

The Memoirs of Count Grammont — Volume 01 eBook

The Memoirs of Count Grammont — Volume 01

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ANTHONY HAMILTON

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Anthony Hamilton, the celebrated author of the Grammont Memoirs, much cannot now be with certainty known.

[For uniformity's sake the writer of this sketch has followed the Memoirs in the spelling of this name; but he thinks it necessary to observe that it should be Gramont, not Grammont.]

The accounts prefixed to the different editions of his works, down to the year 1805, are very imperfect; in that year a new, and, in general, far better edition than any of the preceding ones, was published in Paris, to which a sketch of his life was also added; but it contains rather just criticisms on his works, than any very novel or satisfactory anecdote concerning himself. It is not pretended here to gratify literary curiosity as fully as it ought to be, with regard to this singular and very ingenious man; some effort, however, may be made to communicate a few more particulars relative to him, than the public has hitherto, perhaps, been acquainted with.

Anthony Hamilton was of the noble family of that name: Sir George Hamilton, his father, was a younger son of James, Earl of Abercorn, a native of Scotland. His mother was daughter of Lord Thurles, and sister to James, the first Duke of Ormond; his family and connections therefore, on the maternal side, were entirely Irish. He was, as well as his brothers and sisters, born in Ireland, it is generally said, about the year 1646; but there is some reason to imagine that it was three or four years earlier. The place of his birth, according to the best family accounts, was Roscrea, in the county of Tipperary, the usual residence of his father when not engaged by military or public business.

[In September, 1646, Owen O'Neale took Roscrea, and, as Carte says, "put man, woman, and child to the sword, except Sir George Hamilton's lady, sister to the Marquis of Ormond, and some few gentlewomen whom he kept prisoners." No family suffered more in those disastrous times than the house of Ormond. Lady Hamilton died in August, 1680, as appears from an interesting and affecting letter of her brother, the Duke of Ormond, dated Carrick, August 25th. He had lost his noble son, Lord Ossory, not three weeks before.]

It has been always said, that the family migrated to France when Anthony was an infant; but this is not the fact: "Sir George Hamilton," says Carte, "would have accompanied his brother-in-law, the Marquis of Ormond, to France, in December, 1650: but, as he was receiver-general in Ireland, he stayed to pass his accounts, which he did to the satisfaction of all parties, notwithstanding much clamour had been raised against him." When that business was settled, he, in the spring of 1651, took Lady Hamilton and all his family to France, and resided with Lord and Lady Ormond, near Caen, in Normandy,

[Hence possibly Voltaire's mistake in stating that Hamilton was born at Caen, in his Catalogue des Ecrivains du Siecle de Louis XIV.]

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in great poverty and distress, till the Marchioness of Ormond, a lady whose mind was as exalted as her birth, went over to England, and, after much solicitation obtained two thousand pounds a-year from her own and, her husband's different estates in Ireland. This favour was granted her by Cromwell, who always professed the greatest respect for her. The Marchioness resided in Ireland, with the younger part of her family, from 1655 till after the Restoration; while the Marquis of Ormond continued for a considerable part of that period with his two sisters, Lady Clancarty and Lady Hamilton, at the Feuillatines, in the Faubourg St. Jacques, in Paris.

It appears from a letter of the Marquis to Sir Robert Southwell, that, although he himself was educated in the Protestant religion, not only his father and mother, but all his brothers and sisters, were bred, and always continued, Roman Catholics. Sir George Hamilton also, according to Carte,

[That historian states that the king (Charles I.) deprived several papists of their military commissions, and, among others, Sir George Hamilton, who, notwithstanding, served him with loyalty and unvarying fidelity.]

was a Roman Catholic; Anthony, therefore, was bred in the religion of his family, and conscientiously adhered to it through life. He entered early into the army of Louis XIV., as did his brothers George, Richard, and John, the former of whom introduced the company of English gens d'armes into France, in 1667, according to Le Pere Daniel, author of the History of the French Army, who adds the following short account of its establishment: Charles II., being restored to his throne, brought over to England several catholic officers and soldiers, who had served abroad with him and his brother, the Duke of York, and incorporated them with his guards; but the parliament having obliged him to dismiss all officers who were Catholics, the king permitted George Hamilton to take such as were willing to accompany him to France, where Louis XIV. formed them into a company of gens d'armes, and being highly pleased with them, became himself their captain, and made George Hamilton their captain-lieutenant:— [They were composed of English, Scotch, and Irish.] Whether Anthony belonged to this corps I know not; but this is certain, that he distinguished himself particularly in his profession, and was advanced to considerable posts in the French service.

Anthony Hamilton's residence was now almost constantly in France. Some years previous to this he had been much in England, and, towards the close of Charles II.'s reign, in Ireland, where so many of his connections remained. When James II. succeeded to the throne, the door being then opened to the Roman Catholics, he entered into the Irish army, where we find him, in 1686, a lieutenant-colonel in Sir Thomas Newcomen's regiment. That he did not immediately hold a higher rank there, may perhaps be attributed to the recent accession of the king, his general absence from Ireland, the advanced age of his uncle, the Duke of Ormond, and, more than all, perhaps, to his Grace's early disapprobation of James's conduct in Ireland, which displayed itself more fully afterwards, especially in the ecclesiastical promotions.

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Henry, Earl of Clarendon, son to the lord-chancellor, was at that time lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and appears, notwithstanding his general distrust and dislike of the Catholics, to have held Anthony Hamilton in much estimation: he speaks of his knowledge of, and constant attention to, the duties of his profession; his probity, and the dependance that was to be placed on him, in preference to others of the same religious persuasion, and, in October, 1686, wrote to the Earl of Sunderland respecting him, as follows: "I have only this one thing more to trouble your lordship with at present, concerning Colonel Anthony Hamilton, to get him a commission to command as colonel, though he is but lieutenant-colonel to Sir Thomas Newcomen, in regard of the commands he has had abroad: and I am told it is often done in France, which makes me hope it will not be counted an unreasonable request. I would likewise humbly recommend to make Colonel Anthony Hamilton a privy-councillor here." Lord Clarendon's recommendations were ultimately successful: Hamilton was made a privy-councillor in Ireland, and had a pension of £200 a year on the Irish establishment; and was appointed governor of Limerick, in the room of Sir William King, notwithstanding he had strongly opposed the new-modelling of the army by the furious Tyrconnel. In the brief accounts which have been given of his life, it is said that he had a regiment of infantry; but, though this is very probable, there is no mention whatever of his commanding a regiment in the lists published of King James's army, which are supposed to be very accurate: he is indeed set down among the general officers. Lord Clarendon, in one of his letters to the lord-treasurer, states, "That the news of the day was, that Colonel Russell was to be lieutenant-colonel to the Duke of Ormond's regiment, and that Colonel Anthony Hamilton was to have Russell's regiment, and that Mr. Luttrell was to be lieutenant-colonel to Sir Thomas Newcomen, in the place of Anthony Hamilton." It is not known whether Anthony was present at the battle of the Boyne, or of Aughrim: his brother John was killed at the latter; and Richard, who was a lieutenant-general, led on the cavalry with uncommon gallantry and spirit at the Boyne it is to be wished that his candour and integrity had equalled his courage; but, he acted with great duplicity; and King William's contemptuous echoing back his word to him, when he declared something on his honour, is well known: He is frequently mentioned by Lord Clarendon, but by no means with the same approbation as his brother. After the total overthrow of James's affairs in Ireland, the two brothers finally quitted these kingdoms, and retired to France. Richard lived much with the Cardinal de Bouillon, who was the great protector of the Irish in France, and kept (what must have been indeed highly consolatory to many an emigrant of condition) a magnificent table, which has been recorded in the most glowing and grateful terms, by

