VICTOR HUGO

NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS

Victor Marie Hugo
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Содержание

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PREFACE

A few years ago, while visiting or, rather, rummaging about Notre-Dame, the author of this book found, in an obscure nook of one of the towers, the following word, engraved by hand upon the wall: —

ANANKE.

These Greek capitals, black with age, and quite deeply graven in the stone, with I know not what signs peculiar to Gothic caligraphy imprinted upon their forms and upon their attitudes, as though with the purpose of revealing that it had been a hand of the Middle Ages which had inscribed them there, and especially the fatal and melancholy meaning contained in them, struck the author deeply.

He questioned himself; he sought to divine who could have been that soul in torment which had not been willing to quit this world without leaving this stigma of crime or unhappiness upon the brow of the ancient church.

Afterwards, the wall was whitewashed or scraped down, I know not which, and the inscription disappeared. For it is

thus that people have been in the habit of proceeding with the marvellous churches of the Middle Ages for the last two hundred years. Mutilations come to them from every quarter, from within as well as from without. The priest whitewashes them, the archdeacon scrapes them down; then the populace arrives and demolishes them.

Thus, with the exception of the fragile memory which the author of this book here consecrates to it, there remains to-day nothing whatever of the mysterious word engraved within the gloomy tower of Notre-Dame, – nothing of the destiny which it so sadly summed up. The man who wrote that word upon the wall disappeared from the midst of the generations of man many centuries ago; the word, in its turn, has been effaced from the wall of the church; the church will, perhaps, itself soon disappear from the face of the earth.

It is upon this word that this book is founded.

March, 1831.

VOLUME I

BOOK FIRST

CHAPTER I. THE GRAND HALL

Three hundred and forty-eight years, six months, and nineteen days ago to-day, the Parisians awoke to the sound of all the bells in the triple circuit of the city, the university, and the town ringing a full peal.

The sixth of January, 1482, is not, however, a day of which history has preserved the memory. There was nothing notable in the event which thus set the bells and the bourgeois of Paris in a ferment from early morning. It was neither an assault by the Picards nor the Burgundians, nor a hunt led along in procession, nor a revolt of scholars in the town of Laas, nor an entry of "our much dread lord, monsieur the king," nor even a pretty hanging of male and female thieves by the courts of Paris. Neither was it the arrival, so frequent in the fifteenth century, of some plumed and bedizened embassy. It was barely two days since the last cavalcade of that nature, that of the Flemish ambassadors charged with concluding the marriage between the dauphin and Marguerite of Flanders, had made its entry into Paris, to the great

annoyance of M. le Cardinal de Bourbon, who, for the sake of pleasing the king, had been obliged to assume an amiable mien towards this whole rustic rabble of Flemish burgomasters, and to regale them at his Hôtel de Bourbon, with a very "pretty morality, allegorical satire, and farce," while a driving rain drenched the magnificent tapestries at his door.

What put the "whole population of Paris in commotion," as Jehan de Troyes expresses it, on the sixth of January, was the double solemnity, united from time immemorial, of the Epiphany and the Feast of Fools.

On that day, there was to be a bonfire on the Place de Grève, a maypole at the Chapelle de Braque, and a mystery at the Palais de Justice. It had been cried, to the sound of the trumpet, the preceding evening at all the cross roads, by the provost's men, clad in handsome, short, sleeveless coats of violet camelot, with large white crosses upon their breasts.

So the crowd of citizens, male and female, having closed their houses and shops, thronged from every direction, at early morn, towards some one of the three spots designated.

Each had made his choice; one, the bonfire; another, the maypole; another, the mystery play. It must be stated, in honor of the good sense of the loungers of Paris, that the greater part of this crowd directed their steps towards the bonfire, which was quite in season, or towards the mystery play, which was to be presented in the grand hall of the Palais de Justice (the courts of law), which was well roofed and walled; and that the curious left

the poor, scantily flowered maypole to shiver all alone beneath the sky of January, in the cemetery of the Chapel of Braque.

The populace thronged the avenues of the law courts in particular, because they knew that the Flemish ambassadors, who had arrived two days previously, intended to be present at the representation of the mystery, and at the election of the Pope of the Fools, which was also to take place in the grand hall.

It was no easy matter on that day, to force one's way into that grand hall, although it was then reputed to be the largest covered enclosure in the world (it is true that Sauval had not yet measured the grand hall of the Château of Montargis). The palace place, encumbered with people, offered to the curious gazers at the windows the aspect of a sea; into which five or six streets, like so many mouths of rivers, discharged every moment fresh floods of heads. The waves of this crowd, augmented incessantly, dashed against the angles of the houses which projected here and there, like so many promontories, into the irregular basin of the place. In the centre of the lofty Gothic[1] façade of the palace, the grand staircase, incessantly ascended and descended by a double current, which, after parting on the intermediate landing-place, flowed in broad waves along its lateral slopes, – the grand staircase, I say, trickled incessantly into the place,

[1] The word Gothic, in the sense in which it is generally employed, is wholly unsuitable, but wholly consecrated. Hence we accept it and we adopt it, like all the rest of the world, to characterize the architecture of the second half of the Middle Ages, where the ogive is the principle which succeeds the architecture of the first period, of which the semi-circle is the father.

like a cascade into a lake. The cries, the laughter, the trampling of those thousands of feet, produced a great noise and a great clamor. From time to time, this noise and clamor redoubled; the current which drove the crowd towards the grand staircase flowed backwards, became troubled, formed whirlpools. This was produced by the buffet of an archer, or the horse of one of the provost's sergeants, which kicked to restore order; an admirable tradition which the provostship has bequeathed to the constablery, the constablery to the *maréchaussée*, the *maréchaussée* to our *gendarmeri* of Paris.

Thousands of good, calm, bourgeois faces thronged the windows, the doors, the dormer windows, the roofs, gazing at the palace, gazing at the populace, and asking nothing more; for many Parisians content themselves with the spectacle of the spectators, and a wall behind which something is going on becomes at once, for us, a very curious thing indeed.

If it could be granted to us, the men of 1830, to mingle in thought with those Parisians of the fifteenth century, and to enter with them, jostled, elbowed, pulled about, into that immense hall of the palace, which was so cramped on that sixth of January, 1482, the spectacle would not be devoid of either interest or charm, and we should have about us only things that were so old that they would seem new.

With the reader's consent, we will endeavor to retrace in thought, the impression which he would have experienced in company with us on crossing the threshold of that grand hall, in

the midst of that tumultuous crowd in surcoats, short, sleeveless jackets, and doublets.

And, first of all, there is a buzzing in the ears, a dazzlement in the eyes. Above our heads is a double ogive vault, panelled with wood carving, painted azure, and sown with golden fleurs-de-lis; beneath our feet a pavement of black and white marble, alternating. A few paces distant, an enormous pillar, then another, then another; seven pillars in all, down the length of the hall, sustaining the spring of the arches of the double vault, in the centre of its width. Around four of the pillars, stalls of merchants, all sparkling with glass and tinsel; around the last three, benches of oak, worn and polished by the trunk hose of the litigants, and the robes of the attorneys. Around the hall, along the lofty wall, between the doors, between the windows, between the pillars, the interminable row of all the kings of France, from Pharamond down: the lazy kings, with pendent arms and downcast eyes; the valiant and combative kings, with heads and arms raised boldly heavenward. Then in the long, pointed windows, glass of a thousand hues; at the wide entrances to the hall, rich doors, finely sculptured; and all, the vaults, pillars, walls, jambs, panelling, doors, statues, covered from top to bottom with a splendid blue and gold illumination, which, a trifle tarnished at the epoch when we behold it, had almost entirely disappeared beneath dust and spiders in the year of grace, 1549, when du Breul still admired it from tradition.

Let the reader picture to himself now, this immense, oblong

hall, illuminated by the pallid light of a January day, invaded by a motley and noisy throng which drifts along the walls, and eddies round the seven pillars, and he will have a confused idea of the whole effect of the picture, whose curious details we shall make an effort to indicate with more precision.

It is certain, that if Ravaillac had not assassinated Henri IV., there would have been no documents in the trial of Ravaillac deposited in the clerk's office of the Palais de Justice, no accomplices interested in causing the said documents to disappear; hence, no incendiaries obliged, for lack of better means, to burn the clerk's office in order to burn the documents, and to burn the Palais de Justice in order to burn the clerk's office; consequently, in short, no conflagration in 1618. The old Palais would be standing still, with its ancient grand hall; I should be able to say to the reader, "Go and look at it," and we should thus both escape the necessity, – I of making, and he of reading, a description of it, such as it is. Which demonstrates a new truth: that great events have incalculable results.

It is true that it may be quite possible, in the first place, that Ravaillac had no accomplices; and in the second, that if he had any, they were in no way connected with the fire of 1618. Two other very plausible explanations exist: First, the great flaming star, a foot broad, and a cubit high, which fell from heaven, as every one knows, upon the law courts, after midnight on the seventh of March; second, Théophile's quatrain, —

"Sure, 'twas but a sorry game
When at Paris, Dame Justice,
Through having eaten too much spice,
Set the palace all aflame."

Whatever may be thought of this triple explanation, political, physical, and poetical, of the burning of the law courts in 1618, the unfortunate fact of the fire is certain. Very little to-day remains, thanks to this catastrophe, – thanks, above all, to the successive restorations which have completed what it spared, – very little remains of that first dwelling of the kings of France, – of that elder palace of the Louvre, already so old in the time of Philip the Handsome, that they sought there for the traces of the magnificent buildings erected by King Robert and described by Helgaldus. Nearly everything has disappeared. What has become of the chamber of the chancellery, where Saint Louis consummated his marriage? the garden where he administered justice, "clad in a coat of camelot, a surcoat of linsey-woolsey, without sleeves, and a sur-mantle of black sandal, as he lay upon the carpet with Joinville?" Where is the chamber of the Emperor Sigismond? and that of Charles IV.? that of Jean the Landless? Where is the staircase, from which Charles VI. promulgated his edict of pardon? the slab where Marcel cut the throats of Robert de Clermont and the Marshal of Champagne, in the presence of the dauphin? the wicket where the bulls of Pope Benedict were torn, and whence those who had brought them departed decked out, in derision, in copes and mitres, and making an

apology through all Paris? and the grand hall, with its gilding, its azure, its statues, its pointed arches, its pillars, its immense vault, all fretted with carvings? and the gilded chamber? and the stone lion, which stood at the door, with lowered head and tail between his legs, like the lions on the throne of Solomon, in the humiliated attitude which befits force in the presence of justice? and the beautiful doors? and the stained glass? and the chased ironwork, which drove Biscornette to despair? and the delicate woodwork of Hancy? What has time, what have men done with these marvels? What have they given us in return for all this Gallic history, for all this Gothic art? The heavy flattened arches of M. de Brosse, that awkward architect of the Saint-Gervais portal. So much for art; and, as for history, we have the gossiping reminiscences of the great pillar, still ringing with the tattle of the Patru.

It is not much. Let us return to the veritable grand hall of the veritable old palace. The two extremities of this gigantic parallelogram were occupied, the one by the famous marble table, so long, so broad, and so thick that, as the ancient land rolls – in a style that would have given Gargantua an appetite – say, "such a slice of marble as was never beheld in the world"; the other by the chapel where Louis XI. had himself sculptured on his knees before the Virgin, and whither he caused to be brought, without heeding the two gaps thus made in the row of royal statues, the statues of Charlemagne and of Saint Louis, two saints whom he supposed to be great in favor in heaven, as kings

of France. This chapel, quite new, having been built only six years, was entirely in that charming taste of delicate architecture, of marvellous sculpture, of fine and deep chasing, which marks with us the end of the Gothic era, and which is perpetuated to about the middle of the sixteenth century in the fairylike fancies of the Renaissance. The little open-work rose window, pierced above the portal, was, in particular, a masterpiece of lightness and grace; one would have pronounced it a star of lace.

In the middle of the hall, opposite the great door, a platform of gold brocade, placed against the wall, a special entrance to which had been effected through a window in the corridor of the gold chamber, had been erected for the Flemish emissaries and the other great personages invited to the presentation of the mystery play.

It was upon the marble table that the mystery was to be enacted, as usual. It had been arranged for the purpose, early in the morning; its rich slabs of marble, all scratched by the heels of law clerks, supported a cage of carpenter's work of considerable height, the upper surface of which, within view of the whole hall, was to serve as the theatre, and whose interior, masked by tapestries, was to take the place of dressing-rooms for the personages of the piece. A ladder, naively placed on the outside, was to serve as means of communication between the dressing-room and the stage, and lend its rude rungs to entrances as well as to exits. There was no personage, however unexpected, no sudden change, no theatrical effect, which was not obliged to

mount that ladder. Innocent and venerable infancy of art and contrivances!

Four of the bailiff of the palace's sergeants, perfunctory guardians of all the pleasures of the people, on days of festival as well as on days of execution, stood at the four corners of the marble table.

The piece was only to begin with the twelfth stroke of the great palace clock sounding midday. It was very late, no doubt, for a theatrical representation, but they had been obliged to fix the hour to suit the convenience of the ambassadors.

Now, this whole multitude had been waiting since morning. A goodly number of curious, good people had been shivering since daybreak before the grand staircase of the palace; some even affirmed that they had passed the night across the threshold of the great door, in order to make sure that they should be the first to pass in. The crowd grew more dense every moment, and, like water, which rises above its normal level, began to mount along the walls, to swell around the pillars, to spread out on the entablatures, on the cornices, on the window-sills, on all the salient points of the architecture, on all the reliefs of the sculpture. Hence, discomfort, impatience, weariness, the liberty of a day of cynicism and folly, the quarrels which break forth for all sorts of causes – a pointed elbow, an iron-shod shoe, the fatigue of long waiting – had already, long before the hour appointed for the arrival of the ambassadors, imparted a harsh and bitter accent to the clamor of these people who were shut in,

fitted into each other, pressed, trampled upon, stifled. Nothing was to be heard but imprecations on the Flemish, the provost of the merchants, the Cardinal de Bourbon, the bailiff of the courts, Madame Marguerite of Austria, the sergeants with their rods, the cold, the heat, the bad weather, the Bishop of Paris, the Pope of the Fools, the pillars, the statues, that closed door, that open window; all to the vast amusement of a band of scholars and lackeys scattered through the mass, who mingled with all this discontent their teasing remarks, and their malicious suggestions, and pricked the general bad temper with a pin, so to speak.

Among the rest there was a group of those merry imps, who, after smashing the glass in a window, had seated themselves hardily on the entablature, and from that point despatched their gaze and their railleries both within and without, upon the throng in the hall, and the throng upon the Place. It was easy to see, from their parodied gestures, their ringing laughter, the bantering appeals which they exchanged with their comrades, from one end of the hall to the other, that these young clerks did not share the weariness and fatigue of the rest of the spectators, and that they understood very well the art of extracting, for their own private diversion from that which they had under their eyes, a spectacle which made them await the other with patience.

"Upon my soul, so it's you, 'Joannes Frollo de Molendino!'" cried one of them, to a sort of little, light-haired imp, with a well-favored and malign countenance, clinging to the acanthus leaves of a capital; "you are well named John of the Mill, for your two

arms and your two legs have the air of four wings fluttering on the breeze. How long have you been here?"

"By the mercy of the devil," retorted Joannes Frollo, "these four hours and more; and I hope that they will be reckoned to my credit in purgatory. I heard the eight singers of the King of Sicily intone the first verse of seven o'clock mass in the Sainte-Chapelle."

"Fine singers!" replied the other, "with voices even more pointed than their caps! Before founding a mass for Monsieur Saint John, the king should have inquired whether Monsieur Saint John likes Latin droned out in a Provençal accent."

"He did it for the sake of employing those accursed singers of the King of Sicily!" cried an old woman sharply from among the crowd beneath the window. "I just put it to you! A thousand *livres parisi* for a mass! and out of the tax on sea fish in the markets of Paris, to boot!"

"Peace, old crone," said a tall, grave person, stopping up his nose on the side towards the fishwife; "a mass had to be founded. Would you wish the king to fall ill again?"

"Bravely spoken, Sire Gilles Lecornu, master furrier of king's robes!" cried the little student, clinging to the capital.

A shout of laughter from all the students greeted the unlucky name of the poor furrier of the king's robes.

"Lecornu! Gilles Lecornu!" said some.

"*Cornutus et hirsutus*, horned and hairy," another went on.

"He! of course," continued the small imp on the capital,

"What are they laughing at? An honorable man is Gilles Lecornu, brother of Master Jehan Lecornu, provost of the king's house, son of Master Mahiet Lecornu, first porter of the Bois de Vincennes, – all bourgeois of Paris, all married, from father to son."

The gayety redoubled. The big furrier, without uttering a word in reply, tried to escape all the eyes riveted upon him from all sides; but he perspired and panted in vain; like a wedge entering the wood, his efforts served only to bury still more deeply in the shoulders of his neighbors, his large, apoplectic face, purple with spite and rage.

At length one of these, as fat, short, and venerable as himself, came to his rescue.

