GRADED HOME READING BOOKS

FIRST SERIES

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

Approved, Vide D. P. I's Order
No. L. Dis. 2094/55/A 1 dated 8-2-'55



F. I. EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHERS
THYCAUD—TRIVANDRUM.

4960

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FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

STANDARD X SERIES

BOOK V

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Edited by

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FOREWORD

'The Three Musketeers' is the fifth of a series of six novels abridged and simplified for the use of Standard X pupils as home reading books. Only the words and sentence patterns used in the Detailed English Texts for Standards V to IX have been used in this book. Special care has been taken to see that the number of new words introduced is limited to two or three in a page of about two hundred words. Whenever the meaning of a new word is not clear from the context, it is given at the foot of the page.

The Three Musketeers is a famous French novel by Alexander Dumas. There are only few other novels which are so popular with school children as this. Athos, Porthos, Aramis and D'Artagnan form a group of heroes whom school boys love with all their hearts. Only the story of the diamond studs is given in this book. The later adventures of D'Artagnan will be given in another book.

Self - administering tests have been given at the end of every chapter. Readers are expected to test themselves before they proceed to the next section.

A final test covering the whole book is given at the end. Teachers are requested to check up the

library work of the pupils by making them write down the answers in their note books.

Bright pupils may be encouraged to write their own appreciation of the novel. The points given below may be used for this purpose.

1. Name of the novel.
2. Author.
3. Nationality of the author.
4. Chief incidents.
5. Chief characters.
6. Do you like the novel ? If so, why ? If not, why not ?

No: 4960

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

(The Story of the Studs)

1. ATHOS, PORTHOS AND ARAM.S

When Louis XIII was the king of France and Cardinal Richelieu ruled over the country as his chief minister, there lived in the province of Gascony an old gentleman. He had an only son named D'Artagnan. When the boy was eighteen years old, his father called him and said, "D'Artagnan, though you are born in one of the oldest families in France you are very poor. Your father can give you nothing but his old horse, fifteen crowns and this letter to M. de Treville. Treville is the captain of the King's Musketeers.[1] Next to the king and

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1. musketeer—a soldier with a gun
   musket—a kind of gum

Cardinal Richelieu, he is the greatest man in all France. He is an old friend of mine. Go to Paris, give him this letter and he will help you to become a Musketeer."

With these words he gave the letter to his son who got upon his horse and set out to seek his fortune in the world. Though the boy was tall and handsome, his dress was old and shabby. The old horse on which he rode had only bones and no flesh and it had a dirty yellow colour. It was one of the ugliest horses ever seen. People laughed at him as he rode along. But when they saw that the young man on the yellow horse was ready to fight with anyone who made fun of him they stopped laughing at him. In this way he came to the city of Meung.

There he saw a gentleman standing at the open window of a hotel. Pointing to the horse and its rider the man said something which made all around him laugh. That was enough to make D'Artagnan angry.

He ran up with drawn sword to meet him. The gentleman was very pale, and had a hooked nose and cruel mouth.

"I say sir, you, you sir, at the window," called D'Artagnan pointing to him, "tell me what you are laughing at and we shall laugh together?"

"I was not speaking to you, sir," answered the man stepping back.

"But I am speaking to you, sir," cried D'Artagnam raising his sword. But before he could strike, the man's servants fell upon him and gave him such hard blows that he fell senseless on the ground.

When he came back to his senses he jumped up again and ran out to meet the pale faced man and found him at the gate talking to a beautiful lady.

"Remember, Milady," said the gentleman to her, "Cardinal Richelieu orders you to go to England at once and report to him

when the Duke of Buckingham leaves London."

D'Artagnan saw that she was a beautiful lady with golden hair and deep blue eyes.

"False gentleman, stop," cried D'Artagnan as he rushed forward with drawn sword to strike him. But the man jumped upon his horse and rode away.

"Coward, coward," cried D'Artagnan. But again he fell down senseless, because of the hard blows that he had received, and was carried into the hotel by the people there.

D'Artagnan stayed in the hotel for the night and set out for Paris the next morning. When he was about to leave he found that the letter to M. de Traville was not in his pocket.

"Where is my letter?" cried he turning to the landlord. "If it is not found, I will kill you."

"That letter," answered he, "has been stolen."

"Stolen? By whom?"

"By the pale-faced gentleman when you lay senseless on the floor."

So D'Artagnan reached Paris without the letter. When he went to see M. de Treville he was well received, but was told that only good soldiers with long service were made King's Musketters. However the captain promised to put him in the Royal Academy for being trained as an army officer.

When D'Artagnam was waiting to see M. de Treville he saw some Musketeers talking to their captain.