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that gay companion, and celebrated lover of good cheer, Philippe de Coulanges, who occasionally mentions the “amiable Richard Hamilton” as one of the cardinal’s particular intimates. Anthony, who was regarded particularly as a man of letters and elegant talents, resided almost entirely at St. Germain: solitary walks in the forest of that place occupied his leisure hours in the morning; and poetical pursuits, or agreeable society, engaged the evening: but much of his time seems to have rolled heavily along; his sister, Madame de Grammont, living more at court, or in Paris, than always suited his inclinations or his convenience. His great resource at St. Germain was the family of the Duke of Berwick (son of James II.): that nobleman appears to have been amiable in private life, and his attachment to Hamilton was steady and sincere. The Duchess of Berwick was also his friend. It is necessary to mention this lady particularly, as well as her sisters: they were the daughters of Henry Bulkeley, son to the first viscount of that name: their father had been master of the household to Charles: their mother was Lady Sophia Stewart, sister to the beautiful Duchess of Richmond, so conspicuous in the Grammont Memoirs. The sisters of the Duchess of Berwick were Charlotte, married to Lord Clare, Henrietta, and Laura. They all occupy a considerable space in Hamilton’s correspondence, and the two last are the ladies so often addressed as the Mademoiselles B.; they are almost the constant subjects of Hamilton’s verses; and it is recorded that he was a particular admirer of Henrietta Bulkeley; but their union would have been that of hunger and thirst, for both were very poor and very illustrious: their junction would, of course, have militated against every rule of common prudence. To the influence of this lady, particularly, we are indebted for one or two of Hamilton’s agreeable novels: she had taste enough to laugh at the extravagant stories then so much in fashion, “plus arabes qu’en Arabie,”

[They were wretched imitations of some of the Persian and Arabian tales, in which everything was distorted, and rendered absurd and preposterous.]

as Hamilton says; and he, in compliance with her taste, and his own, soon put the fashionable tales to flight, by the publication of the ‘Quatre Facardins’, and, more especially, ‘La Fleur d’Epine’. Some of the introductory verses to these productions are written with peculiar ease and grace; and are highly extolled, and even imitated, by Voltaire. La Harpe praises the Fleur d’Epine, as the work of an original genius: I do not think, however, that they are much relished in England, probably because very ill translated. Another of his literary productions was the novel called Le Belier, which he wrote on the following occasion: Louis XIV. had presented to the Countess of Grammont (whom he highly esteemed) a remarkably elegant small country house in the park of Versailles: this house became so fashionable

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a resort, and brought such constant visitors, that the Count de Grammont said, in his usual way, he would present the king with a list of all the persons he was obliged to entertain there, as more suited to his Majesty's purse than his own: the countess wished to change the name of the place from the vulgar appellation of Le Moulineau into that of Pentalie: and Hamilton, in his novel, wrote a history of a giant, an enchantment, and a princess, to commemorate her resolution. It has however happened that the giant Moulineau has had the advantage in the course of time; for the estate, which is situated near Meudon, upon the Seine, retains its original and popular designation.

About the year 1704, Hamilton turned his attention to collecting the memoirs of his brother-in-law, the Count de Grammont, as we may conjecture, from the epistle beginning "Honneur des rives éloignées" being written towards the close of the above year: it is dated, or supposed to be so, from the banks of the Garonne. Among other authors whom Hamilton at first proposes to Grammont, as capable of writing his life (though, on reflection, he thinks them not suited to it), is Boileau, whose genius he professes to admire; but adds that his muse has somewhat of malignity; and that such a muse might caress with one hand and satirize him with the other. This letter was sent by Hamilton to Boileau, who answered him with great politeness; but, at the same time that he highly extolled the epistle to Grammont, he, very naturally, seemed anxious to efface any impression which such a representation of his satiric vein might make on the Count's mind, and accordingly added a few complimentary verses to him: this letter is dated, Paris, 8th February, 1705. About the same time, another letter was written to Hamilton on the subject of the Epistle to Grammont, by La Chapelle, who also seemed desirous that his life should be given to the public, but was much perplexed which of the most celebrated ancients to compare the count to. Mecaenas first presented himself to his imagination: absurdly enough, in my opinion; for there was not a trace of similitude between the two characters. This, however, afforded him some opportunity, as he thought, of discovering a resemblance between Horace and Hamilton, in which he equally failed. Petronius is then brought forward, as affording some comparison to the Count;—a man of pleasure, giving up the day to sleep, and the night to entertainment; but then, adds La Chapelle, it will be suggested that, such is the perpetual activity of the Count of Grammont's mind, he may be said to sleep neither night nor day; and if Petronius died, the Count seems determined never to die at all. (He was at this time about eighty-five years of age.) It may well be supposed that all this, though now perfectly vapid and uninteresting, was extremely flattering to Grammont; and the result was, that he very much wished to have his life, or part of it, at least, given to the public. Hamilton,

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who had been so long connected with him, and with whose agreeable talents he was now so familiarized, was, on every account, singled out by him as the person who could best introduce him historically to the public. It is ridiculous to mention Grammont as the author of his own Memoirs: his excellence, as a man of wit, was entirely limited to conversation. Bussy Rabutin, who knew him perfectly, states that he wrote almost worse than any one. If this was said, and very truly, of him in his early days, it can hardly be imagined that he would, when between eighty and ninety years of age, commence a regular, and, in point of style, most finished composition. Besides, independent of everything else, what man would so outrage all decorum as to call himself the admiration of the age? for so is Grammont extolled in the Memoirs, with a variety of other encomiastic expressions; although, perhaps, such vanity has not been without example. Hamilton, it is true, says that he acts as Grammont's secretary, and only holds the pen, whilst the Count dictates to him such particulars of his life as were the most singular, and least known. This is said with great modesty, and, as to part of the work, perhaps with great truth: it requires, however, some explanation. Grammont was more than twenty years older than Hamilton; consequently, the earlier part of his life could only have been known, or was best known, to the latter from repeated conversations, and the long intimacy which subsisted between them. Whether Grammont formally dictated the events of his younger days, or not, is of little consequence from his general character, it is probable that he did not. However, the whole account of such adventures as he was engaged in, from his leaving home to his interview with Cardinal Mazarin (excepting the character of Monsieur de Senantes, and Matta, who was well known to Hamilton), the relation of the siege of Lerida, the description of Gregorio Brice, and the inimitable discovery of his own magnificent suit of clothes on the ridiculous bridegroom at Abbeville; all such particulars must have been again and again repeated to Hamilton by Grammont, and may therefore be fairly grounded on the count's authority. The characters of the court of Charles II., and its history, are to be ascribed to Hamilton: from his residence, at various times, in the court of London, his connection with the Ormond family, not to mention others, he must have been well acquainted with them. Lady Chesterfield, who may be regarded almost as the heroine of the work, was his cousin-german.

