LANG ANDREW

THE VALET'S TRAGEDY, AND OTHER STUDIES

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Содержание

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PREFACE

These studies in secret history follow no chronological order. The affair of James de la Cloche only attracted the author's attention after most of the volume was in print. But any reader curious in the veiled intrigues of the Restoration will probably find it convenient to peruse 'The Mystery of James de la Cloche' after the essay on 'The Valet's Master,' as the puzzling adventures of de la Cloche occurred in the years (1668-1669), when the Valet was consigned to lifelong captivity, and the Master was broken on the wheel. What would have been done to 'Giacopo Stuardo' had he been a subject of Louis XIV., "tis better only guessing.' But his fate, whoever he may have been, lay in the hands of Lord Ailesbury's 'good King,' Charles II., and so he had a good deliverance.

The author is well aware that whosoever discusses historical mysteries pleases the public best by being quite sure, and offering a definite and certain solution. Unluckily Science forbids, and conscience is on the same side. We verily do not know how

the false Pucelle arrived at her success with the family of the true Maid; we do not know, or pretend to know, who killed Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey; or how Amy Robsart came by her death; or why the Valet was so important a prisoner. It is only possible to restate the cases, and remove, if we may, the errors and confusions which beset the problems. Such a tiny point as the year of Amy Robsart's marriage is stated variously by our historians. To ascertain the truth gave the author half a day's work, and, at last, he would have voted for the wrong year, had he not been aided by the superior acuteness of his friend, Mr. Hay Fleming. He feels morally certain that, in trying to set historians right about Amy Robsart, he must have committed some conspicuous blunders; these always attend such enterprises of rectification.

With regard to Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, Mr. A. W. Crawley-Boevey points out to me that in an unpublished letter of Mr. Alexander Herbert Phaire in 1743-44 (Addit. MSS. British Museum 4291, fol. 150) Godfrey is spoken of in connection with his friend Valentine Greatrakes, the 'miraculous Conformist,' or 'Irish Stroker,' of the Restoration. 'It is a pity,' Mr. Phaire remarks, 'that Sir Edmund's letters, to the number of 104, are not in somebody's hands that would oblige the world by publishing them. They contain many remarkable things, and the best and truest secret history in King Charles II.'s reign.' Where are these letters now? Mr. Phaire does not say to whom they were addressed, perhaps to Greatrakes, who named his second son

after Sir Edmund, or to Colonel Phaire, the Regicide. This Mr. Phaire of 1744 was of Colonel Phaire's family. It does not seem quite certain whether Le Fevre, or Lee Phaire, was the real name of the so-called Jesuit whom Bedloe accused of the murder of Sir Edmund.

Of the studies here presented, 'The Valet's Master,' 'The Mystery of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey,' 'The False Jeanne d'Arc,' 'The Mystery of Amy Robsart,' and 'The Mystery of James de la Cloche,' are now published for the first time. Part of 'The Voices of Jeanne d'Arc,' is from a paper by the author in 'The Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.' 'The Valet's Tragedy' is mainly from an article in 'The Monthly Review,' revised, corrected, and augmented. 'The Queen's Marie' is a recast of a paper in 'Blackwood's Magazine'; 'The Truth about "Fisher's Ghost,"' and 'Junius and Lord Lyttelton's Ghost' are reprinted, with little change, from the same periodical. 'The Mystery of Lord Bateman' is a recast of an article in 'The Cornhill Magazine.' The earlier part of the essay on Shakespeare and Bacon appeared in 'The Quarterly Review.' The author is obliged to the courtesy of the proprietors and editors of these serials for permission to use his essays again, with revision and additions.*

*Essays by the author on 'The False Pucelle' and on 'Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey' have appeared in The Nineteenth Century (1895) and in The Cornhill Magazine, but these are not the papers here presented.

The author is deeply indebted to the generous assistance of Father Gerard and Father Pollen, S.J.; and, for making transcripts of unpublished documents, to Miss E. M. Thompson and Miss Violet Simpson.

Since passing the volume for the press the author has received from Mr. Austin West, at Rome, a summary of Armanni's letter about Giacopo Stuardo. He is led thereby to the conclusion that Giacopo was identical with the eldest son of Charles II. – James de la Cloche – but conceives that, at the end of his life, James was insane, or at least was a 'megalomaniac,' or was not author of his own Will.

I. THE VALET'S TRAGEDY

1. THE LEGEND OF THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

The Mystery of the Man in the Iron Mask is, despite a pleasant saying of Lord Beaconsfield's, one of the most fascinating in history. By a curious coincidence the wildest legend on the subject, and the correct explanation of the problem, were offered to the world in the same year, 1801. According to this form of the legend, the Man in the Iron Mask was the genuine Louis XIV., deprived of his rights in favour of a child of Anne of Austria and of Mazarin. Immured in the Isles Sainte-Marguerite, in the bay of Cannes (where you are shown his cell, looking north to the sunny town), he married, and begot a son. That son was carried to Corsica, was named de Buona Parte, and was the ancestor of Napoleon. The Emperor was thus the legitimate representative of the House of Bourbon.

This legend was circulated in 1801, and is referred to in a proclamation of the Royalists of La Vendee. In the same year, 1801, Roux Fazaillac, a Citoyen and a revolutionary legislator, published a work in which he asserted that the Man in the Iron Mask (as known in rumour) was not one man, but a myth, in

which the actual facts concerning at least two men were blended. It is certain that Roux Fazaillac was right; or that, if he was wrong, the Man in the Iron Mask was an obscure valet, of French birth, residing in England, whose real name was Martin.

Before we enter on the topic of this poor menial's tragic history, it may be as well to trace the progress of the romantic legend, as it blossomed after the death of the Man, whose Mask was not of iron, but of black velvet. Later we shall show how the legend struck root and flowered, from the moment when the poor valet, Martin (by his prison pseudonym 'Eustache Dauger'), was immured in the French fortress of Pignerol, in Piedmont (August 1669).

The Man, IN CONNECTION WITH THE MASK, is first known to us from a kind of notebook kept by du Junca, Lieutenant of the Bastille. On September 18, 1698, he records the arrival of the new Governor of the Bastille, M. de Saint-Mars, bringing with him, from his last place, the Isles Sainte-Marguerite, in the bay of Cannes, 'an old prisoner whom he had at Pignerol. He keeps the prisoner always masked, his name is not spoken… and I have put him, alone, in the third chamber of the Bertaudiere tower, having furnished it some days before with everything, by order of M. de Saint-Mars. The prisoner is to be served and cared for by M. de Rosarges,' the officer next in command under Saint-Mars.*

*Funck-Brentano. Legendes et Archives de la Bastille, pp. 86, 87,

Paris, 1898, p. 277, a facsimile of this entry.

The prisoner's death is entered by du Junca on November 19, 1703. To that entry we return later.

The existence of this prisoner was known and excited curiosity. On October 15, 1711, the Princess Palatine wrote about the case to the Electress Sophia of Hanover, 'A man lived for long years in the Bastille, masked, and masked he died there. Two musketeers were by his side to shoot him if ever he unmasked. He ate and slept in his mask. There must, doubtless, have been some good reason for this, as otherwise he was very well treated, well lodged, and had everything given to him that he wanted. He took the Communion masked; was very devout, and read perpetually.'

On October 22, 1711, the Princess writes that the Mask was an English nobleman, mixed up in the plot of the Duke of Berwick against William III. – Fenwick's affair is meant. He was imprisoned and masked that the Dutch usurper might never know what had become of him.*

* Op. cit. 98, note 1.

The legend was now afloat in society. The sub-commandant of the Bastille from 1749 to 1787, Chevalier, declared, obviously on the evidence of tradition, that all the Mask's furniture and clothes were destroyed at his death, lest they might yield a clue to his identity. Louis XV. is said to have told Madame de Pompadour that the Mask was 'the minister of an Italian prince.' Louis XVI.

told Marie Antoinette (according to Madame de Campan) that the Mask was a Mantuan intriguer, the same person as Louis XV. indicated. Perhaps he was, it is one of two possible alternatives. Voltaire, in the first edition of his 'Siecle de Louis XIV.,' merely spoke of a young, handsome, masked prisoner, treated with the highest respect by Louvois, the Minister of Louis XIV. At last, in 'Questions sur l'Encyclopedie' (second edition), Voltaire averred that the Mask was the son of Anne of Austria and Mazarin, an elder brother of Louis XIV. Changes were rung on this note: the Mask was the actual King, Louis XIV. was a bastard. Others held that he was James, Duke of Monmouth – or Moliere! In 1770 Heiss identified him with Mattioli, the Mantuan intriguer, and especially after the appearance of the book by Roux Fazaillac, in 1801, that was the generally accepted opinion.

It MAY be true, in part. Mattioli MAY have been the prisoner who died in the Bastille in November 1703, but the legend of the Mask's prison life undeniably arose out of the adventure of our valet, Martin or Eustache Dauger.

2. THE VALET'S HISTORY

After reading the arguments of the advocates of Mattioli, I could not but perceive that, whatever captive died, masked, at the Bastille in 1703, the valet Dauger was the real source of most of the legends about the Man in the Iron Mask. A study of M. Lair's book 'Nicholas Foucquet' (1890) confirmed this

opinion. I therefore pushed the inquiry into a source neglected by the French historians, namely, the correspondence of the English ambassadors, agents, and statesmen for the years 1668, 1669.* One result is to confirm a wild theory of my own to the effect that the Man in the Iron Mask (if Dauger were he) may have been as great a mystery to himself as to historical inquirers. He may not have known WHAT he was imprisoned for doing! More important is the probable conclusion that the long and mysterious captivity of Eustache Dauger, and of another perfectly harmless valet and victim, was the mere automatic result of the 'red tape' of the old French absolute monarchy. These wretches were caught in the toils of the system, and suffered to no purpose, for no crime. The two men, at least Dauger, were apparently mere supernumeraries in the obscure intrigue of a conspirator known as Roux de Marsilly.

*The papers are in the Record Office; for the contents see the following essay, 'The Valet's Master.'

This truly abominable tragedy of Roux de Marsilly is 'another story,' narrated in the following essay. It must suffice here to say that, in 1669, while Charles II. was negotiating the famous, or infamous, secret treaty with Louis XIV. – the treaty of alliance against Holland, and in favour of the restoration of Roman Catholicism in England – Roux de Marsilly, a French Huguenot, was dealing with Arlington and others, in favour of a Protestant league against France.

When he started from England for Switzerland in February

1669, Marsilly left in London a valet, called by him 'Martin,' who had quitted his service and was living with his own family. This man is the 'Eustache Dauger' of our mystery. The name is his prison pseudonym, as 'Lestang' was that of Mattioli. The French Government was anxious to lay hands on him, for he had certainly, as the letters of Marsilly prove, come and gone freely between that conspirator and his English employers. How much Dauger knew, what amount of mischief he could effect, was uncertain. Much or little, it was a matter which, strange to say, caused the greatest anxiety to Louis XIV. and to his Ministers for very many years. Probably long before Dauger died (the date is unknown, but it was more than twenty-five years after Marsilly's execution), his secret, if secret he possessed, had ceased to be of importance. But he was now in the toils of the French red tape, the system of secrecy which rarely released its victim. He was guarded, we shall see, with such unheard-of rigour, that popular fancy at once took him for some great, perhaps royal, personage.

Marsilly was publicly tortured to death in Paris on June 22, 1669. By July 19 his ex-valet, Dauger, had entered on his mysterious term of captivity. How the French got possession of him, whether he yielded to cajolery, or was betrayed by Charles II., is uncertain. The French ambassador at St. James's, Colbert (brother of the celebrated Minister), writes thus to M. de Lyonne, in Paris, on July 1, 1669:* 'Monsieur Joly has spoken to the man Martin' (Dauger), 'and has really persuaded him that, by going to France and telling all that he knows against Roux, he will play

the part of a lad of honour and a good subject.'

*Transcripts from Paris MSS. Vol. xxxiii., Record Office.

But Martin, after all, was NOT persuaded!

Martin replied to Joly that HE KNEW NOTHING AT ALL, and that, once in France, people would think he was well acquainted with the traffickings of Roux, 'AND SO HE WOULD BE KEPT IN PRISON TO MAKE HIM DIVULGE WHAT HE DID NOT KNOW.' The possible Man in the Iron Mask did not know his own secret! But, later in the conversation, Martin foolishly admitted that he knew a great deal; perhaps he did this out of mere fatal vanity. Cross to France, however, he would not, even when offered a safe-conduct and promise of reward. Colbert therefore proposes to ask Charles to surrender the valet, and probably Charles descended to the meanness. By July 19, at all events, Louvois, the War Minister of Louis XIV., was bidding Saint-Mars, at Pignerol in Piedmont, expect from Dunkirk a prisoner of the very highest importance – a valet! This valet, now called 'Eustache Dauger,' can only have been Marsilly's valet, Martin, who, by one means or another, had been brought from England to Dunkirk. It is hardly conceivable, at least, that when a valet, in England, is 'wanted' by the French police on July 1, for political reasons, and when by July 19 they have caught a valet of extreme political importance, the two valets should be two different men. Martin must be Dauger.