"Athos, Porthos, Aramis?" called the captain. At once two musketeers came up to meet him.

"I am angry," cried the captain, "Did you not run away from Richelieu's Guards yesterday, Porthos? Did they not arrest you Aramis? I am ashamed of you, I am sorry that I made you King's Musketeers."

"We did not run away, sir," said Porthos. "Before we could draw our swords they fell upon us and took us prisoners. But we escaped after killing two of them."

"We did not run away. Nor did we allow the guards to arrest us," said Aramis.

"Then," said the captain, "the news I heard is wrong. But where is Athos?"

"He is wounded."

"Wounded?" cried M. de Treville. But at this moment a very noble and handsome man who was pale as death came into the room.

"Athos!" cried the two Musketeers.

"Athos!" cried M. de Treville.

"Did you send for me, sir?" said Athos "I am here."

"I was about to say, gentleman," said the captain, "I don't want my brave Musketters to die; brave men are rare in these pays; they are dear to the king who knows

that his Musketeers are the bravest men on earth ....."

Before he finished speaking Athos fell senseless on the ground and lay as if dead.

"A doctor, a doctor," cried M. de Treville. Soon a doctor was brought and before long Athos came back to his senses and went home with his friends.

From the talk between the Musketeers and their captain, D'Artagnan understood that the King's Musketeers looked upon the Cardinal's Guards as their enemies. Though Louis was king, the most powerful man in the kingdom was his Chief Minister, Cardinal Richelieu. In fact there were two parties in the state, the king's and the cardinal's. People feared the cardinal more than the king and he had his agents everywhere to report everything to him. It was well known that Richelieu was the enemy of Anne of Austria, the beautiful queen of Louis XIII and each was trying to bring about the downfall of the other. When M. de Treville

chose the best soldiers in the kingdom and formed the King's Musketeers, the Cardinal formed a company of his own guards and whenever the Guards and the Musketeers met there was qurrelling and fighting.

TEST:— Complete the following sentences:—

1. D'Artagnan's father sent him to Paris with a letter to (Richelieu, Treville, Milady).
2. He lost the letter at (Paris, Gascony, Meung).
3. D'Artagnan saw Athos, Porthos and Aramis in the house of (the Cardinal, Treville, the Guards).
4. Richelieu and Anne ot Austria were (friends, enemies).
5. Match the following:—

The King of France	M. de Treville
The Queen of France	Cardinal Richelieu
The Chief Minister	Anne of Austria
The captain of the Musketeers	The Duke of Buckingham
The Queen's lover	Louis XIII

2. THE DUEL

As D'Artagnan stood looking out of the window, he saw the pale-faced gentleman of Meung, who had stolen his letter, pass along the road. At once he ran down to stop him. As he was coming out in a hurry, he ran against a musketeer who was standing at the gate hitting him on his shoulder and the man cried out in pain.

"Excuse me," said D'Artagnan, "I am in a hurry."

"Are you in a hurry?" said the musketeer. "Do you think that because you are in a hurry you can run against me?"

"I did not see you, sir," said D'Artagnan.

"You must learn manners, sir," said Athos, for it was he.

"Are you going to teach me manners?" asked D'Artagnan. "If I am not in a hurry now, I should....."

"Mr. Man-in-a-hurry, I am ready to meet you at any time; do you understand?" said Athos challenging him to fight a duel.[1]

"Where?"

"Behind the church."

"And when?"

"At twelve. Don't make me wait."

"Good," cried D'Artagnan. "I will be there ten minutes before twelve."

So saying he set off again and when he came to the gate he saw Porthos talking to another man. As he was passing between the two he ran against Porthos.

"Do you forget your eyes when you run?" asked Porthos. "You will be beaten if you run against musketeers like this."

"Beaten?"

Porthos got angry and challenged D'Artagnan to a fight.

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1. duel—fight between two persons.

"When? Where?"

"Behind the church. At one o'clock."

D'Artagnan was sorry that he had foolishly got into trouble with two brave musketeers like Athos and Porthos and he made up his mind to be careful thereafter. By the time he came to the road, the unknown man of Meung had gone away and he was nowhere to be seen. He walked on till he saw Aramis talking to three other musketeers. D'Artagnan decided to be friendly to them and seeing a handkerchief that Aramis had dropped on the ground he picked it up and gave it to him.

"This is a handkerchief," said he, "which you would be sorry to lose."

The kerchief had been presented to Aramis by a lady and he wanted to hide the fact from his friends. So he said that it was not his.

"Excuse me, sir," said D'Artagnan.