"Abomination! scholars addressing a bourgeois in that fashion in my day would have been flogged with a fagot, which would have afterwards been used to burn them."

The whole band burst into laughter.

"Holà hé! who is scolding so? Who is that screech owl of evil fortune?"

"Hold, I know him" said one of them; "'tis Master Andry Musnier."

"Because he is one of the four sworn booksellers of the university!" said the other.

"Everything goes by fours in that shop," cried a third; "the four nations, the four faculties, the four feasts, the four procurators, the four electors, the four booksellers."

"Well," began Jean Frollo once more, "we must play the devil with them."[2]

"Musnier, we'll burn your books."

"Musnier, we'll beat your lackeys."

"Musnier, we'll kiss your wife."

"That fine, big Mademoiselle Oudarde."

"Who is as fresh and as gay as though she were a widow."

"Devil take you!" growled Master Andry Musnier.

"Master Andry," pursued Jean Jehan, still clinging to his capital, "hold your tongue, or I'll drop on your head!"

Master Andry raised his eyes, seemed to measure in an instant the height of the pillar, the weight of the scamp, mentally multiplied that weight by the square of the velocity and remained silent.

Jehan, master of the field of battle, pursued triumphantly:

"That's what I'll do, even if I am the brother of an archdeacon!"

"Fine gentry are our people of the university, not to have caused our privileges to be respected on such a day as this! However, there is a maypole and a bonfire in the town; a mystery, Pope of the Fools, and Flemish ambassadors in the city; and, at the university, nothing!"

"Nevertheless, the Place Maubert is sufficiently large!" interposed one of the clerks established on the window-sill.

"Down with the rector, the electors, and the procurators!"

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[2] *Faire le diable a quatre.*

cried Joannes.

"We must have a bonfire this evening in the Champ-Gaillard," went on the other, "made of Master Andry's books."

"And the desks of the scribes!" added his neighbor.

"And the beadles' wands!"

"And the spittoons of the deans!"

"And the cupboards of the procurators!"

"And the hutches of the electors!"

"And the stools of the rector!"

"Down with them!" put in little Jehan, as counterpoint; "down with Master Andry, the beadles and the scribes; the theologians, the doctors and the decretists; the procurators, the electors and the rector!"

"The end of the world has come!,' muttered Master Andry, stopping up his ears.

"By the way, there's the rector! see, he is passing through the Place," cried one of those in the window.

Each rivalled his neighbor in his haste to turn towards the Place.

"Is it really our venerable rector, Master Thibaut?" demanded Jehan Frollo du Moulin, who, as he was clinging to one of the inner pillars, could not see what was going on outside.

"Yes, yes," replied all the others, "it is really he, Master Thibaut, the rector."

It was, in fact, the rector and all the dignitaries of the university, who were marching in procession in front of the

embassy, and at that moment traversing the Place. The students crowded into the window, saluted them as they passed with sarcasms and ironical applause. The rector, who was walking at the head of his company, had to support the first broadside; it was severe.

"Good day, monsieur le recteur! Holà hé! good day there!"

"How does he manage to be here, the old gambler? Has he abandoned his dice?"

"How he trots along on his mule! her ears are not so long as his!"

"Holà hé! good day, monsieur le recteur Thibaut! *Tybalde aleator*! Old fool! old gambler!"

"God preserve you! Did you throw double six often last night?"

"Oh! what a decrepit face, livid and haggard and drawn with the love of gambling and of dice!"

"Where are you bound for in that fashion, Thibaut, *Tybalde ad dados*, with your back turned to the university, and trotting towards the town?"

"He is on his way, no doubt, to seek a lodging in the Rue Thibautodé?"[3] cried Jehan du M. Moulin.

The entire band repeated this quip in a voice of thunder, clapping their hands furiously.

"You are going to seek a lodging in the Rue Thibautodé, are you not, monsieur le recteur, gamester on the side of the devil?"

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[3] *Thibaut au des*, – Thibaut of the dice.

Then came the turns of the other dignitaries.

"Down with the beadles! down with the mace-bearers!"

"Tell me, Robin Pouissepain, who is that yonder?"

"He is Gilbert de Suilly, *Gilbertus de Soliaco*, the chancellor of the College of Autun."

"Hold on, here's my shoe; you are better placed than I, fling it in his face."

"*Saturnalitias mittimus ecce nuces.*"

"Down with the six theologians, with their white surplices!"

"Are those the theologians? I thought they were the white geese given by Sainte-Geneviève to the city, for the fief of Roogny."

"Down with the doctors!"

"Down with the cardinal disputations, and quibblers!"

"My cap to you, Chancellor of Sainte-Geneviève! You have done me a wrong. 'Tis true; he gave my place in the nation of Normandy to little Ascanio Falzapada, who comes from the province of Bourges, since he is an Italian."

"That is an injustice," said all the scholars. "Down with the Chancellor of Sainte-Geneviève!"

"Ho hé! Master Joachim de Ladehors! Ho hé! Louis Dahuille! Ho he Lambert Hoctement!"

"May the devil stifle the procurator of the German nation!"

"And the chaplains of the Sainte-Chapelle, with their gray *amices; cum tunices grisis*!"

"*Seu de pellibus grisis fourratis*!"

"Holà hé! Masters of Arts! All the beautiful black copes! all the fine red copes!"

"They make a fine tail for the rector."

"One would say that he was a Doge of Venice on his way to his bridal with the sea."

"Say, Jehan! here are the canons of Sainte-Geneviève!"

"To the deuce with the whole set of canons!"

"Abbé Claude Choart! Doctor Claude Choart! Are you in search of Marie la Giffarde?"

"She is in the Rue de Glatigny."

"She is making the bed of the king of the debauchees. She is paying her four deniers[4] *quatuor denarios*."

"*Aut unum bombum*."

"Would you like to have her pay you in the face?"

"Comrades! Master Simon Sanguin, the Elector of Picardy, with his wife on the crupper!"

"*Post equitem seclet atra eura*– behind the horseman sits black care."

"Courage, Master Simon!"

"Good day, Mister Elector!"

"Good night, Madame Electress!"

"How happy they are to see all that!" sighed Joannes de Molendino, still perched in the foliage of his capital.

Meanwhile, the sworn bookseller of the university, Master Andry Musnier, was inclining his ear to the furrier of the king's

[4] An old French coin, equal to the two hundred and fortieth part of a pound.

robes, Master Gilles Lecornu.

"I tell you, sir, that the end of the world has come. No one has ever beheld such outbreaks among the students! It is the accursed inventions of this century that are ruining everything, – artilleries, bombards, and, above all, printing, that other German pest. No more manuscripts, no more books! printing will kill bookselling. It is the end of the world that is drawing nigh."

"I see that plainly, from the progress of velvet stuffs," said the fur-merchant.

At this moment, midday sounded.

"Ha!" exclaimed the entire crowd, in one voice.

The scholars held their peace. Then a great hurly-burly ensued; a vast movement of feet, hands, and heads; a general outbreak of coughs and handkerchiefs; each one arranged himself, assumed his post, raised himself up, and grouped himself. Then came a great silence; all necks remained outstretched, all mouths remained open, all glances were directed towards the marble table. Nothing made its appearance there. The bailiff's four sergeants were still there, stiff, motionless, as painted statues. All eyes turned to the estrade reserved for the Flemish envoys. The door remained closed, the platform empty. This crowd had been waiting since daybreak for three things: noonday, the embassy from Flanders, the mystery play. Noonday alone had arrived on time.

On this occasion, it was too much.

They waited one, two, three, five minutes, a quarter of an

hour; nothing came. The dais remained empty, the theatre dumb. In the meantime, wrath had succeeded to impatience. Irritated words circulated in a low tone, still, it is true. "The mystery! the mystery!" they murmured, in hollow voices. Heads began to ferment. A tempest, which was only rumbling in the distance as yet, was floating on the surface of this crowd. It was Jehan du Moulin who struck the first spark from it.

"The mystery, and to the devil with the Flemings!" he exclaimed at the full force of his lungs, twining like a serpent around his pillar.

The crowd clapped their hands.

"The mystery!" it repeated, "and may all the devils take Flanders!"

"We must have the mystery instantly," resumed the student; "or else, my advice is that we should hang the bailiff of the courts, by way of a morality and a comedy."

"Well said," cried the people, "and let us begin the hanging with his sergeants."

A grand acclamation followed. The four poor fellows began to turn pale, and to exchange glances. The crowd hurled itself towards them, and they already beheld the frail wooden railing, which separated them from it, giving way and bending before the pressure of the throng.

It was a critical moment.

"To the sack, to the sack!" rose the cry on all sides.

At that moment, the tapestry of the dressing-room, which

we have described above, was raised, and afforded passage to a personage, the mere sight of whom suddenly stopped the crowd, and changed its wrath into curiosity as by enchantment.

"Silence! silence!"

The personage, but little reassured, and trembling in every limb, advanced to the edge of the marble table with a vast amount of bows, which, in proportion as he drew nearer, more and more resembled genuflections.

In the meanwhile, tranquillity had gradually been restored. All that remained was that slight murmur which always rises above the silence of a crowd.

"Messieurs the bourgeois," said he, "and mesdemoiselles the *bourgeoises*, we shall have the honor of declaiming and representing, before his eminence, monsieur the cardinal, a very beautiful morality which has for its title, 'The Good Judgment of Madame the Virgin Mary.' I am to play Jupiter. His eminence is, at this moment, escorting the very honorable embassy of the Duke of Austria; which is detained, at present, listening to the harangue of monsieur the rector of the university, at the gate Baudets. As soon as his illustrious eminence, the cardinal, arrives, we will begin."

It is certain, that nothing less than the intervention of Jupiter was required to save the four unfortunate sergeants of the bailiff of the courts. If we had the happiness of having invented this very veracious tale, and of being, in consequence, responsible for it before our Lady Criticism, it is not against us that the

classic precept, *Nec deus intersit*, could be invoked. Moreover, the costume of Seigneur Jupiter, was very handsome, and contributed not a little towards calming the crowd, by attracting all its attention. Jupiter was clad in a coat of mail, covered with black velvet, with gilt nails; and had it not been for the rouge, and the huge red beard, each of which covered one-half of his face, – had it not been for the roll of gilded cardboard, spangled, and all bristling with strips of tinsel, which he held in his hand, and in which the eyes of the initiated easily recognized thunderbolts, – had not his feet been flesh-colored, and banded with ribbons in Greek fashion, he might have borne comparison, so far as the severity of his mien was concerned, with a Breton archer from the guard of Monsieur de Berry.

CHAPTER II. PIERRE GRINGOIRE

Nevertheless, as be harangued them, the satisfaction and admiration unanimously excited by his costume were dissipated by his words; and when he reached that untoward conclusion: "As soon as his illustrious eminence, the cardinal, arrives, we will begin," his voice was drowned in a thunder of hooting.

"Begin instantly! The mystery! the mystery immediately!" shrieked the people. And above all the voices, that of Johannes de Molendino was audible, piercing the uproar like the fife's derisive serenade: "Commence instantly!" yelped the scholar.

"Down with Jupiter and the Cardinal de Bourbon!"

vociferated Robin Poussepain and the other clerks perched in the window.

"The morality this very instant!" repeated the crowd; "this very instant! the sack and the rope for the comedians, and the cardinal!"

Poor Jupiter, haggard, frightened, pale beneath his rouge, dropped his thunderbolt, took his cap in his hand; then he bowed and trembled and stammered: "His eminence – the ambassadors – Madame Marguerite of Flanders – ." He did not know what to say. In truth, he was afraid of being hung.

Hung by the populace for waiting, hung by the cardinal for not having waited, he saw between the two dilemmas only an abyss; that is to say, a gallows.

Luckily, some one came to rescue him from his embarrassment, and assume the responsibility.

An individual who was standing beyond the railing, in the free space around the marble table, and whom no one had yet caught sight of, since his long, thin body was completely sheltered from every visual ray by the diameter of the pillar against which he was leaning; this individual, we say, tall, gaunt, pallid, blond, still young, although already wrinkled about the brow and cheeks, with brilliant eyes and a smiling mouth, clad in garments of black serge, worn and shining with age, approached the marble table, and made a sign to the poor sufferer. But the other was so confused that he did not see him. The new comer advanced another step.

"Jupiter," said he, "my dear Jupiter!"

The other did not hear.

At last, the tall blond, driven out of patience, shrieked almost in his face, —

"Michel Giborne!"

"Who calls me?" said Jupiter, as though awakened with a start.

"I," replied the person clad in black.

"Ah!" said Jupiter.

"Begin at once," went on the other. "Satisfy the populace; I undertake to appease the bailiff, who will appease monsieur the cardinal."

Jupiter breathed once more.

"Messeigneurs the bourgeois," he cried, at the top of his lungs to the crowd, which continued to hoot him, "we are going to begin at once."

"*Evoe Jupiter! Plaudite cives*! All hail, Jupiter! Applaud, citizens!" shouted the scholars.

"Noel! Noel! good, good," shouted the people.

The hand clapping was deafening, and Jupiter had already withdrawn under his tapestry, while the hall still trembled with acclamations.

In the meanwhile, the personage who had so magically turned the tempest into dead calm, as our old and dear Corneille puts it, had modestly retreated to the half-shadow of his pillar, and would, no doubt, have remained invisible there, motionless, and mute as before, had he not been plucked by the sleeve by two

young women, who, standing in the front row of the spectators, had noticed his colloquy with Michel Giborne-Jupiter.

"Master," said one of them, making him a sign to approach. "Hold your tongue, my dear Liénarde," said her neighbor, pretty, fresh, and very brave, in consequence of being dressed up in her best attire. "He is not a clerk, he is a layman; you must not say master to him, but messire."

"Messire," said Liénarde.

The stranger approached the railing.

"What would you have of me, damsels?" he asked, with alacrity.

"Oh! nothing," replied Liénarde, in great confusion; "it is my neighbor, Gisquette la Gencienne, who wishes to speak with you."

"Not so," replied Gisquette, blushing; "it was Liénarde who called you master; I only told her to say messire."

The two young girls dropped their eyes. The man, who asked nothing better than to enter into conversation, looked at them with a smile.

"So you have nothing to say to me, damsels?"

"Oh! nothing at all," replied Gisquette.

"Nothing," said Liénarde.

The tall, light-haired young man retreated a step; but the two curious maidens had no mind to let slip their prize.

"Messire," said Gisquette, with the impetuosity of an open sluice, or of a woman who has made up her mind, "do you know

that soldier who is to play the part of Madame the Virgin in the mystery?"

"You mean the part of Jupiter?" replied the stranger.

"Hé! yes," said Liénarde, "isn't she stupid? So you know Jupiter?"

"Michel Giborne?" replied the unknown; "yes, madam."

"He has a fine beard!" said Liénarde.

"Will what they are about to say here be fine?" inquired Gisquette, timidly.

"Very fine, mademoiselle," replied the unknown, without the slightest hesitation.

"What is it to be?" said Liénarde.

"'The Good Judgment of Madame the Virgin,' – a morality, if you please, damsel."

"Ah! that makes a difference," responded Liénarde.

A brief silence ensued – broken by the stranger.

"It is a perfectly new morality, and one which has never yet been played."

"Then it is not the same one," said Gisquette, "that was given two years ago, on the day of the entrance of monsieur the legate, and where three handsome maids played the parts – "

"Of sirens," said Liénarde.

"And all naked," added the young man.

Liénarde lowered her eyes modestly. Gisquette glanced at her and did the same. He continued, with a smile, —

"It was a very pleasant thing to see. To-day it is a morality

made expressly for Madame the Demoiselle of Flanders."

"Will they sing shepherd songs?" inquired Gisquette.

"Fie!" said the stranger, "in a morality? you must not confound styles. If it were a farce, well and good."

"That is a pity," resumed Gisquette. "That day, at the Ponceau Fountain, there were wild men and women, who fought and assumed many aspects, as they sang little motets and bergerettes."

"That which is suitable for a legate," returned the stranger, with a good deal of dryness, "is not suitable for a princess."

"And beside them," resumed Liénarde, "played many brass instruments, making great melodies."

"And for the refreshment of the passers-by," continued Gisquette, "the fountain spouted through three mouths, wine, milk, and hippocrass, of which every one drank who wished."

"And a little below the Ponceau, at the Trinity," pursued Liénarde, "there was a passion performed, and without any speaking."

"How well I remember that!" exclaimed Gisquette; "God on the cross, and the two thieves on the right and the left." Here the young gossips, growing warm at the memory of the entrance of monsieur the legate, both began to talk at once.

"And, further on, at the Painters' Gate, there were other personages, very richly clad."

"And at the fountain of Saint-Innocent, that huntsman, who was chasing a hind with great clamor of dogs and hunting-horns."

"And, at the Paris slaughter-houses, stages, representing the fortress of Dieppe!"

"And when the legate passed, you remember, Gisquette? they made the assault, and the English all had their throats cut."

"And against the gate of the Châtelet, there were very fine personages!"

"And on the Port au Change, which was all draped above!"