[She was born at the castle of Kilkenny, July, 1640, as appears from Carte's life of her father, the Duke of Ormond.]

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But, although the history altogether was written by Hamilton, it may not perhaps be known to every reader that Grammont himself sold the manuscript for fifteen hundred livres; and when it was brought to Fontenelle, then censor of the press, he refused to license it, from respect to the character of the Count, which, he thought, was represented as that of a gambler, and an unprincipled one too. In fact, Grammont, like many an old gentleman, seems to have recollected the gaieties of his youth with more complaisance than was necessary, and has drawn them in pretty strong colours in that part of the work which is more particularly his own. He laughed at poor Fontenelle's scruples, and complained to the chancellor, who forced the censor to acquiesce: the license was granted, and the Count put the whole of the money, or the best part of it, in his pocket, though he acknowledged the work to be Hamilton's. This is exactly correspondent to his general character: when money was his object, he had little, or rather no delicacy.

The History of Grammont may be considered as unique there is nothing like it in any language. For drollery, knowledge of the world, various satire, general utility, united with great vivacity of composition, Gil Blas is unrivalled: but, as a merely agreeable book, the Memoirs of Grammont perhaps deserve that character more than any which was ever written: it is pleasantry throughout, pleasantry of the best sort, unforced, graceful, and engaging. Some French critic has justly observed, that, if any book were to be selected as affording the truest specimen of perfect French gaiety, the Memoirs of Grammont would be selected in preference to all others. This has a Frenchman said of the work of a foreigner: but that foreigner possessed much genius, had lived from his youth, not only in the best society of France, but with the most singular and agreeable man that France could produce. Still, however, though Grammont and Hamilton were of dispositions very different, the latter must have possessed talents peculiarly brilliant, and admirably adapted to coincide with, and display those of his brother-in-law to the utmost advantage. Gibbon extols the "ease and purity of Hamilton's inimitable style;" and in this he is supported by Voltaire, although he adds the censure, that the Grammont Memoirs are, in point of materials, the most trifling; he might also in truth have said, the most improper. The manners of the court of Charles II. were, to the utmost, profligate and abandoned: yet in what colours have they been drawn by Hamilton? The elegance of his pencil has rendered them more seductive and dangerous, than if it had more faithfully copied the originals. From such a mingled mass of grossness of language, and of conduct, one would have turned away with disgust and abhorrence; but Hamilton was, to use the words of his admirer, Lord Orford, "superior to the indelicacy of the court," whose vices he has so agreeably depicted; and that superiority has sheltered such vices from more than half the oblivion which would now have for ever concealed them.

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The Count de Grammont died in 1707. Some years after the publication of his Memoirs, Hamilton was engaged in a very different work: he translated Pope's Essay on Criticism into French, and, as it should seem, so much to that great poet's satisfaction, that he wrote a very polite letter of thanks to him, which is inserted in Pope's Correspondence. Hamilton's Essay was, I believe, never printed, though Pope warmly requested to have that permission: the reign of Louis XIV. had now ceased; and, for several years before his death, the character of the old court of that prince had ceased also: profligacy and gaiety had given way to devotion and austerity. Of Hamilton's friends and literary acquaintance few were left: the Duke of Berwick was employed in the field, or at Versailles: some of the ladies, however, continued at St. Germain; and in their society, particularly that of his niece, the Countess of Stafford (in whose name he carried on a lively correspondence with Lady Mary Wortley Montague), he passed much of his time. He occasionally indulged in poetical compositions, of a style suited to his age and character; and when he was past seventy, he wrote that excellent copy of verses, 'Sur l' Usage de la Vie dans la Vieillesse'; which, for grace of style, justness, and purity of sentiment, does honour to his memory.

Hamilton died at St. Germain, in April, 1720, aged about seventy-four. His death was pious and resigned. From his poem, entitled Reflections, he appears, like some other authors, to have turned his mind, in old age, entirely to those objects of sacred regard, which, sooner or later, must engage the attention of every rational mind. To poetry he bids an eternal adieu, in language which breathes no diminution of genius, at the moment that he for ever recedes from the poetical character. But he aspired to a better.

Whatever were Hamilton's errors, his general character was respectable. He has been represented as grave, and even dull, in society; the very reverse, in short, of what he appears in his Memoirs: but this is probably exaggerated. Unquestionably, he had not the unequalled vivacity of the Count de Grammont in conversation; as Grammont was, on the other hand, inferior, in all respects, to Hamilton when the pen was in his hand; the latter was, however, though reserved in a large society, particularly agreeable in a more select one. Some of his letters remain, in which he alludes to his want of that facility at impromptu which gave such brilliancy to the conversation of some of his brother wits and contemporaries. But, while we admit the truth of this, let it be remembered, at the same time, that when he wrote this, he was by no means young; that he criticised his own defects with severity; that he was poor, and living in a court which itself subsisted on the alms of another. Amidst such circumstances, extemporary gaiety cannot always be found. I can suppose, that the Duchess of Maine, who laid claim to the character of a patroness

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of wit, and, like many who assert such claims, was very troublesome, very self-sufficient, and very 'exigeante', might not always have found that general superiority, or even transient lustre, which she expected in Hamilton's society: yet, considering the great difference of their age and situation, this circumstance will not greatly impeach his talents for conversation. But the work of real genius must for ever remain; and of Hamilton's genius, the Grammont Memoirs will always continue a beauteous and graceful monument. To that monument may also be added, the candour, integrity, and unassuming virtues of the amiable author.

CHAPTER FIRST.

INTRODUCTION

As those who read only for amusement are, in my opinion, more worthy of attention than those who open a book merely to find fault, to the former I address myself, and for their entertainment commit the following pages to press, without being in the least concerned about the severe criticisms of the latter. I further declare, that the order of time and disposition of the facts, which give more trouble to the writer than pleasure to the reader, shall not much embarrass me in these Memoirs. It being my design to convey a just idea of my hero, those circumstances which most tend to illustrate and distinguish his character shall find a place in these fragments just as they present themselves to my imagination, without paying any particular attention to their arrangement. For, after all, what does it signify where the portrait is begun, provided the assemblage of the parts forms a whole which perfectly expresses the original? The celebrated Plutarch, who treats his heroes as he does his readers, commences the life of the one just as he thinks fit, and diverts the attention of the other with digressions into antiquity, or agreeable passages of literature, which frequently have no reference to the subject; for instance, he tells us that Demetrius Poliorcetes was far from being so tall as his father, Antigonus; and afterwards, that his reputed father, Antigonus, was only his uncle; but this is not until he has begun his life with a short account of his death, his various exploits, his good and bad qualities; and at last, out of compassion to his failings, brings forward a comparison between him and the unfortunate Mark Antony.