Here, then, by July 19, 1669, we find our unhappy serving-

man in the toils. Why was he to be handled with such mysterious rigour? It is true that State prisoners of very little account were kept with great secrecy. But it cannot well be argued that they were all treated with the extraordinary precautions which, in the case of Dauger, were not relaxed for twenty-five or thirty years. The King says, according to Louvois, that the safe keeping of Dauger is 'of the last importance to his service.' He must have intercourse with nobody. His windows must be where nobody can pass; several bolted doors must cut him off from the sound of human voices. Saint-Mars himself, the commandant, must feed the valet daily. 'YOU MUST NEVER, UNDER ANY PRETENCE, LISTEN TO WHAT HE MAY WISH TO TELL YOU. YOU MUST THREATEN HIM WITH DEATH IF HE SPEAKS ONE WORD EXCEPT ABOUT HIS ACTUAL NEEDS. He is only a valet, and does not need much furniture.'*

*The letters are printed by Roux Fazaillac, Jung, Lair, and others.

Saint-Mars replied that, in presence of M. de Vauroy, the chief officer of Dunkirk (who carried Dauger thence to Pignerol), he had threatened to run Dauger through the body if he ever dared to speak, even to him, Saint-Mars. He has mentioned this prisoner, he says, to no mortal. People believe that Dauger is a Marshal of France, so strange and unusual are the precautions taken for his security.

A Marshal of France! The legend has begun. At this time (1669) Saint-Mars had in charge Fouquet, the great fallen

Minister, the richest and most dangerous subject of Louis XIV. By-and-by he also held Lauzun, the adventurous wooer of la Grande Mademoiselle. But it was not they, it was the valet, Dauger, who caused 'sensation.'

On February 20,1672, Saint-Mars, for the sake of economy wished to use Dauger as valet to Lauzun. This proves that Saint-Mars did not, after all, see the necessity of secluding Dauger, or thought the King's fears groundless. In the opinion of Saint-Mars, Dauger did not want to be released, 'would never ask to be set free.' Then why was he so anxiously guarded? Louvois refused to let Dauger be put with Lauzun as valet. In 1675, however, he allowed Dauger to act as valet to Fouquet, but with Lauzun, said Louvois, Dauger must have no intercourse. Fouquet had then another prisoner valet, La Riviere. This man had apparently been accused of no crime. He was of a melancholy character, and a dropsical habit of body: Fouquet had amused himself by doctoring him and teaching him to read.

In the month of December 1678, Saint-Mars, the commandant of the prison, brought to Fouquet a sealed letter from Louvois, the seal unbroken. His own reply was also to be sealed, and not to be seen by Saint-Mars. Louvois wrote that the King wished to know one thing, before giving Fouquet ampler liberty. Had his valet, Eustache Dauger, told his other valet, La Riviere, what he had done before coming to Pignerol? (de ce a quoi il a ete employe auparavant que d'etre a Pignerol). 'His Majesty bids me ask you [Fouquet] this question, and expects

that you will answer without considering anything but the truth, that he may know what measures to take,' these depending on whether Dauger has, or has not, told La Riviere the story of his past life.* Moreover, Lauzun was never, said Louvois, to be allowed to enter Fouquet's room when Dauger was present. The humorous point is that, thanks to a hole dug in the wall between his room and Fouquet's, Lauzun saw Dauger whenever he pleased.

*Lair, Nicholas Foucquet, ii. pp. 463, 464.

From the letter of Louvois to Fouquet, about Dauger (December 23, 1678), it is plain that Louis XIV. had no more pressing anxiety, nine years after Dauger's arrest, than to conceal WHAT IT WAS THAT DAUGER HAD DONE. It is apparent that Saint-Mars himself either was unacquainted with this secret, or was supposed by Louvois and the King to be unaware of it. He had been ordered never to allow Dauger to tell him: he was not allowed to see the letters on the subject between Louvois and Fouquet. We still do not know, and never shall know, whether Dauger himself knew his own secret, or whether (as he had anticipated) he was locked up for not divulging what he did not know.

The answer of Fouquet to Louvois must have satisfied Louis that Dauger had not imparted his secret to the other valet, La Riviere, for Fouquet was now allowed a great deal of liberty. In 1679, he might see his family, the officers of the garrison, and Lauzun – it being provided that Lauzun and Dauger should

never meet. In March 1680, Fouquet died, and henceforth the two valets were most rigorously guarded; Dauger, because he was supposed to know something; La Riviere, because Dauger might have imparted the real or fancied secret to him. We shall return to these poor serving-men, but here it is necessary to state that, ten months before the death of their master, Fouquet, an important new captive had been brought to the prison of Pignerol.

This captive was the other candidate for the honours of the Mask, Count Mattioli, the secretary of the Duke of Mantua. He was kidnapped on Italian soil on May 2, 1679, and hurried to the mountain fortress of Pignerol, then on French ground. His offence was the betraying of the secret negotiations for the cession of the town and fortress of Casal, by the Duke of Mantua, to Louis XIV. The disappearance of Mattioli was, of course, known to the world. The cause of his enlevement, and the place of his captivity, Pignerol, were matters of newspaper comment at least as early as 1687. Still earlier, in 1682, the story of Mattioli's arrest and seclusion in Pignerol had been published in a work named 'La Prudenza Trionfante di Casale.'* There was thus no mystery, at the time, about Mattioli; his crime and punishment were perfectly well known to students of politics. He has been regarded as the mysterious Man in the Iron Mask, but, for years after his arrest, he was the least mysterious of State prisoners.

*Brentano, op. cit. p. 117.

Here, then, is Mattioli in Pignerol in May 1679. While Fouquet then enjoyed relative freedom, while Lauzun schemed

escapes or made insulting love to Mademoiselle Fouquet, Mattioli lived on the bread and water of affliction. He was threatened with torture to make him deliver up some papers compromising to Louis XIV. It was expressly commanded that he should have nothing beyond the barest necessaries of life. He was to be kept dans la dure prison. In brief, he was used no better than the meanest of prisoners. The awful life of isolation, without employment, without books, without writing materials, without sight or sound of man save when Saint-Mars or his lieutenant brought food for the day, drove captives mad.

In January 1680 two prisoners, a monk* and one Dubreuil, had become insane. By February 14, 1680, Mattioli was daily conversing with God and his angels. 'I believe his brain is turned,' says Saint-Mars. In March 1680, as we saw, Fouquet died. The prisoners, not counting Lauzun (released soon after), were now five: (1) Mattioli (mad); (2) Dubreuil (mad); (3) The monk (mad); (4) Dauger, and (5) La Riviere. These two, being employed as valets, kept their wits. On the death of Fouquet, Louvois wrote to Saint-Mars about the two valets. Lauzun must be made to believe that they had been set at liberty, but, in fact, they must be most carefully guarded IN A SINGLE CHAMBER. They were shut up in one of the dungeons of the 'Tour d'en bas.' Dauger had recently done something as to which Louvois writes: 'Let me know how Dauger can possibly have done what you tell me, and how he got the necessary drugs, as I cannot suppose that you supplied him with them' (July 10, 1680).**

*A monk, who may have been this monk, appears in the following essay.

**Lair, Nicholas Foucquet, ii. pp. 476, 477.

Here, then, by July 1680, are the two valets locked in one dungeon of the 'Tour d'en bas.' By September Saint-Mars had placed Mattioli, with the mad monk, in another chamber of the same tower. He writes: 'Mattioli is almost as mad as the monk,' who arose from bed and preached naked. Mattioli behaved so rudely and violently that the lieutenant of Saint-Mars had to show him a whip, and threaten him with a flogging. This had its effect. Mattioli, to make his peace, offered a valuable ring to Blainvilliers. The ring was kept to be restored to him, if ever Louis let him go free – a contingency mentioned more than once in the correspondence.

Apparently Mattioli now sobered down, and probably was given a separate chamber and a valet; he certainly had a valet at Pignerol later. By May 1681 Dauger and La Riviere still occupied their common chamber in the 'Tour d'en bas.' They were regarded by Louvois as the most important of the five prisoners then at Pignerol. They, not Mattioli, were the captives about whose safe and secret keeping Louis and Louvois were most anxious. This appears from a letter of Louvois to Saint-Mars, of May 12, 1681. The gaoler, Saint-Mars, is to be promoted from Pignerol to Exiles. 'Thither,' says Louvois, 'the king desires to transport SUCH OF YOUR PRISONERS AS HE THINKS TOO IMPORTANT TO HAVE IN OTHER HANDS

THAN YOURS.' These prisoners are 'THE TWO IN THE LOW CHAMBER OF THE TOWER,' the two valets, Dauger and La Riviere.

From a letter of Saint-Mars (June 1681) we know that Mattioli was not one of these. He says: 'I shall keep at Exiles two birds (merles) whom I have here: they are only known as THE GENTRY OF THE LOW ROOM IN THE TOWER; MATTIOLI MAY STAY ON HERE AT PIGNEROL WITH THE OTHER PRISONERS' (Dubreuil and the mad monk). It is at this point that Le Citoyen Roux (Fazaillac), writing in the Year IX. of the Republic (1801), loses touch with the secret.* Roux finds, in the State Papers, the arrival of Eustache Dauger at Pignerol in 1669, but does not know who he is, or what is his quality. He sees that the Mask must be either Mattioli, Dauger, the monk, one Dubreuil, or one Calazio. But, overlooking or not having access to the letter of Saint-Mars of June 1681, Roux holds that the prisoners taken to Les Exiles were the monk and Mattioli. One of these must be the Mask, and Roux votes for Mattioli. He is wrong. Mattioli beyond all doubt remained at Pignerol.

*Recherches Historiques, sur l'Homme au Masque de Fer, Paris. An IX.

Mountains of argument have been built on these words, deux merles, 'two gaol-birds.' One of the two, we shall see, became the source of the legend of the Man in the Iron Mask. 'How can a wretched gaol-bird (merle) have been the Mask?' asks M.

Topin. 'The rogue's whole furniture and table-linen were sold for 1 pound 19 shillings. He only got a new suit of clothes every three years.' All very true; but this gaol-bird and his mate, by the direct statement of Louvois, are 'the prisoners too important to be entrusted to other hands than yours' – the hands of Saint-Mars – while Mattioli is so unimportant that he may be left at Pignerol under Villebois.

The truth is, that the offence and the punishment of Mattioli were well known to European diplomatists and readers of books. Casal, moreover, at this time was openly ceded to Louis XIV., and Mattioli could not have told the world more than it already knew. But, for some inscrutable reason, the secret which Dauger knew, or was suspected of knowing, became more and more a source of anxiety to Louvois and Louis. What can he have known? The charges against his master, Roux de Marsilly, had been publicly proclaimed. Twelve years had passed since the dealings of Arlington with Marsilly. Yet, Louvois became more and more nervous.

In accordance with commands of his, on March 2, 1682, the two valets, who had hitherto occupied one chamber at Exiles as at Pignerol, were cut off from all communication with each other. Says Saint-Mars, 'Since receiving your letter I have warded the pair as strictly and exactly as I did M. Fouquet and M. Lauzun, who cannot brag that he sent out or received any intelligence. Night and day two sentinels watch their tower; and my own windows command a view of the sentinels. Nobody

speaks to my captives but myself, my lieutenant, their confessor, and the doctor, who lives eighteen miles away, and only sees them when I am present.' Years went by; on January 1687 one of the two captives died; we really do not know which with absolute certainty. However, the intensified secrecy with which the survivor was now guarded seems more appropriate to Dauger; and M. Funck-Brentano and M. Lair have no doubt that it was La Riviere who expired. He was dropsical, that appears in the official correspondence, and the dead prisoner died of dropsy.

As for the strange secrecy about Dauger, here is an example. Saint-Mars, in January 1687, was appointed to the fortress of the Isles Sainte-Marguerite, that sun themselves in the bay of Cannes. On January 20 he asks leave to go to see his little kingdom. He must leave Dauger, but HAS FORBIDDEN EVEN HIS LIEUTENANT TO SPEAK TO THAT PRISONER. This was an increase of precaution since 1682. He wishes to take the captive to the Isles, but how? A sedan chair covered over with oilcloth seems best. A litter might break down, litters often did, and some one might then see the passenger.

Now M. Funck-Brentano says, to minimise the importance of Dauger, 'he was shut up like so much luggage in a chair hermetically closed with oilcloth, carried by eight Piedmontese in relays of four.'

Luggage is not usually carried in hermetically sealed sedan chairs, but Saint-Mars has explained why, by surplus of precaution, he did not use a litter. The litter might break down

and Dauger might be seen. A new prison was built specially, at the cost of 5,000 livres, for Dauger at Sainte-Marguerite, with large sunny rooms. On May 3, 1687, Saint-Mars had entered on his island realm, Dauger being nearly killed by twelve days' journey in a closed chair. He again excited the utmost curiosity. On January 8, 1688, Saint-Mars writes that his prisoner is believed by the world to be either a son of Oliver Cromwell, or the Duc de Beaufort,* who was never seen again, dead or alive, after a night battle in Crete, on June 25, 1669, just before Dauger was arrested. Saint-Mars sent in a note of the TOTAL of Dauger's expenses for the year 1687. He actually did not dare to send the ITEMS, he says, lest they, if the bill fell into the wrong hands, might reveal too much!

*The Duc de Beaufort whom Athos releases from prison in Dumas's Vingt Ans Apres.

Meanwhile, an Italian news-letter, copied into a Leyden paper, of August 1687, declared that Mattioli had just been brought from Pignerol to Sainte-Marguerite. There was no mystery about Mattioli, the story of his capture was published in 1682, but the press, on one point, was in error: Mattioli was still at Pignerol. The known advent of the late Commandant of Pignerol, Saint-Mars, with a single concealed prisoner, at the island, naturally suggested the erroneous idea that the prisoner was Mattioli. The prisoner was really Dauger, the survivor of the two valets.