"And when the legate passed, they let fly on the bridge more than two hundred sorts of birds; wasn't it beautiful, Liénarde?"

"It will be better to-day," finally resumed their interlocutor, who seemed to listen to them with impatience.

"Do you promise us that this mystery will be fine?" said Gisquette.

"Without doubt," he replied; then he added, with a certain emphasis, – "I am the author of it, damsels."

"Truly?" said the young girls, quite taken aback.

"Truly!" replied the poet, bridling a little; "that is, to say, there are two of us; Jehan Marchand, who has sawed the planks and erected the framework of the theatre and the woodwork; and I, who have made the piece. My name is Pierre Gringoire."

The author of the "Cid" could not have said "Pierre Corneille" with more pride.

Our readers have been able to observe, that a certain amount of time must have already elapsed from the moment when Jupiter had retired beneath the tapestry to the instant when the author of the new morality had thus abruptly revealed himself to the

innocent admiration of Gisquette and Liénarde. Remarkable fact: that whole crowd, so tumultuous but a few moments before, now waited amiably on the word of the comedian; which proves the eternal truth, still experienced every day in our theatres, that the best means of making the public wait patiently is to assure them that one is about to begin instantly.

However, scholar Johannes had not fallen asleep.

"Holà hé!" he shouted suddenly, in the midst of the peaceable waiting which had followed the tumult. "Jupiter, Madame the Virgin, buffoons of the devil! are you jeering at us? The piece! the piece! commence or we will commence again!"

This was all that was needed.

The music of high and low instruments immediately became audible from the interior of the stage; the tapestry was raised; four personages, in motley attire and painted faces, emerged from it, climbed the steep ladder of the theatre, and, arrived upon the upper platform, arranged themselves in a line before the public, whom they saluted with profound reverences; then the symphony ceased.

The mystery was about to begin.

The four personages, after having reaped a rich reward of applause for their reverences, began, in the midst of profound silence, a prologue, which we gladly spare the reader. Moreover, as happens in our own day, the public was more occupied with the costumes that the actors wore than with the roles that they were enacting; and, in truth, they were right. All four were

dressed in parti-colored robes of yellow and white, which were distinguished from each other only by the nature of the stuff; the first was of gold and silver brocade; the second, of silk; the third, of wool; the fourth, of linen. The first of these personages carried in his right hand a sword; the second, two golden keys; the third, a pair of scales; the fourth, a spade: and, in order to aid sluggish minds which would not have seen clearly through the transparency of these attributes, there was to be read, in large, black letters, on the hem of the robe of brocade, MY NAME IS NOBILITY; on the hem of the silken robe, MY NAME IS CLERGY; on the hem of the woolen robe, MY NAME IS MERCHANDISE; on the hem of the linen robe, MY NAME IS LABOR. The sex of the two male characters was briefly indicated to every judicious spectator, by their shorter robes, and by the cap which they wore on their heads; while the two female characters, less briefly clad, were covered with hoods.

Much ill-will would also have been required, not to comprehend, through the medium of the poetry of the prologue, that Labor was wedded to Merchandise, and Clergy to Nobility, and that the two happy couples possessed in common a magnificent golden dolphin, which they desired to adjudge to the fairest only. So they were roaming about the world seeking and searching for this beauty, and, after having successively rejected the Queen of Golconda, the Princess of Trebizonde, the daughter of the Grand Khan of Tartary, etc., Labor and Clergy, Nobility and Merchandise, had come to rest upon the marble

table of the Palais de Justice, and to utter, in the presence of the honest audience, as many sentences and maxims as could then be dispensed at the Faculty of Arts, at examinations, sophisms, determinances, figures, and acts, where the masters took their degrees.

All this was, in fact, very fine.

Nevertheless, in that throng, upon which the four allegories vied with each other in pouring out floods of metaphors, there was no ear more attentive, no heart that palpitated more, not an eye was more haggard, no neck more outstretched, than the eye, the ear, the neck, and the heart of the author, of the poet, of that brave Pierre Gringoire, who had not been able to resist, a moment before, the joy of telling his name to two pretty girls. He had retreated a few paces from them, behind his pillar, and there he listened, looked, enjoyed. The amiable applause which had greeted the beginning of his prologue was still echoing in his bosom, and he was completely absorbed in that species of ecstatic contemplation with which an author beholds his ideas fall, one by one, from the mouth of the actor into the vast silence of the audience. Worthy Pierre Gringoire!

It pains us to say it, but this first ecstasy was speedily disturbed. Hardly had Gringoire raised this intoxicating cup of joy and triumph to his lips, when a drop of bitterness was mingled with it.

A tattered mendicant, who could not collect any coins, lost as he was in the midst of the crowd, and who had not probably

found sufficient indemnity in the pockets of his neighbors, had hit upon the idea of perching himself upon some conspicuous point, in order to attract looks and alms. He had, accordingly, hoisted himself, during the first verses of the prologue, with the aid of the pillars of the reserve gallery, to the cornice which ran round the balustrade at its lower edge; and there he had seated himself, soliciting the attention and the pity of the multitude, with his rags and a hideous sore which covered his right arm. However, he uttered not a word.

The silence which he preserved allowed the prologue to proceed without hindrance, and no perceptible disorder would have ensued, if ill-luck had not willed that the scholar Joannes should catch sight, from the heights of his pillar, of the mendicant and his grimaces. A wild fit of laughter took possession of the young scamp, who, without caring that he was interrupting the spectacle, and disturbing the universal composure, shouted boldly, —

"Look! see that sickly creature asking alms!"

Any one who has thrown a stone into a frog pond, or fired a shot into a covey of birds, can form an idea of the effect produced by these incongruous words, in the midst of the general attention. It made Gringoire shudder as though it had been an electric shock. The prologue stopped short, and all heads turned tumultuously towards the beggar, who, far from being disconcerted by this, saw, in this incident, a good opportunity for reaping his harvest, and who began to whine in a doleful way,

half closing his eyes the while, – "Charity, please!"

"Well – upon my soul," resumed Joannes, "it's Clopin Trouillefou! Holà he, my friend, did your sore bother you on the leg, that you have transferred it to your arm?" So saying, with the dexterity of a monkey, he flung a bit of silver into the gray felt hat which the beggar held in his ailing arm. The mendicant received both the alms and the sarcasm without wincing, and continued, in lamentable tones, —

"Charity, please!"

This episode considerably distracted the attention of the audience; and a goodly number of spectators, among them Robin Poussepain, and all the clerks at their head, gayly applauded this eccentric duet, which the scholar, with his shrill voice, and the mendicant had just improvised in the middle of the prologue.

Gringoire was highly displeased. On recovering from his first stupefaction, he bestirred himself to shout, to the four personages on the stage, "Go on! What the devil! – go on!" – without even deigning to cast a glance of disdain upon the two interrupters.

At that moment, he felt some one pluck at the hem of his surtout; he turned round, and not without ill-humor, and found considerable difficulty in smiling; but he was obliged to do so, nevertheless. It was the pretty arm of Gisquette la Gencienne, which, passed through the railing, was soliciting his attention in this manner.

"Monsieur," said the young girl, "are they going to continue?"

"Of course," replied Gringoire, a good deal shocked by the

question.

"In that case, messire," she resumed, "would you have the courtesy to explain to me – "

"What they are about to say?" interrupted Gringoire. "Well, listen."

"No," said Gisquette, "but what they have said so far."

Gringoire started, like a man whose wound has been probed to the quick.

"A plague on the stupid and dull-witted little girl!" he muttered, between his teeth.

From that moment forth, Gisquette was nothing to him.

In the meantime, the actors had obeyed his injunction, and the public, seeing that they were beginning to speak again, began once more to listen, not without having lost many beauties in the sort of soldered joint which was formed between the two portions of the piece thus abruptly cut short. Gringoire commented on it bitterly to himself. Nevertheless, tranquillity was gradually restored, the scholar held his peace, the mendicant counted over some coins in his hat, and the piece resumed the upper hand.

It was, in fact, a very fine work, and one which, as it seems to us, might be put to use to-day, by the aid of a little rearrangement. The exposition, rather long and rather empty, that is to say, according to the rules, was simple; and Gringoire, in the candid sanctuary of his own conscience, admired its clearness. As the reader may surmise, the four allegorical personages were somewhat weary with having traversed the three sections of the

world, without having found suitable opportunity for getting rid of their golden dolphin. Thereupon a eulogy of the marvellous fish, with a thousand delicate allusions to the young betrothed of Marguerite of Flanders, then sadly cloistered in at Amboise, and without a suspicion that Labor and Clergy, Nobility and Merchandise had just made the circuit of the world in his behalf. The said dauphin was then young, was handsome, was stout, and, above all (magnificent origin of all royal virtues), he was the son of the Lion of France. I declare that this bold metaphor is admirable, and that the natural history of the theatre, on a day of allegory and royal marriage songs, is not in the least startled by a dolphin who is the son of a lion. It is precisely these rare and Pindaric mixtures which prove the poet's enthusiasm. Nevertheless, in order to play the part of critic also, the poet might have developed this beautiful idea in something less than two hundred lines. It is true that the mystery was to last from noon until four o'clock, in accordance with the orders of monsieur the provost, and that it was necessary to say something. Besides, the people listened patiently.

All at once, in the very middle of a quarrel between Mademoiselle Merchandise and Madame Nobility, at the moment when Monsieur Labor was giving utterance to this wonderful line, —

> In forest ne'er was seen a more triumphant beast;

the door of the reserved gallery which had hitherto remained so inopportunely closed, opened still more inopportunely; and the ringing voice of the usher announced abruptly, “His eminence, Monseigneur the Cardinal de Bourbon.”

CHAPTER III. MONSIEUR THE CARDINAL

Poor Gringoire! the din of all the great double petards of the Saint-Jean, the discharge of twenty arquebuses on supports, the detonation of that famous serpentine of the Tower of Billy, which, during the siege of Paris, on Sunday, the twenty-sixth of September, 1465, killed seven Burgundians at one blow, the explosion of all the powder stored at the gate of the Temple, would have rent his ears less rudely at that solemn and dramatic moment, than these few words, which fell from the lips of the usher, “His eminence, Monseigneur the Cardinal de Bourbon.”

It is not that Pierre Gringoire either feared or disdained monsieur the cardinal. He had neither the weakness nor the audacity for that. A true eclectic, as it would be expressed nowadays, Gringoire was one of those firm and lofty, moderate and calm spirits, which always know how to bear themselves amid all circumstances (*stare in dimidio rerum*), and who are full of reason and of liberal philosophy, while still setting store by cardinals. A rare, precious, and never interrupted race of philosophers to whom wisdom, like another Ariadne, seems

to have given a clew of thread which they have been walking along unwinding since the beginning of the world, through the labyrinth of human affairs. One finds them in all ages, ever the same; that is to say, always according to all times. And, without reckoning our Pierre Gringoire, who may represent them in the fifteenth century if we succeed in bestowing upon him the distinction which he deserves, it certainly was their spirit which animated Father du Breul, when he wrote, in the sixteenth, these naively sublime words, worthy of all centuries: "I am a Parisian by nation, and a Parrhisian in language, for *parrhisia* in Greek signifies liberty of speech; of which I have made use even towards messeigneurs the cardinals, uncle and brother to Monsieur the Prince de Conty, always with respect to their greatness, and without offending any one of their suite, which is much to say."

There was then neither hatred for the cardinal, nor disdain for his presence, in the disagreeable impression produced upon Pierre Gringoire. Quite the contrary; our poet had too much good sense and too threadbare a coat, not to attach particular importance to having the numerous allusions in his prologue, and, in particular, the glorification of the dauphin, son of the Lion of France, fall upon the most eminent ear. But it is not interest which predominates in the noble nature of poets. I suppose that the entity of the poet may be represented by the number ten; it is certain that a chemist on analyzing and pharmacopolizing it, as Rabelais says, would find it composed

of one part interest to nine parts of self-esteem.

Now, at the moment when the door had opened to admit the cardinal, the nine parts of self-esteem in Gringoire, swollen and expanded by the breath of popular admiration, were in a state of prodigious augmentation, beneath which disappeared, as though stifled, that imperceptible molecule of which we have just remarked upon in the constitution of poets; a precious ingredient, by the way, a ballast of reality and humanity, without which they would not touch the earth. Gringoire enjoyed seeing, feeling, fingering, so to speak an entire assembly (of knaves, it is true, but what matters that?) stupefied, petrified, and as though asphyxiated in the presence of the incommensurable tirades which welled up every instant from all parts of his bridal song. I affirm that he shared the general beatitude, and that, quite the reverse of La Fontaine, who, at the presentation of his comedy of the "Florentine," asked, "Who is the ill-bred lout who made that rhapsody?" Gringoire would gladly have inquired of his neighbor, "Whose masterpiece is this?"

The reader can now judge of the effect produced upon him by the abrupt and unseasonable arrival of the cardinal.

That which he had to fear was only too fully realized. The entrance of his eminence upset the audience. All heads turned towards the gallery. It was no longer possible to hear one's self. "The cardinal! The cardinal!" repeated all mouths. The unhappy prologue stopped short for the second time.

The cardinal halted for a moment on the threshold of the

estrade. While he was sending a rather indifferent glance around the audience, the tumult redoubled. Each person wished to get a better view of him. Each man vied with the other in thrusting his head over his neighbor's shoulder.

He was, in fact, an exalted personage, the sight of whom was well worth any other comedy. Charles, Cardinal de Bourbon, Archbishop and Comte of Lyon, Primate of the Gauls, was allied both to Louis XI., through his brother, Pierre, Seigneur de Beaujeu, who had married the king's eldest daughter, and to Charles the Bold through his mother, Agnes of Burgundy. Now, the dominating trait, the peculiar and distinctive trait of the character of the Primate of the Gauls, was the spirit of the courtier, and devotion to the powers that be. The reader can form an idea of the numberless embarrassments which this double relationship had caused him, and of all the temporal reefs among which his spiritual bark had been forced to tack, in order not to suffer shipwreck on either Louis or Charles, that Scylla and that Charybdis which had devoured the Duc de Nemours and the Constable de Saint-Pol. Thanks to Heaven's mercy, he had made the voyage successfully, and had reached home without hindrance. But although he was in port, and precisely because he was in port, he never recalled without disquiet the varied haps of his political career, so long uneasy and laborious. Thus, he was in the habit of saying that the year 1476 had been "white and black" for him – meaning thereby, that in the course of that year he had lost his mother, the Duchesse de la Bourbonnais, and his

cousin, the Duke of Burgundy, and that one grief had consoled him for the other.

Nevertheless, he was a fine man; he led a joyous cardinal's life, liked to enliven himself with the royal vintage of Challuau, did not hate Richarde la Garmoise and Thomasse la Saillarde, bestowed alms on pretty girls rather than on old women, – and for all these reasons was very agreeable to the populace of Paris. He never went about otherwise than surrounded by a small court of bishops and abbés of high lineage, gallant, jovial, and given to carousing on occasion; and more than once the good and devout women of Saint Germain d' Auxerre, when passing at night beneath the brightly illuminated windows of Bourbon, had been scandalized to hear the same voices which had intoned vespers for them during the day carolling, to the clinking of glasses, the bacchic proverb of Benedict XII., that pope who had added a third crown to the Tiara —*Bibamus papaliter*.

It was this justly acquired popularity, no doubt, which preserved him on his entrance from any bad reception at the hands of the mob, which had been so displeased but a moment before, and very little disposed to respect a cardinal on the very day when it was to elect a pope. But the Parisians cherish little rancor; and then, having forced the beginning of the play by their authority, the good bourgeois had got the upper hand of the cardinal, and this triumph was sufficient for them. Moreover, the Cardinal de Bourbon was a handsome man, – he wore a fine scarlet robe, which he carried off very well, – that is to say, he

had all the women on his side, and, consequently, the best half of the audience. Assuredly, it would be injustice and bad taste to hoot a cardinal for having come late to the spectacle, when he is a handsome man, and when he wears his scarlet robe well.

He entered, then, bowed to those present with the hereditary smile of the great for the people, and directed his course slowly towards his scarlet velvet arm-chair, with the air of thinking of something quite different. His cortege – what we should nowadays call his staff – of bishops and abbés invaded the estrade in his train, not without causing redoubled tumult and curiosity among the audience. Each man vied with his neighbor in pointing them out and naming them, in seeing who should recognize at least one of them: this one, the Bishop of Marseilles (Alaudet, if my memory serves me right); – this one, the primicier of Saint-Denis; – this one, Robert de Lespinasse, Abbé of Saint-Germain des Prés, that libertine brother of a mistress of Louis XI.; all with many errors and absurdities. As for the scholars, they swore. This was their day, their feast of fools, their saturnalia, the annual orgy of the corporation of Law clerks and of the school. There was no turpitude which was not sacred on that day. And then there were gay gossips in the crowd – Simone Quatrelivres, Agnes la Gadine, and Rabine Piédebou. Was it not the least that one could do to swear at one's ease and revile the name of God a little, on so fine a day, in such good company as dignitaries of the church and loose women? So they did not abstain; and, in the midst of the uproar, there was a frightful concert of blasphemies

and enormities of all the unbridled tongues, the tongues of clerks and students restrained during the rest of the year, by the fear of the hot iron of Saint Louis. Poor Saint Louis! how they set him at defiance in his own court of law! Each one of them selected from the new-comers on the platform, a black, gray, white, or violet cassock as his target. Joannes Frollo de Molendin, in his quality of brother to an archdeacon, boldly attacked the scarlet; he sang in deafening tones, with his impudent eyes fastened on the cardinal, "*Cappa repleta mero*!"

