was dressed as a citizen. The Guards of the cardinal, perceiving his youth and that he did not belong to the corps, invited him to retire before they attacked.'

'So you may plainly see, Tréville,' interrupted the king, 'it was they who attacked?'

'That is true, sire; there can be no more doubt on that head. They called upon him then to retire; but he answered that he was a Musketeer at heart, entirely devoted to your Majesty, and that therefore he would remain with Messieurs the Musketeers.'

'Brave young man!' murmured the king.

'Well, he did remain with them; and your Majesty has in him so firm a champion that it was he who gave Jussac the terrible sword thrust which has made the cardinal so angry.'

'He who wounded Jussac!' cried the king, 'he, a boy! Tréville, that's impossible!'

'It is as I have the honour to relate it to your Majesty.'

'Jussac, one of the first swordsmen in the kingdom?'

'Well, sire, for once he found his master.'

'I will see this young man, Tréville—I will see him; and if anything can be done—well, we will make it our business.'

'When will your Majesty deign to receive him?'

'Tomorrow, at midday, Tréville.'

'Shall I bring him alone?'

'No, bring me all four together. I wish to thank them all at once. Devoted men are so rare, Tréville, by the back staircase. It is useless to let the cardinal know.'

'Yes, sire.'

'You understand, Tréville—an edict is still an edict, it is forbidden to fight, after all.'

'But this encounter, sire, is quite out of the ordinary conditions of a duel. It is a brawl; and the proof is that there were five of the cardinal's Guardsmen against my three Musketeers and Monsieur d'Artagnan.'

'That is true,' said the king; 'but never mind, Tréville, come still by the back staircase.'

Tréville smiled; but as it was indeed something to have prevailed upon this child to rebel against his master, he saluted the king respectfully, and with this agreement, took leave of him.

That evening the three Musketeers were informed of the honour accorded them. As they had long been acquainted with the king, they were not much excited; but d'Artagnan, with his Gascon imagination, saw in it his future fortune, and passed the night in golden dreams. By eight o'clock in the morning he was at the apartment of Athos.

D'Artagnan found the Musketeer dressed and ready to go out. As the hour to wait upon the king was not till twelve, he had made a party with Porthos and Aramis to play a game at tennis in a tennis court situated near the stables of the Luxembourg. Athos invited d'Artagnan to follow them; and although ignorant of the game, which he had never played, he accepted, not knowing what to do with his time from nine o'clock in the morning, as it then scarcely was, till twelve.

The two Musketeers were already there, and were playing together. Athos, who was very expert in all bodily exercises, passed with d'Artagnan to the opposite side and challenged them; but at the first effort he made, although he played with his left hand, he found that his wound was yet too recent to allow of such exertion. D'Artagnan remained, therefore, alone; and as he declared he was too ignorant of the game to play it regularly they only continued giving balls to one another without counting. But one of these balls, launched by Porthos' herculean hand, passed so close to d'Artagnan's face that he thought that if, instead of passing near, it had hit him, his audience would have been probably lost, as it would have been impossible for him to present himself before the king. Now, as upon this audience, in his Gascon imagination, depended his future life, he saluted Aramis and Porthos politely, declaring that he would not resume the game until he should be prepared to play with them on more equal terms, and went and took his place near the cord and in the gallery.

Unfortunately for d'Artagnan, among the spectators was one of his Eminence's Guardsmen, who, still irritated by the defeat of his companions, which had happened only the day before, had promised himself to seize the first opportunity of avenging it. He believed this opportunity was now come and addressed his neighbour: 'It is not astonishing that

that young man should be afraid of a ball, for he is doubtless a Musketeer apprentice.'

D'Artagnan turned round as if a serpent had stung him, and fixed his eyes intensely upon the Guardsman who had just made this insolent speech.

'*Pardieu*,' resumed the latter, twisting his moustache, 'look at me as long as you like, my little gentleman! I have said what I have said.'

'And as since that which you have said is too clear to require any explanation,' replied d'Artagnan, in a low voice, 'I beg you to follow me.'

'And when?' asked the Guardsman, with the same jeering air.

'At once, if you please.'

'And you know who I am, without doubt?'

'I? I am completely ignorant; nor does it much disquiet me.'

'You're in the wrong there; for if you knew my name, perhaps you would not be so pressing.'

'What is your name?'

'Bernajoux, at your service.'

'Well, then, Monsieur Bernajoux,' said d'Artagnan, tranquilly, 'I will wait for you at the door.'

