

Project Gutenberg Etext of Quotations From Dumas' Celebrated Crimes
#9 in our series of Widger's Quotations by David Widger

Copyright laws are changing all over the world, be sure to check
the laws for your country before redistributing these files!!!

Please take a look at the important information in this header.
We encourage you to keep this file on your own disk, keeping an
electronic path open for the next readers.

Please do not remove this.

This should be the first thing seen when anyone opens the book.
Do not change or edit it without written permission. The words
are carefully chosen to provide users with the information they
need about what they can legally do with the texts.

****Welcome To The World of Free Plain Vanilla Electronic Texts****

****Etexts Readable By Both Humans and By Computers, Since 1971****

These Etexts Prepared By Hundreds of Volunteers and Donations

Information on contacting Project Gutenberg to get Etexts, and
further information is included below. We need your donations.
The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a 501(c)(3)
organization with EIN [Employee Identification Number] 64-6221541

As of 12/12/00 contributions are only being solicited from people in:
Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa,
Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Montana,
Nevada, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota,
Texas, Vermont, and Wyoming.

As the requirements for other states are met,
additions to this list will be made and fund raising
will begin in the additional states. Please feel
free to ask to check the status of your state.

International donations are accepted,
but we don't know ANYTHING about how
to make them tax-deductible, or
even if they CAN be made deductible,
and don't have the staff to handle it
even if there are ways.

These donations should be made to:

Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation
PMB 113
1739 University Ave.
Oxford, MS 38655-4109

Title: Widger's Quotations from Celebrated Crimes of Alexandre Dumas, Pere

Author: David Widger

Release Date: January, 2003 [Etext #3617]

[Yes, we are about one year ahead of schedule]

[The actual date this file first posted = 06/15/01]

Edition: 10

Language: English

Project Gutenberg Etext of Quotations From Dumas' Celebrated Crimes

*****This file should be named dwqdc10.txt or dwqdc10.zip*****

Corrected EDITIONS of our etexts get a new NUMBER, dwqdc11.txt

VERSIONS based on separate sources get new LETTER, dwqdc10a.txt

This etext was produced by David Widger <widger@cecomet.net>

Project Gutenberg Etexts are usually created from multiple editions, all of which are in the Public Domain in the United States, unless a copyright notice is included. Therefore, we usually do NOT keep any of these books in compliance with any particular paper edition.

We are now trying to release all our books one year in advance of the official release dates, leaving time for better editing.

Please be encouraged to send us error messages even years after the official publication date.

Please note: neither this list nor its contents are final till midnight of the last day of the month of any such announcement. The official release date of all Project Gutenberg Etexts is at Midnight, Central Time, of the last day of the stated month. A preliminary version may often be posted for suggestion, comment and editing by those who wish to do so.

Most people start at our sites at:

<http://gutenberg.net>

<http://promo.net/pg>

Those of you who want to download any Etext before announcement can surf to them as follows, and just download by date; this is also a good way to get them instantly upon announcement, as the indexes our cataloguers produce obviously take a while after an announcement goes out in the Project Gutenberg Newsletter.

<http://www.ibiblio.org/gutenberg/etext03>

or

<ftp://ftp.ibiblio.org/pub/docs/books/gutenberg/etext03>

Or /etext02, 01, 00, 99, 98, 97, 96, 95, 94, 93, 92, 92, 91 or 90

Just search by the first five letters of the filename you want, as it appears in our Newsletters.

Information about Project Gutenberg (one page)

We produce about two million dollars for each hour we work. The time it takes us, a rather conservative estimate, is fifty hours to get any etext selected, entered, proofread, edited, copyright searched and analyzed, the copyright letters written, etc. This projected audience is one hundred million readers. If our value per text is nominally estimated at one dollar then we produce \$2 million dollars per hour this year as we release fifty new Etext files per month, or 500 more Etexts in 2000 for a total of 3000+. If they reach just 1-2% of the world's population then the total should reach over 300 billion Etexts given away by year's end.

The Goal of Project Gutenberg is to Give Away One Trillion Etext Files by December 31, 2001. [10,000 x 100,000,000 = 1 Trillion] This is ten thousand titles each to one hundred million readers, which is only about 4% of the present number of computer users.

