

The Memoirs of Count Grammont — Volume 03 eBook

The Memoirs of Count Grammont — Volume 03

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CHAPTER SIXTH.

His arrival at the English court
—the various personages of this court

Curiosity to see a man equally famous for his crimes and his elevation, had once before induced the Chevalier de Grammont to visit England. Reasons of state assume great privileges. Whatever appears advantageous is lawful, and every thing that is necessary is honourable in politics. While the King of England sought the protection of Spain in the Low Countries, and that of the States-General in Holland, other powers sent splendid embassies to Cromwell.

This man, whose ambition had opened him a way to sovereign power by the greatest crimes, maintained himself in it by accomplishments which seemed to render him worthy of it by their lustre. The nation, of all Europe the least submissive, patiently bore a yoke which did not even leave her the shadow of that liberty of which she is so jealous; and Cromwell, master of the Commonwealth, under the title of Protector, feared at home, but yet more dreaded abroad, was at his highest pitch of glory when he was seen by the Chevalier de Grammont; but the Chevalier did not see any appearance of a court. One part of the nobility proscribed, the other removed from employments; an affectation of purity of manners, instead of the luxury which the pomp of courts displays all taken together, presented nothing but sad and serious objects in the finest city in the world; and therefore the Chevalier acquired nothing by this voyage but the idea of some merit in a profligate man, and the admiration of some concealed beauties he had found means to discover.

Affairs wore quite a different appearance at his second voyage. The joy for the restoration of the royal family still appeared in all parts. The nation, fond of change and novelty, tasted the pleasure of a natural government, and seemed to breathe again after a long oppression. In short, the same people who, by a solemn abjuration, had excluded even the posterity of their lawful sovereign, exhausted themselves in festivals and rejoicings for his return.

The Chevalier de Grammont arrived about two years after the restoration. The reception he met with in this court soon made him forget the other; and the engagements he in the end contracted in England lessened the regret he had in leaving France.

This was a desirable retreat for an exile of his disposition.

Everything flattered his taste, and if the adventures he had in this country were not the most considerable, they were at least the most agreeable of his life. But before we

relate them it will not be improper to give some account of the English court, as it was at that period.

The necessity of affairs had exposed Charles *ii.* from his earliest youth to the toils and perils of a bloody war. The fate of the king his father had left him for inheritance nothing but his misfortunes and disgraces. They overtook him everywhere; but it was not until he had struggled with his ill-fortune to the last extremity that he submitted to the decrees of Providence.

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All those who were either great on account of their birth or their loyalty had followed him into exile; and all the young persons of the greatest distinction having afterwards joined him, composed a court worthy of a better fate.

Plenty and prosperity, which are thought to tend only to corrupt manners, found nothing to spoil in an indigent and wandering court. Necessity, on the contrary, which produces a thousand advantages whether we will or no, served them for education; and nothing was to be seen among them but an emulation in glory, politeness, and virtue.

With this little court, in such high esteem for merit, the King of England returned two years prior to the period we mention, to ascend a throne which, to all appearances, he was to fill as worthily as the most glorious of his predecessors. The magnificence displayed on thus occasion was renewed at his coronation.

The death of the Duke of Gloucester, and of the Princess Royal, which followed soon after, had interrupted the course of this splendour by a tedious mourning, which they quitted at last to prepare for the reception of the Infanta of Portugal.

[The Princess Royal: Mary, eldest daughter of Charles I., born November 4th, 1631, married to the Prince of Orange, 2nd May, 1641, who died 27th October, 1650. She arrived in England, September 23rd, and died of the smallpox, December 24th, 1660,- according to Bishop Burnet, not much lamented. "She had lived," says the author, "in her widowhood for some years with great reputation, kept a decent court, and supported her brothers very liberally; and lived within bounds. But her mother, who had the art of making herself believe anything she had a mind to, upon a conversation with the queen-mother of France, fancied the King of France might be inclined to marry her. So she wrote to her to come to Paris. In order to that, she made an equipage far above what she could support. So she ran herself into debt, sold all her jewels, and some estates that were in her power as her son's guardian; and was not only disappointed of that vain expectation, but fell into some misfortunes that lessened the reputation she had formerly lived in." History of his Own Times, vol. i., p. 238. She was mother of William *iii.*][The Infanta, of Portugal landed in May (1662) at Portsmouth. The king went thither, and was married privately by Lord Aubigny, a secular priest, and almoner to the queen, according to the rites of Rome, in the queen's chamber; none present but the Portuguese ambassador, three more Portuguese of quality, and two or three Portuguese women. What made this necessary was, that the Earl of Sandwich did not marry her by proxy, as usual, before she came away. How this happened, the duke knows not, nor did the chancellor know of this private marriage. The queen would not be bedded, till pronounced man and wife by Sheldon, bishop of London."—Extract 2, from

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King James *ii.*'s Journal.—Macpherson's State Papers, vol. i. In the same collection is a curious letter from the King to Lord Clarendon, giving his opinion of the queen after having seen her.]

It was in the height of the rejoicings they were making for this new queen, in all the splendour of a brilliant court, that the Chevalier de Grammont arrived to contribute to its magnificence and diversions.

Accustomed as he was to the grandeur of the court of France, he was surprised at the politeness and splendour of the court of England. The king was inferior to none, either in shape or air; his wit was pleasant; his disposition easy and affable; his soul, susceptible of opposite impressions, was compassionate to the unhappy, inflexible to the wicked, and tender even to excess; he showed great abilities in urgent affairs, but was incapable of application to any that were not so: his heart was often the dupe, but oftener the slave, of his engagements.

The character of the Duke of York was entirely different he had the reputation of undaunted courage, an inviolable attachment for his word, great economy in his affairs, hauteur, application, arrogance, each in their turn: a scrupulous observer of the rules of duty and the laws of justice; he was accounted a faithful friend, and an implacable enemy.

[James, Duke of York, afterwards King James *ii.* He was born 15th October, 1633; succeeded his brother 6th February, 1684-5; abdicated the crown in 1688; and died 6th September, 1701. Bishop Burnet's character of him appears not very far from the truth. —"He was," says this writer, "very brave in his youth; and so much magnified by Monsieur Turenne, that till his marriage lessened him, he really clouded the king, and passed for the superior genius. He was naturally candid and sincere, and a firm friend, till affairs and his religion wore out all his first principles and inclinations he had a great desire to understand affairs: and in order to that he kept a constant journal of all that passed, of which he showed me a great deal. The Duke of Buckingham gave me once a short but severe character of the two brothers. It was the more severe, because it was true: the king, (he said,) could see things if he would: and the duke would see things if he could. He had no true judgment, and was soon determined by those whom he trusted: but he was obstinate against all other advices. He was bred with high notions of kingly authority, and laid it down for a maxim, that all who opposed the king were rebels in their hearts. He was perpetually in one amour or other, without being very nice in his choice: upon which the king once said, he believed his brother had his mistress given him by his priests for penance. He was naturally eager and revengeful: and was against the taking off any, that set up in an opposition to the measures of the court, and who by that means grew popular in the house

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of commons. He was for rougher methods. He continued many years dissembling his religion, and seemed zealous for the church of England, but it was chiefly on design to hinder all propositions, that tended to unite us among ourselves. He was a frugal prince, and brought his court into method and magnificence, for he had L100,000. a-year allowed him. He was made high admiral, and he came to understand all the concerns of the sea very particularly.”]

His morality and justice, struggling for some time with prejudice, had at last triumphed, by his acknowledging for his wife Miss Hyde, maid of honour to the Princess Royal, whom he had secretly married in Holland. Her father, from that time prime minister of England, supported by this new interest, soon rose to the head of affairs, and had almost ruined them: not that he wanted capacity, but he was too self-sufficient.

The Duke of Ormond possessed the confidence and esteem of his master: the greatness of his services, the splendour of his merit and his birth, and the fortune he had abandoned in adhering to the fate of his prince, rendered him worthy of it nor durst the courtiers even murmur at seeing him grand steward of the household, first lord of the bed-chamber, and lord-lieutenant of Ireland. He exactly resembled the Marshal de Grammont, in the turn of his wit and the nobleness of his manners: and like him was the honour of his master’s court.

The Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of St. Albans were the same in England as they appeared in France: the one full of wit and vivacity, dissipated, without splendour, an immense estate upon which he had just entered: the other, a man of no great genius, had raised himself a considerable fortune from nothing, and by losing at play, and keeping a great table, made it appear greater than it was.

[“The Duke of Buckingham is again one hundred and forty thousand pounds in debt; and by this prorogation his creditors have time to tear all his lands to pieces.”—Andrew Marvell’s Works, 4to. edit., vol. i. p. 406.]

Sir George Berkeley, afterwards Earl of Falmouth, was the confidant and favourite of the King: he commanded the Duke of York’s regiment of guards, and governed the Duke himself. He had nothing very remarkable either in his wit, or his person; but his sentiments were worthy of the fortune which awaited him, when, on the very point of his elevation, he was killed at sea. Never did disinterestedness so perfectly characterise the greatness of the soul: he had no views but what tended to the glory of his master: his credit was never employed but in advising him to reward services, or to confer favours on merit: so polished in conversation, that the greater his power, the greater was his humility; and so sincere in all his proceedings, that he would never have been taken for a courtier.

The Duke of Ormond's sons and his nephews had been in the king's court during his exile, and were far from diminishing its lustre after his return. The Earl of Arran had a singular address in all kinds of exercises, played well at tennis and on the guitar, and was pretty successful in gallantry: his elder brother, the Earl of Ossory, was not so lively, but of the most liberal sentiments, and of great probity.

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The elder of the Hamiltons, their cousin, was the man who of all the court dressed best: he was well made in his person, and possessed those happy talents which lead to fortune, and procure success in love: he was a most assiduous courtier, had the most lively wit, the most polished manners, and the most punctual attention to his master imaginable: no person danced better, nor was any one a more general lover: a merit of some account in a court entirely devoted to love and gallantry. It is not at all surprising, that with these qualities he succeeded my Lord Falmouth in the King's favour; but it is very extraordinary that he should have experienced the same destiny, as if this sort of war had been declared against merit only, and as if this sort of combat was fatal to none but such as had certain hopes of a splendid fortune. This, however, did not happen till some years afterwards.

The beau Sydney, less dangerous than he appeared to be,

[Robert Sydney, third son of the Earl of Leicester, and brother of the famous Algernon Sydney, who was beheaded. This is Lord Orford's account; though, on less authority, I should have been inclined to have considered Henry Sydney, his younger brother, who was afterwards created Earl of Rumney, and died 8th April, 1704, as the person intended. There are some circumstances which seem particularly to point to him. Burnet, speaking of him, says, "he was a, graceful man, and had lived long in the court, where he lead some adventures that became very public. He was a man of a sweet and caressing temper, had no malice in his heart, but too great a love of pleasure. He had been sent envoy to Holland in the year 1679, where he entered into such particular confidences with the prince, that he had the highest measure of his trust and favour that any Englishman ever had."—History of his Own Times, vol. ii., p. 494.

In the Essay on Satire, by Dryden and Mulgrave, he is spoken of in no very decent terms.

