to General Cromwell if I am convinced that all are ignorant of my having given one; go, therefore, and await it at Boulogne-sur-Mer, and promise me to set out to-morrow morning."

"I promise, my lord," replied Mordaunt; "but how many days will your Eminence oblige me to await your reply."

"If you do not receive it in ten days, you can leave."

Mordaunt bowed.

"It is not all, sir," continued Mazarin: "your private adventures have touched me to the quick; besides, the letter from Mr. Cromwell makes you an important person in my eyes as ambassador; come, tell me, what can I do for you?"

Mordaunt reflected a moment, and, after some hesitation, was about to speak, when Bernouin entered hastily, and, bending down to the ear of the Cardinal, whispered to him:

"My lord, the Queen Henrietta Maria, accompanied by an English noble, is just entering the Palais Royal at this moment."

Mazarin made a bound from his chair, which did not escape the attention of the young man, and repressed the confidence he was about to make.

"Sir," said the Cardinal, "you have heard me. I fix on Boulogne because I presume that every town in France is indifferent to you; if you prefer another, name it; but you can easily conceive that, surrounded as I am by influences from which I can escape alone by means of discretion, I desire your presence in Paris to be ignored."

"I shall go, sir," said Mordaunt, advancing a few steps to the door by which he had entered.

"No, not that way I beg, sir," quickly exclaimed the Cardinal: "be so good as to pass by that gallery, by which you can gain the hall; I do not wish you to be seen leaving—our interview must be kept secret."

Mordaunt followed Bernouin, who conducted him through a neighboring chamber, and left him with a doorkeeper, showing him the way out.

CHAPTER XXXVI.
HENRIETTA MARIA AND Mazarin.

The Cardinal rose, and advanced in haste to receive the Queen of England. He showed the more respect to this queen, deprived of all éclat, and without followers, as he felt some self-reproach for his own want of heart and his avarice. But suppliants for favor knew how to vary the expression of their features, and the daughter of Henry IV. smiled as she advanced to meet one whom she hated and despised.

"Ah!" said Mazarin to himself, "what a sweet face! does she come to borrow money of me?"

And he threw an uneasy glance at his strong box; no even turned inside the bevel of the magnificent diamond ring, the brilliancy of which drew every eye upon his hand, which indeed was handsome and white.

"Your Eminence," said the august visitor, "it was my first in-
ten tion to speak of the affair which have brought me here, to the
queen, my sister, but I have reflected that political matters are more
especially the concern of men.'

"Madame," said Mazarin, "be assured that your majesty over-
whelms me with flattering distinction."

"He is very gracious," thought the queen; "has he guessed my
errand then?"

"Give," continued the Cardinal, "your commands to the most
respectful of your servants."

"Alas, sir," replied the queen. "I have lost the habit of giving
commands, and have adopted instead that of making petitions. I am
come to petition you, too happy should my prayer be heard favor-
ably."

"I listen, Madame, with interest," said Mazarin.

"Your Eminence, it concerns the war which the king, my hus-
band, now sus tains against his rebellious subjects. You are, per-
haps, ignorant that they are fighting in England," added she, with
a melancholy smile, "and that, in a short time, they will fight in a
much more decided fashion than they have done hitherto."

"I am completely ignorant of it, Madame," said the Cardinal,
accompanying his words with a slight shrug of the shoulders; "also,
our own wars have quite absorbed the time and the mind of a poor,
incapable, and inna minister like myself."

"Well, then, your Eminence," said the queen, "I must inform
you that Charles, my husband, is on the eve of a decisive engage-
ment. In case of a check," (Mazarin made a slight movement),
"one must foresee everything; in case of a check, he desires to re-
tire into France; and to live here as a private individual. What do
you say to this project?"

The Cardinal had listened without permitting a single fiber of his
face to betray what he felt, and his smile remained as it ever was
false and flattering, and, when the queen finished speaking, he said:

"Do you think, Madame, that France, actuated and disturbed as
it is, would be a safe refuge for a dethroned king? How will the
crown, which is scarce firmly set on the head of Louis XIV., sup-
port a double weight?"

