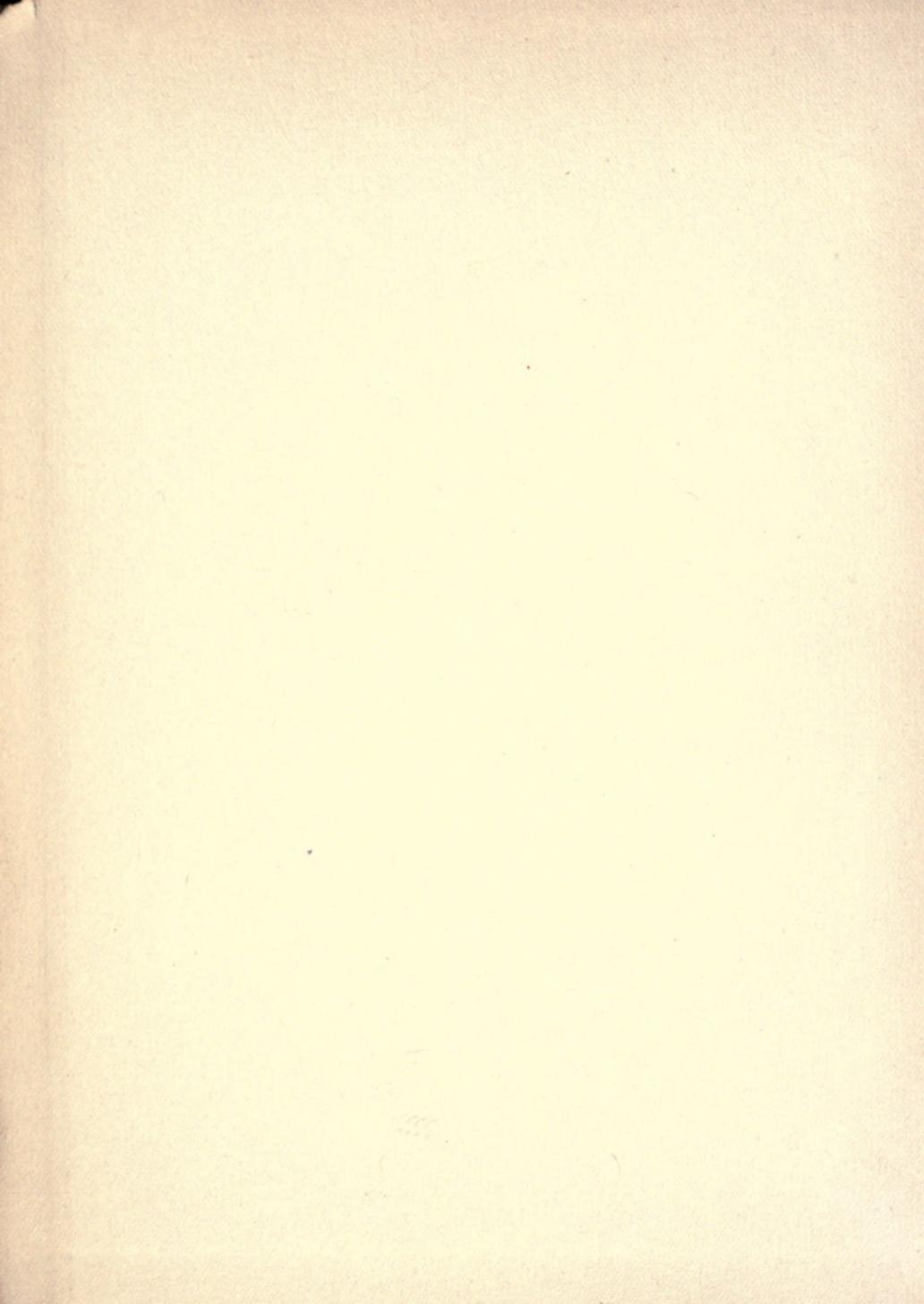