"Allow me," said Aramis, "to say that you have not acted like a gentleman in this."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Even a Gascon should know that people do not drop handkerchiefs without good reason."

"It is true I am from Gascony," said D'Artagnan, "and I saw the handkerchief fall from your pocket."

"Master Gascon," said Aramis, "you are telling a lie and I will teach you a lesson if you say it again."

"Well I am ready," rep'ed D'Artagnan drawing his word.

"Not here, my friend," said Aramis, "for the Cardinal's guards will shut us up in prison if they see us. Meet me at two o'clock to-morrow and we shall fix the time and place."

When D'Artagnan thought of what he had done that day he felt sad. "Perhaps one of them may kill me. Yet I cannot draw back. But if I should die, let me die at the hands of a musketeer."

As D'Artagnan knew nobody in Paris he went to fight the duel without a friend. When he reached the place, he saw Athos waiting for him.

Date.....

Athos said, "Sir, I have asked two of my friends to come; but they have not yet turned up."

"The only man I know in Paris is M. de Treville," replied D'Artagnan. "So I have come all alone."

"Well," said Athos, "if I kill you, people will say I have killed a boy."

"But," said D'Artagnan, "you are not quite well and that wound has not yet healed."

"Sir," said Athos, "I love young men like you and if we don't kill each other, we shall be the best friends."

Just then Porthos and Aramis were seen coming towards them. "There they come, my friends," said Athos.

"This is the gentleman I am going to fight with," said he to his friends.

"Why, it is with him I am also going to fight," said Porthos.

"But not till one o'clock" replied D'Artagnan.

"Well," said Aramis, "I am also going to fight with that gentleman."

"But not till two o'clock," answered D'Artagnan.

"By God, you are very clever," said Athos.

"And now gentleman," said D'Artagnan, "forgive me....."

At the word 'forgive,' the three musketeers looked at one another as if they thought that he was trying to withdraw from the fight. "You misunderstand me, gentlemen," said D'Artagnan. "I beg you to forgive me, M. Porthos, in case your friend Athos, should kill me. And you, M. Aramis forgive me if either Athos or Porthos should kill me."

Then he drew his sword and got ready to meet Athos who rushed at him with drawn sword but no sooner had the fight begun than a party of five guards came that way.

"Put away your swords, gentlemen," cried Porthos and Aramis. "The Cardinal's Guards under M. de Jussac are coming."

"Ha, ha," cried Jussac, "are you fighting a duel? Put away your swords, Musketeers, and follow us."

"And if we don't?" asked Aramis.

"Be ready to fight."

Athos looked at Jussac and his men. "There are five of them," said he, and "we are only three."

But before he had finished D'Artagnan cried, "Gentleman, you are wrong. We are four and not three."

D'Artagnan drew his sword and all the four rushed upon Jussac and his men. Four against five they fought. D'Artagnan found

himself fighting against Jussac who was one of the finest swordsmen in the whole of France. But D'Artagnan defeated him and soon two of the Cardinal's Guards were killed and the others, taken prisoners. The king was very much pleased when he heard the news and he made D'Artagnan a guard in M. de Essart's company. De Essart was Treville's brother-in-law and the young Gascon was told that in good time he would be made a Musketeer in Treville's company.

TEST:— Complete the following sentences:—

1. Athos, Porthos and Aramis challenged (D'Artagnan, Jussac, Treville) to fight a duel with each of them.

2. When D'Artagnan and (Athos, Porthos, Aramis) began to fight, the Cardinal's Guards came to arrest them.

3. D'Artagnan joined the Musketeers and defeated (Athos, Jussac, the Cardinal).

4. The king was (angry, pleased) and made him a guard in the company of (Treville, De Essart).

3. THE DIAMOND STUDS

The news of the defeat of Jussac and his men by the King's Musketeers filled Cardinal Richelieu with anger. But he waited hoping that he would be able to defeat the king's party thoroughly before long. It was well-known that George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was in love with the Queen of France. He had met her when he was the English Ambassador in Paris. The Duke was the most powerful man in England and as the Chief Minister of the English King he was the greatest enemy of Richelieu. Anne of Austria was then the Queen of France and as she was an enemy of the Cardinal, Spain and Austria had turned against him. So Richelieu plotted against the Queen. If he could prove to the king that the Queen loved the Duke, he would be sure of her downfall. So a false letter was sent to Buckingham asking him to come to Paris and meet the Queen; and he sent

his cleverest agent, Milady to London to report to him when the Duke left England.

The Duke of Buckingham got the letter and came to Paris. He was taken to the palace by a friend of the Queen called Constance Bonacieux and he had a talk with Anne of Austria in her room.

