

30 STORIES OF THE FRENCH ARTISTS

exceedingly difficult problem, for one knows so little that can with any degree of certainty be given to him. A document of the utmost importance in this respect is the wonderful collection of three hundred drawings to-day housed at Chantilly. These were purchased *en bloc* by the late duke of Aumale from the earl of Carlisle in 1889. Now, curiously enough, unlike the Holbein drawings at Windsor, these portraits do not always bear the names of the personages represented, and it is only by comparison with known and well-authenticated portraits of the period that some of them have been identified. In this way the late Henry Bouchot rendered great service; for he succeeded in affixing names to a not inconsiderable number. The series covers the period from about 1515 to 1570, and it is thus quite fair to presume that many of the earlier specimens are the work of Jehan Clouet. They are generally masterly in treatment, and quite worthy of such a master as Clouet is reputed to have been.

But even when a portrait is on technical or historical grounds fairly confidently given to him, there is the ever-haunting recollection of the existence of Guéty, Perréal, Bourdichon, and Champion to trouble one.