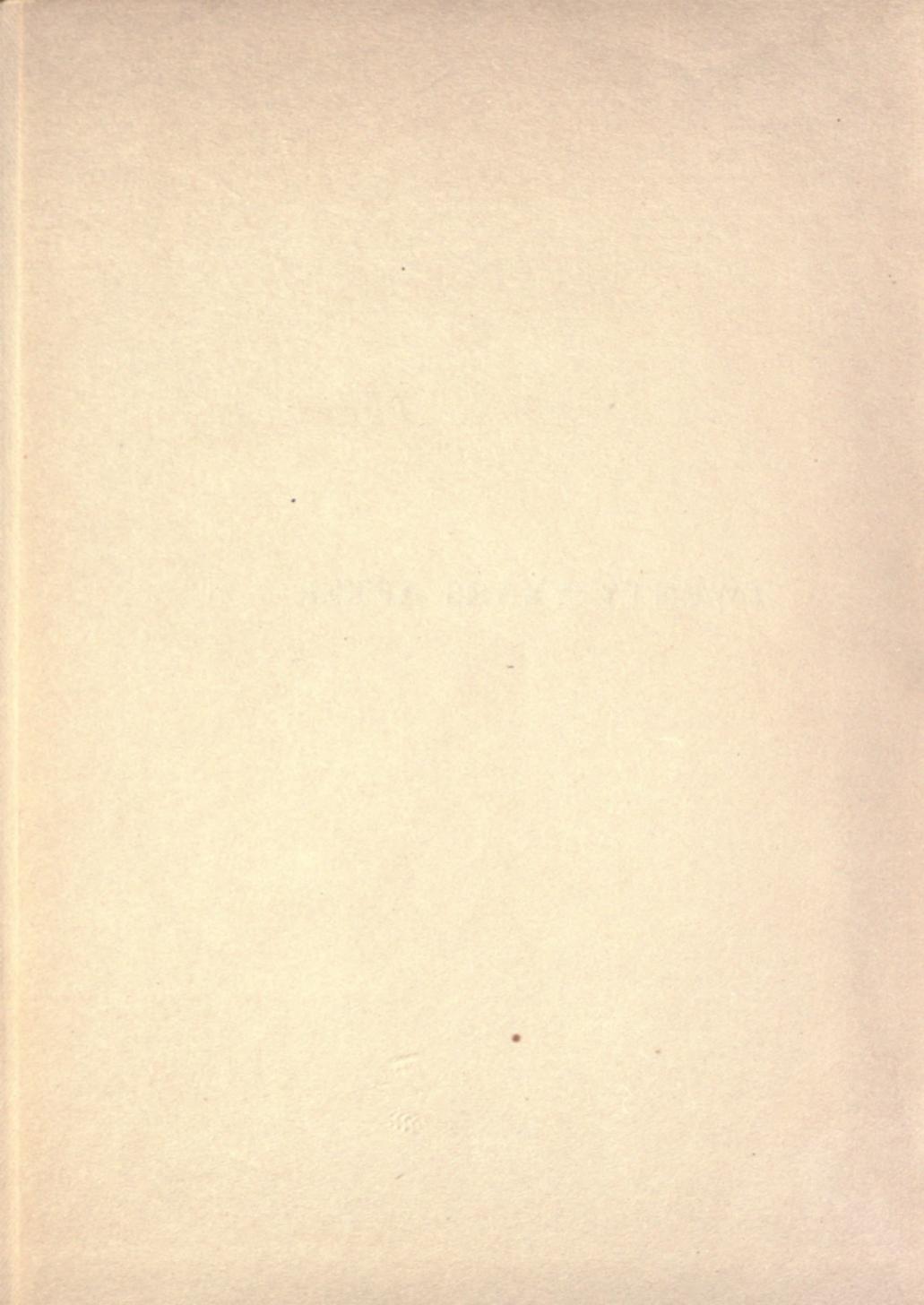


