

# EDWARDS HENRY SUTHERLAND

OLD AND NEW PARIS: ITS  
HISTORY, ITS PEOPLE, AND  
ITS PLACES, V. 2

**Henry Edwards**  
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Its People, and Its Places, v. 2**

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Old and New Paris: Its History, Its People, and Its Places, v. 2:*

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# **H. Sutherland Edwards Old and New Paris: Its History, Its People, and Its Places, v. 2**

## **CHAPTER I. STREET CHARACTERS**

**The Cocher – The Bus-driver – The Private  
Coachman – The Hackney Coachman – The Public  
Writer – The Flower-girl – The Oyster-woman**

A PARISIAN who is not rich enough to keep a distinguished chef of his own will occasionally order a dainty dinner to be forwarded to him from some hotel or restaurant; and in these cases the repast, as soon as it is ready, is sometimes put into a hackney cab and driven to the house of the consignee by the cocher, who is not unaccustomed to find this “fare” more remunerative than the fare he habitually conveys.

A glance at the cocher, as another of the Parisian types of

character, may here be not inopportune. As a matter of fact, however, the cocher is not one type but several. The name applies to the driver of the omnibus, of the fiacre, and of the private carriage. As to the omnibus driver, he is more amiable, more easy-going, less sarcastic than his counterpart in London. Nobody would ever hear an omnibus driver in Paris say, as one has been heard to say in London, when a lady passenger requested to be put down at 339½ – Street, “Certainly, madam, and would you like me to drive upstairs?” Nor is the Paris cabman so extortionate as his London brother; for the fare-regulations, by which there is one fixed charge for the conveyance of a passenger any distance within a certain radius, precludes the inevitable dispute which awaits the lady or gentleman who in our metropolis dares to take a four-wheeler or a hansom.

Already in the sixteenth century hackney carriages were driven in the streets of Paris; and any differences arising between the cocher and his passenger were at this period referred to the lieutenant of the police. The private coachmen, attached to the service of the nobility, found their position a somewhat perilous one in an age when quarrels were so frequent on the question of social precedence. If two aristocratic carriages met in some narrow street, barring each other’s way, the footmen would get down and fight for a passage. Serious wounds were sometimes inflicted, and even the master would now and then step out of his vehicle and, with drawn sword, join in the affray. The coachman, meanwhile, prouder in livery than his master in braided coat,

remained motionless on his box in spite of the blows which were being dealt around. It is related that when on one occasion a party of highwaymen attacked the carriage of Benserade, poet, wit, and dramatic author, his coachman sat calmly at his post, and amused himself with whistling whilst his master was being stripped of everything. From time to time he turned towards the robbers and said, "Gentlemen, shall you soon have finished, and can I continue my journey?"

The private coachman varied in those days, as he has always done, according to the position of the master or mistress whom he served; and Mercier, writing at a later period, indicates a sufficient variety of cochers of this class. "You can clearly distinguish the coachman of a courtesan," he says, "from that of a president; the coachman of a duke from that of a financier; but, at the exit from the theatre, would you like to know where such and such a vehicle is going? Listen to the order which the master gives to the lackey, or rather which the latter transmits to the coachman. In the Marais they say 'Au logis'; in the Isle of St Louis 'À la maison'; in the Faubourg Saint-Germain 'À l'hôtel'; and in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré 'Allez!' With the grandeur of this last word no one can fail to be impressed. At the theatre door stands a thundering personage with a voice like Stentor, who cries: 'The carriage of Monsieur le Marquis!' 'The carriage of Madame la Comtesse!' 'The carriage of M. le Président!' His terrible voice resounds to the very interior of the taverns where the lackeys are drinking, and of the billiard rooms where the

coachmen are quarrelling and disputing. This voice quite drowns the confused sounds of men and horses. Lackeys and coachmen at this re-echoing signal abandon their pint-pots and their cues, and rush out to resume the reins and open the doors."

The profession of the hackney coachman has always been and still is subjected to a special legislation. In Paris anyone exercising it must be at least eighteen years of age; carry upon him the official documents in virtue of which he wields his whip; present to his fare the card which indicates the number and tariff of the vehicle, and which the passenger must retain in view of possible disputes; show politeness to the public; receive his fare in advance when he is driving to theatres, halls, or fêtes where there is likely to be a crush of vehicles; never carry more than his legal number of passengers, and not smoke on duty. When travelling he must take the right side of the road, avoid intercepting funeral processions and bodies of troops, go at walking pace through the markets and in certain other specified places; and, from nightfall, light up his vehicle with a couple of lamps. The lamps used for the cabs of the Imperial Company are blue, yellow, red, or green. These different colours are intended to induce passengers leaving the theatre at night to take, by preference, those vehicles which belong to the quarter in which they live; blue indicating the regions of Popincourt and Belleville; yellow those of Poissonière-Montmartre; red those of the Champs Élysées, Passy, and Batignolles; and green those of the Invalides and the Observatory. Besides the

penalties pronounced by the penal code for causing death or personal injury through careless driving, minor infractions of the regulations are punished, by the prefect of police, with suspension of licence or, in certain cases, final withdrawal. The proprietors and masters are responsible for any offences committed by the coachmen, and for any loss or injury to luggage or other goods confided to their vehicles for transport.

The law which prescribes to Paris cabmen one uniform fare for journeys of no matter what length within a certain radius would at first appear to be very much to the advantage of the public, who are thus protected from extortion. It has a great drawback, all the same. In London a cabman is always delighted to see a gentleman step into his vehicle, even though the welcome he evinces be rather that of the spider to the fly. He unhesitatingly drives him to his destination, and the gentleman, even though he is fleeced at the end of the journey, at least gets where he wished to go. But the Paris cabman is fastidious. If the destination mentioned by the intending passenger does not exactly suit him, he is prone to shake his head, ply his whip, and drive away with an empty vehicle.

The alacrity and enthusiasm of the London cabman are due to the fact that when he has his passenger safely inside the hansom or "growler" his soul is animated by the hope of obtaining a fare indefinitely in excess of the legal tariff. The uniformity of fares in Paris deprives the cabman of any enthusiastic interest in his work, as it likewise strips him of some of the curious and



amusing characteristics which he might otherwise exhibit.

In our own metropolis a famous millionaire, having ridden one day in a cab for the distance of a mile and a half, tendered the driver a shilling in payment of his fare. The driver stared at the coin in the palm of his hand and then proceeded to remonstrate. "Both your sons, sir," he said, "whenever they ride in my hansom, pay me at least half-a-crown." "I dare say they do," replied the millionaire, "for they have an old fool of a father to back them up." In Paris, where this millionaire had a brother as rich as himself, such an incident would have been impossible.

Another figure of the Paris streets is, or rather until some twenty-five years ago was, the Public Writer; not the contributor to an important daily paper, but an unhappy scribe whose task it was to put into epistolary form such matter as was entrusted to him for the purpose by illiterate cabmen, workmen, and servant girls. The little booths with desks in front where he exercised his strange profession have disappeared as Paris has been demolished and rebuilt. The spread of education among the lower classes was really his death-blow.

The public writer was usually an old man, sometimes one of erudition, who had been reduced by severe reverses or persistent misery to a very low position. He wrote a beautiful hand, and could on occasion compose a poem. He could execute a piece of penmanship in so many different handwritings (seventeen or eighteen), and his flourishes and ornamentations were so magnificent, that he would never have prostituted his pen to the

service of shopgirls and domestics had not starvation stared him in the face. Moreover, the cultivation of an acquaintanceship with the Muses solaced him, and caused him to forget the day of his greatness when, holding the diploma of a “master-writer,” he inscribed the Ten Commandments or executed a dedication to the king on a bit of vellum smaller than a crown piece. He could dash off verses at a moment’s notice, and had always in reserve a varied assortment of festive songs, wedding-lines, epitaphs, and simple and double acrostics, to serve whatever occasion might arise.

Above the Public Writer’s door, which he threw open every morning to his clients, this legend was inscribed: – “The Tomb of Secrets.” The passer-by thus learned that there – in the words of a French chronicler – “behind those four coarsely-whitened windows of the entrance door, was an ear and a hand which held the key of human infirmities; that there, smiling and serviceable, Discretion resided in flesh and blood. Curious to see everything, you approached; a few specimens of petitions to the Chief of the State, drawn up on official paper and sealed with wafers, gave you a foretaste of the master’s dexterity. Moreover you could read, in a position well exposed to view, some piece of poetic inscription, deficient in neither rhyme nor even reason, and cleverly calculated to allure you forthwith. The running hand, the round hand, the English hand, and the Gothic hand alternated freely in the ingenious composition, not to mention the flourishings with which the lines ended, the page encased

in ornamented spirals, the capitals complicated with arabesques, and so forth. One day we read one of the writings peculiar to this profession, and copied it with a haste which we do not regret to-day when the booth where we saw it has been removed. This booth, a mere plank box, three feet square, whence issued during forty years an incalculable number of letters, petitions, and other documents, was situated in the quarter of Saint-Victor, at the foot of the Rue des Fossés, Saint-Bernard. Its occupant was a man named Étienne Larroque, an old bailiff whom misfortune had reduced to this poor trade. Nearly eighty years of age, this Nestor of public writers was known to everybody.”

To the pedestrian his signboard proclaimed the particulars of his profession in a piece of poetry which might at all events have been much worse, and of which the metre was marred only by one fault – a certain line with a foot too much. Dressed in a frock coat maltreated by years, the writer, continues the before-mentioned chronicler, sat in his office, with his spectacles on his nose, and all his pens cut before him. He placed himself eagerly at the service of anyone who crossed the threshold. Sometimes the strangest revelations were confided to him. Installed in his cane arm-chair, furnished with a cushion which he had sat upon till it was crushed to a pancake, he lent a grave ear to the pretty little rosy mouths that came to tell him everything, as though he were a confessor or a physician, and took up his pen to write for them their letters of love or complaint. More than one unhappy girl came to him to sigh and weep and to accuse the monster who

had sworn to wed her; more than one fireman came to confess to him the flame which was burning in his breast; more than one soldier to request him to pen a challenge.

As the depository of secrets innumerable, the Public Writer was a most important personage; or would have been had he been able to take full literary advantage of the confidences entrusted to him. Richardson's knowledge of the female heart is said to have been due to the good faith with which he inspired a number of young ladies, who thereupon gave him, unconsciously, material for such characters as Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe. They consulted him now and then about their love letters. But the Public Writer had love letters, letters of reproach, letters of explanation, letters of farewell, to write every day, and by the dozen. It is not recorded, however, that any Public Writer was sufficiently inspired, or sufficiently interested in his habitual work to turn the dramatic materials which must often have come beneath him into novels or plays.

The personage known as the Public Writer was at least a more useful institution than the book entitled "The Complete Letter-Writer," the function of which is to supply correspondence in regard to every possible incident in life. The Public Writer was, if up to his work, capable of suiting his language to peculiar cases, whereas the Complete Letter-Writer was an oracle whose utterances came forth hard and fast, in such a way that the ignorant devotees could not change them. Thus the illiterate persons who could not read at all had a clear advantage over

those whose education enabled them to read the Complete Letter-Writer, but not to apply it. In an excellent farce by M. Varin, one of the best comic dramatists of the French stage, an amusing *equivoque*— or *quiproquo* as the French say — is caused by an ignorant young man in some house of business addressing a love letter to the dark-haired daughter of his employer, which expresses admiration for locks of gold such as belong in profusion, not to the girl, but to her buxom mother. When the husband's jealousy is excited and a variety of comic incidents have resulted therefrom, it appears that the unlettered and moreover foolish young clerk has copied his epistle out of a letter-book, and, thinking apparently that one love letter would do as well as another, has addressed to a girl with dark hair a declaration intended by the author of the Complete Letter-Writer for a woman who is beautifully blonde. No such mistake as this could have occurred had the amorous young clerk told his case to a Public Writer, and ordered an appropriate letter for the occasion.

Another interesting type of street character in Paris is the *bouquetière* or flower-girl. She is more enterprising and engaging than her counterpart in London. She will approach a gentleman who happens to be walking past and stick a flower in his button-hole, leaving it to his own sense of chivalry whether he pays her anything or not. Nor does the device infrequently produce a piece of silver. There is generally one flower-girl in Paris who poses as a celebrity — either on account of her beauty or of other qualities

of a more indefinable character. Fashionable Parisians resort to her stall and pay fantastic prices for whatever bloom she pins to their breast. The flower-girl of the Jockey Club, who used to attend the races and ply her trade in the enclosure of the grand stand, expected a louis as her ordinary fee.

The oyster-woman, too, is a highly important personage. Paris consumes three hundred million oysters a year, and the dispensing of these bivalves keeps the lady in question sufficiently active whilst the season lasts. At breakfast-time or dinner-time, with a white napkin thrust in her girdle, a knife in her hand, and a smile on her lips, she is to be seen stationed at the entrance to restaurants in anticipation of the waiter rushing out and shouting: "One dozen," "Two dozen," or "Ten dozen – open!" A police ordinance of September 25th, 1771, forbade oyster-women to exercise their trade between the last day of April and the 10th of September, under penalty of a fine of 200 francs and the confiscation of their stock. This ordinance was destined to fall into disuse; but inasmuch as the prohibited months are those in which oysters are at their worst, the *écaillères* of Paris do in fact to-day suspend their trade during May, June, July, and August – months which they devote to the sale of sugared barley-water and other cooling beverages.

In Paris a sempstress is supposed to be "*gentille*," a *lingère*, or getter-up of linen, "*aimable*," a flower-girl "pretty." The oyster-woman, although not characterised by any one particular quality, is credited with a combination of qualities in a more or less

modified degree. Without being in her first youth, she is young; without being in the bloom of beauty, she does not lack personal charm; and frequently she invests even the opening of oysters with a grace which may well excite admiration. *La belle écaillère* is indeed the name traditionally applied to her. With the origin of this name a tragic story is associated.

There was once a charmingly pretty oyster-girl named Louise Leroux, known as *La belle écaillère*. She had a lover named Montreuil, a fireman, who, in a moment of frantic jealousy, plunged his sword into her breast. This horrible crime at once rendered "the beautiful oyster-girl" famous, not only in Paris, but throughout Europe; and in due time the legend of her life and love took dramatic form, and found its way to the stage. The interest excited in her unhappy end was all the greater inasmuch as her murderer had eluded justice by flying to England, where, in London, he set up as a fencing master. The Gaieté Theatre achieved, in 1837, one of its greatest successes by putting on the boards, under the title of *La Belle Écaillère*, the tragic history of Louise Leroux.

Since then the name has been familiarly applied without discrimination to the female oyster-sellers of Paris, many of whom have well deserved it. But while bearing the name, they have abandoned the traditional fireman, as rather too dangerous a commodity. In lieu of firemen they have captivated notaries, financiers, and others in superior stations of life; whilst one is known to have turned the head of a state minister, who, even

if he did not marry her, confessed the passion with which she inspired him by devouring thirty-two dozen of her oysters every morning before breakfast. The flame within him had first been excited by the siren's ready wit. As he was entering a restaurant one day, a friend who accompanied him remarked: "To-day, my dear sir, more than ever, France dances on a volcano." "What nonsense!" cried the *écaillère*; "she dances on a heap of oysters!" Next day the exclamation was reported in a Paris journal, which easily turned it to political account.

There was another oyster-girl who solved a question of lexicographic definition which had hopelessly baffled the Academicians. A new edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* was being prepared, and it became necessary to establish the distinction of meaning between the two expressions *de suite* and *tout de suite*. The forty Academicians were all at variance about it, and were about to tear their hair, when one of them, Népomucène Lemercier, exclaimed: "Let us go and dine at Ramponneau's. That's better than disputing. We can discuss the matter during dessert." "Agreed," replied another member – Nodier. The Academicians forthwith set out, and when they had arrived at their destination one of them, Parseval-Grandmaison, who ordered the dinner, said to the *écaillère*: "Open forty dozen oysters for us *de suite*, and serve them *tout de suite*." "But, sir," replied the oyster-woman, "if I open them *de suite*, I cannot serve them *tout de suite*." The Academicians looked at each other in astonishment. The problem had been solved. They had now



discovered that of the two expressions *tout de suite* indicated the greater celerity.

## **CHAPTER II.**

# **THE ENGLISH AND AMERICANS IN PARIS**

**The Englishman Abroad – M. Lemoinne's Analysis  
– The Englishwoman – Sunday in London and in  
Paris – Americans in Par – The American Girl**

HITHERTO the types of character which we have noticed have been native. Let us vary them by a glance at the typical foreigner or rather foreigners residing or sojourning in Paris.

To begin with the Englishman. In Paris, although there are a great number of Englishmen, it can hardly be said that an English Society exists. Samuel Johnson once complained that Englishmen did not fraternise with one another; that if two visitors called upon a lady about the same time and were shown into her drawing-room, they would, until the lady made her appearance – say for five minutes – simply glare at one other in silence, whereas a couple of foreigners would, although they had never met before, have entered into a conversation.

Without, perhaps, being aware of Johnson's stricture on the social frigidity of his own countrymen, an excellent French

writer, John Lemoinne, has noticed the same insular peculiarity in English visitors to Paris. "The English," he says, "do not seek one another's acquaintance; they do not come into other lands to find themselves. If they easily form acquaintanceship with foreigners, they are more fastidious in approaching each other. An Englishman will make friends with a Frenchman without the ceremony of presentation, I mean of introduction, but never with another Englishman. A couple of Englishmen stare at each other very hard before saying, 'How do you do?'"

*Punch* many years ago noticed this national characteristic in a picture which represented two English visitors to Paris breakfasting at the same table in the Hôtel Meurice, and, although the only guests in the room, solemnly ignoring each other's existence.

But M. Lemoinne goes further than *Punch*. "If the English leave their native land," he says, "it is not to find their own compatriots; it is to see new men and new things. Even when you understand their language, they prefer to talk to you in their bad French. The thing is intelligible enough: they wish to learn, and have no desire to teach. You are regarded simply as a book and a grammar. The foreigner must be turned to some account."

So far excellent. But let us return to Samuel Johnson. When he visited Paris did he air his "bad French"? No, he absolutely refused to speak a word of anything but English. This by no means confirms M. Lemoinne's proposition. Yet in fairness, let it be said, Johnson's chief objection to talking French in Paris

was a fear lest he should “put his foot in it,” and, lexicographer as he was, excite by some grammatical blunder the ridicule of irreverent Parisians.

Let us see, however, to what lengths M. Lemoinne is prepared to go. “If there was ever a people who have the sentiment of nationality, it is,” he says, “the English. They are impregnated, petrified with it; the thing is fatiguing and offensive. But in order to affirm and manifest this sentiment the English have no need to group themselves, to form themselves into a society. An Englishman is to himself England alone; he carries his nation in him, with him, on him; he does not require to be several. Everywhere he is at home: the atmosphere is his kingdom and the ambient air his property. Religion enters largely into this temperament. The Englishman carries not only his nation, but his religion with him; he scours the whole earth with his Bible for companion; the Frenchman, habitually catholic, requires a bell and a priest – he does not know how to converse directly with Heaven. From a social point of view, moreover, the English find France freer, more liberal, more open than their own country. English society, at home, is regulated like music-paper; it has a severe hierarchy, in which the most idiotic little lord stands before a man of genius without a title. Geographically, it is a very narrow space which separates England from France; but this space is a gulf. The two countries are in constant relationship; but they never arrive at any resemblance to each other. We have not the political liberty of the English, and they have not our

social equality. An Englishman could not live with laws like those which, in France, regulate the right of speaking, the right of writing, the right of petitioning, the right of assembling, the right of going and coming; but a Frenchman would be stifled amidst those thousand conventional bonds which form English society. The influence of convention in England is such that it equals and even surpasses the tyranny of the political and administrative laws of the Continent. That is why the Englishman, after a stay of some time, and when the ice of his nature is a little melted, moves amongst foreigners as freely as he moves at home. No possible comparison can be made between the Frenchman in London and the Englishman in Paris; or at all events the comparison can only be an antithesis. The Frenchman who pays a visit to England will, so soon as presented, be welcomed with a boundless hospitality, provided his visit is only a flying one; but if he apparently wishes to take root, the soil refuses, and society shuts itself up and retires as though a descent were being made upon its territory. It must be confessed, moreover, that France is not usually represented in England by the cream or flower of her population; and for a simple reason, namely, that a Frenchman does not go to England for pleasure or from choice, and that he has no idea but that of returning as quickly as possible. But apart, even, from these particular circumstances, the mere pressure of the English social atmosphere suffices to asphyxiate a Frenchman. It is a world, an order of ideas, an assemblage of laws and customs entirely different from all others.

“A Parisian may for years walk round English society as he would walk round the wall of China, without being able to find either a door or a window. He understands absolutely nothing about it.

“In France, on the contrary, Englishmen find a greater social liberty. French society is an open society; French manners are cosmopolitan manners. The most diverse peoples can in France find their place without losing their national character. In our country everyone is at home, and the Englishman gets on comfortably enough. In the Englishman, however, it is necessary to distinguish between the citizen and the individual; for he is both. When the national interests or passions are in question he does not scruple to intrigue and conspire; when he is unconcerned with the politics of the country where he happens to find himself, he practises the greatest reserve and mixes in nothing. See the English at Paris. They assist at all our revolutions as mere spectators; their sole care is to get a good seat. They always come to their ambassador to request a presentation at the Tuileries and tickets for the court ball.”

So far we have presented the observations of M. Lemoigne for what they may be worth. That his skilful pen, however, penetrates sometimes into the regions of truth is shown by the fact that his remarks not infrequently recall those of foreign writers so famous as to be regarded more or less as oracular. Heine, after visiting London, complained that at an English dinner party the gentlemen, after the ladies had retired from the dining-room,

remained at table for an hour or two to saturate themselves with port. Heine, it must be remembered, took a perverse delight in satirising everything English. But that we, in England, do leave the ladies to drink their after-dinner coffee in the desolation of the drawing-room must be handsomely admitted. M. Lemoinne notices this peculiarity.

“The time has passed,” he says – with burlesque drollery – “when the true Englishman remained at table for several hours after dinner and ended by slumbering beneath it. Now, when the ladies have quitted the dining-room, the gentlemen content themselves with circulating the Bordeaux for twenty minutes. In France we are beginning to divest ourselves of certain prejudices concerning the English. For a long time we regarded the English character as synonymous with ‘spleen.’ It was an old French author who said of the English: ‘They amuse themselves sadly, after the custom of their country.’”

“The fact is the English are gay in their own fashion, and sometimes even expansive and noisy; but they are not gay with everybody, nor on a first acquaintance. They must unfreeze; they are like the wine of Bordeaux, which, to give forth its fragrance, has to be warmed.”

After this, however, a very dubious compliment is paid to our compatriots. “It is certain that this race is robuster than others, the women as well as the men. It spends more, consumes more, and absorbs more. See how well these pretty white and red-complexioned Englishwomen can take their sherry and their

champagne! Observe them in the middle of the day going to exercise their palate at the pastry-cook's with coffee, chocolate, ices, all kinds of cakes and sandwiches; you are staggered at the quantity of these delicacies they can put out of sight. See them at the buffets of all those official fêtes of which they form the finest ornament. It is a pleasure to see them, especially when you know that their appetite is not destructive of sentiment." Now, however, for a compliment which is absolutely sincere. "We venture to say that English society in Paris has exercised a salutary influence on French society, and that it has introduced cordiality into intimate relationships. The handshake of the English lady, for instance, has long shocked, and still shocks our purists. Their fault is that they believe an amiable woman must be too accessible, and that a certain liberty of manners implies an equal liberty of conduct. With such ideas as these they bring up daughters who, having given the tips of their fingers, imagine that they have given everything and have no longer anything to protect; whereas a pretty little English girl who gives her hand gives nothing else, and knows how to defend the rest."

Another trait of the English character is, we are assured, an "interest in religious questions." English ladies are "all more or less theologians – veritable doctors in petticoats. English girls will hold forth to you on the subject of grace and free will. You will meet them at church, listening to sermons and going through services, and even taking notes. But what does that matter, since it does not prevent them from serving out the tea admirably, from



rearing their children later on, and from being model housewives and model mothers? If our Frenchwomen cry 'Fie' upon the blue-stocking, that is perhaps because it is too green; a little theology would not hurt them. It is at church that you get the most comprehensive view of English society in Paris. On Sunday you have only to visit the Faubourg St. – Honoré towards two o'clock; you will encounter quite a procession of English men and women coming from the Rue d'Agnesseau, with their prayer-books and their Sunday demeanour. I say the church, but I ought to say the churches; for the English have nowadays in Paris almost as many chapels as religions. There is the Embassy chapel for Anglicans of the established religion, an English episcopal chapel in the Rue Bayard, another English chapel in the Rue Royale, a Scotch Presbyterian chapel and two English Methodist places of worship in the Rue Roqueline, independently of American chapels. This is not to say that the English observe Sunday in Paris as strictly as they are obliged to do in their own country. Respect for the Sabbath is an observance which they know very well how to dispense with amongst foreigners. On Sunday, from time to time, you see some individual in black attire, and invariably adorned with an umbrella, who, seated on one of the seats in a public garden, pretends to ignore a little pamphlet which is intended to be picked up by the first pedestrian who passes, and which turns out to be a dissertation on the observance of the Sabbath. There are still, perhaps, a few hotels specially designed for English people, where the Bible Society causes to be placed in every

bedroom a copy of the Scriptures bearing its own stamp. This ardour of propagandism has begun, however, to abate, and the English in general are by no means the last to take advantage of the Paris Sunday. Anyone who has seen the Sabbath of London must feel the difference. Every Frenchman who has just missed dying, not only of ennui, but of hunger and thirst, during the hours of service in England – hearing his footsteps resound in the desolate streets – will understand the solace experienced by an Englishman on finding that the coast is clear for him at Paris and Versailles. There are, it is true, a certain number of English families who do not receive on Saturday evening because the festivity or the dancing might encroach upon the Sabbath; but what is a sin on English territory is not so on French territory, and the English do not scruple to pass midnight in a Parisian drawing-room.”

This drolly severe but, from a literary point of view, admirable writer seems to think that an Englishman is a sort of fox-terrier, or mastiff, which having been chained up for a length of time becomes, when you let him loose, extremely rampant and ill-conducted. “There are so many things the English would not do at home, that they do without scruple amongst foreigners. Once abroad they indemnify themselves for their national reserve; it is on the foreigner that they revenge themselves for the shackles of their own etiquette and social laws. In crossing the Channel they pitch their solemn vestments into the sea. In London they will not go to the opera dressed in anything but black; here they go

in a tweed coat and a slouch hat.” After this Monsieur Lemoinne seems very much upset by the moustaches which Englishmen display as they promenade in the Boulevards. There was a time, he assures us, when a Frenchman crossing the Channel and wishing to have a fashionable air was obliged to sacrifice his moustache – a time when English caricaturists never represented a Frenchman without a pair of long, ill-combed moustaches. To-day the thing is reversed. It is the Englishman who wears this grotesque appendage which proclaims his nationality from afar. Thus moustached, the Englishman goes to Paris – so M. Lemoinne evidently thinks – to have his full fling. “Amongst us,” he says, “a grave man may occasionally dress up to go to a ball, wear fancy costume, or take part in a quadrille, and next morning resume his function as state councillor or referendary. So the Englishman precipitates himself into the French world as into a great masked ball, puts on a false nose, dances at Paris extravagant steps which he calls French dances, cuts capers, sups and gets maudlin, and when he has finished his French tour, tranquilly resumes his duties as member of parliament or no matter what.”

To English ladies M. Lemoinne is a good deal more gallant. He is obliged to point out that they over-dress and stride along the Boulevards like dismounted dragoons. “Yet, make no mistake,” he adds. “In that still crude block there are all the elements of a superb work of art. What fine construction, what solid layers, what grand architecture! Wait till art has put her hand to these

materials; wait till the Englishwoman has learned how to walk, carry herself, and dress, and until, to her native beauty, she has added acquired grace – then you will have the finest type of creation and of civilisation. The native Englishwoman who has become a naturalised Parisian is perfection.”

In spite of the modified tribute which this writer pays to Englishwomen, it may be said that he has handled our nation very roughly. In the present day England and France would no longer, in a European war, fight side by side as they did in the Crimea; and a little unconscious Anglophobia tinctures the writings even of such a skilful and impartial essayist as M. Lemoine. The Americans in Paris are regarded, by French writers generally, from a much more favourable point of view. Let us, in the first place, hear what M. André Léo has to say on this subject. “If you walk through the Champs Élysées, from the Place de la Concorde to the Arc de l’Étoile, or through the avenues which converge there, from the direction of the Madeleine, in the Quartier St. – Honoré towards the Parc Monceaux, you will frequently meet women richly adorned, men with light-coloured beards, tranquil and placid; young women of lively and decided mien, pretty children with curly hair, whose physiognomy is at once full of candour and of assurance. All these individuals, isolated or grouped, offer you pretty nearly the same type; a countenance which is strong in comparison with the small, piercing grey eyes, and flexible features, often agreeable, and sometimes beautiful... All nationalities, indeed, meet and knock

against each other in this new quarter with its fine avenues and its sylvan groves. But there is an evident predominance of English and American language and customs, as appears from the signs over the chemists' shops, the stores, the boarding-houses, and the special pastry-cooks, where cakes, pies, and puddings are displayed in the window. Yet although in this region a unity of language and conformity of habits unite the English and the Americans, the two societies intermix very little. Anglophobia, as a national and popular sentiment, is perhaps more ardent in the United States than amongst us."