'Go, monsieur, I will follow you.'

'Do not hurry yourself, monsieur, lest it be observed that we go out together. You must be aware that for our undertaking, company would be in the way.'

'That's true,' said the Guardsman, astonished that his name had not produced more effect upon the young man.

Indeed, the name of Bernajoux was known to all the world, d'Artagnan alone excepted, perhaps; for it was one of those which figured most frequently in the daily brawls which all the edicts of the cardinal could not repress.

Porthos and Aramis were so engaged with their game, and Athos was watching them with so much attention, that they did not even perceive their young companion go out, who, as he had told the Guardsman of his Eminence, stopped outside the door. An instant after, the Guardsman descended in his turn. As d'Artagnan had no time to lose, on account of the audience of the king, which was fixed for midday, he cast his eyes around, and seeing that the street was empty, said to his adversary, 'My

'Yes, you are right, Tréville, you are right!'

'Then, upon seeing my Musketeers they changed their minds, and forgot their private hatred for partisan hatred; for your Majesty cannot be ignorant that the Musketeers, who belong to the king and nobody but the king, are the natural enemies of the Guardsmen, who belong to the cardinal.'

'Yes, Tréville, yes,' said the king, in a melancholy tone; 'and it is very sad, believe me, to see thus two parties in France, two heads to royalty. But all this will come to an end, Tréville, will come to an end. You say, then, that the Guardsmen sought a quarrel with the Musketeers?'

'I say that it is probable that things have fallen out so, but I will not swear to it, sire. You know how difficult it is to discover the truth; and unless a man be endowed with that admirable instinct which causes Louis XIII to be named the Just— '

'You are right, Tréville; but they were not alone, your Musketeers. They had a youth with them?'

'Yes, sire, and one wounded man; so that three of the king's Musketeers—one of whom was wounded—and a youth not only maintained their ground against five of the most terrible of the cardinal's Guardsmen, but absolutely brought four of them to earth.'

'Why, this is a victory!' cried the king, all radiant, 'a complete victory!'

'Yes, sire; as complete as that of the Bridge of Ce.'

'Four men, one of them wounded, and a youth, say you?'

'One hardly a young man; but who, however, behaved himself so admirably on this occasion that I will take the liberty of recommending him to your Majesty.'

'How does he call himself?'

'D'Artagnan, sire; he is the son of one of my oldest friends—the son of a man who served under the king your father, of glorious memory, in the civil war.'

'And you say this young man behaved himself well? Tell me how, Tréville—you know how I delight in accounts of war and fighting.'

And Louis XIII twisted his moustache proudly, placing his hand upon his hip.

'Sire,' resumed Tréville, 'as I told you, Monsieur d'Artagnan is little more than a boy; and as he has not the honour of being a Musketeer, he

fancy that I am going to take you on your bare word. I am called Louis the Just, Monsieur de Tréville, and by and by, by and by we will see.'

'Ah, sire; it is because I confide in that justice that I shall wait patiently and quietly the good pleasure of your Majesty.'

'Wait, then, monsieur, wait,' said the king; 'I will not detain you long.'

In fact, fortune changed; and as the king began to lose what he had won, he was not sorry to find an excuse for playing Charlemagne—if we may use a gaming phrase of whose origin we confess our ignorance. The king therefore arose a minute after, and putting the money which lay before him into his pocket, the major part of which arose from his winnings, 'La Vieuville,' said he, 'take my place; I must speak to Monsieur de Tréville on an affair of importance. Ah, I had eighty louis before me; put down the same sum, so that they who have lost may have nothing to complain of. Justice before everything.'

Then turning toward M. de Tréville and walking with him toward the embrasure of a window, 'Well, monsieur,' continued he, 'you say it is his Eminence's Guards who have sought a quarrel with your Musketeers?'

'Yes, sire, as they always do.'

'And how did the thing happen? Let us see, for you know, my dear Captain, a judge must hear both sides.'

'Good Lord! In the most simple and natural manner possible. Three of my best soldiers, whom your Majesty knows by name, and whose devotedness you have more than once appreciated, and who have, I dare affirm to the king, his service much at heart—three of my best soldiers, I say, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, had made a party of pleasure with a young fellow from Gascony, whom I had introduced to them the same morning. The party was to take place at St. Germain, I believe, and they had appointed to meet at the Carmes-Deschaux, when they were disturbed by de Jussac, Cahusac, Bicarat, and two other Guardsmen, who certainly did not go there in such a numerous company without some ill intention against the edicts.'