At our revised rates of production, we will reach only one-third of that goal by the end of 2001, or about 3,333 Etexts unless we manage to get some real funding.

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation has been created to secure a future for Project Gutenberg into the next millennium.

We need your donations more than ever!

Presently, contributions are only being solicited from people in: Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, and Wyoming.

As the requirements for other states are met, additions to this list will be made and fund raising will begin in the additional states.

These donations should be made to:

Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation
PMB 113
1739 University Ave.
Oxford, MS 38655-4109

Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation,
EIN [Employee Identification Number] 64-6221541,

has been approved as a 501(c)(3) organization by the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. As the requirements for other states are met, additions to this list will be made and fund raising will begin in the additional states.

All donations should be made to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Mail to:

Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation
PMB 113
1739 University Avenue
Oxford, MS 38655-4109 [USA]

We need your donations more than ever!

You can get up to date donation information at:

<http://www.gutenberg.net/donation.html>

If you can't reach Project Gutenberg,
you can always email directly to:

Michael S. Hart <hart@pobox.com>

hart@pobox.com forwards to hart@prairienet.org and archive.org
if your mail bounces from archive.org, I will still see it, if
it bounces from prairienet.org, better resend later on. . . .

Prof. Hart will answer or forward your message.

We would prefer to send you information by email.

Example command-line FTP session:

```
ftp ftp.ibiblio.org
login: anonymous
password: your@login
cd pub/docs/books/gutenberg
cd etext90 through etext99 or etext00 through etext02, etc.
dir [to see files]
get or mget [to get files. . .set bin for zip files]
GET GUTINDEX.?? [to get a year's listing of books, e.g., GUTINDEX.99]
GET GUTINDEX.ALL [to get a listing of ALL books]
```

****The Legal Small Print****

(Three Pages)

*****START**THE SMALL PRINT!**FOR PUBLIC DOMAIN ETEXTS**START*****

Why is this "Small Print!" statement here? You know: lawyers. They tell us you might sue us if there is something wrong with your copy of this etext, even if you got it for free from someone other than us, and even if what's wrong is not our fault. So, among other things, this "Small Print!" statement disclaims most of our liability to you. It also tells you how you may distribute copies of this etext if you want to.

***BEFORE!* YOU USE OR READ THIS ETEXT**

By using or reading any part of this PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext, you indicate that you understand, agree to and accept this "Small Print!" statement. If you do not, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for this etext by sending a request within 30 days of receiving it to the person you got it from. If you received this etext on a physical medium (such as a disk), you must return it with your request.

ABOUT PROJECT GUTENBERG-TM ETEXTS

This PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext, like most PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etexts, is a "public domain" work distributed by Professor Michael S. Hart through the Project Gutenberg Association (the "Project"). Among other things, this means that no one owns a United States copyright on or for this work, so the Project (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth below, apply if you wish to copy and distribute this etext under the "PROJECT GUTENBERG" trademark.

Please do not use the "PROJECT GUTENBERG" trademark to market any commercial products without permission.

To create these etexts, the Project expends considerable efforts to identify, transcribe and proofread public domain works. Despite these efforts, the Project's etexts and any medium they may be on may contain "Defects". Among other things, Defects may take the form of incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other etext medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

LIMITED WARRANTY; DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES

But for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described below, [1] Michael Hart and the Foundation (and any other party you may receive this etext from as a PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext) disclaims all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including

legal fees, and [2] YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE OR UNDER STRICT LIABILITY, OR FOR BREACH OF WARRANTY OR CONTRACT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES, EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES.

If you discover a Defect in this etext within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending an explanatory note within that time to the person you received it from. If you received it on a physical medium, you must return it with your note, and such person may choose to alternatively give you a replacement copy. If you received it electronically, such person may choose to alternatively give you a second opportunity to receive it electronically.

THIS ETEXT IS OTHERWISE PROVIDED TO YOU "AS-IS". NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, ARE MADE TO YOU AS TO THE ETEXT OR ANY MEDIUM IT MAY BE ON, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.

Some states do not allow disclaimers of implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of consequential damages, so the above disclaimers and exclusions may not apply to you, and you may have other legal rights.