In a general way the resident American population of Paris consists of the Diplomatic body, bankers, families who have come for the education of their children, and artists eager to study the masterpieces of the Parisian galleries. The American nation is accused of being devoid of artistic sentiment; but M. André Léo stoutly protests that "such a criticism passed upon a new people, who have been obliged to occupy themselves before everything with work and industry, is too hasty. American artists already exist; and already their efforts and their ambitions foretell the development of that noble and precious human faculty the germ of which exists in every people and every man, but which necessitates a certain leisure and a certain mental education."

Apart from the American residing in Paris, and the American who, binding himself to the nation by more than lengthened residence, has married into some French family – an occurrence by no means rare – there is the flying American visitor to Paris,

whose headquarters are the Grand Hotel on the Boulevard des Italiens. This establishment, by its central position, its interior arrangements, its luxury and its comfort, enjoys an enormous reputation on the other side of the Atlantic. The Yankee leaves New York for the Grand Hotel. It is not till he passes its threshold that he feels himself on terra firma again; it is here that he finds out where he is and gets his information. If his means or his projects permit it, he installs himself at this hotel for three or four months; if not, he goes on to some other hotel or boarding-house, or else rents an apartment to live by himself. If you enter the courtyard of the Grand Hotel, ascend the portico steps, and, making your way into the stately readingroom, look out of the window for five minutes, you will see that the innumerable vehicles which every few seconds stop at the hotel deposit ten Americans to one Englishman.

From this centre the tourist easily gets to all those points of the city to which necessity or curiosity impels him. The first visit he pays is probably to his banker – to Bowles and Devritt, perhaps, in the Rue de la Paix, or to Norton's in the Rue Auber. Once he banked with the firm of Rothschild, but now no longer. During the American war M. de Rothschild's attitude in reference to the planters was by no means neutral, and this political indiscretion has cost him his American clients.

When the New York party has cashed its cheque at the American bank – which is quite a rendezvous for trans-Atlantics and at which all the American newspapers can be seen – the

feminine element hastens to visit all the most fashionable shops. The ladies are eager to purchase, at comparatively low prices, those Parisian costumes which their own native custom-house raises to prices so exorbitant. Dressed ere long in the richest and newest fashions, they step with their male companions into a carriage and drive to the Bois de Boulogne; then they go to the opera, to spectacles of every kind, and to the Legation. If there happens to be a sovereign on the throne, they put their names down for presentation at the Tuileries and order a court costume. For it must be confessed that the Americans are fond of the pomps of this world, and that, Republicans as they profess to be, they have no prejudice against kings and princes outside their own country. The monarchs of other nations neither shock nor terrify them. And the American tourist, apart from the question of political sentiment, likes to see everything and do everything before he recrosses the Atlantic. If an American family visits a land where it is the fashion to be presented at court, they will feel humiliated and ashamed should they have to confess afterwards to their compatriots that they missed the presentation.

Under the last Empire the American visitors to Paris showed an eagerness for court-presentations which would have entitled them to a place in Thackeray's Book of Snobs – which, nevertheless, directly or indirectly, embraces pretty nearly the whole human species. But there were a certain number of Americans then in France who got acclimatised to the splendours of the court and became habitual guests at imperial residences.

The drawing-room of the United States minister is naturally the centre of meeting for American society in Paris. "The aspect and tone of these assemblies," says a French writer, "is at once less solemn and colder than our French social gatherings. The necessity of being previously presented exists in this democratic society just as it does in England, though on the other hand American conversation and behaviour bear a natural impress of indifference and freedom, not even to the exclusion, perhaps, of a little coarseness."

Curiously enough, the Americans, although they despise or affect to despise social and genealogical distinctions in their own country, turn to some extent into aristocrats during the voyage across the Atlantic to Europe. Frenchmen have noticed that if you wish to be presented to their minister or at one of their drawing-rooms in Paris, you must never forget your ancestry. "A certain author of my acquaintance," says André Léo, "a man of genuine fame, was sufficiently astonished, on reading his American letter of introduction, to find that it recommended him much less on his own account than on that of his grandfather. This is not an isolated case; it results from a law much more human than national, which consists in particularly prizing what one does not possess. The Americans, a people without ancestors, naturally hold race distinctions in high esteem. They boast, one against the other, of belonging to the first founders of the colonies, and even in their own country these pretensions sometimes provoke laughter... As to nobiliary titles,



if you possess any, be particularly careful to let them be known, and rest assured that when once they have been declared the Americans will not fail to apply them to you. These titles will win for you sweet glances, and should you be contemplating marriage will turn the scale in your favour with those blonde beauties who, for the most part, have Californian dowries; for these Republican young women think that a ducal coronet sits marvellously well on blonde hair, and that the title of Countess is the finishing ornament required by an elegant lady. Hence it is that at Paris numerous alliances are contracted between the France of other days and the America of to-day.”

In the United States, so soon as a merchant has done some great stroke of business, or has pierced a big vein of ore in his mine, or has seen the petroleum spouting up on his land too fast for an adequate supply of barrels, his daughters are consumed with a desire to visit Europe. They sail thither, accompanied by the father, who pretends to despise the Continent, but who, inwardly, is scarcely less curious to explore it than his fair-haired children. And as a matter of fact the Americans may well be desirous to see that region of the world whence they derive everything but their liberty and their wealth. For their religion, their language, their literature, their arts and sciences, their memories, and the very blood which courses in their veins, they are indebted to Europe. In America, although an enormous number of books and newspapers are published, the English and French classics, not to mention the best English and French

modern authors, form the foundation of every good library, and even the native writers fashion themselves after European models.

As regards the American families residing in Paris for the education of their children, it is music and the French language which they have chiefly in view. Some years ago M. André Léo observed that young American girls in Paris received a much severer education than their brothers. The instruction of the daughters "is, or appears, very complex; that of the sons much less so, for as a rule, having their own fortune to make, they early precipitate themselves into commercial life. But the young girl, whether intended for an instructress or working merely for the development and adornment of her person, devotes herself to studies which amongst us would pass for pedantic. Some of them learn Latin, algebra, geometry, and even attack without alarm more special sciences. Yet look at them and be reassured. The care of their toilette has not suffered from all this, and the accusations of ungracefulness cast against learned women fall before the display of their luxurious frivolity. See if the waves of silk, of muslin, of lace, which surround them are less abundant on that account; if the details of their exterior show a lesser degree of feminine art, if the whole has a lesser freshness." This writer proceeds to insist on the superiority of the American woman over her male compatriot. The explanation is, according to him, that at fourteen years of age the American boy shuts up his books to enter the office of his father or

some other merchant, and consecrates his whole intelligence to commercial speculations; whereas the young girl pursues her studies, strengthens them sometimes by teaching, and, spinster or wife, has always abundant leisure for mental exercise. The one point on which, in M. André's view, the studious American woman exposes herself to reproach, is that hitherto she has not used her intellectual superiority for the furtherance of her own dignity and independence.

That she is nevertheless a powerful social factor, M. André himself admits, though he attributes this less to her activity than to her fascinations as a beauty in repose. "The first duty and the first pride of an American husband is" he says, "to ensure the idleness of his wife and provide for the expenses of her toilette." There are in the United States many women-workers, whether as preceptresses or clerks in the postal, telegraphic, or even ministerial offices. These are nearly all spinsters – the single state being frequent in New England, which vies with the Mother Country for the supremacy of the feminine population – and they give in their resignation when they get married. "I will not let my wife work," such is the husband's proud determination. Here, however, one imperative reason why women must resign their employment on marriage is overlooked. In London the numberless women engaged in the post and telegraph offices are required by the authorities to abdicate their posts on becoming wives, simply because they would obviously be unable to work their nine hours a day at a desk or counter if they had absorbing

domestic duties to attend to and children to rear.

To Englishmen, who are already acquainted with their Transatlantic brethren, a French view of the American in Paris would be more instructive than an English one. What particularly strikes Parisians is the freedom of American girls as contrasted with the restraint of unmarried young women in France, whose training is notoriously very much that of a convent. "American manners," the French observe, "grant to girls entire liberty. They are the guardians of their own virtue and their own interests, and they preserve these things right well. Instructed in the dangers of life, they are capable of braving them; though it must be owned that their task is easy on account of the respect which, throughout their country, is shown to them by men. A girl can travel the length and breadth of the territory of the Union without having to fear dishonourable pursuits or the slightest unpleasantness. Therefore the American girl utterly differs from ours by her aspect alone." Her costume is more unstudied, and the mouse-like timidity of the young Frenchwoman is replaced in her by a graceful carelessness.

To Americans, as M. André justly says, Paris must seem "a world upside down. American mothers complain greatly of the little security and respect shown to women in this capital, of the gallantry of the French and the indulgence of public opinion in flagrant cases. They are right;" and he thinks that it is because French girls are too severely disciplined, too much caged up, that there is less reverence between the two sexes in France than

in America. "True chastity," he maintains, "has liberty for her sister."

American girls staying in Paris are astonished and indignant at the close surveillance to which unmarried young Frenchwomen are subjected, although they themselves frequently sacrifice to opinion in the matter of not appearing out of doors unaccompanied by a maid. M. André regrets this on account of the countenance it gives to a prudish system, which he is the last to admire in his own countrywomen. "O young ladies," he exclaims, "born on a soil where monarchical influences have never flourished, why do you submit to this shameful spy system? Would it not be better if you openly showed your disdain for it, and taught our women the manners of liberty? Paris, after all, is not a forest, and a mere glance, a shrug of the shoulders, or silence itself, will suffice to shame away a leering loungeur or an impertinent snob. Is it true, then, that in default of other forms of tyranny, respect for opinion, whatever that opinion be, is a yoke in America?"

Let us hope, in conclusion, that the American girl does not "let herself go," on her return from straitlaced Paris to the freedom of New York, at all events to such an extent as suggested by this writer, who assures us that, having once set foot again on native soil, she flirts furiously.

## **CHAPTER III.**

### **MORE PARISIAN TYPES**

**The Spy – Under Sartines and Berryer –  
Fouché – Delavau – The Present System  
– The Écuyère – The Circus in Paris**

TO return, however, to native Parisian types. Mention has already been made of the French spy, but he is such an important and historical character that it is impossible to dismiss him in a few words.

The police, already strongly organised under Louis XIV., resorted largely to espionage; but in Louis XV.'s reign the famous Lieutenant of Police, de Sartines, fashioned the spy system into a civil institution, and gave it a prodigious development. Spies were now employed to follow the Court or to watch the doings of distinguished foreigners who had recently arrived in the capital. Then there were domestic spies, the most terrible of all, to judge by the following observations extracted from a report attributed to Louis XV.'s lieutenant. "The 'family,' amongst us, lives under the protection of a reputation for virtue which cannot impose on the magistracy; the family is a repertory of crimes, an arsenal of infamies. The hypocrisy of the false caresses which are lavished

in it must be apparent to all but fools. In a family of twenty persons the police ought to place forty spies." After Sartines, Lieutenant Berryer by no means allowed the spy service to deteriorate. He employed convicts as spies, one of the conditions of their employment being that on the slightest failure in the vile duties they had to perform, they should be restored to prison. The services, too, of coachmen, landladies, lodgers, were called into requisition. Even domestic servants were sometimes Berryer's agents, and many a mysterious *lettre-de-cachet* was issued on the strength of some word uttered carelessly within the hearing of a lady's-maid or valet-de-chambre.

Stories are even told of men so innocent that they acted as spies without being aware of it. Such a one was Michel-Perrin, of Mme. de Bawr's tale, which, in its dramatic form, gave Bouffé one of his best parts. The simple-minded man had in his youth, when he was a student of theology, known Fouché, afterwards to become Napoleon's Minister of Police. In due time Michel-Perrin took orders, and was doing duty in a little village when, under the Revolution, public worship was abolished. Calling upon Fouché to ask his old friend for some suitable employment, he can obtain nothing until, moved by the urgency of his solicitations, the Police Minister suggests to him, with so much delicacy that his true meaning remains unperceived, that he shall walk about the public places, go into cafés and restaurants, and frequent all kinds of resorts where people congregate, and that he shall then return to Fouché with an

account of anything remarkable he may have seen or heard. This seems to the delighted Michel-Perrin mere child's play, and he regards it as little more than a pretext on the part of the generous minister for handing him every evening a gold piece. When, however, the unconscious spy finds one day that he has revealed a political conspiracy, and jeopardised the lives of many, perhaps innocent men, he suddenly awakens to a sense of what he has been doing, and in horror throws up his employment. Fouché, it seems, was pained to have humiliated the unoffending priest, and, public worship being just at that time restored, he used his influence with Napoleon to obtain the ingenuous man's re-appointment as village curé.

Under the Revolution the spy was replaced by the official denunciator, an agent no less formidable. At length came the Empire, and then Fouché invested espionage with the importance of a science. In 1812 the "brigade of safety" appeared, which was first composed of four agents, but which, in 1823 and 1824, always under the direction of the famous Vidocq, numbered close upon thirty. Delavau, the prefect of police, had permitted him to establish, on the public road, a game known as "troll-madam"; and this game, an excellent trap for boobies and passers-by whose slightest words and actions were keenly watched by Vidocq's hounds, produced, from the 20th of July to the 4th of August, 1823, a net profit of 4,364 francs. This sum was added to the subvention already granted to the spy department.



The Prefect Delavau returned to the method of Lieutenant Berryer in employing as spies convicts, whom he threw back into prison for the slightest fault. One of his predecessors, Baron Pasquier, had endeavoured, like Berryer, to enlist domestic servants into the secret police force; and, with this object, Delavau renewed an old ordinance, calling upon them to get their names noted in the books of the prefecture every time they entered a situation or left one. The domestics, however, perceived the motive of Delavau's measure, and were so unanimous in withholding their names from the books in question, that all idea of family espionage, on which much value had been set, was soon to be abandoned. Delavau drew even more largely upon the criminal class for his myrmidons than Pasquier had done, and in his day no public gathering took place at which some felon, released for the purpose from gaol, was not lurking about for an ill-sounding word or a suspicious gesture. Such agents as these worked with the industry of bloodhounds. "Between the populace and the subalterns of the police," says the historian Peuchet, "there is a continual war; the latter are ill-bred dogs who seize every opportunity for applying their fangs. The police will never inspire respect for order so long as part of its force consists of released gaol-birds who owe a grudge to the whole of the people. When these two elements are in contact there is inevitably a fermentation." The justice of these remarks was recognised by M. Delavau's successor, M. de Belleyme, whose first care was to dismiss and even restore to their respective

prisons this army of felon-spies. To-day, although he has not risen much in public estimation, the spy of the police-force is a citizen in every sense of the word, enjoying all the rights of a Frenchman, and not obtaining his commission from the prefecture until after his past life and his moral character have stood the test of a keen investigation. Thus espionage has been purified as far as that is possible; but whether the system is not in itself essentially immoral, is a question which has exercised the minds even of such writers as Montesquieu. "Espionage," he says, "is never tolerable; if it were so it would be practised by honest men; but the necessary infamy of the person indicates the infamy of the thing." This is in effect another version of the famous utterance of Argenson, who, reproached with employing as spies none but rogues and villains, exclaimed: "Find me honest men who will do this work." The present prefecture of police believes it has found such men, and the discovery, if it has really been made, is a fortunate one indeed.

Another variety of police spy to be met with in Paris is the officious volunteer spy. He may belong to the lower or to the higher ranks of society. He takes upon himself to observe and to denounce, without instructions, and solely in the hope of a pecuniary recompense. This variety is probably the most contemptible and the vilest. It should be mentioned, too, that the French capital swarms with invisible and unrecognisable spies, disguised, as they sometimes are, beneath an appearance of luxury or magnificence. This or that personage passes for a

member of the diplomatic service. He is an admired figure in fashionable drawing-rooms, and while affecting to converse on the European situation, exercises the ear of a fox terrier and the eye of a hawk. Then, of course, there is the military spy, who is superior to the civil variety inasmuch as whilst the latter, in case of recognition, only incurs a more or less disagreeable misadventure, the former is liable to be shot. The military spy, therefore, may have all the heroism of the professed soldier.

The civil spy system was naturally developed to an extraordinary degree by the subtle Richelieu. His secret agent took as many shapes as Proteus. Now it was a brave old seigneur, infirm and professedly deaf, in whose presence people would not hesitate to speak out and say everything, but who recovered his vigour and his legs in order to go and report to the cardinal a conversation of which he had not missed one detail. Now it was a woman, who, having insinuated herself into the intimate friendship of some young and brilliant courtier, wrested from him a dangerous and terrible secret. But it was not only throughout the length and breadth of France that Richelieu had spies; numbers of them were in his pay abroad, all over the Continent indeed, regularly reporting political intrigues, and furnishing clandestine copies of secret treaties.

Enough, however, of the spy; let it simply be added that he has been introduced into two novels by Balzac, into one by Hugo, and into two by Alexandre Dumas, who has likewise made him figure in a couple of plays.

Let us pass from the most slinking and distasteful Paris character to the most open and, as many consider, the most charming one – from the “espion,” that is to say, to the “écuyère.”

At Paris the circus-woman is the object of a much higher admiration than in London. Théophile Gautier, in his dramatic feuilletons, has frequently shown that he preferred the equestrian fairy of the circus to the sylph who dances at the opera. He goes into ecstasies over her agility, vigour, and courage, and is displeased with nothing but the drapery in which her lower limbs are enveloped, holding that, just as the most virtuous fashionable woman or actress takes care to exhibit her bare arms if they are beautiful, so the “écuyère” of the circus should be allowed to display the full symmetry and grace of her legs. The “écuyère” whom Balzac brings on the scene in his *Fausse Maîtresse*, Malaga by name, is an excellent type of the French circus-woman, who is nearly always without relatives, sometimes a foundling, sometimes a stolen child, and who, coming one knows not whence, goes, the idol of a day, one knows not where. “At the fair,” says the greatest of French novelists – or rather, one of his characters – “this delicious Columbine used to carry chairs on the tip of her nose – the prettiest little Greek nose I ever saw. Malaga, madame, is skill personified. Of Herculean strength, she only requires her tiny fist or diminutive foot to rid herself of three or four men. She is, in fact, the goddess of gymnastics. Careless as a gipsy, she says everything that enters her head; she thinks as much of the future as you do of the halfpence you throw

to beggars, and sometimes sublime things escape from her. No one could ever persuade her that an old diplomatist is a beautiful youth; a million could not change her opinion. Her love is, for whoever inspires it, a perpetual flattery. Endowed as she is with really insolent health, her teeth are thirty-two exquisite pearls encased in coral.”

The performances of the Paris circus-woman too closely resemble those of her sister in London to need description. The characters, however, of the two equestrians are not identical, and that of the *écuyère* can scarcely be represented better than in the words of a vivacious French writer, who says: “You can easily imagine what must be, not the future (alas! has she one?), but the present of this poor, intrepid, careless creature. After being exposed twenty times a day to the risk of breaking her jaw, she has hardly earned her food; and every morning she has to wash, stretch, and otherwise renovate the costume in which she is to dazzle her spectators at night... Some of these circus-women marry a Hercules or a professional fool; at the third or fourth child Mme. Hercules or Mme. Fool takes her mare by the head, kisses her on the nose, and bids a weeping adieu to the brave, affectionate beast, the only friend who has never beaten her. It is done: the whole family – husband, wife and children, go forth to try their luck as strolling players. Their theatre is the fair in summer and the street in winter. Hercules will lift, at arm’s length, enormous weights, and the children will form the living column, or dance on the rope, while the mother, as short-

skirted as ever, but now plump enough to burst her vestments, will contribute some kind of music or exhort the outside public to enter the show." She frequently fills up her intervals with fortune-telling; informs young women whether they will be married the same year, and whether the visionary swain is fair or dark; lets married men know if their wives are faithful, and wives if their husbands are engaged in amours. Nurse-maids learn from her that in the mounted gendarmerie or the cuirassiers there is a hero of six-feet-six, only awaiting an opportunity of declaring his passion.

This, however, is a sketch of the more fortunate of the strolling circus artists. Occasionally the husband breaks a limb, or kills himself in attempting some daring feat; in that case his family is often reduced to beggary or something worse.

# **CHAPTER IV.**

## **THE DOMESTIC**

### **The French Servant, as described by Léon Gozlan and by Mercier – The Cook and the Cordon Bleu – The Valet**

IT has already been seen that domestics have at different periods been employed in Paris as spies. – According to Léon Gozlan, writing of his own period, “the police of Paris is almost entirely occupied with the misdeeds of domestics. Nearly all domestics are thieves or spies, and they get more so as they grow older. The most honest amongst them steals at least ten sous a day from his master.” It is to be hoped that if they steal in this amusingly regular fashion, they at least observe the kind of morality which has been noticed in some of the inferior state officials of Russia. One of these complained that a colleague of his was dishonest and helped himself to things which belonged to the State. “But you do the same thing yourself,” suggested a friend. “True,” was the reply; “but this fellow steals too much for his place.”

Let us, however, turning from drollery and from Léon Gozlan – who can hardly have been quite serious – glance at the

household servant of Paris as a factor in the Parisian community. The French domestic, whether valet, lackey, or lady's-maid, is more important and influential than the domestic of England. It is true that occasionally in an English house some servant practically rules the family, and that the relationship between employer and employed becomes so reversed that the mistress is afraid to ring her drawing-room bell. As a rule, however, in England the domestic is a nonentity. The man-servant or maid-servant who waits at an English table is absolutely ignored, and is not even supposed to understand the conversation which accompanies dinner, nor to laugh at jokes indulged in by the host or his guests. An English servant nowadays who shook with laughter at what he overheard in the dining-room, like black Sambo at Mr. Sedley's, would be cautioned if not cashiered. The French domestic is a personage and a power. The "trade of lackey," according to Fabrice, in "Gil Blas," requires a man of superior intellect. The true lackey "does not go through his duties like a ninny; he enters a house to command rather than to serve. He begins by studying his master: he notes his defects, gains his confidence, and ultimately leads him by the nose... If a master has vices, the superior genius who waits upon him flatters them, and often indeed turns them to his own advantage." Awaiting the day when he shall himself be great, the liveried aspirant takes the name of his master when he is with other lackeys, adopts his manners and apes his gestures; he carries a gold watch and wears lace; he is impertinent and foppish. "Bon chien se forme



sur maître,” says the French proverb, and the Parisian domestic religiously takes after his master, even though, as far as intrinsic resemblance goes, he might simply be an ape in his master’s clothes.

That vanity characterises French servants is undeniable. Against the charge of cupidity, however, which is brought against them, even by French writers, must be set off one or two famous instances in which valets have supported their ruined masters for ten or twenty years out of their own savings. Mercier, all the same, represents the Paris domestic as hardly less a rogue than does Léon Gozlan. “Out of ten servants,” he assures us, “four are thieves.” Another native writer, while not undertaking to combat this proposition, finds a defence for the accused domestics. “If they are thus, who,” he asks, “has perverted them? Who, either by example or complicity, has made them thieves and spies? Every year is committed, to the prejudice of the country and of agriculture, an abominable crime, namely, the stealing of individuals, strong and useful, snatched at once from the sunlight and from simplicity of manners, to be degraded, and sullied with a livery; to have imposed upon them their master’s vices and follies, and to be turned into idlers and good-for-nothings, flatterers and procurers.”

Paul Louis Courier looked forward to the time when domestic servitude would be replaced by household service rendered freely, as if in virtue of a contract between man and man; and in Paris, as in other capitals, this state of things seems to be fast

approaching, not as the result of any benignant feeling on the part of the rich towards the poor, but because, with the spread of education and of democratic ideas, a disinclination to remain constantly at the orders of another person is gradually extending. Already servants demand a greater number of holidays than in ancient times; and there are many who, like the London charwoman and the “laundress” of the Inns of Court, are ready to give their services during the day-time, and even until a late hour in the evening, while reserving to themselves the right of returning, after their labours, to their own domicile.

There is much to be said, no doubt, on the other side. If there are masters and mistresses without consideration for their servants, there are servants who, having kind masters and mistresses, show themselves without gratitude. But we are dealing specially with French servants, who, apart from all question of good conduct or bad, enjoy certain privileges not formally recognised as lawfully belonging to servants in England. The *bonne*, for instance, or the cook, who goes to market to purchase provisions considers herself entitled to “make the handle of the basket dance” – “*fair danser l'anse du panier*” – to appropriate, that is to say, a portion of the things she has bought, or of the money she has nominally spent, to her own uses. In like manner the house-porter, or “*concierge*,” takes for himself, as a matter of course, so many logs out of every basket of wood ordered by the different tenants, of whom there are often some half-dozen in the same house. In France, as in other countries, a

valet will sometimes wear his master's clothes, and the Parisian lady's-maid asserts and enforces, more perhaps than in any other capital, her claims to her mistress's cast-off apparel.

The cook – both the “cuisinier” and the “cuisinière” – has already been dealt with in a special chapter. It may here, however, be remarked, that though the best cooks, and certainly the most expensive ones, are in France, as in other countries, men, the female cook is far indeed from being held in disesteem. The “cordon bleu,” or blue ribbon, was a distinction conferred upon the female, not upon the male cook; and a woman who cooks particularly well is called to this day a “cordon bleu.” Such a woman was in the service for many years of the well-known “bourgeois de Paris,” as Dr. Véron loved to describe himself.

If every French servant looks for some particular perquisite, they all expect a gratuity at the New Year. One of the greatest curses and greatest blessings which rest upon Paris is the custom of presenting New Year's gifts. The word “étrenne” is at once a terror and a joy to Parisians, according as they belong to the class who give or the class who receive. In London no gentleman would venture to omit at Christmas-time to “tip” any one of the underlings who had ever cleaned his boots, lifted his portmanteau, or twisted the ends of his moustache. But in Paris, if a gentleman failed at the new year to present “étrennes” to his boot-black, his messenger, or his valet, derision and infamy would, according to a French writer, pursue him, not merely throughout this life, but even beyond the tomb.

Cardinal Dubois, who had a reputation for niggardliness, used to give his servants their "étrennes" in a manner which they could hardly have relished. His major-domo came to him one New Year's Day to demand the annual gratuity. "Étrennes!" exclaimed the cardinal; "yes, I will give you your étrennes. You may keep everything you have stolen from me during the last twelvemonth."

Let us, before quitting the subject of the Parisian domestic, relate an anecdote or two. "When I come home," said a master to his servant, "I often find you asleep." "That, sir," replied the man, "is because I don't like to remain doing nothing."

A nobleman paid a visit to Fontenelle one day, and found him in a very bad humour. "What is the matter with you?" he asked. "The matter?" replied Fontenelle; "I have a valet who serves me as badly as if I had twenty."

The Abbé de Voisenon preserved his gay humour to his very last gasp. Just before his death he caused the leaden coffin which he had ordered beforehand to be brought to his bedside. "There," said he, "is my last overcoat." Then, turning towards one of his servants of whom he had had reason to complain, he added, "I hope you will not wish to steal that too."

A certain high official of Paris lived in the country, and, thanks to railway facilities, went home every evening to dine. On one occasion he arrived earlier than usual, and going into his kitchen found the cook in a decidedly unequivocal position, with a bottle in his hand, three-fourths of whose contents had

already found their way into his stomach. "Ah, my fine fellow," exclaimed the master, "I have caught you drinking my wine." "It is your own fault, sir," was the reply. "You were not due till four o'clock, and it is now hardly three."

Our gallery of Paris types would scarcely be complete without a sketch of a very familiar personage who, though not peculiar to Paris, abounds there more than in other capitals. This is the "rentier," the man of "small, independent means." According to the etymology of the word, anyone should be called a rentier who lives on his "rentes" – the income, that is to say, derived from the letting of houses or farms; or the interest of money invested in the Funds. In practice, however, the name is given exclusively to the man who lives on the interest of money which he has invested in government securities. He has been described as the corresponding type, in English society, to the man retired from business. He lives modestly in the quarter of the Marais or of the Batignolles, as in England he might live at Clapham or Brixton, at Holloway, or Camden Town; and he passes a considerable portion of his time in some favourite café, reading a newspaper of moderate-liberal politics, or playing at dominoes. Condemned to economy, sometimes of the most parsimonious kind, he counts every lump of sugar brought to him by the waiter, and shows a great predilection for halfpenny rolls. In politics, without being an aristocrat, he is something of a conservative; and, while stickling for his rights, hates revolutions as sure to cause perturbations in the securities of the state.