"Duke," said the Queen, "that letter is not mine."

"I know it," said the Duke. "But I am not sorry that I got it, because it has given me a chance to see you."

"But we must not see each other again," said the the Queen.

"Speak on, O Queen," said he, "the sweetness of your voice covers the cruelty of your words. I love you."

"But I never said that I love you," said the queen.

"But you have never said that you did not love me," said he. "It is now three years since I first saw you and this is the

fourth time we meet. I know you would love me if you were not Queen. And I have a feeling that I would shortly die."

"Oh, my God!" cried the Queen who loved the Duke though she did not say so.

"I also have had dreams. I dreamed that you lay wounded, bleeding."

"In the right side?"

"Yes, it was so, my lord"

"With a knife?"

"Yes."

"I, too, had the same dream. It means that you love me. For God would not send the same dream to you and me if you did not love me. You love me, my Queen."

"Oh my God," cried Anne. "I do not know whether I love you or not. But I know that I will never, never be false to my king. Go away, my lord, I pray you."

"O how beautiful you are!" said he.

"Go away, I pray you."

"I shall go away," said he, "if you give me something you have worn and that I may wear—a ring—a necklace—a chain—."

"Will you leave France if I give you that?"

"I will"

"Wait then, wait."

Anne went into her room and came back with a casket.[1] Inside the casket there was a set of twelve diamond studs which the king had given her as a present on her last birthday. "Here, my lord," said she, "keep this, as a present from me."

He fell upon his knees as he received the casket and she allowed him to kiss her hand. Then he was led out and true to his word, he returned to England.

Richelieu who had his agent everywhere came to know of this. If he could get two of those studs, he would show them

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1. casket — box.

to the king and secure the Queen's downfall. So he sent the cleverest of his agents, Milady to steal the studs. She cleverly managed to get two diamonds from the set. As soon as Richelieu got the news he went to the king and said; "Sire, you know how much the Queen loves dancing. Give a ball[1]. It will give her a chance to wear the beautiful diamonds which you presented her on her birthday."

The king agreed to it. "Don't forget," said he, "to tell the Queen to wear the new diamond studs."

When the king told the Queen about the ball she saw the hand of Richelieu in it. "I am lost," said she to herself. "But she did not know how to get them back. Then Constance undertook to send a man to England to bring the studs in time for the ball. Now, D'Artagnan was staying in the house of Constance. She gave him a

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1. ball — a social gathering for dancing.

letter from the Queen and some money and told him to go to London and bring the diamond studs.

TEST:— Complete the following sentences:-

1 The Duke of Buckingham loved (Constance, Anne of Austria).

2. A false letter was sent to the (Cardinal, King, Duke) and he came and saw the Queen. She gave him the diamond (ring, studs, necklace) as a present. (The King, Richelieu,, Treville) came to know of it.

3. Richelieu told the king to give a (present, ball, gold chain). The king asked the Queen to wear the (Chain, ring, studs) when she came to the ball.

4. D'Artagnon was sent to (England, Paris, Austria) to bring the studs.

4. THE JOURNEY TO LONDON

D'Artagnan set out at once and made his way to M. de Treville. He asked for fourteen day's leave.

"Why?" asked Treville.

"To go to London. It is a secret which has much to do with the honour and perhaps the life of the Queen."

"Then keep the secret and don't tell it to anyone." "When do you want to leave?"

"This, very night said he."

"Is there anyone who wants to stop you from going?"

"Yes, the Cardinal would try his best to stop me."

"Are you going alone?"

"In that case you won't reach London. You will be killed on the way. In a matter

of this kind four must set out for one to arrive."

"You are right, sir," said D'Artagnan.

"You know Athos, Parthos and Aramis. Allow me to take them with me."

"I will grant them leave for fourteen days."

"Have you got money?"

"Yes, three hundred pistoles[1]."

D'Artagnan took leave of him and went to see the three musketeers.

"First he met Aramis who was in his room.

"Aramis," said he, "you are given fourteen days leave to come with me to England."

"Why?"

"You will know the reason in good time."

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1. pistole—a Spanish coin worth about 18 shillings.

Aramis took his sword and followed D'Artagnan and soon they reached the house of Athos. He also asked why they were going to England. 'In the king's service?" he asked.

"Either the king's or the Queen's. It makes no difference."

At this moment Porthos came into the room. When he learned that they were going to London he said, "But we want money to go to London and I don't have any."

"Nor I," said Athos.

"Nor I," said Aramis.

"Well, I have," said D'Artagnan placing the bag on the the table. "There are three hundred pistoles in this bag. Let us each take seventy-five. It will be more than enough to take us to London and back. But I am afraid all of us may not reach England."