"And little Sid, for simile renown'd,
Pleasure has always sought, but never found
Though all his thoughts on wine and women fall,
His are so bad, sure he ne'er thinks at all.
The flesh he lives upon is rank and strong;
His meat and mistresses are kept too long.
But sure we all mistake this pious man,
Who mortifies his person all he can
What we uncharitably take for sin,
Are only rules of this odd capuchin;
For never hermit, under grave pretence,
Has lived more contrary to common sense."

These verses, however, have been applied to Sir Charles Sedley, whose name was originally spelt Sidley. Robert Sydney died at Penshurst, 1674.]

had not sufficient vivacity to support the impression which his figure made; but little Jermyn was on all sides successful in his intrigues. The old Earl of St. Albans, his uncle, had for a long time adopted him, though the youngest of all his nephews. It is well known what a table the good man kept at Paris, while the King his master was starving at Brussels, and the Queen Dowager, his mistress, lived not over well in France.

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[To what a miserable state the queen was reduced may be seen in the following extract from De Retz.—“Four or five days before the king removed from Paris, I went to visit the Queen of England, whom I found in her daughter’s chamber, who hath been since Duchess of Orleans. At my coming in she said, ‘You see I am come to keep Henrietta company. The poor child could not rise to-day for want of a fire.’ The truth is, that the cardinal for six months together had not ordered her any money towards her pension; that no trades-people would trust her for anything; and that there was not at her lodgings in the Louvre one single billet. You will do me the justice to suppose that the Princess of England did not keep her bed the next day for want of a faggot; but it was not this which the Princess of Conde meant in her letter. What she spoke about was, that some days after my visiting the Queen of England, I remembered the condition I had found her in, and had strongly represented the shame of abandoning her in that manner, which caused the parliament to send 40,000 livres to her majesty. Posterity will hardly believe that a Princess of England, grand-daughter of Henry the Great, hath wanted a faggot, in the month of January, to get out of bed in the Louvre, and in the eyes of a French court. We read in histories, with horror, of baseness less monstrous than this; and the little concern I have met with about it in most people’s minds, has obliged me to make, I believe, a thousand times, this reflection,—that examples of times past move men beyond comparison more than those of their own times. We accustom ourselves to what we see; and I have sometimes told you, that I doubted whether Caligula’s horse being made a consul would have surprised us so much as we imagine.” —Memoirs, vol. i., p. 261. As for the relative situation of the king and Lord Jermyn, (afterwards St. Albans,) Lord Clarendon says, that the “Marquis of Ormond was compelled to put himself in prison, with other gentlemen, at a pistole a-week for his diet, and to walk the streets a-foot, which was no honourable custom in Paris, whilst the Lord Jermyn kept an excellent table for those who courted him, and had a coach of his own, and all other accommodations incident to the most full fortune: and if the king had the most urgent occasion for the use but of twenty pistoles, as sometimes he had, he could not find credit to borrow it, which he often had experiment of.” —History of the Rebellion, vol. iii., p. 2.]

Jermyn, supported by his uncle’s wealth, found it no difficult matter to make a considerable figure upon his arrival at the court of the Princess of Orange: the poor courtiers of the king her brother could not vie with him in point of equipage and magnificence; and these two articles often produce as much success in love as real merit: there is no necessity for any other example than the present; for though Jermyn was brave, and certainly a gentleman, yet he had neither

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brilliant actions, nor distinguished rank, to set him off; and as for his fibre, there was nothing advantageous in it. He was little: his head was large and his legs small; his features were not disagreeable, but he was affected in his carriage and behaviour. All his wit consisted in expressions learnt by rote, which he occasionally employed either in raillery, or in love. This was the whole foundation of the merit of a man so formidable in amours.

The Princess Royal was the first who was taken with him: Miss Hyde seemed to be following the steps of her mistress: this immediately brought him into credit, and his reputation was established in England before his arrival. Prepossession in the minds of women is sufficient to find access to their hearts: Jermyn found them in dispositions so favourable for him, that he had nothing to do but to speak.

It was in vain they perceived that a reputation so lightly established, was still more weakly sustained: the prejudice remained: the Countess of Castlemaine, a woman lively and discerning followed the delusive shadow; and though undeceived in a reputation which promised so much, and performed so little, she nevertheless continued in her infatuation: she even persisted in it, until she was upon the point of embroiling herself with the King; so great was this first instance of her constancy.

Such were the heroes of the court. As for the beauties, you could not look anywhere without seeing them: those of the greatest reputation were this same Countess of Castlemaine, afterwards Duchess of Cleveland, Lady Chesterfield, Lady Shrewsbury, the Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Middleton, the Misses Brooks, and a thousand others, who shone at court with equal lustre; but it was Miss Hamilton and Miss Stewart who were its chief ornaments.

[Lady Shrewsbury: Anna, Maria, Countess of Shrewsbury, eldest daughter of Robert Brudenel, Earl of Cardigan, and wife of Francis, Earl of Shrewsbury, who was killed in a duel by George, Duke of Buckingham, March 16, 1667. She afterwards re-married with George Rodney Bridges, Esq., second son of Sir Thomas Bridges of Keynsham, in Somersetshire, knight, and died April 20, 1702. By her second husband she had one son, George Rodney Bridges, who died in 1751. This woman is said to have been so abandoned, as to have held, in the habit of a page, her gallant, the duke's horse, while he fought and killed her husband; after which she went to bed with him, stained with her husband's blood.]

The new queen gave but little additional brilliancy to the court, either in her person or in her retinue, which was then composed of the Countess de Panetra, who came over with her in quality of lady of the bedchamber; six frights, who called themselves maids of honour, and a duenna, another monster, who took the title of governess to those extraordinary beauties.

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[Lord Clarendon confirms, in some measure, this account. "There was a numerous family of men and women, that were sent from Portugal, the most improper to promote that conformity in the queen that was necessary for her condition and future happiness that could be chosen; the women, for the most part, old, and ugly, and proud, incapable of any conversation with persons of quality and a liberal education: and they desired, and indeed had conspired so far to possess the queen themselves, that she should neither learn the English language, nor use their habit, nor depart from the manners and fashions of her own country in any particulars: which resolution," they told, "would be for the dignity of Portugal, and would quickly induce the English ladies to conform to her majesty's practice. And this imagination had made that impression, that the tailor who had been sent into Portugal to make her clothes could never be admitted to see her, or receive any employment. Nor when she came to Portsmouth, and found there several ladies of honour and prime quality to attend her in the places to which they were assigned by the king, did she receive any of them till the king himself came; nor then with any grace, or the liberty that belonged to their places and offices. She could not be persuaded to be dressed out of the wardrobe that the king had sent to her, but would wear the clothes which she had brought, until she found that the king was displeased, and would be obeyed; whereupon she conformed, against the advice of her women, who continued their opiniatrety, without any one of them receding from their own mode, which exposed them the more to reproach."—Continuation of Clarendon's Life, p. 168. In a short time after their arrival in England, they were ordered back to Portugal.]

Among the men were Francisco de Melo, brother to the Countess de Panetra; one Taurauvedez, who called himself Don Pedro Francisco Correo de Silva, extremely handsome, but a greater fool than all the Portuguese put together: he was more vain of his names than of his person; but the Duke of Buckingham, a still greater fool than he, though more addicted to raillery, gave him the additional name of Peter of the Wood. He was so enraged at this, that, after many fruitless complaints and ineffectual menaces, poor Pedro de Silva was obliged to leave England, while the happy duke kept possession of a Portuguese nymph more hideous than the queen's maids of honour, whom he had taken from him, as well as two of his names. Besides these, there were six chaplains, four bakers, a Jew perfumer, and a certain officer, probably without an office, who called himself her highness's barber. Katharine de Braganza was far from appearing with splendour in the charming court where she came to reign; however, in the end she was pretty successful.

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[Lord Clarendon says, "the queen had beauty and wit enough to make herself agreeable to him (the king); and it is very certain, that, at their first meeting, and for some time after, the King had very good satisfaction in her. . . . Though she was of years enough to have had more experience of the world, and of as much wit as could be wished, and of a humour very agreeable at some seasons, yet, she had been bred, according to the mode and discipline of her country, in a monastery, where she had only seen the women who attended her, and conversed with the religious who resided there; and, without doubt, in her inclinations, was enough disposed to have been one of that number: and from this restraint she was called out to be a great queen, and to a free conversation in a court that was to be upon the matter new formed, and reduced from the manners of a licentious age to the old rules and limits which had been observed in better times; to which regular and decent conformity the present disposition of men or women was not enough inclined to submit, nor the king enough disposed to exact."—Continuation of Lord Clarendon's Life, p. 167. After some struggle, she submitted to the king's licentious conduct, and from that time lived upon easy terms with him, until his death. On the 30th March, 1692, she left Somerset-house, her usual residence, and retired to Lisbon, where she died, 31st December, 1705, N. S.]

The Chevalier de Grammont, who had been long known to the royal family, and to most of the gentlemen of the court, had only to get acquainted with the ladies; and for this he wanted no interpreter: they all spoke French enough to explain themselves, and they all understood it sufficiently to comprehend what he had to say to them.

The queen's court was always very numerous; that of the duchess was less so, but more select. This princess had a majestic air, a pretty good shape, not much beauty, a great deal of wit, and so just a discernment of merit, that, whoever of either sex were possessed of it, were sure to be distinguished by her: an air of grandeur in all her actions made her be considered as if born to support the rank: which placed her so near the throne.

["The Duchess of York," says Bishop Burnet, "was a very extraordinary woman. She had great knowledge, and a lively sense of things. She soon understood what belonged to a princess, and took state on her rather too much. She wrote well, and had begun the duke's life, of which she showed me a volume. It was all drawn from his journal; and he intended to have employed me in carrying it on. She was bred in great strictness in religion, and practised secret confession. Morley told me he was her confessor. She began at twelve years old, and continued under his direction till, upon her father's disgrace, he was put from the court. She was generous and friendly, but was too severe an enemy."-history of his Own Times, vol. i., p. 237. She was contracted to the

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duke at Breda, November 24, 1659, and married at Worcester-house, 3rd September, 1660, in the night, between eleven and two, by Dr. Joseph Crowther, the duke's chaplain; the Lord Ossory giving her in marriage. —Kennet's Register, p. 246. She died 31st March, 1671, having previously acknowledged herself to be a Roman Catholic.—See also her character by Bishop Morley.—Kennet's Register, p. 385, 390.]

The queen dowager returned after the marriage of the princess royal, and it was in her court that the two others met.

The Chevalier de Grammont was soon liked by all parties those who had not known him before were surprised to see a Frenchman of his disposition. The king's restoration having drawn a great number of foreigners from all countries to the court, the French were rather in disgrace; for, instead of any persons of distinction having appeared among the first who came over, they had only seen some insignificant puppies, each striving to outdo the other in folly and extravagance, despising everything which was not like themselves, and thinking they introduced the 'bel air', by treating the English as strangers in their own country.

The Chevalier de Grammont, on the contrary, was familiar with everybody: he gave in to their customs, eat of everything, and easily habituated himself to their manner of living, which he looked upon as neither vulgar nor barbarous; and as he showed a natural complaisance, instead of the impertinent affectation of the others, all the nation was charmed with a man, who agreeably indemnified them for what they had suffered from the folly of the former.