'Ah, ah! You incline me to think so,' said the king. 'There is no doubt they went thither to fight themselves.'

'I do not accuse them, sire; but I leave your Majesty to judge what five armed men could possibly be going to do in such a deserted place as the neighbourhood of the Convent des Carmes.'

faith! It is fortunate for you, although your name is Bernajoux, to have only to deal with an apprentice Musketeer. Never mind; be content, I will do my best. On guard!'

'But,' said he whom d'Artagnan thus provoked, 'it appears to me that this place is badly chosen, and that we should be better behind the Abbey St. Germain or in the Pré-aux-Clercs.'

'What you say is full of sense,' replied d'Artagnan; 'but unfortunately I have very little time to spare, having an appointment at twelve precisely. On guard, then, monsieur, on guard!'

Bernajoux was not a man to have such a compliment paid to him twice. In an instant his sword glittered in his hand, and he sprang upon his adversary, whom, thanks to his great youthfulness, he hoped to intimidate.

But d'Artagnan had on the preceding day served his apprenticeship. Fresh sharpened by his victory, full of hopes of future favour, he was resolved not to recoil a step. So the two swords were crossed close to the hilts, and as d'Artagnan stood firm, it was his adversary who made the retreating step; but d'Artagnan seized the moment at which, in this movement, the sword of Bernajoux deviated from the line. He freed his weapon, made a lunge, and touched his adversary on the shoulder. D'Artagnan immediately made a step backward and raised his sword; but Bernajoux cried out that it was nothing, and rushing blindly upon him, absolutely spitted himself upon d'Artagnan's sword. As, however, he did not fall, as he did not declare himself conquered, but only broke away toward the hôtel of M. de la Trémouille, in whose service he had a relative, d'Artagnan was ignorant of the seriousness of the last wound his adversary had received, and pressing him warmly, without doubt would soon have completed his work with a third blow, when the noise which arose from the street being heard in the tennis court, two of the friends of the Guardsman, who had seen him go out after exchanging some words with d'Artagnan, rushed, sword in hand, from the court, and fell upon the conqueror. But Athos, Porthos, and Aramis quickly appeared in their turn, and the moment the two Guardsmen attacked their young companion, drove them back. Bernajoux now fell, and as the Guardsmen were only two against four, they began to cry, 'To the rescue! The Hôtel de la Trémouille!' At these cries, all who were in the hôtel rushed out and

fell upon the four companions, who on their side cried aloud, 'To the rescue, Musketeers!'

This cry was generally heeded; for the Musketeers were known to be enemies of the cardinal, and were beloved on account of the hatred they bore to his Eminence. Thus the soldiers of other companies than those which belonged to the Red Duke, as Aramis had called him, often took part with the king's Musketeers in these quarrels. Of three Guardsmen of the company of M. Dessessart who were passing, two came to the assistance of the four companions, while the other ran toward the hôtel of M. de Tréville, crying, 'To the rescue, Musketeers! To the rescue!' As usual, this hôtel was full of soldiers of this company, who hastened to the succour of their comrades. The *mêlée* became general, but strength was on the side of the Musketeers. The cardinal's Guards and M. de la Trémouille's people retreated into the hôtel, the doors of which they closed just in time to prevent their enemies from entering with them. As to the wounded man, he had been taken in at once, and, as we have said, in a very bad state.

Excitement was at its height among the Musketeers and their allies, and they even began to deliberate whether they should not set fire to the hôtel to punish the insolence of M. de la Trémouille's domestics in daring to make a *sortie* upon the king's Musketeers. The proposition had been made, and received with enthusiasm, when fortunately eleven o'clock struck. D'Artagnan and his companions remembered their audience, and as they would very much have regretted that such an opportunity should be lost, they succeeded in calming their friends, who contented themselves with hurling some paving stones against the gates; but the gates were too strong. They soon tired of the sport. Besides, those who must be considered the leaders of the enterprise had quit the group and were making their way toward the hôtel of M. de Tréville, who was waiting for them, already informed of this fresh disturbance.

'Quick to the Louvre,' said he, 'to the Louvre without losing an instant, and let us endeavour to see the king before he is prejudiced by the cardinal. We will describe the thing to him as a consequence of the affair of yesterday, and the two will pass off together.'