"Why so?"

"Because we may be stopped on the way; perhaps, we may be killed."

"If I am going to be killed, I should like to know why," said Porthos.

"Does the king give you any reason when you are sent to the field of battle?" asked D'Artagnan. "You are told to go and you go. That is all."

"Well I am ready," said Athos.

"And I," said Porthos.

"And I," said Aramis.

"And now, gentlemen," said D'Artagnan, "let me tell you my plan. I have a letter in my pocket. If I should be killed one of you must take it and go on. If he is killed, then it will be another's turn and so on. It is all-right if one of us arrived in London with the letter."

"Right," said Athos, "and if anyone asks us we will say we are going to the seaside for the holidays."

"Agreed," said the others.

It was two o'clock at night when the four friends left Paris on their way to

Calais. All went well till they came to Chantilly at eight in the morning. They stopped at an inn for breakfast and as they were eating, a gentleman came in and sat down at the same table. He talked to them and drank to their health. When they rose to go, the gentleman turned to Porthos and said, "Please drink to the Cardinal's health."

Porthos replied that he would do so if the gentleman drank to the king's health; but the man got angry and said that he knew no king except Cardinal Richelieu. Porthos told him that he was drunk and the man drew his sword to fight. "You have been foolish," said Athos, "but you can't withdraw now. Kill your man and join us."

So the other three got upon their horses and rode off. "There goes one," cried Athos who understood that the man was an agent sent by Richelieu to stop them.

"But why did that man pick out Porthos for the quarrel?"

"Because Porthos talked louder than we, he took him to be our leader," said D'Artagnan.

They rode on and came to Beauvais where they stopped for two hours to rest their horses. Then they set out again and before long they came to a place where the road ran between two banks. Eight or ten workman sat on the road, making ruts and digging holes. Aramis got angry and told them to move off. But they took their guns and opened fire on Aramis who was hit on the shoulder.

"Don't stay to fight with them," cried Athos and they rode off as quickly as they could.

"But they will kill poor Porthos when he comes up," said Aramis.

"If Porthos were on his legs, he would have joined us long ago," said Athos.

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rut—the track made by a wheel in soft ground.

When they came to Crevecoeur they found that Aramis could not go farther and so they had to leave him at an inn.

"I won't open my mouth or draw my sword till I reach Calais," said Athos as he rode off with D'Artagnan.

It was midnight when they came to Amiens where they spent the night at an inn.

"I don't like the look of the landlord at all," said D'Artagnan.

"Nor I," said Athos.

Early in the morning when they came out they saw the servant lying on the floor with his head broken. Their horses were so tired that they had to find new ones. But at the door they saw two horses. Then Athos went to pay the landlord. He gave him two pistoles, but the man looked at the coins and said that they were bad and he would hand him over to the magistrate as a coiner.

Athos got angry when he heard this.

"You rascal," cried he. "I will cut off your ears if you open your mouth."

But the man picked up a gun and pointed it at him. At the same time four armed men came running into the room and fell upon Athos who drew his sword.

"I am taken," cried he, "go on, D'Artagnan. Don't wait for me."

D'Artagnan jumped upon the horse and rode off leaving Athos to fight with them as best he could.

"Brave Athos," said he to himself, "I am sorry to leave him like this."

D'Artagnan rode on till he came to the gates of Calais, and just as he entered the city his horse sank down. Blood came from its nose and eyes and D'Artagnan had to go to the port on foot.

Just then he saw a gentleman going to the captain of the ship which was in the port and he heard him saying that he wished to cross over to England at once.

"It is impossible," said the captain, "for this morning an order came that no one should be allowed to cross over with out the Cardinal's special order."

"I have his permission," said the gentleman, "here is the order."

"Get it signed by the Governor of the port," said the Captain.

As the gentleman was going to the Governor's house, D'Artagnan stopped him.

"Sir," said he, "you seem to be in a great hurry."

"Yes, I have to be in London by midday to-morrow."

"And I," said D'Artagnan, "have to be there at ten o'clock. Let me go first."

"No sir, I came here first and will not go second."

"I am sorry, sir," said D'Artagnan. "Though I came second, I will go first." So saying he fell upon the gentleman who also drew his sword and they began to fight.

But D'Artagnan defeated him easily and took the order from him which was in the name of Comte de Wards. He tied the wounded Count to a tree and then went to the Governor.

"I am Comte de Wards," said he.

"Have you an order signed by the Cardinal."

"Yes, here it is."

The Governor took the paper and looked at it.

