TEN YEARS AFTER.

"Halt!" he cried; "this time we shall be pursued. We must let them leave the village and ride after us on the northern road, and when they are passed we will take the opposite direction.

There was a stream close by, and a bridge across it. D'Artagnan led his horse under the arch of the bridge. The others followed. Ten minutes later they heard the rapid gallop of a troop of horsemen. A few minutes more and the troop passed over their heads.

CHAPTER LX.

LONDON.

As soon as the noise of the hoofs was lost in the distance, D'Artagnan remounted the bank of the stream, and scanned the plain, followed by his three friends, directing himself as much as possible toward London.

"This time," said D'Artagnan, when they were sufficiently distant to proceed at a trot, "I think all is lost, and we have nothing better to do than to reach France. What do you think, Athos?"

"True," said Athos; "but we ought, I think, to see this great tragedy played out. Do not let us leave England before the crisis. Don't you agree with me, Aramis?"

"Entirely, my dear count. Then, too, I confess I should not be sorry to come across Mordaunt again. It appears to me that we have an account to settle with him, and that it is not our custom to leave a place without paying our debts, of this kind, at least."

"Ah! that's another thing," said D'Artagnan, "and I should not mind waiting in London a whole year for a chance of meeting this Mordaunt in question. Only let us lodge with some one on whom we can count; for I imagine, that just now, Mr. Cromwell would not be inclined to trifle with us. Athos, do you know any one in the whole town where one can find white sheets, roast beef reasonably cooked, and wine which is not made of hops and gin?"

"I think I know what you want," replied Athos. "Do Winter took us to the house of a Spaniard, who, he said, has been naturalized in England by his fellow countrymen's guineas."

"Well, we must take every precaution."

"Yes, and among others, that of changing our clothes."

"Changing our clothes!" exclaimed Porthos. "I don't see why; we are very comfortable in those we have on."

"To prevent recognition," said D'Artagnan. "Our clothes have a cut which would denounce the Frenchman at first sight. Now, I don't care sufficiently about the cut of my jerkin to risk being hung at Tyburn, or sent for change of scene to the Indies. I shall buy a chestnut-colored suit. I've remarked that your Puritans revel in that color."

"But can you find your man?" said Aramis to Athos.

"Oh! to be sure, yes. He lives at the Bedford Tavern, Green-balls Street. Besides, I can find my way about the city with my eyes shut."

Athos was right. He went direct to the Bedford Tavern, and the host, who recognized him, was delighted to see him again with such worthy and numerous company.
Though it was scarcely daylight, our four travelers found the town in a great bustle, owing to the reported approach of Harrison and the king.

The plan of changing their clothes was unanimously adopted. The landlord sent out for every description of garment, as if he wanted to fit up his wardrobe. Athos chose a black coat, which gave him the appearance of a respectable citizen. Aramis, not wishing to part with his sword, selected a dark green one of a military cut. Piton was induced by a red doublet and green breeches. D'Artagnan, who had fixed on his color beforehand, had only to select the shirt, and looked in his chestnut suit exactly like a retired sugar-dealer.

"Now," said D'Artagnan, "for the actual man. We must cut off our hair, that the populace may not insult us. As we no longer wear the sword of the gentleman, we may as well have the head of the Puritan. This, as you know, is the important point of distinction between the Covenant and the Cavalier."

After some discussion this was agreed to, and Musquetor, played the rôle of barber.

"We look hideous," said Athos.

"And smock of the Puritan to a frightful extent," said Aramis.

"My head feels quite cold," said Piton.

"And as for me, I feel anxious to preach a sermon," said D'Artagnan.

"Now," said Athos, "that we cannot even recognize one another, and have, therefore, no fear of others recognizing us, let us go and see the king's entrance."

They had not been long in the crowd before loud cries announced the king's arrival. A carriage had been sent to meet him; and the giant of Piton, who stood a head above all the other heads, soon announced that he saw the royal equipage approaching. D'Artagnan raised himself on tip-toe, and as the carriage passed, saw Harrison at one window, and Mordant at the other.

The next day, Athos, leaning out of his window, which looked upon the most populous part of the city, heard the Act of Parliament, which summoned the ex-king, Charles I, to the bar, publicly cried.

"The Parliament, indeed!" cried Athos. "Parliament can never have passed such an act as that."

At this moment the landlord came in.

"Did Parliament pass this act?" Athos asked him in English.

"Yes, my lord, the pure Parliament."

"Come," said D'Artagnan, "as I don't understand English, suppose you speak to us in Spanish, which we all do understand."

"Do you mean to say, then," returned Athos, "that there are two Parliaments, one pure, and the other impure?"

"When I speak of the pure Parliament," resumed the host, "I mean the one which Colonel Bridge has created."

"Ah! really," said D'Artagnan, "these people are very ingenious. When I go back to France, I must suggest that to Cardinal Mazarin. One shall weed the Parliament in the name of the court, and the other in the name of the people, so that there won't be any Parliament left at all!"
"And who is this Colonel Bridge?" asked Aramis.

"Colonel Bridge," replied the Spaniard, "is a retired wagoner, a man of much sense, who made one observation in driving his team, namely, that where there happened to be a stone on the road, it was much easier to remove the stone than to try and make the wheel pass over it. Now, of two hundred and fifty-one members who composed the Parliament, there were one hundred and ninety-one who were in his way, and might have upset his political wagon. He took them up, just as he formerly used to take up the stones from the road, and threw them out of the house."

"Next," remarked D'Artagnan, "Very!"

"And all these one hundred and ninety-one were Stuartists!" asked Athos.

"Without doubt, seigneur; and you understand, that they would have saved the king."

"To be sure," said Porthos, majestically, "they were in the majority."

"And you think," said Aramis, "he will consent to appear before such a tribunal?"

"He will be forced to do so," answered the Spaniard.

"Now, Athos!" said D'Artagnan, "do you begin to believe that it's a ruined cause? and that what with your Harrisons, Joyces, Bridges, and Cromwells, we shall never get the upper hand?"

"But," said Aramis, "if they dare to condemn their king, it can only be to exile or imprisonment."

D'Artagnan whistled a little air of incredulity.

"We shall see," said Athos, "for we shall go to the sittings, I presume."

"You will not have long to wait," said the landlord; "they begin to-morrow."

"So, then, they drew up the indictment before the king was taken?"

"Of course," said D'Artagnan; "they began the day he was sold."

"And you know," said Aramis, "that it was our friend Mordaunt who made, if not the bargain, at least the first overtures."

"And you know," added D'Artagnan, "that whenever I catch him I kill him, this Mr. Mordaunt."

"And I, too," exclaimed Porthos.

"And I, too," added Aramis.

"Touching unanimity!" cried D'Artagnan, "which well becomes good citizens like us. Let us take a turn round the town, and imbibe a little fog."

"Yes," said Porthos. "It will be a change from the beer."

CHAPTER LXI
THE TRIAL

The next morning King Charles I., was brought by a strong guard before the high court which was to judge him. All London was crowding to the doors of the house. The throng was terrific, and it was not till after much pushing and some fighting that our