INDEMNITY

You will indemnify and hold Michael Hart, the Foundation, and its trustees and agents, and any volunteers associated with the production and distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm texts harmless, from all liability, cost and expense, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following that you do or cause: [1] distribution of this etext, [2] alteration, modification, or addition to the etext, or [3] any Defect.

DISTRIBUTION UNDER "PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm"

You may distribute copies of this etext electronically, or by disk, book or any other medium if you either delete this "Small Print!" and all other references to Project Gutenberg, or:

[1] Only give exact copies of it. Among other things, this requires that you do not remove, alter or modify the etext or this "small print!" statement. You may however, if you wish, distribute this etext in machine readable binary, compressed, mark-up, or proprietary form, including any form resulting from conversion by word processing or hypertext software, but only so long as *EITHER*:

[*] The etext, when displayed, is clearly readable, and

does *not* contain characters other than those intended by the author of the work, although tilde (~), asterisk (*) and underline (_) characters may be used to convey punctuation intended by the author, and additional characters may be used to indicate hypertext links; OR

[*] The etext may be readily converted by the reader at no expense into plain ASCII, EBCDIC or equivalent form by the program that displays the etext (as is the case, for instance, with most word processors); OR

[*] You provide, or agree to also provide on request at no additional cost, fee or expense, a copy of the etext in its original plain ASCII form (or in EBCDIC or other equivalent proprietary form).

[2] Honor the etext refund and replacement provisions of this "Small Print!" statement.

[3] Pay a trademark license fee to the Foundation of 20% of the gross profits you derive calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. If you don't derive profits, no royalty is due. Royalties are payable to "Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation" the 60 days following each date you prepare (or were legally required to prepare) your annual (or equivalent periodic) tax return. Please contact us beforehand to let us know your plans and to work out the details.

WHAT IF YOU *WANT* TO SEND MONEY EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO?

Project Gutenberg is dedicated to increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine readable form.

The Project gratefully accepts contributions of money, time, public domain materials, or royalty free copyright licenses. Money should be paid to the:
"Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."

If you are interested in contributing scanning equipment or software or other items, please contact Michael Hart at:
hart@pobox.com

END THE SMALL PRINT! FOR PUBLIC DOMAIN ETEXTS*Ver.04.08.01*END

[Portions of this header are copyright (C) 2001 by Michael S. Hart and may be reprinted only when these Etexts are free of all fees.]
[Project Gutenberg is a TradeMark and may not be used in any sales of Project Gutenberg Etexts or other materials be they hardware or software or any other related product without express permission.]

This etext was produced by David Widger <widger@cecomet.net>

WIDGER'S QUOTATIONS

FROM THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EDITION OF
CELEBRATED CRIMES BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS, PERE

by David Widger

EDITOR'S NOTE

Readers acquainted with the Celebrated Crimes of Alexandre Dumas may wish to see if their favorite passages are listed in this selection. The etext editor will be glad to add your suggestions. One of the advantages of internet over paper publication is the ease of quick revision.

All the titles may be found using the Project Gutenberg search engine at:

<http://promo.net/pg/>

After downloading a specific file, the location and complete context of the quotations may be found by inserting a small part of the quotation into the 'Find' or 'Search' functions of the user's word processing program.

The quotations are in two formats:

1. Small passages from the text.
2. Lists of alphabetized one-liners.

The editor may be contacted at <widger@cecomet.net> for comments, questions or suggested additions to these extracts.

D.W.

WIDGER'S QUOTATIONS

FROM CELEBRATED CRIMES BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS, PERE

CONTENTS:

THE BORGHIAS
THE CENCI
MASSACRES OF THE SOUTH
MARY STUART
KARL-LUDWIG SAND
URBAIN GRANDIER
NISIDA
DERUES
LA CONSTANTIN
JOAN OF NAPLES
THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK (The Essay, not the Novel)
MARTIN GUERRE
ALI PACHA
THE COUNTESS DE SAINT GERAN
MURAT
THE MARQUISE DE BRINVILLIERS
VANINKA
THE MARQUISE DE GANGES

NOTE:

Dumas's 'Celebrated Crimes' was not written for children. The novelist has spared no language--has minced no words--to describe the violent scenes of a violent time.

