firm. Imitate me, make less noise, and do more. You cry very loud, you end by doing nothing; you talk of flying—"

Mazarin shrugged his shoulders, and taking the queen's hand led her to the window.

"Look!" he said.

"Well?" said the queen, blinded by her obstinacy.

"Well, what do you see from this window? If I am not mistaken, those are citizens, helmed and mailed, armed with good muskets, as in the time of the League, and whose eyes are so intently fixed on this window, that they will see you if you raise that curtain much; and now come to the other side—what do you see? Creatures of the people, armed with the halberds, guarding your doors. You will see the same at every opening from this palace to which I should lead you. Your doors are griddled, the air-holes of your collars are guarded, and I could say to you, as that good La Ramee said to me of the Duc de Beaufort, you must be either bird or mouse to get out."

"He did get out, however."

"Do you think of escaping in the same way?"

"I am a prisoner, then?"

"Par dieu!" said Mazarin, "I have been proving it to you this last hour."

And he quietly resumed his dispatch at the place where he had been interrupted.

Anne, trembling with anger, and red with humiliation, left the room, shutting the door violently after her. Mazarin did not even turn round. When once more in her own apartment, Anne fell into a chair and wept; then suddenly struck with an idea:

"I am saved!" she exclaimed, rising; "oh, yes! yes! I know a man who will find the means of taking me from Paris: a man whom I have too long forgotten." Then falling into a reverie, she added, however, with an expression of joy, "Ungrateful woman that I am, for twenty years I have forgotten this man, whom I ought to have made marshal of France. My mother-in-law expended gold,巡察, and indignities on Conde, who ruined her; the king made Viey marshal of France for an assassination; while I have left in obscurity, in poverty, that noble D'Artagnan, who saved me!"

And running to a table, upon which were placed paper and ink, she began to write.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE INTERVIEW.

It had been D'Artagnan's practice, ever since the riots, to sleep in the same room as Porthos, and on this eventful morning he was still there, sleeping, and dreaming that a large yellow cloud had overspread the sky, and was raining gold pieces into his hat, whilst he held it under a spout. As for Porthos, he dreamed that the panels of his carriage were not capacious enough to contain the amoral bearings which he had ordered to be painted upon them. They were both aroused at seven o'clock by the entrance of an unliberated servant, who had brought a letter to D'Artagnan.
TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

"From whom is it?" asked the Gascon.
"From the queen," replied the servant.
"Tell," said Porthos, raising himself in his bed, "what does she say?"

D'Artagnan requested the servant to wait in the next room, and when the door was closed, he sprang up from his bed, and read rapidly, whilst Porthos looked at him with starting eyes, not daring to ask a single question.
"Friend Porthos," said D'Artagnan, handing the letter to him, "this time, at least, you are sure of your title of baron, and I of my captancy. There, read and judge."

Porthos took the letter, and with a trembling voice read the following words:

"The queen wishes to speak to Monsieur D'Artagnan, who must follow the bearer.

"Well!" exclaimed Porthos; "I see nothing in that very extraordinary.

"But I see much that is extraordinary in it," replied D'Artagnan.
"It is evident, by their sending for me, that matters are becoming complicated. Just reflect a little what an agitation the queen's mind must be in for her to have remembered me after twenty years."
"It is true," said Porthos."

"Sharpen your sword, baron, load your pistols, and give some corn to the horses, for I will answer for it, something new will happen before to-morrow."
"But, stop; do you think it can be a trap that they are laying for us?" suggested Porthos, incessantly thinking how his greatness must be irksome to other people.

"If it is a snare," replied D'Artagnan, "I shall scent it out, be assured. If Mazarin be an Italian, I am a Gascon."

And D'Artagnan dressed himself in an instant.

Whilst Porthos, still in bed, was looking on his cloak for him, a second knock at the door was heard.
"Come in," cried D'Artagnan; and another servant entered.
"From his Eminence, Cardinal Mazarin," he said, presenting a letter.

D'Artagnan glanced at Porthos, and said:

"It is arranged capitally; his Eminence expects me in half an hour."

"Good."

"My friend," said D'Artagnan, turning to the servant, "tell his Eminence that in half an hour I shall be at his command."

"It is very fortunate," resumed the Gascon, when the valet had retired, "that he did not meet the other one."

"Do you not think that they have sent for you, both for the same thing?"

"I do not think it, I am certain of it."

"Quick, quick, D'Artagnan. Remember that the queen awaits you; and after the queen, the Cardinal; and after the Cardinal, my self."