M. de Tréville, accompanied by the four young fellows, directed his course toward the Louvre; but to the great astonishment of the captain

Chapter VI

His Majesty King Louis XIII

THIS affair made a great noise. M. de Tréville scolded his Musketeers in public, and congratulated them in private; but as no time was to be lost in gaining the king, M. de Tréville hastened to report himself at the Louvre. It was already too late. The king was closeted with the cardinal, and M. de Tréville was informed that the king was busy and could not receive him at that moment. In the evening M. de Tréville attended the king's gaming table. The king was winning; and as he was very avaricious, he was in an excellent humour. Perceiving M. de Tréville at a distance—

'Come here, Monsieur Captain,' said he, 'come here, that I may growl at you. Do you know that his Eminence has been making fresh complaints against your Musketeers, and that with so much emotion, that this evening his Eminence is indisposed? Ah, these Musketeers of yours are very devils—fellows to be hanged.'

'No, sire,' replied Tréville, who saw at the first glance how things would go, 'on the contrary, they are good creatures, as meek as lambs, and have but one desire, I'll be their warranty. And that is that their swords may never leave their scabbards but in your majesty's service. But what are they to do? The Guards of Monsieur the Cardinal are forever seeking quarrels with them, and for the honour of the corps even, the poor young men are obliged to defend themselves.'

'Listen to Monsieur de Tréville,' said the king; 'listen to him! Would not one say he was speaking of a religious community? In truth, my dear Captain, I have a great mind to take away your commission and give it to Mademoiselle de Chemerault, to whom I promised an abbey. But don't

of the Musketeers, he was informed that the king had gone stag hunting in the forest of St. Germain. M. de Tréville required this intelligence to be repeated to him twice, and each time his companions saw his brow become darker.

'Had his Majesty,' asked he, 'any intention of holding this hunting party yesterday?'

'No, your Excellency,' replied the valet de chambre, 'the Master of the Hounds came this morning to inform him that he had marked down a stag. At first the king answered that he would not go; but he could not resist his love of sport, and set out after dinner.'

'And the king has seen the cardinal?' asked M. de Tréville.

'In all probability he has,' replied the valet, 'for I saw the horses harnessed to his Eminence's carriage this morning, and when I asked where he was going, they told me, "'To St. Germain."'

'He is beforehand with us,' said M. de Tréville. 'Gentlemen, I will see the king this evening; but as to you, I do not advise you to risk doing so.'

This advice was too reasonable, and moreover came from a man who knew the king too well, to allow the four young men to dispute it. M. de Tréville recommended everyone to return home and wait for news.

On entering his hôtel, M. de Tréville thought it best to be first in making the complaint. He sent one of his servants to M. de la Trémouille with a letter in which he begged of him to eject the cardinal's Guardsmen from his house, and to reprimand his people for their audacity in making *sortie* against the king's Musketeers. But M. de la Trémouille—already prejudiced by his esquire, whose relative, as we already know, Bernajoux was—replied that it was neither for M. de Tréville nor the Musketeers to complain, but, on the contrary, for him, whose people the Musketeers had assaulted and whose hôtel they had endeavoured to burn. Now, as the debate between these two nobles might last a long time, each becoming, naturally, more firm in his own opinion, M. de Tréville thought of an expedient which might terminate it quietly. This was to go himself to M. de la Trémouille.

He repaired, therefore, immediately to his hôtel, and caused himself to be announced.

The two nobles saluted each other politely, for if no friendship existed between them, there was at least esteem. Both were men of courage and

honour; and as M. de la Trémouille—a Protestant, and seeing the king seldom—was of no party, he did not, in general, carry any bias into his social relations. This time, however, his address, although polite, was cooler than usual.

'Monsieur,' said M. de Tréville, 'we fancy that we have each cause to complain of the other, and I am come to endeavour to clear up this affair.'

'I have no objection,' replied M. de la Trémouille, 'but I warn you that I am well informed, and all the fault is with your Musketeers.'

'You are too just and reasonable a man, monsieur!' said Tréville, 'not to accept the proposal I am about to make to you.'

'Make it, monsieur, I listen.'

'How is Monsieur Bernajoux, your esquire's relative?'

'Why, monsieur, very ill indeed! In addition to the sword thrust in his arm, which is not dangerous, he has received another right through his lungs, of which the doctor says bad things.'

'But has the wounded man retained his senses?'

'Perfectly.'

'Does he talk?'

'With difficulty, but he can speak.'