In some instances facts appear distorted out of their true perspective, and in others the author makes unwarranted charges. It is not within our province to edit the historical side of Dumas, any more than it would be to correct the obvious errors in Dickens's Child's History of England. The careful, mature reader, for whom the books are intended, will recognize, and allow for, this fact.

INTRODUCTION:

The contents of these volumes of 'Celebrated Crimes', as well as the motives which led to their inception, are unique. They are a series of stories based upon historical records, from the pen of Alexandre Dumas, pere, when he was not "the elder," nor yet the author of D'Artagnan or Monte Cristo, but was a rising young dramatist and a lion in the literary set and world of fashion.

Dumas, in fact, wrote his 'Crimes Celebres' just prior to launching upon his wonderful series of historical novels, and they may therefore be considered as source books, whence he was to draw so much of that far-reaching and intimate knowledge of inner history which has perennially astonished his readers. The Crimes were published in Paris, in 1839-40, in eight volumes, comprising eighteen titles--all of which now appear in the present carefully translated text. The success of the original work was instantaneous. Dumas laughingly said that he thought he had exhausted the subject of famous crimes, until the work was off the press, when he immediately became deluged with letters from every province in France, supplying him with material upon other deeds of violence! The subjects which he has chosen, however, are of both historic and dramatic importance, and they have the added value of giving the modern reader a clear picture of the state of semi-lawlessness which existed in Europe, during the middle ages. "The Borgias, the Cenci, Urbain Grandier, the Marchioness of Brinvilliers, the Marchioness of Ganges, and the rest--what subjects for the pen of Dumas!" exclaims Garnett.

Space does not permit us to consider in detail the material here collected, although each title will be found to present points of special interest. The first volume comprises the annals of the Borgias and the Cenci. The name of the noted and notorious Florentine family has become a synonym for intrigue and violence, and yet the Borgias have not been without staunch defenders in history.

Another famous Italian story is that of the Cenci. The beautiful Beatrice Cenci--celebrated in the painting of Guido, the sixteenth century romance of Guerrazi, and the poetic tragedy of Shelley, not to mention numerous succeeding works inspired by her hapless fate--will always remain a shadowy figure and one of infinite pathos.

The second volume chronicles the sanguinary deeds in the south of France, carried on in the name of religion, but drenching in blood the fair country round about Avignon, for a long period of years.

The third volume is devoted to the story of Mary Queen of Scots, another woman who suffered a violent death, and around whose name an endless controversy has waged. Dumas goes carefully into the dubious episodes of her stormy career, but does not allow these to blind his sympathy for her fate. Mary, it should be remembered, was closely allied to France by education and marriage, and the French never forgave Elizabeth the part she played in the tragedy.

The fourth volume comprises three widely dissimilar tales. One of the strangest stories is that of Urbain Grandier, the innocent victim of a cunning and relentless religious plot. His story was dramatised by Dumas, in 1850. A famous German crime is that of Karl-Ludwig Sand, whose murder of Kotzebue, Councillor of the Russian Legation, caused an international upheaval which was not to subside for many years.

An especially interesting volume is number six, containing, among

other material, the famous "Man in the Iron Mask." This unsolved puzzle of history was later incorporated by Dumas in one of the D'Artagnan Romances a section of the Vicomte de Bragelonne, to which it gave its name. But in this later form, the true story of this singular man doomed to wear an iron vizer over his features during his entire lifetime could only be treated episodically. While as a special subject in the Crimes, Dumas indulges his curiosity, and that of his reader, to the full. Hugo's unfinished tragedy, 'Les Jumeaux', is on the same subject; as also are others by Fournier, in French, and Zschokke, in German.

Other stories can be given only passing mention. The beautiful poisoner, Marquise de Brinvilliers, must have suggested to Dumas his later portrait of Miladi, in the Three Musketeers, the most celebrated of his woman characters. The incredible cruelties of Ali Pacha, the Turkish despot, should not be charged entirely to Dumas, as he is said to have been largely aided in this by one of his "ghosts," Mallefille.

"Not a mere artist"--writes M. de Villemessant, founder of the Figaro,--"he has nevertheless been able to seize on those dramatic effects which have so much distinguished his theatrical career, and to give those sharp and distinct reproductions of character which alone can present to the reader the mind and spirit of an age. Not a mere historian, he has nevertheless carefully consulted the original sources of information, has weighed testimonies, elicited theories, and . . . has interpolated the poetry of history with its most thorough prose."