He first of all made his court to the king, and was of all his parties of pleasure: he played high, and lost but seldom: he found so little difference in the manners and conversation of those with whom he chiefly associated, that he could scarcely believe he was out of his own country. Everything which could agreeably engage a man of his disposition, presented itself to his different humours, as if the pleasures of the court of France had quitted it to accompany him in his exile.

He was every day engaged for some entertainment; and those who wished to regale him in their turn, were obliged to take their measures in time, and to invite him eight or ten days before hand. These importunate civilities became tiresome in the long run; but as they seemed indispensable to a man of his disposition, and as they were the most genteel people of the court who loaded him with them, he submitted with a good grace; but always reserved to himself the liberty of supping at home.

His supper hour depended upon play, and was indeed very uncertain; but his supper was always served up with the greatest elegance, by the assistance of one or two servants, who were excellent caterers and good attendants, but understood cheating still better.



The company, at these little entertainments, was not numerous, but select: the first people of the court were commonly of the party; but the man, who of all others suited him best on these occasions, never failed to attend: that was the celebrated Saint Evremond, who with great exactness, but too great freedom, had written the history of the treaty of the Pyrenees: an exile like himself, though for very different reasons.

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Happily for them both, fortune had, some time before the arrival of the Chevalier de Grammont, brought Saint Evremond to England, after he had had leisure to repent in Holland of the beauties of that famous satire.

[Charles de St. Denis, Seigneur de Saint Evremond, was born at St. Denis le Guast, in Lower Normandy, on the 1st of April, 1613. He was educated at Paris, with a view to the profession of the law; but he early quitted that pursuit, and went into the army, where he signalized himself on several occasions. At the time of the Pyrenean treaty, he wrote a letter censuring the conduct of Cardinal Mazarin, which occasioned his being banished France. He first took refuge in Holland; but, in 1662, he removed into England, where he continued, with a short interval, during the rest of his life. In 1675, the Duchess of Mazarin came to reside in England; and with her St. Evremond passed much of his time. He preserved his health and cheerfulness to a very great age, and died 9th of September, 1703, aged ninety years, five months, and twenty days. His biographer Monsieur Des Maizeaux, describes him thus: "M. de St. Evremond had blue, lively, and sparkling eyes, a large forehead, thick eyebrows, a handsome mouth, and a sneering physiognomy. Twenty years before his death, a wen grew between his eye-brows, which in time increased to a considerable bigness. He once designed to have it cut off, but as it was no ways troublesome to him, and he little regarded that kind of deformity, Dr. Le Fevre advised him to let it alone, lest such an operation should be attended with dangerous symptoms in a man of his age. He would often make merry with himself on account of his wen, his great leather cap, and grey hair, which he chose to wear rather than a periwig." St. Evremond was a kind of Epicurean philosopher, and drew his own character in the following terms, in a letter to Count de Grammont. He was a philosopher equally removed from superstition and impiety; a voluptuary who had no less aversion from debauchery than inclination for pleasure: a man who had never felt the pressure of indigence, and who had never been in possession of affluence: he lived in a condition despised by those who have everything, envied by those who have nothing, and relished by those who make their reason the foundation of their happiness. When he was young he hated profusion, being persuaded that some degree of wealth was necessary for the conveniencies of a long life: when he was old, he could hardly endure economy, being of opinion that want is little to be dreaded when a man has but little time left to be miserable. He was well pleased with nature, and did not complain of fortune. He hated vice, was indulgent to frailties, and lamented misfortunes. He sought not after the failings of men with a design to expose them; he only found what was ridiculous in them for his own amusement: he had a secret pleasure in discovering this himself, and would, indeed, have

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had a still greater in discovering this to others, had not he been checked by discretion. Life, in his opinion, was too short to read all sorts of books, and to burden one's memory with a multitude of things, at the expense of one's judgment. He did not apply himself to the most learned writings, in order to acquire knowledge, but to the most rational, to fortify his reason: he sometimes chose the most delicate, to give delicacy to his own taste, and sometimes the most agreeable, to give the same to his own genius. It remains that he should be described, such as he was, in friendship and in religion. In friendship he was more constant than a philosopher, and more sincere than a young man of good nature without experience. With regard to religion, his piety consisted more in justice and charity than in penance or mortification. He placed his confidence in God, trusting in His goodness, and hoping that in the bosom of His providence he should find his repose and his felicity."—He was buried in Westminster Abbey.]

The Chevalier was from that time his hero: they had each of them attained to all the advantages which a knowledge of the world, and the society of people of fashion, could add to the improvement of good natural talents. Saint Evremond, less engaged in frivolous pursuits, frequently gave little lectures to the Chevalier, and by making observations upon the past, endeavoured to set him right for the present, or to instruct him for the future. "You are now," said he, "in the most agreeable way of life a man of your temper could wish for: you are the delight of a youthful, sprightly, and gallant court: the king has never a party of pleasure to which you are not admitted. You play from morning to night, or, to speak more properly, from night to morning, without knowing what it is to lose. Far from losing the money you brought hither, as you have done in other places, you have doubled it, trebled it, multiplied it almost beyond your wishes, notwithstanding the exorbitant expenses you are imperceptibly led into. This, without doubt, is the most desirable situation in the world: stop here, Chevalier, and do not ruin your affairs by returning to your old sins. Avoid love, by pursuing other pleasures: love has never been favourable to you.

["Saint Evremond and Bussi-Rabutin, who have also written on the life of the Count de Grammont, agree with Hamilton in representing him as a man less fortunate in love than at play; not seeking for any other pleasure in the conquest of a woman but that of depriving another of her; and not able to persuade any one of his passion, because he spoke to her, as at all other times, in jest: but cruelly revenging himself on those who refused to hear him; corrupting the servants of those whom they did favour, counterfeiting their handwriting, intercepting their letters, disconcerting their rendezvous; in one word, disturbing their amours by everything which a rival, prodigal, indefatigable, and full

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of artifice, can be imagined to do. The straitest ties of blood could not secure any one from his detraction. His nephew, the Count de Guiche, was a victim: he had in truth, offended the Count de Grammont, by having supplanted him in the affection of the Countess de Fiesque, whom he loved afterwards for the space of twelve years. Here was enough to irritate the self-love of a man less persuaded of his own merit." Hamilton does not describe the exterior of the count, but accuses Bussi-Rabutin of having, in the following description, given a more agreeable than faithful portrait of him: "The chevalier had laughing eyes, a well-formed nose, a beautiful mouth, a small dimple in the chin, which had an agreeable effect on his countenance, a certain delicacy in his physiognomy, and a handsome shape, if he had not stooped."]

"You are sensible how much gallantry has cost you; and every person here is not so well acquainted with that matter as yourself. Play boldly: entertain the court with your wit: divert the king by your ingenious and entertaining stories; but avoid all engagements which can deprive you of this merit, and make you forget you are a stranger and an exile in this delightful country.

"Fortune may bow weary of befriending you at play. What would have become of you, if your last misfortune had happened to you when your money had been at as low an ebb as I have known it? Attend carefully then to this necessary deity, and renounce the other. You will be missed at the court of France before you grow weary of this; but be that as it may, lay up a good store of money: when a man is rich he consoles himself for his banishment. I know you well, my dear Chevalier: if you take it into your head to seduce a lady, or to supplant a lover, your gains at play will by no means suffice for presents and for bribes: no, let play be as productive to you as it can be, you will never gain so much by it as you will lose by love, if you yield to it.

"You are in possession of a thousand splendid qualifications which distinguish you here: generous, benevolent, elegant, and polite; and for your engaging wit, inimitable. Upon a strict examination, perhaps, all this would not be found literally true; but these are brilliant marks; and since it is granted that you possess them, do not show yourself here in any other light: for, in love, if your manner of paying your addresses can be so denominated, you do not in the least resemble the picture I have just now drawn."

"My little philosophical monitor," said the Chevalier de Grammont, "you talk here as if you were the Cato of Normandy." "Do I say anything untrue?" replied Saint Evremond: "Is it not a fact, that as soon as a woman pleases you, your first care is to find out whether she has any other lover, and your second how to plague her; for the gaining her affection is the last thing in your thoughts. You seldom engage in intrigues, but to disturb the happiness of others: a mistress

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who has no lovers would have no charms for you, and if she has, she would be invaluable. Do not all the places through which you have passed furnish me with a thousand examples? Shall I mention your coup d'essai at Turin? the trick you played at Fontainebleau, where you robbed the Princess Palatine's courier upon the highway? and for what purpose was this fine exploit, but to put you in possession of some proofs of her affection for another, in order to give her uneasiness and confusion by reproaches and menaces, which you had no right to use?

"Who but yourself ever took it into his head to place himself in ambush upon the stairs, to disturb a man in an intrigue, and to pull him back by the leg when he was half way up to his mistress's chamber? yet did not you use your friend the Duke of Buckingham in this manner, when he was stealing at night to-----although you were not in the least his rival? How many spies did not you send out after d'Olonne?

[Mademoiselle de la Loupe, who is mentioned in De Retz's Memoirs, vol. iii., p. 95. She married the Count d'Olonne, and became famous for her gallantries, of which the Count de Bussi speaks so much, in his History of the Amours of the Gauls. Her maiden name was Catherine Henrietta d'Angennes, and she was daughter to Charles d'Angennes, Lord of la Loupe, Baron of Amberville, by Mary du Raynier. There is a long character of her by St. Evremond, in his works, vol. i., p. 17. The same writer, mentioning the concern of some ladies for the death of the Duke of Candale, says, "But his true mistress (the Countess d'Olonne) made herself famous by the excess of her affliction, and had, in my opinion, been happy, if she had kept it on to the last. One amour is creditable to a lady; and I know not whether it be not more advantageous to their reputation than never to have been in love."—St. Evremond's works, vol. ii., p. 24.]

"How many tricks, frauds, and persecutions, did you not practise for the Countess de Fiesque, who perhaps might have been constant to you, if you had not yourself forced her to be otherwise? But, to conclude, for the enumeration of your iniquities would be endless, give me leave to ask you, how you came here? Are not we obliged to that same evil genius of yours, which rashly inspired you to intermeddle even in the gallantries of your prince? Show some discretion then on this point here, I beseech you; all the beauties of the court are already engaged; and however docile the English may be with respect to their wives, they can by no means bear the inconstancy of their mistresses, nor patiently suffer the advantages of a rival: suffer them therefore to remain in tranquillity, and do not gain their ill-will for no purpose.

"You certainly will meet with no success with such as are unmarried: honourable views, and good landed property, are required here; and you possess as much of the one as the other. Every country has its customs: in Holland, unmarried ladies are of easy access, and of tender dispositions; but as soon as ever they are married, they become like so many Lucretias: in France, the women are great coquettes before marriage, and

still more so afterwards; but here it is a miracle if a young lady yields to any proposal but that of matrimony and I do not believe you yet so destitute of grace as to think of that."

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Such were Saint Evremond's lectures; but they were all to no purpose: the Chevalier de Grammont only attended to them for his amusement; and though he was sensible of the truth they contained, he paid little regard to them: in fact, being weary of the favours of fortune, he had just resolved to pursue those of love.

Mrs. Middleton was the first whom he attacked: she was one of the Handsomest women in town, though then little known at court: so much of the coquette as to discourage no one; and so great was her desire of appearing magnificently, that she was ambitious to vie with those of the greatest fortunes, though unable to support the expense. All this suited the Chevalier de Grammont; therefore, without trifling away his time in useless ceremonies, he applied to her porter for admittance, and chose one of her lovers for his confidant.