"This weight was not so heavy when I was in peril," interrupted
the queen, with a sad smile, "and I ask no more for my husband
than has been done for me; you see that we are very humble mon-
archs, sir."

"Oh, you, Madame, you," the Cardinal hastened to say. In order
to cut short the explanation which he foresaw was coming, "with
regard to you, that is another thing; a daughter of Henry IV., of
that great, that sublime sovereign..."

"All which does not prevent you refusing hospitality to his son
in-law, sir! Nevertheless, you ought to remember that at that great,
that sublime monarch, when proscribed at one time, as my hus-
bond, may be, demanded aid from England, and that England ac-
ceded it to him; and it is but just to say that Queen Elizabeth was
not his niece."

"Pescari!" said Mazarin, writing beneath this simple eloquence,
'your majesty does not understand me; you judge my intentions.
wrongly, and that is because, doubtless, I explain myself if it is French.

"Speak Italian, sir; ere the Cardinal, your predecessor, sent you; mother, Marie de Médicis, to die in exile, she taught us that language. If anything yet remains of that great, that sublime king, Henry, of whom you have just spoken, he would be much surprised at so little pity for his family being united to such a profound admiration of himself."

"The perspiration hung in large drops upon Mazarin's brow. "That admiration is, on the contrary, so great, so real, madame," returned Mazarin, without noticing the change of language offered to him by the queen, "that if the king, Charles I., whom heaven protect from evil, came into France, I would offer him my house—my own house—but, alas! it would be but an unsafe retreat. Some day the people will burn that house, as they burnt that of the Maréchal d'Ancre. Poor Concino Concini! and yet he but desired the good of the people."

"Yes, my lord, like yourself," said the queen, ironically.

Mazarin pretended not to understand the double meaning of his own sentence, but continued to compassionate the fate of Concino Concini.

"Well, then, your Eminence," said the queen, becoming impatient, "what is your answer?"

"Madame," cried Mazarin, more and more moved, "will your majesty permit me to give you counsel?"

"Speak, sir." replied the queen; "the counsels of so prudent a man as yourself ought certainly to be good."

"Madame, believe me, the king ought to defend himself to the last."

"He has done so, sir, and this last battle, which he encounters with resources much inferior to those of the enemy, proves that he will not yield without a struggle; but, in case he is beaten?"

"Well, madame, in that case, my advice—I know that I am very bold to offer advice to your majesty—my advice is that the king should not leave his kingdom. Absent kings are very soon forgotten; if he passes over to France his cause is lost."

"But then," persisted the queen, "if such be your advice, and you have his interest at heart, send him some help of men and money, for I can do nothing for him; I have sold even to my last diamond to aid him. If I had had a single ornament left, I should have bought wood this winter to make a fire for my daughter and myself."

"Oh, madame," said Mazarin, "your majesty knows not what you ask. On the day when foreign succor follows in the train of a king to replace him on his throne, it is an arraignment that he no longer possesses the help and the love of his subjects."

"To the point, sir," said the queen, "to the point, and answer me, yes, or no; if the king persists in remaining in England will you send him succor? If he comes to France will you accord him hospitality? What do you intend to do?—speak."

"I will go this instant and consult the queen, and we will refer the affair at once to the parliament."

"With which you are at war, is it not so? You will charge
Broussel to report it. Enough, sir, enough. I understand you, or rather, I am wrong. Go to the parliament, for, it was from this parliament, the enemy of monarchs, that the daughter of the great, the sublime Henry IV., whom you so much admire, received the only relief this winter which prevented her from dying of hunger and cold!"

And with these words, Henrietta rose in majestic indignation, whilst the Cardinal, raising his hands clasped toward her, exclaimed,

"Ah, madame, madame, how little you know me, mon Dieu!"

"It signifies little," said Mozzaria, when he was alone, "it gave me pain, and it is an ungracious sort to play. But I have said nothing either to the one or to the other. Bernois!"

Bernois entered.

"See if the young man, with the black doublet and the short hair, who was with me just now, is still in the palace."