It was doubtless a rentier from whose pocket the thief in Lord Lytton's "Pelham" extracted, in a Paris café, a tiny packet which he had seen the owner put carefully away in his coat-tail pocket, and which, on being adroitly stolen and curiously examined, was found to contain, not a precious stone, but a lump of sugar. In the rentier's defence it may be mentioned that during the great Napoleonic war, when a universal blockade had been declared against English exports, and when colonial produce was everywhere excluded from the ports of France, the price of sugar rose to such a height as to render this luxury difficult for persons of straitened means to indulge in.

The existence of such a number of rentiers in Paris goes far to demonstrate the prudence of the ordinary Frenchman. An Englishman with a few thousand pounds in his possession would, as a rule, speculate with it, instead of burying it in the Funds. The speculation would furnish him with active employment, whereas the permanent investment preferred by the average Frenchman involves an idle and somewhat ignoble life.

# CHAPTER V.

## PARISIAN CHARACTERISTICS

### **Parisian Characteristics – Gaiety, Flippancy, Wit – A String of Favourite Anecdotes**

IN our last few chapters we have been glancing about Paris for different types of character. These are sufficiently varied even where they are not absolutely dissimilar from each other. But there is one characteristic which runs through the whole of them; the Parisian, be he great or small, rich or poor, never loses his national gaiety. He laughs through his tears and sometimes jests with his last breath.

This gaiety finds expression in manifold ways, and shows itself above all in innumerable anecdotes. If, as Dr. Johnson maintained, the dullest book is worth wading through if only it contains a couple of good anecdotes, no apology need be made for presenting in this chapter a few of those “bonnes histoires” in which Parisians delight, and which so often illustrate their character.

Let us begin with one which is very French and particularly Parisian. A poverty-stricken author, awaking suddenly at midnight, discerned in his garret a burglar feeling in his empty

cash-box. The author burst into a laugh. The burglar, annoyed to find himself an object of ridicule, inquired what the author could find so particularly amusing. "A thousand pardons," was the polite reply, "but I could not help smiling to see you searching in the dark for what I shall be unable to find in the daylight."

A Parisian had been accustomed for twenty years to pass his evenings at the house of a certain M<sup>me</sup>. R — . He lost his wife, and everyone expected he would marry the lady whom he had so assiduously visited. When however, his friends urged him to do so, he refused, saying, "I should no longer know where to pass my evenings."

A general who had been beaten in Germany and in Italy perceived one day, hanging over his door, a drum inscribed with this device: "I am beaten on both sides."

The Regent of Orleans wished to go to a masked ball without being recognised. "I know how to manage it," said the Abbé Dubois. During the ball he set the Regent on his guard against disclosing his identity, by dint of sundry admonitory kicks. The victim, finding the clerical foot by no means a light one, whispered, "My dear Abbé, you disguise me too much."

A French soldier, not knowing how otherwise to pass his time, entered the fashionable church of Saint-Roch. When the woman who receives money for the use of chairs approached him and asked for five sous, "Five sous?" he exclaimed. "If I had five sous I should not be here."

A lady had a spoilt child, whose praises she was never tired



of sounding. "Your child is delightful," said a visitor. "At what time does he go to bed?"

Someone, in presence of the Abbé Trublet, was praising one day the soft seductive manners of Mme. de Tencin, who was fascinating but without principle. "Yes," said the abbé, "if she wished to poison you she would use the sweetest poison she could find."

A Paris cabdriver, much vexed by the success of the omnibus, then just introduced, determined to start an opposition. He proposed to take passengers at four sous a head, and put this inscription outside his vehicle: "Fiacribus at four sous."

A Parisian boy was receiving a long lecture from his father on the subject of his inattention, no matter what good advice might be given to him. The boy lowered his head and seemed to be earnestly engaged in listening to his parent's observations. Suddenly, however, he exclaimed, "Ninety-nine – one hundred! That is the hundredth ant, father, that has gone into that little hole since you have been talking to me."

A Parisian, who could not brook contradiction, fought fourteen duels by way of maintaining his opinion that Dante was a greater poet than Petrarch. When dying from the effects of a wound received in his last encounter, he admitted to a friend that he had never read a line of either poet.

A Parisian candidate for the degree of bachelor in letters was being examined in history. He gave satisfactory answers to every question until at last he was asked when Charlemagne lived.

“Eight centuries before Christ,” he replied. “You mean after Christ?” said the questioner with a smile. “I am sorry to disagree with the board of examiners,” answered the young man with some modesty, “but I maintain my opinion that Charlemagne must have lived eight centuries before Christ.” This determined student had, as a matter of course, to be plucked.

Two daughters of Paris, at the bedside of their dying father, who had gained millions by usury, were shocked to hear the priest, who had just received his confession, enjoin restitution as the only condition on which he could possibly be saved. “For pity’s sake, father,” said the girls, when the priest had left the room, “do nothing of the kind. You will suffer for a short time, but after the first quarter of an hour you will be like a fish in water.”

An impressionable Paris banker, the owner of immense riches, died of grief on hearing that he had lost everything in the world except 100,000 francs. His pauper brother, on inheriting the sum, died of joy.

A Parisian husband, to whom his wife rendered but scant obedience, asked her one day, when she was leaving the house, where she was going. “Wherever I like,” she answered. “And when do you propose to come back?” “Whenever I think fit,” she replied. “If you return one moment later,” said the husband, with an air of menace, “I shall have a word with you.”

A Parisian schoolboy, meeting a little beggar in the street who declared himself to be the most miserable boy alive, said to him,

with an accent of deep sympathy, "What! are you learning the Latin grammar?"

The Prince de Condé was one of the wittiest of Parisians. He had been criticising severely a tedious tragedy called *Zenobia*, the work of the Abbé d'Aubignac. "It is written strictly in accordance," said one of the Abbe's defenders, "with the rules of Aristotle" "I don't blame the abbé," replied Condé, "for having followed Aristotle, but I shall never forgive Aristotle for having caused him to write so tedious a piece."

A Parisian *grande dame*, before whom a gentleman had just taken out a cigar, was asked whether she disliked the smell of tobacco. "I cannot say," she replied. "No one has ever smoked in my presence."

The French are perhaps less celebrated than of old for their politeness. It was a French preacher, however, who, in a sermon delivered before Louis XIV., observed deferentially "we are nearly all mortal"; and it was a French professor who, when Louis XVIII. had requested from him some lessons in chemistry, began his explanations by saying, "These two bodies, of opposite properties, will now have the honour of combining in presence of your Majesty."

A Parisian, in the midst of a dissipated life, was prevailed upon to enter a monastery. Ere long he confessed to the Superior that in his moments of solitude he was constantly assailed by a desire to return to his former mode of existence. The Superior recommended him on these occasions to ring the great bell of

the monastery, which would at once give him bodily exercise, distract him from evil thoughts, and be a signal to the other monks to pray for him. He rang, however, so frequently that the bell went on tolling all night, until at last representations on the subject were made from the entire neighbourhood.

A cuirassier, who had seen and admired Horace Vernet's military pictures, called upon the great painter and asked how much he would charge him for his portrait. "How much are you prepared to pay?" asked Vernet. "I could go as high – as high as a franc and a half," replied the soldier. "Done," said Vernet, and in a few minutes he had made a rapid sketch of the warrior. As the cuirassier left the room he said to a comrade who had been waiting for him at the door, "I got it done for a franc and a half. But I am sorry, now, I did not bargain. He might have taken a franc."

Sophie Arnould's dog having fallen ill, the celebrated actress sent him for treatment to her friend Mesmer, inventor of the pretended science which bears his name. In a few days the German physician returned the dog with a letter certifying that it was quite well. The dog, however, died on the way home. "What a comfort it is," said Sophie, on seeing the letter and the dead body, "to know that the poor animal died in good health."

On seeing the dancer, Madeleine Guimard, who was thin even to scragginess, perform in a "pas de trois" with a robust male dancer leaping about on each side of her, Sophie Arnould said that it was like two dogs fighting for a bone.

A Parisian lady observed one day, in the presence of a man six feet high who greatly admired her, that she did not like tall men. He redoubled his attentions until, seeing her one day in rather a dreamy condition, he asked her what she was thinking about. "I am wondering how it is," she replied, "that you seem to get smaller and smaller every day."

The Abbé Fouquet was Mazarin's spy, and he threw numberless Parisians into the Bastille. One man, whom he sent there one day, saw a large dog in the court-yard of the fortress-prison. "What has that dog done?" he asked, "to get in a place like this?" "He has probably bitten the Abbé Fouquet's dog," replied a veteran prisoner.

An amorous youth wished to send to the object of his affections a passionate, but at the same time witty, epistle. After cudgelling his brains for some hours to no purpose he went to a bookseller's, bought a "complete letter-writer," and copied out what seemed to him the most suitable missive, which he duly despatched. The young lady replied to him next day as follows: "Turn to the next page and you will find my answer."

A Parisian publisher, extremely annoyed at having printed a big book of which he could only sell four copies, bitterly reproached the author, telling him that his works would not even give him bread. A vigorous blow with the fist, which knocked out several of the publisher's teeth, was the only reply made by the haughty writer. Arrested by the police, the latter, called upon to explain his conduct, extricated himself by the following

ingenious defence, at which the judge, the audience, and even the plaintiff could not restrain their laughter. "Gentlemen," he said, "I confess that I acted with rather too much warmth. I knocked out his teeth; but after all, what mischief is done? He told me my works would not give him bread, and teeth are useless when there is nothing to eat."

The Marquis de Favières, a great borrower and notorious for never returning his loans, went one day to the financier Samuel Bernard, and said to him: "I am going to astonish you, sir. I am the Marquis de Favières. I do not know you, and I have come to borrow five hundred louis." "Sir," said Bernard, "I shall astonish you still more. I know you, and I am going to lend you the money."

The Parisian "badaud," an intensification of the London Cockney, has a reputation, moreover, for making blunders and bulls of the Irish kind. One of them, hazarding some speculations on the subject of astronomy, is said to have observed that the moon was a much more important orb than the sun, because the sun "comes out only in the day-time, when everyone can see perfectly well. The moon, on the other hand, shines in the darkness, when a light to guide us is really wanted."

Another Parisian of the dull species once wrote to a friend as follows: "A man has just called me a villain, and threatened, if I ever speak to him again, to kick me. What do you usually do in such a case?"

A Parisian who, without knowing much about horse-flesh,

had just bought a horse, was asked whether the animal was timid. "Not at all," he replied. "He has slept three nights running in the stable by himself." Another Parisian "sportsman" was reproached by a connoisseur with having clipped his horse's ears. He explained that the animal was in the habit, whenever alarmed, of pricking up his ears, and that he had cut them in order to cure him of his timidity.

A literary specimen of the Parisian Cockney is said to have written, in an historical novel, the following remarkable sentence. "Before the year 1667 Paris at night was plunged in total darkness, which was made darker than ever by the absence of gas-lights, not yet invented."

In a Russian history of Poland, the Poles were seriously reminded that it was not until after the partition of Poland that the streets of Warsaw were lighted with gas.

# **CHAPTER VI.**

## **THE STREETS**

### **The Arrangement of the Streets – System of Numbering the Houses – Street Nomenclature – Street Lamps – The Various Kinds of Vehicles in Use**

WE have already searched the streets of Paris for types of character. Let us proceed to look at one or two characteristic street objects, after first taking a general view of the streets themselves.

The streets of Paris divide themselves into two categories: those parallel to the Seine and those at right angles to it. In the first the numbers follow the course of the stream, in the second they begin from that end of the street which is nearest to the river. The traveller, however, finding himself in any particular street, cannot in the present day tell at once to which category it belongs, inasmuch as the old distinction of colour is no longer preserved, by which the parallel streets used to be numbered in red, and those at right angles in black.

All the Paris streets are lit up throughout the night. Early in the morning, before daylight, companies of scavengers collect the city refuse in heaps which, some hours afterwards, are carted



away into the neighbouring country to fertilise the soil. During the day other scavengers clear the highways of whatever dust or mud they may have accumulated.

Every day in summer water-carts sprinkle the principal thoroughfares. These carts carry behind them an apparatus which flings the water over the whole width of the street. In streets which are rather narrow, or when the cart cannot keep exactly to the middle, the pedestrians come in for a part of the municipal spray, as also do vehicles which are low or open. It is prudent, therefore, to keep one's eye on the water-cart, unless a gratuitous shower-bath is absolutely desired.

Every public way bears a distinctive name. Extended thoroughfares are not infrequently divided up into portions, each named separately; this is due sometimes to local circumstances, sometimes to the fact that in the olden days it was a caprice of the citizens frequently to change the title of the street in which they resided. It was not until the seventeenth century that the municipal administration officially intervened in this matter. Then, however, the titles were less often derived from local circumstances, adulation lavishing on the highways and byways the names of princes and other personages of wealth or power. Under Louis XIV. a certain proportion of street names were also drawn from royal victories or from those officers who had achieved them. The Revolution inscribed with the names of its heroes, its martyrs, its triumphs, its principles, not only the new streets which it opened, but even the old ones from which it

wished to efface monarchical titles. The Empire followed the same system. The Restoration returned to the Royalist traditions; and the monarchy of July united those of the Revolution and the Empire, mingling the ancient glories of France with the modern, and illustrious foreigners with natives of renown.

To pass, however, from streets to street-illumination. Parisians of to-day, accustomed to the brilliancy of gas, which turns night almost into day, can scarcely believe that two centuries ago their town knew no other light than that of the moon and stars. It was the case, nevertheless; previously to 1667 not a public lamp existed. The necessity of street illumination had already, however, been recognised by a civic regulation which required householders, in those localities where garrotting had become too frequent, to place beneath their first-floor window, at 9 p.m., a lantern which might cast its beams into the street. It was M. de la Reynie, lieutenant of police for Paris, who first, in 1667, instituted public lamps. At the outset a lamp was placed at the end of each street, with a third in the middle. Then, after a time, the number of lamps was increased in streets of exceptional length. Each containing a candle, these "lanternes" were suspended by a rope from a crooked iron bar in the form of the gallows.

The lamps introduced by La Reynie marked a certain progress in civilisation. They at least diminished in a remarkable manner the number of night attacks. La Reynie's lanterns lasted until 1776, when they were replaced by so-called *verrebères*, or reflecting lamps. In a few months more than half the streets

in Paris were illuminated by the new lamps, which, with some modifications, remained in use until the introduction of gas.

The most celebrated of all the lamps in Paris was the lamp or "lanterne" of the Place de la Grève, which on the outbreak of the Revolution was made the instrument of several summary executions, the first victims being two retired soldiers and Major de Losme, accused of firing on the people at the capture of the Bastille. The cry of "À la lanterne!" was now constantly raised; and when the emigration began a number of aristocrats were dragged to the fatal lamp, but saved at the last moment by the intervention of Bailly and La Fayette. The notorious Foulon, detested by everyone, was really hanged from the fatal lamp. His son-in-law, Bertier, was also dragged beneath the lamp, but he defended himself, snatched a musket from one of his guards, and fought until he was shot down. On the 5th of October the brave Abbé Lefèvre d'Ormesson, a member of the Commune, was half hanged by a number of wild women. Fortunately for him, the rope was cut before it had done its work. About the same time the mob, perishing from hunger, hung to the lamp a baker named François, accused of hoarding up his bread. François is said to have been the "last man tied up to the illuminated gallows" of the Place de la Grève. Camille Desmoulins published, some eighty years before Henri Rochefort made use of the title, a pamphlet called "La Lanterne," or, to quote the title in full, "Discours de la Lanterne aux Parisiens." It bore this epigraph: "Qui male agit odit lucem," which he translated thus: "Only rogues fear the light."

If, however, the public lamps of Paris are the most conspicuous street objects by night, those which first strike the eye by day are unquestionably the vehicles.

In France, as in other countries, carriages are comparatively of modern invention; and when they were first introduced they were generally condemned as calculated to do away with a taste for equitation and to produce habits of effeminacy. The condition of the streets and public thoroughfares would, in ancient times, have rendered the employment of vehicles impossible, and thus persons who did not go on foot went on horseback until the sixteenth century, when the use of the so-called "Sedan-chairs" became general. Wheeled carriages were not absolutely unknown, but in Francis I.'s reign there were but two, one belonging to the king, the other to the queen. The privilege of constructing and letting out Sedan-chairs, or "chaises à bras," was granted by Louis XIII. at the beginning of the seventeenth century to one of the officers of his body-guard; and towards the end of the reign, after many other inventions in the way of vehicles had been tried, two-wheeled chaises, called "brouettes," or "wheelbarrows," were introduced by a Monsieur Dupin, who received the king's support in the shape of a formal authorisation. There was now a great dispute between the privileged makers of Sedan-chairs and the privileged makers of "wheelbarrows," which ended in this compromise – that the new wheelbarrows were not to be allowed unless drawn exclusively by men. In the reign of Henry IV. the carriage, or "carrosse," was introduced: a

heavy, lumbering vehicle, whose windows were hung with leather curtains. The use of glass in carriage windows had not yet been adopted. Henry IV. was himself driving in one of these carriages when Ravaillac thrust his hand through the window and struck the fatal blow.

The first coach with glass windows – “glass-coach,” as the new vehicle was called when, many years later, it was introduced into England – was seen in Paris in 1630, brought there from Brussels by the Prince de Condé. Up to the middle of the seventeenth century no wheeled vehicles were seen in the streets of Paris except those belonging to private persons. In 1650, however, it occurred to a man named Sauvage, living in an hotel in the Rue Saint-Martin, which bore the sign of “Saint-Fiacre,” to let out horses and carriages to anyone who wanted them; and in time the name of fiacre was given to all hired carriages. Soon afterwards, about the middle of the seventeenth century, so-called “diligences” were established for conveying “with diligence” passengers in common from one part of France to another; and from the idea of conveying a number of passengers in the same vehicle from town to town was derived that of the omnibus, doing a like service within the walls of the capital. The invention of the omnibus is attributed to Pascal, the author of so many “Pensées” of a finer type. The original Parisian omnibus was called the “five sous carriage” – “carrosse au cinq sous” – five sous being required from each passenger. It held six persons, and carried as a distinctive sign a lantern at the end of an iron

pole, which was fixed on the top, to the left of the driver.

Until the time of the Revolution the right of letting out carriages was always made the subject of a privilege or concession, accorded to some court favourite, male or female. After the Revolution, however, when all privileges were abolished, those connected with the letting out of public vehicles came to an end. A few years afterwards, in 1800, a tariff regulating the prices payable to the drivers of hackney carriages was drawn up, when, as now, the cost of a drive, or "course," inside Paris, was fixed at something above a franc, two francs being chargeable per hour if the vehicle were hired by time. Originally private carriages had now become public, so that at last a demand arose for carriages which might be taken by the month, the week, the day, or the half-day.

Hitherto all the hackney vehicles of Paris had been of one pattern and furnished with four wheels. They seated either two or four passengers, and were drawn by one or two horses. In the year 1800 the two-wheeled "cabriolet" was introduced, containing seats for two, one of which was occupied by the driver, to whose intimate society the unfortunate passenger was thus condemned. From this period until 1830 the public vehicles of Paris were, according to a French writer, "a disgrace to the capital." They were drawn by ruined beasts which looked unlikely to reach any given destination, and they were many of them good for nothing but firewood.

The Paris hackney vehicle largely excited at this time the

ridicule of wits and song-writers, although, irrespectively of its condition, it has always figured almost exclusively in literature. In a great city like Paris the cab is the witness, the auxiliary, or the accomplice in nearly every event which takes place – it is a mute confidant in most of the scenes of human life. The song-writer, Desaugiers, has left in verse a curious history of a cab, supposed to be written by itself, and in which it relates how one day it conveyed a widow to the altar, another day a husband to Chantilly without his wife, and a third day the wife to Gros-Bois without her husband.

Coming to modern times, we find the driver of the fiacre as interesting a personage as he must frequently find his fare to be. The question whether, as is asserted, ruined aristocrats are at present earning their bread as cab-drivers has already been discussed. But it is unquestionable that many members of what are called the “better” classes turn to the cab as their last resource, even as Dr. Johnson’s “scoundrel” was said to turn to politics. Priests, devoid in two senses of a living, bachelors of arts and sciences, old professors and worn-out notaries, may be seen plying the whip of the “cocher” in the Paris streets.

That the London cab – of which the name, as probably everyone knows, is simply a contraction of “cabriolet” – surpasses the cab of Paris is admitted even by patriotic Frenchmen. One able writer on the subject of the French capital says that “the London cabs, which we have vainly tried to acclimatise in Paris, are, if not comfortable, at least rapid

and well-managed. Our neighbours can boast two elements of incontestable superiority. These are the drivers and the horses. Despite these causes, it is probable that the English 'cab' would be found less attractive if, instead of being paid by the mile, it were taken by the journey or by the hour." This writer, it should be explained, complains bitterly that the Parisian cabman, engaged by the hour, proceeds at a crawl, knowing that he will be paid just as much as if he drove with the celerity of his London brother, who simply wants to get to his journey's end and receive his fare – or as much beyond it as he possibly can.

As regards the omnibuses of Paris, they resemble in many respects those of London. For instance, they are painted different colours according to their particular route. When the vehicle is quite full a board or card announcing the fact is fixed up over the door; and each vehicle is numbered so that in case of complaint it can be identified by the passenger.

The private carriages let out on hire – those which can be taken by the month or for the season – are not permitted to ply in the streets of Paris like the fiacre. They take up their passenger at his own door, and can be hired by the year, month, day, or half-day. The form of these vehicles varies, according to the caprices or the fortune of the hirer, from plain to magnificent. In France, as in England, rich families accustomed to winter in the capital leave their own carriages in the country and hire others by the month. Even wealthy Frenchmen, who reside altogether in the capital, have of late years shown themselves more and more disposed to



escape in this way the trouble and annoyance connected with the maintenance of personal equipages. Nor do those Englishmen who have tried both methods feel a less marked preference for that of hire, which relieves them from the numerous anxieties associated with the stable. It will be remembered how Henry J. Byron's coachman came to that comedy-writer one day and said that the mare was ill. "What's to be done?" asked Byron. "I shall have to give her a ball, sir," was the reply. "Very well," said Byron with a sigh of resignation, "but don't ask too many people."

# **CHAPTER VII.**

## **THE SEINE AND ITS BRIDGES. – THE MORGUE**

### **The Various Bridges over the Seine – Their Histories – The Morgue – Some Statistics**

OF all the Paris thoroughfares the most important, in a commercial sense, is the Seine, which enters the city from the east to flow out in the direction of the south-west. The Seine, however, does not play in connection with Paris the part of the Thames in connection with London. On the Seine no large ships are to be seen above or below bridge; and until a few years ago the attempts periodically made to establish a service of passenger steamers, such as we have on the Thames at London, were usually discontinued after a brief experimental season. Wine, wood, stone, and other merchandise is sent down the Seine towards Havre at the mouth. But the Parisians, as a body, make little use of the Seine, except for bathing purposes, and then only during the warm weather, when the numerous swimming baths established on the river are largely frequented.

The Seine enters Paris after receiving at Conflans the waters

of the Marne. The first bridge beneath which it passes, beyond Bercy, is continued on either side as a viaduct, and is connected with the external or girdle railway known as the Chemin de Fer de Ceinture. Constructed in 1858, when the Second Empire was at the height of its popularity it received the name of “Napoleon III.”

The next bridge, the Pont de Bercy, which dates from 1835, was originally a suspension bridge. In 1863 it was replaced by the present bridge, constructed in stone, with five elliptical and very graceful arches. To the bridge of Bercy succeeds the bridge of Austerlitz, whose name connects it with one of the greatest battles of the First Empire. Begun in 1802, it was finished in 1807, and was called the bridge of Austerlitz in memory of the important victory gained on the 2nd of December, 1805, by Napoleon, over the arms of Austria and Russia. When in 1814 the allied armies were in possession of Paris, some observation was made to the Emperor Alexander of Russia by a time-serving French official as to the name of the bridge, which, it was suggested, might be changed. “I do not mind the name,” replied Alexander, “now that I have crossed the bridge at the head of my troops.” More sensitive, or at least more irritable than the Russian emperor, Blucher took umbrage at another of the Paris bridges being called, in commemoration of the great Prussian defeat, bridge of Jena, and really wished to blow it up. He was dissuaded from this project by the Russian emperor, who, according to an anecdote more or less veracious, said that if the Prussian

marshal thought seriously of carrying his project into execution, the emperor would take up his position on the bridge and perish with it.

Under the Restoration the name of the bridge of Austerlitz was really changed. It was hence officially designated Bridge of the King's Garden, but continued in general parlance to be called by its original name. A little below the bridge of Austerlitz the Saint-Martin canal pours its waters into the river; and not many yards lower down the Seine met formerly the island of Louviers, on which there were no habitations, but only warehouses for wood. The narrow channel which separated this island from the right bank of the river was filled up in 1847, when, in a geographical sense, the island ceased to exist.

At a short distance from what was formerly the Île Louviers, the Seine throws out on the right an arm, which, before rejoining the main stream, forms the island of Saint-Louis. In the seventeenth century this island was augmented by being joined to two smaller ones; the island of Cows on the east, and the island of Notre Dame (the property of the cathedral) on the west; and the triple island received the name of Île Saint-Louis in honour of the great king. The island of Saint-Louis communicates with the left bank, from which the main stream separates it, by the foot bridge of Constantine and the bridge of Latournelle. The bridge of Constantine owes its name to the town taken by the French in 1836. It is only available for pedestrians. The ancient bridge of Latournelle, constructed in 1614 on the site of a still older one,

was in wood. After being several times destroyed in this form, it was in 1656 reconstructed in stone. In 1831 a band of thieves who had robbed the royal library of many valuable medals, threw their booty from the Pont de Latournelle into the Seine, whence the greater part of it was recovered by divers.

Close to the Pont de Latournelle is the Pont Marie, of which the first stone was laid in 1614 by Louis XIII. and Marie de Medicis. The bridge, however, is said, according to a somewhat improbable statement, generally accepted by the historians of Paris, to owe its name, not to the queen, but to Marie, a well-known builder of the time. The next bridge, as we continue to descend the stream, is the Pont Louis Philippe, the date of which is indicated approximately by the reign under which it was built. Begun in 1833, it was finished in 1834, but since then has undergone many restorations and modifications. The bridge of Saint-Louis, which joins the two islands, replaces the second section of the original Louis Philippe bridge, at one time known from its colour as the Red Bridge.

We now reach the celebrated Pont Neuf, which with its two arms connects the island of the city, otherwise island of Notre Dame, with both banks of the Seine. The island in question is the ancient Lutetia, the germ of modern Paris. The number of habitations on this kernel, this core of the French metropolis, becomes smaller every year. Before long it will be occupied only by its ancient historical edifices, with a café-chantant at one end of the island and the Morgue at the other. Some

who begin life at the former will finish it perhaps at the latter establishment. As to the other bridges, it may be sufficient to mention some of their names; which possess for the most part historical significance, and for that reason have, in many cases, to suit historical circumstances, been changed. The bridge of the Arts owes its name to the institute on the left bank, which it connects with the Louvre on the right; and this bridge has retained its original name since the date of its construction. But the National Bridge, as it was called when it was first built under the Republic of 1789, became, after the proclamation of the First Empire, the bridge of the Tuileries; and at the time of the Restoration, Pont Royal. The Solferino bridge, dating only from 1860, the year after the great battle of the French against the Austrians, has retained its name without intermission.

The Pont de la Cour has, like the Place of the same name, been called successively Pont Louis XV., Pont de la Révolution, Pont Louis XVI., and finally (since the Revolution which in 1830 placed Louis Philippe on the throne) Pont de la Cour. The bridge of the Alma dates from 1855, the second year of the Crimean war.

Having now disposed, somewhat summarily, of the Paris bridges, let us say a few words about that mournful establishment, the Morgue, to which a desperate leap from one of the bridges has so often led. The Paris Morgue is situated at the back of Notre Dame, close to the bridge of Saint-Louis. Reconstructed in 1864, it replaces the original one in the form of a Greek

tomb, which was built in virtue of a police edict under the First Republic. Something of the kind, however, was known long before, and in ancient chronicles a morgue, where dead bodies were exposed, is spoken of as far back as the early days of the seventeenth century. In its existing form the Morgue is a one-storied building, with two wings, and with slabs of black marble in two lines, for the reception of twelve bodies. The keeper of the Morgue is supposed, by the writer of a novel choke-full of horrors, to have dwelling rooms in this dismal abode; and the perverted imagination of the author represents him as giving an evening party to his friends in close proximity to the sepulchral chamber where the remains of so many unhappy victims are waiting to be recognised by their relatives or friends. The number of men who find their way to this place of ill omen is, according to the statistical tables on the subject, far greater than that of the women. Thus, up to the age of twenty-five, the number of male occupants of the Morgue was found, during a period of years, to be 515 as against 115 female occupants. Between the ages of twenty-five and forty-five, among 1,242 occupants, 1,050 were men, and 192 women. From forty-five to fifty-five, there were 599 men, and fifty-eight women.

