

A Man of His Age

"I pray God they are dead with La Hake, to whom she sent them," answered Jeanne, bitterly. "Get her gone she must, as to the how and whither, that is her affair and not mine, nor can the roads of Navarre have many terrors for a tiring-damsel of Catherine de Medici. Monsieur de Crussenay, you who keep the door so well, bid some one without send for Monsieur de Montamar."

At the Queen's last words the lad's face had crimsoned, but now, except to draw the girl still closer to him, he moved neither hand nor foot, nor, saving for the tightening of his clasp, did he make any answer. Dumb as he was the motion was enough, and never have I seen Jeanne d'Albret's anger so moved.

"So, Monsieur," said she, and though her voice was lowered it shook as it had never shaken in her rebuke of De Luxe and his fellows, "you fling away faith, honor, service, duty, advancement; and all for a light woman?"

"No, no!" cried Mademoiselle, in a scream. "Never that, Henri! never that, by God above, never that."

Again he looked at her as he looked once before, then back to the Queen.

"You hear, Madame," he repeated. "As for me, you speak of duty and service. My duty and service are to hold my wife that is to be safe and sacred, or, if that fails, to make an end as my father did before me. And I humbly pray to God, Madame, I may show you later as to faith and honor. Come, my heart."

With his arm still fast round her and she clinging to him in a half faint, they passed out into the cor-