on condition that you become a Proudest, my young friend, and a hearty Proudest, too."

"Well, sir, I will obey you, although I do not understand you."

"It is unnecessary for you to understand; hold," continued D'Artagnan, turning toward the door, which had just opened, "here is Monsieur du Vallon, who comes with his coat torn."

"Yes, but in exchange," said Porthos, covered with perspiration, and soiled by dust—"in exchange, I have torn many skins. Those wretches wanted to take away my sword! D'Artagnan, what popular commotion!" continued the giant, in his quiet manner: "but I knocked down more than twenty with the hilt of Bazaine—a drop of wine D'Artagnan."

"Oh, I'll answer for you," said the Gascon, filling Porthos' glass to the brim, "but when you have drunk, give me your opinion."

"Upon what?" asked Porthos.

"Look here," resumed D'Artagnan: "here is Monsieur de Bragelonne, who determined, at all risks, to aid the arrest of Broussel, and whom I had great difficulty to prevent defending Monsieur de Commines."

"The devil!" said Porthos; "and the guardian, what would he have said to that?"

"Do you hear?" interrupted D'Artagnan; "be a Proudest, my friend, belong to the Proude, and remember that I fill the count's place in everything," and he jingled his money.

"Will you come?" said he to Porthos.

"Where to?" asked Porthos, filling a second glass of wine.

"To present our respects to the Cardinal."

Porthos swallowed the second glass with the same ease with which he had drunk the first, took his beaver, and followed D'Artagnan. As for Raoul, he remained bewildered with what he had seen, having been forbidden by D'Artagnan to leave the room until the tumult was over.

CHAPTER XLIII.
THE BEGGAR OF ST. BUSTACHES.

D'ARTAGNAN had calculated that in not going at once to the Palais Royal he would give time to Commines to arrive there before him, and consequently to make the Cardinal acquainted with the eminent services which he, D'Artagnan, and his friend had rendered to the queen's party in the morning.

They were indeed admirably received by Mazarin, who paid them numerous compliments, and announced that they were more than half on their way to obtain what they desired, namely, D'Artagnan his captaincy, and Porthos his barony.

Whilst the two friends were with the Cardinal, the queen sent for him. Mazarin thinking that it would be the means of increasing the zeal of his two defenders if he procured them personal thanks from the queen, motioned to them to follow him. D'Artagnan and Porthos pointed to their dusty and torn dresses, but the Cardinal shook his head.
"Those costumes," he said, "are of more worth than most of those which you will see on the queen's courtiers; they are the costumes of battle.

D'Artagnan and Porthos obeyed. The court of Anne of Austria was full of gaiety and animation; for, after having gained a victory over the Spaniards, it had just gained another over the people. Brumel had been conducted out of Paris without resistance, and was at this time in the prison of St. Germain; and Blancmesnil, who was arrested at the same time, but whose arrest had been made without difficulty or noise, was safe in the Castle of Vincennes.

Connuques was near the queen, who was questioning him upon the details of his expedition, and every one was listening to his account when D'Artagnan and Porthos were perceived at the door behind the Cardinal.

"Ah, madame," said Connuques, hastening to D'Artagnan, "here is one who can tell you better than myself, for he is my protector. Without him I should probably, at this moment, be caught in the net at St. Cloud, for it was a question of nothing less than throwing me into the river. Speak, D'Artagnan, speak."

D'Artagnan had been a hundred times in the same room with the queen since he had become lieutenant of the Musketeers, but her Majesty had never once spoken to him.

"Well, sir," at last said Anne of Austria, "you are silent, after rendering such a service?"

"Madame," replied D'Artagnan, "I have ought to say, save that my life is ever at your Majesty's service; and that I shall only be happy the day that I lose it for you."

"I knew that, sir; I have known that," said the queen, "a long time; therefore I am delighted to be able thus publicly to mark my gratitude and my esteem."

"Permit me, madame," said D'Artagnan, "to reserve a portion for my friend; like myself—he laid an emphasis on these words—an ancient Musketeer of the company of Treville, and he has done wonders."

"His name?" asked the queen.

"In the regiment," said D'Artagnan, "he is called Porthos (the queen started), but his true name is the Chevalier du Vallon."

"De Bracieux de Pierrefonds," added Porthos.

"These names are too numerous for me to remember them all, and I will content myself with the first," said the queen, graciously. Porthos bowed. At this moment the Condéjou was announced; a cry of surprise ran through the royal assemblage. Although the Condéjou had preached that same morning, it was well known that he went much to the side of the Fronde; and Mazarin, in requesting the Archbishop of Paris to make his nephew preach, had evidently had the intention of administering to Monseur de Rets one of those Italian kicks which he so much enjoyed giving.