From 1688 to 1691 no letter about Dauger has been published.

Apparently he was then the only prisoner on the island, except one Chezut, who was there before Dauger arrived, and gave up his chamber to Dauger while the new cells were being built. Between 1689 and 1693 six Protestant preachers were brought to the island, while Louvois, the Minister, died in 1691, and was succeeded by Barbezieux. On August 13, 1691, Barbezieux wrote to ask Saint-Mars about 'the prisoner whom he had guarded for twenty years.' The only such prisoner was Dauger, who entered Pignerol in August 1669. Mattioli had been a prisoner only for twelve years, and lay in Pignerol, not in Sainte-Marguerite, where Saint-Mars now was. Saint-Mars replied: 'I can assure you that nobody has seen him but myself.'

By the beginning of March 1694, Pignerol had been bombarded by the enemies of France; presently Louis XIV. had to cede it to Savoy. The prisoners there must be removed. Mattioli, in Pignerol, at the end of 1693, had been in trouble. He and his valet had tried to smuggle out letters written on the linings of their pockets. These were seized and burned. On March 20, 1694, Barbezieux wrote to Laprade, now commanding at Pignerol, that he must take his three prisoners, one by one, with all secrecy, to Sainte-Marguerite. Laprade alone must give them their food on the journey. The military officer of the escort was warned to ask no questions. Already (February 26, 1694) Barbezieux had informed Saint-Mars that these prisoners were coming. 'They are of more consequence, one of them at least, than the prisoners on the island, and must be put in the safest

places.' The 'one' is doubtless Mattioli. In 1681 Louvois had thought Dauger and La Riviere more important than Mattioli, who, in March 1694, came from Pignerol to Sainte-Marguerite. Now in April 1694 a prisoner died at the island, a prisoner who, like Mattioli, HAD A VALET. We hear of no other prisoner on the island, except Mattioli, who had a valet. A letter of Saint-Mars (January 6, 1696) proves that no prisoner THEN had a valet, for each prisoner collected his own dirty plates and dishes, piled them up, and handed them to the lieutenant.

M. Funck-Brentano argues that in this very letter (January 6, 1696) Saint-Mars speaks of 'les valets de messieurs les prisonniers.' But in that part of the letter Saint-Mars is not speaking of the actual state of things at Sainte-Marguerite, but is giving reminiscences of Fouquet and Lauzun, who, of course, at Pignerol, had valets, and had money, as he shows. Dauger had no money. M. Funck-Brentano next argues that early in 1694 one of the preacher prisoners, Melzac, died, and cites M. Jung ('La Verite sur le Masque de Fer,' p. 91). This is odd, as M. Jung says that Melzac, or Malzac, 'DIED IN THE END OF 1692, OR EARLY IN 1693.' Why, then, does M. Funck-Brentano cite M. Jung for the death of the preacher early in 1694, when M. Jung (conjecturally) dates his decease at least a year earlier?* It is not a mere conjecture, as, on March 3, 1693, Barbezieux begs Saint-Mars to mention his Protestant prisoners under nicknames. There are three, and Malzac is no longer one of them. Malzac, in 1692, suffered from a horrible disease, discreditable to one of the

godly, and in October 1692 had been allowed medical expenses. Whether they included a valet or not, Malzac seems to have been non-existent by March 1693. Had he possessed a valet, and had he died in 1694, why should HIS valet have been 'shut up in the vaulted prison'? This was the fate of the valet of the prisoner who died in April 1694, and was probably Mattioli.

*M. Funck-Brentano's statement is in Revue Historique, lvi. p. 298.

'Malzac died at the beginning of 1694,' citing Jung, p. 91. Now on P. 91

M. Jung writes, 'At the beginning of 1694 Saint-Mars had six prisoners, of whom one, Melzac, dies.' But M. Jung (pp. 269, 270) later writes, 'It is probable that Melzac died at the end of 1692, or early in 1693,' and he gives his reasons, which are convincing. M. Funck-Brentano must have overlooked M. Jung's change of opinion between his P. 91 and his pp.

269, 270.

Mattioli, certainly, had a valet in December 1693 at Pignerol. He went to Sainte-Marguerite in March 1694. In April 1694 a prisoner with a valet died at Sainte-Marguerite. In January 1696 no prisoner at Sainte-Marguerite had a valet. Therefore, there is a strong presumption that the 'prisonnier au valet' who died in April 1694 was Mattioli.

After December 1693, when he was still at Pignerol, the name of Mattioli, freely used before, never occurs in the correspondence. But we still often hear of 'l'ancien prisonnier,'

'the old prisoner.' He was, on the face of it, Dauger, by far the oldest prisoner. In 1688, Saint-Mars, having only one prisoner (Dauger), calls him merely 'my prisoner.' In 1691, when Saint-Mars had several prisoners, Barbezieux styles Dauger 'your prisoner of twenty years' standing.' When, in 1696-1698, Saint-Mars mentions 'mon ancien prisonnier,' 'my prisoner of long standing,' he obviously means Dauger, not Mattioli – above all, if Mattioli died in 1694. M. Funck-Brentano argues that 'mon ancien prisonnier' can only mean 'my erstwhile prisoner, he who was lost and is restored to me' – that is, Mattioli. This is not the view of M. Jung, or M. Lair, or M. Loiseleur.

Friends of Mattioli's claims rest much on this letter of Barbezieux to Saint-Mars (November 17, 1697): 'You have only to watch over the security of all your prisoners, WITHOUT EVER EXPLAINING TO ANY ONE WHAT IT IS THAT YOUR PRISONER OF LONG STANDING DID.' That secret, it is argued, MUST apply to Mattioli. But all the world knew what Mattioli had done! Nobody knew, and nobody knows, what Eustache Dauger had done. It was one of the arcana imperii. It is the secret enforced ever since Dauger's arrest in 1669. Saint-Mars (1669) was not to ask. Louis XIV. could only lighten the captivity of Fouquet (1678) if his valet, La Riviere, did not know what Dauger had done. La Riviere (apparently a harmless man) lived and died in confinement, the sole reason being that he might perhaps know what Dauger had done. Consequently there is the strongest presumption that the 'ancien prisonnier' of 1697

is Dauger, and that 'what he had done' (which Saint-Mars must tell to no one) was what Dauger did, not what Mattioli did. All Europe knew what Mattioli had done; his whole story had been published to the world in 1682 and 1687.

On July 19, 1698, Barbezieux bade Saint-Mars come to assume the command of the Bastille. He is to bring his 'old prisoner,' whom not a soul is to see. Saint-Mars therefore brought his man MASKED, exactly as another prisoner was carried masked from Provence to the Bastille in 1695. M. Funck-Brentano argues that Saint-Mars was now quite fond of his old Mattioli, so noble, so learned.

At last, on September 18, 1698, Saint-Mars lodged his 'old prisoner' in the Bastille, 'an old prisoner whom he had at Pignerol,' says the journal of du Junca, Lieutenant of the Bastille. His food, we saw, was brought him by Rosarges alone, the 'Major,' a gentleman who had always been with Saint-Mars. Argues M. Funck-Brentano, all this proves that the captive was a gentleman, not a valet. Why? First, because the Bastille, under Louis XIV., was 'une prison de distinction.' Yet M. Funck-Brentano tells us that in Mazarin's time 'valets mixed up with royal plots' were kept in the Bastille. Again, in 1701, in this 'noble prison,' the Mask was turned out of his room to make place for a female fortune-teller, and was obliged to chum with a profligate valet of nineteen, and a 'beggarly' bad patriot, who 'blamed the conduct of France, and approved that of other nations, especially the Dutch.' M. Funck-Brentano himself publishes these facts

(1898), in part published earlier (1890) by M. Lair.* Not much noblesse here! Next, if Rosarges, a gentleman, served the Mask, Saint-Mars alone (1669) carried his food to the valet, Dauger. So the service of Rosarges does not ennoble the Mask and differentiate him from Dauger, who was even more nobly served, by Saint-Mars.

*Legendes de la Bastille, pp. 86-89. Citing du Junca's Journal, April 30, 1701.

On November 19, 1703, the Mask died suddenly (still in his velvet mask), and was buried on the 20th. The parish register of the church names him 'Marchialy' or 'Marchioly,' one may read it either way; du Junca, the Lieutenant of the Bastille, in his contemporary journal, calls him 'Mr. de Marchiel.' Now, Saint-Mars often spells Mattioli, 'Marthioly.'

This is the one strength of the argument for Mattioli's claims to the Mask. M. Lair replies, 'Saint-Mars had a mania for burying prisoners under fancy names,' and gives examples. One is only a gardener, Francois Eliard (1701), concerning whom it is expressly said that, as he is a State prisoner, his real name is not to be given, so he is registered as Pierre Maret (others read Navet, 'Peter Turnip'). If Saint-Mars, looking about for a false name for Dauger's burial register, hit on Marsilly (the name of Dauger's old master), that MIGHT be miswritten Marchialy. However it be, the age of the Mask is certainly falsified; the register gives 'about forty-five years old.' Mattioli would have been sixty-three;

Dauger cannot have been under fifty-three.

There the case stands. If Mattioli died in April 1694, he cannot be the Man in the Iron Mask. Of Dauger's death we find no record, unless he was the Man in the Iron Mask, and died, in 1703, in the Bastille. He was certainly, in 1669 and 1688, at Pignerol and at Sainte-Marguerite, the centre of the mystery about some great prisoner, a Marshal of France, the Duc de Beaufort, or a son of Oliver Cromwell. Mattioli was no mystery, no secret. Dauger is so mysterious that probably the secret of his mystery was unknown to himself. By 1701, when obscure wretches were shut up with the Mask, the secret, whatever its nature, had ceased to be of moment. The captive was now the mere victim of cruel routine. But twenty years earlier, Saint-Mars had said that Dauger 'takes things easily, resigned to the will of God and the King.'

To sum up, on July 1, 1669, the valet of the Huguenot intriguer, Roux de Marsilly, the valet resident in England, known to his master as 'Martin,' was 'wanted' by the French secret police. By July 19, a valet, of the highest political importance, had been brought to Dunkirk, from England, no doubt. My hypothesis assumes that this valet, though now styled 'Eustache Dauger,' was the 'Martin' of Roux de Marsilly. He was kept with so much mystery at Pignerol that already the legend began its course; the captive valet was said to be a Marshal of France! We then follow Dauger from Pignerol to Les Exiles, till January 1687, when one valet out of a pair, Dauger being one of them,

dies. We presume that Dauger is the survivor, because the great mystery still is 'what he HAS DONE,' whereas the other valet had done nothing, but may have known Dauger's secret. Again, the other valet had long been dropsical, and the valet who died in 1687 died of dropsy.

In 1688, Dauger, at Sainte-Marguerite, is again the source and centre of myths; he is taken for a son of Oliver Cromwell, or for the Duc de Beaufort. In June 1692, one of the Huguenot preachers at Sainte-Marguerite writes on his shirt and pewter plate, and throws them out of window.* Legend attributes these acts to the Man in the Iron Mask, and transmutes a pewter into a silver plate. Now, in 1689-1693, Mattioli was at Pignerol, but Dauger was at Sainte-Marguerite, and the Huguenot's act is attributed to him. Thus Dauger, not Mattioli, is the centre round which the myths crystallise: the legends concern HIM, not Mattioli, whose case is well known, and gives rise to no legend. Finally, we have shown that Mattioli probably died at Sainte-Marguerite in April 1694. If so, then nobody but Dauger can be the 'old prisoner' whom Saint-Mars brought, masked, to the Bastille, in September 1698, and who died there in November 1703. However, suppose that Mattioli did not die in 1694, but was the masked man who died in the Bastille in 1703, then the legend of Dauger came to be attributed to Mattioli: these two men's fortunes are combined in the one myth.

*Saint-Mars au Ministre, June 4, 1692.

The central problem remains unsolved,

WHAT HAD THE VALET, EUSTACHE DAUGER, DONE?*

*One marvels that nobody has recognised, in the mask, James Stuart (James de la Cloche), eldest of the children of Charles II. He came to England in 1668, was sent to Rome, and 'disappears from history.' See

'The Mystery of James de la Cloche.'

II. THE VALET'S MASTER

The secret of the Man in the Iron Mask, or at least of one of the two persons who have claims to be the Mask, was 'WHAT HAD EUSTACHE DAUGER DONE?' To guard this secret the most extraordinary precautions were taken, as we have shown in the fore-going essay. And yet, if secret there was, it might have got wind in the simplest fashion. In the 'Vicomte de Bragelonne,' Dumas describes the tryst of the Secret-hunters with the dying Chief of the Jesuits at the inn in Fontainebleau. They come from many quarters, there is a Baron of Germany and a laird from Scotland, but Aramis takes the prize. He knows the secret of the Mask, the most valuable of all to the intriguers of the Company of Jesus.

Now, despite all the precautions of Louvois and Saint-Mars, despite sentinels for ever posted under Dauger's windows, despite arrangements which made it impossible for him to signal to people on the hillside at Les Exiles, despite the suppression even of the items in the accounts of his expenses, his secret, if he knew it, could have been discovered, as we have remarked, by the very man most apt to make mischievous use of it – by Lauzun. That brilliant and reckless adventurer could see Dauger, in prison at Pignerol, when he pleased, for he had secretly excavated a way into the rooms of his fellow-prisoner, Fouquet, on whom Dauger attended as valet. Lauzun was released soon after Fouquet's

death. It is unlikely that he bought his liberty by the knowledge of the secret, and there is nothing to suggest that he used it (if he possessed it) in any other way.