'Well, monsieur, let us go to him. Let us adjure him, in the name of the God before whom he must perhaps appear, to speak the truth. I will take him for judge in his own cause, monsieur, and will believe what he will say.'

M. de la Trémouille reflected for an instant; then as it was difficult to suggest a more reasonable proposal, he agreed to it.

Both descended to the chamber in which the wounded man lay. The latter, on seeing these two noble lords who came to visit him, endeavoured to raise himself up in his bed; but he was too weak, and exhausted by the effort, he fell back again almost senseless.

M. de la Trémouille approached him, and made him inhale some salts, which recalled him to life. Then M. de Tréville, unwilling that it should be thought that he had influenced the wounded man, requested M. de la Trémouille to interrogate him himself.

That happened which M. de Tréville had foreseen. Placed between life and death, as Bernajoux was, he had no idea for a moment of concealing

triumphal march. The heart of d'Artagnan swam in delirium; he marched between Athos and Porthos, pressing them tenderly.

'If I am not yet a Musketeer,' said he to his new friends, as he passed through the gateway of M. de Tréville's hôtel, 'at least I have entered upon my apprenticeship, haven't I?'

D'Artagnan perceived that it would be disobliging Athos not to leave him alone; and in a few minutes Cahusac fell, with a sword thrust through his throat.

At the same instant Aramis placed his sword point on the breast of his fallen enemy, and forced him to ask for mercy.

There only then remained Porthos and Bicarat. Porthos made a thousand flourishes, asking Bicarat what o'clock it could be, and offering him his compliments upon his brother's having just obtained a company in the regiment of Navarre; but, jest as he might, he gained nothing. Bicarat was one of those iron men who never fell dead.

Nevertheless, it was necessary to finish. The watch might come up and take all the combatants, wounded or not, royalists or cardinalists. Athos, Aramis, and d'Artagnan surrounded Bicarat, and required him to surrender. Though alone against all and with a wound in his thigh, Bicarat wished to hold out; but Jussac, who had risen upon his elbow, cried out to him to yield. Bicarat was a Gascon, as d'Artagnan was; he turned a deaf ear, and contented himself with laughing, and between two parries finding time to point to a spot of earth with his sword, 'Here,' cried he, parodying a verse of the Bible, 'here will Bicarat die; for I only am left, and they seek my life.'

'But there are four against you; leave off, I command you.'

'Ah, if you command me, that's another thing,' said Bicarat. 'As you are my commander, it is my duty to obey.' And springing backward, he broke his sword across his knee to avoid the necessity of surrendering it, threw the pieces over the convent wall, and crossed his arms, whistling a cardinalist air.

Bravery is always respected, even in an enemy. The Musketeers saluted Bicarat with their swords, and returned them to their sheaths. D'Artagnan did the same. Then, assisted by Bicarat, the only one left standing, they bore Jussac, Cahusac, and one of Aramis's adversaries who was only wounded, under the porch of the convent. The fourth, as we have said, was dead. They then rang the bell, and carrying away four swords out of five, they took their road, intoxicated with joy, toward the hôtel of M. de Tréville.

They walked arm in arm, occupying the whole width of the street and taking in every Musketeer they met, so that in the end it became a

the truth; and he described to the two nobles the affair exactly as it had passed.

This was all that M. de Tréville wanted. He wished Bernajoux a speedy convalescence, took leave of M. de la Trémouille, returned to his hôtel, and immediately sent word to the four friends that he awaited their company at dinner.

M. de Tréville entertained good company, wholly anticardinalist, though. It may easily be understood, therefore, that the conversation during the whole of dinner turned upon the two checks that his Eminence's Guardsmen had received. Now, as d'Artagnan had been the hero of these two fights, it was upon him that all the felicitations fell, which Athos, Porthos, and Aramis abandoned to him, not only as good comrades, but as men who had so often had their turn that they could very well afford him his.

Toward six o'clock M. de Tréville announced that it was time to go to the Louvre; but as the hour of audience granted by his Majesty was past, instead of claiming the *entrée* by the back stairs, he placed himself with the four young men in the antechamber. The king had not yet returned from hunting. Our young men had been waiting about half an hour, amid a crowd of courtiers, when all the doors were thrown open, and his Majesty was announced.

At his announcement d'Artagnan felt himself tremble to the very marrow of his bones. The coming instant would in all probability decide the rest of his life. His eyes therefore were fixed in a sort of agony upon the door through which the king must enter.