All these details which we here lay bare for the edification of the reader, were so covered by the general uproar, that they were lost in it before reaching the reserved platforms; moreover, they would have moved the cardinal but little, so much a part of the customs were the liberties of that day. Moreover, he had another cause for solicitude, and his mien as wholly preoccupied with it, which entered the estrade the same time as himself; this was the embassy from Flanders.

Not that he was a profound politician, nor was he borrowing trouble about the possible consequences of the marriage of his cousin Marguerite de Bourgoyne to his cousin Charles, Dauphin de Vienne; nor as to how long the good understanding which had been patched up between the Duke of Austria and the King of France would last; nor how the King of England would take this disdain of his daughter. All that troubled him but little; and he gave a warm reception every evening to the wine of the royal vintage of Chaillot, without a suspicion that several flasks

of that same wine (somewhat revised and corrected, it is true, by Doctor Coictier), cordially offered to Edward IV. by Louis XI., would, some fine morning, rid Louis XI. of Edward IV. "The much honored embassy of Monsieur the Duke of Austria," brought the cardinal none of these cares, but it troubled him in another direction. It was, in fact, somewhat hard, and we have already hinted at it on the second page of this book, – for him, Charles de Bourbon, to be obliged to feast and receive cordially no one knows what bourgeois; – for him, a cardinal, to receive aldermen; – for him, a Frenchman, and a jolly companion, to receive Flemish beer-drinkers, – and that in public! This was, certainly, one of the most irksome grimaces that he had ever executed for the good pleasure of the king.

So he turned toward the door, and with the best grace in the world (so well had he trained himself to it), when the usher announced, in a sonorous voice, "Messieurs the Envoys of Monsieur the Duke of Austria." It is useless to add that the whole hall did the same.

Then arrived, two by two, with a gravity which made a contrast in the midst of the frisky ecclesiastical escort of Charles de Bourbon, the eight and forty ambassadors of Maximilian of Austria, having at their head the reverend Father in God, Jehan, Abbot of Saint-Bertin, Chancellor of the Golden Fleece, and Jacques de Goy, Sieur Dauby, Grand Bailiff of Ghent. A deep silence settled over the assembly, accompanied by stifled laughter at the preposterous names and all the bourgeois

designations which each of these personages transmitted with imperturbable gravity to the usher, who then tossed names and titles pell-mell and mutilated to the crowd below. There were Master Loys Roelof, alderman of the city of Louvain; Messire Clays d'Etuelde, alderman of Brussels; Messire Paul de Baeust, Sieur de Voirmizelle, President of Flanders; Master Jehan Coleghens, burgomaster of the city of Antwerp; Master George de la Moere, first alderman of the kuere of the city of Ghent; Master Gheldolf van der Hage, first alderman of the *parchous* of the said town; and the Sieur de Bierbecque, and Jehan Pinnock, and Jehan Dymaerzelle, etc., etc., etc.; bailiffs, aldermen, burgomasters; burgomasters, aldermen, bailiffs – all stiff, affectedly grave, formal, dressed out in velvet and damask, hooded with caps of black velvet, with great tufts of Cyprus gold thread; good Flemish heads, after all, severe and worthy faces, of the family which Rembrandt makes to stand out so strong and grave from the black background of his "Night Patrol "; personages all of whom bore, written on their brows, that Maximilian of Austria had done well in "trusting implicitly," as the manifest ran, "in their sense, valor, experience, loyalty, and good wisdom."

There was one exception, however. It was a subtle, intelligent, crafty-looking face, a sort of combined monkey and diplomat phiz, before whom the cardinal made three steps and a profound bow, and whose name, nevertheless, was only, "Guillaume Rym, counsellor and pensioner of the City of Ghent."

Few persons were then aware who Guillaume Rym was. A rare genius who in a time of revolution would have made a brilliant appearance on the surface of events, but who in the fifteenth century was reduced to cavernous intrigues, and to "living in mines," as the Duc de Saint-Simon expresses it. Nevertheless, he was appreciated by the "miner" of Europe; he plotted familiarly with Louis XI., and often lent a hand to the king's secret jobs. All which things were quite unknown to that throng, who were amazed at the cardinal's politeness to that frail figure of a Flemish bailiff.

CHAPTER IV. MASTER JACQUES COPPENOLE

While the pensioner of Ghent and his eminence were exchanging very low bows and a few words in voices still lower, a man of lofty stature, with a large face and broad shoulders, presented himself, in order to enter abreast with Guillaume Rym; one would have pronounced him a bull-dog by the side of a fox. His felt doublet and leather jerkin made a spot on the velvet and silk which surrounded him. Presuming that he was some groom who had stolen in, the usher stopped him.

"Hold, my friend, you cannot pass!"

The man in the leather jerkin shouldered him aside.

"What does this knave want with me?" said he, in stentorian tones, which rendered the entire hall attentive to this strange

colloquy. “Don’t you see that I am one of them?”

“Your name?” demanded the usher.

“Jacques Coppenole.”

“Your titles?”

“Hosier at the sign of the ‘Three Little Chains,’ of Ghent.”

The usher recoiled. One might bring one’s self to announce aldermen and burgomasters, but a hosier was too much. The cardinal was on thorns. All the people were staring and listening. For two days his eminence had been exerting his utmost efforts to lick these Flemish bears into shape, and to render them a little more presentable to the public, and this freak was startling. But Guillaume Rym, with his polished smile, approached the usher.

“Announce Master Jacques Coppenole, clerk of the aldermen of the city of Ghent,” he whispered, very low.

“Usher,” interposed the cardinal, aloud, “announce Master Jacques Coppenole, clerk of the aldermen of the illustrious city of Ghent.”

This was a mistake. Guillaume Rym alone might have conjured away the difficulty, but Coppenole had heard the cardinal.

“No, cross of God?” he exclaimed, in his voice of thunder, “Jacques Coppenole, hosier. Do you hear, usher? Nothing more, nothing less. Cross of God! hosier; that’s fine enough. Monsieur the Archduke has more than once sought his *gant*[5] in my hose.”

Laughter and applause burst forth. A jest is always understood

[5] Got the first idea of a timing.

in Paris, and, consequently, always applauded.

Let us add that Coppenole was of the people, and that the auditors which surrounded him were also of the people. Thus the communication between him and them had been prompt, electric, and, so to speak, on a level. The haughty air of the Flemish hosier, by humiliating the courtiers, had touched in all these plebeian souls that latent sentiment of dignity still vague and indistinct in the fifteenth century.

This hosier was an equal, who had just held his own before monsieur the cardinal. A very sweet reflection to poor fellows habituated to respect and obedience towards the underlings of the sergeants of the bailiff of Sainte-Geneviève, the cardinal's train-bearer.

Coppenole proudly saluted his eminence, who returned the salute of the all-powerful bourgeois feared by Louis XI. Then, while Guillaume Rym, a "sage and malicious man," as Philippe de Comines puts it, watched them both with a smile of raillery and superiority, each sought his place, the cardinal quite abashed and troubled, Coppenole tranquil and haughty, and thinking, no doubt, that his title of hosier was as good as any other, after all, and that Marie of Burgundy, mother to that Marguerite whom Coppenole was to-day bestowing in marriage, would have been less afraid of the cardinal than of the hosier; for it is not a cardinal who would have stirred up a revolt among the men of Ghent against the favorites of the daughter of Charles the Bold; it is not a cardinal who could have fortified the populace with a word

against her tears and prayers, when the Maid of Flanders came to supplicate her people in their behalf, even at the very foot of the scaffold; while the hosier had only to raise his leather elbow, in order to cause to fall your two heads, most illustrious seigneurs, Guy d'Hymbercourt and Chancellor Guillaume Hugonet.

Nevertheless, all was over for the poor cardinal, and he was obliged to quaff to the dregs the bitter cup of being in such b.ad company.

The reader has, probably, not forgotten the impudent beggar who had been clinging fast to the fringes of the cardinal's gallery ever since the beginning of the prologue. The arrival of the illustrious guests had by no means caused him to relax his hold, and, while the prelates and ambassadors were packing themselves into the stalls – like genuine Flemish herrings – he settled himself at his ease, and boldly crossed his legs on the architrave. The insolence of this proceeding was extraordinary, yet no one noticed it at first, the attention of all being directed elsewhere. He, on his side, perceived nothing that was going on in the hall; he wagged his head with the unconcern of a Neapolitan, repeating from time to time, amid the clamor, as from a mechanical habit, "Charity, please!" And, assuredly, he was, out of all those present, the only one who had not deigned to turn his head at the altercation between Coppenole and the usher. Now, chance ordained that the master hosier of Ghent, with whom the people were already in lively sympathy, and upon whom all eyes were riveted – should come and seat himself in

the front row of the gallery, directly above the mendicant; and people were not a little amazed to see the Flemish ambassador, on concluding his inspection of the knave thus placed beneath his eyes, bestow a friendly tap on that ragged shoulder. The beggar turned round; there was surprise, recognition, a lighting up of the two countenances, and so forth; then, without paying the slightest heed in the world to the spectators, the hosier and the wretched being began to converse in a low tone, holding each other's hands, in the meantime, while the rags of Clopin Trouillefou, spread out upon the cloth of gold of the dais, produced the effect of a caterpillar on an orange.

The novelty of this singular scene excited such a murmur of mirth and gayety in the hall, that the cardinal was not slow to perceive it; he half bent forward, and, as from the point where he was placed he could catch only an imperfect view of Trouillerfou's ignominious doublet, he very naturally imagined that the mendicant was asking alms, and, disgusted with his audacity, he exclaimed: "Bailiff of the Courts, toss me that knave into the river!"

"Cross of God! monseigneur the cardinal," said Coppenole, without quitting Clopin's hand, "he's a friend of mine."

"Good! good!" shouted the populace. From that moment, Master Coppenole enjoyed in Paris as in Ghent, "great favor with the people; for men of that sort do enjoy it," says Philippe de Comines, "when they are thus disorderly." The cardinal bit his lips. He bent towards his neighbor, the Abbé of Saint Geneviéve,

and said to him in a low tone, – "Fine ambassadors monsieur the archduke sends here, to announce to us Madame Marguerite!"

"Your eminence," replied the abbé, "wastes your politeness on these Flemish swine. *Margaritas ante porcos*, pearls before swine."

"Say rather," retorted the cardinal, with a smile, "*Porcos ante Margaritam*, swine before the pearl."

The whole little court in cassocks went into ecstacies over this play upon words. The cardinal felt a little relieved; he was quits with Coppenole, he also had had his jest applauded.

Now, will those of our readers who possess the power of generalizing an image or an idea, as the expression runs in the style of to-day, permit us to ask them if they have formed a very clear conception of the spectacle presented at this moment, upon which we have arrested their attention, by the vast parallelogram of the grand hall of the palace.

In the middle of the hall, backed against the western wall, a large and magnificent gallery draped with cloth of gold, into which enter in procession, through a small, arched door, grave personages, announced successively by the shrill voice of an usher. On the front benches were already a number of venerable figures, muffled in ermine, velvet, and scarlet. Around the dais – which remains silent and dignified – below, opposite, everywhere, a great crowd and a great murmur. Thousands of glances directed by the people on each face upon the dais, a thousand whispers over each name. Certainly, the spectacle is

curious, and well deserves the attention of the spectators. But yonder, quite at the end, what is that sort of trestle work with four motley puppets upon it, and more below? Who is that man beside the trestle, with a black doublet and a pale face? Alas! my dear reader, it is Pierre Gringoire and his prologue.

We have all forgotten him completely.

This is precisely what he feared.

From the moment of the cardinal's entrance, Gringoire had never ceased to tremble for the safety of his prologue. At first he had enjoined the actors, who had stopped in suspense, to continue, and to raise their voices; then, perceiving that no one was listening, he had stopped them; and, during the entire quarter of an hour that the interruption lasted, he had not ceased to stamp, to flounce about, to appeal to Gisquette and Liénarde, and to urge his neighbors to the continuance of the prologue; all in vain. No one quitted the cardinal, the embassy, and the gallery – sole centre of this vast circle of visual rays. We must also believe, and we say it with regret, that the prologue had begun slightly to weary the audience at the moment when his eminence had arrived, and created a diversion in so terrible a fashion. After all, on the gallery as well as on the marble table, the spectacle was the same: the conflict of Labor and Clergy, of Nobility and Merchandise. And many people preferred to see them alive, breathing, moving, elbowing each other in flesh and blood, in this Flemish embassy, in this Episcopal court, under the cardinal's robe, under Coppenole's jerkin, than painted, decked

out, talking in verse, and, so to speak, stuffed beneath the yellow amid white tunics in which Gringoire had so ridiculously clothed them.

Nevertheless, when our poet beheld quiet reestablished to some extent, he devised a stratagem which might have redeemed all.

"Monsieur," he said, turning towards one of his neighbors, a fine, big man, with a patient face, "suppose we begin again."

"What?" said his neighbor.

"Hé! the Mystery," said Gringoire.

"As you like," returned his neighbor.

This semi-approbation sufficed for Gringoire, and, conducting his own affairs, he began to shout, confounding himself with the crowd as much as possible: "Begin the mystery again! begin again!"

"The devil!" said Joannes de Molendino, "what are they jabbering down yonder, at the end of the hall?" (for Gringoire was making noise enough for four.) "Say, comrades, isn't that mystery finished? They want to begin it all over again. That's not fair!"

"No, no!" shouted all the scholars. "Down with the mystery! Down with it!"

But Gringoire had multiplied himself, and only shouted the more vigorously: "Begin again! begin again!"

These clamors attracted the attention of the cardinal.

"Monsieur Bailiff of the Courts," said he to a tall, black man,

placed a few paces from him, “are those knaves in a holy-water vessel, that they make such a hellish noise?”

The bailiff of the courts was a sort of amphibious magistrate, a sort of bat of the judicial order, related to both the rat and the bird, the judge and the soldier.

He approached his eminence, and not without a good deal of fear of the latter’s displeasure, he awkwardly explained to him the seeming disrespect of the audience: that noonday had arrived before his eminence, and that the comedians had been forced to begin without waiting for his eminence.

The cardinal burst into a laugh.

“On my faith, the rector of the university ought to have done the same. What say you, Master Guillaume Rym?”

“Monseigneur,” replied Guillaume Rym, “let us be content with having escaped half of the comedy. There is at least that much gained.”

“Can these rascals continue their farce?” asked the bailiff.

“Continue, continue,” said the cardinal, “it’s all the same to me. I’ll read my breviary in the meantime.”

The bailiff advanced to the edge of the estrade, and cried, after having invoked silence by a wave of the hand, —

“Bourgeois, rustics, and citizens, in order to satisfy those who wish the play to begin again, and those who wish it to end, his eminence orders that it be continued.”

Both parties were forced to resign themselves. But the public and the author long cherished a grudge against the cardinal.

So the personages on the stage took up their parts, and Gringoire hoped that the rest of his work, at least, would be listened to. This hope was speedily dispelled like his other illusions; silence had indeed, been restored in the audience, after a fashion; but Gringoire had not observed that at the moment when the cardinal gave the order to continue, the gallery was far from full, and that after the Flemish envoys there had arrived new personages forming part of the cortege, whose names and ranks, shouted out in the midst of his dialogue by the intermittent cry of the usher, produced considerable ravages in it. Let the reader imagine the effect in the midst of a theatrical piece, of the yelping of an usher, flinging in between two rhymes, and often in the middle of a line, parentheses like the following, —

"Master Jacques Charmolue, procurator to the king in the Ecclesiastical Courts!"

"Jehan de Harlay, equerry guardian of the office of chevalier of the night watch of the city of Paris!"

"Messire Galiot de Genoilhac, chevalier, seigneur de Brussac, master of the king's artillery!"

"Master Dreux-Raguier, surveyor of the woods and forests of the king our sovereign, in the land of France, Champagne and Brie!"

"Messire Louis de Graville, chevalier, councillor, and chamberlain of the king, admiral of France, keeper of the Forest of Vincennes!"

"Master Denis le Mercier, guardian of the house of the blind

at Paris!" etc., etc., etc.

This was becoming unbearable.

This strange accompaniment, which rendered it difficult to follow the piece, made Gringoire all the more indignant because he could not conceal from himself the fact that the interest was continually increasing, and that all his work required was a chance of being heard.

