

for had this come to my ears in any other way I could not have spared you. You will render your accounts to M. de Sully to-morrow, and according as you are frank with him you will be treated."

Fauchet thanked him with abject tears, and the King rose and prepared to leave. But at the door a thought struck him, and he turned. "How long have you done this?" he said, indicating the room by a gesture, and speaking in a gentler tone.

"Three years," sire, the wretched man answered.

"And how much have you distributed?"

"Fifteen hundred crowns, sire,"

The King cast an indescribable look at me, wherein amusement, scorn and astonishment were all blended. "St. Gris! man!" he said, shrugging his shoulders and drawing in his breath sharply, "you think God is as easily duped as the King! I wish I could think so."

He did not speak again until we were half-way back to the Louvre; when he opened his mouth to announce his intention of rewarding me with a tithe of the money recovered. It was duly paid to me, and I bought with it part of the outlying lands of Villebon—those, I mean, which extend towards Chartres. The rest of the money notwithstanding all my efforts was wasted here and there, Pimental winning 30,000 crowns that year. But the discovery led to others of a similar character, and eventually set me on the track of a greater offender, M. L'Argentier, whom I brought to justice a few months later.