Bernois went out, and soon returned with Comminges, who was on guard.

"Your Eminence," said Comminges, "as I was reconducting the young man for whom you have asked, he approached the glass door of the gallery, and gazed intently upon some object, doubtless the picture by Raphael, which is opposite the door. He reflected for a second, and then descended the stairs. I believe I saw him mount on a gray horse, and leave the palace court. But is not Your Eminence going to the queen?"

"For what purpose?"

"Monsieur de Guise, my uncle, has just told me that his majesty had received news of the army."

"It is well—I will go."

Comminges had seen rightly, and Mordant had really acted as he had related. In crossing the gallery parallel to the large glass gallery, he perceived De Winter, who was waiting until the queen had finished her negotiations.

At this sight the young man stopped short, not in admiration of Raphael's picture, but as if fascinated at the sight of some terrible object. His eyes dilated, and a shudder ran through his body. One would have said that he longed to break through the wall of glass which separated him from his enemy; for if Comminges had seen with what an expression of hatred the eyes of this young man were fixed upon De Winter, he would not have doubted for an instant but that the English lord was his mortal foe.

But he stopped—doubtless to reflect; for instead of allowing his first impulse, which had been to go straight to Lord De Winter, to carry him away, he leisurely descended the staircase, left the palace, with his head down, mounted his horse, which he raised in at the corner of the Rue Richelieu, and with his eyes fixed on the gate, he waited until the queen's carriage had left the court.

He did not wait long, for the queen scarcely remained a quarter of an hour with Mozzaria, but this quarter of an hour of expectation appeared a century to him. At last the heavy machine, which was called a chariot in those days, came out, rumbling against the gates, and De Winter, still on horseback, bent again to the door to converse with her majesty.

The horses started into a trot, and took the road to the Louvre
which they entered. Before leaving the convent of the Carmelites, Henrietta had desired her daughter to attend her at the palace, which she had inhabited for a long time, and which she had only left because their poverty seemed to them more difficult to bear in gilded chambers.

Mornant followed the carriage, and when he had watched it drive under the somber arches, he went and shadowed himself under a wall over which the shadow was extended, and remained motionless, amidst the moldings of Jean Goujon, like a bas-relief, representing an equestrian statue.

CHAPTER XXXVII

How, Sometimes, the Unhappy Mistake Changes for Providence.

"Well, madame," said Du Winter, when the queen had dismissed her attendants. "Well, my lord, what I had foreseen has come to pass."

"What? does the Cardinal refuse to receive the king? France refuses hospitality to an unfortunate prince? But it is for the first time, madame!"

"I did not say France, my lord. I said the Cardinal, and the Cardinal is not even a Frenchman."

"But did you see the queen?"

"It is useless," replied Henrietta: "the queen will not say yes when the Cardinal has said no. Are you not aware that this Italian directs everything, both indoors and out? And, moreover, I should not be surprised had we been forestalled by Cromwell; he was embarrassed while speaking to me, and yet quite firm in his determination to refuse. Then, did you not observe the agitation in the Palace Royal, the passing to and fro of busy people? Can they have received any news, my lord?"

"Not from England, madame. I made such haste that I am certain of not having been forestalled. I set out three days ago, passing miraculously through the Puritan army, and I took post horses with my servant Tony: the horses upon which we were mounted were bought in Paris. Besides, the king, I am certain, awaits your majesty’s reply before risking anything."

"You will tell him, my lord," resumed the queen, despairingly, "that I can do nothing, that I have suffered as much as himself—more than he has—obliged as I am to eat the bread of exile, and to ask hospitality from false friends who smile at my tears; and as regards his royal person, he must sacrifice it generously, and die like a king. I shall go and die by his side."

"Madame, madame," exclaimed Du Winter, "your majesty abandons yourself to despair; and yet, perhaps, there still remains some hope."

"No friends left, my lord; no other friends left in the whole world but yourself! Oh, God!" exclaimed the poor queen, raising her eyes to Heaven, "have you indeed taken back all the generous hearts which existed in the world?"