The natural clue to the supposed secret of Dauger is a study of the career of his master, Roux de Marsilly. As official histories say next to nothing about him, we may set forth what can be gleaned from the State Papers in our Record Office. The earliest is a letter of Roux de Marsilly to Mr. Joseph Williamson, secretary of Lord Arlington (December 1668). Marsilly sends Martin (on our theory Eustache Dauger) to bring back from Williamson two letters from his own correspondent in Paris. He also requests Williamson to procure for him from Arlington a letter of protection, as he is threatened with arrest for some debt in which he is not really concerned. Martin will explain. The next paper is endorsed 'Received December 28, 1668, Mons. de Marsilly.' As it is dated December 27, Marsilly must have been in England. The contents of this piece deserve attention, because they show the terms on which Marsilly and Arlington were, or, at least, how Marsilly conceived them.

(1) Marsilly reports, on the authority of his friends at Stockholm, that the King of Sweden intends, first to intercede with Louis XIV. in favour of the French Huguenots, and next, if diplomacy fails, to join in arms with the other Protestant Powers of Europe.

(2) His correspondent in Holland learns that if the King of England invites the States to any 'holy resolution,' they will

heartily lend forces. No leader so good as the English King – Charles II! Marsilly had shown ARLINGTON'S LETTER to a Dutch friend, who bade him approach the Dutch ambassador in England. He has dined with that diplomatist. Arlington had, then, gone so far as to write an encouraging letter. The Dutch ambassador had just told Marsilly that he had received the same news, namely, that, Holland would aid the Huguenots, persecuted by Louis XIV.

(3) Letters from Provence, Languedoc, and Dauphine say that the situation there is unaltered.

(4) The Canton of Zurich write that they will keep their promises and that Berne IS ANXIOUS TO PLEASE THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, and that it is ready to raise, with Zurich, 15,000 men. They are not afraid of France.

(5) Zurich fears that, if Charles is not represented at the next Diet, Bale and Saint Gal will be intimidated, and not dare to join the Triple Alliance of Spain, Holland, and England. The best plan will be for Marsilly to represent England at the Diet of January 25, 1669, accompanied by the Swiss General Balthazar. This will encourage friends 'TO GIVE HIS BRITTANIC MAJESTY THE SATISFACTION WHICH HE DESIRES, and will produce a close union between Holland, Sweden, the Cantons, and other Protestant States.'

This reads as if Charles had already expressed some 'desire.'

(6) Geneva grumbles at a reply of Charles 'through a bishop who is their enemy,' the Bishop of London, 'a persecutor of

our religion,' that is, of Presbyterianism. However, nothing will dismay the Genevans, 'si S. M. B. ne change.'

Then comes a blank in the paper. There follows a copy of a letter as if FROM CHARLES II. HIMSELF, to 'the Right High and Noble Seigneurs of Zurich.' He has heard of their wishes from Roux de Marsilly, whom he commissions to wait upon them. 'I would not have written by my Bishop of London had I been better informed, but would myself have replied to your obliging letter, and would have assured you, as I do now, that I desire…'

It appears as if this were a draft of the kind of letter which Marsilly wanted Charles to write to Zurich, and there is a similar draft of a letter for Arlington to follow, if he and Charles wish to send Marsilly to the Swiss Diet. The Dutch ambassador, with whom Marsilly dined on December 26, the Constable of Castille, and other grandees, are all of opinion that he should visit the Protestant Swiss, as from the King of England. The scheme is for an alliance of England, Holland, Spain, and the Protestant Cantons, against France and Savoy.

Another letter of Marsilly to Arlington, only dated Jeudi, avers that he can never repay Arlington for his extreme kindness and liberality. 'No man in England is more devoted to you than I am, and shall be all my life.'*

*State Papers, France, vol. 125, 106.

On the very day when Marsilly drafted for Charles his own commission to treat with Zurich for a Protestant alliance against

France, Charles himself wrote to his sister, Madame (Henriette d'Orleans). He spoke of his secret treaty with France. 'You know how much secrecy is necessary for the carrying on of the business, and I assure you that nobody does, nor shall, know anything of it here, but myself and that one person more, till it be fit to be public.'* (Is 'that one person' de la Cloche?)

*Madame, by Julia Cartwright, p. 275.

Thus Marsilly thought Charles almost engaged for the Protestant League, while Charles was secretly allying himself with France against Holland. Arlington was probably no less deceived by Charles than Marsilly was.

The Bishop of London's share in the dealing with Zurich is obscure.

It appears certain that Arlington was not consciously deceiving Marsilly. Madame wrote, on February 12, as to Arlington, 'The man's attachment to the Dutch and his inclination towards Spain are too well known.'* Not till April 25, 1669, does Charles tell his sister that Arlington has an inkling of his secret dealings with France; how he knows, Charles cannot tell.** It is impossible for us to ascertain how far Charles himself deluded Marsilly, who went to the Continent early in spring, 1669. Before May 15/25 1669, in fact on April 14, Marsilly had been kidnapped by agents of Louis XIV., and his doom was dight.

*Madame, by Julia Cartwright, p. 281.

**Ibid. p. 285.

Here is the account of the matter, written to – by Perwich in Paris:

W Perwich to —

Paris, May 25, '69.

Honored Sir,

•••

The Cantons of Switzerland are much troubled at the French King's having sent 15 horsemen into Switzerland from whence the Sr de Maille, the King's resident there, had given information of the Sr Roux de Marsilly's being there negociating the bringing the Cantons into the Triple League by discourses much to the disadvantage of France, giving them very ill impressions of the French King's Government, who was BETRAYED BY A MONK THAT KEPT HIM COMPANY and intercepted by the said horsemen brought into France and is expected at the Bastille. I believe you know the man… I remember him in England.

Can this monk be the monk who went mad in prison at Pignerol, sharing the cell of Mattioli? Did he, too, suffer for his connection with the secret? We do not know, but the position of Charles was awkward. Marsilly, dealing with the Swiss, had come straight from England, where he was lie with Charles's minister, Arlington, and with the Dutch and Spanish ambassadors. The King refers to the matter in a letter to his sister of May 24, 1669 (misdated by Miss Cartwright, May 24, 1668.)*

'You have, I hope, received full satisfaction by the last post in the matter of Marsillac [Marsilly], for my Ld. Arlington has sent to Mr. Montague [English ambassador at Paris] his history all the time he was here, by which you will see how little credit he had here, and that particularly my Lord Arlington was not in his good graces, because he did not receive that satisfaction, in his negotiation, he expected, and that was only in relation to the Swissers, and so I think I have said enough of this matter.'

*Madame, by Julia Cartwright, p. 264.

Charles took it easily!

On May 15-25 Montague acknowledged Arlington's letter to which Charles refers; he has been approached, as to Marsilly, by the Spanish resident, 'but I could not tell how to do anything in the business, never having heard of the man, or that he was employed by my Master [Charles] in any business. I have sent you also a copy of a letter which an Englishman writ to me that I do not know, in behalf of Roux de Marsilly, but that does not come by the post,' being too secret.*

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.

France had been well informed about Marsilly while he was in England. He then had a secretary, two lackeys, and a valet de chambre, and was frequently in conference with Arlington and the Spanish ambassador to the English Court. Colbert, the French ambassador in London, had written all this to the French Government, on April 25, before he heard of Marsilly's arrest.*

*Bibl. Nat., Fonds Francais, No. 10665.

The belief that Marsilly was an agent of Charles appears to have been general, and, if accepted by Louis XIV., would interfere with Charles's private negotiations for the Secret Treaty with France. On May 18 Prince d'Aremberg had written on the subject to the Spanish ambassador in Paris. Marsilly, he says, was arrested in Switzerland, on his way to Berne, with a monk who was also seized, and, a curious fact, Marsilly's valet was killed in the struggle. This valet, of course, was not Dauger, whom Marsilly had left in England. Marsilly 'doit avoir demande la protection du Roy de la Grande Bretagne en faveur des Religionaires (Huguenots) de France, et passer en Suisse AVEC QUELQUE COMMISSION DE SA PART.' D'Aremberg begs the Spanish ambassador to communicate all this to Montague, the English ambassador at Paris, but Montague probably, like Perwich, knew nothing of the business any more than he knew of Charles's secret dealings with Louis through Madame.*

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.

To d'Aremberg's letter is pinned an unsigned English note, obviously intended for Arlington's reading.

'Roux de Marsilly is still in the Bastille though they have a mind to hang him, yet they are much puzzled what to do with him. De Lionne has beene to examine him twice or thrice, but there is noe witnes to prove anything against him. I was told by one that the French king told it to, that in his papers they find

great mention of the DUKE OF BUCKS: AND YOUR NAME, and speak as if he were much trusted by you. I have enquired what this Marsilly is, and I find by one Mr. Marsilly that I am acquainted withall, and a man of quality, that this man's name is onely Roux, and borne at Nismes and having been formerly a soldier in his troope, ever since has taken his name to gain more credit in Switserland where hee, Marsilly, formerly used to bee employed by his Coll: the Mareschall de Schomberg who invaded Switserland.'

We next find a very curious letter, from which it appears that the French Government inclined to regard Marsilly as, in fact, an agent of Charles, but thought it wiser to trump up against him a charge of conspiring against the life of Louis XIV. On this charge, or another, he was executed, while the suspicion that he was an agent of English treachery may have been the real cause of the determination to destroy him. The Balthazar with whom Marsilly left his papers is mentioned with praise by him in his paper for Arlington, of December 27, 1668. He is the General who should have accompanied Marsilly to the Diet.

The substance of the letter (given in full in Note I.) is to the following effect. P. du Moulin (Paris, May 19-29, 1669) writes to Arlington. Ever since Ruvigny, the late French ambassador, a Protestant, was in England, the French Government had been anxious to kidnap Roux de Marsilly. They hunted him in England, Holland, Flanders, and Franche-Comte. As we know from the case of Mattioli, the Government of Louis XIV. was

unscrupulously daring in breaking the laws of nations, and seizing hostile personages in foreign territory, as Napoleon did in the affair of the Duc d'Enghien. When all failed, Louis bade Turenne capture Roux de Marsilly wherever he could find him. Turenne sent officers and gentlemen abroad, and, after four months' search, they found Marsilly in Switzerland. They took him as he came out of the house of his friend, General Balthazar, and carried him to Gex. No papers were found on him, but he asked his captors to send to Balthazar and get 'the commission he had from England,' which he probably thought would give him the security of an official diplomatic position. Having got this document, Marsilly's captors took it to the French Ministers. Nothing could be more embarrassing, if this were true, to Charles's representative in France, Montague, and to Charles's secret negotiations, also to Arlington, who had dealt with Marsilly. On his part, the captive Marsilly constantly affirmed that he was the envoy of the King of England. The common talk of Paris was that an agent of Charles was in the Bastille, 'though at Court they pretend to know nothing of it.' Louis was overjoyed at Marsilly's capture, giving out that he was conspiring against his life. Monsieur told Montague that he need not beg for the life of a would-be murderer like Marsilly. But as to this idea, 'they begin now to mince it at Court,' and Ruvigny assured du Moulin 'that they had no such thoughts.' De Lyonne had seen Marsilly and observed that it was a blunder to seize him. The French Government was nervous, and Turenne's secretary

had been 'pumping' several ambassadors as to what they thought of Marsilly's capture on foreign territory. One ambassador replied with spirit that a crusade by all Europe against France, as of old against the Moslems, would be necessary. Would Charles, du Moulin asked, own or disown Marsilly?

Montague's position was now awkward. On May 23, his account of the case was read, at Whitehall, to the Foreign Committee in London. (See Note II. for the document.) He did not dare to interfere in Marsilly's behalf, because he did not know whether the man was an agent of Charles or not. Such are the inconveniences of a secret royal diplomacy carried on behind the backs of Ministers. Louis XV. later pursued this method with awkward consequences.* The French Court, Montague said, was overjoyed at the capture of Marsilly, and a reward of 100,000 crowns, 'I am told very privately, is set upon his head.' The French ambassador in England, Colbert, had reported that Charles had sent Marsilly 'to draw the Swisses into the Triple League' against France. Montague had tried to reassure Monsieur (Charles's brother-in-law), but was himself entirely perplexed. As Monsieur's wife, Charles's sister, was working with Charles for the secret treaty with Louis, the State and family politics were clearly in a knot. Meanwhile the Spanish ambassador kept pressing Montague to interfere in favour of Marsilly. After Montague's puzzled note had been read to the English Foreign Committee on May 23, Arlington offered explanations. Marsilly came to England, he said, when Charles

was entering into negotiations for peace with Holland, and when France seemed likely to oppose the peace. No proposition was made to him or by him. Peace being made, Marsilly was given money to take him out of the country. He wanted the King to renew his alliance with the Swiss cantons, but was told that the cantons must first expel the regicides of Charles I. He undertook to arrange this, and some eight months later came back to England. 'He was coldly used, and I was complained of for not using so important a man well enough.'

*Cf. Le Secret du Roi, by the Duc de Broglie.