"It is all right," said he as he signed it and gave it to D'Artagnan.

"The Cardinal does not want somebody to cross over to England. Do you know him?"

"Yes," said D'Artagnan, "he is a man called D'Artagnan."

"Have you seen this D'Artagnan?"

"Yes, I have." And he gave him a true description of Comte de Wards.

"If I catch him, I will send him to the Cardinal," said the Governor.

"Do," said D'Artagnan, "and the Cardinal will be very much pleased with you."

So saying he took leave of the Governor and went to the captain saying, "Here is the pass. Let us go."

"Where is the other gentleman?" asked the captain.

"He will not go today. But I will pay for two."

In five minutes they set sail from Calais and reached Dover at about ten o'clock in the morning.

TEST:— Complete the following sentences:-

1. D'Artagnan took Athos, Porthos and Aramis with him when he set out for (Paris, Meung, London).
2. Porthos, Aramis, and Athos were stopped (in Paris, on the way, at Calais).
3. D'Artagnon took the pass from (the Cardinal, the Governor, Comte de Wards).
4. He came to England with the Queen's (diamonds, letter, picture).

5. THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

D'Artagnan was happy when he set foot on English soil. But he did not know a word of English. So when he reached London, he wrote the name of Buckingham on a sheet of paper and the people pointed out the house of the Duke to him. But when he reached the place, he learned that the Duke had gone out hunting with the king. So D'Artagnan went to Windsor to see Buckingham. At last he met him a few miles away from the castle.

"Has anything happened to the Queen?" cried Buckingham.

"No," said D'Artagnan, "but her honour and even her life are in danger and you alone can save her."

"What is it? Speak and it shall be done."

"Read this letter," said D'Artagnan as he gave him the Queen's letter.

The Duke turned pale when he read the letter. "O God!" cried he, "What do

I read?" Then he called his servant to his side and said, "Tell the king that I have gone to London," and he set out with D'Artagnan at once

As they rode along D'Artagnan told the Duke what he knew about the matter. Buckingham was surprised to hear that Cardinal Richelieu could not stop the queen's agent from leaving France. But when D'Artagnan said how he had set out with three friends and how he got the special pass of Comte de Wards Buckingham was filled with wonder at his courage, faithfulness and cleverness. Soon they reached London and they went straight to the Duke's bedroom. It was a large and beautiful room, and D'Artagnan stopped when he came to the door.

"Come in," said the Duke, "and when you meet the queen, tell her what you see here."

D'Artagnan entered the room and closed the door after him. There was a life like picture of the queen in the room

and beneath it was the casket of diamond studs.

"Here," said the Duke opening the casket and taking the studs from it, "here are the diamond studs. It was my wish that they should be buried with me when I die. But the queen wills otherwise. The queen gave them to me and the queen takes them away. Her will be done in all things."

Then he kissed the studs which were dearer th him than life. All at once he jumped up with a cry.

"What is the matter my lord?" asked D'Artagnan.

"All is lost! all is lost!" cried Buckingham. "Two of the studs are missing! There are only ten of them left."

"Have they been lost or stolen?"

"They have been stolen," replied the Duke." It is Cardinal Richelieu's agents that stole them. See, the ribbon has been cut here."

"Do you know that thief?"

"Let me think," said the Duke. "The only time I wore them was at a dance given by the king at Windsor a week ago. Then I sat talking with Milady for some time. That woman is an agent of Richelieu. She must have stolen them."

"Why then," cried D'Artagnan, "Richelieu has agents all over the world!"

"Yes," said Buckingham, "he is a terrible enemy. Now tell me when is this ball to be held?"

"Next Monday!"

"Next Monday! Today is only Wednesday. So we have five days yet. It means there is more time than we want."

Then Buckingham sent for his goldsmith. A few minutes later, his secretary came into the room and saw the Duke writing an order which was to be sent to the king for his signature.

"Master Jackson," said he, "send this order at once."

"But," said the secretary as he read the order, "the officer may ask why you have ordered that no ship should leave England without your special permission?"

"Tell him that it is my will and I am answerable to no man."

"Yet," said the secretary, "the king has to sign the order and he may ask why you have so ordered."

"You are right," replied the Duke. "Tell the king that we are going to war with France and this is the first step."

The secretary bowed and went out.

"We are safe on this side," said the Duke turning to D Artagnan. "If the studs have not yet left the shores of England they will not go before you reach Paris."

"How so, my lord?"

"I have ordered that no ship going to France, should be allowed to leave England, not even the one carrying letters."

D'Artagnan was filled with wonder at the great power the Duke had as Chief Minister of England. Just then the goldsmith came in.