The fact was, in leaving Notre Dame the Condéjou had learnt the event of the day. Although almost cajoled to the leaders of the Fronde, he had not gone so far but that retreat was possible should the court offer him the advantages for which he was ambitious, and to which the condutiorship was but a stepping stone. Monseur de Rets wished to be archbishop in his uncle's place, and cardinal, like
Mazarin, and the popular party could with difficulty accord to him favors so entirely royal. He, therefore, hastened to the palace to congratulate the queen on the battle of Lens, determined beforehand to act with or against the court, according as his congratulations were well or ill received.

The Condéjtor had, perhaps, in his own person, as much wit as all those together who were assembled at the court to laugh at him. His speech, therefore, was so well turned, that in spite of the great wish felt by the couriers to laugh, they could find no point upon which to vent their ridicule. He concluded by saying that he placed his feeble influence at her Majesty's command.

During the whole time that he was speaking, the queen appeared to be well pleased with the Condéjtor's arraignment; but terminating as it did with such a phrase, the only one which could be caught at by the jokers, Anne turned round and directed a glance toward her favorites, which announced that she delivered up the Condéjtor to her tender mercies. Immediately the wits of the court plunged into satire. Nogent-Beaurain, the fool of the court, exclaimed that "the queen was very happy to have the sacror of religion at such a moment." This caused a universal burst of laughter. The Count de Villers said "that he did not know how any fear could be entertained for a moment when the court had, to defend itself against the parliament and the citizens of Paris, his houseman, the Condéjtor, who by a signal could raise an army of curates, church porters and vergers;" and soon.

During this storm, Goody, who had it in his power to make it fatal to the jesters, remained calm and stern. The queen at last asked him if he had anything to add to the fine discourse which he had just made to her.

"Yes, madame," replied the Condéjtor; "I have to beg you to reflect twice ere you cause a civil war in the kingdom."

The queen turned her back, and the laughing recommenced.

The Condéjtor bowed and left the palace, casting upon the Cardinal such a glance as is understood best between mortal foes.

"Oh!" muttered Bissy, as he left the threshold of the palace—"ungrateful court! faithless court! I will teach you how to laugh to-morrow—but in another manner."

But whilst they were indulging in extravagant joy at the Palais Royal, to increase the hilarity of the queen, Mazarin, a man of sense, and whose fear, moreover, gave him foresight, lost no time in making idle and dangerous jokes: he went out after the Condéjtor, settled his account, locked up his gold, and had confidential workmen to contrive hiding-places in his walls.

On his return home the Condéjtor was informed that a young man had come in after his departure, and was waiting for him; he started with delight when, on demanding the name of this young man, he learnt that it was Louvières.

He immediately went to his room, and advancing toward him, held out his hand. The young man gazed at him as if he would have read the secret of his heart.

"My dear Monsieur Louvières," said the Condéjtor, "believe how truly concert I am for the misfortune which has happened to you."
"Is that true, and do you speak seriously?" asked Louvières.
"From the depth of my heart," said Gondy.
"In that case, my lord, the time for words has passed, and the hour for action is come; my lord, in three days, if you wish it, my father will be out of prison, and in six months you may be Cardinal."

The Coadjutor started.
"Oh! let us speak frankly," continued Louvières, "and act in a straightforward manner. Thirty thousand crowns in alms is not given—as you have done for the last six months—out of pure Christian charity; that would be too grand. You are ambitious; it is natural; you are a man of genius, and you know your worth. As for me, I hate the court, and have but one desire at this moment; it is for vengeance. Give us the clergy and the people, of whom you can dispose, and I will bring you the citizens and the parliament; with these four elements, Paris is ours in a week; and believe me, Monsieur Coadjutor, the court will give from fear what she will not give from good will."

It was now the Coadjutor's turn to fix his piercing glance on Louvières.
"But, Monsieur Louvières, are you aware that it is simply civil war that you propose to me?"
"You have been preparing it long enough, my lord, for it to be welcome to you now."
"Never mind," said the Coadjutor; "you must know that this requires reflection."
"And how many hours of reflection do you ask?"
"Twelve hours, sir; is it too long?"
"It is now noon; at midnight I will be at your house."
"If I am not come in—wait for me."
"Good! at midnight, my lord."
"At midnight, my dear Monsieur Louvières."

When once more alone, Gondy sent to summon all the curates, with whom he had any connection, to his house. Two hours later, thirty officiating ministers from the most populous, and consequently the most disturbed, parishes of Paris, had assembled together there. Gondy related to them the insults he had received at the Palais Royal, and retold the jests of Beaumarches, Count de Villeroy, and the Maréchal de la Meilleraye. The curates demanded what was to be done.
"Simply this," said the Coadjutor; "you are the directors of consciences. Well, undermine in them the miserable prejudice of respect and fear of kings—instruct your flocks that the queen is a tyrant; and repeat, often and loudly, so that all may know it, that the misfortunes of France are caused by Mazarin, her lover and her destroyer; begin this work to-day, this instant even, and in three days I shall expect the result. For the rest, if any one of you have good counsel to give me, I shall listen to him with pleasure."