As we saw, Marsilly expressed the most effusive gratitude to Arlington, which does not suggest cold usage. Arlington told the complainers that Marsilly was 'another man's spy,' what man's, Dutch, Spanish, or even French, he does not explain. So Charles gave Marsilly money to go away. He was never trusted with anything but the expulsion of the regicides from Switzerland. Arlington was ordered by Charles to write a letter thanking Balthazar for his good offices.

These explanations by Arlington do not tally with Marsilly's communications to him, as cited at the beginning of this inquiry. Nothing is said in these about getting the regicides of Charles I. out of Switzerland: the paper is entirely concerned with bringing the Protestant Cantons into anti-French League with England, Holland, Spain, and even Sweden. On the other hand, Arlington's acknowledged letter to Balthazar, carried by Marsilly, may be the 'commission' of which Marsilly boasted. In any case, on June

2, Charles gave Colbert, the French ambassador, an audience, turning even the Duke of York out of the room. He then repeated to Colbert the explanations of Arlington, already cited, and Arlington, in a separate interview, corroborated Charles. So Colbert wrote to Louis (June 3, 1669); but to de Lyonne, on the same day, 'I trust that you will extract from Marsilly much matter for the King's service. IT SEEMED TO ME THAT MILORD D'ARLINGTON WAS UNEASY ABOUT IT [EN AVAIT DE L'INQUIETUDE]… There is here in England one Martin' (Eustace Dauger), 'who has been that wretch's valet, and who left him in discontent.' Colbert then proposes to examine Martin, who may know a good deal, and to send him into France. On June 10, Colbert writes to Louis that he expects to see Martin.*

*Bibl. Nat., Fonds Francais, No. 10665.

On June 24, Colbert wrote to Louis about a conversation with Charles. It is plain that proofs of a murder-plot by Marsilly were scanty or non-existent, though Colbert averred that Marsilly had discussed the matter with the Spanish Ministers. 'Charles knew that he had had much conference with Isola, the Spanish ambassador.' Meanwhile, up to July 1, Colbert was trying to persuade Marsilly's valet to go to France, which he declined to do, as we have seen. However, the luckless lad, by nods and by veiled words, indicated that he knew a great deal. But not by promise of security and reward could the valet be induced to return to France. 'I might ask the King to give up Martin, the valet

of Marsilly, to me,' Colbert concludes, and, by hook or by crook, he secured the person of the wretched man, as we have seen. In a postscript, Colbert says that he has heard of the execution of Marsilly.

By July 19, as we saw in the previous essay, Louvois was bidding Saint-Mars expect, at Pignerol from Dunkirk, a prisoner of the highest political importance, to be guarded with the utmost secrecy, yet a valet. That valet must be Martin, now called Eustache Dauger, and his secret can only be connected with Marsilly. It may have been something about Arlington's negotiations through Marsilly, as compromising Charles II. Arlington's explanations to the Foreign Committee were certainly incomplete and disingenuous. He, if not Charles, was more deeply engaged with Marsilly than he ventured to report. But Marsilly himself avowed that he did not know why he was to be executed.

Executed he was, in circumstances truly hideous. Perwich, June 5, wrote to an unnamed correspondent in England: 'They have all his papers, which speak much of the Triple Alliance, but I know not whether they can lawfully hang him for this, having been naturalised in Holland, and taken in a privileged country' (Switzerland). Montague (Paris, June 22, 1669) writes to Arlington that Marsilly is to die, so it has been decided, for 'a rape which he formerly committed at Nismes,' and after the execution, on June 26, declares that, when broken on the wheel, Marsilly 'still persisted that he was guilty of nothing, nor did

know why he was put to death.'

Like Eustache Dauger, Marsilly professed that he did not know his own secret. The charge of a rape, long ago, at Nismes, was obviously trumped up to cover the real reason for the extraordinary vindictiveness with which he was pursued, illegally taken, and barbarously slain. Mere Protestant restlessness on his part is hardly an explanation. There was clearly no evidence for the charge of a plot to murder Louis XIV., in which Colbert, in England, seems to have believed. Even if the French Government believed that he was at once an agent of Charles II., and at the same time a would-be assassin of Louis XIV., that hardly accounts for the intense secrecy with which his valet, Eustache Dauger, was always surrounded. Did Marsilly know of the Secret Treaty, and was it from him that Arlington got his first inkling of the royal plot? If so, Marsilly would probably have exposed the mystery in Protestant interests. We are entirely baffled.

In any case, Francis Vernon, writing from Paris to Williamson (?) (June 19-29 1669), gave a terrible account of Marsilly's death. (For the letter, see Note V.) With a broken piece of glass (as we learn from another source), Marsilly, in prison, wounded himself in a ghastly manner, probably hoping to die by loss of blood. They seared him with a red-hot iron, and hurried on his execution. He was broken on the wheel, and was two hours in dying (June 22). Contrary to usage, a Protestant preacher was brought to attend him on the scaffold. He came most reluctantly, expecting insult, but not a taunt was uttered by

the fanatic populace. 'He came up the scaffold, great silence all about.' Marsilly lay naked, stretched on a St. Andrew's cross. He had seemed half dead, his head hanging limp, 'like a drooping calf.' To greet the minister of his own faith, he raised himself, to the surprise of all, and spoke out loud and clear. He utterly denied all share in a scheme to murder Louis. The rest may be read in the original letter (Note V.).

So perished Roux de Marsilly; the history of the master throws no light on the secret of the servant. That secret, for many years, caused the keenest anxiety to Louis XIV. and Louvois. Saint-Mars himself must not pry into it. Yet what could Dauger know? That there had been a conspiracy against the King's life? But that was the public talk of Paris. If Dauger had guilty knowledge, his life might have paid for it; why keep him a secret prisoner? Did he know that Charles II. had been guilty of double dealing in 1668-1669? Probably Charles had made some overtures to the Swiss, as a blind to his private dealings with Louis XIV., but, even so, how could the fact haunt Louis XIV. like a ghost? We leave the mystery much darker than we found it, but we see reason good why diplomatists should have murmured of a crusade against the cruel and brigand Government which sent soldiers to kidnap, in neighbouring states, men who did not know their own crime.

To myself it seems not improbable that the King and Louvois were but stupidly and cruelly nervous about what Dauger MIGHT know. Saint-Mars, when he proposed to utilise Dauger

as a prison valet, manifestly did not share the trembling anxieties of Louis XIV. and his Minister; anxieties which grew more keen as time went on. However, 'a soldier only has his orders,' and Saint-Mars executed his orders with minute precision, taking such unheard-of precautions that, in legend, the valet blossomed into the rightful king of France.

* * *

APPENDIX

ORIGINAL PAPERS IN THE CASE OF ROUX DE MARSILLY.*

Note I. Letter of Mons. P. du Moulin to Arlington.**

Paris, May ye 19-29, 1669.

My Lord,

...

Ever since that Monsieur de Ruvigny was in England last, and upon the information he gave, this King had a very great desire to seize if it were possible this Roux de Marsilly, and several persons were sent to effect it, into England, Holland, Flanders, and Franche Comte: amongst the rest one La Grange, exempt des Gardes, was a good while in Holland with fifty of the guards dispersed in severall places and quarters; But all having miscarried the King recommended the thing to Monsieur de Turenne who sent some of his gentlemen and officers under him to find this man out and to endeavour to bring him alive. These men after foure months search found him att last in Switzerland, and having laid waite for him as he came out from Monsr

Balthazar's house (a commander well knowne) they took him and carryed him to Gex before they could be intercepted and he rescued. This was done only by a warrant from Monsieur de Turenne but as soone as they came into the french dominions they had full powers and directions from this court for the bringing of him hither. Those that tooke him say they found no papers about him, but that he desired them to write to Monsr Balthazar to desire him to take care of his papers and to send him THE COMMISSION HE HAD FROM ENGLAND and a letter being written to that effect it was signed by the prisoner and instead of sending it as they had promised, they have brought it hither along with them. THEY DO ALL UNANIMOUSLY REPORT THAT HE DID CONSTANTLY AFFIRME THAT HE WAS IMPLOYED BY THE KING OF GREAT BRITTAIN AND DID ACT BY HIS COMMISSION; so that the general discourse here in towne is that one of the King of England's agents is in the Bastille; though att Court they pretend to know nothing of it and would have the world think they are persuaded he had no relacion to his Majesty. Your Lordship hath heard by the publique newes how overjoyed this King was att the bringing of this prisoner, and how farr he expressed his thanks to the cheife person employed in it, declaring openly that this man had long since conspired against his life, and agreable to this, Monsieur, fearing that My lord Ambr. was come to interpose on the prisoner's behalfe asked him on Friday last att St. Germains whether that was the cause of his coming, and told him that

he did not think he would speake for a man that attempted to kill the King. The same report hath been hitherto in everybody's mouth but they begin now to mince it att court, and Monsieur de Ruvigny would have persuaded me yesterday, they had no such thoughts. The truth is I am apt to believe they begin now to be ashamed of it: and I am informed from a very good hand that Monsieur de Lionne who hath been at the Bastille to speake with the prisoner hath confessed since that he can find no ground for this pretended attempting to the King's life, and that upon the whole he was of opinion that this man had much better been left alone than taken, and did look upon what he had done as the intemperancy of an ill-settled braine. And to satisfy your Lordship that they are nettled here, and are concerned to know what may be the issue of all this, Monsieur de Turenne's secretary was on Munday last sent to several forreigne Ministers to pump them and to learne what their thoughts were concerning this violence committed in the Dominions of a sovereign and an allye whereupon he was told by one of them that such proceedings would bring Europe to the necessity of entering into a Croisade against them, as formerly against the infidels. If I durst I would acquaint your Lordship with the reflexions of all publique ministers here and of other unconcerned persons in relation to his Majesty's owning or disowning this man; but not knowing the particulars of his case, nor the grounds his Ma'ty may go upon, I shall forbeare entering upon this discourse…

Your Lordships' etc.

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.
**Ibid.

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Note II. Paper endorsed 'Mr. Montague originally in Cypher. Received May 19, '69. Read in foreigne Committee, 23 May. Roux de Marsilli.'*

I durst not venture to sollicite in Monsr Roux Marsilly's behalfe because I doe not know whether the King my Master hath imployed him or noe; besides he is a man, as I have beene told by many people here of worth, that has given out that hee is resolved to kill the French king at one time or other, and I think such men are as dangerous to one king as to another: hee is brought to the Bastille and I believe may be proceeded against and put to death, in very few daies. There is great joy in this Court for his being taken, and a hundred thousand crownes, I am told very privately, set upon his head; the French Ambassador in England watcht him, and hee has given the intelligence here of his being employed by the King, and sent into Switzerland by my Master to draw the Swisses into the Triple League. Hee aggravates the business as much as hee can to the prejudice of my Master to value his owne service the more, and they seeme here to wonder that the King my Master should have imployed or countenanced a man that had so base a design against the King's Person, I had a great deal of discourse with Monsieur about it,

but I did positively say that he had noe relation to my knowledge to the King my Master, and if he should have I make a question or noe whither in this case the King will owne him. However, my Lord, I had nothing to doe to owne or meddle in a buisines that I was so much a stranger to…

This Roux Marsilly is a great creature of the B. d'Isola's, wch makes them here hate him the more. The Spanish Resident was very earnest with mee to have done something in behalfe of Marsilly, but I positively refused.

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.

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Note III. [A paper endorsed 'Roux de Marsilli. Read in for. Committee, 23d May.']*

Roux de Marsilly came hither when your Majesty had made a union with Holland for making the Peace betwixt the two Crownes and when it was probable the opposition to the Peace would bee on the side of France.

Marsilly was heard telling of longe things but noe proposition made to him or by him.

Presently the Peace was made and Marsilly told more plainly wee had no use of him. A little summe of money was given him to returne as he said whither he was to goe in Switzerland. Upon which hee wishing his Ma'ty would renew his allience wth the Cantons hee was answerd his M'ty would not enter into any comerce with them till they had sent the regicides out of their Country, hee undertooke it should bee done. Seven or eight

months after wth out any intimation given him from hence or any expectation of him, he comes hither, but was so coldly used I was complained off for not using so important a man well enough. I answerd I saw noe use the King could make of him, because he had no credit in Switzerlande and for any thing else I thought him worth nothing to us, but above all because I knew by many circumstances HEE WAS ANOTHER MAN'S SPY and soe ought not to be paid by his Majesty. Notwithstanding this his Ma'ty being moved from compassion commanded hee should have some money given him to carry him away and that I should write to Monsieur Balthazar thanking him in the King's name for the good offices hee rendered in advancing a good understanding betwixt his Ma'ty and the Cantons and desiring him to continue them in all occasions.

The man was always looked upon as a hot headed and indiscreete man, and soe accordingly handled, hearing him, but never trusting him with anything but his own offered and undesired endeavours to gett the Regicides sent out of Switzerland.

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.

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Note IV. Letter of W. Perwich to – .*

Paris: June 5, 1669.

Honored Sir,

…

Roux Marsilly has prudently declared hee had some what of importance to say but it should bee to the King himselfe wch may be means of respiting his processe and as he hopes intercession may bee made for him; but people talk so variously of him that I cannot tell whether hee ought to bee owned by any Prince; the Suisses have indeed the greatest ground to reclayme him as being taken in theirs. They have all his papers which speak much of the Triple Alliance; if they have no other pretext of hanging him I know not whether they can lawfully for this, hee having been naturallised in Holland and taken in a priviledged Country…

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.