What I have said upon this subject is not meant to reflect upon this historian, to whom, of all the ancients, we are most obliged; it is only intended to authorize the manner in which I have treated a life far more extraordinary than any of those he has transmitted to us. It is my part to describe a man whose inimitable character casts a veil over those faults which I shall neither palliate nor disguise; a man distinguished by a mixture of virtues and vices so closely linked together as in appearance to form a necessary

dependence, glowing with the greatest beauty when united, shining with the brightest lustre when opposed.

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It is this indefinable brilliancy, which, in war, in love, in gaming, and in the various stages of a long life, has rendered the Count de Grammont the admiration of his age, and the delight of every country wherein he has displayed his engaging wit, dispensed his generosity and magnificence, or practised his inconstancy: it is owing to this that the sallies of a sprightly imagination have produced those admirable bons-mots which have been with universal applause transmitted to posterity. It is owing to this that he preserved his judgment free and unembarrassed in the most trying situations, and enjoyed an uncommon presence of mind and facetiousness of temper in the most imminent dangers of war. I shall not attempt to draw his portrait: his person has been described by Bussi and St. Evremond, authors more entertaining than faithful.

[Voltaire, in the age of Louis XIV., ch. 24, speaking of that monarch, says, “even at the same time when he began to encourage genius by his liberality, the Count de Bussi was severely punished for the use he made of his: he was sent to the Bastile in 1664. ‘The Amours of the Gauls’ was the pretence of his imprisonment; but the true cause was the song in which the king was treated with too much freedom, and which, upon this occasion, was brought to remembrance to ruin Bussi, the reputed author of it.

Que Deodatus est heureux,
De baiser ce bec amoureux,
Qui d’une oreille a l’autre va!

See Deodatus with his billing dear,
Whose amorous mouth breathes love from ear to ear!

“His works were not good enough to compensate for the mischief they did him. He spoke his own language with purity: he had some merit, but more conceit: and he made no use of the merit he had, but to make himself enemies.” Voltaire adds, “Bussi was released at the end of eighteen months; but he was in disgrace all the rest of his life, in vain protesting a regard for Louis XIV.” Bussi died 1693. Of St. Evremond, see note, postea.]

The former has represented the Chevalier Grammont as artful, fickle, and even somewhat treacherous in his amours, and indefatigable and cruel in his jealousies. St. Evremond has used other colours to express the genius and describe the general manners of the Count; whilst both, in their different pictures, have done greater honour to themselves than justice to their hero.

It is, therefore, to the Count we must listen, in the agreeable relation of the sieges and battles wherein he distinguished himself under another hero; and it is on him we must rely for the truth of passages the least glorious of his life, and for the sincerity with which he relates his address, vivacity, frauds, and the various stratagems he practised either in love or gaming. These express his true character, and to himself we owe these

memoirs, since I only hold the pen, while he directs it to the most remarkable and secret passages of his life.

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CHAPTER SECOND.

Arrival of the chevalier Grammont at the siege of Trino, and the life he led there.

In those days affairs were not managed in France as at present. Louis XIII.—[Son and successor of Henry IV. He began to reign 14th May, 1610, and died 14th May, 1643.]—then sat upon the throne, but the Cardinal de Richelieu, governed the kingdom;

[Of this great minister Mr. Hume gives the following character:—

“Undaunted, Undaunted and implacable, prudent and active, he braved all the opposition of the French princes and nobles in the prosecution of his vengeance; he discovered and dissipated all their secret cabals and conspiracies. His sovereign himself he held in subjection, while he exalted the throne. The people, while they lost their liberties, acquired, by means of his administration, learning, order, discipline, and renown.”]

great men commanded little armies, and little armies did great things; the fortune of great men depended solely upon ministerial favour, and blind devotion to the will of the minister was the only sure method of advancement. Vast designs were then laying in the heart of neighbouring states the foundation of that formidable greatness to which France has now risen: the police was somewhat neglected; the highways were impassable by day, and the streets by night; but robberies were committed elsewhere with greater impunity. Young men, on their first entrance into the world, took what course they thought proper. Whoever would, was a chevalier, and whoever could, an abbe: I mean a beneficed abbe: dress made no distinction between them; and I believe the Chevalier Grammont was both the one and the other at the siege of Trino. —[Trino was taken 4th May, 1639.]—This was his first campaign, and here he displayed those attractive graces which so favourably prepossess, and require neither friends nor recommendations in any company to procure a favourable reception. The siege was already formed when he arrived, which saved him some needless risks; for a volunteer cannot rest at ease until he has stood the first fire: he went therefore to reconnoitre the generals, having no occasion to reconnoitre the place. Prince Thomas commanded the army; and as the post of lieutenant-general was not then known, Du Plessis Pralin and the famous Viscount Turenne were his majors general. Fortified places were treated with some respect, before a power which nothing can withstand had found means to destroy them by dreadful showers of bombs, and by destructive batteries of hundreds of pieces of cannon. Before these furious storms which drive governors underground and reduce their garrisons to powder, repeated sallies bravely repulsed, and vigorous attacks nobly sustained, signaled both the art of the besiegers and the courage of the

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besieged; consequently, sieges were of some length, and young men had an opportunity of gaining some knowledge. Many brave actions were performed on each side during the siege of Trino; a great deal of fatigue was endured, and considerable losses sustained; but fatigue was no more considered, hardships were no more felt in the trenches, gravity was at an end with the generals, and the troops were no longer dispirited after the arrival of the Chevalier Grammont. Pleasure was his pursuit, and he made it universal.

Among the officers in the army, as in all other places, there are men of real merit, or pretenders to it. The latter endeavoured to imitate the Chevalier Grammont in his most shining qualities, but without success; the former admired his talents and courted his friendship. Of this number was Matta:

[Matta, or Matha, of whom Hamilton has drawn so striking a picture, is said to have been of the house of Bourdeille, which had the honour to produce Brautome and Montresor. The combination of indolence and talent, of wit and simplicity, of bluntness and irony, with which he is represented, may have been derived from tradition, but could only have been united into the inimitable whole by the pen of Hamilton. Several of his bons-mots have been preserved; but the spirit evaporates in translation. "Where could I get this nose," said Madame D'Albret, observing a slight tendency to a flush in that feature. "At the side board, Madame," answered Matta. When the same lady, in despair at her brother's death, refused all nourishment, Matta administered this blunt consolation: "If you are resolved, madame, never again to swallow food, you do well; but if ever you mean to eat upon any future occasion, believe me, you may as well begin just now." Madame Caylus, in her *Souvenirs*, commemorates the simple and natural humour of Matta as rendering him the most delightful society in the world. Mademoiselle, in her *Memoirs*, alludes to his pleasantry in conversation, and turn for deep gaming. When the *Memoirs* of Grammont were subjected to the examination of Fontenelle, then censor of the Parisian press, he refused to license them, on account of the scandalous conduct imputed to Grammont in this party at quinze. The count no sooner heard of this than he hastened to Fontenelle, and having joked him for being more tender of his reputation than he was himself, the license was instantly issued. The censor might have retorted upon Grammont the answer which the count made to a widow who received coldly his compliments of condolence on her husband's death: "Nay, madame, if that is the way you take it, I care as little about it as you do." He died in 1674. "Matta est mort sans confession," says Madame Maintenon, in a letter to her brother. Tome I., p. 67.]