"Master O 'Reilly," said the Duke to him, "look at these diamond studs and say what will be the price of each."

The goldsmith examined the studs and said, "Each will cost least fifteen hundred pistoles.

"How many days do you want to make two studs like these?"

"A week."

"I will give you three thousand pistoles each, if I can have them in two days."

"My lord, you shall have them."

"You are a clever man, O'Reilly," said the Duke. "But I won't give these studs to anyone. The new ones must be made here."

"Impossible."

"And you are my prisoner till they

are made. You may send for your best workmen and the tools."

In half an hour the room was turned into a workshop and the goldsmith was busy at work. The Duke posted two men at the door and told them not to let in anyone or let out anyone.

"And you shall have one thousand pistoles more for your trouble," said the Duke.

D'Artagnan was filled with wonder at the large sums of money the Duke spent so freely.

"Now, my friend," said the Duke turning to him, "England is all our own. What is it that you want?"

"A bed," replied D'Artagnan. "That is what I want most."

Buckingham gave him a room next to his own.

Two days later by eleven o'clock, the two new studs were ready. They were so

like the others that even the Duke could not tell the old from the new. Then Buckingham called D'Artagnan and said, "Here are the studs, and you know that I have done all that a man can do."

"My lord, I will tell the queen everything. Are you giving me the casket?"

"No," said he, "I am going to keep it. "Now tell me D'Artagnan, what can I do for you?"

The proud Gascon uuderstood that the Duke wished to give him a costly present.

"Let us understand each other well, my lord," said D'Artagnan. "I am in the service of the King of France. So are the three brave friends who came with me. We have done our duty, that is all. There is nothing in what we have done, for which you should thank me or give me a present."

"You are very proud," said the Duke.

D'Artagnan took the diamonds and turned to go.

"And are you going away?" asked Buckingham. "But where? How?"

"Forgive me my lord. I forgot that I am in an Island."

"Well," said the Duke, "I have made all arrangements for your journey to Paris. Go to the port and ask for the boat, 'Le Sund.' Give this letter to the captain and he will take you to a little port in France, where the Cardinal's agents will not be looking for you."

"What is the name of that port?"

"Saint-Valery. Now hear me. There is a small inn there. Go to the landlord and give him the password, 'Forward.' Then he will give a horse and show you your road. At three other places on the way, you will find horses ready for you. You have only to give the password to get anything you want. If you give your

Paris address, the four horses will be sent to you. They are some of the best horses in the world, and if you care, you can have them for yourself. Give one to each of your friends. I hope you won't refuse this present."

"I will have them, my lord."

"Now let us part as friends," said the Duke.

D'Artagnan bowed and went out quickly and made his way to the port where he saw fifty ships awaiting orders to sail. He found the boat 'Le Sund' and set sail at once. As they were sailing away he saw Milady in a ship waiting for the order to go away to France.

He came to Saint-Valery early in the morning and going to the inn, he met the landlord.

"Forward!" said he.

At once the landlord led him to the gate and gave him a fine horse.

"Take that road," said he, pointing

out the way he had to go, "and when you come to Blangy, ask for the inn called the 'Golden Harrow.' Give the password and you will find everything ready for you."

"Have I to pay anything?"

"No, everything is paid."

At once D'Artagnan jumped upon the horse and rode off.

In four hours he reached Blangy and found the landlord who gave him a new horse and sent him off to Neufchatel. At Neufchatel also he found everything ready for him and from there he rode off to the next stop at Ecouis. From Ecouis he set off to Pontoise which was the last stop before reaching Paris.

"Your Paris address, please," asked the landlord as he was going out.

"The Hotel of the Guards, company of De Essarts."

"The four horses will be there to-morrow."

D'Artagnan rode off at once and by nine o'clock he reached Paris. He had covered the whole distance in twelve hours and had come back with the diamond studs, all safe.

The dance was about to begin and D'Artagnan had come in time to save the Queen's honour.

TEST:— Complete the following sentences:-

1. D'Artagnan met the (King, Duke, Milady) at Windsor.

2. But the Duke discovered that (all, two, three) studs were stolen.

3. At once he sent for his goldsmith who made two (old, new, good) studs and gave them to D'Artagnan.

4. The Duke made all arrangements for D'Artagnan's safe return to (London, Paris, Calias).

5. The Duke wished to give a (stud, present, diamond) to D Artagnan but he (agreed, refused to take it.

6. He came to Paris (late, in time) for the ball.

6. THE BALL

The ball at which the queen was asked to wear the diamond studs had already begun. The queen had arrived half an hour before and as she came in she saw that Cardinal Richelieu's eyes were fixed on her shoulder. A smile of joy spread over his face when he saw the queen without the diamond studs.