It was, in fact, difficult to imagine a more ingenious and more dramatic composition. The four personages of the prologue were bewailing themselves in their mortal embarrassment, when Venus in person, (*vera incessa patuit dea*) presented herself to them, clad in a fine robe bearing the heraldic device of the ship of the city of Paris. She had come herself to claim the dolphin promised to the most beautiful. Jupiter, whose thunder could be heard rumbling in the dressing-room, supported her claim, and Venus was on the point of carrying it off, – that is to say, without allegory, of marrying monsieur the dauphin, when a young child clad in white damask, and holding in her hand a daisy (a transparent personification of Mademoiselle Marguerite of Flanders) came to contest it with Venus.

Theatrical effect and change.

After a dispute, Venus, Marguerite, and the assistants agreed to submit to the good judgment of time holy Virgin. There was another good part, that of the king of Mesopotamia; but through so many interruptions, it was difficult to make out what end he served. All these persons had ascended by the ladder to the stage.

But all was over; none of these beauties had been felt nor understood. On the entrance of the cardinal, one would have said that an invisible magic thread had suddenly drawn all glances from the marble table to the gallery, from the southern to the western extremity of the hall. Nothing could disenchant the audience; all eyes remained fixed there, and the new-comers and their accursed names, and their faces, and their costumes, afforded a continual diversion. This was very distressing. With the exception of Gisquette and Liénarde, who turned round from time to time when Gringoire plucked them by the sleeve; with the exception of the big, patient neighbor, no one listened, no one looked at the poor, deserted morality full face. Gringoire saw only profiles.

With what bitterness did he behold his whole erection of glory and of poetry crumble away bit by bit! And to think that these people had been upon the point of instituting a revolt against the bailiff through impatience to hear his work! now that they had it they did not care for it. This same representation which had been begun amid so unanimous an acclamation! Eternal flood and ebb of popular favor! To think that they had been on the point of hanging the bailiff's sergeant! What would he not have given to be still at that hour of honey!

But the usher's brutal monologue came to an end; every one had arrived, and Gringoire breathed freely once more; the actors continued bravely. But Master Coppenole, the hosier, must needs rise of a sudden, and Gringoire was forced to listen to

him deliver, amid universal attention, the following abominable harangue.

"Messieurs the bourgeois and squires of Paris, I don't know, cross of God! what we are doing here. I certainly do see yonder in the corner on that stage, some people who appear to be fighting. I don't know whether that is what you call a "mystery," but it is not amusing; they quarrel with their tongues and nothing more. I have been waiting for the first blow this quarter of an hour; nothing comes; they are cowards who only scratch each other with insults. You ought to send for the fighters of London or Rotterdam; and, I can tell you! you would have had blows of the fist that could be heard in the Place; but these men excite our pity. They ought at least, to give us a moorish dance, or some other mummer! That is not what was told me; I was promised a feast of fools, with the election of a pope. We have our pope of fools at Ghent also; we're not behindhand in that, cross of God! But this is the way we manage it; we collect a crowd like this one here, then each person in turn passes his head through a hole, and makes a grimace at the rest; time one who makes the ugliest, is elected pope by general acclamation; that's the way it is. It is very diverting. Would you like to make your pope after the fashion of my country? At all events, it will be less wearisome than to listen to chatterers. If they wish to come and make their grimaces through the hole, they can join the game. What say you, Messieurs les bourgeois? You have here enough grotesque specimens of both sexes, to allow of laughing in Flemish fashion,

and there are enough of us ugly in countenance to hope for a fine grinning match."

Gringoire would have liked to retort; stupefaction, rage, indignation, deprived him of words. Moreover, the suggestion of the popular hosier was received with such enthusiasm by these bourgeois who were flattered at being called "squires," that all resistance was useless. There was nothing to be done but to allow one's self to drift with the torrent. Gringoire hid his face between his two hands, not being so fortunate as to have a mantle with which to veil his head, like Agamemnon of Timantis.

CHAPTER V. QUASIMODO

In the twinkling of an eye, all was ready to execute Coppenole's idea. Bourgeois, scholars and law clerks all set to work. The little chapel situated opposite the marble table was selected for the scene of the grinning match. A pane broken in the pretty rose window above the door, left free a circle of stone through which it was agreed that the competitors should thrust their heads. In order to reach it, it was only necessary to mount upon a couple of hogsheads, which had been produced from I know not where, and perched one upon the other, after a fashion. It was settled that each candidate, man or woman (for it was possible to choose a female pope), should, for the sake of leaving the impression of his grimace fresh and complete, cover his face and remain concealed in the chapel until the moment of

his appearance. In less than an instant, the chapel was crowded with competitors, upon whom the door was then closed.

Coppenole, from his post, ordered all, directed all, arranged all. During the uproar, the cardinal, no less abashed than Gringoire, had retired with all his suite, under the pretext of business and vespers, without the crowd which his arrival had so deeply stirred being in the least moved by his departure. Guillaume Rym was the only one who noticed his eminence's discomfiture. The attention of the populace, like the sun, pursued its revolution; having set out from one end of the hall, and halted for a space in the middle, it had now reached the other end. The marble table, the brocaded gallery had each had their day; it was now the turn of the chapel of Louis XI. Henceforth, the field was open to all folly. There was no one there now, but the Flemings and the rabble.

The grimaces began. The first face which appeared at the aperture, with eyelids turned up to the reds, a mouth open like a maw, and a brow wrinkled like our hussar boots of the Empire, evoked such an inextinguishable peal of laughter that Homer would have taken all these louts for gods. Nevertheless, the grand hall was anything but Olympus, and Gringoire's poor Jupiter knew it better than any one else. A second and third grimace followed, then another and another; and the laughter and transports of delight went on increasing. There was in this spectacle, a peculiar power of intoxication and fascination, of which it would be difficult to convey to the reader of our day and

our salons any idea.

Let the reader picture to himself a series of visages presenting successively all geometrical forms, from the triangle to the trapezium, from the cone to the polyhedron; all human expressions, from wrath to lewdness; all ages, from the wrinkles of the new-born babe to the wrinkles of the aged and dying; all religious phantasmagories, from Faun to Beelzebub; all animal profiles, from the maw to the beak, from the jowl to the muzzle. Let the reader imagine all these grotesque figures of the Pont Neuf, those nightmares petrified beneath the hand of Germain Pilon, assuming life and breath, and coming in turn to stare you in the face with burning eyes; all the masks of the Carnival of Venice passing in succession before your glass, – in a word, a human kaleidoscope.

The orgy grew more and more Flemish. Teniers could have given but a very imperfect idea of it. Let the reader picture to himself in bacchanal form, Salvator Rosa's battle. There were no longer either scholars or ambassadors or bourgeois or men or women; there was no longer any Clopin Trouillefou, nor Gilles Lecornu, nor Marie Quatrelivres, nor Robin Poussepain. All was universal license. The grand hall was no longer anything but a vast furnace of effrontry and joviality, where every mouth was a cry, every individual a posture; everything shouted and howled. The strange visages which came, in turn, to gnash their teeth in the rose window, were like so many brands cast into the brazier; and from the whole of this effervescing crowd, there escaped, as

from a furnace, a sharp, piercing, stinging noise, hissing like the wings of a gnat.

"Ho hé! curse it!"

"Just look at that face!"

"It's not good for anything."

"Guillemette Maugerepuis, just look at that bull's muzzle; it only lacks the horns. It can't be your husband."

"Another!"

"Belly of the pope! what sort of a grimace is that?"

"Hola hé! that's cheating. One must show only one's face."

"That damned Perrette Callebotte! she's capable of that!"

"Good! Good!"

"I'm stifling!"

"There's a fellow whose ears won't go through!" Etc., etc.

But we must do justice to our friend Jehan. In the midst of this witches' sabbath, he was still to be seen on the top of his pillar, like the cabin-boy on the topmast. He floundered about with incredible fury. His mouth was wide open, and from it there escaped a cry which no one heard, not that it was covered by the general clamor, great as that was but because it attained, no doubt, the limit of perceptible sharp sounds, the thousand vibrations of Sauveur, or the eight thousand of Biot.

As for Gringoire, the first moment of depression having passed, he had regained his composure. He had hardened himself against adversity. – "Continue!" he had said for the third time, to his comedians, speaking machines; then as he was marching

with great strides in front of the marble table, a fancy seized him to go and appear in his turn at the aperture of the chapel, were it only for the pleasure of making a grimace at that ungrateful populace. – "But no, that would not be worthy of us; no, vengeance! let us combat until the end," he repeated to himself; "the power of poetry over people is great; I will bring them back. We shall see which will carry the day, grimaces or polite literature."

Alas! he had been left the sole spectator of his piece. It was far worse than it had been a little while before. He no longer beheld anything but backs.

I am mistaken. The big, patient man, whom he had already consulted in a critical moment, had remained with his face turned towards the stage. As for Gisquette and Liénarde, they had deserted him long ago.

Gringoire was touched to the heart by the fidelity of his only spectator. He approached him and addressed him, shaking his arm slightly; for the good man was leaning on the balustrade and dozing a little.

"Monsieur," said Gringoire, "I thank you!"

"Monsieur," replied the big man with a yawn, "for what?"

"I see what wearies you," resumed the poet; "'tis all this noise which prevents your hearing comfortably. But be at ease! your name shall descend to posterity! Your name, if you please?"

"Renauld Chateau, guardian of the seals of the Châtelet of Paris, at your service."

"Monsieur, you are the only representative of the muses here," said Gringoire.

"You are too kind, sir," said the guardian of the seals at the Châtelet.

"You are the only one," resumed Gringoire, "who has listened to the piece decorously. What do you think of it?"

"He! he!" replied the fat magistrate, half aroused, "it's tolerably jolly, that's a fact."

Gringoire was forced to content himself with this eulogy; for a thunder of applause, mingled with a prodigious acclamation, cut their conversation short. The Pope of the Fools had been elected.

"Noel! Noel! Noel!"[6] shouted the people on all sides. That was, in fact, a marvellous grimace which was beaming at that moment through the aperture in the rose window. After all the pentagonal, hexagonal, and whimsical faces, which had succeeded each other at that hole without realizing the ideal of the grotesque which their imaginations, excited by the orgy, had constructed, nothing less was needed to win their suffrages than the sublime grimace which had just dazzled the assembly. Master Coppenole himself applauded, and Clopin Trouillefou, who had been among the competitors (and God knows what intensity of ugliness his visage could attain), confessed himself conquered: We will do the same. We shall not try to give the reader an idea of that tetrahedral nose, that horseshoe mouth; that little left eye obstructed with a red, bushy, bristling eyebrow, while

[6] The ancient French hurrah.

the right eye disappeared entirely beneath an enormous wart; of those teeth in disarray, broken here and there, like the embattled parapet of a fortress; of that callous lip, upon which one of these teeth encroached, like the tusk of an elephant; of that forked chin; and above all, of the expression spread over the whole; of that mixture of malice, amazement, and sadness. Let the reader dream of this whole, if he can.

The acclamation was unanimous; people rushed towards the chapel. They made the lucky Pope of the Fools come forth in triumph. But it was then that surprise and admiration attained their highest pitch; the grimace was his face.

Or rather, his whole person was a grimace. A huge head, bristling with red hair; between his shoulders an enormous hump, a counterpart perceptible in front; a system of thighs and legs so strangely astray that they could touch each other only at the knees, and, viewed from the front, resembled the crescents of two scythes joined by the handles; large feet, monstrous hands; and, with all this deformity, an indescribable and redoubtable air of vigor, agility, and courage, – strange exception to the eternal rule which wills that force as well as beauty shall be the result of harmony. Such was the pope whom the fools had just chosen for themselves.

One would have pronounced him a giant who had been broken and badly put together again.

When this species of cyclops appeared on the threshold of the chapel, motionless, squat, and almost as broad as he was

tall; squared on the base, as a great man says; with his doublet half red, half violet, sown with silver bells, and, above all, in the perfection of his ugliness, the populace recognized him on the instant, and shouted with one voice, —

"'Tis Quasimodo, the bellringer! 'tis Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre-Dame! Quasimodo, the one-eyed! Quasimodo, the bandy-legged! Noel! Noel!"

It will be seen that the poor fellow had a choice of surnames.

"Let the women with child beware!" shouted the scholars.

"Or those who wish to be," resumed Joannes.

The women did, in fact, hide their faces.

"Oh! the horrible monkey!" said one of them.

"As wicked as he is ugly," retorted another.

"He's the devil," added a third.

"I have the misfortune to live near Notre-Dame; I hear him prowling round the eaves by night."

"With the cats."

"He's always on our roofs."

"He throws spells down our chimneys."

"The other evening, he came and made a grimace at me through my attic window. I thought that it was a man. Such a fright as I had!"

"I'm sure that he goes to the witches' sabbath. Once he left a broom on my leads."

"Oh! what a displeasing hunchback's face!"

"Oh! what an ill-favored soul!"

"Whew!"

The men, on the contrary, were delighted and applauded. Quasimodo, the object of the tumult, still stood on the threshold of the chapel, sombre and grave, and allowed them to admire him.

One scholar (Robin Poussepain, I think), came and laughed in his face, and too close. Quasimodo contented himself with taking him by the girdle, and hurling him ten paces off amid the crowd; all without uttering a word.

Master Coppenole, in amazement, approached him.

"Cross of God! Holy Father! you possess the handsomest ugliness that I have ever beheld in my life. You would deserve to be pope at Rome, as well as at Paris."

So saying, he placed his hand gayly on his shoulder. Quasimodo did not stir. Coppenole went on, —

"You are a rogue with whom I have a fancy for carousing, were it to cost me a new dozen of twelve livres of Tours. How does it strike you?"

Quasimodo made no reply.

"Cross of God!" said the hosier, "are you deaf?"

He was, in truth, deaf.

Nevertheless, he began to grow impatient with Coppenole's behavior, and suddenly turned towards him with so formidable a gnashing of teeth, that the Flemish giant recoiled, like a bull-dog before a cat.

Then there was created around that strange personage, a

circle of terror and respect, whose radius was at least fifteen geometrical feet. An old woman explained to Coppenole that Quasimodo was deaf.

"Deaf!" said the hosier, with his great Flemish laugh. "Cross of God! He's a perfect pope!"

"He! I recognize him," exclaimed Jehan, who had, at last, descended from his capital, in order to see Quasimodo at closer quarters, "he's the bellringer of my brother, the archdeacon. Good-day, Quasimodo!"

"What a devil of a man!" said Robin Poussepain still all bruised with his fall. "He shows himself; he's a hunchback. He walks; he's bandy-legged. He looks at you; he's one-eyed. You speak to him; he's deaf. And what does this Polyphemus do with his tongue?"

"He speaks when he chooses," said the old woman; "he became deaf through ringing the bells. He is not dumb."

"That he lacks," remarks Jehan.

"And he has one eye too many," added Robin Poussepain.

"Not at all," said Jehan wisely. "A one-eyed man is far less complete than a blind man. He knows what he lacks."

In the meantime, all the beggars, all the lackeys, all the cutpurses, joined with the scholars, had gone in procession to seek, in the cupboard of the law clerks' company, the cardboard tiara, and the derisive robe of the Pope of the Fools. Quasimodo allowed them to array him in them without wincing, and with a sort of proud docility. Then they made him seat himself on a

motley litter. Twelve officers of the fraternity of fools raised him on their shoulders; and a sort of bitter and disdainful joy lighted up the morose face of the cyclops, when he beheld beneath his deformed feet all those heads of handsome, straight, well-made men. Then the ragged and howling procession set out on its march, according to custom, around the inner galleries of the Courts, before making the circuit of the streets and squares.

CHAPTER VI. ESMERALDA

We are delighted to be able to inform the reader, that during the whole of this scene, Gringoire and his piece had stood firm. His actors, spurred on by him, had not ceased to spout his comedy, and he had not ceased to listen to it. He had made up his mind about the tumult, and was determined to proceed to the end, not giving up the hope of a return of attention on the part of the public. This gleam of hope acquired fresh life, when he saw Quasimodo, Coppenole, and the deafening escort of the pope of the procession of fools quit the hall amid great uproar. The throng rushed eagerly after them. “Good,” he said to himself, “there go all the mischief-makers.” Unfortunately, all the mischief-makers constituted the entire audience. In the twinkling of an eye, the grand hall was empty.

To tell the truth, a few spectators still remained, some scattered, others in groups around the pillars, women, old men, or children, who had had enough of the uproar and tumult. Some

scholars were still perched astride of the window-sills, engaged in gazing into the Place.

"Well," thought Gringoire, "here are still as many as are required to hear the end of my mystery. They are few in number, but it is a choice audience, a lettered audience."

An instant later, a symphony which had been intended to produce the greatest effect on the arrival of the Virgin, was lacking. Gringoire perceived that his music had been carried off by the procession of the Pope of the Fools. "Skip it," said he, stoically.

He approached a group of bourgeois, who seemed to him to be discussing his piece. This is the fragment of conversation which he caught, —

"You know, Master Cheneteau, the Hôtel de Navarre, which belonged to Monsieur de Nemours?"

"Yes, opposite the Chapelle de Braque."

"Well, the treasury has just let it to Guillaume Alixandre, historian, for six hivres, eight sols, parisian, a year."

"How rents are going up!"