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Note V. Francis Vernon to [Mr. Williamson?].*

Paris: June 19-29 1669.

Honored Sir,

My last of the 26th Currt was soe short and soe abrupt that I fear you can peck butt little satisfaction out of it.

…

I did intend to have written something about Marsilly but that I had noe time then. In my letter to my Lord Arlington

I writt that Friday 21 Currt hee wounded himself wch he did not because hee was confronted with Ruvigny as the Gazettes speake. For he knew before hee should dye, butt he thought by dismembering himself that the losse of blood would carry him out of the world before it should come to bee knowne that he had wounded himselfe. And when the Governor of the Bastille spied the blood hee said It was a stone was come from him which caused that effusion. However the governor mistrusted the worst and searcht him to see what wound he had made. So they seared him and sent word to St. Germaines which made his execution be hastened. Saturday about 1 of the clock hee was brought on the skaffold before the Chastelet and tied to St. Andrew's Crosse all wch while he acted the Dying man and scarce stirred, and seemed almost breathlesse and fainting. The Lieutenant General presst him to confesse and ther was a doctor of the Sorbon who was a counsellr of the Castelet there likewise to exhort him to disburthen his mind of any thing which might be upon it. Butt he seemed to take no notice and lay panting.

Then the Lieutenant Criminel bethought himself that the only way to make him speake would bee to sende for a ministre soe hee did to Monsr Daillie butt hee because the Edicts don't permitt ministres to come to condemned persons in publique butt only to comfort them in private before they goe out of prison refused to come till hee sent a huissier who if hee had refused the second time would have brought him by force. At this second summons hee came butt not without great expectations to bee

affronted in a most notorious manner beeing the first time a ministre came to appeare on a scaffold and that upon soe sinister an occasion. Yet when he came found a great presse of people. All made way, none lett fall soe much as a taunting word. Hee came up the Scaffold, great silence all about. Hee found him lying bound stretched on St Andrew's Crosse, naked ready for execution. Hee told him hee was sent for to exhort him to die patiently and like a Christian. Then immediately they were all surprized to see him hold up his head wch he lett hang on one side before like a drooping calfe and speake as loud and clear as the ministre, to whom he said with a chearful air hee was glad to see him, that hee need not question butt that hee would dye like a Christian and patiently too. Then hee went and spoke some places of Scripture to encourage him which he heard with great attention. They afterward came to mention some things to move him to contrition, and there hee tooke an occasion to aggravate the horrour of a Crime of attempting against the King's person. Hee said hee did not know what hee meant. For his part hee never had any evill intention against the Person of the King.

The Lieutenant Criminel stood all the while behind Monsieur Daillie and hearkened to all and prompted Monsr Daillie to aske him if hee had said there were 10 Ravillacs besides wch would doe the King's businesse. Hee protested solemnly hee never said any such words or if hee did hee never remembred, butt if hee had it was with no intention of Malice. Then Monsieur Daillie turned to the people and made a discourse in vindication of those

of the Religion that it was no Principle of theirs attempts on the persons of King[s] butt only loyalty and obedience. This ended hee went away; hee staid about an hour in all, and immediately as soon as he was gone, they went to their worke and gave him eleven blows with a barre and laid him on the wheele. Hee was two houres dying. All about Monsr Daillie I heard from his own mouth for I went to wait on him because it was reported hee had said something concerning the King of England butt hee could tell mee nothing of that. There was a flying report that he should say going from the Chastelet – The Duke of York hath done mee a great injury – The Swisses they say resented his [Marsilly's] taking and misst butt half an hour to take them which betrayed him [the monk] after whom they sent. When he was on the wheele hee was heard to say Le Roy est grand tyrant, Le Roy me traitte d'un facon fort barbare. All that you read concerning oaths and dying en enrage is false all the oaths hee used being only asseverations to Monsr Daillie that he was falsely accused as to the King's person.

Sr I am etc
FRANS. VERNON.

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.

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Note VI. The Ambassador Montague to Arlington.*

Paris: June 22, 1669.

My Lord,

•••

The Lieutenant criminel hath proceeded pretty farre with Le Roux Marsilly. The crime they forme their processe on beeing a rape which he had formerly committed at Nismes soe that he perceiving but little hopes of his life, sent word to the King if hee would pardon him he could reveale things to him which would concerne him more and be of greater consequence to him, than his destruction.

*State Papers, France, vol. 126.

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Note VII. The same to the same.

Paris: June 26, '69.
My Lord,

•••

I heard that Marsilly was to be broke on the wheel and I gave order then to one of my servants to write Mr. Williamson word of it, soe I suppose you have heard of it already: they hastened his execution for feare he should have dyed of the hurt he had done himself the day before; they sent for a minister to him when he was upon the scaffold to see if he would confesse anything, but he still persisted that he was guilty of nothing nor DID NOT

KNOW WHY HE WAS PUT TO DEATH…

III. THE MYSTERY OF SIR EDMUND BERRY GODFREY

When London was a pleasanter place than it is to-day, when anglers stretched their legs up Tottenham Hill on their way to fish in the Lee; when the 'best stands on Hackney river' were competed for eagerly by bottom fishers; when a gentleman in St. Martin's Lane, between the hedges, could 'ask the way to Paddington Woods;' when a hare haunted Primrose Hill and was daily pursued by a gallant pack of harriers; enfin, between three and four on the afternoon of October 17, 1678, two common fellows stepped into the White House tavern in the fields north of Marylebone, a house used as a club by a set of Catholic tradesmen. They had been walking in that region, and, as the October afternoon was drawing in, and rain was falling, they sought refuge in the White House. It would appear that they had not the means of assuaging a reasonable thirst, for when they mentioned that they had noticed a gentleman's cane, a scabbard, a belt, and some add a pair of gloves, lying at the edge of a deep dry ditch, overgrown with thick bush and bramble, the landlord offered the new comers a shilling to go and fetch the articles.* But the rain was heavy, and probably the men took the shilling out in ale, till about five o'clock, when the weather held up for a while.

*A rather different account by the two original finders, Bromwell and Walters, is in L'Estrange's Brief History, iii. pp. 97, 98. The account above is the landlord's. Lords' MSS., Hist. MSS. Com., xi. pp. 2, 46, 47.

The delay was the more singular if, as one account avers, the men had not only observed the cane and scabbard outside of the ditch, on the bank, but also a dead body within the ditch, under the brambles.* By five o'clock the rain had ceased, but the tempestuous evening was dark, and it was night before Constable Brown, with a posse of neighbours on foot and horseback, reached the ditch. Herein they found the corpse of a man lying face downwards, the feet upwards hung upon the brambles; thus half suspended he lay, and the point of a sword stuck out of his back, through his black camlet coat.** By the lights at the inn, the body was identified as that of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, a Justice of the Peace for Westminster, who had been missing since Saturday October 12. It is an undeniable fact that, between two and three o'clock, before the body was discovered and identified, Dr. Lloyd, Dean of St. Asaph's, and Bishop Burnet, had heard that Godfrey had been found in Leicester Fields, with his own sword in his body. Dr. Lloyd mentioned his knowledge in the funeral sermon of the dead magistrate. He had the story from a Mr. Angus, a clergyman, who had it from 'a young man in a grey coat,' in a bookseller's shop near St. Paul's, about two o'clock in the afternoon. Angus hurried to tell Bishop Burnet, who sent

him on to Dr. Lloyd.*** Either the young man in the grey coat knew too much, or a mere rumour, based on a conjecture that Godfrey had fallen on his own sword, proved to be accurate by accident; a point to be remembered. According to Roger Frith, at two o'clock he heard Salvetti, the ambassador of the Duke of Tuscany, say: 'Sir E. Godfrey is dead… the young Jesuits are grown desperate; the old ones would do no such thing.' This again may have been a mere guess by Salvetti.****

*Pollock, Popish Plot, pp. 95, 96.
**Brown in Brief History, iii. pp. 212-215, 222.
***L'Estrange, Brief History, iii. pp. 87-89.
****Lords' MSS. p. 48, October 24.

In the circumstances of the finding of the body it would have been correct for Constable Brown to leave it under a guard till daylight and the arrival of surgical witnesses, but the night was threatening, and Brown ordered the body to be lifted; he dragged out the sword with difficulty, and had the dead man carried to the White House Inn. There, under the candles, the dead man, as we said, was recognised for Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, a very well-known justice of the peace and wood and coal dealer. All this occurred on Thursday, October 17, and Sir Edmund had not been seen by honest men and thoroughly credible witnesses, at least, since one o'clock on Saturday, October 12. Then he was observed near his house in Green Lane, Strand, but into his house he did not go.

Who, then, killed Sir Edmund?

The question has never been answered, though three guiltless men were later hanged for the murder. Every conceivable theory has been tried; the latest is that of Mr. Pollock: Godfrey was slain by 'the Queen's confessor,' Le Fevre, 'a Jesuit,' and some other Jesuits, with lay assistance.* I have found no proof that Le Fevre was either a Jesuit or confessor of the Queen.

*Pollock, The Popish Plot, Duckworth, London, 1903.

As David Hume says, the truth might probably have been discovered, had proper measures been taken at the moment. But a little mob of horse and foot had trampled round the ditch in the dark, disturbing the original traces. The coroner's jury, which sat long and late, on October 18 and 19, was advised by two surgeons, who probably, like the rest of the world, were biassed by the belief that Godfrey had been slain 'by the bloody Papists.' In the reign of mad terror which followed, every one was apt to accommodate his evidence, naturally, to that belief. If they did not, then, like the two original finders, Bromwell and Walters, they might be thrown, heavily ironed, into Newgate.*

*Lords' MSS. P. 47, note 1.

But when the Popish Plot was exploded, and Charles II. was firm on his throne, still more under James II., every one was apt to be biassed in the opposite direction, and to throw the guilt on the fallen party of Oates, Bedloe, Dugdale, and the other deeply perjured and infamous informers. Thus both the evidence of 1678-1680, and that collected in 1684-1687, by Sir Roger

L'Estrange, J.P. (who took great trouble and was allowed access to the manuscript documents of the earlier inquiries), must be regarded with suspicion.*

*L'Estrange, Brief History of the Times, London, 1687.

The first question is cui bono? who had an interest in Godfrey's death? Three parties had an interest, first, the Catholics (IF Godfrey knew their secrets); next, the managers of the great Whig conspiracy in favour of the authenticity of Oates's Popish Plot; last, Godfrey himself, who was of an hereditary melancholy (his father had suicidal tendencies), and who was involved in a quandary whence he could scarcely hope to extricate himself with life and honour.

Of the circumstances of Godfrey's quandary an account is to follow. But, meanwhile, the theory of Godfrey's suicide (though Danby is said to have accepted it) was rejected, probably with good reason (despite the doubts of L'Estrange, Hume, Sir George Sitwell, and others), by the coroner's jury.*

*Sitwell, The First Whig, Sacheverell.

Privately printed, 1894, Sir George's book – a most interesting volume, based on public and private papers – unluckily is introuvable. Some years have passed since I read a copy which he kindly lent me.

The evidence which determined the verdict of murder was that of two surgeons. They found that the body had been severely bruised, on the chest, by kicks, blows of a blunt weapon, or by

men's knees. A sword-thrust had been dealt, but had slipped on a rib; Godfrey's own sword had then been passed through the left pap, and out at the back. There was said to be no trace of the shedding of fresh living blood on the clothes of Godfrey, or about the ditch. What blood appeared was old, the surgeons averred, and malodorous, and flowed after the extraction of the sword.

L'Estrange (1687) argues at great length, but on evidence collected later, and given under the Anti-Plot bias, that there was much more 'bloud' than was allowed for at the inquest. But the early evidence ought to be best. Again, the surgeons declared that Godfrey had been strangled with a cloth (as the jury found), and his neck dislocated. Bishop Burnet, who viewed the body, writes (long after the event): 'A mark was all round his neck, an inch broad, which showed he was strangled… And his neck was broken. All this I saw.'*

*Burnet, History of his own Time, ii. p. 741. 1725.

L'Estrange argued that the neck was not broken (giving an example of a similar error in the case of a dead child), and that the mark round the neck was caused by the tightness of the collar and the flow of blood to the neck, the body lying head downwards. In favour of this view he produced one surgeon's opinion. He also declares that Godfrey's brothers, for excellent reasons of their own, refused to allow a thorough post-mortem examination. 'None of them had ever been opened,' they said. Their true motive was that, if Godfrey were a suicide, his estate would be forfeited to the Crown, a point on which they

undoubtedly showed great anxiety.

Evidence was also given to prove that, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 15 and 16, Godfrey's body was not in the ditch. On Tuesday Mr. Forsett, on Wednesday Mr. Harwood had taken Mr. Forsett's harriers over the ground, in pursuit of the legendary hare. They had seen no cane or scabbard; the dogs had found no corpse. L'Estrange replied that, as to the cane, the men could not see it if they were on the further side of the bramble-covered ditch. As to the dogs, they later hunted a wood in which a dead body lay for six weeks before it was found. L'Estrange discovered witnesses who had seen Godfrey in St. Martin's Lane on the fatal Saturday, asking his way to Paddington Woods, others who had seen him there or met him returning thence. Again, either he or 'the Devil in his clothes' was seen near the ditch on Saturday afternoon. Again, his clerk, Moore, was seen hunting the fields near the ditch, for his master, on the Monday afternoon. Hence L'Estrange argued that Godfrey went to Paddington Woods, on Saturday morning, to look for a convenient place of suicide: that he could not screw his courage to the sticking place; that he wandered home, did not enter his house, roamed out again, and, near Primrose Hill, found the ditch and 'the sticking place.' His rambles, said L'Estrange, could neither have been taken for business nor pleasure. This is true, if Godfrey actually took the rambles, but the evidence was not adduced till several years later; in 1678 the witnesses would have been in great danger. Still, if we accept L'Estrange's witnesses

for Godfrey's trip to Paddington and return, perhaps we ought not to reject the rest.*

*Brief History, iii. pp. 252, 300, 174, 175; State Trials, viii. pp. 1387, 1392, 1393, 1359-1389.