WIDGER'S QUOTATIONS

FROM ALEXANDRE DUMAS CELEBRATED CRIMES

THE BORGHIAS

borgs10.txt or borgs10.zip [Etext #2741]

Indeed, Caesar (Borgia) had the power of persuasion as a gift from heaven; and though they perfectly well knew his duplicity, they had no power of resisting, not so much his actual eloquence as that air of frank good-nature which Macchiavelli so greatly admired, and which indeed more than once deceived even him, wily politician as he was.

At a time when he was besieged on all sides by mediocrities....

Forgetfulness is the best cure for the losses we suffer.

The vice-chamberlain (a Cardinal) one day remarked in public, when certain people were complaining of the venality of justice, "God wills not that a sinner die, but that he live and pay."

The same day, the cardinal's mother sent the pope the 2000 ducats, and the next day his mistress, in man's attire, came in person to bring the missing pearl. His Holiness, however, was so struck with her beauty in this costume, that, we are told, he let her keep the pearl for the same price she had paid for it.

Roderigo, retired from public affairs, was given up entirely to the affections of a lover and a father, when he heard that his uncle, who loved him like a son, had been elected pope under the name of Calixtus III. But the young man was at this time so much a lover that love imposed silence on ambition; and indeed he was almost terrified at the exaltation of his uncle, which was no doubt destined to force him once more into public life.

THE CENCI

cenci10.txt or cenci10.zip [Etext #2742]

On the 11th of August, 1492, after the lingering death-agony of Innocent VIII, during which two hundred and twenty murders were committed in the streets of Rome, Alexander VI ascended the pontifical throne. Son of a sister of Pope Calixtus III, Roderigo Lenzuoli Borgia, before being created cardinal, had five children by Rosa Vanozza, whom he afterwards caused to be married to a rich Roman.

Having seen that Beatrice was sentenced to the torture ordinary and extraordinary, and having explained the nature of these tortures, we proceed to quote the official report:-- "And as in reply to every question she would confess nothing, we caused her to be taken by two officers and led from the prison to the torture chamber, where the torturer was in attendance; there, after cutting off her hair, he made her sit on a small stool, undressed her, pulled off her shoes, tied her hands behind her back, fastened them to a rope passed over a pulley bolted into the ceiling of the aforesaid chamber, and wound up at the other end by a four lever windlass, worked by two men."

MASSACRES OF THE SOUTH

mssth10.txt or mssth10.zip [Etext #2743]

The massacres went on during the whole of the second day, though towards evening the search for victims relaxed somewhat; but still many isolated

acts of murder took place during the night. On the morrow, being tired of killing, the people began to destroy, and this phase lasted a long time, it being less fatiguing to throw stones about than corpses. All the convents, all the monasteries, all the houses of the priests and canons were attacked in turn; nothing was spared except the cathedral, before which axes and crowbars seemed to lose their power, and the church of Ste. Eugenie, which was turned into a powder-magazine. The day of the great butchery was called "La Michelade," because it took place the day after Michaelmas, and as all this happened in the year 1567 the Massacre of St. Bartholomew must be regarded as a plagiarism.

But from this period, each flux and reflux bears more and more the peculiar character of the party which for the moment is triumphant; when the Protestants get the upper hand, their vengeance is marked by brutality and rage; when the Catholics are victorious, the retaliation is full of hypocrisy and greed. The Protestants pull down churches and monasteries, expel the monks, burn the crucifixes, take the body of some criminal from the gallows, nail it on a cross, pierce its side, put a crown of thorns round its temples and set it up in the market-place--an effigy of Jesus on Calvary. The Catholics levy contributions, take back what they had been deprived of, exact indemnities, and although ruined by each reverse, are richer than ever after each victory.

Mary Stuart

marys10.txt or marys10.zip [Etext #2744]

Mary was a harmony in which the most ardent enthusiast for sculptured form could have found nothing to reproach. This was indeed Mary's great and real crime: one single imperfection in face or figure, and she would not have died upon the scaffold. Besides, to Elizabeth, who had never seen her, and who consequently could only judge by hearsay, this beauty was a great cause of uneasiness and of jealousy, which she could not even disguise, and which showed itself unceasingly in eager questions.