He was agreeable in his person, but still more by the natural turn of his wit; he was plain and simple in his manners, but endued with a quick discernment and refined delicacy, and full of candour and integrity in all his actions. The Chevalier Grammont was not

long in discovering his amiable qualities; an acquaintance was soon formed, and was succeeded by the strictest intimacy.

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Matta insisted that the Chevalier should take up his quarters with him; to which he only consented on condition of equally contributing to the expense. As they were both liberal and magnificent, at their common cost they gave the best designed and most luxurious entertainments that had ever yet been seen. Play was wonderfully productive at first, and the Chevalier restored by a hundred different ways that which he obtained only by one. The generals, being entertained by turns, admired their magnificence, and were dissatisfied with their own officers for not keeping such good tables and attendance. The Chevalier had the talent of setting off the most indifferent things to advantage; and his wit was so generally acknowledged, that it was a kind of disgrace not to submit to his taste. To him Matta resigned the care of furnishing the table and doing its honours; and, charmed with the general applause, persuaded himself that nothing could be more honourable than their way of living, and nothing more easy than to continue it; but he soon perceived that the greatest prosperity is not the most lasting. Good living, bad economy, dishonest servants, and ill-luck, all uniting together to disconcert their housekeeping, their table was going to be gradually laid aside, when the Chevalier's genius, fertile in resources, undertook to support his former credit by the following expedient.

They had never yet conferred about the state of their finances, although the steward had acquainted each, separately, that he must either receive money to continue the expenses, or give in his accounts. One day, when the Chevalier came home sooner than usual, he found Matta fast asleep in an easy chair, and, being unwilling to disturb his rest, he began musing on his project. Matta awoke without his perceiving it; and having, for a short time, observed the deep contemplation he seemed involved in, and the profound silence between two persons who had never held their tongues for a moment when together before, he broke it by a sudden fit of laughter, which increased in proportion as the other stared at him. "A merry way of waking, and ludicrous enough," said the Chevalier; "what is the matter, and whom do you laugh at!" "Faith, Chevalier," said Matta, "I am laughing at a dream I had just now, which is so natural and diverting, that I must make you laugh at it also. I was dreaming that we had dismissed our maitre-d'hotel, our cook, and our confectioner, having resolved, for the remainder of the campaign, to live upon others as others have lived upon us: this was my dream. Now tell me, Chevalier, on what were you musing?" "Poor fellow!" said the Chevalier, shrugging up his shoulders, "you are knocked down at once, and thrown into the utmost consternation and despair at some silly stories which the maitre-d'hotel has been telling you as well as me. What! after the figure we have made in the face of the nobility and foreigners in the army, shall we give it up, and

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like fools and beggars sneak off, upon the first failure of our money! Have you no sentiments of honour? Where is the dignity of France?" "And where is the money?" said Matta; "for my men say, the devil may take them, if there be ten crowns in the house, and I believe you have not much more, for it is above a week since I have seen you pull out your purse, or count your money, an amusement you were very fond of in prosperity." "I own all this," said the Chevalier, "but yet I will force you to confess, that you are but a mean-spirited fellow upon this occasion. What would have become of you if you had been reduced to the situation I was in at Lyons, four days before I arrived here? I will tell you the story."

CHAPTER THIRD.

*Education and adventures of the chevalier Grammont
before his coming to the siege of Trino.*

"This," said Matta, "smells strongly of romance, except that it should have been your squire's part to tell your adventures."

"True," said the Chevalier; "however, I may acquaint you with my first exploits without offending my modesty; besides, my squire's style borders too much upon the burlesque for an heroic narrative."

"You must know, then, that upon my arrival at Lyons—"

"Is it thus you begin?" said Matta. "Pray give us your history a little further back. The most minute particulars of a life like yours are worthy of relation; but above all, the manner in which you first paid your respects to Cardinal Richelieu: I have often laughed at it. However, you may pass over the unlucky pranks of your infancy, your genealogy, name and quality of your ancestors, for that is a subject with which you must be utterly unacquainted."

"Pooh!" said the Chevalier; "you think that all the world is as ignorant as yourself; you think that I am a stranger to the Mendores and the Corisandes. So, perhaps I don't know that it was my father's own fault that he was not the son of Henry IV. The king would by all means have acknowledged him for his son, but the traitor would never consent to it. See what the Grammonts would have been now, but for this cross-grained fellow! They would have had precedence of the Caesars de Vendome. You may laugh if you like, yet it is as true as the gospel: but let us come to the point."

"I was sent to the college of Pau, with the intention of being brought up to the church; but as I had quite different views, I made no manner of improvement: gaming was so

much in my head, that both my tutor and the master lost their labour in endeavouring to teach me Latin. Old Brinon, who served me both as valet-de-chambre and governor, in vain threatened to acquaint my mother. I only studied when I pleased, that is to say, seldom or never: however, they treated me as is customary with scholars of my quality; I was raised to all the

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dignities of the forms, without having merited them, and left college nearly in the same state in which I entered it; nevertheless, I was thought to have more knowledge than was requisite for the abbacy which my brother had solicited for me. He had just married the niece of a minister, to whom every one cringed: he was desirous to present me to him. I felt but little regret to quit the country, and great impatience to see Paris. My brother having kept me some time with him, in order to polish me, let me loose upon the town to shake off my rustic air, and learn the manners of the world. I so thoroughly gained them, that I could not be persuaded to lay them aside when I was introduced at court in the character of an Abby. You know what kind of dress was then the fashion. All that they could obtain of me was to put a cassock over my other clothes, and my brother, ready to die with laughing at my ecclesiastical habit, made others laugh too. I had the finest head of hair in the world, well curled and powdered, above my cassock, and below were white buskins and gilt spurs. The Cardinal, who had a quick discernment, could not help laughing. This elevation of sentiment gave him umbrage; and he foresaw what might be expected from a genius that already laughed at the shaven crown and cowl.