Three curates remained: those of St. Merri, St. Sulpice, and St. Buisine.
"You think, then, that you can help me more efficaciously than your brethren?" said Gondy.
"We hope so," answered the curates.
"Let us hear, Monsieur de St. Merri, you begin."

"My lord, I have in my parish a man who might be of the greatest use to you."

"What is this man?"

"A shopkeeper in the Rue des Lombards, who has great influence upon the little commerce of his quarter."

"What is his name?"

"He is named Planchet, who himself also caused an émeute about six weeks ago; but as he was searched for after this émeute he disappeared."

"And could you find him?"

"I hope so. I think he has not been arrested, and as I am his wife's confessor, if she knows where he is I shall know it too."

"Very well, sir; find this man, and when you have found him bring him to me."

"We will be with you at six o'clock, my lord."

"Go, my dear curate, and may God aid you!"

"And you, sir?" continued Gondy, turning to the curate of St. Sulphice.

"I, my lord," said the latter, "I know a man who has rendered great services to a very popular printer, and who would make an excellent leader of a revolt, and whom I can put at your disposal; it is Count de Rochefort."

"I know him also, but unfortunately he is not in Paris."

"My lord, he has been for three days at the Rue Conecille."

"And wherefore has he not been to see you?"

"He was told—my lord will pardon me——"

"Certainly, speak."

"That your lordship was about to treat with the court."

Gondy bit his lips.

"They are mistaken; bring him here at eight o'clock, sir, and may Heaven bless you as I bless you!"

"And now 'tis your turn," said the Grand Inquisitor, turning to the last that remained, "have you anything so good to offer me as the two gentlemen who have left us?"

"Better, my lord."

"Diable! think what a solemn engagement you are making there; one has offered a shopkeeper, the other a count; you are going, then, to offer a prince, are you?"

"I offer you a beggar, my lord."

"Ah! ah!" said Gondy, reflecting, "you are right, sir; some one who could raise the legion of paupers who choke up the crossings of Paris, some one who would know how to cry aloud to them, that all France might hear it, that it is Moazarin who has reduced them to the wretches——"

"Exactly your man."

"Brave! and what is the man?"

"A simple beggar, as I have said, my lord, who asks for alms, as he gives holy water, a practice he has carried on for about six years on the steps of the Church of St. Eustache."

"And you say that he has a great influence over his companions?"

"Are you aware, my lord, that mendicancy is an organized body, a kind of association of those who have not, against those who have"
an association in which every one takes his share, and which elects a lorden?"
"Yes, I have heard that said," replied the Conduitor.
"Well, the man whom I offer to you is an universal authority."
"And what do you know of this man?"
"Nothing, my lord, except that he is tormented with remorse."
"What makes you think so?"
"On the 26th of every month, he makes me say a mass for the repose of the soul of a person who died a violent death: yesterday I said this mass again."
"And his name?"
"Mullard; but I do not think it is his true name."
"And think you that we should find him at this hour at his post?"
"Certainly."
"Let us go and see your beggar, sir, and if he is such as you describe him, you are right—it will be you who have found the true treasure."

Gundy dressed himself as an officer, put on a felt cap with a red feather, hung on a long sword, buckled spurs to his boots, wrapped himself in an ample cloak, and followed the curate.

On arriving at the Rue des Prouvaires, the curate pointed toward the square before the church.
"Stop!" he said, "there he is at his post."

Gundy looked at the spot indicated, and perceived a beggar seated in a chair, and leaning against one of the moldings; a little basin was near him and he held a holy water brush in his hand.
"Is it by permission that he remains there?" asked Gundy.
"No, my lord; these places are bought; I think that this man paid his predecessor a hundred pistoles for his."
"The rascal is rich, then?"
"Some of these men sometimes die worth twenty thousand, and twenty-five and thirty thousand francs, and sometimes more."
"Hum!" said Gundy, laughing: "I was not aware that my alms were so well invested."

In the meantime they were advancing toward the square, and the moment the Conduitor and the curate put their feet on the first church step, the mendicant rose and proffered his brush.
He was a man between sixty-six and sixty-eight years of age, little, rather stout, with gray hair, and light eyes. His countenance denoted the struggle between two opposite principles—a wicked nature subdued by determination, perhaps by repentance.
He started on seeing the cavalier with the curate. The latter and
the Conduitor touched the brush with the tips of their fingers, and made the sign of the cross; the Conduitor threw a piece of money into the hat, which was on the ground.
"Mullard," began the curate, "this gentleman and I have come to talk with you a little."
"With me!" said the mendicant: "it is a great honor for a poor giver of holy water."