This lover, who was not deficient in wit, was at that time a Mr. Jones, afterwards Earl of Ranelagh: what engaged him to serve the Chevalier de Grammont, was to traverse the designs of a most dangerous rival, and to relieve himself from an expense which began to lie too heavy upon him. In both respects the Chevalier answered his purpose.

Immediately spies were placed, letters and presents flew about: he was received as well as he could wish: he was permitted to ogle: he was even ogled again; but this was all. He found that the fair one was very willing to accept, but was tardy in making returns. This induced him, without giving up his pretensions to her, to seek his fortune elsewhere.

Among the queen's maids of honour, there was one called Warmestre: she was a beauty very different from the other. Mrs. Middleton was well made, fair, and delicate; but had in her behaviour and discourse something precise and affected. The indolent languishing airs she gave herself did not please everybody: people grew weary of those sentiments of delicacy, which she endeavoured to explain without understanding them herself; and instead of entertaining she became tiresome. In these attempts she gave herself so much trouble, that she made the company uneasy, and her ambition to pass for a wit, only established her the reputation of being tiresome, which lasted much longer than her beauty.

Miss Warmestre was brown: she had no shape at all, and still less air; but she had a very lively complexion, very sparkling eyes, tempting looks, which spared nothing that might ensnare a lover, and promised everything which could preserve him. In the end, it very plainly appeared that her consent went along with her eyes to the last degree of indiscretion.

It was between these two goddesses that the inclinations of the Chevalier de Grammont stood wavering, and between whom his presents were divided. Perfumed gloves, pocket looking-glasses, elegant boxes, apricot paste, essences, and other small wares of love, arrived every week from Paris, with some new suit for himself; but, with regard

to more solid presents, such as ear-rings, diamonds, brilliants, and bright guineas, all this was to be met with of the best sort in London, and the ladies were as well pleased with them as if they had been brought from abroad.

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Miss Stewart's beauty began at this time to be celebrated.

[Frances, Duchess of Richmond, daughter of Walter Stewart, son of Walter, Baron of Blantyre, and wife of Charles Stewart, Duke of Richmond and Lennox: a lady of exquisite beauty, if justly represented in a puncheon made by Roettiere, his majesty's engraver of the mint, in order to strike a medal of her, which exhibits the finest face that perhaps was ever seen. The king was supposed to be desperately in love with her; and it became common discourse, that there was a design on foot to get him divorced from the queen, in order to marry this lady. Lord Clarendon was thought to have promoted the match with the Duke of Richmond, thereby to prevent the other design, which he imagined would hurt the king's character, embroil his affairs at present, and entail all the evils of a disputed succession on the nation. Whether he actually encouraged the Duke of Richmond's marriage, doth not appear; but it is certain that he was so strongly possessed of the king's inclination to a divorce, that, even after his disgrace, he was persuaded the Duke of Buckingham had under taken to carry that matter through the parliament. It is certain too that the king considered him as the chief promoter of Miss Stewart's marriage, and resented it in the highest degree. (See Pepys' Diaries. Ed.) The ceremony took place privately, and it was publicly declared in April, 1667. From one of Sir Robert Southwell's dispatches, dated Lisbon, December 7/12, 1667, it appears that the report of the queen's intended divorce had not then subsided in her native country.—History of the Revolutions of Portugal, 1740, p. 352. The duchess became a widow in 1672, and died October 15, 1702. See Burnet's History, Ludlow's Memoirs, and Carte's Life of the Duke of Ormond. A figure in wax of this duchess is still to be seen in Westminster-abbey.]

The Countess of Castlemaine perceived that the king paid attention to her; but, instead of being alarmed at it, she favoured, as far as she was able, this new inclination, whether from an indiscretion common to all those who think themselves superior to the rest of mankind, or whether she designed, by this pastime, to divert the king's attention from the commerce which she held with Jermyn. She was not satisfied with appearing without any degree of uneasiness at a preference which all the court began to remark: she even affected to make Miss Stewart her favourite, and invited her to all the entertainments she made for the king; and, in confidence of her own charms, with the greatest indiscretion, she often kept her to sleep. The king, who seldom neglected to visit the countess before she rose, seldom failed likewise to find Miss Stewart in bed with her. The most indifferent objects have charms in a new attachment: however, the imprudent countess was not jealous of this rival's appearing with her, in such a situation, being confident, that whenever she thought fit, she could triumph over all the advantages which these opportunities could afford Miss Stewart; but she was quite mistaken.

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The Chevalier de Grammont took notice of this conduct, without being able to comprehend it; but, as he was attentive to the inclinations of the king, he began to make his court to him, by enhancing the merit of this new mistress. Her figure was more showy than engaging: it was hardly possible for a woman to have less wit, or more beauty: all her features were fine and regular; but her shape was not good: yet she was slender, straight enough, and taller than the generality of women: she was very graceful, danced well, and spoke French better than her mother tongue: she was well bred, and possessed, in perfection, that air of dress which is so much admired, and which cannot be attained, unless it be taken when young, in France. While her charms were gaining ground in the king's heart, the Countess of Castlemaine amused herself in the gratification of all her caprices.

Mrs. Hyde was one of the first of the beauties who were prejudiced with a blind prepossession in favour of Jermyn she had just married a man whom she loved: by this marriage she became sister-in-law to the duchess, brilliant by her own native lustre, and full of pleasantry and wit. However, she was of opinion, that so long as she was not talked of on account of Jermyn, all her other advantages would avail nothing for her glory: it was, therefore, to receive this finishing stroke, that she resolved to throw herself into his arms.

She was of a middle size, had a skin of a dazzling whiteness, fine hands, and a foot surprisingly beautiful, even in England: long custom had given such a languishing tenderness to her looks, that she never opened her eyes but like a Chinese; and, when she ogled, one would have thought she was doing something else.

Jermyn accepted of her at first; but, being soon puzzled what to do with her, he thought it best to sacrifice her to Lady Castlemaine. The sacrifice was far from being displeasing to her; it was much to her glory to have carried off Jermyn from so many competitors; but this was of no consequence in the end.

Jacob Hall (the famous rope-dancer) was at that time in vogue in London; his strength and agility charmed in public, even to a wish to know what he was in private; for he appeared, in his tumbling dress, to be quite of a different make, and to have limbs very different from the fortunate Jermyn.

["There was a symmetry and elegance, as well as strength and agility, in the person of Jacob Hall, which was much admired by the ladies, who regarded him as a due composition of Hercules and Adonis. The open-hearted Duchess of Cleveland was said to have been in love with this rope-dancer and Goodman the player at the same time. The former received a salary from her grace."—Granger, vol. ii., part 2, p. 461. In reference to the connection between the duchess and the ropedancer, Mr. Pope introduced the following lines into his "Sober Advice from Horace:"

"What

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push'd poor E—s on th' imperial whore?
'Twas but to be where Charles had been before,
The fatal steel unjustly was apply'd,
When not his lust offended, but his pride
Too hard a penance for defeated sin,
Himself shut out, and Jacob Hall let in.”]

The tumbler did not deceive Lady Castlemaine's expectations, if report may be believed; and as was intimated in many a song, much more to the honour of the rope-dancer than of the countess; but she despised all these rumours, and only appeared still more handsome.

While satire thus found employment at her cost, there were continual contests for the favours of another beauty, who was not much more niggardly in that way than herself; this was the Countess of Shrewsbury.

The Earl of Arran, who had been one of her first admirers, was not one of the last to desert her; this beauty, less famous for her conquests than for the misfortunes she occasioned, placed her greatest merits in being more capricious than any other. As no person could boast of being the only one in her favour; so no person could complain of having been ill received.

Jermyn was displeased that she had made no advances to him, without considering that she had no leisure for it; his pride was offended; but the attempt which he made to take her from the rest of her lovers was very ill-advised.

Thomas Howard, brother to the Earl of Carlisle, was one of them; there was not a braver, nor a more genteel man in England; and though he was of a modest demeanour, and his manners appeared gentle and pacific, no person was more spirited nor more passionate. Lady Shrewsbury, inconsiderately returning the first ogles of the invincible Jermyn, did not at all make herself more agreeable to Howard; that, however, she paid little attention to; yet, as she designed to keep fair with him, she consented to accept an entertainment which he had often proposed, and which she durst no longer refuse. A place of amusement, called Spring Garden,—was fixed upon for the scene of this entertainment.

As soon as the party was settled, Jermyn was privately informed of it. Howard had a company in the regiment of guards, and one of the soldiers of his company played pretty well on the bagpipes; this soldier was therefore at the entertainment. Jermyn was at the garden, as by chance; and, puffed up with his former successes, he trusted to his victorious air for accomplishing this last enterprise; he no sooner appeared on the walks, than her ladyship showed herself upon the balcony.



I know not how she stood affected to her hero; but Howard did not fancy him much; this did not prevent his coming up stairs upon the first sign she made to him; and not content with acting the petty tyrant, at an entertainment not made for himself, no sooner had he gained the soft looks of the fair one, than he exhausted all his common-place, and all his stock of low irony, in railing at the entertainment, and ridiculing the music.

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[Spring Garden: They stay there so long as if they wanted not time to finish the race; for it is usual here to find some of the young company till midnight; and the thickets of the garden seem to be contrived to all advantages of gallantry, after they have refreshed with the collation, which is here seldom omitted, at a certain cabaret, in the middle of this paradise, where the forbidden fruits are certain trifling tarts, newts' tongues, spacious meats, and bad Rhenish, for which the gallants pay sauce, as indeed they do at all such houses throughout England; for they think it a piece of frugality beneath them to bargain or account for what they eat in any place, however unreasonably imposed upon."-Character of England, 12mo., 1659, p. 56, written, it is said, by John Evelyn, Esq. Spring Garden is the scene of intrigue in many of our comedies of this period.]

Howard possessed but little raillery, and still less patience; three times was the banquet on the point of being stained with blood; but three times did he suppress his natural impetuosity, in order to satisfy his resentment elsewhere with greater freedom.

Jermyn, without paying the least attention to his ill-humour, pursued his point, continued talking to Lady Shrewsbury, and did not leave her until the repast was ended.

He went to bed, proud of this triumph, and was awakened next morning by a challenge. He took for his second Giles Rawlings, a man of intrigue, and a deep player. Howard took Dillon, who was dexterous and brave, much of a gentleman, and, unfortunately, an intimate friend to Rawlings.

In this duel fortune did not side with the votaries of love poor Rawlings was left stone dead; and Jermyn, having received three wounds, was carried to his uncle's, with very little signs of life.

While the report of this event engaged the courtiers according to their several interests, the Chevalier de Grammont was informed by Jones, his friend, his confidant, and his rival, that there was another gentleman very attentive to Mrs. Middleton: this was Montagu, no very dangerous rival on account of his person, but very much to be feared for his assiduity, the acuteness of his wit, and for some other talents which are of importance, when a man is once permitted to display them.