Mrs. C. L. Anderson



TWENTY YEARS AFTER





"ARAMIS," HE SAID, "BREAK YOUR SWORD IN TWO"

Dumas, Vol. Thirteen

THE WORKS OF
ALEXANDRE DUMAS

IN THIRTY VOLUMES



TWENTY YEARS
AFTER



ILLUSTRATED WITH DRAWINGS ON WOOD BY
EMINENT FRENCH AND AMERICAN ARTISTS



NEW YORK
P. F. COLLIER AND SON
MCMII

Stack
Annex
PQ
2223
A1
1902
v. 13

TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE SHADE OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU.

IN ONE of the rooms of the Palais Royal, in old times styled the Palais Cardinal, there sat a man in deep reverie, his head supported on his hands, leaning over a table, the corners of which were of silver-gilt, and which was covered with letters and papers. Behind this figure was a vast fireplace glowing with heat; large masses of wood blazed and crackled on the gilded andirons, and the flames shone upon the superb habiliments of the solitary inhabitant of the chamber, illumined in the foreground by a candelabra filled with wax-lights.

Any one who had happened at that moment to contemplate that red simar—the gorgeous robe of office—and the rich lace—or who gazed upon that pale brow, bent in anxious meditation, might, in the solitude of that apartment, combined with the silence of the antechambers, and the measured paces of the guards upon the landing-place, have fancied that the shade of Cardinal Richelieu still lingered in his accustomed haunt.

But it was, alas! only the ghost of former greatness. France enfeebled, the authority of her sovereign rejected, her nobles returning to their former turbulence and insolence, her enemies within her frontiers—all proved that Richelieu was no longer in existence.

In truth, that the red simar which occupied his wonted place was his no longer, was still more strikingly obvious from the isolation which seemed, as we have observed, more appropriate to a phantom than to a living creature—from the corridors, deserted by courtiers, and courts crowded with guards—from that spirit of bitter ridicule, which, arising from the streets below, penetrated through the very windows of that

room, which resounded with the murmurs of a whole city leagued against the minister, as well as from the distant and incessant sounds of guns firing—let off, happily, without other end or aim, except to show to the guards, the Swiss troops, and the military who surrounded the Palais Royal,* that the people were possessed of arms.

The shade of Richelieu was Mazarin. Now Mazarin was alone and defenseless—as he well knew.

“Foreigner!” he ejaculated, “Italian! that is their mean word of reproach—the watchword with which they assassinated, hanged, and made away with Concini, and—if I gave them their way—they would assassinate, hang, and make away with me in the same manner, although they have nothing to complain of, except a tax or two now and then. Idiots! ignorant of their real enemies, they do not perceive that it is not the Italian who speaks French badly, but those who can say fine things to them in the purest Parisian accent who are their real foes.

“Yes, yes,” Mazarin continued, while his wonted smile, full of subtlety, gave a strange expression to his pale lips; “yes, these noises prove to me, indeed, that the destiny of favorites is precarious; but ye should know that I am no ordinary favorite. No! the Earl of Essex, ’tis true, wore a splendid ring, set with diamonds, given him by his royal mistress; while I—I have nothing but a simple circlet of gold with a cypher on it and a date; but that ring has been blessed in the chapel of the Palais Royal,† so they will never ruin me as they would do; and while they shout, ‘Down with Mazarin!’ I, unknown and unperceived by them, incite them to cry out, ‘Long live the Duke de Beaufort’ one day; another, ‘Long live the Prince de Condé;’ and again, ‘Long live the Parliament!’” And, at this word, the smile on the the cardinal’s lips assumed an expression of hatred, of which his mild countenance seemed incapable. “The parliament! We shall soon see how to dispose,” he continued, “of the parliament! Both Orleans and Montargis are ours. It will be a work of time! but those who have begun by crying out, ‘Down with Mazarin!’ will finish by shouting out

* The Palais Royal ceased to be called the Palais Cardinal before this epoch.

† It is said that Mazarin, who, though a cardinal, had not taken such vows as to prevent it, was secretly married to Anne of Austria.—*La Porte's Memoirs*.

Down with all the people I have mentioned, each in his turn.

“Richelieu, whom they hated during his lifetime, and whom they now praise after his death, was even less popular than I am. Often was he driven away—oftener still had he a dread of being sent away. The queen will never banish me; and even were I obliged to yield to the populace, she would yield with me; if I fly, she will fly; and then we shall see how the rebels will get on without either king or queen.

“Oh, were I not a foreigner! were I but a Frenchman! would I were even merely a gentleman!”

The position of the cardinal was, indeed, critical, and several recent events added to his difficulties. Discontent had long pervaded the lower ranks of society in France. Crushed and impoverished by taxation—imposed by Mazarin, whose avarice impelled him to grind them down to the very dust—the people, as the Advocate-General Talon described it, had nothing left to them except their souls; and as those could not be sold by auction, they began to murmur. Patience had in vain been recommended to them, by reports of brilliant victories gained by France; laurels, however, were not meat and drink; and the people had for some time been in a state of discontent.