What are the kinds of death which feed the Morgue? From 1826 to 1846, out of 1745 cases of apparent suicide represented at the Morgue, there were 1,414 deaths by drowning, 114 by hanging, ninety-eight by fire-arms, forty-six through the fumes of charcoal, fifty-six through falls from heights, sixteen through

sharp weapons, eleven by poison, seven by crushing beneath vehicles, and 4 by alcohol. About two-thirds of the bodies exposed at the Morgue are never recognised.

There is so much that is beautiful and elevating, so much that is curious and interesting, to be seen in Paris, that a visit to the Morgue – by many persons thought indispensable – should surely, by persons of ordinary taste and feeling, be regarded as time ill-spent. It ought to be sufficient to read of it in Jules Janin's strange novel already referred to.



# **CHAPTER VIII.**

## **THE REFORMATION IN PARIS**

**D'Étaples, the Pioneer of the Reformation  
– Nicolas Cop and Calvin – Progress of the  
Reformation – Persecutions – Catharine de  
Médicis – St. Bartholomew's – The Edict of Nantes**

PERMANENT head-quarters of science and study, the left bank of the Seine was also in the fifteenth century the home of a great religious movement, by which, for some time, the right bank was scarcely touched.

“Few persons,” says M. Athanase Coquerel *Fils*, “know that the Reformation of the sixteenth century, before it flamed forth in Germany and elsewhere, had already been kindled in the capital of France. It had for its cradle that left bank of the Seine which was then separated from the town and its suburbs, and divided into two quarters subjected to special jurisdictions: the University and the vast territory of the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Was it not natural, despite the jealous vigilance of the Sorbonne, that the Paris schools where Abailard had boldly attacked school-divinity should be the first to awake to the new spiritual life?”

A professor of the college of Cardinal Lemoine Lefèvre, d'Étaples by name, produced in 1512, within the precincts of the Abbey, his "Commentary on St. Paul," in whose epistles he indicated, five years before Luther, the essential doctrines of the Reformation. This book was dedicated to the powerful abbot of Saint-Germain, Briçonnet, and, under his auspices, assembled in Paris a first group of ardent propagators of the new ideas. During forty-three years the Reformation spread gradually to the University, to the town and to the court, though it maintained its head-quarters in the suburb of Saint-Germain, which people became accustomed to call "the little Geneva," and which is to-day the most Catholic quarter of Paris. The first Protestant put to death for his religion was one of the pupils of Lefèvre, by name Pauvent, burned on the Place de Grève in 1524. His martyrdom was followed ere long by that of many a Huguenot.

Calvin at this period was studying at Paris, but he could not stay there. The rector of the University, Nicolas Cop, a secret propagator of the Reformation, had commissioned young Calvin to write a discourse which, on a formal occasion, he had to deliver in the church of the Mathurins. Several monks denounced in Parliament the heresies contained in this discourse. The rector fled to Bâle, where he became a pastor. Calvin, it is said, had to escape by a window of one of the colleges.

It was in the Louvre that the Reformation was first publicly preached at Paris. Queen Marguerite of Navarre, sister of Francis I. and the friend of Briçonnet, caused her chaplain and

other disciples of Lefèvre to preach before her in that palace. Thereupon the Franciscan friar, Lemaud, declared from his pulpit that she ought to be thrown into the Seine in a sack. The priestly rage which had now been excited soon spread to the people, and the streets began to resound with cries of "Death to the Heretics." "To be thrown into the river," says Bèze, writing of this period, "it was only necessary to be called a Huguenot in public, no matter what one's religion might be." A series of religious murders were now perpetrated; and Francis I., a bigot like his people, headed one day in 1535 a procession in which he was followed by his three sons, the court, the parliaments, the trade corporations, and the brotherhoods, and of which the object was to burn at the stake six Protestants at six different halting-places. Henri II. took after his father. On one occasion he assisted, from a window of the Hôtel de la Rochepot, Rue Saint-Antoine, at the execution of a Protestant tailor who was burned alive. It is said, however, that the martyr's eyes, fixed as they were upon him, inspired him with terror, and that this was the last heretic whose dying pangs he ever witnessed.

As yet the Protestants of Paris had neither temple nor pastor. But already they had schools, "hedge schools," as they were termed, because, prohibited within the city walls, the teachers took refuge in the country.

The secret meetings of the Protestants of Paris were often surprised. In 1557 services were held and the Communion was administered in one of the houses of the Rue Saint-Jacques,

beside the building where is now established the Lyceum of Louis the Great. Excited by the seminarists of the Collège Duplessis, the populace besieged the assembly for six hours, stoning many persons as they came out. Several were killed, and 135 prisoners were taken to the Châtelet. Among those who were executed may be mentioned the young and beautiful widow of a member of the Consistory, "who," says a chronicler of the times, "seated on the tumbril, showed a face of rosy complexion and of excellent beauty." The poor woman's tongue had been cut out, which was often done at that time in order to prevent the martyrs from addressing the crowds. As a special mark of favour, the beautiful widow was only scorched in the face and on the feet; and she was then strangled before the body was finally consigned to the flames.

The Protestant poet, Clement Marot, to whom Francis I. had given a house, called the "House of the Bronze Horse," translated at this epoch some of the Psalms into French verse, and his work obtained extraordinary vogue even at the court. The students, who used to amuse themselves in the evening in the Pré aux Clercs, opposite the Louvre, replaced their customary songs by the Psalms of Marot; and it became the fashion for a time among the lords and ladies of the court to cross the Seine in order to hear the chants of the students. Often they joined in; and the Huguenot king of Navarre, Antoine de Bourbon, was seen walking round the Louvre and singing a psalm at the head of a long procession of courtiers and scholars.

The persecution, which for a time had slackened, was soon revived in all its fury. Marot took flight. Paris had grown too hot for him; "Paris," he says, in an epigram dated 1537, "Paris, thou hast given me many a fright, even to the point of chasing me to death": —

"Paris, tu m'as fait maints d'allarmes  
Jusqu'à me poursuyvre à la mort."

In spite of everything the deputies of the reformed church continued to meet at Paris in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where they held secretly their first national synod in 1559. This assembly, of which not one member would have escaped the block had they been discovered, bound into one corporation the reformed churches of France, until then without cohesion.

Francis II., husband of Mary Queen of Scots, and through her nephew of the Guises, allowed this persecuting family to carry on the cruel work of his father. The illustrious chancellor, Du Bourg, was hanged and burned in the Place de Grève, as to which Voltaire wrote: "This murder was of more service to Protestantism than all the most eloquent works written by its defenders." Cardinal de Lorraine captured many other victims by surrounding a Protestant hotel in the Rue des Marais Saint-Germain. This street was the head-quarters of the reformed church, and many of its houses communicated with one another by means of mysterious apertures through which the inhabitants passed when threatened with arrest. The street in question, one of the most historic in all Paris, was lately rechristened by the

name of Visconti in place of the one which it had borne for more than three centuries, and by which it was known, not only to the first Protestants of Paris, the d'Aubignés and the Du Moulins, but later on to the Duke de la Rochefoucauld and Mme. de Sévigné, to Racine and Voltaire, to Mlle. Clairon and Adrienne Lecouvreur, who all for a considerable time inhabited it, or were accustomed to visit its inhabitants. Meanwhile the reform continued to spread. Coligny and his two brothers, one of whom was a cardinal, joined it openly. These three Châtillons were now violently attacked in the Paris churches, and Jean de Han, a monk, took one day for his text, "Ite in Castellum quod contrà vos est," which he thus translated; "March upon Châtillon, who is against you."

On assuming the regency, Catherine de Médicis, indifferent to both religions, hesitated between the Châtillons and the Guises. She summoned a conference at Poissy in the hope of bringing about a reconciliation. Theodore de Bèze represented Calvin on the occasion, and for several months he was allowed to fulfil all the duties of pastor at Paris. The reformed religion was now celebrated openly, but in general beyond the walls. Four pastors, without counting Bèze, preached regularly in the different places of worship. One of them, Malot, had been vicar at Saint-André-des-Arcs, and the chronicles of the times speak of assemblies of from two to three thousand Protestants. Catherine de Médicis placed herself one day at a window in the Rue Saint-Antoine to see the Huguenots go by to their place of worship, and many of

them, knowing the intention of the queen, wore on that occasion the insignia of their rank or profession. In 1562 the Consistory of Paris adopted, for the relief of the indigent, a regulation which was read from all the Protestant pulpits, with the names of those who were to distribute the alms, notwithstanding the danger thus brought upon them. Soon afterwards, indeed, a riot provoked by the clergy of Saint-Médard disturbed the service that was being celebrated by Malot in the adjoining temple of the Patriarch. Temple and church were invaded and sacked, and the officer of the watch, Gabaston by name, was afterwards hanged for having arrested indiscriminately the rioters of both religions. The temple was now shut up, while Saint-Médard was restored and inaugurated anew with great pomp, numbers of Protestants being sacrificed on the occasion. The constable of Montmorency gained the sobriquet of Captain Burn-bench (Brûle-banc) from having set fire to the interior of the reformed church of Popincourt. Subsequently he burned this same building from roof to basement and sacked another Protestant temple in the Rue aux Fossés Saint-Jacques.

The edict of January having granted to the Protestants a certain tolerance, Guise, who boasted that he would cut this edict in half with his sword, proved his word by the massacre of Vassy. The Protestants of Paris were terrified at this tragedy, but would not be discouraged. The very day the duke returned to Paris, his sword reeking with innocent blood, Bèze went to preach at the temple of Jerusalem, whither he was escorted by the Prince de

Condé, a faithful Huguenot, and by a large company of mounted arquebusiers.

During the second civil war, in January, 1568, the citizens of Paris were, by an official proclamation, called upon to warn the Protestants of the capital to absent themselves from it, "until those who had taken arms against His Majesty should have laid them low." In December, after the "lame" peace, as it was called, Parliament ordered the Protestants to shut themselves up in their houses "to avoid the murders which might follow." It is asserted that ten thousand of them were assassinated during the six months which succeeded the peace, though this figure is doubtless exaggerated.

The extermination of the heretics had for a considerable time past been recommended to Catherine de Médicis by Philippe II., by the Duke of Alva, and by Pope Pius V. The queen, long irresolute, decided suddenly, just when the Guises had aggravated the situation by causing Coligny to be assassinated. Catherine, as we have seen in a previous chapter, obtained, at the last moment, the consent of the king; but it was Charles's brother and successor, Henry III., who took the direction of the massacre and posted himself in the middle of the bridge of Notre Dame in order to have both banks beneath his eye. We know how the signal for the tragedy was given by the bell of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, and how Coligny was the first to feel the Catholic steel. The assassins who now plunged into their ghastly work carried a white cross in their hat and a kerchief tied in a



knot on their arm.

At the court of the Louvre the officer of the guard, with a list in his hand, called out the Huguenot gentlemen who were staying in the palace, and the king, from one of the windows, saw the throats of his guests cut, to the number of two hundred. It is an error, all the same, to suppose that the massacre scarcely touched any but the aristocratic classes; a large portion of the Parisian population, merchants, workmen, belonged to the Reformation and perished.

Towards seven in the morning Charles IX., armed with a blunderbuss, fired upon some of the fugitives, whom he failed to hit because his fowling-piece did not carry far enough. This incident has been denied; but it has been gravely recorded by Brantôme, D'Aubigny, and Goulard. It was attested moreover to Voltaire by Marshal de Jessé. The Marshal had known the page, then almost a centenarian, who loaded and re-loaded the royal blunderbuss.

After the massacre the king went to the Parliament and declared that he assumed the whole responsibility for what had happened. The audience of senators loudly applauded the murderer, and the chief president overwhelmed him with the vilest eulogies. On the 27th August the chapter of Notre Dame formed a special procession to thank the Almighty for the "extirpation of the heretics now happily commenced"; and at the same juncture Panigarole, bishop of Asti, preaching before the queen-mother, Charles IX., and Henry, King of Poland, praised

the king for having “in one morning purged France of heresy.” Nor did the municipality of Paris omit to have medals struck “in memory of Saint Bartholomew’s Day.”

More than one professor of the reformed faith now turned renegade. Condé abjured at Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Henry of Navarre and his sister at the Louvre. But the infant church was fondly nursed by such devotees as Bérenger and Portal, who endowed it with a sum sufficient to maintain its pastors in their functions and to educate candidates for the future ministry.

The edict of July authorised the exercise of the reformed religion at two leagues from Paris. Noisy-le-Sec was chosen as the place of worship. But in September, 1576, the congregation found itself assailed by the populace, and the faithful had to abandon all public service.

The League, prepared long beforehand by the Cardinal of Lorraine, was organised in 1576 by two curés of Paris, a number of citizens, and several fanatical magistrates. From this moment Protestantism was more completely crushed in the capital than it had been even by the Saint Bartholomew butchery. The Spanish ambassador reigned at Paris. Hatred of the Reformation stifled in the breasts of the leaguers all love of their country; and they went to the almost incredible length of offering, on the 20th September, 1591, by a formal resolution passed in the municipal council, the city of Paris and the crown of France to Philip II., King of Spain.

After the accession of Henry IV., in the interval which elapsed

before the issuing of the Edict of Nantes, which permitted Protestant worship except within five leagues of Paris, the sister of the new king, Catherine de Bourbon, made use of the privilege which belonged to the nobility of performing religious worship in their own houses, with the doors open. The reformed church found an asylum within her walls; there the faithful adored their Maker in peace. On all occasions Catherine protected her co-religionists, and her brother, le Béarnais, when they came to him with some petition, used to send them on to her, saying: – “You must apply to my sister; your kingdom is now under feminine rule.” By the marriage and departure of Catherine in 1599 the Protestants lost a large part of their advantages; but, become Duchess of Bar, she returned every year to Paris and gathered the faithful around her. This continued, despite the frequent complaints of the clergy, until the Duchess’s death in 1604.

The Edict of Nantes formally countenanced the reformed religion even whilst forbidding its adherents to assemble for worship within five leagues of Paris. The meeting-place chosen in 1599 by the Protestants was the Château de Grigny, residence of the seigneur Josias Mercier des Bordes, a distinguished scholar as well as a councillor of state. Several times, on returning from Grigny, the Protestants were assailed by the populace, acting at the instigation of such fanatics as the aristocratic capuchin, Ange de Joyeuse. It was found necessary to erect extra gibbets for those who attacked worshippers returning from Grigny.

This place of assembly, however, was too remote, and at the

end of six months the king transferred it to Ablon-sur-Seine. Even Ablon proved inconveniently distant, although it was nearer the capital than the edict permitted. The difficulties and dangers of the journey to this spot were great. The Protestants often went by water, and several were accidentally drowned. A petition presented to the king set forth that forty infants had died through having been carried in winter to baptism at Ablon. At length the king found that his own Protestant ministers could not render their duties to God and to himself on the same day; and Henry IV., yielding to the influence of Sully and of Calignon, assigned to the Protestants of the capital, as their place of meeting, Charenton, two leagues distant.

From that time the street and the faubourg of Saint-Antoine were traversed on Sunday by crowds of Huguenots, in carriages, on horseback, or on foot; and for their protection two fresh gibbets had to be erected, one in the name of the Lieutenant of the Town, the other in that of the Chief of the Watch. Many of the Huguenots now went to Charenton by water. On Sundays and holidays the river was covered with boats of all kinds, conveying, in the words of a Catholic poet of the time,

“La flotte des brebis galeuses  
Qui vont au presche à Charenton.”

The lord of the manor, notwithstanding the increased value given to his property by the arrival of the Huguenots, many of whom established themselves in the neighbourhood of their one recognised place of worship, protested constantly against the

toleration accorded to them.

Often the Huguenots returning from Charenton, where on Sunday they would pass the entire day, were attacked; on which an appeal was made to the king, who took the part of his former co-religionists. The death of Henry IV. was a terrible blow to the French Protestants, who were now at the mercy of the Jesuits, of Catherine de Médicis, and of her Florentine advisers, such as the Concinis. The principal Protestant pastors deplored aloud from the Charenton pulpit the death of the king, who had endeavoured to bring about an understanding, if not perfect harmony, between his subjects of both religions, and whose wise tolerance had been the cause of his death. Ravailac was a fanatic who, in striking his murderous blow, had been prompted only by his hatred of Protestantism and of the king's concessions to the Protestants. The temple constructed at Charenton was pillaged and burnt in 1621. In 1624 it was rebuilt on a larger scale; and the Protestant historians note that it was approached through an avenue of shops, where books of all kinds were sold, without any objection on the part of the consistory, which, although very strict in its rules for the conduct of the Protestants, did not enforce the Judaic observance of the Sabbath, "as practised," says a writer of the time, by the Protestants of Scotland and England.

Many illustrious persons still belonged to the reformed religion. But gradually the aristocratic families were bought over to the other side; and the Jesuit Garasse declared that the church of the Protestants would soon be a church of beggars.

The unhappy Protestants did not in any case neglect their poor; and as it was found impossible to keep priests and monks out of the hospitals, which were constantly invaded by them, the chiefs of the reformed religion established hospitals in secret places, which, however, were closed as soon as Catholic clergy or the public discovered them. In 1600 the Parliament of Paris interdicted these charitable establishments by a formal decree.

The first decisive step towards the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the suppression of all representation of the Protestants in the Parliaments of Paris and of Normandy. In connection with this step Louis XIV. received, though only as a matter of form, Ruvigny, deputy general of the reformed church, and the eloquent pastor du Bosc, of whom, after listening to the exposition of his claims, the king said to the queen: "He is the best speaker in my kingdom." He suppressed, all the same, the only guarantee of justice remaining to the French Protestants.

The Protestant consistories were now required to admit into their assemblies representatives of the Catholic clergy, whose mission it was to read to them a so-called pastoral warning. Already the minister Louvois had attempted to enforce conversion to the Roman Catholic religion by quartering upon the unfortunate Protestants dragoons, whom, if they remained faithful to their religion, they had for an indefinite time to support. The so-called "dragonnades" were for the most part confined to the provinces. Paris was exempted from them, lest the king himself should be scandalised by the scenes they well

might lead to. Louvois had sworn to extirpate the “dangerous heresy,” and he assured the king that he was doing so by peaceful means.

Four days after the signing of the edict, and on the very day of its formal registration, the Protestant temples were demolished by the mob, who could not wait for official measures to be taken against the buildings already condemned. The cemetery adjoining the temple of Charenton was profaned, and the tombs of the Protestants violated, as, a century later, were to be violated the tombs of the Catholic kings. Notices were served on the chiefs of the Protestant families, commanding them, in the name of the king, to change their religion. Of the recalcitrants large numbers were sent to the Bastille, while the members of the consistory were exiled by “lettres de cachet.” Protestants who had been domiciled in Paris for less than a year were ordered to quit the capital, and the pastors in general had a fortnight given to them in which to leave France; while Claude, the most renowned amongst them, was ordered to quit French territory within twenty-four hours, being meantime watched by one of the king’s servants. In the months of October, November, and December, 1685, no less than 1,087 members of the reformed church emigrated from Paris, 1,098 abjured their religion, while 3,823, after refusing to abjure, still remained in the city. The emigration had been arranged beforehand by Claude and his colleagues. A constant service of guides was kept up between Paris and the frontiers, though it was death for those who had once quitted

Paris to return. The exiles took flight at midnight on market days, when it was easier to pass the barriers. Notwithstanding the menace of capital punishment, some half-dozen Protestant ministers returned to Paris a year after the revocation in order to do secret duty among their co-religionaries remaining in the capital. Some were sentenced to imprisonment for life in the isles of Sainte-Marguerite, others were shut up in the Bastille, and one of them, the celebrated Claude (Claude Brousson, by his full name), was hanged. Meanwhile some of the Protestants who still ventured to stay at Paris continued services at the English Embassy, or at the legation of the United Provinces. Instead of one chaplain the legation of the Dutch Republic maintained two. But an edict was soon passed forbidding French Protestants to attend worship in the chapels of any of the foreign ministers.

Protestantism was not again to be tolerated in France until 1787, two years before the Revolution, many of whose reforms (including the abolition of torture) had been anticipated by the Monarchy, already condemned.

It must be added that under the Reign of Terror Protestantism was persecuted from a new point of view. Under the ancient régime, the complaint against it had been that it rejected much which ought to be believed. The Terrorists, when public worship had been abolished in France, hated it for its persistent adherence to doctrines which the enemies of religion had proscribed.

Paris at present possesses numerous Protestant churches representing various Protestant sects. The Independents have six



different places of worship, and the Wesleyans two, at one of which the service is performed in French, English, and German. There is a Baptist chapel, established some thirty years ago by Americans resident in Paris, a Scotch Presbyterian church, an American Episcopal church, an English Wesleyan church, and three Anglican churches.

# **CHAPTER IX.**

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS AND THE COLLEGE OF FRANCE**

### **The French Educational System – Lycées and Colleges – The University of Paris – The College of France**

THE three principal establishments in France connected with “superior instruction” are the College of France, an independent institution where lectures free to everyone are delivered by the first literary and scientific men of the country; the University of France, whose chief function is to confer degrees; and the Sorbonne, which, when it does not mean the building of that name, is used to denote collectively the three faculties of which the Sorbonne may be considered the headquarters. As regards secondary instruction, the lyceums (*lycées*) are public schools maintained by the state; the colleges (*collèges*), public schools supported by the municipalities throughout France. In the innumerable colleges, of which every provincial town of the least importance possesses one, the studies are absolutely identical; a source of infinite satisfaction to a certain Minister of

Public Instruction, who is reported one day to have exclaimed, "It is gratifying to reflect that at this moment in every college of France the opening lines of the second book of the *Æneid* are being construed."

The future masters for the different lyceums and colleges are all educated in a special school known as the *École Normale*, founded under the First Republic, and where, according to the government order calling it into existence, the students have not only to receive instruction, but to be taught the art of imparting it.

It should be noted that all the lyceums or government schools are in Paris, with the exception only of the Lyceum of Versailles. As regards the localisation of schools and academies of all kinds, it will be observed that the French system is entirely opposed to the English. Our public schools, like our universities, are in provincial towns; those of France are all concentrated in the capital. Up to the time of the Revolution, France had universities, many of them celebrated, at Toulouse, Montpellier, Orleans, Cahors, Angers, Orange, Perpignan, Aix, Poitiers, Caen, Valence, Nantes, Basançon, Bourges, Bordeaux, Angoulême, Reims, Douai, Pont-à-Mousson, Rennes, Pau, Strasbourg, and Nancy. In the year 1794 a decree of the convention suppressed at one blow the whole of the provincial universities. The idea of one university directing all public instruction in France, and taking its orders from one central authority, the Minister of Public Instruction, suited admirably the views of the first Napoleon, who maintained, with improvements

of his own, the educational system introduced by the Revolution.

There is now nothing in France corresponding to an English university, with its different colleges. Until the year 1850 a candidate for the degree of bachelor of arts, or bachelor of letters, was obliged to show that he had studied for at least one year in each of the two upper classes of a lyceum. The government lyceums thus correspond in a certain measure to the colleges of an English university. But in the year just mentioned all certificates of study were abolished, and candidates for a degree had now simply to prove themselves capable of passing the required examination. The effect of this reform, certainly favourable to students of limited means, was at the same time to call into existence a host of private establishments corresponding to those of our crammers.

The College of France, as already mentioned, is in no way connected with the modern University of Paris. It was toward 1530 that Francis I., at the solicitation of Guillaume Budé and Jean du Bellay, instituted, apart from the ancient university, two free chairs, one for Greek, and the other for Hebrew. According to a national tradition, the university dates from Charlemagne, who in any case occupied himself with educational improvements and created at Paris some important schools. But the formal privileges granted to the university by the Crown can be traced only to the reign of Philippe Augustus at the very beginning of the thirteenth century. Up to that time the schools in France were dependent on the churches and monasteries; in Paris

on the metropolitan cathedral. But towards the end of the twelfth century the cathedral schools had become too small for the number of students. Thus the most celebrated masters delivered free lectures on the hill of Saint-Geneviève, where now stands the Panthéon. The students, in spite of complaints raised by the Bishop of Paris, attended the open-air lectures in crowds, and in order to regularise this relative liberation of the schools from the authority of the Church, Philippe Augustus founded, under the name of *Universitas parisiensis magistrorum et scholarum*, a teaching institution which was independent alike of the Church and of the ordinary civil and criminal jurisdiction.

The left bank of the Seine, formerly known, and with reason, as the University bank, became more and more numerously inhabited, and was soon covered with dwelling-houses, schools, and churches. The teaching of the Paris University was in a measure international, as is sufficiently indicated by its official division into four nations: nation of France, nation of Picardy, nation of Normandy, and nation of England, which became nation of Germany in 1437, when Paris was at length delivered from the English domination by Charles VII.

The liberal spirit in which the schools of the University of Paris were thrown open to foreigners could not fail to bear fruit. The students of all countries, hastening in those distant days to Paris, made it the intellectual capital, and at the same time the most popular city of continental Europe. In the course of less than a century were seen on the benches, or, to be literal,

standing on the straw, of the schools of Paris, Albertus Magnus from Germany, Duns Scotus from Scotland, Raymond Lulli from Spain, Roger Bacon from England, Brunetto Latini and his pupil, Dante Alighieri, from Italy. "Eldest daughter of our Kings," was the name given to the University of Paris throughout France.

The history of the Paris University, with its exclusive privileges and its special government by its own authorities, abounds in stories of dissensions and open combats between the students and the townspeople. These town-and-gown fights were often attended by fatal results. Occasionally too the universities had to struggle against the Church, and especially against the Order of Jesuits, the object of the Jesuits being to get everywhere into their hands the instruction of the rising generation, so that they might eradicate, at least in the future, all germs of Protestantism.

The order founded by Ignatius Loyola made every endeavour to subjugate the university, which, however, refused to admit the Jesuits, even as students. But they were allowed to establish a college of their own; and in 1564 the rector of the university, Julien de Saint-Germain, who was well-disposed towards the Jesuits, without consulting the different nations, admitted them to "letters of scholarship," the equivalent apparently of degrees. The University of Paris protested, and brought the question before the Parliament of Paris, which, however, came to no decision; and thenceforward war between the university and the Jesuits was carried on with scarcely any intermission.

Some idea of the life led by the professors and students of the university may be gathered from the edicts of restriction from time to time issued in connection with the institution. Under Henry III., when the discipline of the university had somewhat declined, the use of any language for teaching purposes except Latin was forbidden. The members of colleges were no longer to have women in their service, and from all colleges fencing-masters were to be excluded. The university, with some hesitation, took part against the Reformation; but after the victory of Henry IV., it sent a deputation to wait upon him, and while expressing its regret for any annoyance it might have caused him, joined with him in declaring war against the Jesuits, whom he hated, regarding them as the promoters of more than one of the attempts made against his life. The Jesuits were now banished from France, but at the same time new statutes were given to the university, by one of which it was forbidden to receive any student who did not belong to the Catholic religion. Other statutes proscribed dancing, fencing, and acting.

In 1603 the king permitted the return of the Jesuits on certain conditions which they were not likely to observe. Under the reign of Louis XIV. the struggle between the university and the Jesuits was particularly severe; and to an "apologia" issued by a friend of the Order the theological faculty of the university replied in these terms: —

"The whole Church looks upon you as usurpers of the power of its pastors; all your actions are attempts against the sanctity

of their character. You disparage them in the pulpit, you defame them in your books, you attack them in general, and slander them in particular. The years of your society can be counted by your continual rebellions against the successors of the apostles; you rise up against them in conspiracy and with arrogance.” Nevertheless the Jesuits, when one of them became confessor to the king, regained credit and favour, and gave to their college the name of Louis the Great.

Under Louis XIV. an edict regulated the teaching of law in the university, and ordered that Roman law and French law should be taught concurrently. Already, however, the history of this institution was drawing to a close; the “Eldest daughter of the Kings” was destined not to survive the fall of the monarchy. A decree of the Convention dated March 20, 1794, suppressed the University of Paris, together with the numerous provincial universities which had existed up to this time.

Of France’s three great teaching institutions, the Collège de France is the youngest. To return for a moment to this establishment. Its professors, to the number of twenty-eight, teach the language and literature of mediæval France, the Greek language and literature, Latin prose and Latin verse, the Hebrew, Chaldaic, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literatures, the Sanscrit and Chinese languages and literatures, the language and literature of the Slavonians, the modern languages and literature of Western Europe; history, morality, and the law of nations; comparative legislation and political



economy, archæology, mathematics, astronomy, general and experimental physics, medicine, chemistry, the natural history of organic and inorganic bodies, and comparative embryogeny. Among the celebrated lecturers of the College of France may be mentioned, in modern times, Michelet, Quinet, Mickiewicz, the Polish poet (who here delivered an admirable, if at times somewhat mystical, series of lectures on the Slavonians), and finally Renan.

