

" All desperate hazards courage do create,
As he plays frankly who has least estate ;
Presence of mind and courage in distress,
Are more than armies to procure success."

In fact, having forced the door, it appeared they were not mistaken ; that they were at the bottom of a staircase which led into the Court. It was now half past four o'clock ; the morning was dark and cold, while rain and snow were falling in abundance. The associates embraced each other with transport, and were preparing to mount the staircase, when Porral cried out, " what are you about ? if we attempt to go out at present it is all over with us. The gate is now shut, and if any should be perceived in the court the alarm would instantly be given, and all would be discovered. After having had the courage to penetrate thus far, let us have resolution still to wait awhile. At eight o'clock the gate will be opened, and the passage through the court free. We can then steal out by degrees ; and mingling with the numbers that are constantly passing and repassing, we can go away without being perceived. It is not till ten o'clock the prisoners are summoned to execution ; between eight and ten there will be time enough for us all to get away. We will return to the cave ; and when the time of departure arrives, each of us five will inform two others of the means of escape offered. We shall then be fifteen, and going out three at a time, we shall pass unobserved. Let the last three, as they set off, inform fifteen others, and thus in succession we may all escape. This plan appeared judicious and safe ; it was unanimously agreed to, and the associates returning to the cave, made choice of those who should first be informed of what they had done.

Montellier, a notary, and Baron de Chaffoy, to whom the means of escape were offered, refused to avail themselves of them, the former from a confidence of pardon, as he had been mistaken for his brother, and the latter, though in the flower of his age, declared that all his ties in the world had been broken, and that life had nothing now to offer which could make him desirous of prolonging it. They were both guillotined the next morning.

The fate of the fifteen who fled was very dissimilar, and the escape of the rest was prevented by the imprudence of one of them. The last of the fifteen, who, on quitting the cave, was according to the plan arranged, privately to apprise fifteen others ; instead of doing so, cried aloud, " The passage is open ; let him that can, escape." This excited a great movement among the prisoners. They arose in an instant, doubting whether what they heard could be true, or whether he who uttered these words was not mad. The noise they made alarmed the sentinel without ; he called to the turnkey ; they hastened immediately to the cave, perceived what had been done, and closing up the door by which the prisoners had escaped, placed a strong guard before it. Nesple, who excited this movement, was, with three others, taken and executed. Another of the fugitives took refuge in the house of a friend, in an obscure street ; but he was discovered, brought back, and guillotined.

It was not thus with Porral, the original author of the plan,