D'Artagnan summoned Anne of Austria's servant, and answered that he was ready to follow him.
The servant conducted him by the Rue des Petits-Champs, and turning to the left, entered the little garden gate leading into the Rue Richelieu; then they gained the private staircase, and D'Artagnan was ushered into the counting. A certain emotion, for which he could not account, made the lieutenant's heart beat; he had no longer the assurance of youth, and experience had taught him all the importance of past events. Formerly, he would have approached the queen, as a young man, who beholds before a woman; but now it was a different thing: he answered her summons as an humble soldier obeys an illustrious general.

The silence of the counting was at last disturbed by a slight rustling sound, and D'Artagnan started when he perceived the tapestry raised by a white hand, which, by its form, its color, and its beauty, he recognized as that royal hand, which had one day been presented to him to kiss. 'The queen entered.

'"It is you, Monsieur D'Artagnan," she said, fixing a gaze full of melancholy interest on the countenance of the officer," and I know you well. Look at me well in your turn. I am the queen; do you recognize me?"

'"No, madame," replied D'Artagnan.

'"But are you no longer aware," continued Anne, giving that sweet expression to her voice which she could do at will, "that in former days the queen had once need of a young, brave, and devoted cavalier; that she found this cavalier; and that, although he might have thought that she had forgotten him, she had kept a place for him in the depths of her heart."

'"No, madame, I was ignorant of that," said the Musketeer.

'"So much the worse, sir," said Anne of Austria, "so much the worse, at least for the queen, for to-day she has need of the same courage, and of that same devotion."

'"What?" exclaimed D'Artagnan, "does the queen, surrounded as she is by such devoted cavaliers, such wise counselors, men, in short, so great by their merit or their position—does she deign to cast her eyes on an obscure soldier?"

Anne understood this covert approach, and was more moved than irritated by it. She had many a time felt humiliated by the selfishness and disinterestedness shown by the Gascon gentleman, and she had allowed herself to be exceeded in generosity.

'"All that you tell me of those by whom I am surrounded, Monsieur D'Artagnan, is doubtless true," said the queen, "but I have confidence in you alone. I know that you belong to the Cardinal—but belong to me as well—and I will take upon myself the making of your fortune. Come, will you do to-day what formerly the gentleman whom you do not know did for the queen?"

'"I will do everything which your Majesty commands," replied D'Artagnan.

'The queen reflected for a moment, and then seeing the cautious demeanor of the Musketeer:

'"Perhaps you like reposes," she said.

'"I do not know, for I have never had it, madame."

'"Have you any friends?"

'"I had three, two of whom have left Paris, to go I know not where. One alone is left to me, but he is one of those known, I be-
Twenty Years After.

Here, to the cavalier of whom your Majesty did me the honor to speak to me:"

"Very good," said the queen, "you and your friend are worthy
an army."

"'What am I to do, madame?"

"Return at five o'clock, and I will tell you—but do not breathe to
a living soul, sir, the rendezvous which I give you."

"No, madame."

"Swear it by Christ."

"Madame, I have never been false to my word—when I say no,
it means no."

The queen, although astonished at this language, to which she was
not accustomed from her-courtiers, argued from it a happy omen of
the zeal with which D'Artagnan would serve her in the accomplish-
ment of her project. It was one of the Gascon's artifices to hide
his deep cunning occasionally under an appearance of rough loyalty.

"Has the queen any further commands for me now?" asked
D'Artagnan.

"No, sir," replied Anne of Austria, "and you may retire until
the time that I mentioned to you."

D'Artagnan bowed and went out.

"Diable!" he exclaimed, when the door was shut, "they seem
to have great need of me here."

Then, as the half hour had already elapsed, he crossed the gal-
lery, and knocked at the Cardinal's door.

"I come for your commands, my lord," he said.

And according to his custom, D'Artagnan glanced rapidly round,
and remarked that Mazarin had a sealed letter before him.

"You come from the queen?" said Mazarin, looking fixedly at
D'Artagnan.

"If my lord, who told you that?"

"Nobody, but I know it."

"I regret, infinitely, to tell you, my lord, that you are mistaken,"
replied the Gascon, impudently, firm to the promise he had just
made to Anne of Austria.

"I opened the door of the ante-room myself, and I saw you enter
at the end of the corridor."

"Because I was shown up the private stairs,"

"How so?"

"I know not, it must have been a mistake."

Mazarin was aware that it was not easy to make D'Artagnan
reveal anything which he was desirous of hiding, so he therefore
gave up, for the first time, the discovery of the mystery which the
Gascon made.

"Let us speak of my affairs," said Mazarin, "since you will tell
me nothing of yours. Are you fond of traveling?"

"My life has been passed on the high roads."

"Would anything retain you particularly in Paris?"

"Nothing but an order from a superior would retain me in Paris."

"Very well. Here is a letter, which must be taken to its ad-
dress."

"To its address, my lord? But it has none."
"I regret to say," resumed Mazarin, "that it is in a double envelope."

"I understand; and I am only to take off the first one when I have reached a certain place?"

