

## V. LE CID

THE *Cid*, represented for the first time in December, 1636, or January, 1637, was a great success, a veritable triumph, for Corneille. All Paris, the court and the people, noblemen and bourgeois, were carried away by it. Very strange, indeed, would it have been, had such a tremendous success not aroused the jealousy and envy of his rivals. Their wrath was unchained. The very men who, not so very long before, had sounded his praises, and greeted him, at his *début*, as a great poet, now turned against him in a body, and the *Cid* was declared by savants and poets alike to be inferior by far to the author's preceding plays, the mere titles of which are scarcely remembered to-day. The taste of the public was of no account, it was claimed, and its verdict had to yield to that of men who knew Aristotle, and who could discourse about the rules laid down by him in his *Poetics*. The names of all the