Just opposite the College of France is the Collège du Plessis. "From my window at the College of France," says M. Renan, in the preface to his "Abbesse de Jouarre," "I witness daily the fall, stone by stone, of the last walls of the Collège du Plessis, founded by Geoffroi du Plessis, secretary to King Philippe the Long in 1517, enlarged in the seventeenth century by Richelieu, and in the eighteenth one of the centres of the best philosophical culture. There Turgot, the greatest man in our history, received his education from the Abbé Sigorgne, the first in France to grasp perfectly the ideas of Newton. The Collège du Plessis was closed in 1790. In 1793 and 1794 it became the saddest of the Paris prisons. There the "suspects" were confined, condemned in a sense beforehand; whence they only issued in order to go to the revolutionary tribunal or to death. I often try to imagine the language these walls, now torn open by the builders engaged in reconstruction, must have heard; those grassplots whose last trees have just been cut down. I think of the conversations which must have been held in those large halls of the ground floor

during the hours immediately preceding the summons; and I have conceived a series of dialogues which, if I wrote them, I should call 'Dialogues of the Last Night.' The hour of death is essentially philosophical; at that hour everybody speaks well, everyone is in the presence of the Infinite, and is not tempted to make phrases. The condition of good dialogue is the sincerity of the personages. Now, the hour of death is the most sincere – when one approaches death in happy circumstances, entirely oneself, that is to say; sound in mind and body, without previous debilitation. The work I now offer the public is probably the only one of this series that I shall execute.”

# **CHAPTER X.**

## **THE SORBONNE**

### **Robert de Sorbonne – The Sorbonne, its Origin and History – Richelieu – The Revolution – The New Sorbonne – Mercier's Views**

THE Sorbonne owes its origin and its name to Robert de Sorbonne, chaplain and confessor to Louis IX. Like so many other scholars of the same period, this priest had been compelled to rely on alms to defray the expenses of his education. Touched by miseries which he himself had shared, he established a society of secular ecclesiastics, whose function it was to give gratuitous instruction; and he petitioned the king to endow the charitable enterprise with a dwelling for those pupils who could not pay for their lodging. Nor was his request unheeded. Thanks to royal patronage he was able, in 1253, to open his college. Indigent scholars were taught for nothing; those not quite destitute of means paid five sous and a half weekly. The institution was directed by the associates, who had neither superiors nor principals. The Sorbonne, as the new College was soon to be called, was attached, like all other establishments of the kind, to the University of Paris, and the connection,

throughout its long and brilliant history, never ceased. But the ties which bound it to this central institution became looser and looser as the Sorbonne increased in importance. The provisor, who after a time made the appointments in the Sorbonne, was himself elected by a jury composed of the local archdeacon, the great chancellor, the masters and the faculty of theology, the deans of law and medicine, the rector of the university, and the procurators of the "four nations" into which the university was divided. The election took place in this manner until 1524, after which the provisor was elected by the members of the college, the former jury of election being now only called upon to confirm the choice.

If the Sorbonne was the great school of theology in the middle ages, it was not its cradle; theology was born with scholasticism in the ninth century. It had already nourished with Longfranc, Saint-Anselme, Abailard, and Pierre Lombard before bearing riper fruits with Albertus Magnus and Saint Thomas Aquinas. Already the court of Rome submitted questions of pure dogma to the theologians of the University of Paris, while reserving to itself all questions of canonical law. But the college founded in so humble a manner by Robert de Sorbonne was soon to become the official organ of scholastic theology; and in its bosom were discussed questions which embarrassed the Church of France and even the court of Rome. From its walls went forth the sentences, decrees, and censures which were to have force of law throughout the Catholic world.

The Sorbonne was not only a teaching establishment, it conferred degrees. The theses of the Sorbonne acquired particular celebrity, the “Sorbonic thesis” being regarded as the ideal of the theological essay. During the middle ages and even to the end of the seventeenth century the Sorbonne was the great theological authority; but it had politics of its own which, viewed in the present day, do not seem to have been always in accord with its religious teaching. It took part with Étienne Marcel in the parliamentary and almost revolutionary movement which he directed in opposition to the party of the dauphin and of the aristocracy. It was a doctor of the Sorbonne, the Franciscan friar, Jean Petit, who wrote the “apologia” for the assassination of Louis of Orleans; and another doctor of the same institution, Jean Larcher, who, with the deputies of the university, publicly accused the dauphin of the murder on the bridge of Montereau, where, on the 10th of May, 1410, the Duke of Burgundy, Jean Sans-Peur, was assassinated by men belonging to the dauphin’s suite. To avenge this crime Philippe the Good, Jean’s son, seconded by the King of England, took possession on the 20th of June, 1420, of Montereau, which remained in the power of the English until 1428.

The Sorbonne, representing the Church, condemned Joan of Arc as a sorceress, communicated its judgment to the Duke of Bedford, and, in a petition addressed to the King of England, demanded her extradition. When the religious war was at its height this body fulminated decrees in favour of the League,

the Guises, and Spain against Henry III. and Henry IV. It was to the Sorbonne that the Guises addressed themselves in order to obtain theological support for their projected usurpation. The learned assembly did not go so far as to recommend the assassination of Henry III., but it pronounced in favour of revolt, and consigned the partisans, first of Henry III. and afterwards of Henry IV., to eternal damnation, finally offering the crown of France to Philip II. of Spain. After the triumph of Henry IV. the Sorbonne continued for a time its seditious manifestations; when Cardinal de Bourbon, its “apostolic conservator,” was arrested on the denunciation of the Procurator-general, it at the same time received a reprimand from the Parliament of Paris.

Forced to submit to the new government, it retracted its doctrine as to the lawfulness of “tyrannicide,” supported in this not very startling retraction by the authority of the court of Rome. Finally, under Marie de Médicis, Louis XIII., Richelieu, and Louis XIV., the Sorbonne was a firm supporter of the Bourbon dynasty, together with the Church of France and the University of Paris. Richelieu was its constant patron. Under Louis XIV. it took part with the Gallican Church against the pretensions of the court of Rome. As to the evil done or attempted to be done by the Sorbonne, it will be sufficient to say that besides helping to bring Joan of Arc to the block, it condemned Vanini, whom the Parliament of Toulouse ordered to be burned alive. It pronounced also against Ramus and Descartes, the adversaries of the Aristotelian philosophy;

Montesquieu for his “*Esprit des Lois*” and Buffon for his “*Natural History*”; besides Rousseau, Marmontel, Helvetius, Diderot, Mably, and the whole of the Encyclopædists. Defenders of the Sorbonne point out with justice that it also condemned the absurdities of many visionaries, charlatans, and impostors, and that if it was an obstacle in the way of science, it also showed itself at times a barrier against superstition. It opposed the Jesuits; but what, after all, can this count for against its condemnation of Jeanne d’Arc, John Hus, and Vanini, to say nothing of its encouragement and justification of the Saint-Bartholomew massacre? It condemned no one to death, not having power to do so; but, like the Inquisition, it handed over to the civil power the alleged infidels, apostates, and sorcerers, whom it deemed worthy of the severest punishment. The boldest decree it ever issued was the one already referred to, which was circulated throughout France during the wars between Protestants and Catholics. After exhorting the Parisians to defend against King Henry III. the Catholic religion as menaced by him, it declared that sovereign “degraded from his royal power,” and, after his assassination, consigned to eternal death everyone who dared to recognise Henry of Navarre as his successor. In this denunciation were specially included all those who treated with him or paid taxes to him. No true Catholic, declared the Sorbonne, could recognise as king, “without offending God, a prince who had lapsed into fatal heresies, even though he might afterwards have abjured them.” This decree, as issued by the Sorbonne, was

signed by the clergy of Paris and put into circulation throughout France.

Of all the famous men connected with the Sorbonne, the most famous was the one known throughout the world as Cardinal de Richelieu, who represented politics without pity, as the Sorbonne represented theology without mercy. The tomb of the great man found its place naturally in the church of the Sorbonne, which he had himself erected. The head stolen from the coffin during the Revolution was carried back there not many years ago; his heart will follow, should it ever be discovered.

The ancient Sorbonne came to an end, as a matter of course, at the epoch of the Revolution. It was suppressed as soon as the Revolutionists had time to attend to it, in 1790. If the Sorbonne was greatly indebted to the minister of Louis XIII., it had again to thank a Richelieu for new life and new fame when, in 1821, the minister of Louis XVIII. made it the head and centre of teaching throughout France. At the same time a body of electors was appointed who represented, not the scholasticism and theology of the middle ages, but modern literature and modern science. Among those named in 1821, the year of the Sorbonne's resuscitation, may be mentioned Biot, Poisson, Gay-Lussac, Thénard, Häüy, Brogniart, and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, who were to be followed by such men as Dumas (the celebrated chemist), Bulart, Dulong, Pouillet, Milne-Edwards, and Leverrier. Nor must the names of Guizot, Victor Cousin, Saint-Marc Girardin, Jules Simon, and Nisard be omitted from



the list of those writers and professors who have given even greater reputation to the Sorbonne in the present day than it enjoyed of old. The Sorbonne, however, of history, the Sorbonne associated with severe theology and with still severer theological persecution, perished beneath the first blows of the Revolution, thus verifying a prophecy put forth when Richelieu, while reconstructing its walls, seemed disposed to modernise its spirit

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Instaurata ruet jamjam Sorbona. Caduca  
Dum fuit, inconcussa stetit, renovata peribit.

“If,” wrote Mercier at the end of the eighteenth century, “the Académie Française is the seat of literary despotism, the Sorbonne may be called the throne of ignorance, superstition, and folly. This foundation is the work of an obscure priest, whose name it retained, though it was afterwards enlarged, beautified, and amply endowed by Cardinal Richelieu, who, as we have had occasion to mention in the foregoing description, never formed an establishment which did not tend in some measure to support his favourite plan of carrying arbitrary power beyond all bounds. Whilst his politics made slaves of the subjects, he supported this kind of spiritual inquisition in order to enthral their very minds. The Sorbonne was consulted on all occasions, and the decree of a few ignorant divines respected as the oracle of the Deity himself.”

# CHAPTER XI.

## THE INSTITUTE

### **The Institute – Its Unique Character – The Objects of its Projectors – Its Constitution**

THE Institute – immediately facing the wayfarer who crosses by the Bridge of Arts from the right bank to the left – is, says M. Renan, who was himself a member of it, “one of the most glorious creations of the Revolution, and a thing quite peculiar to France. Many countries have academies which may rival our own by the distinction of the persons composing them, and by the importance of their labours; France alone possesses an Institute in which all the efforts of the human mind are bound together as in a sheaf; where the philosopher, the historian, the philologist, the critic, the mathematician, the physicist, the astronomer, the analyst, the economist, the jurisconsult, the sculptor, the painter, the musician, may call one another colleagues.” The simple and great men who conceived the design of this absolutely new establishment were preoccupied by two thoughts: the first, admirably true, that all the productions of the human mind have something in common and are interdependent; the second, more open to criticism, but connected in any case with all that is

deepest in the French mind, that science, literature, and art are state affairs, recognisable in corporate form, which the country is bound to protect, encourage, and reward. On the last day but one of the Convention, October 25th, 1795, appeared the law destined to realise this idea, so prolific of great things. The object of the Institute was the progress of science; the general utility and glory of the Republic. Every year it renders an account to the legislative body of the progress accomplished. It has its budget, its collections, its prizes. It sends out scientific missions at its own expense. To form the nucleus of the institution forty-eight persons were named, a third of the whole number of members, the remaining two-thirds to be nominated by the original members. The three men to whom, in particular, this project was due, were Lakanal, Dainon, and Carnot. Unhappily France was at that time in the condition of a patient who is just recovering from an attack of fever. Entire branches of human culture seemed to have disappeared; the moral, political, and philosophical sciences were at the lowest level. Literature scarcely existed. The historical and philological sciences counted scarcely more than one man of eminence, Silvestre de Sacy. On the other hand the physical and mathematical sciences were at one of their highest states of development. The division of the institute into classes and sections was affected by this condition of things. There were originally three classes; one answered precisely to the Academy of Sciences as it now exists, and contained nearly the same sections; the second was called

the class of moral and political science; the third represented Literature and the Fine Arts. It embraced what is now known as the French Academy, the Academy of Fine Arts, and the greater part of the Academy of Inscriptions. The principal error of this division was that it took no count of historical science. To tell the truth, the mistake was excusable, since the science in question had then scarcely come into existence in France. Historical science presupposes long traditions, together with a refined and, up to a certain point, aristocratic society. Philosophy, on the other hand, cannot be made to order, and defies classification. Something rather scholastic, savouring of the pedagogue, presided over this primitive distribution. The second class had a section called "Analysis of sensations and ideas." Six persons were constantly occupied with this difficult labour. The third class comprised eight sections, which were entitled: "Grammar, Ancient Languages, Poetry, Antiquities and Monuments, Painting and Sculpture, Architecture, Music, and Declamation."

This organisation lasted six years; to be subsequently modified by various regulations. In 1816, immediately after the Restoration, a serious blow was struck at the Institute, whose revolutionary origin was not forgotten. The First Consul had suppressed the class of moral and political sciences, without depriving of their titles those who had belonged to these classes. The case was not the same in 1816, when twenty-two persons, with the painter David, the Bishop Grégoire, Monge, Carnot,

Lakanel, and Sieyès, were deprived of a title on which they themselves conferred honour. On the other hand seventeen persons received, by royal edict, a title which has no value except when it is conferred on a man of letters or of science by the free suffrage of his peers.

Under Louis XVIII. and Charles X. science was held as of no account, and the academy which represented historical studies was invaded by gentlemen of the chamber, who had neither literary nor scientific claims. The Duke of Berry, the Duke of Angoulême, everyone connected with the royal family or with the court could be admitted to the honours of the Institute. M. Renan declares that there were candidates so degraded as to wish to become members of the Institute simply that they might wear an embroidered uniform and carry a sword.

The Revolution of 1830 brought better days, though the Legitimist party, defeated in the public street, had still the majority in all the academies. Gradually the slightly-educated men of modern fashion and ancient birth – “*benè nati, benè vestiti, moderatè docti*,” as used to be said at All Saints, were eliminated, or rather were allowed to disappear in the ordinary course of nature without being replaced.

Such as it now exists, “the Institute,” says M. Renan, “is one of the essential elements of intellectual labour in France, controlled as it is by three powers, neither of which can be allowed to reign absolutely – the government, the academies, and the public. These three great patrons are not always of one mind,

and the divisions between them afford the necessary guarantee of liberty for thinkers, writers, and inventors. Constituted into irresponsible senates, the academies would often show themselves narrow, egotistical, and self-willed. The government, possessing means of action superior to any the academies can possess, corrects at need their unjust exclusiveness; while the public, with the crown of glory it holds in its hand, can always console those who, in spite of everything, are kept out. Alone privileged to decide in intellectual questions, the government would often be too much influenced by personal considerations. But the academies bring it back to a healthy appreciation of the men themselves, while the control exercised by the public prevents it from yielding everything to court favour or party interests. The public is often a bad judge; it is incapable of appreciating certain scientific merits. The government and the academics can enable scientific men to dispense with public encouragement in order to pursue those special studies which fifty persons in Europe follow and understand, while they at the same time do justice on the intriguers and charlatans who contrive so often to enlist the suffrages of the public and the favours of journalists. Nowhere is the unity of power more dangerous than in intellectual matters. Intellectual liberty results from contrary forces, unable to absorb one another, and helping by their very rivalry the cause of progress.”

The Institute is composed of five academies. I. The French Academy, founded in 1635 by Richelieu, with forty members,

of which mention will afterwards be made in a special article. II. The Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-lettres, founded in 1663 by Colbert, with forty titular members, ten free members, eight foreign associates, and fifty correspondents. III. The Academy of Sciences, founded in 1666 by Colbert, with sixty-five titular members, ten free members, eight foreign associates, and ninety-two correspondents. IV. The Academy of Fine Arts, formed between the years 1648 and 1671 by the union of the three academies of sculpture and painting, of music, and of architecture; with forty titular members, ten free members, ten foreign associates, and forty correspondents. V. The Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, with forty titular members, six free members, six foreign associates, and from thirty to forty correspondents.

The Institute is administered by a commission composed of a president, a secretary, and a treasurer, all of them members. Each of the academies has a president and a perpetual secretary. The Academy of Sciences has two perpetual secretaries. The French Academy has a director, a chancellor, and a perpetual secretary. Members of the academies are elected by the members of each of them. Under the Monarchy the election had to be confirmed by the decree of the sovereign; and on two occasions under the Restoration King Louis XVIII. refused to approve the elections of the Academy of Sciences. The French Academy is the only one of the five which enjoys liberty of election. The new member is presented to the chief of the state by the perpetual secretary.

In 1852, under the Second Empire, M. Berryer, as a Legitimist, refused to be presented, which was not allowed to invalidate his election.

Every two years the whole body of the Institute is summoned to decree a prize of 20,000 francs, founded by the Emperor Napoleon, for “the work or the discovery most fitted to honour or to serve the country.” On these occasions each of the academies puts forward a candidate, in support of whose claims all the members of the Institute give their suffrages.

Every year, on the 14th of August, the Institute holds a public meeting at which the members of all the academies are invited to attend. The Palace of the Institute, also known as the Palais Mazarin, is the ancient college founded in conformity with one of the clauses of Cardinal Mazarin’s will, and constructed in 1663 on the site of various mansions, including the Hôtel de Nesle, with its famous tower. The Institute possesses a choice, and at the same time copious, library, which is not absolutely free to the public, but to which admission can be obtained by presenting the card of one of the members of the Institute.



# CHAPTER XII.

## THE ACADEMIE FRANÇAISE

### **The Académie Française – Its Foundation by Richelieu – Its Constitution – The “Forty-first Chair.”**

THE French Academy, the most celebrated of the five academies included in the Institute, owes its origin to Cardinal de Richelieu, who had conceived the idea of basing the glory of France not only on the power of her arms, but also on the influence of her language and literature. Men of letters had been accustomed in France, since the time of Ronsard, to assemble periodically for the discussion of literary subjects; and the great minister determined to give to this species of association a regular and legal form. Accordingly, on the 2nd of January, 1635, the newly founded French Academy received letters patent signed by Louis XIII.; when the Parliament, jealous of this new power, refused for two years to register what it looked upon as a parliament of writers. The first task undertaken by the French Academy was to purify and fix the language. This has occupied it more or less fully throughout its existence, though at this moment the best dictionary of the French language is not the one issued

by the French Academy, but the dictionary of M. Littré, whom, on the recommendation – one might almost say denunciation – of Monseigneur Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, the Academy rejected. Apart from its ordinary dictionary, of which six editions have appeared, the first in 1694, the sixth and last in 1835, the Academy has long been at work on a special etymological dictionary, with which, however, it has made but little progress; nor can it be said to have succeeded at any period of its existence in making itself the representative of contemporary literature.

It consisted, from the beginning, of forty members, to each of whom was assigned a particular seat, designated as a “fauteuil” or arm-chair, though, as a matter of fact, the academicians have always sat on benches. On the death of an academician his particular “chair” becomes vacant, and his successor is named by the thirty-nine survivors. Among the first French Academicians appointed in 1634 and 1635 only four names are to be found with which the ordinary student of French literature could be supposed to be well acquainted: those of Voiture (twelfth chair), Vaugelas (fourteenth chair), Balzac (nineteenth chair), and Chapelain (thirty-seventh chair). The modern Balzac, the greatest novelist of France, if not the greatest novelist the world has seen, was never, a member of the Academy; and M. Arsène Houssaye (who will scarcely be invited to become one of the forty “Immortals”) has written a book called “The Forty-first Chair,” in which he shows that throughout the history of the Academy there has always been some writer of the first eminence

for whom, if no other could have been offered to him, a forty-first chair should have been found. Voltaire (who in 1747 was elected to the twelfth chair) may be said to have anticipated Arsène Houssaye's view when he observed that the Academy was an assembly to which noblemen, prelates, eminent lawyers, men of the world, "and even writers" were admitted. As a rule, men of learning have more chance of being elected than men of talent. Birth, moreover, social position, and conduct, count for much. Alexandre Dumas the elder was never asked to join the Academy; and it was understood that if he proposed himself he would not be accepted. For this reason Alexandre Dumas the younger refused for many years, and until his father's death, to join the Immortals, though he could have been elected long before had he chosen to put himself forward. Originally the French Academy would, on rare occasions, invite a distinguished writer to join its body, but in consequence of some refusals (one of which came from Béranger in the form of a song) it now elects no one who has not first of all asked to be received.

The style of man peculiarly acceptable as a member of the Academy was well described by M. Guizot when one day the merits of a candidate were being discussed in his presence. "I shall vote for him," said Guizot; "for whatever may be said on the subject, he has the qualities of a true academician; he has a good demeanour, he is very polite, he is decorated, and he has no opinions. I know that he has written a few books, but what of that? A man cannot be perfect."

To return to M. Arsène Houssaye and his forty-first chair, here are a few of the names by which that absent article of furniture might have been adorned.

I. Descartes, from whom dates, in France at least, true liberty of thought. Great writer as well as profound thinker, the author of the “*Discours sur la Méthode*,” possessed every qualification for election to the Academy. “*Qui benè latuit benè vixit*,” however, was his motto, and he was allowed to remain in the obscurity he loved.

II. Pascal, author of the “*Lettres Provinciales*,” and of the admirable “thoughts” which he did not even think it worth while to put together, troubled himself as little about the Academy as did the Academy about him.

III. Molière, the great comedy-writer, was also an actor, and for that reason, considering the prejudices of the time, could not be admitted to the Academy.

After Molière’s death his bust was placed in the Hall of Meeting, and Saurin wrote this verse in his honour:

Rien ne manque à sa gloire; il manquait à la nôtre.”<sup>1</sup>

IV. La Rochefoucauld, the famous author of the “*Maxims*,” would not think of entering the Academy because, as he said, it was impossible for him to make a speech of even a few lines; and an address on being elected, containing a eulogium in honour of the member replaced, is expected from each new academician.

V. The author of the *Historical and Critical Dictionary* was

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<sup>1</sup> Nothing was wanting to his glory; he was wanting to ours.

an academy in himself. Everything, said someone who knew the work, is to be found in Bayle; but you must know where to look for it. He worked fourteen hours a day, and died without having time to think of the French Academy, whence, in any case, his free unorthodox opinions would certainly have excluded him.

VI. Regnard, the best French comedy writer after Molière, was too much occupied with his own work and with amusing himself to dream of joining the French Academy, where, moreover, by reason of his loose life, he had but little chance of being elected.

VII. J. B. Rousseau, who in the days before André Chénier, Béranger, Victor Hugo, and Alfred de Musset was justly regarded as the first lyric poet of France, did not belong to the Academy. He left Paris, it is true, for some scandalous verses attributed to him, but which he was never proved to have written; and he died in exile.

VIII. Vauvenargues – always to be remembered by the finest of his many fine thoughts, “les grandes pensées viennent du cœur” – died young, so that the Academy may be said not to have had time to elect him.

IX. Lesage, author of “Gil Blas” and of several comedies, married the daughter of a carpenter, which might well have told against his election. But his exclusion from the Academy is generally attributed to his having failed to write a tragedy.

X. The Abbé Prévost, author of “Manon Lescaut,” was not a member of the Academy; and it is quite possible that the fact of

his having written "Manon Lescaut" may have kept him out.

XI. Piron, already mentioned as the author of a famous epigram against the Academy, was really elected to it. But to be valid, the election had to be confirmed by the sovereign, and Louis XV. would not ratify the Academy's choice. "What are the emoluments of the place?" asked the king; and being told that an academician received, by way of honorarium, one thousand francs annually, he assigned to Piron a pension for that amount.

XII. Jean Jacques Rousseau was never asked to join the Academy, nor did he ever show any wish to belong to it.

XIII. Diderot was naturally not an academician.

XIV. Mably, the learned and vigorous publicist, who, before socialism had been formulated into a creed, put forth socialistic views, replied to many persons who urged him to become a candidate for academical honours: "If I were a member of the Academy people would perhaps say, 'Why does he belong to it?' I would rather hear them say, 'Why does he not belong to it?'"

XV. The poet, André Chénier, one of the victims of the Revolution, was never a member of the French Academy; nor was Mirabeau (XVI.), nor Camille Desmoulins (XVII.).

XVIII. Beaumarchais not only wrote brilliant comedies, but took part in all kinds of speculations, some of them hazardous; and it may be for this reason, but possibly also because he was looked upon as only a playwright, that he was never asked to join the Academy. Neither Chamfort (XIX.) nor Rivarol (XX.) were Academicians. Lamennais, who, from the infallibility of

the Pope passed to the infallibility of the people, was never a member of the Academy.

Women are not admitted to the Academy, or Mme. de Lefayette, Mme. Dacier, Mme. Cotin, Mme. de Stael, perhaps even the most illustrious of them all, George Sand, might have been academicians. Scarcely, however, George Sand.

In ancient days a dramatist seems to have had no chance of being elected to the Academy unless he had produced tragedies. Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, were all academicians, whereas Molière, Regnard, and Lesage were all excluded. The modern Academy has shown itself less prejudiced. Scribe was a member of the Academy, and so is Labiche, who, in a smaller way, may be regarded as the Molière of our time.

Suppressed, as too aristocratic, under the Revolution, the Academy came to life again as a literary branch of the Institute, and under the First Empire resumed a more independent existence in something like its old historic form. Since its revival it has traversed the Empire, the Restoration, the reign of Louis Philippe, the Republic of 1848, and the Second Empire. Finding itself sufficiently in accord with the three first governments, and tolerating the Republic of 1848, the Academy objected, it would seem, to the Second Empire; in proof of which it need only be mentioned that not one of Napoleon III.'s political men was ever admitted to the Academy. This literary society has now had time enough to get accustomed to the Third Republic, which has lasted in France longer than any governmental system since the

downfall of the ancient Monarchy.

The Academy has plenty of funds at its disposal, arising from donations made to it at one time or another, and it receives annually from the state a sum of 85,000 francs. It awards prizes for eloquence and prizes for poetry; prizes for virtue (the celebrated "priz Monthyon") and prizes for the best work of fiction, regarded from a literary, artistic, and moral point of view. This prize was adjudged to M. Alphonse Daudet for his "Fromont jeune et Risler aîné," of which the moral tendency would not, perhaps, be obvious to everyone, though as a rule the works crowned by the Academy are such as a careful girl might safely allow her own mother to read. A prize of 20,000 francs was voted to M. Thiers for his "History of the Consulate and of the Empire," but the money was returned by the grateful historian on the understanding that the interest it produced should be given annually as a prize for the best essay on some historical subject. A prize of 4,800 francs, founded by Dr. Toirac, is given annually for the best comedy in verse or prose played during the previous year at the Théâtre Français; and M. Louis Langlois, a famous writer of Latin elegiacs, has founded an annual prize of 1,500 francs for the best translation in verse or prose of a Greek, Latin, or other foreign work.



## **CHAPTER XIII.**

### **THE PANTHÉON**

**The Church of Clovis – The Church of Sainte-Geneviève – France in the Thirteenth Century – The Building of the New Church under Louis XV. – Mirabeau and the Constituent Assembly – The Church of Sainte-Geneviève becomes the Panthéon**

THE College of France and the Sorbonne stand close together at the corner of the Rue Saint-Jacques and the Rue des Écoles; and between the College of France and the new Sorbonne, on the right, stands the Lyceum of Louis the Great (Lycée Louis le Grand), formerly a Jesuit college, founded by the order in 1550 in the Hôtel de Clermont; the property of Cardinal de Praat in virtue of letters patent which the Parliament of Paris declined to register until some dozen years after they had been issued. Expelled from Paris after the attempt made by Jean Châtel on the person of Henry IV., the Jesuits did not again obtain permission to teach until 1618. Amongst their celebrated pupils were some who might well be suspected of having been educated elsewhere – Molière, for instance, and Voltaire.

Originally known as the College of Clermont, this institution became, in virtue of letters patent, a royal foundation in 1662, when it received the name of Louis the Great. It was afterwards, in 1753, connected with the university. Here, indeed, until the time of the Revolution, the assemblies of the university were held, as well as those of the “four nations” included in it. The Revolution brought the Lyceum, with its monarchical name, to an end; but it was revived at the time of the Revolution, when it was once more called “Collège Louis le Grand.” Public institutions, however, like streets, ships, and theatres, change their names in France with each new form of government. The Lycée Louis le Grand was called, under the Republic, the Consulate, and the Empire, the Collège de l'Égalité; and under the Republic of 1848, when M. Carnot was Minister of Public Instruction, Collège Descartes.