"Come," said Gringoire to himself, with a sigh, "the others are listening."

"Comrades," suddenly shouted one of the young scamps from the window, "La Esmeralda! La Esmeralda in the Place!"

This word produced a magical effect. Every one who was left in the hall flew to the windows, climbing the walls in order to see, and repeating, "La Esmeralda! La Esmeralda?" At the same

time, a great sound of applause was heard from without.

"What's the meaning of this, of the Esmeralda?" said Gringoire, wringing his hands in despair. "Ah, good heavens! it seems to be the turn of the windows now."

He returned towards the marble table, and saw that the representation had been interrupted. It was precisely at the instant when Jupiter should have appeared with his thunder. But Jupiter was standing motionless at the foot of the stage.

"Michel Giborne!" cried the irritated poet, "what are you doing there? Is that your part? Come up!"

"Alas!" said Jupiter, "a scholar has just seized the ladder."

Gringoire looked. It was but too true. All communication between his plot and its solution was intercepted.

"The rascal," he murmured. "And why did he take that ladder?"

"In order to go and see the Esmeralda," replied Jupiter piteously. "He said, 'Come, here's a ladder that's of no use!' and he took it."

This was the last blow. Gringoire received it with resignation.

"May the devil fly away with you!" he said to the comedian, "and if I get my pay, you shall receive yours."

Then he beat a retreat, with drooping head, but the last in the field, like a general who has fought well.

And as he descended the winding stairs of the courts: "A fine rabble of asses and dolts these Parisians!" he muttered between his teeth; "they come to hear a mystery and don't listen to it at

all! They are engrossed by every one, by Chopin Trouillefou, by the cardinal, by Coppenole, by Quasimodo, by the devil! but by Madame the Virgin Mary, not at all. If I had known, I'd have given you Virgin Mary; you ninnies! And I! to come to see faces and behold only backs! to be a poet, and to reap the success of an apothecary! It is true that Homerus begged through the Greek towns, and that Naso died in exile among the Muscovites. But may the devil flay me if I understand what they mean with their Esmeralda! What is that word, in the first place? – 'tis Egyptian!"

BOOK SECOND

CHAPTER I. FROM CHARYBDIS TO SCYLLA

Night comes on early in January. The streets were already dark when Gringoire issued forth from the Courts. This gloom pleased him; he was in haste to reach some obscure and deserted alley, in order there to meditate at his ease, and in order that the philosopher might place the first dressing upon the wound of the poet. Philosophy, moreover, was his sole refuge, for he did not know where he was to lodge for the night. After the brilliant failure of his first theatrical venture, he dared not return to the lodging which he occupied in the Rue Grenier-sur-l'Eau, opposite to the Port-au-Foin, having depended upon receiving from monsieur the provost for his epithalamium, the wherewithal to pay Master Guillaume Doulx-Sire, farmer of the taxes on cloven-footed animals in Paris, the rent which he owed him, that is to say, twelve sols parisian; twelve times the value of all that he possessed in the world, including his trunk-hose, his shirt, and his cap. After reflecting a moment, temporarily sheltered beneath the little wicket of the prison of the treasurer of the Sainte-Chappelle, as to the shelter which he would select for the night, having all the pavements of Paris to choose from, he

remembered to have noticed the week previously in the Rue de la Savaterie, at the door of a councillor of the parliament, a stepping stone for mounting a mule, and to have said to himself that that stone would furnish, on occasion, a very excellent pillow for a mendicant or a poet. He thanked Providence for having sent this happy idea to him; but, as he was preparing to cross the Place, in order to reach the tortuous labyrinth of the city, where meander all those old sister streets, the Rues de la Barillerie, de la Vielle-Draperie, de la Savaterie, de la Juiverie, etc., still extant to-day, with their nine-story houses, he saw the procession of the Pope of the Fools, which was also emerging from the court house, and rushing across the courtyard, with great cries, a great flashing of torches, and the music which belonged to him, Gringoire. This sight revived the pain of his self-love; he fled. In the bitterness of his dramatic misadventure, everything which reminded him of the festival of that day irritated his wound and made it bleed.

He was on the point of turning to the Pont Saint-Michel; children were running about here and there with fire lances and rockets.

"Pest on firework candles!" said Gringoire; and he fell back on the Pont au Change. To the house at the head of the bridge there had been affixed three small banners, representing the king, the dauphin, and Marguerite of Flanders, and six little pennons on which were portrayed the Duke of Austria, the Cardinal de Bourbon, M. de Beaujeu, and Madame Jeanne de France, and Monsieur the Bastard of Bourbon, and I know not whom else; all

being illuminated with torches. The rabble were admiring.

"Happy painter, Jehan Fourbault!" said Gringoire with a deep sigh; and he turned his back upon the bannerets and pennons. A street opened before him; he thought it so dark and deserted that he hoped to there escape from all the rumors as well as from all the gleams of the festival. At the end of a few moments his foot came in contact with an obstacle; he stumbled and fell. It was the May truss, which the clerks of the clerks' law court had deposited that morning at the door of a president of the parliament, in honor of the solemnity of the day. Gringoire bore this new disaster heroically; he picked himself up, and reached the water's edge. After leaving behind him the civic Tournelle[7] and the criminal tower, and skirted the great walls of the king's garden, on that unpaved strand where the mud reached to his ankles, he reached the western point of the city, and considered for some time the islet of the Passeur-aux-Vaches, which has disappeared beneath the bronze horse of the Pont Neuf. The islet appeared to him in the shadow like a black mass, beyond the narrow strip of whitish water which separated him from it. One could divine by the ray of a tiny light the sort of hut in the form of a beehive where the ferryman of cows took refuge at night.

"Happy ferryman!" thought Gringoire; "you do not dream of glory, and you do not make marriage songs! What matters it to you, if kings and Duchesses of Burgundy marry? You know no other daisies (*marguerites*) than those which your April

[7] A chamber of the ancient parliament of Paris.

greensward gives your cows to browse upon; while I, a poet, am hooted, and shiver, and owe twelve sous, and the soles of my shoes are so transparent, that they might serve as glasses for your lantern! Thanks, ferryman, your cabin rests my eyes, and makes me forget Paris!"

He was roused from his almost lyric ecstacy, by a big double Saint-Jean cracker, which suddenly went off from the happy cabin. It was the cow ferryman, who was taking his part in the rejoicings of the day, and letting off fireworks.

This cracker made Gringoire's skin bristle up all over.

"Accursed festival!" he exclaimed, "wilt thou pursue me everywhere? Oh! good God! even to the ferryman's!"

Then he looked at the Seine at his feet, and a horrible temptation took possession of him:

"Oh!" said he, "I would gladly drown myself, were the water not so cold!"

Then a desperate resolution occurred to him. It was, since he could not escape from the Pope of the Fools, from Jehan Fourbault's bannerets, from May trusses, from squibs and crackers, to go to the Place de Grève.

"At least," he said to himself, "I shall there have a firebrand of joy wherewith to warm myself, and I can sup on some crumbs of the three great armorial bearings of royal sugar which have been erected on the public refreshment-stall of the city."

CHAPTER II. THE PLACE DE GREVE

There remains to-day but a very imperceptible vestige of the Place de Grève, such as it existed then; it consists in the charming little turret, which occupies the angle north of the Place, and which, already enshrouded in the ignoble plaster which fills with paste the delicate lines of its sculpture, would soon have disappeared, perhaps submerged by that flood of new houses which so rapidly devours all the ancient façades of Paris.

The persons who, like ourselves, never cross the Place de Grève without casting a glance of pity and sympathy on that poor turret strangled between two hovels of the time of Louis XV., can easily reconstruct in their minds the aggregate of edifices to which it belonged, and find again entire in it the ancient Gothic place of the fifteenth century.

It was then, as it is to-day, an irregular trapezoid, bordered on one side by the quay, and on the other three by a series of lofty, narrow, and gloomy houses. By day, one could admire the variety of its edifices, all sculptured in stone or wood, and already presenting complete specimens of the different domestic architectures of the Middle Ages, running back from the fifteenth to the eleventh century, from the casement which had begun to dethrone the arch, to the Roman semicircle, which had been supplanted by the ogive, and which still occupies, below it, the first story of that ancient house de la Tour Roland, at

the corner of the Place upon the Seine, on the side of the street with the Tannerie. At night, one could distinguish nothing of all that mass of buildings, except the black indentation of the roofs, unrolling their chain of acute angles round the place; for one of the radical differences between the cities of that time, and the cities of the present day, lay in the façades which looked upon the places and streets, and which were then gables. For the last two centuries the houses have been turned round.

In the centre of the eastern side of the Place, rose a heavy and hybrid construction, formed of three buildings placed in juxtaposition. It was called by three names which explain its history, its destination, and its architecture: "The House of the Dauphin," because Charles V., when Dauphin, had inhabited it; "The Marchandise," because it had served as town hall; and "The Pillared House" (*domus ad piloria*), because of a series of large pillars which sustained the three stories. The city found there all that is required for a city like Paris; a chapel in which to pray to God; a *plaidoyer*, or pleading room, in which to hold hearings, and to repel, at need, the King's people; and under the roof, an *arsenac* full of artillery. For the bourgeois of Paris were aware that it is not sufficient to pray in every conjuncture, and to plead for the franchises of the city, and they had always in reserve, in the garret of the town hall, a few good rusty arquebuses. The Grève had then that sinister aspect which it preserves to-day from the execrable ideas which it awakens, and from the sombre town hall of Dominique Bocador, which has replaced the Pillared

House. It must be admitted that a permanent gibbet and a pillory, "a justice and a ladder," as they were called in that day, erected side by side in the centre of the pavement, contributed not a little to cause eyes to be turned away from that fatal place, where so many beings full of life and health have agonized; where, fifty years later, that fever of Saint Vallier was destined to have its birth, that terror of the scaffold, the most monstrous of all maladies because it comes not from God, but from man.

It is a consoling idea (let us remark in passing), to think that the death penalty, which three hundred years ago still encumbered with its iron wheels, its stone gibbets, and all its paraphernalia of torture, permanent and riveted to the pavement, the Grève, the Halles, the Place Dauphine, the Cross du Trahoir, the Marché aux Pourceaux, that hideous Montfauçon, the barrier des Sergents, the Place aux Chats, the Porte Saint-Denis, Champeaux, the Porte Baudets, the Porte Saint Jacques, without reckoning the innumerable ladders of the provosts, the bishop of the chapters, of the abbots, of the priors, who had the decree of life and death, – without reckoning the judicial drownings in the river Seine; it is consoling to-day, after having lost successively all the pieces of its armor, its luxury of torment, its penalty of imagination and fancy, its torture for which it reconstructed every five years a leather bed at the Grand Châtelet, that ancient suzerain of feudal society almost expunged from our laws and our cities, hunted from code to code, chased from place to place, has no longer, in our immense Paris, any more than a

dishonored corner of the Grève, – than a miserable guillotine, furtive, uneasy, shameful, which seems always afraid of being caught in the act, so quickly does it disappear after having dealt its blow.

CHAPTER III. KISSES FOR BLOWS

When Pierre Gringoire arrived on the Place de Grève, he was paralyzed. He had directed his course across the Pont aux Meuniers, in order to avoid the rabble on the Pont au Change, and the pennons of Jehan Fourbault; but the wheels of all the bishop's mills had splashed him as he passed, and his doublet was drenched; it seemed to him besides, that the failure of his piece had rendered him still more sensible to cold than usual. Hence he made haste to draw near the bonfire, which was burning magnificently in the middle of the Place. But a considerable crowd formed a circle around it.

"Accursed Parisians!" he said to himself (for Gringoire, like a true dramatic poet, was subject to monologues) "there they are obstructing my fire! Nevertheless, I am greatly in need of a chimney corner; my shoes drink in the water, and all those cursed mills wept upon me! That devil of a Bishop of Paris, with his mills! I'd just like to know what use a bishop can make of a mill! Does he expect to become a miller instead of a bishop? If only my malediction is needed for that, I bestow it upon him! and his cathedral, and his mills! Just see if those boobies will

put themselves out! Move aside! I'd like to know what they are doing there! They are warming themselves, much pleasure may it give them! They are watching a hundred fagots burn; a fine spectacle!"

On looking more closely, he perceived that the circle was much larger than was required simply for the purpose of getting warm at the king's fire, and that this concourse of people had not been attracted solely by the beauty of the hundred fagots which were burning.

In a vast space left free between the crowd and the fire, a young girl was dancing.

Whether this young girl was a human being, a fairy, or an angel, is what Gringoire, sceptical philosopher and ironical poet that he was, could not decide at the first moment, so fascinated was he by this dazzling vision.

She was not tall, though she seemed so, so boldly did her slender form dart about. She was swarthy of complexion, but one divined that, by day, her skin must possess that beautiful golden tone of the Andalusians and the Roman women. Her little foot, too, was Andalusian, for it was both pinched and at ease in its graceful shoe. She danced, she turned, she whirled rapidly about on an old Persian rug, spread negligently under her feet; and each time that her radiant face passed before you, as she whirled, her great black eyes darted a flash of lightning at you.

All around her, all glances were riveted, all mouths open; and, in fact, when she danced thus, to the humming of the Basque

tambourine, which her two pure, rounded arms raised above her head, slender, frail and vivacious as a wasp, with her corsage of gold without a fold, her variegated gown puffing out, her bare shoulders, her delicate limbs, which her petticoat revealed at times, her black hair, her eyes of flame, she was a supernatural creature.

"In truth," said Gringoire to himself, "she is a salamander, she is a nymph, she is a goddess, she is a bacchante of the Menelean Mount!"

At that moment, one of the salamander's braids of hair became unfastened, and a piece of yellow copper which was attached to it, rolled to the ground.

"Hé, no!" said he, "she is a gypsy!"

All illusions had disappeared.

She began her dance once more; she took from the ground two swords, whose points she rested against her brow, and which she made to turn in one direction, while she turned in the other; it was a purely gypsy effect. But, disenchanted though Gringoire was, the whole effect of this picture was not without its charm and its magic; the bonfire illuminated, with a red flaring light, which trembled, all alive, over the circle of faces in the crowd, on the brow of the young girl, and at the background of the Place cast a pallid reflection, on one side upon the ancient, black, and wrinkled façade of the House of Pillars, on the other, upon the old stone gibbet.

Among the thousands of visages which that light tinged with

scarlet, there was one which seemed, even more than all the others, absorbed in contemplation of the dancer. It was the face of a man, austere, calm, and sombre. This man, whose costume was concealed by the crowd which surrounded him, did not appear to be more than five and thirty years of age; nevertheless, he was bald; he had merely a few tufts of thin, gray hair on his temples; his broad, high forehead had begun to be furrowed with wrinkles, but his deep-set eyes sparkled with extraordinary youthfulness, an ardent life, a profound passion. He kept them fixed incessantly on the gypsy, and, while the giddy young girl of sixteen danced and whirled, for the pleasure of all, his revery seemed to become more and more sombre. From time to time, a smile and a sigh met upon his lips, but the smile was more melancholy than the sigh.

The young girl, stopped at length, breathless, and the people applauded her lovingly.

"Djali!" said the gypsy.

Then Gringoire saw come up to her, a pretty little white goat, alert, wide-awake, glossy, with gilded horns, gilded hoofs, and gilded collar, which he had not hitherto perceived, and which had remained lying curled up on one corner of the carpet watching his mistress dance.

"Djali!" said the dancer, "it is your turn."

And, seating herself, she gracefully presented her tambourine to the goat.

"Djali," she continued, "what month is this?"

The goat lifted its fore foot, and struck one blow upon the tambourine. It was the first month in the year, in fact.

"Djali," pursued the young girl, turning her tambourine round, "what day of the month is this?"

Djali raised his little gilt hoof, and struck six blows on the tambourine.

"Djali," pursued the Egyptian, with still another movement of the tambourine, "what hour of the day is it?"

Djali struck seven blows. At that moment, the clock of the Pillar House rang out seven.

The people were amazed.

"There's sorcery at the bottom of it," said a sinister voice in the crowd. It was that of the bald man, who never removed his eyes from the gypsy.

She shuddered and turned round; but applause broke forth and drowned the morose exclamation.

It even effaced it so completely from her mind, that she continued to question her goat.

"Djali, what does Master Guichard Grand-Remy, captain of the pistoliers of the town do, at the procession of Candlemas?"

Djali reared himself on his hind legs, and began to bleat, marching along with so much dainty gravity, that the entire circle of spectators burst into a laugh at this parody of the interested devoutness of the captain of pistoliers.

"Djali," resumed the young girl, emboldened by her growing success, "how preaches Master Jacques Charmolue, procurator

to the king in the ecclesiastical court?"

The goat seated himself on his hind quarters, and began to bleat, waving his fore feet in so strange a manner, that, with the exception of the bad French, and worse Latin, Jacques Charmolue was there complete, – gesture, accent, and attitude.

And the crowd applauded louder than ever.

"Sacrilege! profanation!" resumed the voice of the bald man.

The gypsy turned round once more.

