attacked without knowing that it was you. I am sorry, if you die, that you should die with sentiments of hatred toward me."

Rochefort extended his hand to D'Artagnan, who took it. The count wished to speak, but a gush of blood stupefied him. He suffered in the last convulsions of death, and expired.

"Boo!" cried D'Artagnan; "your leader is dead, and you have no longer anything to do here."

Indeed, as if De Rochefort had been the very soul of the attack, all the crowd who had followed and obeyed him took flight on seeing him fall. D'Artagnan charged with a party of Musketeers in the Rue du Coq, and that portion of the mob whom he assailed disappeared like smoke, dispersing near the Place St. Germain's L'Aux Erroles, and taking the direction of the quays.

D'Artagnan returned to help Porthos, if Porthos needed it; but Porthos, on his side, had done his work as conscientiously as D'Artagnan. The left of the carriage was as well cleared as the right; and they drew up the blind of the window which Mazure, less heroic than the king, had taken the precaution to lower.

Porthos looked very melancholy.

"What a devil of a face you have, Porthos! and what a strange air for a ferocious man!"

"But you," answered Porthos, "seem to me agitated."

"There's a reason! Zounds! I have just killed an old friend."

"Indeed!" replied Porthos; "who?"

"That poor Count de Rochefort."

"Well! exactly like me! I have just killed a man whose face is not unknown to me. Unluckily, I hit him on the head, and immediately his face was covered with blood."

"And he said nothing as he died?"

"Yes; he said, 'Oh!'"

"I suppose," answered D'Artagnan, laughing, "if he only said that, it did not enlighten you much!"

"Well, sir!" cried the queen.

"Madame, the passage is quite clear, and your Majesty can continue your road."

In fact, the procession arrived in safety at Notre Dame, at the front gate of which all the clergy, with the Conjuror at their head, awaited the king, the queen, and the minister, for whose happy return they chanted a Te Deum.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII

CONCLUSION.

On going home, the two friends found a letter from Athos, who desired them to meet him at the Grand Charlemagne on the following day.

Both of the friends went to bed early, but neither of them slept. When we arrive at the summit of one's wishes, success has usually the power of driving away sleep on the first night after the fulfillment of long-cherished hopes.
The next day, at the apportioned hour, they went to see Athos and found him and Aramis in traveling costume.

"'What!' cried Porthos, 'are we all going away, then? I have also made my preparations this morning.'

'Oh, heavens! yes,' said Aramis. 'There's nothing to do in Paris now there's no Froide. The Duchesse de Longueville has invited me to pass some days in Normandy, and has deputies me, while her son is being baptized, to go and prepare her residence at Rouen; after which, if nothing new occurs, I shall go and bury myself in my convent at Noisy-le-Grand.'

'And I,' said Athos, 'am returning to Bragelonne. You know, dear D'Artagnan, I am nothing more than a good honest country gentleman. Round has no other fortune but what I possess, poor child; and I must take care of it for him, since I only lend him my name.'

'And Raoul—what shall you do with him?'

'I leave him with you, my friend. War in Flanders has broken out; you shall take him with you there. I am afraid that remaining at Blois would be dangerous to his youthful mind. Take him, and teach him to be as brave and loyal as you are yourself.'

'Then,' replied D'Artagnan, 'though I shall not have you, Athos, at all events I shall have that dear fair-haired head by me; and though he is but a boy, yet, since your soul lives again in him, dear Athos, so I shall always fancy that you are near me, sustaining and encouraging me.'

The four friends embraced, with tears in their eyes.

Then they departed, without knowing whether they should ever see each other again.

D'Artagnan returned to the Rue Trignonette with Porthos, still possessed by the wish to find out who the man was whom he had killed. On arriving at the Hôtel de la Chevrette they found the Baron's equipages all ready, and Musquetau on his saddle.

'Come, D'Artagnan,' said Porthos, 'lod adieu to your sword, and come with me to Pierrefonds, to Bracieux, or to Du Valson. We will grow old together, and talk of our companions.'

'No!' replied D'Artagnan, 'dence take it, the campaign is going to begin; I wish to be there. I expect to get something by it.'

'What do you expect to get?'

'Why, I expect to be a Marshal of France!'

'Ha, ha!' cried Porthos, who was not completely taken in by D'Artagnan's gascogne.

'Ha!'

'Come, my brother, go with me,' added D'Artagnan, 'and I will make you a duke!'

'No,' answered Porthos, 'Mouzon has no desire to fight—besides, they have made a triumphal entrance for me into my barony, which will kill my neighbors with envy.'

'To that I can say nothing,' returned D'Artagnan, who knew the vanity of the new baron. 'Here, then, to our next merry meeting.'

'Adieu, dear Captain,' said Porthos, 'I shall always be happy to welcome you to my barony.'

'True—when the campaign is over,' replied the Gascon.
TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

The equipage of his honor is waiting," said Musqueton.

The two friends, after a cordial pressure of the hands, thereupon separated. D'Artagnan was standing at the door, looking after Porthos with a mournful gaze, when the baron, after walking scarcely more than twenty paces, returned—stood still—struck his forehead with his finger, and exclaimed:

"I recollect!"

"What?" inquired D'Artagnan.

"Who the beggar that I killed was."

"Ah! indeed! and who was he?"

"'Twas that low fellow, Bonacieux."

And Porthos, enchanted at having relieved his mind, rejoined Musqueton, and they disappeared round an angle of the street. D'Artagnan stood for an instant, mute, pensive, and motionless; then, as he went in, he saw the fair Madeleine, his hostess, standing on the threshold.

"Madeleine," said the Gascon, "give me your apartment on the first floor; now that I am a captain in the Royal Musketeers, I must make an appearance; nevertheless, still keep my room on the fifth story for me; one never knows what may happen."