“When my brother had taken me home, ‘Well, my little parson,’ said he, ‘you have acted your part to admiration, and your parti-coloured dress of the ecclesiastic and soldier has greatly diverted the court; but this is not all: you must now choose, my little knight. Consider then, whether, by sticking to the church, you will possess great revenues, and have nothing to do; or, with a small portion, you will risk the loss of a leg or arm, and be the fructus belli of an insensible court, to arrive in your old age at the dignity of a major-general, with a glass eye and a wooden leg.’ ‘I know,’ said I, ‘that there is no comparison between these two situations, with regard to the conveniences of life; but, as a man ought to secure his future state in preference to all other considerations, I am resolved to renounce the church for the salvation of my soul, upon condition, however, that I keep my abbacy.’ Neither the remonstrances nor authority of my brother could induce me to change my resolution; and he was forced to agree to this last article in order to keep me at the academy. You know that I am the most adroit man in France, so that I soon learned all that is taught at such places, and, at the same time, I also learnt that which gives the finishing stroke to a young fellow’s education, and makes him a gentleman, *viz.* all sorts of games, both at cards and dice; but the truth is, I thought, at first, that I had more skill in them than I really had, as experience proved. When my mother knew the choice I had made, she was inconsolable; for she reckoned, that had I been a clergyman I should have been a saint; but now she was certain that I should either be a devil in the world, or be killed

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in the wars. And indeed I burned with impatience to be a soldier; but being yet too young, I was forced to make a campaign at Bidache —[A principality belonging to the family of the Grammonts, in the Province of Gascony.]—before I made one in the army. When I returned to my mother's house, I had so much the air of a courtier and a man of the world, that she began to respect me, instead of chiding me for my infatuation towards the army. I became her favourite, and finding me inflexible, she only thought of keeping me with her as long as she could, while my little equipage was preparing. The faithful Brinon, who was to attend me as valet-de-chambre, was likewise to discharge the office of governor and equerry, being, perhaps, the only Gascon who was ever possessed of so much gravity and ill-temper. He passed his word for my good behaviour and morality, and promised my mother that he would give a good account of my person in the dangers of the war; but I hope he will keep his word better as to this last article than he has done as to the former.

“My equipage was sent away a week before me. This was so much time gained by my mother to give me good advice. At length, after having solemnly enjoined me to have the fear of God before my eyes, and to love my neighbour as myself, she suffered me to depart, under the protection of the Lord and the sage Brinon. At the second stage we quarrelled. He had received four hundred louis d'or for the expenses of the campaign: I wished to have the keeping of them myself, which he strenuously opposed. ‘Thou old scoundrel,’ said I, ‘is the money thine, or was it given thee for me? You suppose I must have a treasurer, and receive no money without his order. I know not whether it was from a presentiment of what afterwards happened that he grew melancholy; however, it was with the greatest reluctance, and the most poignant anguish, that he found himself obliged to yield. One would have thought that I had wrested his very soul from him. I found myself more light and merry after I had eased him of his trust; he, on the contrary, appeared so overwhelmed with grief, that it seemed as if I had laid four hundred pounds of lead upon his back, instead of taking away these four hundred louis. He went on so heavily, that I was forced to whip his horse myself, and turning to me, now and then, ‘Ah! sir,’ said he, my lady did not think it would be so. ‘His reflections and sorrows were renewed at every stage; for, instead of giving a shilling to the post-boy, I gave him half-a-crown.

“Having at last reached Lyons, two soldiers stopped us at the gate of the city, to carry us before the governor. I took one of them to conduct me to the best inn, and delivered Brinon into the hands of the other, to acquaint the commandant with the particulars of my journey, and my future intentions.

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"There are as good taverns at Lyons as at Paris; but my soldier, according to custom, carried me to a friend of his own, whose house he extolled as having the best accommodations, and the greatest resort of good company, in the whole town. The master of this hotel was as big as a hogshead, his name Cerise; a Swiss by birth, a poisoner by profession, and a thief by custom. He showed me into a tolerably neat room, and desired to know whether I pleased to sup by myself or at the ordinary. I chose the latter, on account of the beau monde which the soldier had boasted of.

"Brinon, who was quite out of temper at the many questions which the governor had asked him, returned more surly than an old ape; and seeing that I was dressing my hair, in order to go downstairs: 'What are you about now, sir?' said he. 'Are you going to tramp about the town? No, no; have we not had tramping enough ever since the morning? Eat a bit of supper, and go to bed betimes, that you may get on horseback by day-break.' 'Mr. Comptroller,' said I, 'I shall neither tramp about the town, nor eat alone, nor go to bed early. I intend to sup with the company below.' 'At the ordinary!' cried he; 'I beseech you, sir, do not think of it! Devil take me, if there be not a dozen brawling fellows playing at cards and dice, who make noise enough to drown the loudest thunder!'

"I was grown insolent since I had seized the money; and being desirous to shake off the yoke of a governor, 'Do you know, Mr. Brinon,' said I, 'that I don't like a blockhead to set up for a reasoner? Do you go to supper, if you please; but take care that I have post-horses ready before daybreak.' The moment he mentioned cards and dice, I felt the money burn in my pocket. I was somewhat surprised, however, to find the room where the ordinary was served filled with odd-looking creatures. My host, after presenting me to the company, assured me that there were but eighteen or twenty of those gentlemen who would have the honour to sup with me. I approached one of the tables where they were playing, and thought I should have died with laughing: I expected to have seen good company and deep play; but I only met with two Germans playing at backgammon. Never did two country boobies play like them; but their figures beggared all description. The fellow near whom I stood was short, thick, and fat, and as round as a ball, with a ruff, and prodigious high crowned hat. Any one, at a moderate distance, would have taken him for the dome of a church, with the steeple on the top of it. I inquired of the host who he was. 'A merchant from Basle,' said he, 'who comes hither to sell horses; but from the method he pursues, I think he will not dispose of many; for he does nothing but play.' 'Does he play deep?' said I. 'Not now,' said he; 'they are only playing for their reckoning, while supper is getting ready; but he has no objection to play as deep as any one.' 'Has he money?' said I. 'As for that,'

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replied the treacherous Cerise, 'would to God you had won a thousand pistoles of him, and I went your halves; we should not be long without our money.' I wanted no further encouragement to meditate the ruin of the high-crowned hat. I went nearer to him, in order to take a closer survey; never was such a bungler; he made blots upon blots; God knows, I began to feel some remorse at winning of such an ignoramus, who knew so little of the game. He lost his reckoning; supper was served up; and I desired him to sit next me. It was a long table, and there were at least five-and-twenty in company, notwithstanding the landlord's promise. The most execrable repast that ever was begun being finished, all the crowd insensibly dispersed, except the little Swiss, who still kept near me, and the landlord, who placed himself on the other side of me. They both smoked like dragons; and the Swiss was continually saying, in bad French, 'I ask your pardon, sir, for my great freedom,' at the same time blowing such whiffs of tobacco in my face as almost suffocated me. Mr. Cerise, on the other hand, desired he might take the liberty of asking me whether I had ever been in his country? and seemed surprised I had so genteel an air, without having travelled in Switzerland.

"The little chub I had to encounter was full as inquisitive as the other. He desired to know whether I came from the army in Piedmont; and having told him I was going thither, he asked me, whether I had a mind to buy any horses; that he had about two hundred to dispose of, and that he would sell them cheap. I began to be smoked like a gammon of bacon; and being quite wearied out, both with their tobacco and their questions, I asked my companion if he would play for a single pistole at backgammon, while our men were supping; it was not without great ceremony that he consented, at the same time asking my pardon for his great freedom.