Had this been all, it might not, perhaps, have greatly signified; for, when the lower classes alone complained, the court of France, separated as it was from the poor by the intervening classes of the gentry and the *bourgeoisie*, seldom listened to their voice; but, unluckily, Mazarin had had the imprudence to attack the magistrates, and had sold no less than ten appointments in the Court of Requests, at a high price; and, as the officers of that court paid very dear for their places, and as the addition of twelve new colleagues would necessarily lower the value of each place, the old functionaries formed an union among themselves, and, enraged, swore on the Bible not to allow this addition to their number, but to resist all the persecutions which might ensue; and should any one of them chance to forfeit his post by this resistance, to combine to indemnify him for his loss.

Now the following occurrences had taken place between the two contending parties.

On the seventh of January, between seven and eight hundred tradesmen had assembled in Paris to discuss a new tax which was to be levied on house property. They deputed ten of their number to wait upon the Duke of Orleans, who, according to custom, affected popularity. The duke received

room, which resounded with the murmurs of a whole city leagued against the minister, as well as from the distant and incessant sounds of guns firing—let off, happily, without other end or aim, except to show to the guards, the Swiss troops, and the military who surrounded the Palais Royal,* that the people were possessed of arms.

The shade of Richelieu was Mazarin. Now Mazarin was alone and defenseless—as he well knew.

“Foreigner!” he ejaculated, “Italian! that is their mean word of reproach—the watchword with which they assassinated, hanged, and made away with Concini, and—if I gave them their way—they would assassinate, hang, and make away with me in the same manner, although they have nothing to complain of, except a tax or two now and then. Idiots! ignorant of their real enemies, they do not perceive that it is not the Italian who speaks French badly, but those who can say fine things to them in the purest Parisian accent who are their real foes.

“Yes, yes,” Mazarin continued, while his wonted smile, full of subtlety, gave a strange expression to his pale lips; “yes, these noises prove to me, indeed, that the destiny of favorites is precarious; but ye should know that I am no ordinary favorite. No! the Earl of Essex, ’tis true, wore a splendid ring, set with diamonds, given him by his royal mistress; while I—I have nothing but a simple circlet of gold with a cypher on it and a date; but that ring has been blessed in the chapel of the Palais Royal,† so they will never ruin me as they would do; and while they shout, ‘Down with Mazarin!’ I, unknown and unperceived by them, incite them to cry out, ‘Long live the Duke de Beaufort’ one day; another, ‘Long live the Prince de Condé;’ and again, ‘Long live the Parliament!’” And, at this word, the smile on the the cardinal’s lips assumed an expression of hatred, of which his mild countenance seemed incapable. “The parliament! We shall soon see how to dispose,” he continued, “of the parliament! Both Orleans and Montargis are ours. It will be a work of time! but those who have begun by crying out, ‘Down with Mazarin!’ will finish by shouting out

* The Palais Royal ceased to be called the Palais Cardinal before this epoch.

† It is said that Mazarin, who, though a cardinal, had not taken such vows as to prevent it, was secretly married to Anne of Austria.—*La Porte's Memoirs.*

Down with all the people I have mentioned, each in his turn.

“Richelieu, whom they hated during his lifetime, and whom they now praise after his death, was even less popular than I am. Often was he driven away—oftener still had he a dread of being sent away. The queen will never banish me; and even were I obliged to yield to the populace, she would yield with me; if I fly, she will fly; and then we shall see how the rebels will get on without either king or queen.

“Oh, were I not a foreigner! were I but a Frenchman! would I were even merely a gentleman!”

The position of the cardinal was, indeed, critical, and several recent events added to his difficulties. Discontent had long pervaded the lower ranks of society in France. Crushed and impoverished by taxation—imposed by Mazarin, whose avarice impelled him to grind them down to the very dust—the people, as the Advocate-General Talon described it, had nothing left to them except their souls; and as those could not be sold by auction, they began to murmur. Patience had in vain been recommended to them, by reports of brilliant victories gained by France; laurels, however, were not meat and drink; and the people had for some time been in a state of discontent.

Had this been all, it might not, perhaps, have greatly signified; for, when the lower classes alone complained, the court of France, separated as it was from the poor by the intervening classes of the gentry and the *bourgeoisie*, seldom listened to their voice; but, unluckily, Mazarin had had the imprudence to attack the magistrates, and had sold no less than ten appointments in the Court of Requests, at a high price; and, as the officers of that court paid very dear for their places, and as the addition of twelve new colleagues would necessarily lower the value of each place, the old functionaries formed an union among themselves, and, enraged, swore on the Bible not to allow this addition to their number, but to resist all the persecutions which might ensue; and should any one of them chance to forfeit his post by this resistance, to combine to indemnify him for his loss.