"Just so—take it and go. You have a friend, Monsieur du Vallon, whom I like much; let him accompany you." The devil!" said D'Artagnan to himself. "He knows that we overheard his conversation yesterday, and he wants to get us away from Paris."

"Do you hesitate?" asked Mazarin.

"No, my lord, and I will set out at once. There is one thing only which I must request." "What is it? speak." "That your Eminence will go at once to the queen." "What for?"

"Merely to say these words: "I am going to send Monsieur d'Artagnan away, and I wish him to set out directly.'"

"I told you," said Mazarin, "that you had seen the queen."

"I had the honor of saying to your Eminence that there had been some mistake."

"Very well; I will go. Wait here for me." And looking attentively around him, to see if he had forgotten any keys in his closets, Mazarin went out. Ten minutes elapsed ere he returned, pale, and evidently thoughtful. He seated himself at his desk, and D'Artagnan proceeded to examine his face, as he had just examined the letter he held, but the envelope which covered his countenance was almost as impenetrable as that which covered the letter.

"Eh! eh!" thought the Gascon; "he looks displeased. Can it be with me? He meditates. Is it about sending me to the Bastile? All very fine, my lord; but at the very first hint you give of such a thing, I will struggle, and become a Royalist. I should be carried to triumph like Monsieur Broussel, and Athos would proclaim me the French Brutus. It would be droll."

The Gascon, with his vivid imagination, had already seen the advantage to be derived from his situation; Mazarin gave, however, no order of the kind, but, on the contrary, began to be insinuating.

"You were right," he said, "my dear Monsieur D'Artagnan, and you cannot set out yet. I beg you to return me that dispatch."

D'Artagnan obeyed, and Mazarin ascertained that the seal was intact.

"I shall want you this evening," he said. "Return in two hours."

"My lord," said D'Artagnan, "I have an appointment in two hours, which I cannot miss."

"Do not be uneasy," said Mazarin; "it is the same."

"Good!" thought D'Artagnan; "I fancied it was so."

"Return, then, at five o'clock, and bring that worthy Monsieur du Vallon with you. Only, leave him in the ante-room, as I wish to speak to you alone."

D'Artagnan bowed, and thought—"Both at the same hour; both commands alike—both at the Palais Royal. I guess. Ah! Monsieur de Gondy would pay a hundred thousand francs for such a secret!"
"You are thoughtful," said Mazarin, uneasily.
"Yes, I was thinking whether we ought to come armed or not."
"Armed to the teeth!" replied Mazarin.
"Very well, my lord; it shall be so."

CHAPTER XLIX.
THE FLIGHT.

When D'Artagnan returned to the Palais Royal at five o'clock, it presented, in spite of the excitement which reigned in the town, a spectacle of the greatest rejoicing. Nor was that surprising. The queen had restored Brissot and D'Anneux to the people, and had therefore nothing to fear, since the people had nothing more to ask for. The return, also, of the conqueror of Lens was the pretext for giving a grand banquet. The princes and princesses were invited, and their carriages had crowded the court since noon. Soon after dinner the queen was to have a play in her apartment. Anne of Austria had never appeared more brilliant than on that day—radiant with grace and wit. Mazarin disappeared as they rose from table. He found D'Artagnan waiting for him already at his post in the ante-room. The Cardinal advanced to him with a smile, and taking him by the hand, led him into his study.

"My dear M. D'Artagnan," said the minister, sitting down,
"I am about to give you the greatest proof of confidence that a minister can give to an officer."

"I hope," said D'Artagnan, bowing, "that you give it, my lord, without hesitation, and with the conviction that I am worthy of it."

"More worthy than any one, my dear friend; therefore I apply to you. We are about to leave this evening," continued Mazarin,

"My dear M. D'Artagnan, the welfare of the state is reposed in your hands."

He paused.

"Explain yourself, my lord; I am listening."

"The queen has resolved to make a little excursión with the king to St. Germain."

"Ah! ah!" said D'Artagnan, "that is to say, the queen wishes to leave Paris."

"A woman's caprice—you understand."

"Yes, I understand perfectly," said D'Artagnan.

"It was for this that she summoned you this morning, and that she told you to return at five o'clock."

"Was it worth while to wish me to swear this morning that I would mention the appointment to no one?" muttered D'Artagnan.

"Oh, women! women! whether queens or not, they are always the same."

"Do you disapprove of this journey, my dear M. D'Artagnan?" asked Mazarin, anxiously.

"I, my lord?" said D'Artagnan; "and why?"

"Because you shrug your shoulders."

"It is a way I have of speaking to myself. I neither approve nor disapprove, my lord; I merely await your commands."

"Good; it is you, therefore, that I have picked upon to conduct the king and the queen to St. Germain."