Louis XIII appeared, walking fast. He was in hunting costume covered with dust, wearing large boots, and holding a whip in his hand. At the first glance, d'Artagnan judged that the mind of the king was stormy.

This disposition, visible as it was in his Majesty, did not prevent the courtiers from ranging themselves along his pathway. In royal antechambers it is worth more to be viewed with an angry eye than not to be seen at all. The three Musketeers therefore did not hesitate to make a step forward. D'Artagnan on the contrary remained concealed behind them; but although the king knew Athos, Porthos, and Aramis personally, he passed before them without speaking or looking—indeed, as if he had never seen them before. As for M. de Tréville, when the eyes of the king fell upon him, he sustained the look with so much firmness that it was the

king who dropped his eyes; after which his Majesty, grumbling, entered his apartment.

'Matters go but badly,' said Athos, smiling; 'and we shall not be made Chevaliers of the Order this time.'

'Wait here ten minutes,' said M. de Tréville; 'and if at the expiration of ten minutes you do not see me come out, return to my hôtel, for it will be useless for you to wait for me longer.'

The four young men waited ten minutes, a quarter of an hour, twenty minutes; and seeing that M. de Tréville did not return, went away very uneasy as to what was going to happen.

M. de Tréville entered the king's cabinet boldly, and found his Majesty in a very ill humour, seated on an armchair, beating his boot with the handle of his whip. This, however, did not prevent his asking, with the greatest coolness, after his Majesty's health.

'Bad, monsieur, bad!' replied the king; 'I am bored.'

This was, in fact, the worst complaint of Louis XIII, who would sometimes take one of his courtiers to a window and say, 'Monsieur So-and-so, let us weary ourselves together.'

'How! Your Majesty is bored? Have you not enjoyed the pleasures of the chase today?'

'A fine pleasure, indeed, monsieur! Upon my soul, everything degenerates; and I don't know whether it is the game which leaves no scent, or the dogs that have no noses. We started a stag of ten branches. We chased him for six hours, and when he was near being taken—when St. Simon was already putting his horn to his mouth to sound the *halali*—crack, all the pack takes the wrong scent and sets off after a two-year-older. I shall be obliged to give up hunting, as I have given up hawking. Ah, I am an unfortunate king, Monsieur de Tréville! I had but one gerfalcon, and he died day before yesterday.'

'Indeed, sire, I wholly comprehend your disappointment. The misfortune is great; but I think you have still a good number of falcons, sparrow hawks, and tiercels.'

'And not a man to instruct them. Falconers are declining. I know no one but myself who is acquainted with the noble art of venery. After me it will all be over, and people will hunt with gins, snares, and traps. If I had but the time to train pupils! But there is the cardinal always at hand,

D'Artagnan then cast an anxious and rapid glance over the field of battle.

Aramis had killed one of his adversaries, but the other pressed him warmly. Nevertheless, Aramis was in a good situation, and able to defend himself.

Bicarat and Porthos had just made counterhits. Porthos had received a thrust through his arm, and Bicarat one through his thigh. But neither of these two wounds was serious, and they only fought more earnestly.

Athos, wounded anew by Cahusac, became evidently paler, but did not give way a foot. He only changed his sword hand, and fought with his left hand.

According to the laws of duelling at that period, d'Artagnan was at liberty to assist whom he pleased. While he was endeavouring to find out which of his companions stood in greatest need, he caught a glance from Athos. The glance was of sublime eloquence. Athos would have died rather than appeal for help; but he could look, and with that look ask assistance. D'Artagnan interpreted it; with a terrible bound he sprang to the side of Cahusac, crying, 'To me, Monsieur Guardsman; I will slay you!'

Cahusac turned. It was time; for Athos, whose great courage alone supported him, sank upon his knee.

'S'blood!' cried he to d'Artagnan, 'do not kill him, young man, I beg of you. I have an old affair to settle with him when I am cured and sound again. Disarm him only—make sure of his sword. That's it! Very well done!'

The exclamation was drawn from Athos by seeing the sword of Cahusac fly twenty paces from him. D'Artagnan and Cahusac sprang forward at the same instant, the one to recover, the other to obtain, the sword; but d'Artagnan, being the more active, reached it first and placed his foot upon it.

Cahusac immediately ran to the Guardsman whom Aramis had killed, seized his rapier, and returned toward d'Artagnan; but on his way he met Athos, who during his relief which d'Artagnan had procured him had recovered his breath, and who, for fear that d'Artagnan would kill his enemy, wished to resume the fight.