There needed not half so much to bring into action all the Chevalier's vivacity, in point of competition: vexation awakened in him whatever expedients the desire of revenge, malice, and experience, could suggest, for troubling the designs of a rival, and tormenting a mistress. His first intention was to return her letters, and demand his presents, before he began to tease her; but, rejecting this project, as too weak a revenge for the injustice done him, he was upon the point of conspiring the destruction of poor Mrs. Middleton, when, by accident, he met with Miss Hamilton. From this moment ended all his resentment against Mrs. Middleton, and all his attachment to Miss Warmestre: no longer was he inconstant: no longer were his wishes fluctuating: this

object fixed them all; and, of all his former habits, none remained, except uneasiness and jealousy.

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Here his first care was to please; but he very plainly saw, that to succeed he must act quite in a different manner to that which he had been accustomed to.

The family of the Hamiltons, being very numerous, lived in a large and commodious house, near the court: the Duke of Ormond's family was continually with them; and here persons of the greatest distinction in London, constantly met: the Chevalier de Grammont was here received in a manner agreeable to his merit and quality, and was astonished that he had spent so much time in other places; for, after having made this acquaintance, he was desirous of no other.

All the world agreed that Miss Hamilton was worthy of the most ardent and sincere affection: nobody could boast a nobler birth, nothing was more charming than her person.

[Elizabeth, sister of the author of these Memoirs, and daughter of Sir George Hamilton, fourth son of James, the first Earl of Abercorn, by Mary, third daughter of Thomas, Viscount Thurles, eldest son of Walter, eleventh Earl of Ormond, and sister to James, the first Duke of Ormond. She married Philibert, Count of Grammont, the hero of these Memoirs, by whom she had two daughters: Claude Charlotte, married, 3rd April, 1694, to Henry, Earl of Stafford; and another, who became superior, or abbess, of the Canonesses in Lorraine.]

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

He Falls in love with Miss Hamilton—various adventures at the ball in the queen's drawing-room—curious voyage of his valet-de-chambre to and from Paris.

The Chevalier de Grammont, never satisfied in his amours, was fortunate without being beloved, and became jealous without having an attachment.

Mrs. Middleton, as we have said, was going to experience what methods he could invent to torment, after having experienced his powers of pleasing.

He went in search of her to the queen's drawing-room, where there was a ball; there she was; but fortunately for her, Miss Hamilton was there likewise. It had so happened, that of all the beautiful women at Court, this was the lady whom he had least seen, and whom he had heard most commended; this, therefore, was the first time that he had a close view of her, and he soon found that he had seen nothing at court before this instant; he asked her some questions, to which she replied; as long as she was dancing, his eyes were fixed upon her; and from this time he no longer resented Mrs. Middleton's conduct. Miss Hamilton was at the happy age when the charms of the fair sex begin to bloom; she had the finest shape, the loveliest neck, and most beautiful

arms in the world; she was majestic and graceful in all her movements; and she was the original after which all the ladies copied in their taste and air of dress. Her forehead was open, white, and smooth; her hair

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was well set, and fell with ease into that natural order which it is so difficult to imitate. Her complexion was possessed of a certain freshness, not to be equalled by borrowed colours: her eyes were not large, but they were lively, and capable of expressing whatever she pleased: her mouth was full of graces, and her contour uncommonly perfect; nor was her nose, which was small, delicate, and turned up, the least ornament of so lovely a face. In fine, her air, her carriage, and the numberless graces dispersed over her whole person, made the Chevalier de Grammont not doubt but that she was possessed of every other qualification. Her mind was a proper companion for such a form: she did not endeavour to shine in conversation by those sprightly sallies which only puzzle; and with still greater care she avoided that affected solemnity in her discourse, which produces stupidity; but, without any eagerness to talk, she just said what she ought, and no more. She had an admirable discernment in distinguishing between solid and false wit; and far from making an ostentatious display of her abilities, she was reserved, though very just in her decisions: her sentiments were always noble, and even lofty to the highest extent, when there was occasion; nevertheless, she was less prepossessed with her own merit than is usually the case with those who have so much. Formed, as we have described, she could not fail of commanding love; but so far was she from courting it, that she was scrupulously nice with respect to those whose merit might entitle them to form any pretensions to her.

The more the Chevalier de Grammont was convinced of these truths, the more did he endeavour to please and engage her in his turn: his entertaining wit, his conversation, lively, easy, and always distinguished by novelty, constantly gained him attention; but he was much embarrassed to find that presents, which so easily made their way in his former method of courtship, were no longer proper in the mode which, for the future, he was obliged to pursue.

He had an old valet-de-chambre, called Termes, a bold thief, and a still more impudent liar: he used to send this man from London every week, on the commissions we have before mentioned; but after the disgrace of Mrs. Middleton, and the adventure of Miss Warmestre, Mr. Termes was only employed in bringing his master's clothes from Paris, and he did not always acquit himself with the greatest fidelity in that employment, as will appear hereafter.

The queen was a woman of sense, and used all her endeavours to please the king, by that kind obliging behaviour which her affection made natural to her: she was particularly attentive in promoting every sort of pleasure and amusement especially such as she could be present at herself.

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She had contrived, for this purpose, a splendid masquerade, where those, whom she appointed to dance, had to represent different nations; she allowed some time for preparation, during which we may suppose, the tailors, the mantua makers, and embroiderers, were not idle: nor were the beauties, who were to be there, less anxiously employed; however, Miss Hamilton found time enough to invent two or three little tricks, in a conjuncture so favourable, for turning into ridicule the vain fools of the court. There were two who were very eminently such: the one was Lady Muskerri, who had married her cousin-german; and the other a maid of honour to the Duchess, called Blague.

The first, whose husband most assuredly never married her for beauty, was made like the generality of rich heiresses, to whom just nature seems sparing of her gifts, in proportion as they are loaded with those of fortune: she had the shape of a woman big with child, without being so; but had a very good reason for limping; for, of two legs uncommonly short, one was much shorter than the other. A face suitable to this description gave the finishing stroke to this disagreeable figure.

Miss Blague was another species of ridicule: her shape was neither good nor bad: her countenance bore the appearance of the greatest insipidity, and her complexion was the same all over; with two little hollow eyes, adorned with white eye-lashes, as long as one's finger. With these attractions she placed herself in ambuscade to surprise unwary hearts; but she might have done so in vain, had it not been for the arrival of the Marquis de Brisacier. Heaven seemed to have made them for each other: he had in his person and manners every requisite to dazzle a creature of her character he talked eternally, without saying anything, and in his dress exceeded the most extravagant fashions. Miss Blague believed that all this finery was on her account; and the Marquis believed that her long eyelashes had never taken aim at any but himself: everybody perceived their inclination for each other; but they had only conversed by mute interpreters, when Miss Hamilton took it into her head to intermeddle in their affairs.

She was willing to do everything in order, and therefore began with her cousin Muskerri, on account of her rank. Her two darling foibles were dress and dancing. Magnificence of dress was intolerable with her figure; and though her dancing was still more insupportable, she never missed a ball at court: and the queen had so much complaisance for the public, as always to make her dance; but it was impossible to give her a part in an entertainment so important and splendid as this masquerade: however, she was dying with impatience for the orders she expected.

It was in consequence of this impatience, of which Miss Hamilton was informed, that she founded the design of diverting herself at the expense of this silly woman. The queen sent notes to those whom she appointed to be present, and described the manner in which they were to be dressed. Miss Hamilton wrote a note exactly in the same manner to Lady Muskerri, with directions for her to be dressed in the Babylonian fashion.

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She assembled her counsel to advise about the means of sending it: this cabinet was composed of one of her brothers and a sister, who were glad to divert themselves at the expense of those who deserved it. After having consulted some time, they at last resolved upon a mode of conveying it into her own hands. Lord Muskerri was just going out, when she received it: he was a man of honour, rather serious, very severe, and a mortal enemy to ridicule. His wife's deformity was not so intolerable to him, as the ridiculous figure she made upon all occasions. He thought that he was safe in the present case, not believing that the queen would spoil her masquerade by naming Lady Muskerri as one of the dancers nevertheless, as he was acquainted with the passion his wife had to expose herself in public, by her dress and dancing, he had just been advising her very seriously to content herself with being a spectator of this entertainment, even though the queen should have the cruelty to engage her in it: he then took the liberty to show her what little similarity there was between her figure, and that of persons to whom dancing and magnificence in dress were allowable. His sermon concluded at last, by an express prohibition to solicit a place at this entertainment, which they had no thoughts of giving her; but far from taking his advice in good part, she imagined that he was the only person who had prevented the queen from doing her an honour she so ardently desired; and as soon as he was gone out, her design was to go and throw herself at her Majesty's feet to demand justice. She was in this very disposition when she received the billet: three times did she kiss it; and without regarding her husband's injunctions, she immediately got into her coach in order to get information of the merchants who traded to the Levant, in what manner the ladies of quality dressed in Babylon.

The plot laid for Miss Blague was of a different kind: she had such faith in her charms, and was so confident of their effects, that she could believe anything. Brisacier, whom she looked upon as desperately smitten, had wit, which he set off with common-place talk, and with little sonnets: he sung out of tune most methodically, and was continually exerting one or other of these happy talents: the Duke of Buckingham did all he could to spoil him, by the praises he bestowed both upon his voice and upon his wit.

Miss Blague, who hardly understood a word of French, regulated herself upon the Duke's authority, in admiring the one and the other. It was remarked, that all the words which he sung to her were in praise of fair women, and that always taking this to herself, she cast down her eyes in acknowledgment and consciousness. It was upon these observations they resolved to make a jest of her, the first opportunity.

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While these little projects were forming, the king, who always wished to oblige the Chevalier de Grammont, asked him, if he would make one at the masquerade, on condition of being Miss Hamilton's partner? He did not pretend to dance sufficiently well for an occasion like the present; yet he was far from refusing the offer: "Sire," said he, "of all the favours you have been pleased to show me, since my arrival, I feel this more sensibly than any other; and to convince you of my gratitude, I promise you all the good offices in my power with Miss Stewart." He said this, because they had just given her an apartment separate from the rest of the maids of honour, which made the courtiers begin to pay respect to her. The king was very well pleased at this pleasantry, and having thanked him for so necessary an offer: "Monsieur le Chevalier," said he, "in what style do you intend to dress yourself for the ball? I leave you the choice of all countries." "If so," said the Chevalier, "I will dress after the French manner, in order to disguise myself; for they already do me the honour to take me for an Englishman in your city of London. Had it not been for this, I should have wished to have appeared as a Roman; but for fear of embroiling myself with Prince Rupert, who so warmly espouses the interests of Alexander against Lord Thanet, who declares himself for Caesar, I dare no longer think of assuming the hero: nevertheless, though I may dance awkwardly, yet, by observing the tune, and with a little alertness, I hope to come off pretty well; besides, Miss Hamilton will take care that too much attention shall not be paid to me. As for my dress, I shall send Termes off tomorrow morning; and if I do not show you at his return the most splendid habit you have ever seen, look upon mine as the most disgraced nation in your masquerade."

Termes set out with ample instructions, on the subject of his journey: and his master, redoubling his impatience on an occasion like the present, before the courier could be landed, began to count the minutes in expectation of his return: thus was he employed until the very eve of the ball; and that was the day that Miss Hamilton and her little society had fixed for the execution of their project.