Unfortunately for her honour, Mary, always more the woman than the queen, while, on the contrary, Elizabeth was always more the queen than the woman, had no sooner regained her power than her first royal act was to exhume Rizzio, who had been quietly buried on the threshold of the chapel nearest Holyrood Palace, and to have him removed to the burial-place of the Scottish kings, compromising herself still more by the honours she paid him dead, than by the favour she had granted him living.

NISIDA

nisid10.txt or nisid10.zip [Etext #2747]

The priests had already begun to sing the death hymn; the executioner was ready, the procession had set out, when Solomon the fisherman appeared suddenly on the threshold of the prison, his eyes aflame and his brow radiant with the halo of the patriarchs. The old man drew himself up to his full height, and raising in one hand the reddened knife, said in a sublime voice, "The sacrifice is fulfilled. God did not send His angel to stay the hand of Abraham."

The crowd carried him in triumph!

[The details of this case are recorded in the archives of the Criminal Court at Naples. We have changed nothing in the age or position of the persons who appear in this narrative. One of the most celebrated advocates at the Neapolitan bar secured the acquittal of the old man.]

KARL LUDWIG SAND

ksand10.txt or ksand10.zip [Etext #2745]

Fundamentally nothing is great, you see, and nothing small, when things are looked at apart from one another.

URBAIN GRANDIER

ugran10.txt or ugran10.zip [Etext #2746]

Danger of driving the vanquished to despair.

Let fall from the height of his superiority a few of those disdainful words which brand as deeply as a red-hot iron.

The more absurd the reports, the more credence did they gain.

....crowd of prejudices, which are sacred to the vulgar.

Fourneau having saluted Grandier, proceeded to carry out his orders, whereupon a judge said it was not sufficient to shave the body of the prisoner, but that his nails must also be torn out, lest the devil should hide beneath them. Grandier looked at the speaker with an expression of unutterable pity, and held out his hands to Fourneau; but Fourneau put them gently aside, and said he would do nothing of the kind, even were the order given by the cardinal-duke himself.

LA CONSTANTIN

const10.txt or const10.zip [Etext #2749]

Madly in love, which is the same as saying that he was hopelessly blind, silly, and dense to everything around him.

It is singular how very clear-sighted we can be about things that don't touch us.

There in semi-isolation and despoiled of her greatness lived Angelique-Louise de Guerchi, formerly companion to Mademoiselle de Pons and then maid of honour to Anne of Austria. Her love intrigues and the scandals they gave rise to had led to her dismissal from court. Not that she was a greater sinner than many who remained behind, only she was unlucky enough or stupid enough to be found out. Her admirers were so indiscreet that they had not left her a shred of reputation, and in a court where a cardinal is the lover of a queen, a hypocritical appearance of decorum is indispensable to success. So Angelique had to suffer for the faults she was not clever enough to hide.

DERUES

derue10.txt or derue10.zip [Etext #2748]

"All passions," says La Bruyere,--"all passions are deceitful; they disguise themselves as much as possible from the public eye; they hide from themselves. There is no vice which has not a counterfeit resemblance to some virtue, and which does not profit by it."

The whole life of Derues bears testimony to the truth of this observation. An avaricious poisoner, he attracted his victims by the pretence of fervent and devoted piety, and drew them into the snare where he silently destroyed them.

As soon as his head was covered, the executioner gave the signal. One would have thought a very few blows would have finished so frail a being, but he seemed as hard to kill as the venomous reptiles which must be crushed and cut to pieces before life is extinct, and the 'coup de grace' was found necessary. The executioner uncovered his head and showed the confessor that the eyes were closed and that the heart had ceased to beat. The body was then removed from the cross, the hands and feet fastened together, and it was thrown on the funeral pile. While the execution was proceeding the people applauded. On the morrow they bought up the fragments of bone, and hastened to buy lottery tickets, in the firm conviction that these precious relics would bring luck to the fortunate possessors!

THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

ironm10.txt or ironm.zip [Etext #2751]

Voltaire added a few further details which had been given him by M. de Bernaville, the successor of M. de Saint-Mars, and by an old physician of the Bastille who had attended the prisoner whenever his health required a doctor, but who had never seen his face, although he had "often seen his tongue and his body." He also asserted that M. de Chamillart was the last minister who was in the secret, and that when his son-in-law, Marshal de la Feuillade, besought him on his knees, de Chamillart being on his deathbed, to tell him the name of the Man in the Iron Mask, the minister replied that he was under a solemn oath never to reveal the secret, it being an affair of state. To all these details, which the marshal acknowledges to be correct, Voltaire adds a remarkable note: "What increases our wonder is, that when the unknown captive was sent to the Iles Sainte-Marguerite no personage of note disappeared from the European stage."

JOAN OF NAPLES

jonap10.txt or jonap10.zip [Etext #2750]

The next morning the people were beforehand with the executioner, loudly demanding their prey. All the national troops and mercenaries that the judicial authorities could command were echeloned in the streets, opposing a sort of dam to the torrent of the raging crowd. The sudden insatiable cruelty that too often degrades human nature had awaked in the populace: all heads were turned with hatred and frenzy; all imaginations inflamed with the passion for revenge; groups of men and women, roaring like wild beasts, threatened to knock down the walls of the prison, if the condemned were not handed over to them to take to the place of punishment: a great murmur arose, continuous, ever the same, like the growling of thunder: the queen's heart was petrified with terror.

That same evening the sentence, to the great joy of all, was proclaimed, that Joan was innocent and acquitted of all concern in the assassination of her husband. But as her conduct after the event and the indifference she had shown about pursuing the authors of the crime admitted of no valid excuse, the pope declared that there were plain traces of magic, and that the wrong-doing attributed to Joan was the result of some baneful charm cast upon her, which she could by no possible means resist.

MARTIN GUERRE

mguer10.txt or mguer10.zip [Etext #2752]

On the 10th of, August 1557, an inauspicious day in the history of France, the roar of cannon was still heard at six in the evening in the plains of St. Quentin; where the French army had just been destroyed by the united troops of England and Spain, commanded by the famous Captain Emanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy. An utterly beaten infantry, the Constable Montmorency and several generals taken prisoner, the Duke d'Enguien mortally wounded, the flower of the nobility cut down like grass,--such were the terrible results of a battle which plunged France into mourning, and which would have been a blot on the reign of Henry II, had not the Duke of Guise obtained a brilliant revenge the following year.

This sentence substituted the gallows for the decapitation decreed by the first judge, inasmuch as the latter punishment was reserved for criminals of noble birth, while hanging was inflicted on meaner persons.

ALI PACHA

alpac10.txt or alpac10.zip [Etext #2753]

Albania was one of the most difficult provinces to manage. Its inhabitants were poor, brave, and, the nature of the country was mountainous and inaccessible. The pashas had great difficulty in collecting tribute, because the people were given to fighting for their bread. Whether Mahomedans or Christians, the Albanians were above all soldiers. Descended on the one side from the unconquerable Scythians, on the other from the ancient Macedonians, not long since masters of the world; crossed with Norman adventurers brought eastwards by the great movement of the Crusades; they felt the blood of warriors flow in their veins, and that war was their element. Sometimes at feud with one another, canton against canton, village against village, often even house against house; sometimes rebelling against the government their sanjaks; sometimes in league with these against the sultan; they never rested from combat except in an armed peace. Each tribe had its military organisation, each family its fortified stronghold, each man his gun on his shoulder. When they had nothing better to do, they tilled their fields, or mowed their neighbours', carrying off, it should be noted, the crop; or pastured their flocks, watching the opportunity to trespass over pasture limits. This was the normal and regular life of the population of Epirus, Thesprotia, Thessaly, and Upper Albania.

MURAT

murat10.txt or murat10.zip [Etext #2755]

On the 18th June, 1815, at the very moment when the destiny of Europe was being decided at Waterloo, a man dressed like a beggar was silently following the road from Toulon to Marseilles.

Arrived at the entrance of the Gorge of Ollioulles, he halted on a little eminence from which he could see all the surrounding country; then either because he had reached the end of his journey, or because, before attempting that forbidding, sombre pass which is called the Thermopylae of Provence, he wished to enjoy the magnificent view which spread to the southern horizon a little longer, he went and sat down on the edge of the ditch which bordered the road, turning his back on the mountains which rise like an amphitheatre to the north of the town, and having at his feet a rich plain covered with tropical vegetation, exotics of a conservatory, trees and flowers quite unknown in any other part of France.