"Ah!" said she, "'tis that villanous man!" Then, thrusting her under lip out beyond the upper, she made a little pout, which appeared to be familiar to her, executed a pirouette on her heel, and set about collecting in her tambourine the gifts of the multitude.

Big blanks, little blanks, targes[8] and eagle liards showered into it.

All at once, she passed in front of Gringoire. Gringoire put his hand so recklessly into his pocket that she halted. "The devil!" said the poet, finding at the bottom of his pocket the reality, that is, to say, a void. In the meantime, the pretty girl stood there, gazing at him with her big eyes, and holding out her tambourine to him and waiting. Gringoire broke into a violent perspiration.

If he had all Peru in his pocket, he would certainly have given it to the dancer; but Gringoire had not Peru, and, moreover, America had not yet been discovered.

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[8] A blank: an old French coin; six blanks were worth two sous and a half; targe, an ancient coin of Burgundy, a farthing.

Happily, an unexpected incident came to his rescue.

"Will you take yourself off, you Egyptian grasshopper?" cried a sharp voice, which proceeded from the darkest corner of the Place.

The young girl turned round in affright. It was no longer the voice of the bald man; it was the voice of a woman, bigoted and malicious.

However, this cry, which alarmed the gypsy, delighted a troop of children who were prowling about there.

"It is the recluse of the Tour-Roland," they exclaimed, with wild laughter, "it is the sacked nun who is scolding! Hasn't she supped? Let's carry her the remains of the city refreshments!"

All rushed towards the Pillar House.

In the meanwhile, Gringoire had taken advantage of the dancer's embarrassment, to disappear. The children's shouts had reminded him that he, also, had not supped, so he ran to the public buffet. But the little rascals had better legs than he; when he arrived, they had stripped the table. There remained not so much as a miserable *camichon* at five sous the pound. Nothing remained upon the wall but slender fleurs-de-lis, mingled with rose bushes, painted in 1434 by Mathieu Biterne. It was a meagre supper.

It is an unpleasant thing to go to bed without supper, it is a still less pleasant thing not to sup and not to know where one is to sleep. That was Gringoire's condition. No supper, no shelter; he saw himself pressed on all sides by necessity, and he found

necessity very crabbed. He had long ago discovered the truth, that Jupiter created men during a fit of misanthropy, and that during a wise man's whole life, his destiny holds his philosophy in a state of siege. As for himself, he had never seen the blockade so complete; he heard his stomach sounding a parley, and he considered it very much out of place that evil destiny should capture his philosophy by famine.

This melancholy revery was absorbing him more and more, when a song, quaint but full of sweetness, suddenly tore him from it. It was the young gypsy who was singing.

Her voice was like her dancing, like her beauty. It was indefinable and charming; something pure and sonorous, aerial, winged, so to speak. There were continual outbursts, melodies, unexpected cadences, then simple phrases strewn with aerial and hissing notes; then floods of scales which would have put a nightingale to rout, but in which harmony was always present; then soft modulations of octaves which rose and fell, like the bosom of the young singer. Her beautiful face followed, with singular mobility, all the caprices of her song, from the wildest inspiration to the chastest dignity. One would have pronounced her now a mad creature, now a queen.

The words which she sang were in a tongue unknown to Gringoire, and which seemed to him to be unknown to herself, so little relation did the expression which she imparted to her song bear to the sense of the words. Thus, these four lines, in her mouth, were madly gay, —

Un cofre de gran riqueza
Hallaron dentro un pilar,
Dentro del, nuevas banderas
Con figuras de espantar.[9]

And an instant afterwards, at the accents which she imparted to this stanza, —

Alarabes de cavallo
Sin poderse menear,
Con espadas, y los cuellos,
Ballestas de buen echar,

Gringoire felt the tears start to his eyes. Nevertheless, her song breathed joy, most of all, and she seemed to sing like a bird, from serenity and heedlessness.

The gypsy's song had disturbed Gringoire's revery as the swan disturbs the water. He listened in a sort of rapture, and forgetfulness of everything. It was the first moment in the course of many hours when he did not feel that he suffered.

The moment was brief.

The same woman's voice, which had interrupted the gypsy's dance, interrupted her song.

"Will you hold your tongue, you cricket of hell?" it cried, still

[9] A coffer of great richnessIn a pillar's heart they found,Within it lay new banners,With figures to astound.

from the same obscure corner of the place.

The poor "cricket" stopped short. Gringoire covered up his ears.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "accursed saw with missing teeth, which comes to break the lyre!"

Meanwhile, the other spectators murmured like himself; "To the devil with the sacked nun!" said some of them. And the old invisible kill-joy might have had occasion to repent of her aggressions against the gypsy had their attention not been diverted at this moment by the procession of the Pope of the Fools, which, after having traversed many streets and squares, debouched on the Place de Grève, with all its torches and all its uproar.

This procession, which our readers have seen set out from the Palais de Justice, had organized on the way, and had been recruited by all the knaves, idle thieves, and unemployed vagabonds in Paris; so that it presented a very respectable aspect when it arrived at the Grève.

First came Egypt. The Duke of Egypt headed it, on horseback, with his counts on foot holding his bridle and stirrups for him; behind them, the male and female Egyptians, pell-mell, with their little children crying on their shoulders; all – duke, counts, and populace – in rags and tatters. Then came the Kingdom of Argot; that is to say, all the thieves of France, arranged according to the order of their dignity; the minor people walking first. Thus defiled by fours, with the divers insignia of their grades,

in that strange faculty, most of them lame, some cripples, others one-armed, shop clerks, pilgrim, *hubins*, bootblacks, thimble-riggers, street arabs, beggars, the blear-eyed beggars, thieves, the weakly, vagabonds, merchants, sham soldiers, goldsmiths, passed masters of pickpockets, isolated thieves. A catalogue that would weary Homer. In the centre of the conclave of the passed masters of pickpockets, one had some difficulty in distinguishing the King of Argot, the grand coësre, so called, crouching in a little cart drawn by two big dogs. After the kingdom of the Argotiers, came the Empire of Galilee. Guillaume Rousseau, Emperor of the Empire of Galilee, marched majestically in his robe of purple, spotted with wine, preceded by buffoons wrestling and executing military dances; surrounded by his macebearers, his pickpockets and clerks of the chamber of accounts. Last of all came the corporation of law clerks, with its maypoles crowned with flowers, its black robes, its music worthy of the orgy, and its large candles of yellow wax. In the centre of this crowd, the grand officers of the Brotherhood of Fools bore on their shoulders a litter more loaded down with candles than the reliquary of Sainte-Geneviève in time of pest; and on this litter shone resplendent, with crosier, cope, and mitre, the new Pope of the Fools, the bellringer of Notre-Dame, Quasimodo the hunchback.

Each section of this grotesque procession had its own music. The Egyptians made their drums and African tambourines resound. The slang men, not a very musical race, still clung to

the goat's horn trumpet and the Gothic rubebbe of the twelfth century. The Empire of Galilee was not much more advanced; among its music one could hardly distinguish some miserable rebec, from the infancy of the art, still imprisoned in the *re-la-mi*. But it was around the Pope of the Fools that all the musical riches of the epoch were displayed in a magnificent discord. It was nothing but soprano rebecs, counter-tenor rebecs, and tenor rebecs, not to reckon the flutes and brass instruments. Alas! our readers will remember that this was Gringoire's orchestra.

It is difficult to convey an idea of the degree of proud and blissful expansion to which the sad and hideous visage of Quasimodo had attained during the transit from the Palais de Justice, to the Place de Grève. It was the first enjoyment of self-love that he had ever experienced. Down to that day, he had known only humiliation, disdain for his condition, disgust for his person. Hence, deaf though he was, he enjoyed, like a veritable pope, the acclamations of that throng, which he hated because he felt that he was hated by it. What mattered it that his people consisted of a pack of fools, cripples, thieves, and beggars? it was still a people and he was its sovereign. And he accepted seriously all this ironical applause, all this derisive respect, with which the crowd mingled, it must be admitted, a good deal of very real fear. For the hunchback was robust; for the bandy-legged fellow was agile; for the deaf man was malicious: three qualities which temper ridicule.

We are far from believing, however, that the new Pope of

the Fools understood both the sentiments which he felt and the sentiments which he inspired. The spirit which was lodged in this failure of a body had, necessarily, something incomplete and deaf about it. Thus, what he felt at the moment was to him, absolutely vague, indistinct, and confused. Only joy made itself felt, only pride dominated. Around that sombre and unhappy face, there hung a radiance.

It was, then, not without surprise and alarm, that at the very moment when Quasimodo was passing the Pillar House, in that semi-intoxicated state, a man was seen to dart from the crowd, and to tear from his hands, with a gesture of anger, his crosier of gilded wood, the emblem of his mock popeship.

This man, this rash individual, was the man with the bald brow, who, a moment earlier, standing with the gypsy's group had chilled the poor girl with his words of menace and of hatred. He was dressed in an ecclesiastical costume. At the moment when he stood forth from the crowd, Gringoire, who had not noticed him up to that time, recognized him: "Hold!" he said, with an exclamation of astonishment. "Eh! 'tis my master in Hermes, Dom Claude Frollo, the archdeacon! What the devil does he want of that old one-eyed fellow? He'll get himself devoured!"

A cry of terror arose, in fact. The formidable Quasimodo had hurled himself from the litter, and the women turned aside their eyes in order not to see him tear the archdeacon asunder.

He made one bound as far as the priest, looked at him, and fell upon his knees.

The priest tore off his tiara, broke his crozier, and rent his tinsel cope.

Quasimodo remained on his knees, with head bent and hands clasped. Then there was established between them a strange dialogue of signs and gestures, for neither of them spoke. The priest, erect on his feet, irritated, threatening, imperious; Quasimodo, prostrate, humble, suppliant. And, nevertheless, it is certain that Quasimodo could have crushed the priest with his thumb.

At length the archdeacon, giving Quasimodo's powerful shoulder a rough shake, made him a sign to rise and follow him.

Quasimodo rose.

Then the Brotherhood of Fools, their first stupor having passed off, wished to defend their pope, so abruptly dethroned. The Egyptians, the men of slang, and all the fraternity of law clerks, gathered howling round the priest.

Quasimodo placed himself in front of the priest, set in play the muscles of his athletic fists, and glared upon the assailants with the snarl of an angry tiger.

The priest resumed his sombre gravity, made a sign to Quasimodo, and retired in silence.

Quasimodo walked in front of him, scattering the crowd as he passed.

When they had traversed the populace and the Place, the cloud of curious and idle were minded to follow them. Quasimodo then constituted himself the rearguard, and followed the archdeacon,

walking backwards, squat, surly, monstrous, bristling, gathering up his limbs, licking his boar's tusks, growling like a wild beast, and imparting to the crowd immense vibrations, with a look or a gesture.

Both were allowed to plunge into a dark and narrow street, where no one dared to venture after them; so thoroughly did the mere chimera of Quasimodo gnashing his teeth bar the entrance.

"Here's a marvellous thing," said Gringoire; "but where the deuce shall I find some supper?"

CHAPTER IV. THE INCONVENIENCES OF FOLLOWING A PRETTY WOMAN THROUGH THE

STREETS IN THE EVENING.

Gringoire set out to follow the gypsy at all hazards. He had seen her, accompanied by her goat, take to the Rue de la Coutellerie; he took the Rue de la Coutellerie.

"Why not?" he said to himself.

Gringoire, a practical philosopher of the streets of Paris, had noticed that nothing is more propitious to revery than following a pretty woman without knowing whither she is going. There was in this voluntary abdication of his freewill, in this fancy submitting itself to another fancy, which suspects it not, a mixture of fantastic independence and blind obedience, something indescribable, intermediate between slavery and

liberty, which pleased Gringoire, – a spirit essentially compound, undecided, and complex, holding the extremities of all extremes, incessantly suspended between all human propensities, and neutralizing one by the other. He was fond of comparing himself to Mahomet's coffin, attracted in two different directions by two loadstones, and hesitating eternally between the heights and the depths, between the vault and the pavement, between fall and ascent, between zenith and nadir.

If Gringoire had lived in our day, what a fine middle course he would hold between classicism and romanticism!

But he was not sufficiently primitive to live three hundred years, and 'tis a pity. His absence is a void which is but too sensibly felt to-day.

Moreover, for the purpose of thus following passers-by (and especially female passers-by) in the streets, which Gringoire was fond of doing, there is no better disposition than ignorance of where one is going to sleep.

So he walked along, very thoughtfully, behind the young girl, who hastened her pace and made her goat trot as she saw the bourgeois returning home and the taverns – the only shops which had been open that day – closing.

"After all," he half thought to himself, "she must lodge somewhere; gypsies have kindly hearts. Who knows? – "

And in the points of suspense which he placed after this reticence in his mind, there lay I know not what flattering ideas.

Meanwhile, from time to time, as he passed the last groups

of bourgeois closing their doors, he caught some scraps of their conversation, which broke the thread of his pleasant hypotheses.

Now it was two old men accosting each other.

"Do you know that it is cold, Master Thibaut Fernicle?" (Gringoire had been aware of this since the beginning of the winter.)

"Yes, indeed, Master Boniface Disome! Are we going to have a winter such as we had three years ago, in '80, when wood cost eight sous the measure?"

"Bah! that's nothing, Master Thibaut, compared with the winter of 1407, when it froze from St. Martin's Day until Candlemas! and so cold that the pen of the registrar of the parliament froze every three words, in the Grand Chamber! which interrupted the registration of justice."

Further on there were two female neighbors at their windows, holding candles, which the fog caused to sputter.

"Has your husband told you about the mishap, Mademoiselle la Boudraque?"

"No. What is it, Mademoiselle Turquant?"

"The horse of M. Gilles Godin, the notary at the Châtelet, took fright at the Flemings and their procession, and overturned Master Philippe Avrillot, lay monk of the Célestins."

"Really?"

"Actually."

"A bourgeois horse! 'tis rather too much! If it had been a cavalry horse, well and good!"

And the windows were closed. But Gringoire had lost the thread of his ideas, nevertheless.

Fortunately, he speedily found it again, and he knotted it together without difficulty, thanks to the gypsy, thanks to Djali, who still walked in front of him; two fine, delicate, and charming creatures, whose tiny feet, beautiful forms, and graceful manners he was engaged in admiring, almost confusing them in his contemplation; believing them to be both young girls, from their intelligence and good friendship; regarding them both as goats, – so far as the lightness, agility, and dexterity of their walk were concerned.

But the streets were becoming blacker and more deserted every moment. The curfew had sounded long ago, and it was only at rare intervals now that they encountered a passer-by in the street, or a light in the windows. Gringoire had become involved, in his pursuit of the gypsy, in that inextricable labyrinth of alleys, squares, and closed courts which surround the ancient sepulchre of the Saints-Innocents, and which resembles a ball of thread tangled by a cat. “Here are streets which possess but little logic!” said Gringoire, lost in the thousands of circuits which returned upon themselves incessantly, but where the young girl pursued a road which seemed familiar to her, without hesitation and with a step which became ever more rapid. As for him, he would have been utterly ignorant of his situation had he not espied, in passing, at the turn of a street, the octagonal mass of the pillory of the fish markets, the open-work summit of which threw its black,

fretted outlines clearly upon a window which was still lighted in the Rue Verdelet.

The young girl's attention had been attracted to him for the last few moments; she had repeatedly turned her head towards him with uneasiness; she had even once come to a standstill, and taking advantage of a ray of light which escaped from a half-open bakery to survey him intently, from head to foot, then, having cast this glance, Gringoire had seen her make that little pout which he had already noticed, after which she passed on.

This little pout had furnished Gringoire with food for thought. There was certainly both disdain and mockery in that graceful grimace. So he dropped his head, began to count the paving-stones, and to follow the young girl at a little greater distance, when, at the turn of a street, which had caused him to lose sight of her, he heard her utter a piercing cry.

He hastened his steps.

The street was full of shadows. Nevertheless, a twist of tow soaked in oil, which burned in a cage at the feet of the Holy Virgin at the street corner, permitted Gringoire to make out the gypsy struggling in the arms of two men, who were endeavoring to stifle her cries. The poor little goat, in great alarm, lowered his horns and bleated.

"Help! gentlemen of the watch!" shouted Gringoire, and advanced bravely. One of the men who held the young girl turned towards him. It was the formidable visage of Quasimodo.

Gringoire did not take to flight, but neither did he advance

another step.

Quasimodo came up to him, tossed him four paces away on the pavement with a backward turn of the hand, and plunged rapidly into the gloom, bearing the young girl folded across one arm like a silken scarf. His companion followed him, and the poor goat ran after them all, bleating plaintively.

"Murder! murder!" shrieked the unhappy gypsy.

"Halt, rascals, and yield me that wench!" suddenly shouted in a voice of thunder, a cavalier who appeared suddenly from a neighboring square.

It was a captain of the king's archers, armed from head to foot, with his sword in his hand.