Martial gloves were then very much in fashion: she had by chance several pairs of them: she sent one to Miss Blague, accompanied with four yards of yellow riband, the palest she could find, to which she added this note:

"You were the other day more charming than all the fair women in the world: you looked yesterday still more fair than you did the day before: if you go on, what will become of my heart? But it is a long time since that has been a prey to your pretty little young wild boar's eyes. Shall you be at the masquerade to-morrow? But can there be any charms at an entertainment, at which you are not present? It does not signify: I shall know you in whatever disguise you may be: but I shall be better informed of my fate, by the present I send you: you will wear knots of this riband in your hair; and these gloves will kiss the most beautiful hands in the universe."

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This billet, with the present, was delivered to Miss Blague with the same success as the other had been conveyed to Lady Muskerry. Miss Hamilton had just received an account of it, when the latter came to pay her a visit: something seemed to possess her thoughts very much; when, having stayed some time, her cousin desired her to walk into her cabinet. As soon as they were there: "I desire your secrecy for what I am going to tell you," said Lady Muskerry. "Do not you wonder what strange creatures men are? Do not trust to them, my dear cousin: my Lord Muskerry, who, before our marriage, could have passed whole days and nights in seeing me dance, thinks proper now to forbid me dancing, and says it does not become me. This is not all: he has so often rung in my ears the subject of this masquerade, that I am obliged to hide from him the honour the queen has done me, in inviting me to it. However, I am surprised I am not informed who is to be my partner: but if you knew what a plague it is, to find out, in this cursed town, in what manner the people of Babylon dress, you would pity me for what I have suffered since the time I have been appointed: besides, the cost which it puts me to is beyond all imagination."

Here it was that Miss Hamilton's inclination to laugh, which had increased in proportion as she endeavoured to suppress it, at length overcame her, and broke out in an immoderate fit: Lady Muskerry took it in good humour, not doubting but it was the fantastical conduct of her husband that she was laughing at. Miss Hamilton told her that all husbands were much the same, and that one ought not to be concerned at their whims; that she did not know who was to be her partner at the masquerade; but that, as she was named, the gentleman named with her would certainly not fail to attend her; although she could not comprehend why he had not yet declared himself, unless he likewise had some fantastical spouse, who had forbid him to dance.

This conversation being finished, Lady Muskerry went away in great haste, to endeavour to learn some news of her partner. Those who were accomplices in the plot were laughing very heartily at this visit, when Lord Muskerry paid them one in his turn, and taking Miss Hamilton aside: "Do you know," said he, "whether there is to be any ball in the city tomorrow?" "No," said she; "but why do you ask?" "Because," said he, "I am informed that my wife is making great preparations of dress. I know very well she is not to be at the masquerade: that I have taken care of; but as the devil is in her for dancing, I am very much afraid that she will be affording some fresh subject for ridicule, notwithstanding all my precautions: however, if it was amongst the citizens, at some private party, I should not much mind it."

They satisfied him as well as they could, and having dismissed him, under pretence of a thousand things they had to prepare for the next day, Miss Hamilton thought herself at liberty for that morning, when in came Miss Price, one of the maids of honour to the Duchess. This was just what she was wishing for: This lady and Miss Blague had been at variance some time, on account of Duncan, whom Miss Price had drawn away from the other; and hatred still subsisted between these two divinities.

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Though the maids of honour were not nominated for the masquerade, yet they were to assist at it; and, consequently, were to neglect nothing to set themselves off to advantage. Miss Hamilton had still another pair of gloves of the same sort as those she had sent to Miss Blague, which she made a present of to her rival, with a few knots of the same riband, which appeared to have been made on purpose for her, brown as she was. Miss Price returned her a thousand thanks, and promised to do herself the honour of wearing them at the ball. "You will oblige me if you do," said Miss Hamilton, "but if you mention that such a trifle as this comes from me, I shall never forgive you; but," continued she, "do not go and rob poor Miss Blague of the Marquis Brisacier, as you already have of Duncan: I know very well that it is wholly in your power: you have wit: you speak French: and were he once to converse with you ever so little the other could have no pretensions to him." This was enough: Miss Blague was only ridiculous and coquettish: Miss Price was ridiculous, coquettish, and something else besides.

The day being come, the court, more splendid than ever, exhibited all its magnificence at this masquerade. The company were all met except the Chevalier de Grammont: every body was astonished that he should be one of the last at such a time, as his readiness was so remarkable on every occasion; but they were still more surprised to see him at length appear in an ordinary court-dress, which he had worn before. The thing was preposterous on such an occasion, and very extraordinary with respect to him: in vain had he the finest point-lace, with the largest and best powdered peruke imaginable his dress, magnificent enough for any other purpose, was not at all proper for this entertainment.

The king immediately took notice of it: "Chevalier," said he, "Termes is not arrived then?" "Pardon me, sire," said he, "God be thanked!" "Why God be thanked?" said the king; "has anything happened to him on the road?" "Sire," said the Chevalier de Grammont, "this is the history of my dress, and of Termes, my messenger." At these words the ball, ready to begin, was suspended: the dancers making a circle around the Chevalier de Grammont, he continued his story in the following manner:

"It is now two days since this fellow ought to have been here, according to my orders and his protestations: you may judge of my impatience all this day, when I found he did not come: at last, after I had heartily cursed him, about an hour ago he arrived, splashed all over from head to foot, booted up to the waist, and looking as if he had been excommunicated 'Very well, Mr. Scoundrel,' said I, 'this is just like you, you must be waited for to the very last minute, and it is a miracle that you are arrived at all.' 'Yes, faith,' said he, 'it is a miracle. You are always grumbling: I had the finest suit in the world made for you, which the Duke de Guise

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himself was at the trouble of ordering.' 'Give it me then, scoundrel,' said I. 'Sir,' said he, 'if I did not employ a dozen embroiderers upon it, who did nothing but work day and night, I am a rascal: I never left them one moment: 'And where is it traitor?' said I: 'do not stand here prating, while I should be dressing.' 'I had,' continued he, 'packed it up, made it tight, and folded it in such a manner, that all the rain in the world could never have been able to reach it; and I rid post, day and night, knowing your impatience, and that you were not to be trifled with.' 'But where is it?' said I. 'Lost, sir,' said he, clasping his hands. 'How! lost,' said I, in surprise. 'Yes, lost, perished, swallowed up: what can I say more?' 'What! was the packet-boat cast away then?' said I. 'Oh! indeed, sir, a great deal worse, as you shall see,' answered he: 'I was within half a league of Calais yesterday morning, and I was resolved to go by the sea-side, to make greater haste; but, indeed, they say very true, that nothing is like the highway; for I got into a quicksand, where I sunk up to the chin.' 'A quicksand,' said I, 'near Calais?' 'Yes, sir,' said he, 'and such a quicksand that, the devil take me, if they saw anything but the top of my head when they pulled me out: as for my horse, fifteen men could scarce get him out; but the portmanteau, where I had unfortunately put your clothes, could never be found: it must be at least a league under ground.'

"This, sire," continued the Chevalier de Grammont, "is the adventure, and the relation which this honest gentleman has given me of it. I should certainly have killed him, but I was afraid of making Miss Hamilton wait, and I was desirous of giving your Majesty immediate advice of the quicksand, that your couriers may take care to avoid it."

The King was ready to split his sides with laughing, when the Chevalier de Grammont, resuming the discourse, "apropos, sire," said he, "I had forgot to tell you, that, to increase my ill-humour, I was stopped, as I was getting out of my chair, by the devil of a phantom in masquerade, who would by all means persuade me that the queen had commanded me to dance with her; and as I excused myself with the least rudeness possible, she charged me to find out who was to be her partner, and desired me to send him to her immediately so that your Majesty will do well to give orders about it; for she has placed herself in ambush in a coach, to seize upon all those who pass through Whitehall. However, I must tell you, that it is worth while to see her dress; for she must have at least sixty ells of gauze and silver tissue about her, not to mention a sort of a pyramid upon her head, adorned with a hundred thousand baubles."

This last account surprised all the assembly, except those who had a share in the plot. The queen assured them, that all she had appointed for the ball were present; and the king, having paused some minutes: "I bet," said he, "that it is the Duchess of Newcastle." "And I," said Lord Muskerry, coming up to Miss Hamilton, "will bet it is another fool; for I am very much mistaken if it is not my wife."

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The king was for sending to know who it was, and to bring her in: Lord Muskerry offered himself for that service, for the reason already mentioned; and it was very well he did so. Miss Hamilton was not sorry for this, knowing very well that he was not mistaken in his conjecture; the jest would have gone much farther than she intended, if the Princess of Babylon had appeared in all her glory.

The ball was not very well executed, if one maybe allowed the expression, so long as they danced only slow dances; and yet there were as good dancers, and as beautiful women in this assembly, as were to be found in the whole world: but as their number was not great, they left the French, and went to country dances. When they had danced some time, the king thought fit to introduce his auxiliaries, to give the others a little respite; the queen's and the duchess's maids of honour were therefore called in to dance with the gentlemen.

Then it was that they were at leisure to take notice of Miss Blague, and they found that the billet they had conveyed to her on the part of Brisacier had its effect: she was more yellow than saffron: her hair was stuffed with the citron-coloured riband, which she had put there out of complaisance; and, to inform Brisacier of his fate, she raised often to her head her victorious hands, adorned with the gloves we have before mentioned: but, if they were surprised to see her in a head-dress that made her look more wan than ever, she was very differently surprised to see Miss Price partake with her in every particular of Brisacier's present: her surprise soon turned to jealousy; for her rival had not failed to join in conversation with him, on account of what had been insinuated to her the evening before; nor did Brisacier fail to return her first advances, without paying the least attention to the fair Blague, nor to the signs which she was tormenting herself to make him, to inform him of his happy destiny.

Miss Price was short and thick, and consequently no dancer, the Duke of Buckingham, who brought Brisacier forward as often as he could, came to desire him, on the part of the king, to dance with Miss Blague, without knowing what was then passing in this nymph's heart: Brisacier excused himself, on account of the contempt that he had for country dances: Miss Blague thought that it was herself that he despised; and, seeing that he was engaged in conversation with her mortal enemy, she began to dance, without knowing what she was doing. Though her indignation and jealousy were sufficiently remarkable to divert the court, none but Miss Hamilton and her accomplices, understood the joke perfectly: their pleasure was quite complete; for Lord Muskerry returned, still more confounded at the vision, of which the Chevalier de Grammont had given the description. He acquainted Miss Hamilton, that it was Lady Muskerry herself, a thousand times more ridiculous than she had ever been before, and that he had had an immense trouble to get her home, and place a sentry at her chamber door.

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The reader may think, perhaps, that we have dwelt too long on these trifling incidents; perhaps he may be right. We will therefore pass to others.

Everything favoured the Chevalier de Grammont in the new passion which he entertained: he was not, however, without rivals; but, what is a great deal more extraordinary, he was without uneasiness: he was acquainted with their understandings, and no stranger to Miss Hamilton's way of thinking.