On the whole, it seems that the evidence for murder, not suicide, is much the better, though even here absolute certainty is not attained. Granting Godfrey's constitutional hereditary melancholy, and the double quandary in which he stood, he certainly had motives for suicide. He was a man of humanity and courage, had bravely faced the Plague in London, had withstood the Court boldly on a private matter (serving a writ, as Justice, on the King's physician who owed him money in his capacity as a coal dealer), and he was lenient in applying the laws against Dissenters and Catholics.

To be lenient was well; but Godfrey's singular penchant for Jesuits, and especially for the chief Catholic intriguer in England, was probably the ultimate cause of his death, whether inflicted by his own hand or those of others.

2

We now study Godfrey's quandary. On June 23, 1678, the infamous miscreant Titus Oates had been expelled from the Jesuit College of St. Omer's, in France. There he may readily

have learned that the usual triennial 'consult' of English Jesuits was to be held in London on April 24, but WHERE it was held, namely in the Duke of York's chambers in St. James's Palace, Oates did not know, or did not say. The Duke, by permitting the Jesuits to assemble in his house, had been technically guilty of treason in 'harbouring' Jesuits, certainly a secret of great importance, as he was the head and hope of the Catholic cause, and the butt of the Whigs, who were eager to exclude him from the succession. Oates had scraps of other genuine news. He returned to London after his expulsion from St. Omer's, was treated with incautious kindness by Jesuits there, and, with Tonge, constructed his monstrous fable of a Popish plot to kill the King and massacre the Protestant public. In August, Charles was apprised of the plot, as was Danby, the Lord Treasurer; the Duke of York also knew, how much he knew is uncertain. The myth was little esteemed by the King.

On September 6, Oates went to Godfrey, and swore before him, as a magistrate, to the truth of a written deposition, as to treason. But Godfrey was not then allowed to read the paper, nor was it left in his hands; the King, he was told, had a copy.* The thing might have passed off, but, as King James II. himself writes, he (being then Duke of York) 'press'd the King and Lord Treasurer several times that the letters' (letters forged by Oates) 'might be produced and read, and the business examined into at the Committee of Foreign Affairs.'** Mr. Pollock calls the Duke's conduct tactless. Like Charles I., in the mystery of 'the

Incident,' he knew himself guiltless, and demanded an inquiry.

*Kirkby, Complete Narrative, pp. 2, 3, cited by Mr. Pollock. At the time, it was believed that Godfrey saw the depositions.

**Clarke's Life of James II. i. p. 518. Cited from the King's original Memoirs.

On September 28, Oates was to appear before the Council. Earlier on that day he again visited Godfrey, handed to him a copy of his deposition, took oath to its truth, and carried another copy to Whitehall. As we shall see, Oates probably adopted this course by advice of one of the King's ministers, Danby or another. Oates was now examined before the King, who detected him in perjury. But he accused Coleman, the secretary of the Duchess of York, of treasonable correspondence with La Chaise, the confessor of Louis XIV.: he also said that, on April 24, he himself was present at the Jesuit 'consult' in the White Horse Tavern, Strand, where they decided to murder the King! This was a lie, but they HAD met on ordinary business of the Society, on April 24, at the palace of the Duke of York. Had the Jesuits, when tried, proved this, they would not have saved their lives, and Oates would merely have sworn that they met AGAIN, at the White Horse.

Godfrey, having Oates's paper before him, now knew that Coleman was accused. Godfrey was very intimate with many Jesuits, says Warner, who was one of them, in his manuscript history.* With Coleman, certainly a dangerous

intriguer, Godfrey was so familiar that 'it was the form arranged between them for use when Godfrey was in company and Coleman wished to see him,' that Coleman should be announced under the name of Mr. Clarke.**

* Pollock, p. 91, note 1.

**Ibid. p. 151, note 3. Welden's evidence before the Lords' Committee,

House of Lords MSS., p. 48. Mr. Pollock rather overstates the case. We cannot be certain, from Welden's words, that Coleman habitually used the name 'Clarke' on such occasions.

It is extraordinary enough to find a rigid British magistrate engaged in clandestine dealings with an intriguer like Coleman, who, for the purpose, receives a cant name. If that fact came out in the inquiry into the plot, Godfrey's doom was dight, the general frenzy would make men cry for his blood. But yet more extraordinary was Godfrey's conduct on September 28. No sooner had he Oates's confession, accusing Coleman, in his hands, than he sent for the accused. Coleman went to the house of a Mr. (or Colonel) Welden, a friend of Godfrey's, and to Godfrey it was announced that 'one Clarke' wished to see him there. 'When they were together at my house they were reading papers,' said Welden later, in evidence.* It cannot be doubted that, after studying Oates's deposition, Godfrey's first care was to give Coleman full warning. James II. tells us this himself, in his memoirs. 'Coleman being known to depend on the Duke, Sir

Edmund Bury (sic) Godfrey made choice of him, to send to his Highness an account of Oates's and Tongue's depositions as soon as he had taken them,' that is, on September 28.** Apparently the Duke had not the precise details of Oates's charges, as they now existed, earlier than September 28, when they were sent to him by Godfrey.

*See previous note (Pollock, p. 151, note 3.)
**Life of James II. i, p. 534.

It is Mr. Pollock's argument that, when Godfrey and Coleman went over the Oates papers, Coleman would prove Oates's perjury, and would to this end let out that, on April 24, the Jesuits met, not as Oates swore, at a tavern, but at the Duke of York's house, a secret fatal to the Duke and the Catholic cause. The Jesuits then slew Godfrey to keep the secret safe.*

*Pollock, p. 153.

Now, first, I cannot easily believe that Coleman would blab this secret (quite unnecessarily, for this proof of Oates's perjury could not be, and was not, publicly adduced), unless Godfrey was already deep in the Catholic intrigues. He may have been, judging by his relations with Coleman. If Godfrey was not himself engaged in Catholic intrigues, Coleman need only tell him that Oates was not in England in April, and could not have been, as he swore he was, at the 'consult.' Next, Godfrey was not the man (as Mr. Pollock supposes) to reveal his knowledge to the world, from a sense of duty, even if the Court 'stifled the

plot.' Mr. Pollock says: 'Godfrey was, by virtue of his position as justice of the peace, a Government official… Sooner or later he would certainly reveal it… The secret… had come into the hands of just one of the men who could not afford, even if he might wish, to retain it.'* Mr. Pollock may conceive, though I do not find him saying so, that Godfrey communicated Oates's charges to Coleman merely for the purpose of 'pumping' him and surprising some secret. If so he acted foolishly.

*Pollock, p. 154.

In fact, Godfrey was already 'stifling the plot.' A Government official, he was putting Coleman in a posture to fly, and to burn his papers; had he burned all of them, the plot was effectually stifled. Next, Godfrey could not reveal the secret without revealing his own misprision of treason. He would be asked 'how he knew the secret.' Godfrey's lips were thus sealed; he had neither the wish nor the power to speak out, and so his knowledge of the secret, if he knew it, was innocuous to the Jesuits. 'What is it nearer?' Coleman was reported, by a perjured informer, to have asked.*

*State Trials, vii. 1319. Trial of Lord Stafford, 1680.

To this point I return later. Meanwhile, let it be granted that Godfrey knew the secret from Coleman, and that, though, since Godfrey could not speak without self-betrayal – though it was 'no nearer' – still the Jesuits thought well to mak sikker and slay him.

Still, what is the evidence that Godfrey had a mortal secret?

Mr. Pollock gives it thus: 'He had told Mr. Wynnel that he was master of a dangerous secret, which would be fatal to him. "Oates," he said, "is sworn and is perjured."' * These sentences are not thus collocated in the original. The secret was not, as from Mr. Pollock's arrangement it appears to be, that Oates was perjured.

*Pollock, p. 150.

The danger lay, not in knowledge that Oates was perjured – all the Council knew the King to have discovered that. 'Many believed it,' says Mr. Pollock. 'It was not an uncommon thing to say.'* The true peril, on Mr. Pollock's theory, was Godfrey's possession of PROOF that Oates was perjured, that proof involving the secret of the Jesuit 'consult' of April 14, AT THE DUKE OF YORK'S HOUSE. But, by a singular oversight, Mr. Pollock quotes only part of what Godfrey said to Wynell (or Wynnel) about his secret. He does not give the whole of the sentence uttered by Wynell. The secret, of which Godfrey was master, on the only evidence, Wynell's, had nothing to do with the Jesuit meeting of April 24. Wynell is one of L'Estrange's later witnesses. His words are:

Godfrey: 'The (Catholic) Lords are as innocent as you or I. Coleman will die, but not the Lords.'

Wynell: 'If so, where are we then?'

Godfrey: 'Oates is sworn and is perjured.'

* * *

'Upon Wynell's asking Sir Edmund some time why he was so melancholy, his answer has been, "he was melancholy because he was master of a dangerous secret that would be fatal to him, THAT HIS SECURITY WAS OATE'S DEPOSITION, THAT THE SAID OATES HAD FIRST DECLARED IT TO A PUBLIC MINISTER, AND SECONDLY THAT HE CAME TO SIR EDMUND BY HIS (the Minister's) DIRECTION." **

*Pollock, p. 152.
**L'Estrange, part iii. p. 187.

We must accept all of Mr. Wynell's statement or none; we cannot accept, like Mr. Pollock, only Godfrey's confession of owning a dangerous secret, without Godfrey's explanation of the nature of the danger. Against THAT danger (his knowing and taking no action upon what Oates had deposed) Godfrey's 'security' was Oates's other deposition, that his information was already in the Minister's hands, and that he had come to Godfrey by the Minister's orders. The invidiousness of knowing and not acting on Oates's 'dangerous secret,' Godfrey hoped, fell on the Minister rather than on himself. And it did fall on Danby, who was later accused of treason on this very ground, among others. Such is Wynell's evidence, true or false. C'est a prendre ou a laisser in bulk, and in bulk is of no value to Mr. Pollock's

argument.

That Godfrey was in great fear after taking Oates's deposition, and dealing with Coleman, is abundantly attested. But of what was he afraid, and of whom? L'Estrange says, of being made actual party to the plot, and not of 'bare misprision' only, the misprision of not acting on Oates's information.* It is to prove this point that L'Estrange cites Wynell as quoted above. Bishop Burnet reports that, to him, Godfrey said 'that he believed he himself should be knocked on the head.'** Knocked on the head by whom? By a frightened Protestant mob, or by Catholic conspirators? To Mr. Robinson, an old friend, he said, 'I do not fear them if they come fairly, and I shall not part with my life tamely.' Qu'ils viennent! as Tartarin said, but who are 'they'? Godfrey said that he had 'taken the depositions very unwillingly, and would fain have had it done by others… I think I shall have little thanks for my pains… Upon my conscience I believe I shall be the first martyr.'*** He could not expect thanks from the Catholics: it was from the frenzied Protestants that he expected 'little thanks.'

*L'Estrange, iii. p. 187.
**Burnet, ii. p. 740.
***State Trials, vii. pp. 168, 169.

Oates swore, and, for once, is corroborated, that Godfrey complained 'of receiving affronts from some great persons (whose names I name not now) for being so zealous in this business.' If Oates, by 'great persons,' means the Duke of York,

it was in the Duke's own cause that Godfrey had been 'zealous,' sending him warning by Coleman. Oates added that others threatened to complain to Parliament, which was to meet on October 21, that Godfrey had been 'too remiss.' Oates was a liar, but Godfrey, in any case, was between the Devil and the deep sea. As early as October 24, Mr. Mulys attested, before the Lords, Godfrey's remark, 'he had been blamed by some great men for not having done his duty, and by other great men for having done too much.' Mulys corroborates Oates.* If Godfrey knew a secret dangerous to the Jesuits (which, later, was a current theory), he might be by them silenced for ever. If his conduct, being complained of, was examined into by Parliament, misprision of treason was the lowest at which his offence could be rated. Never was magistrate in such a quandary. But we do not know, in the state of the evidence, which of his many perils he feared most, and his possession of 'a dangerous secret' (namely, the secret of the consult of April 24) is a pure hypothesis. It is not warranted, but refuted, by Godfrey's own words as reported by Wynell, when, unlike Mr. Pollock, we quote Wynell's whole sentence on the subject. (see previous exchange between Godfrey and Wynell.)

*Lords' MSS., P. 48.