"I won the game; I gave him his revenge, and won again. We then played double or quit; I won that too, and all in the twinkling of an eye; for he grew vexed, and suffered himself to be taken in so that I began to bless my stars for my good fortune. Brinon came in about the end of the third game, to put me to bed, he made a great sign of the cross, but paid no attention to the signs I made him to retire. I was forced to rise to give him that order in private. He began to reprimand me for disgracing myself by keeping company with such a low-bred wretch. It was in vain that I told him he was a great merchant, that he had a great deal of money, and that he played like a child. 'He a merchant,' cried Brinon. 'Do not believe that, sir! May the devil take me, if he is not some conjurer.' 'Hold your tongue, old fool,' said I; 'he is no more a conjurer than you are, and that is decisive; and, to prove it to you, I am resolved to win four or five hundred pistoles of him before I go to bed. With these words I turned him out, strictly enjoining him not to return, or in any manner to disturb us.

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"The game being done, the little Swiss unbuttoned his pockets, to pull out a new four-pistole piece, and presenting it to me, he asked my pardon for his great freedom, and seemed as if he wished to retire. This was not what I wanted. I told him we only played for amusement; that I had no design upon his money; and that, if he pleased, I would play him a single game for his four pistoles. He raised some objections; but consented at last, and won back his money. I was piqued at it. I played another game; fortune changed sides; the dice ran for him, he made no more blots. I lost the game; another game, and double or quit; we doubled the stake, and played double or quit again. I was vexed; he, like a true gamester, took every bet I offered, and won all before him, without my getting more than six points in eight or ten games. I asked him to play a single game for one hundred pistoles; but as he saw I did not stake, he told me it was late; that he must go and look after his horses; and went away, still asking my pardon for his great freedom. The cool manner of his refusal, and the politeness with which he took his leave, provoked me to such a degree, that I could almost have killed him. I was so confounded at losing my money so fast, even to the last pistole, that I did not immediately consider the miserable situation to which I was reduced.

"I durst not go up to my chamber for fear of Brinon. By good luck, however, he was tired with waiting for me, and had gone to bed. This was some consolation, though but of short continuance. As soon as I was laid down, all the fatal consequences of my adventure presented themselves to my imagination. I could not sleep. I saw all the horrors of my misfortune, without being able to find any remedy; in vain did I rack my brain; it supplied me with no expedient. I feared nothing so much as daybreak; however, it did come, and the cruel Brinon along with it. He was booted up to the middle, and cracking a cursed whip, which he held in his hand, 'Up, Monsieur le Chevalier,' cried he, opening the curtains; 'the horses are at the door, and you are still asleep. We ought by this time to have ridden two stages; give me money to pay the reckoning.' 'Brinon,' said I, in a dejected tone, 'draw the curtains.' 'What!' cried he, 'draw the curtains! Do you intend, then, to make your campaign at Lyons? you seem to have taken a liking to the place. And for the great merchant, you have stripped him, I suppose? No, no, Monsieur le Chevalier, this money will never do you any good. This wretch has, perhaps, a family; and it is his children's bread that he has been playing with, and that you have won. Was this an object to sit up all night for? What would my lady say, if she knew what a life you lead?' 'M. Brinon,' said I, 'pray draw the curtains.' But instead of obeying me, one would have thought that the devil had prompted him to use the most pointed and galling terms to a person under such misfortunes. 'And how much have you won?' said he; 'five hundred pistoles? what must the poor man do?

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“Recollect, Monsieur le Chevalier, what I have said, this money will never thrive with you. It is, perhaps, but four hundred? three? two? well if it be but one hundred louis d’or, continued he, seeing that I shook my head at every sum which he had named, there is no great mischief done; one hundred pistoles will not ruin him, provided you have won them fairly.’ ‘Friend Brinon,’ said I, fetching a deep sigh, ‘draw the curtains; I am unworthy to see daylight’ Brinon was much affected at these melancholy words, but I thought he would have fainted, when I told him the whole adventure. He tore his hair, made grievous lamentations, the burden of which still was, ‘What will my lady say?’ And, after having exhausted his unprofitable complaints, ‘What will become of you now, Monsieur le Chevalier?’ said he, ‘what do you intend to do?’ ‘Nothing,’ said I, ‘for I am fit for no thing. After this, being somewhat eased after making him my confession, I thought upon several projects, to none of which could I gain his approbation. I would have had him post after my equipage, to have sold some of my clothes. I was for proposing to the horse-dealer to buy some horses of him at a high price on credit, to sell again cheap. Brinon laughed at all these schemes, and after having had the cruelty of keeping me upon the rack for a long time, he at last extricated me. Parents are always stingy towards their poor children; my mother intended to have given me five hundred louis d’or, but she had kept back fifty, as well for some little repairs in the abbey, as to pay for praying for me. Brinon had the charge of the other fifty, with strict injunctions not to speak of them, unless upon some urgent necessity. And this you see soon happened.

“Thus you have a brief account of my first adventure. Play has hitherto favoured me; for, since my arrival, I have had, at one time, after paying all my expenses, fifteen hundred louis d’or. Fortune is now again become unfavourable: we must mend her. Our cash runs low; we must, therefore, endeavour to recruit.”

“Nothing is more easy,” said Matta; “it is only to find out such another dupe as the horse-dealer at Lyons; but now I think on it, has not the faithful Brinon some reserve for the last extremity? Faith, the time is now come, and we cannot do better than to make use of it!”

“Your raillery would be very seasonable,” said the Chevalier, “if you knew how to extricate us out of this difficulty. You must certainly have an overflow of wit, to be throwing it away upon every occasion as at present. What the devil! will you always be bantering, without considering what a serious situation we are reduced to. Mind what I say, I will go tomorrow to the head-quarters, I will dine with the Count de Cameran, and I will invite him to supper.” “Where?” said Matta. “Here,” said the Chevalier. “You are mad, my poor friend,” replied Matta. “This is some such project as you formed at Lyons: you know we have neither money nor credit; and, to re-establish our circumstances, you intend to give a supper.”

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"Stupid fellow!" said the Chevalier, "is it possible, that, so long as we have been acquainted, you should have learned no more invention? The Count de Cameran plays at quinze, and so do I; we want money; he has more than he knows what to do with; I will bespeak a splendid supper, he shall pay for it. Send your maitre-d'hotel to me, and trouble yourself no further, except in some precautions, which it is necessary to take on such an occasion." "What are they?" said Matta. "I will tell you," said the Chevalier; "for I find one must explain to you things that are as clear as noon-day."

"You command the guards that are here, don't you? As soon as night comes on, you shall order fifteen or twenty men, under the command of your sergeant La Place, to be under arms, and to lay themselves flat on the ground, between this place and the headquarters." "What the devil!" cried Matta, "an ambuscade? God forgive me, I believe you intend to rob the poor Savoyard. If that be your intention, I declare I will have nothing to say to it" "Poor devil!" said the Chevalier, "the matter is this; it is very likely that we shall win his money. The Piedmontese, though otherwise good fellows, are apt to be suspicious and distrustful. He commands the horse; you know you cannot hold your tongue, and are very likely to let slip some jest or other that may vex him. Should he take it into his head that he is cheated, and resent it, who knows what the consequences might be? for he is commonly attended by eight or ten horsemen. Therefore, however he may be provoked at his loss, it is proper to be in such a situation as not to dread his resentment"

"Embrace me, my dear Chevalier," said Matta, holding his sides and laughing; "embrace me, for thou art not to be matched. What a fool I was to think, when you talked to me of taking precautions, that nothing more was necessary than to prepare a table and cards, or perhaps to provide some false dice! I should never have thought of supporting a man who plays at quinze by a detachment of foot: I must, indeed, confess that you are already a great soldier."

