

that the reality far outstripped his most sanguine expectations; he was in raptures at all he beheld and declared himself abundantly rewarded for his patience. Le Notre would at times request the King to close his eyes, and not open them until they would get to a certain point, then he would give the signal for opening them by crying *Voilà*. The view was indeed enchanting. It seemed as if a whole army of fairies had been at work to bring such a paradise out of chaos. Long rows of stately full-grown trees, brought from distant countries, had taken root and were flourishing as in their native soil: winding paths intersected majestic avenues and led the visitor, unexpectedly to richly planted groves, where marble fauns coyly hid; all the elves in fairyland, all the gods in Olympia were here congregated, now astray in the green tangled wood, now standing in majestic groups, or peeping singly through an opening in the foliage as if they were playing hide-and-seek; water-nymphs dashing the soft spray about them, started unexpectedly from nooks and corners, cooling the air that was heavy with the scent of flowers. The laughing ripple of artistic fountains answered the wild rush of the cascade, and both contrasted pleasantly with the still surface of the artificial lakes. The whole was indeed a sight worthy to set before a King, and Le Notre transported with joy at the monarch's delight, declared that day to be the proudest in his life.

Henceforth the King made the Palace of Versailles his permanent residence. His life there was a series of *fetes* of the most luxurious kind. He gathered around him the first men of the land, and played the King as it was never played before or since. He was handsome and majestic and truly merited the title of *Grand Monarque*. Here in the *Salle du Trone* all the potentates of the earth came and greeted him, as *the King*, as if he were the only real King, and they his humble imitators. The following characteristic story of him may not prove uninteresting.

His son, the Dauphin, while hunting in the neighbouring forest, strayed with a few companions from the rest of the party, and were obliged to seek hospitality for the night of an aged priest who occupied a small cottage in that deserted place. The latter thinking them one of the numerous bands of thieves in which the place abounded, refused to admit them; but they were well armed and forced admittance. In answer to their demand for supper the good *cure* gave them a leg of mutton, which they