THE COUNTESS OF SAINT GERAN

geran10.txt or geran10.zip [Etext #2754]

"Could not, for instance," said the marquis, "a confinement be effected without pain?"

"I don't know about that, but this I do" know, that I shall take very good care not to practise any method contrary to the laws of nature."

"You are deceiving me: you are acquainted with this method, you have already practised it upon a certain person whom I could name to you."

"Who has dared to calumniate me thus? I operate only after the decision of the Faculty. God forbid that I should be stoned by all the physicians, and perhaps expelled from France!"

MARQUISE DE BRINVILLIERS

brinv10.txt or brinv10.zip [Etext #2756]

When the prayer was done and the doctor raised his head, he saw before him the executioner wiping his face. "Well, sir," said he, "was not that a good stroke? I always put up a prayer on these occasions, and God has always assisted me; but I have been anxious for several days about this lady. I had six masses said, and I felt strengthened in hand and heart." He then pulled out a bottle from under his cloak, and drank a dram; and taking the body under one arm, all dressed as it was, and the head in his other hand, the eyes still bandaged, he threw both upon the faggots,

which his assistant lighted.

"The next day," says Madame de Sevigne, "people were looking for the charred bones of Madame de Brinvilliers, because they said she was a saint."

MARQUISE DE GANGES

gange10.txt or gange10.zip [Etext #2758]

The beginnings of this union were perfectly happy; the marquis was in love for the first time, and the marquise did not remember ever to have been in love. A son and a daughter came to complete their happiness. The marquise had entirely forgotten the fatal prediction, or, if she occasionally thought of it now, it was to wonder that she could ever have believed in it. Such happiness is not of this world, and when by chance it lingers here a while, it seems sent rather by the anger than by the goodness of God. Better, indeed, would it be for him who possesses and who loses it, never to have known it.

VANINKA

vanin10.txt or vanin10.zip [Etext #2757]

About the end of the reign of the Emperor Paul I--that is to say, towards the middle of the first year of the nineteenth century--just as four o'clock in the afternoon was sounding from the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, whose gilded vane overlooks the ramparts of the fortress, a crowd, composed of all sorts and conditions of people, began to gather in front of a house which belonged to General Count Tchernayloff, formerly military governor of a fair-sized town in the government of Pultava. The first spectators had been attracted by the preparations which they saw had been made in the middle of the courtyard for administering torture with the knout. One of the general's serfs, he who acted as barber, was to be the victim.

Although this kind of punishment was a common enough sight in St. Petersburg, it nevertheless attracted all passers-by when it was publicly administered. This was the occurrence which had caused a crowd, as just mentioned, before General Tchernayloff's house.

dcrim10.txt or dcrim10.zip [Etext #2760]

Air of frank good-nature which Macchiavelli so greatly admired
All passions are deceitful
Always in extremes, whether of enthusiasm or hatred
Besieged on all sides by mediocrities
Danger of driving the vanquished to despair
Determination to exact his strict legal rights
Disdainful words which brand as deeply as a red-hot iron
Doubting spirit which was unhappily so prevalent
Forgetfulness is the best cure for the losses we suffer
Fundamentally nothing is great, you see, and nothing small
God wills not that a sinner die, but that he live and pay
Influence he had gained over the narrow-minded
Interpolated according to the needs of the prosecution
Italy and Greece seemed to be mere suburbs of Venice
Jesus, Son of David and Mary
Knew how short was the space between a prison and a tomb
Let her keep the pearl for the same price she had paid for it
Madly in love-that is to say silly and blind
Method contrary to the laws of nature
More absurd the reports, the more credence did they gain
No vice which has not a counterfeit resemblance to some virtue
Prejudices, which are sacred to the vulgar
Put to the question ordinary and extraordinary
So much a lover that love imposed silence on ambition
The last thing I should desire would be to be as dead as he
To draw back was to acknowledge one's guilt
Too commonplace ever to arrive at a high position
Vanity and self-satisfaction
Very clear-sighted we can be about things that don't touch us
Without fear of being called to account

End of this Project Gutenberg Etext of Widger's Quotations
from Alexandre Dumas, pere: Celebrated Crimes, by David Widger