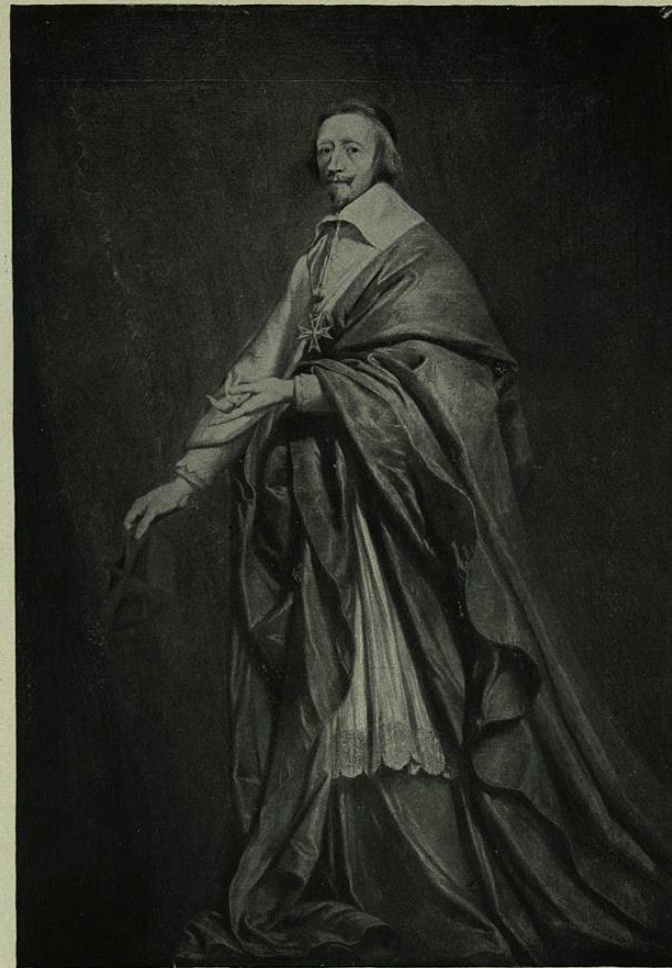


Ratisbon, in 1641, the diet of the Empire and the emperor himself. While the successor of Banér, the paralytic Torstenson, was astonishing Europe by the rapidity of his operations and a succession of glorious victories in Silesia and Saxony (1641), Guébriant boldly advanced with the Duke of Weimar's army into the western part of the Empire, and was victorious at Wolfenbüttel (1641) and at Kempen (1642).

Death of Richelieu (December, 1642). — It was in the midst of all these victories that Richelieu died, at the age of fifty-seven. When they presented the Host to him, he said, "Behold the Judge before whom I shall soon appear; I pray Him to condemn me if I have had any other desire than the good of religion and the State." "Do you forgive your enemies?" said the confessor. "I have never had any others but those of the State," he replied. He left France victorious everywhere; the house of Austria conquered; four provinces, Lorraine, Alsace, Artois, and Roussillon, added to the kingdom; Catalonia and Portugal in revolt against Spain; the Swedish and French soldiers almost at the gates of Vienna. He had indeed fulfilled the promise made to Louis XIII. upon entering on his ministry; he had raised the king's name to the position it ought to hold among foreign nations; at home he had made everything submit to his authority. But the nation passed from one danger to another; from aristocratic license to arbitrary royal despotism which sometimes set justice aside, and disposed at will of the fortunes, liberty, and lives of its citizens.

Richelieu was not in reality a systematic enemy of the nobility. He thought it a necessity, and had a horror of the mixture of classes. He was indignant at the position which the bourgeoisie already occupied in the State, on account of the offices it held. Merchants and soldiers were all he asked the Third Estate to furnish. We reproached him a moment ago for having badly managed the finances. But he regarded taxation from a double point of view, — as furnishing resources to the State, and also as a means of keeping the people in submission. "All politicians," said he, "agree that if the people are too much at their ease, it will be impossible to make them conform with the rules of duty. If they are free from taxation, they will dream of being free from obedience."

The French Academy; the Sorbonne; the Palais-Royal; the Jardin des Plantes. — The terrible minister had a taste for



CARDINAL RICHELIEU.

From a painting by Champagne in the Louvre.

letters and the arts. He instituted the French Academy in 1635, designing it to control the language and regulate literary taste; he reconstructed the Sorbonne; he built the college of Plessis, the Palais-Cardinal (Palais-Royal), and founded the royal printing-house; he established the Jardin des Plantes for the instruction of medical students. He treated authors with a deference to which they had not been accustomed, pensioned learned men and poets, Corneille among others, and encouraged painters. He was himself a remarkable writer.

Death of Louis XIII. — Louis XIII. made no alteration in the policy of the cardinal, and called to the council Jules Mazarin (Giulio Mazarini); the friend and confidant of the great minister. The king survived Richelieu only six months (died May 14, 1643).

This prince does not deserve the contempt that is often expressed for him. He retained for eighteen years a minister for whom he had little liking; he made him less his counsellor than the depository of his omnipotence and the dictator of France. This willingness to accept a minister whose demands were often painful and sometimes cruel, should be placed to the credit of the prince who possessed such rare devotion to public interest. Besides, Louis XIII. had courage, and sometimes decision of character, and he exhibited on the throne a virtue which is rarely seen there, the chastity of Saint Louis.