Now the following occurrences had taken place between the two contending parties.

On the seventh of January, between seven and eight hundred tradesmen had assembled in Paris to discuss a new tax which was to be levied on house property. They deputed ten of their number to wait upon the Duke of Orleans, who, according to custom, affected popularity. The duke received

them, and they informed him that they were resolved not to pay this tax, even if they were obliged to defend themselves against the collectors of it by force of arms. They were listened to with great politeness by the duke, who held out hopes of more moderate measures; promised them to speak in their behalf to the queen; and dismissed them with the ordinary expression of royalty—"We shall see what we can do."

Two days afterward these same magistrates appeared before the cardinal, and the spokesman among them addressed Mazarin with so much fearlessness and determination, that the minister was astounded, and sent the deputation away with the same answer as it had received from the Duke of Orleans—that he would see what could be done: and, in accordance with that intention, a council of state was assembled, and the superintendent of finance was summoned.

This man, named Emery, was the object of popular detestation—in the first place, because he *was* superintendent of finance, and every superintendent of finance deserved to be hated; in the second place, because he rather deserved the odium which he had incurred.

He was the son of a banker at Lyons, named Particelli, who, after becoming a bankrupt, chose to change his name to Emery; and Cardinal Richelieu, having discovered in young Emery great financial aptitude, had introduced him with a strong recommendation to Louis XIII. under his assumed name, in order that he might be appointed to the post which he subsequently held.

"You surprise me!" exclaimed the monarch. "I am rejoiced to hear you speak of Monsieur d'Emery as calculated for a post which requires a man of probity. I was really afraid that you were going to force that villain Particelli upon me."

"Sire," replied Richelieu, "rest assured that Particelli—the man to whom your majesty refers—has been hanged."

"Ah, so much the better!" exclaimed the king. "It is not for nothing that I am styled Louis the Just"—and he signed Emery's appointment.

This was the same Emery who had become eventually superintendent of finance.

He was sent for by the ministers, and he came before them pale and trembling, declaring that his son had very nearly been assassinated the day before near the palace. The mob had insulted him on account of the ostentatious luxury of his wife, whose house was hung with red velvet, edged with gold fringe. This lady was the daughter of Nicholas de Camus,

who had arrived in Paris with twenty francs in his pocket—had become secretary of state—and had accumulated wealth enough to divide nine millions of francs among his children, and to keep forty thousand for himself.

The fact was, that Emery's son had run a great chance of being suffocated; one of the rioters having proposed to squeeze him until he gave up all the gold he had swallowed. Nothing, therefore, was settled that day, as Emery's head was not steady enough for business after such an occurrence.

Other disturbances had followed this outrage.

Matthew Mole, chief president of the parliament, and esteemed equal in courage to Condé and De Beaufort, had been insulted and threatened. The queen in going to mass at Notre Dame, as she always did on Saturdays, was followed by more than two hundred women, demanding justice. These poor creatures had no bad intentions. They wished only to be allowed to fall on their knees before their sovereign, and that they might move her to compassion; but they were prevented by the royal guard, and the queen proceeded on her way, haughtily disdainful of their entreaties.

At length parliament was convoked—the authority of the king was to be maintained.

One day—it was the morning of that when my story begins—the king, Louis XIV., then ten years of age, went in state, under pretext of returning thanks for his recovery from the smallpox, to Notre Dame. He took the opportunity of calling out his guard, the Swiss troops, and the musketeers, and he had planted them round the Palais Royal, on the quays, and on the Pont Neuf. After mass the young monarch drove to the parliament house, where, upon the throne, he hastily confirmed not only the edicts which he had already passed, but issued new ones; each one, according to Cardinal de Retz, more ruinous than the others—a proceeding which drew forth a strong remonstrance from the chief president Mole—while President Blancmesnil and Councillor Broussel raised their voices in indignation against fresh taxes.

The king returned amid the silence of a vast multitude to the Palais Royal. All minds were uneasy—most were foreboding—many of the people using threatening language.

At first, indeed, they were doubtful whether the king's visit to the parliament had been in order to lighten or to increase their burdens; but scarcely was it known that the taxes were even to be increased, than cries of "Down with Mazarin!" "Long live Broussel!" "Long live Blancmesnil!" resounded through the city. All attempts to disperse the

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