The next day everything happened as the Chevalier Grammont had planned it; the unfortunate Cameran fell into the snare. They supped in the most agreeable manner possible Matta drank five or six bumpers to drown a few scruples which made him somewhat uneasy. The Chevalier de Grammont shone as usual, and almost made his guest die with laughing, whom he was soon after to make very serious; and the good-natured Cameran ate like a man whose affections were divided between good cheer and a love of play; that is to say, he hurried down his victuals, that he might not lose any of the precious time which he had devoted to quinze.

Supper being done, the sergeant La Place posted his ambuscade, and the Chevalier de Grammont engaged his man. The perfidy of Cerise, and the high-crowned hat, were still fresh in remembrance, and enabled him to get the better of a few grains of remorse, and conquer some scruples which arose in his mind. Matta, unwilling to be a spectator of violated hospitality, sat down in an easy chair, in order to fall asleep, while the Chevalier was stripping the poor Count of his money.

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They only staked three or four pistoles at first, just for amusement; but Cameran having lost three or four times, he staked high, and the game became serious. He still lost, and became outrageous; the cards flew about the room, and the exclamations awoke Matta.

As his head was heavy with sleep, and hot with wine, he began to laugh at the passion of the Piedmontese, instead of consoling him. "Faith, my poor Count," said he, "if I were in your place, I would play no more." "Why so?" said the other. "I don't know," said he, "but my heart tells me that your ill-luck will continue." "I will try that," said Cameran, calling for fresh cards. "Do so," said Matta, and fell asleep again. It was but for a short time. All cards were equally unfortunate for the loser. He held none but tens or court-cards; and if by chance he had quinze, he was sure to be the younger hand, and therefore lost it. Again he stormed. "Did not I tell you so?" said Matta, starting out of his sleep. "All your storming is in vain; as long as you play you will lose. Believe me, the shortest follies are the best. Leave off, for the devil take me if it is possible for you to win." "Why?" said Cameran, who began to be impatient. "Do you wish to know?" said Matta; "why, faith, it is because we are cheating you."

The Chevalier de Grammont was provoked at so ill-timed a jest, more especially as it carried along with it some appearance of truth. "Mr. Matta," said he, "do you think it can be very agreeable for a man who plays with such ill-luck as the Count to be pestered with your insipid jests? For my part, I am so weary of the game, that I would desist immediately, if he was not so great a loser." Nothing is more dreaded by a losing gamester, than such a threat; and the Count, in a softened tone, told the Chevalier that Mr. Matta might say what he pleased, if he did not offend him; that, as to himself, it did not give him the smallest uneasiness.

The Chevalier de Grammont gave the Count far better treatment than he himself had experienced from the Swiss at Lyons; for he played upon credit as long as he pleased; which Cameran took so kindly, that he lost fifteen hundred pistoles, and paid them the next morning. As for Matta, he was severely reprimanded for the intemperance of his tongue. All the reason he gave for his conduct was, that he made it a point of conscience not to suffer the poor Savoyard to be cheated without informing him of it. "Besides," said he, "it would have given me pleasure to have seen my infantry engaged with his horse, if he had been inclined to mischief."

This adventure having recruited their finances, fortune favoured them the remainder of the campaign, and the Chevalier de Grammont, to prove that he had only seized upon the Count's effects by way of reprisal, and to indemnify himself for the losses he had sustained at Lyons, began from this time to make the same use of his money, that he has been known to do since upon all occasions. He found out the distressed, in order to relieve them; officers who had lost their equipage in the war, or their money at play; soldiers who were disabled in the trenches; in short, every one felt the influence of his benevolence: but his manner of conferring a favour exceeded even the favour itself.

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Every man possessed of such amiable qualities must meet with success in all his undertakings. The soldiers knew his person, and adored him. The generals were sure to meet him in every scene of action, and sought his company at other times. As soon as fortune declared for him, his first care was to make restitution, by desiring Cameran to go his halves in all parties where the odds were in his favour.

An inexhaustible fund of vivacity and good humour gave a certain air of novelty to whatever he either said or did. I know not on what occasion it was that Monsieur de Turenne towards the end of the siege, commanded a separate body. The Chevalier de Grammont went to visit him at his new quarters, where he found fifteen or twenty officers. M. de Turenne was naturally fond of merriment, and the Chevalier's presence was sure to inspire it. He was much pleased with this visit, and, by way of acknowledgment, would have engaged him to play. The Chevalier de Grammont, in returning him thanks, said, that he had learned from his tutor, that when a man went to see his friends, it was neither prudent to leave his own money behind him, nor civil to carry off theirs. "Truly," said Monsieur de Turenne, "you will find neither deep play nor much money among us; but, that it may not be said that we suffered you to depart without playing, let us stake every one a horse."

The Chevalier de Grammont agreed. Fortune, who had followed him to a place where he did not think he should have any need of her, made him win fifteen or sixteen horses, by way of joke; but, seeing some countenances disconcerted at the loss, "Gentlemen," said he, "I should be sorry to see you return on foot from your general's quarters; it will be enough for me if you send me your horses to-morrow, except one, which I give for the cards."

The valet-de-chambre thought he was bantering. "I speak seriously," said the Chevalier, "I give you a horse for the cards; and, what is more, take whichever you please, except my own." "Truly," said Monsieur de Turenne, "I am vastly pleased with the novelty of the thing; for I don't believe that a horse was ever before given for the cards."

Trino surrendered at last. The Baron de Batteville, who had defended it valiantly, and for a long time, obtained a capitulation worthy of such a resistance.

[This officer appears to have been the same person who was afterwards ambassador from Spain to the court of Great Britain, where, in the summer of 1660, he offended the French court, by claiming precedence of their ambassador, Count d'Estrades, on the public entry of the Swedish ambassador into London. On this occasion the court of France compelled its rival of Spain to submit to the mortifying circumstance of acknowledging the French superiority. To commemorate this important victory, Louis XIV. caused a medal to be struck, representing the Spanish ambassador, the Marquis de Fuente, making the declaration

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to that king, "No concurrer con los ambassadores des de Francia," with this inscription, "Jus praecedendi assertum," and under it, "Hispaniorum excusatio coram xxx legatis principum, 1662." A very curious account of the fray occasioned by this dispute, drawn up by Evelyn, is to be seen in that gentleman's article in the Biographia Britannica.]

I do not know whether the Chevalier de Grammont had any share in the capture of this place; but I know very well, that during a more glorious reign, and with armies ever victorious, his intrepidity and address have been the cause of taking others since, even under the eye of his master, as we shall see in the sequel of these memoirs.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Resolved to renounce the church for the salvation of my soul
The shortest follies are the best
There are men of real merit, or pretenders to it
Those who open a book merely to find fault