A few more steps, and from the point where the Rue Saint-Jacques is intersected by the Rue Soufflet, may be perceived the Panthéon, the name given to the imposing edifice which under monarchical governments has always been known as the Church of Sainte-Geneviève.

On the site of the Panthéon stood originally a church dedicated by Clovis to the Holy Apostles. It was destroyed by the Normans in one of their incursions, and replaced soon afterwards by the Abbey of Sainte-Geneviève. The bell which tolled in this once-celebrated edifice hangs to-day in the Lycée Corneille.

For a number of centuries the Church of Sainte-Geneviève

seems to have had an uneventful history. Dulaure, however, in that strange book, “*Les Singularités Historiques*,” gives some remarkable details in regard to the life led and the actions performed by the clergy attached to Saint-Geneviève, and indeed by the French clergy generally.

Under the reign of Louis VII., styled the Young, Pope Eugène III., says this writer, driven out of Rome, came in 1145 to Paris, and a few days after his arrival wished to celebrate mass at the Church of Sainte-Geneviève. The canons to do him honour brought before the altar a large silk carpet, on which the Pope knelt to pray. After the mass the sovereign pontiff retired to the vestry, when his servants, lay and ecclesiastic, took possession of the carpet, claiming that it belonged to them simply because the Pope had made use of it. The servants of the canons being of a different opinion snatched the carpet from the hands of the Pope’s servants. The carpet, dragged on one side and the other, gave way and was soon in pieces; the accident caused insults on both sides followed by blows. The king, who had witnessed the tumult, went forward to stop it; his authority, however, was powerless against the fury of the combatants, and in the confusion he himself was struck. Victory remained with the holders of the place – the attendants in the Church of Sainte-Geneviève. The Pope’s followers, with torn clothes and bleeding faces, went before their master, who complained to the king and begged him to punish the insult. Thereupon the Pope and the king resolved to change the constitution of the Sainte-Geneviève

Monastery.

It was first resolved to send away the canons and replace them by monks from Cluny, but this idea was abandoned. A new abbé was named and twelve new canons were introduced from the Abbey of Saint-Victor, who were formally installed in the Abbey of Sainte-Geneviève, to the great displeasure of the former canons, who did all in their power to get rid of these strangers.

They employed against them calumnious threats and even violence. In the excesses of their animosity they ordered their servants to go in the night and break in the doors of the church, take possession of the building, and prevent the new canons from singing the matins, uttering shrieks which prevented them from being heard.

In spite of the precautions taken by the Abbé Suger, in charge of the church, they took possession of a great portion of the treasure, detaching from the shrine of Sainte-Geneviève gold ornaments which weighed fourteen marks, their object being to get together a sum sufficiently large to send to the Pope in order to prevail upon him to change his resolution in regard to the monastery. The conduct of the canons caused all kinds of reports to be circulated; among others one to the effect that the head of Sainte-Geneviève had been cut off and removed from her shrine, whereupon the shrine was solemnly opened and the body of the saint displayed, with its head, while at the same time the Te Deum was sung.

Those indeed were lawless times; nor had matters improved in Paris in the next century, when Jacques de Vitry, Archbishop Cardinal and Legate of the Pope in France, wrote such an account of life in Paris as Pope Eugène III. would doubtless have approved.

“Although the Lord has said,” wrote Jacques de Vitry in his “Western History,” “that it is more blessed to give than to receive, the men of our time, above all those who are in a position to command others, do not confine themselves to extorting money from their subjects by requiring from them unlawful presents, or by filling their greedy hands with the product of the taxes and exactions with which they so unjustly oppress them; they do far worse. The thefts, the rapines, and the acts of violence which they exercise, now openly, now in secret on the wretches under their dependence, render their cruel tyranny insupportable. These lords, notwithstanding the pompous titles of which they are so proud, do not omit to go out robbing and to perform the trade of mere thieves; also that of brigands, for they ravage whole tracts of country with their incendiarism. They respect nothing, not even the property of the monasteries, nor of the churches. They profane even the sanctuary, from which they carry away the objects consecrated to the celebration of the mass. Whenever, for the slightest causes, disputes arise between the poor and their lords and masters, the latter succeed through their satellites in selling the property of these unhappy beings. On the highways you see them, covered with iron, attack the passers-by without

sparing either the pilgrims or the monks. If they wish to exercise personal vengeance against simple, innocent men, they attack them through their bandits, scoundrels who follow the streets of the towns and boroughs, or who, concealed in secret places, lay traps for these poor wretches in order to catch them and shed their blood. On the sea they are pirates, and without fearing the anger of God, they plunder passengers and merchants, in many cases burning the ships and drowning in the waves those whom they have despoiled. Princes and nobles without faith are the associates of these robbers. Far from protecting their subjects and maintaining them in peace, they oppress them; far from repressing the rascals and keeping them down through the fear of punishment, they favour them, become their patrons, and for the money they receive from them help them in their scandalous actions. The French nobles are like unclean dogs, who, always famishing, dispute with greedy crows the flesh of carcases. The nobles, by the agency of their provosts and their satellites, persecute the poor, rob the widow and the orphan, lay snares for them, pick quarrels with them, and attribute to them imaginary crimes in order to extort money. It is a common practice with them to put in prison and load with chains men who have committed no offence, and to make these innocent persons support cruel tortures in order to extract sums of money from them. This is all done in order to obtain supplies for their prodigality, their luxuries, their superfluities, their mad expenditure on the vanities of the century, to pay their usurers, to

support mimes, singers, actors, jugglers, parasites, and flatterers, veritable dogs of their courtyards.”

“This sketch,” says Dulaure, “traced by a man of serious character, proves how great was the evil, how excessive was the disorder, how entirely all principles were subverted. Such were the knights of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, whose loyalty, so much exalted in novels, in poetical compositions, and on our modern stage, is constantly disproved by history. These men, to whom so many glorious exploits, so many generous actions are attributed, were merciless brigands, wretches who would now figure at the hulks or in the dungeons of Bicêtre.”

Some idea of the extreme corruption of the French clergy in the thirteenth century may be formed from a letter written by Pope Innocent III. in 1203 to the Abbé of Saint-Denis, close to Paris. “There are,” he said, “in your town priests who, abusing the clerical privilege, go through the streets at night and visit the most disreputable houses, breaking in the doors and taking the same liberties with the daughters of respectable citizens. The provost and the officers of justice, from respect for the liberties of the clerical order, do not dare to lay hands on them; and if you, my son, wish to stop these disorders, the culprits at once appeal to us, invoke our authority, ignore your jurisdiction, escape the canonical punishment, and continue with audacity their lawless habits.” The Pope then authorises the Abbé of Saint-Denis to exercise against these “priestly libertines” all ecclesiastical powers, without attending to their appeals.

The period of religious and warlike fanaticism was also a period of licentiousness and persecution.

The Jews, at the chivalrous time of the Crusades, were particularly unhappy. Their faith, their wealth, their usurious practices, exposed them at all times to persecution, and the Crusaders, before starting for the Holy Land, habitually massacred them. Kings drove them from the country, and then, on payment of large sums, allowed them to return. Dulaure ("Singularités Historiques") attributes simply to avarice the accusations, always justified by the fanaticism of the people, which rulers brought against them, and which were withdrawn on payment of money.

In 1290 a woman living at Paris had pawned some clothes for thirty sous to a Jew named Jonathan, and wishing to take them out for the Easter holidays without repaying the money advanced, was told, according to her sworn testimony, that she might do so if she would bring to the Jew a piece of the Holy Sacrament, which she did. Then the Jew thrust his penknife into the Host, from which blood flowed in abundance without in any way terrifying him. Then he took a nail and hammered it into the Host; threw it into the fire, when it hovered above the flames; plunged it into a kettle of boiling water, which it reddened with its blood, receiving meanwhile no injury. These miracles did not frighten Jonathan. The son of this Jew, seeing Christians go to church, said to them, "It is useless for you to pray to your God, my father has killed him." Then a woman who lived next door



to Jonathan entered his house under pretext of getting a light, and took away the Host in the skirt of her dress; after which she placed it in a wooden vessel and carried it to the curé of Saint-Jean-en-Grève, to whom she narrated what she had seen. The Bishop of Paris had Jonathan arrested, tried to convert him, and as the Jew refused, burnt him alive.

“Jonathan,” says Dulaure, in commenting on this strange story, the authenticity of which he regards as undeniable, “possessed a large fortune. Was he convicted in any legal manner? Why was not the woman brought to justice who gave the Host to Jonathan? She was more criminal than the Jew. Everything in this process makes one suspect that an odious plot had been woven against the Israelite in order to get hold of his fortune.”

It was not the Jews alone, however, who were maltreated in these cruel times. How severely Marguerite de Bourgogne, wife of Louis X., and Blanche and Jeanne de Bourgogne, her sisters-in-law, were punished for their undeniably licentious lives. The Abbey of Maubuisson, near Pontoise, was the theatre of their misdeeds. Their principal accomplices were Philippe and Gauthier d'Aunay, and they were both of them maltreated, skinned alive, and then decapitated and hung by the arms to the gallows. A beadle who had been mixed up with the princesses' intrigues was condemned to the gibbet, and a monk who had played a still more active part in connection with them was tortured to death. Queen Marguerite, after being imprisoned

in the Château Gaillard with her sister-in-law Blanche, was strangled there in 1315; Jeanne was detained in captivity at the Château of Dourdan – that same Jeanne de Bourgogne who, according to the tradition, threw from the Tour de Nesle into the Seine the students of whose discretion she wished to make sure.

But to return to the Church of Sainte-Geneviève, which, though by its site one of the very oldest in Paris, dates, by its structure, only from the eighteenth century. In 1754 Louis XV., finding himself seriously ill, vowed “that if, through the intercession of Sainte-Geneviève, he recovered, he would raise to her honour a new and sumptuous temple.” Restored to health he showed himself ready to keep his word. The architect employed to plan the structure was Soufflot, a man imbued with memories of Rome, where he had passed several years of his life. On the 6th of September, 1764, the first stone of the new church was laid by Louis XV. The construction had advanced far, and the dome had already been commenced, when Soufflot perceived with horror that the massive edifice threatened collapse, ugly cracks showing themselves here and there in the masonry. In despair, full of self-distrust, and harassed by the raillery of his critics, Soufflot died in 1720, without seeing the completion of his work. Rondelet, who took his place, substituted for the graceful but fragile pilasters and columns of his predecessor, heavy masonry supports devoid of beauty, but at least capable of keeping the roof aloft. For the pursuance of his undertaking, however, he required money, and the want of it more than once

suspended or retarded his operations. Until 1789 the building went on with exasperating slowness. Then, however, it received an unexpected impetus. Mirabeau had just died. The Constituent Assembly wished to give the great orator a tomb worthy of him, and at the same time to create a monument in which might be brought together the tombs of all those great citizens who had deserved well of their country: to create a Westminster Abbey. This monument already existed; for it was precisely a sort of Panthéon that Soufflot, never suspecting to what purpose his edifice would be turned, had constructed. "In a civic transport," says M. E. Quinet, "the Constituent Assembly baptised with the name of Panthéon a monument which now for the first time seemed to receive a soul. The church soon became a temple of Renown – a place where the People gather to pronounce their judgment on the dead. This is why that colonnade bears its splendours so high aloft; why the cupola lifts itself up as though it were a crown on the head of Paris. Here occurs the apotheosis, not of a shepherdess – Sainte-Geneviève, that is to say – but of France, of the country, in the form of illustrious men who have gone to breathe the air of another shore. What had been blamed as superfluous luxury for the prophetess of Nanterre was assuredly necessary for the glorification of glorious men. How could the columns be high enough, the capitals proud enough, the wreaths rich enough to celebrate those to whom their terrestrial country owed terrestrial honours? The defects which had been found in the church became so many beauties in the Panthéon."

The assembly voted the following decree: "Art. I. The new edifice of Sainte-Geneviève shall be used for the reception of the ashes of the great men belonging to the period of French liberty. Art. II. The legislative body shall alone decide to whom this honour is to be awarded. Art. III. Honoré Riquetti Mirabeau is judged worthy to receive such honour. Art. IV. The legislature shall not, in the future, have power to decree this honour to any of its members who may die; that is a question which shall be decided by the succeeding magistracy. Art. V. Any exceptions which may be made in favour of great men who died before the Revolution, shall be decided only by the legislative body. Art. VI. The directory of the department of the Seine shall with promptitude put the edifice of Sainte-Geneviève into a condition to fulfil its new functions, and shall cause to be engraved over the pediment these words, 'To the great men of a grateful country.' Art. VII. Until the new church of Sainte-Geneviève is finished the body of Riquetti Mirabeau shall repose beside the ashes of Descartes, in the vault of the old church."

The remains of Voltaire were transported to the Panthéon soon after those of Mirabeau, and with a pomp no less magnificent. On the 30th of May, 1791, Gossin, deputy for Barle-Duc, addressed the Tribune in an enthusiastic outburst thus: "It was on the 30th of May that the honours of sepulture were refused to Voltaire, and it is on the same day that the national gratitude must acquit itself of its duty of reverence towards one who has prepared men for toleration and liberty." The procession

which accompanied the relics of Voltaire on their conveyance to the Panthéon was imposing in the extreme. Representatives of numerous corporations and professions attended to do homage to his memory, and at one point in the cortège eight women dressed in white, and carrying a statue of Liberty which appeared to be pointing to a complete edition of Voltaire's works, were borne along in a gilded car. Finally came the sarcophagus, drawn by twelve white horses. After halts innumerable the solemn procession drew up before the Panthéon to the flare of torches.

The name of Panthéon, sufficiently heathen in character, had not hitherto been applied to the church of Sainte-Geneviève; but it appeared a few days later in a petition demanding the same honours for Rousseau, and signed by poets, artists, and scholars. The Assembly would willingly have acceded, but such was the resistance of the inhabitants of Montmorency, who eagerly requested that the ashes of this great writer might be left in their midst, that it deferred its decision.

On the 21st of January, 1793, the Convention decreed that the body of Lepelletier, deputy of Saint-Fargeau, who had been assassinated for having voted the death of the king, should be translated to the Panthéon. Then Marat, to whom, after the stab of Charlotte Corday, the Convention had already erected a mausoleum on the Place du Carrousel, was judged worthy of the Panthéon. On the 25th of November, 1793, Marie Joseph Chénier, speaking before the Tribune, and armed with documents, proved the transactions which Mirabeau had had

with the Court, contrasting therewith the disinterestedness of Marat, whose remains, as he eloquently maintained, should displace at the Panthéon those of Mirabeau, unworthy of such a resting-place. The Convention adopted his propositions in a decree which was not executed until after the fall of Robespierre, on the 22nd of September, 1794. The official programme of the ceremonies, still extant, is interesting enough. After having fixed the order and the route of the cortège the authors of the programme added: "The procession will stop when it arrives on the Place of the Panthéon; a tipstaff of the Convention will advance towards the door of entrance, and there will be read the decree which excludes from the Panthéon the relics of Mirabeau. Thereupon the body of Mirabeau shall be conveyed out of the precincts of the Panthéon, and handed over to the commissary of police for that section. Then the body of Marat shall be placed in triumph on a platform elevated in the Panthéon... All citizens assisting at this ceremony shall be unarmed." From the last injunction it is evident that the authorities feared the possibility of a riot. Everything, however, passed off quietly. The body of Mirabeau was laid in a corner of the cemetery of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont.

At length, on the 19th of October, 1794, the turn of Rousseau came. His body, borne by a deputation of the inhabitants of Ermonville, where he had breathed his last, was received at the Tuileries, where the future arch-chancellor pronounced over it an impressive speech. The remains of the philosopher, enclosed

in an urn, were then conveyed to the Panthéon, escorted by the crowd and preceded by an orchestra playing various airs from his own “Devin du Village.”

But the political tide was already on the turn. On the 1st of February, 1795, the bust of Marat, placed in several of the theatres and cafés, was hooted and overthrown. His remains, according to the Abbé de Montgaillard in his history of the Revolution, were snatched from the Panthéon, dragged through the streets by young men, and cast amongst the refuse of the Rue Montmartre – “a tabernacle,” says the abbé, “worthy of such a god.” This account, however, is inaccurate; it was only Marat’s effigy which was thrown into the sewer, his relics were transported to Saint-Étienne-du-Mont.

In the meantime the Panthéon, as a structure, was in a state of neglect. These installations of illustrious men within its walls had taken place more or less hastily, and the works were far indeed from completion. Mercier, in his “Picture of Paris,” thus describes a visit which he paid to the Panthéon in 1795: “I ventured on the staircases of the edifice, across ladders, heaps of cement, hammers, long saws and moving scaffoldings. The least sound reverberated, the least movement seemed to announce the approaching fall of the dome, and for the moment I imagined myself interred in the Panthéon without any pleading or contest. When I quitted the edifice I experienced the pleasure which is felt by sailors and warriors at the end of tempests and combats: that of discovering that I was alive.” By the time

the Panthéon had been put into a satisfactory condition the Empire had come into existence, and Napoleon, who had just re-established public worship, wished to present the Republican temple to the clergy, whilst maintaining the purpose for which the Constituent Assembly had designed it. A decree, dated 20th of February, 1806, dedicated the Panthéon to public worship under the name of Church of Sainte-Geneviève, and consecrated it as a sepulchre for citizens who, in the career of arms or in that of the administration or of letters, had rendered eminent services to their country. The remains of thirty-nine persons, not all of them truly illustrious, were deposited in the Panthéon under the Empire; but the fall of the Empire brought about another change. Louis XVIII. suppressed the necropolis, and removed from the pediment the famous legend, “Aux grands hommes, la patrie reconnaissante.”

The last illustrious men admitted to the honours of the temple supposed to have been erected to them by a “grateful country” were Victor Hugo, the great Carnot, the deputy Baudin, killed on a barricade during the *coup d'état* of 1851, General Marceau, and La Tour d’Auvergne, “the first grenadier of France,” whose name, by order of Napoleon, used to be pronounced at every roll-call of his regiment, when this answer was solemnly given: “Mort sur le champ de bataille.”

The large open space to which the Panthéon gives its name – Place du Panthéon – was the scene of terrible conflicts between the troops and the insurgents during the Revolution of February,



1848, and again during the unsuccessful insurrection of June in the same year, when troops and national guards all took part against the workmen set free to starve or fight by the closing of the national workshops which, for financial reasons, could no longer be carried on, and against the social democrats who placed themselves at their head. On the northern side of the Place stands the Sainte-Geneviève Library, which, like all the Paris libraries, is open to all comers.

A foreigner who happened to visit the Quartier Latin, and observed the students strolling, lounging, or driving off to the theatre or a ball, might fancy that they led an easy and idle life, but he would be mistaken. These youths, ardent pleasure-seekers as they are, give three-fourths of their time to severe study. Earlier in the day a visitor to the Rue Saint-Jacques might have seen them waiting impatiently for the classes to begin at the College of France; might have seen them issue thence, full of enthusiasm for the great thinkers of their time, and wend their way to this or that public institution affording facilities for private study. A proportion of them would be found to resort to the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, where a noble collection of books ranged on shelves adorned with delicate sculptures may well conduce to the tranquil exercise of the mind.

The first library of Sainte-Geneviève, which was founded as a private institution in 1624, and became national property in 1790, occupied in the buildings of the old abbey of the same name a habitation which had to be abandoned some forty years

ago, because the building began everywhere to crumble and threaten collapse. The new library was finished and inaugurated in 1850; and although the external architecture is somewhat plain and heavy, the interior is highly artistic, with many a mural painting by master hands. Formerly this library possessed a very curious collection of crayon sketches, portraits of personages of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which were transferred by an imperial decree to the library of the Rue de Richelieu. It can support this loss, however, rich as it is in quaint and valuable specimens of art. For its manuscripts, with certain exceptions, the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève is not remarkable; though it boasts a particularly fine collection of old printed books, with bindings sumptuous and fantastic enough to turn the head of a bibliophile.

Dependent on the church of Sainte-Geneviève, which it was destined to survive, is the church of St. Stephen-of-the-Mount. Among the wonders of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont is the tomb of Sainte Geneviève, whose relics, patroness saint of Paris as she was, were burnt in 1793 by the Paris Commune in the Place de Grève. During the fête of Sainte Geneviève, from the 3rd to the 11th of January, the church is crowded with pilgrims from the Paris suburbs to the number, it is calculated, of more than one hundred thousand. In the chapel immediately facing the altar stands a monument which contains the heart of Monseigneur Sibour, Archbishop of Paris, assassinated on the 3rd of January, 1857, in this very church, when he was opening the nine

days' service in honour of Sainte Geneviève, by a priest whom he had interdicted. The predecessor of Monseigneur Sibour, Monseigneur Affre, was shot dead by the insurgents of June, 1848, when exhorting them from a barricade to cease fighting. His successor, Monseigneur Darboy, was put to death with the other hostages whom the Paris Commune in 1871 had taken with the view of securing for the Communards made prisoners by the troops the character of prisoners of war.

# **CHAPTER XIV.**

## **THE POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL**

### **The “Central School of Public Works” – Bonaparte and the Polytechnic – The College of Navarre – Formal Inauguration in 1805 – 1816 – 1832**

BEHIND the church of St. Stephen-of-the-Mount, from which it is separated by the Rue Descartes, stands the Polytechnic School, founded by a decree of the National Convention on the 14th of March, 1794.

The Convention had made a clean sweep of all the schools established in the days of the Monarchy. Ere long, however, it began to revive the scholastic institutions on a new plan. The Committee of Public Safety began by decreeing the formation of a “Central School of Public Works.” Fourcroy was commissioned to present a detailed report on the new scheme; and the propositions contained in it were unanimously adopted. The Palais Bourbon was chosen as the domicile of erudition; and here a three years’ course of study, involving nine hours’ work a day, was offered to aspirants. The youth of Paris and of the provinces hastened in crowds to a school where every subject was taught by an eminent specialist. Enthusiasm characterised

the labours both of students and professors, and rapid successes were achieved, despite the constant struggle which had to be maintained with the Committee of Public Safety, whether on account of the privilege which the school enjoyed of filling all vacancies in certain departments of the public service, or because the committee, at times when war had drained the national exchequer, could not furnish the funds indispensable to the educational scheme. The school, however, fought bravely through its difficulties, and presently received that denomination of *École Polytechnique* which became and has remained so popular. In the legislative tribunals, in the political and scientific journals, the Polytechnic School was never mentioned without being coupled with some formula expressing the high opinion entertained of its utility and of what it might achieve. "The first school in the world," "the institution which Europe envies us," "the establishment without a rival and without a model" – in such phrases was it described. Already the Polytechnic had been appointed to furnish officers for the artillery; and by a state decree it was enacted that no pupils should be received into the military and naval schools who had not first gone through their course in the Polytechnic. In 1803, when the peace of Amiens was broken and war burst out afresh between France and England, the pupils of the Polytechnic School evinced their patriotism by paying into the state coffers a sum of 4,000 francs which they had collected amongst themselves.

Bonaparte, on his return from Italy, endeavoured to conciliate

the affection of men of learning and of letters. At that period nothing but the lustre of power or the superiority of the mind could command admiration. Having had himself admitted to the Institute, the First Consul loved to join his academic title to the indication of his rank in the army. He often visited the Polytechnic School, and even assisted occasionally at some of the lessons. He enriched its library with a number of costly works, and furnished its laboratories with all that they needed.

During the four years (1801 to 1804) which preceded the turning of this school into a barrack the people of Paris had returned to a state of tranquillity. At the theatre, however, disturbances frequently occurred in which Polytechnic students played a part. The reiterated complaints of the Minister of the Interior and the arrest of several of the disorderly students caused great vexation to the school authorities, who remonstrated with the delinquents and imposed severe disciplinary punishments upon them, but to little purpose. The classes began to suffer, for the agitation of the pit penetrated into the school, and the time which should have been devoted to work was frequently taken up with eager conversations on this or that exciting topic. Bonaparte, who had just taken the title of emperor, was apprised of these unfortunate occurrences, and immediately decreed, on the 16th of July, 1804, a new organisation by which the pupils would be formed into a military body and put in barracks. General Lacuée, councillor of state, was appointed governor, and Gay de Vernon took second command. The new organisation included the union

of the barrack and the school on one spot, and an obligation on the part of the pupils to pay fees. General Lacuée formed from his body of councillors a commission which repaired to Fontainebleau, where the École Militaire was then established, in order to obtain all particulars as to the working of the Paris institution; and an active search was made for a building in which the school might be adequately installed. At length the College of Navarre was fixed upon as the fittest habitation. Napoleon in determining the funds necessary for his new organisation showed himself sufficiently lavish. He felt grateful to the students of the Polytechnic School for the patriotic aid they had offered him during the war with England; which had indeed evoked from him at the time some flattering words to the effect that he “expected nothing less from a youth thirsting for glory, to whom national honour was a patrimony.”

The school was inaugurated on the 11th of November, 1805, at the College of Navarre, which it has not quitted since. This college had been founded in 1304 by Jeanne of Navarre and her husband Philippe le Bel. The chapel, now used as a tracing-room, is all that remains of the original structure. Suppressed in 1790, the College of Navarre had been a seminary for princes and other pupils either distinguished already by their birth or destined to conquer fame: both Richelieu and Bossuet had sat on its benches.

The pupils of the Polytechnic School showed in 1814 the same patriotic feeling which had delighted Napoleon on a previous occasion. They offered for the artillery eight horses

fully equipped; and immediately afterwards they petitioned to be admitted as combatants into the ranks of the French army. Napoleon made a reply which has become famous – that he was not reduced to such straits as to find it necessary to “kill his fowl with the golden eggs.” He formed, however, out of the Paris National Guard twelve batteries of artillery, three of which consisted of pupils of the Polytechnic School. On the 28th of March the pupils were entrusted with the service of twenty-eight pieces of reserve artillery, and on the 30th, during the battle of Paris, this reserve, placed across the avenue of Vincennes, held in check the enemy’s troops, who were endeavouring to enter Paris on this side in order to turn the position of the diminutive French army, fighting at Belleville and at Pantin.

On the return from Elba the Polytechnic School was again formed into a body of artillery; and it then received the only visit Napoleon paid to it throughout the Empire. With all his admiration for it, he regarded it as infected with the spirit of republicanism. Monge defended the pupils against the bad opinion entertained by the emperor, saying that, ardent Republicans when the school was first formed, they had not yet had time to become zealous Imperialists; at which Napoleon is said to have smiled.

Broken up in 1816 in consequence of some act of insubordination, and reorganised towards the end of 1817 under a civilian administration, the Polytechnic School was now placed under the Ministry of the Interior. Five years later, however, in



1822, it was once more organised on a military system. Like all the students of those days, the pupils of the Polytechnic School were enthusiastic Liberals, and when the Revolution of July, 1830, broke out they joined the people and acted for the most part as officers. One of them, Vanneau by name, was killed in the attack made on the barracks of the Swiss guards in the Rue de Babylone; and afterwards, by universal desire, the name of the young man was given to a neighbouring street, which still bears it.

Since then the Polytechnic has been mixed up with every important political movement that has taken place in France. On the 7th of June, 1832, many students, in spite of orders to the contrary, went out to assist at the funeral of General Lamarque, and took part in the outbreak to which it led. In 1848 the school was called out in a body to support the provisional government, which invited it, together with the Normal School and the School of Saint-Cyr, to take part in all the celebrations of the new Republic.

Amongst the distinguished men produced by the Polytechnic School since its creation under the First Republic may be mentioned Arago, Gay-Lussac, Biot, Poisson, and Carnot. Foreign governments have often asked permission to send young men of promise to this school; at once an effect and a cause of its European reputation.

# **CHAPTER XV.**

## **THE HÔTEL CLUNY**

**The Rue des Carmes – Comte de Mun and  
the Catholic Workmen’s Club – The Place  
Maubert – The Palais des Thermes – The  
Hotel Cluny – Its History – Its Art Treasures**

THE street in which the Polytechnic School is situated bears its name, and descending the northern slope of the so-called “mountain of Sainte-Geneviève,” the “Street of the Seven Ways” takes, at the point where the Rue de l’École Polytechnique crosses the Rue Saint-Hilaire, the name of Rue des Carmes. In ancient times it contained, besides the grand Couvent des Carmes founded in 1318, the College of Dace, established for Danish students, the College of Soissons, where Peter Ramus fell in the St. Bartholomew massacre, and finally the College of the Lombards. At the end of a large courtyard, surrounded with gardens, is seen the portico of a church with Ionic columns, whose pediment, frightfully mutilated, has quite a tragic aspect. This is the chapel of the ancient College of the Lombards, founded in 1334 by A. Chini of Florence, bishop of Tournai. The college was then the “House of the poor Italians” by the

charity of the beneficent Marie. Three centuries later it was falling into ruins when two Irish priests undertook to build it up for the benefit of the priests and poor students of their country, who for two centuries possessed this corner of the earth, when, on its becoming too small, they abandoned it in 1776 and moved to the Rue Cheval-Vert. The chapel was then for many years taken possession of by industrial speculators, who turned it into shops and even into a stable. It was restored to public worship through the activity of Comte de Mun. In one part of the building is established the Catholic Workmen's Club of Sainte-Geneviève, which has existed since May, 1875, and which offers to workmen and also clerks of all professions and trades a centre of instruction and even of amusement. To this institution are due the popular lectures (*Conférences Populaires*) delivered by M. Léon Gautier of the Institute, Albert de Mun, Father Montsabre, M. d'Hulst, etc. Without neglecting religious studies, the lecturers occupy themselves with the most varied subjects, such as literature, political and social economy, art and music. Here a certain number of workmen assemble every evening and, above all, on Sunday, when, after hearing mass, they can finish their day in an interesting and improving manner, reading books and newspapers and taking part in various games.

