

at the heels of the unfortunate youth, and only watching for an opportunity to destroy him.

Such opportunity occurred but too soon. Among the loose companions with whom the count had become intimate were two who lodged in the same hotel with him. One was a youth only twenty years of age, who passed himself off as the Chevalier d'Etampes, but whose real name was Lestang, the prodigal son of a Flemish banker. The other, named Laurent de Mille, a Piedmontese, was a cashiered captain, and at the time an esquire in the service of the dissolute Princess de Carignan, who kept gambling-tables in her palace. It is probable that gambling propensities had brought these young men together, and that their losses had driven them to desperate measures; certain it is that all Paris was suddenly astounded by a murder which they were said to have committed. What made the crime more startling was, that it seemed connected with the great Mississippi scheme, at that time the fruitful source of all kinds of panics and agitations. A Jew, a stock-broker, who dealt largely in shares of the bank of Law, founded on the Mississippi scheme, was the victim. The story of his death is variously related. The darkest account states that the Jew was decoyed by these young men into an obscure tavern, under pretext of negotiating with him for bank shares to the amount of one hundred thousand crowns, which he had with him in his pocketbook. Lestang kept watch upon the stairs. The count and De Mille entered with the Jew into a chamber. In a little while there were heard cries and struggles from within. A waiter passing by the room looked in, and seeing the Jew weltering in his blood, shut the door again, double-locked it, and alarmed the house. Lestang rushed downstairs, made his way to the hotel, secured his most portable effects and fled the country. The count and De Mille endeavored to escape by the window, but were both taken and conducted to prison.

A circumstance which occurs in this part of the count's story seems to point him out as a fated man. His mother, and his brother, the Prince Van Horn, had received intelligence some time before at Baussigny, of the dissolute life that the count was leading at Paris and of his losses at play. They dispatched a gentleman of the prince's household to Paris, to pay the debts of the count and persuade him to return to Flanders; or, if he should refuse, to obtain an order from the regent for him to quit the capital. Unfortunately