3

The theories of Godfrey's death almost defy enumeration. For suicide, being a man of melancholic temperament, he had reasons as many and as good as mortal could desire. That he was murdered for not being active enough in prosecuting the plot, is most improbable. That he was taken off by Danby's orders, for giving Coleman and the Duke of York early warning, is an absurd idea, for Danby could have had him on THAT score by ordinary process of law. That he was slain by Oates's gang, merely to clinch the fact that a plot there veritably was, is improbable. At the same time, Godfrey had been calling Oates a perjurer: he KNEW that Oates was forsworn. This was an unsafe thing for any man to say, but when the man was the magistrate who had read Oates's deposition, he invited danger. Such were the chances that Godfrey risked from the Plot party. The Catholics, on the other hand, if they were aware that Godfrey possessed the secret of the Jesuit meeting of April 24, and if they deemed him too foolish to keep the secret in his own interest, could not but perceive that to murder him was to play into the hands of the Whigs by clinching the belief in a Popish plot. Had they been the murderers, they would probably have taken his money and rings, to give the idea that he had been attacked and robbed by vulgar villains. If they 'were not the damnedest fools' (thus freely speaks L'Estrange), they would not have taken deliberate steps to secure

the instant discovery of the corpse. Whoever pitched Godfrey's body into the bramble-covered ditch, meant it to be found, for his cane, scabbard, and so on were deliberately left outside of the ditch. Your wily Jesuit would have caused the body to disappear, leaving the impression that Godfrey had merely absconded, as he had the best reasons for doing. On the other hand, Oates's gang would not, if they first strangled Godfrey, have run his own sword through his body, as if he had committed suicide – unless, indeed, they calculated that this would be a likely step for your wily Jesuit to take, in the circumstances. Again, an educated 'Jesuit,' like Le Fevre, 'the Queen's confessor,' would know that the sword trick was futile; even a plain man, let alone a surgeon, could detect a wound inflicted on a corpse four or five days old.

Two other theories existed, first, that Godfrey hanged himself, and that his brothers and heirs did the sword trick, to suggest that he had not committed suicide by strangulation, but had been set on and stabbed with his own sword. In that case, of course, the brothers would have removed his rings and money, to prove that he had been robbed. The other theory, plausible enough, held that Godfrey was killed by Catholics, NOT because he took Oates's deposition (which he was bound to do), but because he officiously examined a number of persons to make discoveries. The Attorney-General at the trial of Godfrey's alleged murderers (February 1679), declared that Sir Edmund had taken such examinations: 'we have proof that he had some… perhaps some more than are now extant' * This theory, then,

held that he was taken off to prevent his pursuing his zealous course, and to seize the depositions which he had already taken. When this was stated to Charles II., on November 7, 1678, by the perjured Bedloe, the King naturally remarked: 'The parties were still alive' (the deponents) 'to give the informations.' Bedloe answered, that the papers were to be seized 'in hopes the second informations taken from the parties would not have agreed with the first, and so the thing would have been disproved.'** This was monstrously absurd, for the slayers of Godfrey could not have produced the documents of which they had robbed him.

*State Trials, vii. p. 163.
**Pollock, p. 385.

The theory that Sir Edmund was killed because Coleman had told him too many secrets did not come to general knowledge till the trial of Lord Stafford in 1680. The hypothesis – Godfrey slain because, through Coleman, he knew too many Catholic secrets – is practically that of Mr. Pollock. It certainly does supply a motive for Godfrey's assassination. Hot-headed Catholics who knew, or suspected, that Godfrey knew too much, MAY have killed him for that reason, or for the purpose of seizing his papers, but it is improbable that Catholics of education, well aware that, if he blabbed, Godfrey must ruin himself, would have put their hands into his blood, on the mere chance that, if left alive, he might betray both himself and them.

4

It is now necessary to turn backward a little and see what occurred immediately after the meeting of Coleman and Godfrey on September 28. On that day, Oates gave his lying evidence before the Council: he was allowed to go on a Jesuit drive, with warrants and officers; he caught several of the most important Jesuits. On September 29, the King heard his tale, and called him a 'lying knave.' None the less he was sent on another drive, and, says Mr. Pollock, 'before dawn most the Jesuits of eminence in London lay in gaol.' But Le Fevre, 'the Queen's confessor,' and the other 'Jesuits' whom Mr. Pollock suspects of Godfrey's murder, were not taken. Is it likely (it is, of course, possible) that they stayed on in town, and killed Godfrey twelve days later?

Meanwhile Coleman, thanks to Godfrey's warning, had most of September 28, the night of that day, and September 29, wherein to burn his papers and abscond. He did neither; if he destroyed some papers, he left others in his rooms, letters which were quite good enough to hang him for high treason, as the law stood. Apparently Coleman did not understand his danger. On Sunday night, September 29, a warrant for his apprehension was issued, and for the seizure of his papers. 'He came voluntarily in on Monday morning,' having heard of the warrant. This is not the conduct of a man who knows himself guilty. He met the charges with disdain, and made so good a case that, instead of being sent

to Newgate, he was merely entrusted to a messenger, who was told 'to be very civil to Mr. Coleman.'

Charles II. went to the Newmarket Autumn Meeting, Coleman's papers were examined, and 'sounded so strange to the Lords' that they sent him to Newgate (October 1). The papers proved that Coleman, years before, had corresponded (as Oates had sworn) with the confessor of Louis XIV. and had incurred the technical guilt of treason. Either Coleman did not understand the law and the measure of his offence (as seems probable), or he thought his papers safely hidden. But the heather was on fire. The belief in Oates's impossible Plot blazed up, 'hell was let loose'.*

*State Trials, vii. p. 29.

Coleman had thought himself safe, says James II., then Duke of York. 'The Duke perceiving' (from Godfrey's information of September 28) 'Oates had named Coleman, bade him look to himself, for he was sure to find no favour, and therefore, if he had any papers that might hurt him, to secure them immediately; but he, apprehending no danger, let them be seized, however kept close himself, and sent to advise with the Duke whether he should deliver himself up or not. The Duke replyd, "He knew best what was in his papers; if they contain'd any expression which could be wrested to an ill sence, he had best not appear, otherwise the surrendering himself would be an argument of innocency." He did accordingly,' and was condemned in November, and hanged.*

*Life of James II., i. p. 534.

King James's tale agrees with the facts of Coleman's surrender. 'He came in voluntarily.' He did not appreciate the resources of civilisation at the service of the English law of treason: he had dabbled in intrigue without taking counsel's advice, and knowing for certain that Oates was an inconsistent liar, Coleman took his chance with a light heart. However, not only did some of his letters bring him (though he could not understand the fact) within the elastic law of treason; but Oates's evidence was accepted when conspicuously false; Coleman was not allowed to produce his diary and prove an alibi as to one of Oates's accusations, and a new witness, Bedloe, a perjurer who rivalled Oates, had sprung up out of the filth of London streets. So Coleman swung for it, as Godfrey, according to Wynell, had prophesied that he would.

Coleman's imprisonment began twelve days before Godfrey's disappearance. At Coleman's trial, late in November, a mere guess was given that Godfrey was slain to prevent him (a Protestant martyr) from blabbing Catholic secrets. This cause of Godfrey's taking off was not alleged by Bedloe. This man, a notorious cosmopolitan rogue, who had swindled his way through France and Spain, was first heard of in the Godfrey case at the end of October. He wrote to the Secretaries of State from Bristol (L'Estrange says from Newbury on his way to Bristol), offering information, as pardon and reward had been promised to contrite accomplices in the murder. He came to town, and, on

November 7, gave evidence before the King. Bedloe gave himself out as a Jesuit agent; concerning the Plot he added monstrous inventions to those of Oates.

'As to Sir Edmund Godfrey; was promised 2,000 guineas to be in it by Le Fere' (Le Fevre, 'the Queen's confessor),' [by] 'my Lord Bellasis gentleman, AND THE YOUNGEST OF THE WAITERS IN THE QUEENE'S CHAPEL, IN A PURPLE GOWN, and to keep the people orderly.'*

*See Pollock, pp. 384, 387. The report is from Secretary Coventry's MSS., at Longleat. The evidence as to Bedloe's deposition before the King (November 7) is in a confused state. Mr. Pollock prints (pp. 383, 384, cf. p. 110) a document from 'Brit. Mus. Addit. MS. 11058, f. 244.'

This is also given, with the same erroneous reference, by Mr. Foley, in Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus, vol. v. p. 30, note. The right reference is 11055. The document is quite erroneously printed, with variations in error, by Mr. Foley and Mr. Pollock. Bedloe really said that Godfrey was lured into Somerset House Yard, not into 'some house yard' (Foley), or 'into a house yard' (Pollock). Bedloe, so far, agreed with Prance, but, in another set of notes on his deposition (Longleat MSS., Coventry Papers, xi. 272-274, Pollock, 384-387), he made Somerset House the scene of the murder. There are other errors. Mr.

Pollock and Mr. Foley make Bedloe accuse Father Eveley, S.J., in whom I naturally recognised Father Evers or Every, who was then at Tixall in Staffordshire. The name in the MS. is 'Welch,' not Eveley. The MS. was manifestly

written not before September 12. It does not appear that Bedloe, on November 7, knew the plot as invented by Oates, on which compare Mr. Pollock, p. 110, who thinks that 'it is quite possible that Charles II. deceived him,' Bishop Burnet, 'intentionally,' on this head (Burnet, ii. 745-746, 1725). By printing 'he acquainted' instead of 'he acquainteth the Lords,' in the British Museum MS., and by taking the document, apparently, to be of November 7, Mr. Pollock has been led to an incorrect conclusion. I am obliged to Father Gerard, S.J., for a correct transcript of the British Museum MS.; see also Note iii., 'The Jesuit Murderers,' at the end of this chapter, and Father Gerard's The Popish Plot and its Latest Historian (Longman's, 1903).

Bedloe here asserts distinctly that one accomplice was an official of the Queen's chapel, in her residence, Somerset House: a kind of verger, in a purple gown. This is highly important, for the man whom he later pretended to recognise as this accomplice was not a 'waiter,' did not 'wear a purple gown;' and, by his own account, 'was not in the chapel once a month.' Bedloe's recognition of him, therefore, was worthless. He said that Godfrey was smothered with a pillow, or two pillows, in a room in Somerset House, for the purpose of securing 'the examinations' that Godfrey had taken. 'Coleman and Lord Bellasis advised to destroy him.' His informant was Le Fevre. One Walsh (a 'Jesuit'), Le Fevre, Lord Bellasis's man, and 'the chapel keeper' did the deed. The chapel keeper carried him' (Godfrey) 'off.' 'HE DID NOT SEE HIM' (Godfrey)

'AFTER HE WAS DEAD.'

On the following day Bedloe told his tale at the bar of the House of Lords. He now, contradicting himself, swore THAT HE SAW GODFREY'S DEAD BODY IN SOMERSET HOUSE. He was offered 2,000 guineas to help to carry him off. This was done by chairmen, 'retainers to Somerset House,' on Monday night (October 14).*

*Pollock, p. 387, Lords' Journals, xiii. p. 343.

On that night, Bedloe saw Samuel Atkins, Mr. Pepys's clerk, beside the corpse, by the light of a dark lantern. Atkins had an alibi, so Bedloe shuffled, and would not swear to him.

On November 14, before the Lords' Committee, Bedloe again gave evidence. The 2,100 pounds were now 4,000 pounds offered to Bedloe, by Le Fevre, early in October, to kill a man. The attendant in the Queen's chapel was at the scene (a pure figment) of the corpse exposed under the dark lantern. The motive of the murder was to seize Godfrey's examinations, which he said he had sent to Whitehall. At a trial which followed in February 1679, Mr. Robinson, who had known Godfrey for some forty years, deposed that he had said to him, 'I understand you have taken several examinations.' 'Truly,' said he, 'I have.' 'Pray, Sir, have you the examinations about you, will you please to let me see them?' 'No, I have them not, I delivered them to a person of quality.'*

*State Trials, vii. 168.

This person of quality was not the Duke of York, for it may be noted that, on the day before his disappearance, Godfrey had, in fact, received back from the Lord Chief Justice the original copy of Oates's depositions. This copy was found in his house, after his death, and handed over by his brother to the Government.* To get the examinations was always the motive of the murder, with Bedloe. The hour of Godfrey's death was now 2 P.M.; now 3, or 4, or 5 P.M., on October 12. The body was hidden in various rooms of Somerset House, or under the high altar in the Queen's Chapel. The discrepancies never affected the faith given to Bedloe.

*Lords' MSS., Hist. MSS. Commission Report, xi. Appendix, part ii., pp. 2,3.

At the end of December came in a new accomplice-witness. This was an Irishman, Miles Prance, a silversmith, who had a business among Catholics, and worked for the Queen's Chapel. Unlike all the other informers, Prance had hitherto been an ordinary fellow enough, with a wife and family, not a swindling debauchee. He was arrested on December 21, on information given by John Wren, a lodger of his, with whom he had quarrelled. Wren had noticed that Prance lay out of his own house while Godfrey was missing, which Prance admitted to be true.*

*Op. cit. p. 51. Prance both said, and denied, that he slept out while Sir Edmund was missing. He was flurried

and self-contradictory.

Bedloe, passing through a room in the House of Commons, saw Prance in custody, and at once pretended to recognise in him the 'chapel keeper,' 'under waiter,' or 'man in the purple gown,' whom he had seen by the light of a dark lantern, beside Godfrey's body, in a room of Somerset House, on October 14. 'There was very little light' on that occasion, Bedloe had said, and he finally refused, we saw, to swear to Atkins, who had an alibi. But, as to Prance, he said: 'This is one of the rogues that I saw with a dark lantern about the body of Sir Edmund, but he was then in a periwig.'* The periwig was introduced in case Prance had an alibi: Oates had used the same 'hedge,' 'a periwig doth disguise a man very much,' in Coleman's case.**

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.