The Workmen's Club of Sainte-Geneviève is not the only one of the kind in Paris; there are at least ten formed on the same plan and which reach directly and surely, without any attempt at noisy propagandism, their essential aim: that of depriving the

dram shop and the tavern of their prey.

The lower part of the Rue des Carmes leads to the market of the same name and to the Place Maubert, which occupies the site of the ancient convent. The cloister of the Couvent des Carmes was remarkable as a masterpiece of architecture.

The Place Maubert was in the middle ages the true forum of the University Quarter, the meeting place of the students, the boatmen of the Seine, and market people from all parts of the country, as well as the central academy of the language spoken by the populace. Thus it was said of a man who was coarse in his talk that he had "learned his compliments in the Place Maubert." The "Compliments of the Place Maubert" was indeed the title of a dictionary of plebeianisms. The name of the place or square is corrupted from that of Jean Aubert, second Abbé of Sainte-Geneviève. Receiving from all sides the outpourings of six popular streets, the Place Maubert has witnessed many tumultuous scenes. Here in 1418 assembled the partisans of Bourgogne who set out to massacre the partisans of Armagnac in their prisons. Here were burnt as heretics Alexandre d'Evreux and Jean Pointer in 1533; the mason Poille in 1535, the goldsmith Claude Lepeintre in 1540, and finally, in 1546, the printer Étienne Dolet, who, by his religious and political opinions as well as by the bitterness of his polemical writings, had made for himself implacable enemies. Across the Place Maubert was dragged the body of Ramus, assassinated in 1572 at the College of Presles in the Rue des Carmes. On one side of it were raised

in 1588 the first barracks of the partisans of the House of Guise against King Henri III., and sixty years later the barricades of the Fronde.

At a few steps from the Place Maubert stood, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in the Rue de Bièvre and the Rue des Grands Degrés, two attorneys' offices, where were engaged two young clerks destined one day to dazzle the world of letters and of the stage. One was Crébillon; the other Voltaire.

All kinds of famous houses existed on or in the immediate neighbourhood of the Place Maubert: that, for instance, of Grandjean, the celebrated surgeon and oculist to Louis XVI., and that of Marie Antoinette. Local tradition assigns one of the houses to Gabrielle d'Estrées – “la belle Gabrielle” of Henri IV., and here she may really have lived, though the hostile critics of the tradition point out that the architecture of the house does not take us further back than the reign of Louis XV. Part of the house in question is now let out in artisans' lodgings. On the ground floor, painted red, is the Château Rouge, called also – it must be feared with more than external significance – the Guillotine. A special chapter is devoted to the Château Rouge by M. Macé, in his volume on the police of Paris. It is composed of two large rooms, which are filled from morning till night with the disreputable and dangerous classes; close by is a lodging-house, constructed in the garden of the ancient mansion, and let out entirely to Swiss workmen, who live together in the most economical manner, and pass the gaping mouth of the Château

Rouge ten times a day without ever going in. It was at the tavern of the Château Rouge that, in 1887, three men proposed, accepted, and carried out among themselves a bet to throw a woman into the Seine simply for amusement. The victim was a drunken rag-picker, and the stake was two sous: the price of a small glass of brandy.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the University and the Sorbonne, in the very heart of the district of the schools, are two of the most ancient and interesting buildings in Paris: the Palais des Thermes, which carries us back to the Lutetia of the Romans, and the Hôtel Cluny, which recalls mediæval Paris. The Palace of the Hot Baths is in ruins, but these ruins of a building which dates from the third century contain monuments more ancient than themselves.

The Bath-house of the Romans was at the same time a citadel; it is said to have been built in the reign of the Emperor Constantine Chlorus, who inhabited Lutetia from 287 to 292. In the year 360 Julian the Apostate was proclaimed emperor in this palace by the army and the people, and the palace is still generally known as the Thermæ of Julian. This honour was due to him by reason of his special predilection for his “dear Lutetia.” After him, the Emperors Valentinian and Gratian passed at this palace the winter of 365.

Independently of the interest presented by the Palais des Thermes as a survival of Roman Paris, and of the Hôtel Cluny, as a type of French architecture, these two monuments shelter

a museum in which have been brought together numerous specimens of curiosities and wonders of all kinds – some only of antiquarian, others both of antiquarian and of artistic interest. In the time when Paris was a Gallo-Roman city there existed on the left bank of the Seine, opposite the island which was to be known as that of the City, a palace surrounded with immense gardens, whose green lawns sloped down even to the edge the river. The Norman invaders laid a portion of it in ruins, and the edifice was by no means in good condition as a whole when, in 1218, Philip Augustus gave it to his chamberlain, Henri. Soon afterwards the old buildings and the gardens connected with them were broken up and apportioned, and towards the end of the eighteenth century the Bishop of Bayeux sold the remains of the Palace des Thermes to Pierre de Chalus, the Abbé of Cluny. The monks of this abbey had plenty of means; and as they did not buy to sell again, they remained proprietors of the Palace of Julian up to the time of the Revolution. The ruins were then made over to private persons, who, without regard to the majesty of history, introduced houses and shops in the midst of the Roman remains. Louis, as a lettered monarch, endeavoured to save the ruins from these profanations of the infidels, and he seems even to have entertained the thought of turning the remains of the ancient edifice into a sort of museum, but he did not carry out his idea; it was not until the reign of Louis Philippe that the town of Paris regained possession of the Palais des Thermes. It ceded the relic to the State in 1843.

After the lapse of so many centuries the astonishing thing is that one stone of the ancient Roman edifice should now remain. The part of the original edifice which Time has spared is that which enclosed the Hot Baths. The large hall, with its highly-imposing vaulted roof, was the Hall of the Cold Baths: the so-called Frigidarium. The place occupied by the fish-tank can still be recognised, and the remains may be seen of the canals which brought the water into the baths. Bricks and stones have been alternately employed in the walls, whose surface has been blackened by "sluttish Time," and impaired in all sorts of ways. This hall has had the most varied fortunes, and for a long time it served as depôt to a cooper, who here stowed away his casks and barrels.

The other portions of the edifice present a purely archæological interest. Going out of the large hall just mentioned and crossing the narrow vestibule, one enters the Tepidarium; but here the vaulted roof has disappeared, and the spectator has nothing around him but crumbling walls. A few steps further on he will come to sub-structures which are evidently the remains of the reservoirs.

The ancient ruin has become a dependence of the more modern Hôtel Cluny. It is a marvellous relic of the fourteenth century; fragments of statues, bas-reliefs, mutilated inscriptions, art relics dug up from under the earth have been collected in the great hall of the "Frigidarium." These remains of Gallo-Roman art show the very foundations of French history. Here is the



famous inscription which sets forth that the "Parisian boatmen" raised under the reign of Tiberius a statue in honour of Jupiter. Close by are enormous blocks of stone, borrowed from the pavement of primitive Lutetia. In the midst of these fragments of columns, of these empty tombs, one figure remains untouched. it is the statue of Julian the Apostate. This sculpture recalls to those who might have forgotten it the carriage and character, the origin and type, of this strange emperor. Is not his hierarchic attitude that of an Asiatic satrap? Is not the calm countenance that of an Oriental prince?

By the side of the ancient palace of the Roman emperors the Hôtel Cluny seems quite young, and we shall doubtless be more at our ease in an edifice which is not yet four hundred years old. When, in the fourteenth century, Pierre de Chalus bought the Palais des Thermes and the land surrounding it, he intended to construct, near the college of his order, a residence which might afford lodging to abbés of Cluny when they were making their frequent visits to Paris. This project does not seem to have been carried into execution; and it was under Charles VIII. that one of the successors of Pierre de Chalus, Jean de Bourbon, founded the building so much admired in the present day. He was not, however, destined to complete it; the Hôtel Cluny, after many delays, was terminated towards the end of the reign of Charles VIII. by Jacques d'Amboise, Abbé of Jumièges, and Bishop of Clermont, one of whose brothers was the famous minister of Louis XII., while the other was grand-master of the order of

Saint John of Jerusalem. All the members of this family seem to get animated by the spirit of the time. Jacques d'Amboise – man of letters, collector, and, in his way, an artist – was one of the moving spirits of the French Renaissance. The Hôtel Cluny belongs, indeed, to that ancient time when art becomes softer and more graceful without losing altogether the severity of the past.

The former residence of Jacques d'Amboise is enclosed on the side of the Rue des Mathurins by a high crenelated wall. In the interior the different apartments have lost very little of their original character, but modifications have of necessity been made; and as the museum needs light the number of the windows has been increased. The chapel retains in all respects its primitive style. The picture of the two Marys weeping over the dead Christ dates from the end of the reign of Louis XII. Of the glass windows which at the time of Jacques d'Amboise adorned the chapel, one alone has remained intact – that in which the Bearing of the Cross is represented. Little enough, then, survives of the past in this building, which has sheltered, one after the other, so many different inmates, some of them sufficiently careless about matters of art. The Hôtel Cluny has been inhabited by Marie of England, widow of Louis XII., by James V., King of Scotland, by Cardinal de Lorraine, and the Duke of Guise; here, under Henry III., the Italian actors represented their pastoral love scenes. Towards the end of the eighteenth century Moutard the printer occupied the principal apartments; and a member of the Academy of Sciences, Messier, had installed above the chapel

a sort of observatory. After the Revolution the hôtel passed from hand to hand, and it would perhaps have disappeared, to give place to a modern house, when a member of the Court of Accounts, M. Alexandre du Sammerard, bought, in 1833, the former residence of the Abbés de Cluny, in order to place within its walls archæological curiosities, precious furniture, and mediæval objects of art which he had made it his pleasure to collect. At his death, nine years later, the Chamber of Deputies passed, on the report of François Arrago, a resolution authorising the Government to buy in the name of the State M. de Sammerard's collections and the edifice which held them. A credit of five hundred thousand francs having been voted for this double acquisition, the Musée des Thermes et de l'Hôtel Cluny was founded in virtue of the law of 24th July, 1843.

Since then the collection has been considerably increased, partly through liberal donations from private persons, partly through excavations undertaken by the State. The catalogue of the museum registers nearly four thousand objects of art. One of the most interesting of these is the altar-piece of the Chapel of Saint-Germer – unhappily much mutilated – in which the chisel of a master of the thirteenth century has represented the Passion of Christ and the legendary adventures of the holy patron of the Church. The heads of all the personages have been broken; the colour and the gilding which covered their vestments have partly disappeared; but in what remains of the altar-piece one sees attitudes which are full of character, and is impressed by

a certain simplicity which approaches grandeur. There is more emotion in the statuettes detached from the tomb of the Duke of Burgundy at the Chartreuse of Dijon. These figures of marble date from the last days of the fourteenth century, and represent the servants of the duke, with writers and chaplains attached to his household. Monks are seen weeping beneath the hood which covers their face. The uncovered faces, full of life and expression, are evidently portraits. Close by, the spirit and grace of the Renaissance may be seen in several admirable specimens: such as the Venus, partly broken, which is attributed, with more or less reason, to Jean Cousin, and the sleeping statuette of a naked woman whose head seems lost in a dream. The delicate style of the sculpture seems to reveal an Italian hand. Less perfect in execution, but equally interesting, is that Ariadne which, by a strange coincidence, was found in the Loire opposite that Château of Chaumont where another woman in despair, Diana of Poitiers, had been shut up by Catherine de Médicis after the death of Henry II. It is the same Diana, this time accompanied by her two daughters, which tradition recognises in the statue attributed to Germain Pilon.

The ivories of the Hôtel Cluny are among its greatest treasures. In this collection ivory work of every period and in every style may be found. The mysterious statuette of a woman crowned by two genii dates from the fourth century. It was discovered in a tomb on the borders of the Rhine. This statuette is surrounded by a number of marbles representing divinities of

various kinds, and is classed, therefore, with the works styled Pantheistic. In one hand this strange figure holds a sceptre bursting into blossom; in the other an oval vase. The style recalls at once classical art and the art of Byzantium. By the side of the ancient statuette is a less ancient bas-relief, representing the marriage of the Princess Theophania with Otho II., who was Emperor of the West from 973 to 983. Here we see the art of the lower Empire: an art of stiff symmetrical forms, but full of barbaric richness. Of the same period, or nearly so, is "The Virgin holding the Infant Jesus on her knees": a solemn hieratic group. To the eleventh century belongs the cross of Saint Anthony, found in the tomb of Morard, Abbé of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Another work of the highest value is the shrine of Saint Yved (twelfth century), from the Abbey of Braisne. This reliquary, in the form of a rectangular casket, is decorated on all sides with figures in relief of elaborate workmanship. Of the same epoch, or still earlier, are the sheets of ivory used for the binding of the Gospels, on which are painted admirable pictures in illustration of the Divine books. The ivory looking-glass frame, representing two figures, which are supposed to be those of Saint Louis and of Blanche de Castille, comes from the treasure of Saint Denis. The pastoral staff which, twice ennobled, belonged, first to the famous Debruges-Dumesnil collection, and afterwards to the collection of Prince Soltykoff, dates from the thirteenth century. The rod of ivory is crowned with a lion in boxwood, enriched with precious stones.

The little monument known as the “oratory of the Duchess of Burgundy” is an ivory on which are related, by means of numerous figures, here the history of Jesus Christ, there that of John the Baptist. It comes from the Chartreuse of Dijon; and by the memoirs of Philippe le Hardi, it would seem that the author was a certain Berthelot.

Eight crowns of massive gold, enriched with pearls and precious stones, were one day dug from the earth at Guarazzar in the neighbourhood of Toledo. They were followed soon afterwards by another crown, belonging evidently to the same hidden treasure. Until then it was scarcely suspected that the Visigoth kings knew what gold-work meant. One of the crowns, however, purchased for the Cluny Museum, bears the words: “Reccesvinthus rex offeret.” Reccesvinthus reigned in Spain from 653 to 672. On a second crown may be read, in characters struck with the hammer, the name, not yet explained, of Sonnica. The other crowns bear no inscription. Archaeologists are unable to decide whether the largest of these crowns was ever worn. But the one inscribed with the name of Reccesvinthus was used, it is held, at the coronation of that king by the Bishop of Toledo. They were, however, offered to the Virgin, and suspended in one of the chapels consecrated to her. The supposition is entertained that at the time of the Arab invasion these precious offerings of the Visigoth king were buried by the Christians. They came to light centuries afterwards, to tell of the magnificence of these almost legendary sovereigns, and of the skill possessed by their artificers

for moulding and cutting gold in every style, besides enriching it with incrustations of sapphires and pearls. The gold altar given by the Emperor Henry III. to the Cathedral of Bâle at the beginning of the eleventh century is another rare and remarkable work. The character of the design, and what is known as to the origin of the monument, have caused it to be attributed to Lombard artists. From the treasury of the same church comes the Golden Rose, given to the Bishop of Bâle by Pope Clement V. at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

But in this part of the museum the glass cases contain innumerable specimens of the religious work of the Middle Ages. Among the curios of the thirteenth century may be cited a large cross adorned with filigree work and precious stones in relief. This was one of the treasures of the Soltykoff collection. Nuremberg is represented by the shrine of Saint Anne, executed in 1472 by Hans Grief. The flesh of the figure is painted. From the same epoch may be dated the "Crossbow Prize," an admirable piece of smith's work in wrought silver, chased and gilt. As the works of the sixteenth century, we find a large mechanical piece, more singular than beautiful, in the form of a vessel on which, among the personages in enamelled gold, grouped around the steering apparatus, may be recognised Charles V. in the midst of a crowd of high dignitaries of the Imperial Court. A mechanism concealed within the ship makes the figure move, musical instruments play, and cannons roar. The museum possesses also, in a mixed style, belonging at once to

art and science, clocks and watches of the Renaissance and of the seventeenth century. Nor must the visitor pass by the famous basin of François Briot, made in pewter with an artistic taste which would not be thrown away on the finest gold. The iron-work consists chiefly of Gothic locks and bolts, once attached to the doors and gates of feudal mansions. Here, too, are the keys, finely worked, of the Château Anest, which Diana of Poitiers may well have touched with her delicate hand. The Hôtel Cluny is famous, moreover, for its collection of ancient arms: Toledo blades of tragic aspect, bearing the names of the great burnishers of the time; armour of war or of parade, carved and damasked by the artificers of Milan; helmets, pikes, muskets, shields; all the formidable instruments of attack with all the ingenious instruments of defence. In the armoury of the Hôtel Cluny may likewise be seen some fine specimens of Oriental work; though the finest creations of this special art are preserved, not at the Hôtel Cluny, but at the Museum of Artillery.

The masterpieces in wax-work will next demand our attention; and here Italy, which in almost every other art has the right to pass first, may perhaps be asked to give precedence to Spain. The Spanish-Moorish specimens are above all admirable. As for the Italian works, they are very numerous, and for the most part well chosen. Apart from the medallions of Lucca della Robbia, which belong to sculpture as much as to waxwork, the plates suspended on the walls, the cups enclosed beneath the glass, are all interesting, and are nearly all of Italian make. A product from



the workshops of Faenza, which, in France, gives its name to crockery in general (*faience*), adorned with the monogram of Christ in Gothic characters, bears the date of 1475. The work is quite archaic; but Faenza can also show plates and cups which tell of the progress and also of the decadence of this centre of a special art, so active in the sixteenth century. Urbino, the birthplace of Raphael, and Pesaro, the birthplace of Rossini, are also represented, together with Rimini, Caffagiolo, Castel-Durante, and, above all, Gubbio, with the masterpieces of its illustrious potter, Giorgio Andreoli. The word seems appropriate when one contemplates the fine plate representing Dædalus, dated 1533, and the two cups relieved with gold, on which smile, from a rainbow-tinted background, two charming women: "Angela Bella," "Dianara Bella." These cups, which now form the admiration of artists, served formerly to receive the presents made by the lover to his mistress. Superb types of the Gubbio work in the sixteenth century are as bright and pure as if they had come yesterday from the hands of the potter. French pottery is also conspicuous at the Hôtel Cluny, both in its ancient and in its modern glory. Specimens of enamelled terracotta, dating from the thirteenth century, are first to be seen. Then one remarks a cup decorated with arabesques encrusted in brown on a whitish ground. These famous styles of pottery used to be vaguely connected with the name and period of Henry II.; but they are at present known to have been made at Oiron, in Poitou, by François Cherpentier, the humble workman of Madame de

Boisy.

The Hôtel Cluny contains many of the best works of Bernard Palissy, the famous artist whose life was a long martyrdom and, for his wife, it must be feared, a long torture; for if it was noble on the part of the husband to sacrifice the household furniture to the perfection of an art to which he was devoted, it must have been painful for the perhaps less enthusiastic wife to hear it crackling within his furnaces. In seeking to determine which of the numerous alleged specimens of this artist's work really belong to him, connoisseurs have been aided by Time, which, destroying the imitations, seems to have preserved the genuine ones alone. Even the charming little figure of the Nurse, for a long time attributed to Palissy, is now said to be from another and later hand. Nevers, Rouen, Moustiers, and the various centres of French pottery, are worthily represented at the Hôtel Cluny, either by isolated pieces or by groups, and even entire collections.

The stained glass at the Hôtel Cluny is for the most part of Swiss or of German origin. The enamels are of every country and every age. Nine enamelled plates of exceptionally large dimensions were painted by Pierre Courtoys in 1559 for the Château de Madrid, in the Bois de Boulogne. The figures – the largest, perhaps, that were ever executed in enamel – represent Justice, Charity, Prudence, and six other mythological divinities, more astonishing than attractive. A remarkable triptych, or picture with shutters, whose painter is unknown, but which belonged to Catherine de Médicis, represents on the central panel

the queen on her knees, in widow's dress, before a crucifix. Her initials, with those of Henry II., adorn this curious relic. Close by are enamelled cups and plates by Pierre Rémond, Nardon Penicaud, and Jean Courtoys, with many works, justly esteemed, by the great enameller Leonard Limousin, remarkable among these being a fine portrait of Eleonora of Austria, sister of Charles V. and Francis I.

The piece of Florentine mosaic in the first hall of the museum ought not to pass unnoticed. It has been described by Vasari; and the Virgin and Child which it represents are the genuine work of Ghirlandaio. Executed at Florence in 1496, it was brought to France by Jean de Ganay, President of the Parliament of Paris. The works of this famous mosaist are now very rare. The one preserved at the Hôtel Cluny is relatively in sound condition, and gives a good idea of the great mosaics which adorned the churches of Tuscany.

The Cluny Museum has no claim to be considered a picture-gallery. It contains, however, a certain number of canvases, illustrating the manners, the costumes, or the furniture of particular periods. The best critics deny that the Jesus in the Garden of Olives is the work of Gentile di Fabriano, to whom the catalogue attributes it. Nor, according to competent judges, is the hand of Primaticcio to be recognised in that Venus who, standing by the side of Love, faces the spectator smiling, and with an arrow in her hand. The painting is marked by delicacy and refinement; but the style is not that of Primaticcio, nor does

the face of Venus reproduce the features of Diana of Poitiers, who, according to some keen-sighted observers, is everywhere to be seen. A more genuine interest is inspired by a few pictures of the fifteenth century, some of Flemish, others of French origin. Very curious is the Mary Magdalen attributed to King René. The repentant sinner is grieving in the midst of a landscape whose background represents the city of Marseilles. Another picture well worthy of notice is one which represents two pictures in the same frame; on the one is represented the coronation of David, on the other the coronation of Louis XII. The author of this work is unknown, but the period is marked by the date of Louis XII.'s coronation (1498); and it is presumable that the painter was some artist of distinction attached to the Court. He was in any case a man of ability, with a certain feeling for colour.

French painting of the sixteenth century is represented by the school of Janet and his successors, but the true house decoration in those luxurious days, when art was mixed up with every detail of life, was tapestry. It was scarcely possible to feel dull in those vast halls, whose walls were covered, and, so to say, animated by a number of life-sized figures, now chasing the stag in picturesque woods, now sitting down to sumptuous feasts, now breaking lances in tournaments and jousts.

Many of these ancient tapestries have become worn out, less through the action of Time – for they were admirably woven – than through the carelessness of their possessors. The Hôtel Cluny preserves some of the best that were ever produced. Take,

for example, the Deliverance of St. Peter, executed at Beauvais in the fifteenth century, or the ten embroidered pictures which tell the history of David and Bathsheba, done in Flanders under Louis XII. The biblical personages who figure in this illustrated story are dressed, of course, in the latest fashion of the year 1500, and the costumes are more interesting inasmuch as the artist who furnished the cartoons for these pictures was undeniably, with all his *naïveté*, an excellent draughtsman. Of another epoch, when art was already on the decline, are the tapestries taken from the arsenal, in which Henry IV. is represented as Apollo, Jeanne d'Albert as Venus, and Marie de Médicis as Juno. The painter, in his passion for allegory, has transformed into Saturn the king's father, Antoine de Bourbon. Many other tapestries, in various states of preservation, and of which the colours have, in many cases, faded beneath the effect of sunlight, possess both artistic and historic interest. The vestments once worn by the Bishop of Bayonne were found in a tomb, and belong to the twelfth century. All kinds of strange contrivances worn by women in past ages (often, it must be supposed, against their will) are to be seen in the Hôtel Cluny: collars, collarettes, baskets, farthingales, girdles, and even high-heeled pattens, all made of iron.

The furniture preserved in the Hôtel Cluny is particularly fine, and is as historical as it is artistically beautiful. Remarkable among the examples of church furniture is the great sideboard of the Cathedral of St. Paul, carved by a Cellini of the fifteenth century. He must have spent his whole life at the work. Nor

is the house furniture less magnificent. Witness the delicate sculpture of the benches, the high chairs with emblazoned backs, the chests for marriage gifts, the bed which is said to have belonged to Francis I., the cabinets of all times and of every shape, the harpsichords, the spinets, the gala carriages, covered with gildings, the sledges, the sedan chairs, and a hundred other objects of luxury: reminiscences of a time when between the workman and the artist there was scarcely any distinction, and when objects destined for the most common use were fashioned and adorned with an elegance and grace which told of true artistic feeling.

In the ancient mansion of Jacques d'Amboise, innumerable other objects might be pointed out either marvellous as works of art or deeply interesting, as illustrating the daily life of past ages, which they reproduce more vividly, perhaps, than any books could do.

Strange as it will appear to Englishmen, the Hôtel Cluny is not only open to the public on Sundays, but is open to the public on Sundays only. On other days permission to visit the museum must be obtained from the Minister of Fine Arts. Exceptions are made in favour of foreigners exhibiting their passports.

# **CHAPTER XVI.**

## **THE MUSÉE D'ARTILLERIE**

### **The Museum of Artillery – Its Origin and History – The Growth of its Collection of Armour and Weapons of all Kinds**

THE Museum of Artillery, with its varied and admirably classified collection of arms, takes us back to prehistoric times, and after exhibiting rude martial implements of dim antiquity, brings us forward through successive ages of arms until it at length produces the very piece which is to-day in the hands of the French soldier.

The origin of the Musée d'Artillerie may be traced to the reign of Louis XIV. The Duc d'Humières, Grand Master of Artillery, obtained of the great monarch permission to place, in one of the halls of the royal magazine at the Bastille, a collection of small models of artillery then in use. This collection, intended to serve for the instruction of young artillery officers, was exhibited in glass cases.

The Duc de Maine and the Comte d'Eu, who succeeded d'Humières, did nothing towards the development of this happy idea, which was only resumed on the abolition of the post

of Grand Master in 1755 by Lieutenant-General de Vallières, who succeeded the count as First Inspector-General. A certain number of ancient arms and of new models were transported to the Academy, and an inventory of the collections, which is still extant, was prepared. In 1788 the celebrated General de Gribeauval, regarded by French writers as the creator of modern artillery, succeeded de Vallières as Inspector-General. It was by means of little models constructed beneath his eyes that Gribeauval had prosecuted his studies, and it was his familiarity with models which enabled him to determine the precise form of the arms to be employed in his new system.

The idea of these little models extended itself to all the machines used in the artillery, as likewise to those ancient arms of which specimens had been preserved. Generalising his idea, Gribeauval determined to apply it to the creation of a complete establishment, and his project was in due time realised. The Minister of War, Comte de Brienne, at the reiterated recommendation of the general, granted to Rolland, Commissary of War and chief in the office of General Inspection of Artillery, a commission which named him director of the new museum. The programme proposed by Gribeauval embraced every description of war implements, whether past or present; nor did it exclude a collection of all the projects which had hitherto been proposed to the State by inventors.

This comprehensive scheme, executed with intelligence and activity, almost immediately gave the happy results which had



been anticipated. Objects of all kinds, manufactured with great care in provincial establishments of artillery, arrived in shoals at Paris, and were united with the assemblage of ancient arms and armour which already existed in the royal magazine. This was a moment of growth and prosperity for the new institution. Very soon, however, its progress was to be checked, and its existence threatened by the grave events of 1789. On the 14th of July the arsenal of the artillery was devastated, and its collections almost entirely destroyed. Gribeauval was spared the pain of witnessing the destruction of the work to which he had wished to attach his name. He died on the 7th of May, 1789, two months before the taking of the Bastille.

Curiously enough, however, that same revolution which seemed to have finally wrecked the new museum gave it suddenly a second life, and afforded it an opportunity of wide and rapid development.

From 1791 to 1794 the national factories were inadequate to supply the wants of the army. The system of requisitions which was vigorously enforced brought into the arsenals considerable quantities of arms of all kinds, as well as armour. A commission named by the Ministry had to select therefrom what was serviceable, and to reject what was useless. Regnier, attached to the commission as "Controller of Arms," conceived the happy notion of putting aside every object which seemed to him to possess particular interest, and which at the same time was of no practical use. The assortment he thus made was

placed temporarily in the Convent of the Feuillants. Here it was inspected by Pétier, Minister of War, who, perceiving the future utility of such a collection, caused it to be transferred to the Convent of the Dominicans of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Here it was enhanced by the addition of those models which the before-mentioned Rolland had managed to save from the destruction of the Bastille. The whole was placed under the charge of the newly-formed "Committee of Artillery"; and thus in 1796 the museum obtained its re-organisation.