Among her lovers, the most considerable, though the least professedly so, was the Duke of York: it was in vain for him to conceal it, the court was too well acquainted with his character to doubt of his inclinations for her. He did not think it proper to declare such sentiments as were not fit for Miss Hamilton to hear; but he talked to her as much as he could, and ogled her with great assiduity. As hunting was his favourite diversion, that sport employed him one part of the day, and he came home generally much fatigued; but Miss Hamilton's presence revived him, when he found her either with the queen or the duchess. There it was that, not daring to tell her of what lay heavy on his heart, he entertained her with what he had in his head: telling her miracles of the cunning of foxes and the mettle of horses; giving her accounts of broken legs and arms, dislocated shoulders, and other curious and entertaining adventures; after which, his eyes told her the rest, till such time as sleep interrupted their conversation; for these tender interpreters could not help sometimes composing themselves in the midst of their ogling.

The duchess was not at all alarmed at a passion which her rival was far from thinking sincere, and with which she used to divert herself, as far as respect would admit her; on the contrary, as her highness had an affection and esteem for Miss Hamilton, she never treated her more graciously than on the present occasion.

The two Russells, uncle and nephew,—were two other of the Chevalier de Grammont's rivals: the uncle was full seventy, and had distinguished himself by his courage and fidelity in the civil wars. His passions and intentions, with regard to Miss Hamilton, appeared both at once; but his magnificence only appeared by halves in those gallantries which love inspires. It was not long since the fashion of high crowned hats had been left off, in order to fall into the other extreme. Old Russell, amazed at so terrible a change, resolved to keep a medium, which made him remarkable: he was still more so, by his constancy for cut doublets, which he supported a long time after they had been universally suppressed; but, what was more surprising than all, was a certain mixture of avarice and liberality, constantly at war with each other, ever since he had entered the list with love.

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His nephew was only of a younger brother's family, but was considered as his uncle's heir; and though he was under the necessity of attending to his uncle for an establishment, and still more so of humouring him, in order to get his estate, he could not avoid his fate. Mrs. Middleton showed him a sufficient degree of preference; but her favours could not secure him from the charms of Miss Hamilton: his person would have had nothing disagreeable in it, if he had but left it to nature; but he was formal in all his actions, and silent even to stupidity; and yet rather more tiresome when he did speak.

The Chevalier de Grammont, very much at his ease in all these competitions, engaged himself more and more in his passion, without forming other designs, or conceiving other hopes, than to render himself agreeable. Though his passion was openly declared, no person at court regarded it otherwise than as a habit of gallantry, which goes no farther than to do justice to merit.

His monitor, Saint Evremond, was quite of a different opinion; and finding, that, besides an immense increase of magnificence and assiduity, he regretted those hours which he bestowed on play; that he no longer sought after those long and agreeable conversations they used to have together; and that this new attachment everywhere robbed him of himself:

"Monsieur le Chevalier," said he, "methinks that for some time you have left the town beauties and their lovers in perfect repose: Mrs. Middleton makes fresh conquests with impunity, and wears your presents, under your nose, without your taking the smallest notice. Poor Miss Warmestre has been very quietly brought to bed in the midst of the court, without your having even said a word about it. I foresaw it plain enough, Monsieur le Chevalier, you have got acquainted with Miss Hamilton, and, what has never before happened to you, you are really in love; but let us consider a little what may be the consequence. In the first place, then, I believe, you have not the least intention of seducing her: such is her birth and merit, that if you were in possession of the estate and title of your family, it might be excusable in you to offer yourself upon honourable terms, however ridiculous marriage may be in general; for, if you only wish for wit, prudence, and the treasures of beauty, you could not pay your addresses to a more proper person: but for you, who possess only a very moderate share of those of fortune, you cannot pay your addresses more improperly.

"For your brother Toulangeon, whose disposition I am acquainted with, will not have the complaisance to die, to favour your pretensions: but suppose you had a competent fortune for you both—and that is supposing a good deal—are you acquainted with the delicacy, not to say capriciousness, of this fair one about such an engagement? Do you know that she has had the choice of the best matches in England? The Duke of Richmond paid his addresses

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to her first; but though he was in love with her, still he was mercenary: however, the king, observing that want of fortune was the only impediment to the match, took that article upon himself, out of regard to the Duke of Ormond, to the merit and birth of Miss Hamilton, and to her father's services; but, resenting that a man, who pretended to be in love, should bargain like a merchant, and likewise reflecting upon his character in the world, she did not think that being Duchess of Richmond was a sufficient recompense for the danger that was to be feared from a brute and a debauchee.

"Has not little Jermyn, notwithstanding his uncle's great estate, and his own brilliant reputation, failed in his suit to her? And has she ever so much as vouchsafed to look at Henry Howard, who is upon the point of being the first duke in England, and who is already in actual possession of all the estates of the house of Norfolk? I confess that he is a clown, but what other lady in all England would not have dispensed with his stupidity and his disagreeable person, to be the first duchess in the kingdom, with twenty-five thousand a year?

"To conclude, Lord Falmouth has told me himself, that he has always looked upon her as the only acquisition wanting to complete his happiness: but, that even at the height of the splendour of his fortune, he never had had the assurance to open his sentiments to her; that he either felt in himself too much weakness, or too much pride, to be satisfied with obtaining her solely by the persuasion of her relations; and that, though the first refusals of the fair on such occasions are not much minded, he knew with what an air she had received the addresses of those whose persons she did not like. After this, Monsieur le Chevalier, consider what method you intend to pursue: for, if you are in love, the passion will still increase, and the greater the attachment, the less capable will you be of making those serious reflections that are now in your power."

"My poor philosopher," answered the Chevalier de Grammont, "you understand Latin very well, you can make good verses, you understand the course, and are acquainted with the nature of the stars in the firmament; but, as for the luminaries of the terrestrial globe, you are utterly unacquainted with them: you have told me nothing about Miss Hamilton, but what the king told me three days ago. That she has refused the savages you have mentioned is all in her favour if she had admitted their addresses, I would have had nothing to say to her, though I love her to distraction. Attend now to what I am going to say: I am resolved to marry her, and I will have my tutor Saint Evremond himself to be the first man to commend me for it. As for an establishment, I shall make my peace with the king, and will solicit him to make her one of the ladies of the bed-chamber to the queen: this he will grant me. Toulangeon will die, without my assistance.

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[Count de Toulangeon was elder brother to Count Grammont, who, by his death, in 1679, became, according to St. Evremond, on that event, one of the richest noblemen at court.—See St. Evremond's Works. vol. ii., p. 327.]

“Notwithstanding all his care; Miss Hamilton will have Semeat,—[A country seat belonging to the family of the Grammonts.]—with the Chevalier de Grammont, as an indemnification for the Norfolks and Richmonds. Now, have you any thing to advance against this project? For I will bet you an hundred louis, that everything will happen as I have foretold it.”

At this time the king's attachment to Miss Stewart was so public, that every person perceived, that if she was but possessed of art, she might become as absolute a mistress over his conduct as she was over his heart. This was a fine opportunity for those who had experience and ambition. The Duke of Buckingham formed the design of governing her, in order to ingratiate himself with the king: God knows what a governor he would have been, and what a head he was possessed of, to guide another; however, he was the properest man in the world to insinuate himself with Miss Stewart: she was childish in her behaviour, and laughed at everything, and her taste for frivolous amusements, though unaffected, was only allowable in a girl about twelve or thirteen years old. A child, however, she was, in every other respect, except playing with a doll: blind man's buff was her most favourite amusement: she was building castles of cards, while the deepest play was going on in her apartments, where you saw her surrounded by eager courtiers, who handed her the cards, or young architects, who endeavoured to imitate her.

She had, however, a passion for music, and had some taste for singing. The Duke of Buckingham, who built the finest towers of cards imaginable, had an agreeable voice: she had no aversion to scandal: and the duke was both the father and the mother of scandal, he made songs, and invented old women's stories, with which she was delighted; but his particular talent consisted in turning into ridicule whatever was ridiculous in other people, and in taking them off, even in their presence, without their perceiving it: in short, he knew how to act all parts with so much grace and pleasantry, that it was difficult to do without him, when he had a mind to make himself agreeable; and he made himself so necessary to Miss Stewart's amusement, that she sent all over the town to seek for him, when he did not attend the king to her apartments.

He was extremely handsome, and still thought himself much more so than he really was: although he had a great deal of discernment, yet his vanity made him mistake some civilities as intended for his person, which were only bestowed on his wit and drollery: in short, being seduced by too good an opinion of his own merit, he forgot his first project and his Portuguese mistress, in order to pursue a fancy in which he mistook himself; for he no sooner began to act a serious part with Miss Stewart, than he met with so severe a repulse that he abandoned, at once, all his designs upon her:

however, the familiarity she had procured him with the king, opened the way to those favours to which he was afterwards advanced.

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[George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham, was born 30th January, 1627. Lord Orford observes, "When this extraordinary man, with the figure and genius of Alcibiades, could equally charm the presbyterian Fairfax and the dissolute Charles; when he alike ridiculed that witty king and his solemn chancellor: when he plotted the ruin of his country with a cabal of bad ministers, or, equally unprincipled, supported its cause with bad patriots,—one laments that such parts should have been devoid of every virtue: but when Alcibiades turns chemist; when he is a real bubble and a visionary miser; when ambition is but a frolic; when the worst designs are for the foolish ends,—contempt extinguishes all reflection on his character."]

Lord Arlington took up the project which the Duke of Buckingham had abandoned, and endeavoured to gain possession of the mind of the mistress, in order to govern the master. A man of greater merit and higher birth than himself might, however, have been satisfied with the fortune he had already acquired. His first negotiations were during the treaty of the Pyrenees: and though he was unsuccessful in his proceedings for his employer, yet he did not altogether lose his time; for he perfectly acquired, in his exterior, the serious air and profound gravity of the Spaniards, and imitated pretty well their tardiness in business: he had a scar across his nose, which was covered by a long patch, or rather by a small plaister, in form of a lozenge.

Scars in the face commonly give a man a certain fierce and martial air, which sets him off to advantage; but it was quite the contrary with him, and this remarkable plaister so well suited his mysterious looks, that it seemed an addition to his gravity and self-sufficiency.

Arlington, under the mask of this compound countenance where great earnestness passed for business, and impenetrable stupidity for secrecy, had given himself the character of a great politician; and no one having leisure to examine him, he was taken at his word, and had been made minister and secretary of state, upon the credit of his own importance.

His ambition soaring still above these high stations, after having provided himself with a great number of fine maxims, and some historical anecdotes, he obtained an audience of Miss Stewart, in order to display them; at the same time offering her his most humble services, and best advice, to assist her in conducting herself in the situation to which it had pleased God and her virtue to raise her. But he was only in the peface of his speech, when she recollected that he was at the head of those whom the Duke of Buckingham used to mimic; and as his presence and his language exactly revived the ridiculous ideas that had been given her of him, she could not forbear bursting out into a fit of laughter in his face, so much the more violent as she had for a long time struggled to suppress it.

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The minister was enraged: his pride became his post, and his punctilious behaviour merited all the ridicule which could be attached to it: he quitted her abruptly, with all the fine advice he had prepared for her, and was almost tempted to carry it to Lady Castlemaine, and to unite himself with her interests; or immediately to quit the court party, and declaim freely in parliament against the grievances of the state, and particularly to propose an act to forbid the keeping of mistresses; but his prudence conquered his resentments; and thinking only how to enjoy with pleasure the blessings of fortune, he sent to Holland for a wife, in order to complete his felicity.