There was an ironical tone in his voice, which he could not quite prevent, and which astonished the Conduitor.
"Yes," continued the curate, apparently accustomed to this
tone, "yes, we wish to know your opinion of the events of to-day, and what you have heard said by people going in and out of the church."

The mendicant shook his head.

"These are melancholy doings, your Reverence, which always fall again upon the poor people. As to what is said, everybody is discontented—everybody complains—but——"

"Explain yourself, my good friend," said the Coadjutor.

I mean that all these cries, all these complaints, these curses, produce nothing but storms and flashes, and that is all; but the lightning will not strike until there is a hand to guide it."

"My friend," said Gondy, "you seem to be a clever man; are you disposed to take a part in a little civil war, should we have one, and put at the command of the leader—should we find one—your personal influence, and the influence you have acquired over your convents?"

"Yes, sir, provided this war were approved by the church, and would advance the end I wish to attain—I mean the remission of my sins."

"The war will not only be approved of, but directed by the church. As for the remission of your sins, we have the Archbishop of Paris, who has great power at the court of Rome, and even the Coadjutor who possesses some particular indulgences; we will recommend you to him. And do you think your power as great with the fraternity as Monsieur le Curé told me it was just now?"

"I think they have some esteem for me," said the mendicant, with pride, "and that not only will they obey me, but wherever I go, they will follow me."

"And could you count upon fifty resolute men, good, unemployed, but active souls, braverings capable of bringing down the walls of the Palais Royal by crying 'Down with Mazarin,' as fell all those at Jericho?"

"I think," said the beggar, "that I can undertake things more difficult, and more important than that."

"Ah, ah," said Gondy, "you will undertake, then, some night, to throw up some ten barricades."

"I will undertake to throw up fifty, and when the day comes, to defend them."

"I think," exclaimed Gondy, "you speak with a certainty that gives me pleasure; and since Monsieur le Curé can answer for you——"

"I answer for him," said the curate.

"Here is a bag containing five hundred pistoles in gold—make all your arrangements, and tell me where I shall be able to find you this evening at ten o'clock."

"It must be on some elevated place, whence a given signal may be seen in every quarter of Paris."

"Shall I give you a line for the Vicar of St. Jacques-de-la-Boucherie? he will let you into the rooms in his tower," said the curate.

"Capital," answered the mendicant.

"Then," said the Coadjutor, "this evening, at ten o'clock, and if I am pleased with you, another bag of five hundred pistoles will be at your disposal."

The eyes of the mendicant flashed with rudity, but he suppressed this emotion.

"This evening, sir," he replied, "all will be ready."

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE TOWER OF ST. JACQUES-DE-LA-BOUCHERIE.

At a quarter to six o'clock, Monsieur de Gondy, having finished all his business, returned to the archiepiscopal palace.

At six o'clock the curate of St. Merri was announced.

The Coadjutor glanced rapidly behind, and saw that he was followed by another man. The curate then entered, followed by Panchet.

"Your holiness," said the curate, "here is the person of whom I lend the honor to speak to you."

"And you are disposed to serve the cause of the people?" asked Gondy.

"Most undoubtedly," said Panchet. "I am a Fronde from my heart. You see fit me, such as I am, a person sentenced to be hung."

"And on what account?"

"I rescued from the hands of Mazarin's police a noble lord, whom they were conducting again to the Bastille, where he had been for five years."

"Will you name him?"

"Oh, you know him well, my lord—it is Count de Rochefort."

"Ah! really, yes," said the Coadjutor, "I have heard this affair mentioned. You raised the whole district they told me."

"Very nearly," replied Panchet, with a self-satisfied air.

"And your business is—"

"That of a confectioner, in the Rue des Lombards."

"Explain to me how it happens that, following so peaceful a business, you had such warlike inclinations."

"Why does my lord, belonging to the church, now receive me in the dress of an officer, with a sword at his side, and spurs to his boots?"

"Not badly answered, father," said Gondy, laughing; "but I have, you must know, always had, in spite of my hands, warlike inclinations."

"Well, my lord, before I became a confectioner, I myself was a three years sergeant in the Piedmontese regiment, and before I became sergeant I was for eighteen months the servant of Monsieur D'Artagnan."

"The lieutenant of the Musketeers?" asked Gondy.

"Myself, my lord,"

"But he is said to be a furious Mazarinist."

"Hew!" said Panchet.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Nothing, my lord; Monsieur D'Artagnan belongs to the service; Monsieur D'Artagnan makes it his business to defend the Cardinal, who pays him, as much as we make it our—our citizens—to attack him, whom he rules."