The Committee at once applied its energies to the development of the enterprise. They obtained from the Ministry permission to inspect those collections of arms which were contained in ancient royal residences, or in the mansions of great families who had become dispersed or had taken to flight. From these collections they were empowered to select whatever objects seemed eligible for exhibition in their museum. Such, however, was the resistance offered in many instances to this system of scientific plunder, that the booty carried off was not so extensive as had been anticipated.

In a more direct manner, however, the Ministry enlarged the treasures of the museum. For this purpose the First Consul, passing through Sedan in 1804, ordered that the arms he saw at the Town Hall should be transported to Paris; and this time it was necessary to obey, though the carriage of the trophies was entrusted, unfortunately, to rascals, who filched and sold part of them.

The peace of 1814 brought back to Paris the generals of artillery. The Central Committee resumed its sittings, and one of the first of these was devoted to the reorganisation of the museum, the importance of whose contents had just been revealed by a hastily-prepared inventory. The Committee appointed a commission, composed of three colonels, three chiefs of squadrons, and three captains, presided over by a general. This body had to draw up an inventory descriptive of each object, classifying the whole collection and reducing it to chronological order. The peace of 1814, however, was broken by Napoleon's return from Elba, and the members of the commission were called away to active duty.

In 1815 the Museum of Artillery suffered nothing from the invasion: in consequence, it may be, of special measures taken beforehand for its protection. Between 1815 and 1830 the building was enlarged and a new classification was introduced. All was going well when the Artillery Museum was threatened with complete ruin. On the 28th of July, 1830, the insurgents came to the museum in search of arms; after a short but violent struggle, the doors were broken in and the place sacked. For one entire day, July 29th, the museum was almost empty, but on the morrow many of the arms seized the day before were given back, and little by little the contents of the museum, to the honour of the Parisian population, were restored. A certain number of the arms, about a hundred in all, had disappeared for ever; the loss was soon afterwards made good through

the purchase of the Duke of Reggio's collection. During the Revolution of February 7, 1848, the museum suffered no injury; a few insurgents approached the place, but were easily induced to retire.

The museum, as now constituted, fulfils the condition of its original programme, as laid down by General de Gribeauval. It contains specimens of every arm known, from the primitive flint hatchet to the weapons actually in use. It offers many gaps, entire centuries are unrepresented; but these gaps are unavoidable: they exist everywhere; and the historical character of the collection is as complete as the present condition of archaeological research permits.

The most distant period to which the history of arms can be traced is the one described by modern archæology as the Age of Stone. The use of metals was at that time unknown to man, who constructed his arms and implements out of the hardest stones he could find, the bones of animals in this primitive industry being also employed.

The researches made in different parts of France have yielded a good supply of hatchets, arrow and javelin points, made generally of flint. In the earliest period of the Stone Age the flints of the weapons were rough splints, in the second period they were polished. Among the earliest specimens of metal-work, the helmets of the ancient Etruscans may be cited, and afterwards those of the Greeks for infantry and for cavalry. In the satirical comedies of Aristophanes the price is mentioned

(in the one entitled “Peace”) of the cuirasses and helmets of his time. Thus a cuirass cost ten minæ (about £35), a helmet one mina (£3 10s.). This series is continued by two Roman helmets in bronze, found at Lyons on the site of the ancient city. Among the Roman swords, some bear the mark of the place of manufacture – “Sabini.” In one of the principal cases may be seen the bronze portion of an ancient Roman standard found in Asia Minor, and given to the museum by the Emperor Napoleon III. The object is probably unique, and possesses in any case much archæological value; it is adorned with the medallions of the two emperors reigning at the time to which it belongs, and the effigies of the greater gods.

After Cæsar’s conquest, the Gauls adopted rapidly enough the manners and the arms of the Romans. At length, however, towards the end of the fifth century, the Franks appeared, and the Frankish invader brought with him his own sword and his own shield. The soldier among the Franks was buried sometimes in a sitting posture, more often stretched on his back. On the right of the sleeping warrior was his lance, with the point turned towards his head, and measuring about his own height; turned towards his feet was his battle-axe; on the left his sword – but this by exception, and only in the case of a chief. The Franks also carried small daggers with a single edge, knives, and scissors in their waist-bands. The smaller objects of equipment have been found in the graves of Frankish warriors. The Frank was armed chiefly for attack; his weapons of offence were numerous and

formidable, while for the defensive he had nothing but his little shield, so small in comparison with the huge target-like arm of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The chiefs alone among the Franks wore helmets.

The period of Charlemagne has been much studied, but it is difficult even now to form any idea as to the arms the emperor and his soldiers carried. The sword of Charlemagne in the Museum of Sovereigns and his spear are all, in the way of armoury, that has been preserved. If, however, we compare the sword with that of Childeric, we see many points of difference; the sword of Childeric, almost without a guard, and with a pommel of small dimensions, is very like a Roman sword. The large hemispheric pommel and the broad blade of the Emperor take us back to the mediæval types of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. As regards the successors of Charlemagne, the guards of Charles the Bald wore a uniform which closely resembled that of the Romans, with helmets of barbaric form, of which the base was very nearly square.

Now for a century and a half there is a break in the history of French weapons until we come to the Bayeux Tapestry, some time after the conquest of England by William the Norman. This celebrated piece of embroidery enlightens us as to the arms, the costume, and the equipment of armies towards the end of the eleventh century: so different from everything of the kind under Charles the Bald. In the space of about two hundred years the arms and the equipment of the soldier had undergone a complete

change. A single sword is the only weapon of this epoch that the museum can offer; it is exactly like those of the Bayeux Tapestry, the point being formed not by the gradual tapering of the blade, but suddenly, by a sharpened end.

The twelfth century is represented by two helmets placed beneath glass at the end of one of the galleries; they were both found in the Somme. In the thirteenth century the man of war was usually armed with a coat of mail, but he wore a sort of hood in mail which he could throw back on his shoulders, of which an interesting specimen is to be seen at the museum.

The fourteenth century saw a transformation of the coat of mail into a suit of armour of polished steel, which, with some variations, caused by the introduction of portable fire-arms, remained the ordinary armour of the man of war until the time of its final disappearance. Towards 1325 the transformation was complete, as is proved by a great number of monuments of the time, including sculptured figures on tombs, paintings, manuscripts, sepulchral figures engraved on plates of copper, &c. These monuments and documents show that the military costume and equipment of the fourteenth century varied more than is generally imagined. Every man of war armed himself as he thought fit; but there are enough records to give an idea of the type that prevailed and even to guide the archæologist as to the dates of particular changes. What caused the ancient coat of mail to be given up was its weight, and at the same time its incompleteness for defensive purposes. It could stop the thrust

of a sword and even of a lance, but in collision the effect of the shock was felt; and in adopting leather jerkins, and afterwards steel plates, the object was to spread the effect of the shock over a greater surface.

The coat of mail was not abandoned, but it was worn shorter and of lighter make, without its former accessories, and thus greater lightness and greater facilities of movement were gained.

The warrior towards the end of the thirteenth century was oppressed by his equipment, and did not get off his horse. After the transformation he was able to fight on foot, as he did in all the celebrated battles of the fourteenth century, beginning from Crécy (1346).

After the adoption of steel armour the coat of mail was still for a time worn underneath; but as the steel armour became more solid the coat of mail was gradually abandoned. The museum contains the complete armour of a man and horse, which dates from the middle of the fifteenth century.

Towards the end of that century the armour of the man of war had reached perfection. Every kind of shield had now been given up as useless; plate armour furnished every necessary defence, for it was only when the armour was weak that any additional protection was necessary. Thus the Norman coat of mail, as worn by William's invading army, presented in its species of trellis-work enormous gaps, and for his complete defence the horseman protected himself with a long shield in the form of a heart, which in action covered the whole of his left side – the side he presented



to the foe. As the armour becomes more effective the necessity for a shield diminishes, and, after getting smaller and smaller, it at last disappears. The Artillery Museum contains a suit of armour by Turenne, which shows what plate armour had become at the end of the seventeenth century. It was abandoned altogether at the beginning of Louis XIV.'s reign; the last helmets worn in France and England belonging to the time when this head-gear formed part of the armour of Cromwell's Ironsides.

Among the innumerable specimens of arms preserved in the Museum of Artillery, portable arms are classed apart from those which strike at a distance, the latter including spears, javelins, bows and arrows, cannon, and every kind of fire-arm. The bow was the arm of the English, the crossbow that of the French. With the former the archer could fire more quickly, and it was easier to preserve the string from getting wet; of which the advantage was experienced on the English side during the battle of Crécy.

The English retained the use of the bow long after the French had abandoned that of the crossbow; and, according to the director of the Musée d'Artillerie, English bowmen were seen in action as late as 1627, at the siege of Rochelle. Companies of archers disappeared from the French army under Louis XII., about the year 1514. The last time, however, that bows and arrows were seen in European warfare was at the battles of Eylau and Friedland, in 1806, when, according to M. Thiers ("History of the Consulate and Empire"), some of the Tartar troops in the Russian army appeared armed with these antique, and for the

most part obsolete, engines of war.

Musketry of every kind is represented in the Museum of Artillery, from the earliest to the latest patterns, including, in particular, the flint locks used in the wars of the Empire, percussion locks, by which they were replaced, the rifles adopted just before the Crimean war, and the quick-firing muskets of the most recent models, including the chassepot, associated with the war of 1870 and 1871, and the “fusil Gras,” which replaced it. The word artillery was formerly applied to every implement of war, though since the introduction of musketry it has been used only to designate guns of large calibre drawn by horses, as distinguished from portable fire-arms. Nevertheless, the first specimens of artillery, in something like the modern sense of the word, were of small bore, and the projectiles were the balls used in connection with the crossbow. The French employed artillery of this kind as far back as the battle of Crécy (1346). Gradually the bolts of the crossbow were replaced, for artillery fire, by leaden balls, called plummets (“plommées”), of about three pounds’ weight; these were used in cannons of modern shape, and by degrees the size of the balls was increased until soon the artillery of an army was divided into light and heavy.

The discoveries of the monk Berthold Schwartz belong to the middle of the fourteenth century; and though this learned, but not perhaps beneficent, inventor revolutionised the art of war, he cannot be accused, in pursuing his studies, of having had any deadly purpose in view.

The earliest fire-arms were loaded at the breech by means of a box which was received in a strong stirrup and fastened with a key; and with the use of breech-loading pieces the history of artillery begins, and up to the present time ends. Soon after the introduction of artillery a rapid augmentation took place in the size of the guns employed, and cannon-balls of stone were used. These were replaced by smaller balls made of cast iron, but even to the present day the weight-carrying power of a gun is estimated on the supposition that the ball is of stone. Stone cannon-balls were used by the Turks long after they had been abandoned in European armies; so also were pieces of immense calibre. In Western Europe cast-iron balls were found to be more effective than the larger balls of stone.

The Artillery Museum contains specimens of every kind of cannon used, from the original breech-loader to the breech-loader of the present day. No. 1 of the catalogue is a small cannon of the earliest period, made of forged iron and furnished with a breech-loading apparatus; 14 and the numbers following are siege-pieces of various kinds abandoned by the English at Meaux, after the bombardment of 1422. The projectiles for these pieces were of stone. No. 7 comes from the ancient residence, near Verdun, of the Knights of Malta; and next to it is a fine cannon in bronze given to the Knights of Rhodes by the Emperor Sigismund in 1434. No. 19, also in bronze, belongs to the reign of Louis XI.; and, like No. 18, comes from Rhodes. It bears this inscription: – “At the command of Loys [Louis], by the grace of

God King of France, eleventh of this name, I was cast at Chartres by Jean Chollet, knight, artillery master to this sovereign." Next but one in the series is a large mortar of bronze, cast at the command of the Grand Master of the Order of the Hospitallers of Jerusalem, Pierre d'Aubusson, 1480.

The construction of the various pieces, as we follow them in chronological order, becomes simplified, then complicated, then simplified again. Gun-carriages and ammunition-chests vary in form, until we find at last the field artillery, under Napoleon III., of one pattern; though two kinds of guns, light and heavy, are still used in the reserve artillery. The rifled cannon introduced by the Emperor Napoleon, which did such effective service during the Italian war of 1859, was looked upon by the French as the best possible field-gun; and, possibly from exaggerated loyalty taking the form of servility, the commission of officers to whom the breech loading rifled guns of Krupp were submitted a few years before the war of 1870 rejected them as in no way superior to the gun of Napoleonic invention actually in use. Since the last war the French have adopted breech-loading rifled pieces more or less on the model of the Krupp guns, treated with such disdain by the military advisers of Napoleon III.

Next to the pieces arranged in chronological order have been placed a number of foreign guns taken at various epochs from the enemy, including, among the latest acquisitions of this kind, a number of curious highly ornamented Chinese guns. Apart from the interesting exhibition of musketry and artillery in the

military museum, a few words may here be said on the history of fire-arms generally. The use of fire-arms preceded by some centuries the famous invention of the German monk, Berthold Schwartz; which, in Europe, is known to have been anticipated a century earlier by the English monk, Roger Bacon. The art of making gunpowder was known in the second half of the thirteenth century to the Arabs of the north of Africa and the Moors of Spain.

The Italians, too, are said to have employed artillery in the thirteenth century, but there is no positive proof of its having been used until the middle of the fourteenth, when, so far as Europe is concerned, Roger Bacon's invention, and all previous inventions of the same kind, had borne no fruit, whereas the discovery made by Berthold Schwartz received instant application.

# **CHAPTER XVII.**

## **THE VAL DE GRÂCE – RELICS OF THE GREAT**

**The Deaf and Dumb Institution – The  
Val de Grâce – Hearts as Relics – Royal  
Funerals – The Church of Saint-Denis**

RETURNING from the Museum of Artillery to the Museum of the Hôtel Cluny, we see, from the Cluny garden, the portico of the ancient church of Saint-Benoit, first transformed into the Théâtre du Panthéon, and then demolished. Enclosed by the church and cloister of Saint-Benoit was an open space, in which, on the 5th of June, the day of the Fête-Dieu, 1455, François Villon, the wild vagabond poet, assassinated the priest Philippe Chermoye, his rival in love. Closed at the time of the Revolution, and then sold as national property, it was afterwards, in 1813, converted into a flour dépôt. In 1832, on the site of the ruined church, was built the Théâtre du Panthéon, where Alexandre Dumas brought out his drama of *Paul Jones*. The Théâtre du Panthéon, after remaining closed for some years, was pulled down in 1854. Near it, however, on the other side of the Hôtel

Cluny, looking towards the Boulevard Saint-Germain, was built the Théâtre des Folies Saint-Germain, where were produced *Les Inutiles* of Edouard Cadol, *Les Sceptiques* of Felicien Mallefille, and a number of other amusing pieces.

In the neighbourhood of the Hôtel Cluny and of the Théâtre Cluny is a very interesting establishment: the Deaf and Dumb Institution of the benevolent Abbé de l'Epée, to whom the deaf and dumb are indebted not only for the language of signs, which for them replaces speech, but also for the establishment in which the deaf and dumb children receive the education and instruction necessary for them to make their way in the world. But those inmates intended by their parents for a liberal profession are charged one thousand francs (£40) a year. The departments, communes, and charitable institutions of the country maintain purses of about 6,000 francs. The State has the disposal of 140 purses, from which it makes to the institution an annual allowance of 70,000 francs. There are higher classes for children who desire to follow them, with workshops for children who will have to subsist by manual labour. In 1785 the Deaf and Dumb School, carried on until that time in the Rue des Moulins at the Butte Saint-Roch, received an annual subvention of 34,000 francs. The Abbé de l'Epée died on the 23rd of December, 1789, at the age of seventy-seven. His funeral oration was pronounced on the 23rd of January, 1790, by the Abbé Fauchet, preacher-in-ordinary to the king. On the 21st of July in the following year the National Assembly voted an annual sum of 12,700 livres (*i. e.*,

francs) for the Deaf and Dumb School, which now, from the Convent of the Celestins, where Queen Marie Antoinette had established it, was transferred to the ancient seminary of Saint-Magloire, Rue du Faubourg Saint-Jacques.

The Deaf and Dumb School was reconstructed in 1823 by the architect, M. Peyre, who left it as it now stands. It is looked upon as the perfect model of institutions of the kind. It contains, besides the class-rooms, refectories, dormitories, and workshops, not to mention the rooms in which the sittings of the "Central Society of Education and Assistance for the Deaf and Dumb" are held.

Almost opposite the entrance to the Deaf and Dumb Institute is the Rue des Ursulines, and just beyond, the Rue des Feuillantines, where Victor Hugo passed the happiest years of his childhood, to which reference is made in some of the finest verses of the *Orientales*. The Rue Saint-Jacques now joins the Rue d'Enfer, which separates it from the Boulevard Saint-Michel. The Rue d'Enfer owes its ominous name to a belief entertained in the eighteenth century that it was haunted by the fiend. Various plans for driving away the common enemy of man were suggested, until at last the bright idea occurred to someone of making over the entire street to an order of monks, who, it was thought, would be able, if anyone could, to deal with the invader from below. Either by some exorcising process, or by the natural dread which Satan or his emissary could not fail to experience at being brought beneath the observation of so many pious brethren,



the Rue d'Enfer, from the time of its passing into the hands of the religious order, became one of the quietest thoroughfares in Paris. It still, however, in memory of the old legend, preserves its ancient name. No. 269 in the Rue d'Enfer, which runs out of Paris by the side of the Luxembourg Gardens, and takes us almost to suburban parts, is the house, formerly a Benedictine monastery, where, until the Revolution, was preserved the body of James II. of England, who had died at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the 16th September, 1701, and of Louise Marie Stewart, his daughter, who died at the same place in 1727.

We now approach the Val de Grâce, that superb monument which Anne of Austria founded in 1641 as a thank-offering for the birth of the dauphin, afterwards Louis XIV., who came into the world when his mother had been twenty-two years without giving birth to a child. The young king, now in his eighth year, laid the first stone of the Val de Grâce on the 1st of April, 1645. Mansard, the royal architect, had drawn up the plan and begun the work, when serious difficulties presented themselves; for the site of the church was just above the catacombs. To reach a foundation, it was necessary to make a number of deep piercings, besides supporting the new edifice with blocks of solid masonry. One of Molière's few serious poems is in honour of the Val de Grâce and of its architect, who was numbered amongst his most intimate and most cherished friends. After a very short time, however, the direction of the works was taken from Mansard, and given to Jacques le Mercier. Finally, Pierre de Muet was

entrusted with the difficult but honourable task; nor did he finish the work without the assistance of two other architects, Gabriel le Duc and Duval.

The façade of the Val de Grâce, like that of the Sorbonne, is composed of two Corinthian orders, placed one above the other. Around the cupola Pierre Mignard has painted a large fresco representing the abode of the blest, divided into many mansions. This admirable work is certainly (as Molière pointed out in the poem previously referred to) Mignard's masterpiece; and it may well be regarded as the most important wall-painting in Paris. The mosaic of the marble pavement, in spite of its dilapidated condition, is another attraction connected with this fine building. The principal altar, reproduced from that of St. Peter's at Rome, had been destroyed in the revolutionary days of 1793. But the architect, Ruprich Robert, reconstructed it by order of the Emperor Napoleon III.; and it was consecrated after the fall of the Second Empire, on the 28th of July, 1870. The paintings which adorn the chapel are by Philippe of Champagne and his nephew, Jean Baptiste. The dome, which seemed to be in an insecure condition, was reconstructed and strengthened by means of iron supports in 1864 and 1865.

Closed in 1790, the Church of Val de Grâce was used as a magazine for stores during the Republic and the Empire; and it was not restored to public worship until 1826. The hearts of the princes and princesses of the royal family were successively deposited in the different chapels of the church, the first being

that of Ann Elizabeth, daughter of Louis XIV., who died in tender years; the last that of Louis, Duke of Burgundy, who died March 27, 1761. These hearts were thrown to the winds in 1793, but not the reliquaries of gilded enamel in which they were enclosed. One alone was saved: the heart of the dauphin, son of Louis XVI. and of Marie Antoinette, which was restored to the royal family and afterwards deposited at Saint-Denis in 1817. Two hearts are still deposited in the ancient vaults: that of an English woman named Mary Danby, of whom no record has been preserved, and that of Larrey, the illustrious surgeon-in-chief to the Grand Army, whose statue in bronze, by David of Angers, adorns the courtyard of the Val de Grâce.

The last king of France and of Navarre died on the 6th of July, 1836, and it was not until nine days afterwards, on the 15th of July, that the fact was made known to the French public through the columns of the *Gazette de France*. The heart, too, of Charles X. was, according to royal custom, separated from the body; though instead of being preserved apart, as in the case of former French kings, it was, after being enclosed in a heart-shaped box of lead, again enclosed in a box of enamel fastened with screws to the top of the coffin. The Comte de Chambord, on the other hand, was buried in the ordinary manner, and not, like Charles X., with his heart on the coffin lid; nor like Louis XVIII., with his heart in one place and his body in another. The dead, according to the German ballad, "ride fast." But the living move still faster; and in France, almost as much as in England, the separation of

a heart from the body to be kept permanently as a relic is in the present day a process which seems to savour of ancient times; though, as a matter of fact, it was common enough, at least among the French, at the end of the last century. In our own country the discontinuance of what was at one time as much a custom in England as in France, or any other Continental land, is probably due to the influence of the Reformation, which, condemning absolutely the adoration of the relics of saints, did not favour the respectful preservation of relics of any kind. Great was the astonishment caused in England when, in the last generation, it was found that Daniel O'Connell had by will ordered his heart to be sent to Rome. The injunction was made at the time the subject of an epigram which was intended to be offensive, but which would probably have been regarded by O'Connell himself as the reverse, setting forth, as it did, that the heart which was to be forwarded to Rome had never, in fact, been anywhere else. The reasons for which, in the Middle Ages, hearts were enclosed in precious urns may have been very practical ones. Sometimes the owner of the heart had died far from home; and, in accordance with his last wishes, the organ associated with all his noblest emotions was sent across the seas to his living friends. Such may well have been the case when, after the death of St. Louis at Tunis, the heart of the pious king was transmitted to France, where it was preserved for centuries, perhaps even until our own time, in the Sainte-Chapelle. In the year 1798, while some masons were engaged in repairing the building, which had

been converted into a *depôt* for state archives, they came across a heart-shaped casket in lead, containing what was described as “the remains of a human heart.” The custodians of the archives drew up a formal report on the discovery, and, enclosing it in the casket with the remains, replaced the whole beneath the flagstones under which they had been found. In 1843, when the chapel was restored, the leaden heart-shaped casket was found anew, and a commission was appointed to decide as to the genuineness of the remains believed to be those of St. Louis. An adverse decision was pronounced, the reasons for discrediting the legend on the subject being fully set forth by M. Letrenne, the secretary of the commission.

More authentic are the remains cherished at Rouen as representing the heart of Richard the Lion-hearted; though in this case again all similitude to a heart, whether in shape or in substance, has entirely disappeared. The descendants of St. Louis have in most cases had their hearts preserved, though for different reasons from those which seemed to have actuated the pious Crusader in his distant exile. Louis XIV., whose body, like that of his predecessors and successors even to the eighteenth of the same name, was to be buried at Saint-Denis, gave his heart to the Jesuits: “that heart,” says the Duc de Saint-Simon, “which loved none and which few loved.” The heart of Louis XVIII. was in like manner entrusted to the keeping of a religious house; and the same custom would doubtless have been followed when Louis XV. died of small-pox, had the dangerous condition of the body

allowed of its being done.

From Louis XV. to Louis XVIII. no king of France died on the throne. But when the postmortem examination was made of the child who perished in the Temple, Dr. Pelletan, one of the surgeons who took part in the operation, placed aside the heart of the so-called Louis XVII., and, some twenty years afterwards, offered it to Louis XVIII., who, however, declined the gift. Whether the king disbelieved Dr. Pelletan's story, or whether, as a certain set of writers maintain, he regarded as two different beings the child who died in the Temple and Louis XVII. (believed by many to have been smuggled out of prison and replaced by a substitute) has never been made known. The reputed heart of Louis XVII. did not in any case possess for Louis XVII.'s successor the value that Dr. Pelletan had hoped. Such relics cannot indeed be prized if any uncertainty exists as to their identity. About the same time that Dr. Pelletan, by his own account, was appropriating to himself the heart of Louis XVII., the heart of the great Buffon somehow became lost. Buffon had bequeathed his heart to a friend for whom he entertained the deepest affection. But the son, who had a great affection for his father, refused to part with it, and offered in its place his father's brain. The heart was somehow lost in the midst of the revolutionary troubles, but the brain has been preserved even until now. The illustrious Cuvier wished at one time to purchase it, in order to place it at the foot of Buffon's statue. At another time the Russian Government wished to buy it; and a high bid

was once made for it by the proprietor of a museum of curiosities; until at last it became the property of the State.

The heart of Buffon may probably, like many others, have been stolen for the sake of its casket. Hearts intended to be preserved were usually enclosed in cases not of lead – as by exception the heart of St. Louis seems to have been – but of silver, and even gold. The precious metal was often, moreover, adorned with jewels of great value. Every precaution, in fact, was taken to render as difficult as possible the permanent preservation of the object which it was desired to keep for ever; and, as a natural result, the number of hearts which have come down to the present day is exceedingly small. Nearly all the hearts in cases now to be met with are those of modern celebrities. That of Voltaire – which after being reverently kept until his death by his friend and admirer, the Marquis de Villette, was at the Marquis's death given by his heirs to the state – can be seen at the National Library of Paris. But the Hôtel des Invalides is, more than any other French establishment, rich in hearts of the great. There the hearts are religiously preserved of Turenne, of La Tour d'Auvergne, of Kléber, and of Napoleon. In England the encased heart best known to us is probably that "Heart of Bruce" celebrated in Aytoun's "Lay" on the subject. Boece, in the story on which Aytoun's poem is partly founded, relates that when Sir James Douglas was chosen as most worthy of all Scotland to pass with King Robert's heart to the Holy Land, he put it in a case of gold, with aromatic and precious ointments, and

took with him Sir William Sinclair and Sir Robert Logan, with many other noblemen, to the holy grave, “where he buried the said heart with the most reverence and solemnity that could be devised.” According to Froissart, however, and other authorities, Bruce’s heart was brought back to Scotland. Douglas, the keeper of the heart, encountering the infidels, endeavoured to cut his way through, and might have done so had he not turned to rescue a companion whom he saw in jeopardy. In attempting this he became inextricably mixed up with the enemy. Then taking from his neck the casket which contained the heart of Bruce, he cast it before him, and exclaimed with a loud voice, “Now pass onward as thou wert wont, and I will follow thee.” These were the last words and deeds of an heroic life. Douglas, quite overpowered, was slain; and it was not until the following day that the heart of Bruce and the body of Douglas were both recovered. Brought back to Scotland, the heart was deposited at Melrose, and the Douglas family have ever since carried on their armorial bearings a bloody heart. This is one of the few hearts which have been preserved to a good purpose, and its preservation in the present day is largely due to its having been embalmed in verse.

The obsequies of the French kings have from the earliest times been attended with as much pomp and show as their coronations. It was not enough to embalm the body, place it in several coffins and finally carry it to the tomb; it was necessary, before transporting it to the royal burial-place of Saint-Denis, to observe a ceremonial which the court functionaries and the



officials of state made a point of following in the most literal manner. In the first place, the effigy of the dead king was exposed for forty days in the palace, stretched out on a state bed, clothed in royal garments – the crown on the head, the sceptre in the right hand, and the brand of Justice in the left, with a crucifix, a vessel of holy water, and two golden censers at the foot of the bed. The officers of the palace continued their duties as usual, and even went so far as to serve the king's meals as though he were still living. The body was afterwards transported to the abbey of Saint-Denis, with the innumerable formalities laid down beforehand; while, at the moment of interment, so many honours were paid to it, that to enumerate them would be to fill a small volume. So precisely was the ceremony regulated that battles of etiquette constantly took place among the exalted persons figuring in the ceremony. At the burial of Philip Augustus the Papal Legate and the Archbishop of Rheims disputed for precedence, and, as neither would give way, they performed service at the same time, in the same church, but at different altars. A like scandal occurred at the funeral of St. Louis. When his successor, Philip III., wished to enter the abbey of Saint-Denis at the head of the procession, the doors were closed in his face. The abbot objected to the presence, not of the king, his master, but of the Bishop of Paris and the Archbishop of Sens, whom he had observed among the officiating clergy, and who, according to his view, had no right to perform service in the abbey of Saint-Denis, where he alone was chief. The

difference was arranged by the archbishop and bishop taking off their pontifical garments and acknowledging the supremacy of the abbot in his own abbey.

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