A few minutes later, the king went to the queen and asked her angrily, "Why have you not worn my diamond studs?"

The queen turned pale and said, "Sire they are so costly that I did not want to wear them. Perhaps they might be lost."

Then the king saw Richelieu come smiling up to them. It made him more angry.

When the queen saw it she said, "I will send for the diamond, if you want."

"Do so at once," said the king, "for the dance will begin in half an hour."

When the queen had gone away Richelieu took two diamond studs from his pocket and gave them to the king.

"What does this mean?" asked Louis.

"It means," said he, "that the Queen's diamond studs have been stolen. I am afraid she has lost the whole set. If she has not, count them and you will find only ten. Then ask her who could have stolen these two studs from her."

At this moment the queen came back to the hall and on her shoulders shone the diamond studs. The king was pleased to see, them but the question was whether she had ten studs or twelve. So he went up to her and said, 'Thank you for wearing my studs. But I am afraid you have lost two of them and I bring them back to you."

So saying he gave her the two studs which Richelieu had given him.

"How, Sire," cried the queen, "you are giving me two more. I now have fourteen."

The king counted them and all the twelve studs were there.

He called Richelieu. "What does this mean?" he asked,

Quickly came the reply. "It means, Sire, that I wish to present the queen with these two studs. But as I am afraid she may refuse them, I want you to give them to her."

"Thank you for the present," said the queen with a smile. "I know how much it has cost you to get them."

When the gueen went back to her room, she saw Constance Bonacieux waiting for her. D'Artagnan who was in the next room heard the queen's voice and waited eagerly to see her.

Then a beautiful arm was seen coming out through an opening in the curtain.

"It's the Queen," said Constance, "kneel down, D'Artagnan."

At once he fell upon his knees and kissed the beautiful hand. As the hand was withdrawn D'Artagnan saw something shining in his hand. It was a beautiful diamond ring!

Great was his joy when he returned home with the queen's ring on his finger. His joy was all the greater when he saw four fine horses waiting at his door.

But his joy was turned to sorrow when he found that none of his friends had yet returned to Paris. So the very next day he set out to seek them out. After many adventures he found them all and brought them safely to Paris. Then to their great delight he gave each of them a horse as a present from the Duke of Buckingham.

And as they sat by the fire side D'Drtagnan told them how he crossed over to England, saw the good Duke, and returned to Paris with the diamond studs.

TEST:- Complete the following sentences:-

1. The Queen came wearing the (diamond, ring, pearl necklace diamond studs).

2. The Cardinal was (successful, defeated) and he gave the two studs as a present to the (King, Queen).

3. The Queen gave D'Artagnan a (studs, ring, horse) as a present.

4. D'Artagnan brought his friends to (Prais, London, Meung) safe.

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FINAL TEST

Complete the following sentences:-

1. 'The story of the Studs' is taken from the novel. (The Queen's Necklace, The Three Musketeers, A Tale of Two Cities.)

2. 'The Three Musketeers, is a famous (English, French, Dutch) novel by Alexander Dumas.

3. Cardinal Richelieu plotted to bring about the downfall of (King Louis, Queen Anne, the Duke of Buckinghan) by getting the studs.

4. The Queen gave the studs to (D'Artagnan, Constance, Buckingham) as a present, but Richlieu made the king tell the queen to wear them at a (dinner, ball, tournament.)

5. So the Queen's friend, (Milady, Treville, Constance) sent (D'Artagnan, Athos, De Essart) to London to bring the studs.

6. D'Artagnan was a young gentleman, who wished to join (the army, the King's Musketeers, the Queen s bodyguard).

7. In Paris he met three (musketeers, guards, noblemen) and became their friend and leader. The three musketeers were (Treville, Athos, Jussac, Porthos, De Essart and Aramis).

8. D'Artagan took the three musketeers with him when he set out for (Paris, London Meung) But he had to leave all of them behind before he came to (paris, Calais).

9. He got the pass from (Athos, Comte de Wards, the Governor of Calais) and left Calais for London.

10. He met the Duke of Buckingham; but they found that two of the studs had been (stolen, broken, bad).

11. So the Duke got two new studs made and sent D'Artagnan to (Windsor Paris Calais) with them.

12 D'Artagngan came to Paris in time and the Queen came to the ball wearing (the necklace, studs, crown).

13. Richelieu saw that he had failed; so he gave the stolen studs as a present to the (King, Queen, Duke.)

14. The Queen's honour was (lost, saved) and she presented (Constance, D'Artagnan) with a diamond ring.

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