Hamilton was, of all the courtiers, the best qualified to succeed in an enterprise, in which the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Arlington had miscarried: he was thinking upon it; but his natural coquetry traversed his intentions, and made him neglect the most advantageous prospects in the world, in order unnecessarily to attend to the advances and allurements thrown out to him by the Countess of Chesterfield. This was one of the most agreeable women in the world: she had a most exquisite shape, though she was not very tall; her complexion was extremely fair, with all the expressive charms of a brunette; she had large blue eyes, very tempting and alluring; her manners were engaging; her wit lively and amusing; but her heart, ever open to tender sentiments, was neither scrupulous in point of constancy, nor nice in point of sincerity. She was daughter to the Duke of Ormond, and Hamilton, being her cousin-german, they might be as much as they pleased in each other's company without being particular; but as soon as her eyes gave him some encouragement, he entertained no other thoughts than how to please her,

[This lady was Isabella, daughter to Lewis de Nassau, Lord Beverwaert, son to Maurice, Prince of Orange, and Count Nassau. By her, Lord Arlington had an only daughter, named Isabella.]

without considering her fickleness, or the obstacles he had to encounter. His intention, which we mentioned before, of establishing himself in the confidence of Miss Stewart, no longer occupied his thoughts: she now was of opinion that she was capable of being the mistress of her own conduct: she had done all that was necessary to inflame the king's passions, without exposing her virtue by granting the last favours; but the eagerness of a passionate lover, blessed with favourable opportunities, is difficult to withstand, and still more difficult to vanquish; and Miss Stewart's virtue was almost exhausted, when the queen was attacked with a violent fever, which soon reduced her to extreme danger.

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Then it was that Miss Stewart was greatly pleased with herself for the resistance she had made, though she had paid dearly for it: a thousand flattering hopes of greatness and glory filled her heart, and the additional respect that was universally paid her, contributed not a little to increase them. The queen was given over by her physicians: the few Portuguese women that had not been sent back to their own country filled the court with doleful cries; and the good nature of the king was much affected with the situation in which he saw a princess, whom, though he did not love her, yet he greatly esteemed. She loved him tenderly, and thinking that it was the last time she should ever speak to him, she told him, that the concern he showed for her death, was enough to make her quit life with regret; but that not possessing charms sufficient to merit his tenderness, she had at least the consolation in dying to give place to a consort who might be more worthy of it, and to whom heaven, perhaps, might grant a blessing that had been refused to her. At these words, she bathed his hands with some tears, which he thought would be her last: he mingled his own with hers; and without supposing she would take him at his word, he conjured her to live for his sake. She had never yet disobeyed him; and, however dangerous sudden impulses may be, when one is between life and death, this transport of joy, which might have proved fatal to her, saved her life, and the king's wonderful tenderness had an effect, for which every person did not thank heaven in the same manner.

Jermyn had now for some time been recovered of his wounds: however, Lady Castlemaine, finding his health in as deplorable a condition as ever, resolved to regain the king's heart, but in vain: for notwithstanding the softness of her tears, and the violence of her passions, Miss Stewart wholly possessed it. During this period the court was variously entertained: sometimes there were promenades, and at others the court beauties sallied out on horseback, and to make attacks with their charms and graces, sometimes successfully, sometimes otherwise, but always to the best of their abilities at other seasons there were such shows on the river, as the city of London alone can afford.

The Thames washes the sides of a large though not a magnificent palace of the kings of Great Britain:—[This was Whitehall, which was burnt down, except the banqueting-house, 4th January, 1698.]—from the stairs of this palace the court used to take water, in the summer evenings, when the heat and dust prevented their walking in the park: an infinite number of open boats, filled with the court and city beauties, attended the barges, in which were the Royal Family: collations, music, and fireworks, completed the scene. The Chevalier de Grammont always made one of the company, and it was very seldom that he did not add something of his own invention, agreeably to surprise by some unexpected stroke of magnificence and gallantry. Sometimes he had complete concerts of vocal and instrumental music, which he privately brought from Paris, and which struck up on a sudden in the midst of these parties; sometimes he gave banquets, which likewise came from France, and which, even in the midst of London, surpassed the king's collations. These entertainments sometimes exceeded, as others fell short of his expectations, but they always cost him an immense deal of money.

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Lord Falmouth was one of those who had the greatest friendship and esteem for the Chevalier de Grammont: this profusion gave him concern, and as he often used to go and sup with him without ceremony, one day finding only Saint Evremond there, and a supper fit for half a dozen guests, who had been invited in form: "You must not," said he, addressing himself to the Chevalier de Grammont, "be obliged to me for this visit. I come from the king's 'coucher', where all the discourse was about you; and I can assure you that the manner in which the king spoke of you, could not afford you so much pleasure as I myself felt upon the occasion. You know very well, that he has long since offered you his good offices with the King of France; and for my own part," continued he, smiling, "you know very well that I would solicit him so to do, if it was not through fear of losing you as soon as your peace is made; but, thanks to Miss Hamilton, you are in no great haste: however, I am ordered by the king, my master, to acquaint you, that while you remain here, until you are restored to the favour of your sovereign, he presents you with a pension of fifteen hundred Jacobus's: it is indeed a trifle, considering the figure the Chevalier de Grammont makes among us; but it will assist him," said he, embracing him, "to give us sometimes a supper."

The Chevalier de Grammont received, as he ought, the offer of a favour he did not think proper to accept: "I acknowledge," said he, "the king's bounty in this proposal, but I am still more sensible of Lord Falmouth's generosity in it; and I request him to assure his Majesty of my perfect gratitude: the king, my master, will not suffer me to want, when he thinks fit to recall me; and while I continue here, I will let you see that I have wherewithal to give my English friends now and then a supper."

At these words, he called for his strong box, and showed him seven or eight thousand guineas in solid gold. Lord Falmouth, willing to improve to the Chevalier's advantage the refusal of so advantageous an offer, gave Monsieur de Comminge, then ambassador at the English court, an account of it; nor did Monsieur de Comminge fail to represent properly the merit of such a refusal to the French court.

Hyde Park, every one knows, is the promenade of London! nothing was so much in fashion, during the fine weather, as that promenade, which was the rendezvous of magnificence and beauty: every one, therefore, who had either sparkling eyes, or a splendid equipage, constantly repaired thither; and the king seemed pleased with the place.

Coaches with glasses were then a late invention.

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[Coaches were first introduced into England in the year 1564. Taylor, the water poet, (Works, 1630, p. 240,) says,—“One William Boonen, a Dutchman, brought first the use of coaches hither; and the said Boonen was Queen Elizabeth’s coachman; for, indeed, a coach was a strange monster in those days, and the sight of them put both horse and man into amazement.” Dr. Percy observes, they were first drawn by two horses, and that it was the favourite Buckingham, who, about 1619, began to draw with six horses. About the same time, he introduced the sedan. ‘The Ultimum Vale of John Carleton’, 4to, 1663, p. 23, will, in a great measure, ascertain the time of the introduction of glass coaches. He says, “I could wish her (i. e. Mary Carleton’s) coach (which she said my lord Taff bought for her in England, and sent it over to her, made of the new fashion, wide glasse, very stately; and her pages and lacquies were of the same livery,) was come for me,” &c.]

The ladies were afraid of being shut up in them: they greatly preferred the pleasure of showing almost their whole persons, to the conveniences of modern coaches: that which was made for the king not being remarkable for its elegance, the Chevalier de Grammont was of opinion that something ingenious might be invented, which should partake of the ancient fashion, and likewise prove preferable to the modern; he therefore sent away Termes privately with all the necessary instructions to Paris: the Duke of Guise was likewise charged with this commission; and the courier, having by the favour of Providence escaped the quicksand, in a month’s time brought safely over to England the most elegant and magnificent calash that had ever been seen, which the Chevalier presented to the king.

The Chevalier de Grammont had given orders that fifteen hundred louis should be expended upon it; but the Duke of Guise, who was his friend, to oblige him, laid out two thousand. All the court was in admiration at the magnificence of the present; and the king, charmed with the Chevalier’s attention to everything which could afford him pleasure, failed not to acknowledge it: he would not, however, accept a present of so much value, but upon condition that the Chevalier should not refuse another from him.

The queen, imagining that so splendid a carriage might prove fortunate for her, wished to appear in it first, with the Duchess of York. Lady Castlemaine, who had seen them in it, thinking that it set off a fine figure to greater advantage than any other, desired the king to lend her this wonderful calash to appear in it the first fine day in Hyde Park: Miss Stewart had the same wish, and requested to have it on the same day. As it was impossible to reconcile these two goddesses, whose former union was turned into mortal hatred, the king was very much perplexed.

Lady Castlemaine was with child, and threatened to miscarry, if her rival was preferred; Miss Stewart threatened, that she never would be with child, if her request was not granted. This menace prevailed, and Lady Castlemaine’s rage was so great, that she had almost kept her word; and it was believed that this triumph cost her rival some of her innocence.

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The queen dowager, who, though she had no share in these broils, had no objection to them, and as usual being diverted with this circumstance, she took occasion to joke with the Chevalier de Grammont, for having thrown this bone of contention among such competitors; and did not fail to give him, in the presence of the whole court, those praises which so magnificent a present deserved: "But how comes it," said she, "that you have no equipage yourself, though you are at so great an expense? for I am told that you do not keep even a single footman, and that one of the common runners in the streets lights you home with a stinking link." "Madam," said he, "the Chevalier de Grammont hates pomp: my linkboy, of whom you speak, is faithful to my service; and besides, he is one of the bravest fellows in the world. Your Majesty is unacquainted with the nation of link-boys: it is a charming one, I can assure you: a man cannot step out in the night without being surrounded by a dozen of them. The first time I became acquainted with them, I retained all that offered me their services; so that when I arrived at Whitehall, I had at least two hundred about my chair: the sight was new; for those who had seen me pass with this illumination, asked whose funeral it was. These gentlemen, however, began fighting about some dozen shillings I had thrown among them then; and he whom your Majesty mentions having beaten three or four of his companions, I retained him for his valour. As for the parade of coaches and footmen, I despise it: I have sometimes had five or six valets-de-chambre at once, without having a single servant in livery, except my chaplain Poussatin." "How!" said the queen, bursting out laughing, "a chaplain in your livery! he surely was not a priest?" "Pardon me, madam," said he, "and the first priest in the world for dancing the Biscayan jig." "Chevalier," said the king, "pray tell us the history of your chaplain Poussatin."

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Ambition to pass for a wit, only established her tiresome
An affectation of purity of manners
Despising everything which was not like themselves
Duke would see things if he could
Every thing that is necessary is honourable in politics
Good attendants, but understood cheating still better
Great earnestness passed for business
Hardly possible for a woman to have less wit, or more beauty
He talked eternally, without saying anything
His mistress given him by his priests for penance
Impenetrable stupidity (passed) for secrecy
Life, in his opinion, was too short to read all sorts of books
Never felt the pressure of indigence
Not that he wanted capacity, but he was too self-sufficient
Obstinate against all other advices
One amour is creditable to a lady
Possessed but little raillery, and still less patience



Reasons of state assume great privileges
She just said what she ought, and no more
They can by no means bear the inconstancy of their mistresses
Very willing to accept, but was tardy in making returns
Wealth was necessary for the conveniencies of a long life