He tore the gypsy from the arms of the dazed Quasimodo, threw her across his saddle, and at the moment when the terrible hunchback, recovering from his surprise, rushed upon him to regain his prey, fifteen or sixteen archers, who followed their captain closely, made their appearance, with their two-edged swords in their fists. It was a squad of the king's police, which was making the rounds, by order of Messire Robert d'Estouteville, guard of the provostship of Paris.

Quasimodo was surrounded, seized, garroted; he roared, he foamed at the mouth, he bit; and had it been broad daylight, there is no doubt that his face alone, rendered more hideous by wrath, would have put the entire squad to flight. But by night he was deprived of his most formidable weapon, his ugliness.

His companion had disappeared during the struggle.

The gypsy gracefully raised herself upright upon the officer's saddle, placed both hands upon the young man's shoulders, and gazed fixedly at him for several seconds, as though enchanted with his good looks and with the aid which he had just rendered her. Then breaking silence first, she said to him, making her sweet voice still sweeter than usual, —

"What is your name, monsieur le gendarme?"

"Captain Phoebus de Châteaupers, at your service, my beauty!" replied the officer, drawing himself up.

"Thanks," said she.

And while Captain Phoebus was turning up his moustache in Burgundian fashion, she slipped from the horse, like an arrow falling to earth, and fled.

A flash of lightning would have vanished less quickly.

"Nombrill of the Pope!" said the captain, causing Quasimodo's straps to be drawn tighter, "I should have preferred to keep the wench."

"What would you have, captain?" said one gendarme. "The warbler has fled, and the bat remains."

CHAPTER V. RESULT OF THE DANGERS

Gringoire, thoroughly stunned by his fall, remained on the pavement in front of the Holy Virgin at the street corner. Little by little, he regained his senses; at first, for several minutes, he

was floating in a sort of half-somnolent revery, which was not without its charm, in which aeriel figures of the gypsy and her goat were coupled with Quasimodo's heavy fist. This state lasted but a short time. A decidedly vivid sensation of cold in the part of his body which was in contact with the pavement, suddenly aroused him and caused his spirit to return to the surface.

"Whence comes this chill?" he said abruptly, to himself. He then perceived that he was lying half in the middle of the gutter.

"That devil of a hunchbacked cyclops!" he muttered between his teeth; and he tried to rise. But he was too much dazed and bruised; he was forced to remain where he was. Moreover, his hand was tolerably free; he stopped up his nose and resigned himself.

"The mud of Paris," he said to himself – for decidedly he thought that he was sure that the gutter would prove his refuge for the night; and what can one do in a refuge, except dream? – "the mud of Paris is particularly stinking; it must contain a great deal of volatile and nitric salts. That, moreover, is the opinion of Master Nicholas Flamel, and of the alchemists – "

The word "alchemists" suddenly suggested to his mind the idea of Archdeacon Claude Frollo. He recalled the violent scene which he had just witnessed in part; that the gypsy was struggling with two men, that Quasimodo had a companion; and the morose and haughty face of the archdeacon passed confusedly through his memory. "That would be strange!" he said to himself. And on that fact and that basis he began to construct a fantastic

edifice of hypothesis, that card-castle of philosophers; then, suddenly returning once more to reality, "Come! I'm freezing!" he ejaculated.

The place was, in fact, becoming less and less tenable. Each molecule of the gutter bore away a molecule of heat radiating from Gringoire's loins, and the equilibrium between the temperature of his body and the temperature of the brook, began to be established in rough fashion.

Quite a different annoyance suddenly assailed him. A group of children, those little bare-footed savages who have always roamed the pavements of Paris under the eternal name of *gamins*, and who, when we were also children ourselves, threw stones at all of us in the afternoon, when we came out of school, because our trousers were not torn – a swarm of these young scamps rushed towards the square where Gringoire lay, with shouts and laughter which seemed to pay but little heed to the sleep of the neighbors. They were dragging after them some sort of hideous sack; and the noise of their wooden shoes alone would have roused the dead. Gringoire who was not quite dead yet, half raised himself.

"Ohé, Hennequin Dandéche! Ohè, Jehan Pincebourde!" they shouted in deafening tones, "old Eustache Moubon, the merchant at the corner, has just died. We've got his straw pallet, we're going to have a bonfire out of it. It's the turn of the Flemish to-day!"

And behold, they flung the pallet directly upon Gringoire, beside whom they had arrived, without espying him. At the same

time, one of them took a handful of straw and set off to light it at the wick of the good Virgin.

"S'death!" growled Gringoire, "am I going to be too warm now?"

It was a critical moment. He was caught between fire and water; he made a superhuman effort, the effort of a counterfeiter of money who is on the point of being boiled, and who seeks to escape. He rose to his feet, flung aside the straw pallet upon the street urchins, and fled.

"Holy Virgin!" shrieked the children; "'tis the merchant's ghost!"

And they fled in their turn.

The straw mattress remained master of the field. Belleforet, Father Le Juge, and Corrozet affirm that it was picked up on the morrow, with great pomp, by the clergy of the quarter, and borne to the treasury of the church of Saint Opportune, where the sacristan, even as late as 1789, earned a tolerably handsome revenue out of the great miracle of the Statue of the Virgin at the corner of the Rue Mauconseil, which had, by its mere presence, on the memorable night between the sixth and seventh of January, 1482, exorcised the defunct Eustache Moubon, who, in order to play a trick on the devil, had at his death maliciously concealed his soul in his straw pallet.

CHAPTER VI. THE BROKEN JUG

After having run for some time at the top of his speed, without knowing whither, knocking his head against many a street corner, leaping many a gutter, traversing many an alley, many a court, many a square, seeking flight and passage through all the meanderings of the ancient passages of the Halles, exploring in his panic terror what the fine Latin of the maps calls *tota via, cheminum et viaria*, our poet suddenly halted for lack of breath in the first place, and in the second, because he had been collared, after a fashion, by a dilemma which had just occurred to his mind. “It strikes me, Master Pierre Gringoire,” he said to himself, placing his finger to his brow, “that you are running like a madman. The little scamps are no less afraid of you than you are of them. It strikes me, I say, that you heard the clatter of their wooden shoes fleeing southward, while you were fleeing northward. Now, one of two things, either they have taken flight, and the pallet, which they must have forgotten in their terror, is precisely that hospitable bed in search of which you have been running ever since morning, and which madame the Virgin miraculously sends you, in order to recompense you for having made a morality in her honor, accompanied by triumphs and mummeries; or the children have not taken flight, and in that case they have put the brand to the pallet, and that is precisely the good fire which you need to cheer, dry, and warm you. In

either case, good fire or good bed, that straw pallet is a gift from heaven. The blessed Virgin Marie who stands at the corner of the Rue Mauconseil, could only have made Eustache Moubon die for that express purpose; and it is folly on your part to flee thus zigzag, like a Picard before a Frenchman, leaving behind you what you seek before you; and you are a fool!"

Then he retraced his steps, and feeling his way and searching, with his nose to the wind and his ears on the alert, he tried to find the blessed pallet again, but in vain. There was nothing to be found but intersections of houses, closed courts, and crossings of streets, in the midst of which he hesitated and doubted incessantly, being more perplexed and entangled in this medley of streets than he would have been even in the labyrinth of the Hôtel des Tournelles. At length he lost patience, and exclaimed solemnly: "Cursed be cross roads! 'tis the devil who has made them in the shape of his pitchfork!"

This exclamation afforded him a little solace, and a sort of reddish reflection which he caught sight of at that moment, at the extremity of a long and narrow lane, completed the elevation of his moral tone. "God be praised!" said he, "There it is yonder! There is my pallet burning." And comparing himself to the pilot who suffers shipwreck by night, "*Salve*," he added piously, "*salve, maris stella*!"

Did he address this fragment of litany to the Holy Virgin, or to the pallet? We are utterly unable to say.

He had taken but a few steps in the long street, which

sloped downwards, was unpaved, and more and more muddy and steep, when he noticed a very singular thing. It was not deserted; here and there along its extent crawled certain vague and formless masses, all directing their course towards the light which flickered at the end of the street, like those heavy insects which drag along by night, from blade to blade of grass, towards the shepherd's fire.

Nothing renders one so adventurous as not being able to feel the place where one's pocket is situated. Gringoire continued to advance, and had soon joined that one of the forms which dragged along most indolently, behind the others. On drawing near, he perceived that it was nothing else than a wretched legless cripple in a bowl, who was hopping along on his two hands like a wounded field-spider which has but two legs left. At the moment when he passed close to this species of spider with a human countenance, it raised towards him a lamentable voice: "*La buona mancia, signor! la buona mancia*!"[10]

"Deuce take you," said Gringoire, "and me with you, if I know what you mean!"

And he passed on.

He overtook another of these itinerant masses, and examined it. It was an impotent man, both halt and crippled, and halt and crippled to such a degree that the complicated system of crutches and wooden legs which sustained him, gave him the air of a mason's scaffolding on the march. Gringoire, who liked noble

[10] Alms.

and classical comparisons, compared him in thought to the living tripod of Vulcan.

This living tripod saluted him as he passed, but stopping his hat on a level with Gringoire's chin, like a shaving dish, while he shouted in the latter's ears: "*Senor cabellero, para comprar un pedaso de pan*!"[11]

"It appears," said Gringoire, "that this one can also talk; but 'tis a rude language, and he is more fortunate than I if he understands it." Then, smiting his brow, in a sudden transition of ideas: "By the way, what the deuce did they mean this morning with their Esmeralda?"

He was minded to augment his pace, but for the third time something barred his way. This something or, rather, some one was a blind man, a little blind fellow with a bearded, Jewish face, who, rowing away in the space about him with a stick, and towed by a large dog, droned through his nose with a Hungarian accent: "*Facitote caritatem*!"

"Well, now," said Gringoire, "here's one at last who speaks a Christian tongue. I must have a very charitable aspect, since they ask alms of me in the present lean condition of my purse. My friend," and he turned towards the blind man, "I sold my last shirt last week; that is to say, since you understand only the language of Cicero: *Vendidi hebdomade nuper transita meam ultimam chemisan*."

That said, he turned his back upon the blind man, and pursued

[11] Give me the means to buy a bit of bread, sir.

his way. But the blind man began to increase his stride at the same time; and, behold! the cripple and the legless man, in his bowl, came up on their side in great haste, and with great clamor of bowl and crutches, upon the pavement. Then all three, jostling each other at poor Gringoire's heels, began to sing their song to him, —

"*Caritatem*!" chanted the blind man.

"*La buona mancia*!" chanted the cripple in the bowl.

And the lame man took up the musical phrase by repeating: "*Un pedaso de pan*!"

Gringoire stopped up his ears. "Oh, tower of Babel!" he exclaimed.

He set out to run. The blind man ran! The lame man ran! The cripple in the bowl ran!

And then, in proportion as he plunged deeper into the street, cripples in bowls, blind men and lame men, swarmed about him, and men with one arm, and with one eye, and the leprous with their sores, some emerging from little streets adjacent, some from the air-holes of cellars, howling, bellowing, yelping, all limping and halting, all flinging themselves towards the light, and humped up in the mire, like snails after a shower.

Gringoire, still followed by his three persecutors, and not knowing very well what was to become of him, marched along in terror among them, turning out for the lame, stepping over the cripples in bowls, with his feet imbedded in that ant-hill of lame men, like the English captain who got caught in the quicksand

of a swarm of crabs.

The idea occurred to him of making an effort to retrace his steps. But it was too late. This whole legion had closed in behind him, and his three beggars held him fast. So he proceeded, impelled both by this irresistible flood, by fear, and by a vertigo which converted all this into a sort of horrible dream.

At last he reached the end of the street. It opened upon an immense place, where a thousand scattered lights flickered in the confused mists of night. Gringoire flew thither, hoping to escape, by the swiftness of his legs, from the three infirm spectres who had clutched him.

"*Onde vas, hombre*?" (Where are you going, my man?) cried the cripple, flinging away his crutches, and running after him with the best legs that ever traced a geometrical step upon the pavements of Paris.

In the meantime the legless man, erect upon his feet, crowned Gringoire with his heavy iron bowl, and the blind man glared in his face with flaming eyes!

"Where am I?" said the terrified poet.

"In the Court of Miracles," replied a fourth spectre, who had accosted them.

"Upon my soul," resumed Gringoire, "I certainly do behold the blind who see, and the lame who walk, but where is the Saviour?"

They replied by a burst of sinister laughter.

The poor poet cast his eyes about him. It was, in truth,

that redoubtable Cour des Miracles, whither an honest man had never penetrated at such an hour; the magic circle where the officers of the Châtelet and the sergeants of the provostship, who ventured thither, disappeared in morsels; a city of thieves, a hideous wart on the face of Paris; a sewer, from which escaped every morning, and whither returned every night to crouch, that stream of vices, of mendicancy and vagabondage which always overflows in the streets of capitals; a monstrous hive, to which returned at nightfall, with their booty, all the drones of the social order; a lying hospital where the bohemian, the disfrocked monk, the ruined scholar, the ne'er-do-wells of all nations, Spaniards, Italians, Germans, – of all religions, Jews, Christians, Mahometans, idolaters, covered with painted sores, beggars by day, were transformed by night into brigands; an immense dressing-room, in a word, where, at that epoch, the actors of that eternal comedy, which theft, prostitution, and murder play upon the pavements of Paris, dressed and undressed.

It was a vast place, irregular and badly paved, like all the squares of Paris at that date. Fires, around which swarmed strange groups, blazed here and there. Every one was going, coming, and shouting. Shrill laughter was to be heard, the wailing of children, the voices of women. The hands and heads of this throng, black against the luminous background, outlined against it a thousand eccentric gestures. At times, upon the ground, where trembled the light of the fires, mingled with large, indefinite shadows, one could behold a dog passing, which

resembled a man, a man who resembled a dog. The limits of races and species seemed effaced in this city, as in a pandemonium. Men, women, beasts, age, sex, health, maladies, all seemed to be in common among these people; all went together, they mingled, confounded, superposed; each one there participated in all.

The poor and flickering flames of the fire permitted Gringoire to distinguish, amid his trouble, all around the immense place, a hideous frame of ancient houses, whose wormeaten, shrivelled, stunted façades, each pierced with one or two lighted attic windows, seemed to him, in the darkness, like enormous heads of old women, ranged in a circle, monstrous and crabbed, winking as they looked on at the Witches' Sabbath.

It was like a new world, unknown, unheard of, misshapen, creeping, swarming, fantastic.

Gringoire, more and more terrified, clutched by the three beggars as by three pairs of tongs, dazed by a throng of other faces which frothed and yelped around him, unhappy Gringoire endeavored to summon his presence of mind, in order to recall whether it was a Saturday. But his efforts were vain; the thread of his memory and of his thought was broken; and, doubting everything, wavering between what he saw and what he felt, he put to himself this unanswerable question, —

"If I exist, does this exist? if this exists, do I exist?"

At that moment, a distinct cry arose in the buzzing throng which surrounded him, "Let's take him to the king! let's take him to the king!"

"Holy Virgin!" murmured Gringoire, "the king here must be a ram."

"To the king! to the king!" repeated all voices.

They dragged him off. Each vied with the other in laying his claws upon him. But the three beggars did not loose their hold and tore him from the rest, howling, "He belongs to us!"

The poet's already sickly doublet yielded its last sigh in this struggle.

While traversing the horrible place, his vertigo vanished. After taking a few steps, the sentiment of reality returned to him. He began to become accustomed to the atmosphere of the place. At the first moment there had arisen from his poet's head, or, simply and prosaically, from his empty stomach, a mist, a vapor, so to speak, which, spreading between objects and himself, permitted him to catch a glimpse of them only in the incoherent fog of nightmare, – in those shadows of dreams which distort every outline, agglomerating objects into unwieldy groups, dilating things into chimeras, and men into phantoms. Little by little, this hallucination was succeeded by a less bewildered and exaggerating view. Reality made its way to the light around him, struck his eyes, struck his feet, and demolished, bit by bit, all that frightful poetry with which he had, at first, believed himself to be surrounded. He was forced to perceive that he was not walking in the Styx, but in mud, that he was elbowed not by demons, but by thieves; that it was not his soul which was in question, but his life (since he lacked that

precious conciliator, which places itself so effectually between the bandit and the honest man – a purse). In short, on examining the orgy more closely, and with more coolness, he fell from the witches' sabbath to the dram-shop.

The Cour des Miracles was, in fact, merely a dram-shop; but a brigand's dram-shop, reddened quite as much with blood as with wine.

The spectacle which presented itself to his eyes, when his ragged escort finally deposited him at the end of his trip, was not fitted to bear him back to poetry, even to the poetry of hell. It was more than ever the prosaic and brutal reality of the tavern. Were we not in the fifteenth century, we would say that Gringoire had descended from Michael Angelo to Callot.

Around a great fire which burned on a large, circular flagstone, the flames of which had heated red-hot the legs of a tripod, which was empty for the moment, some wormeaten tables were placed, here and there, haphazard, no lackey of a geometrical turn having deigned to adjust their parallelism, or to see to it that they did not make too unusual angles. Upon these tables gleamed several dripping pots of wine and beer, and round these pots were grouped many bacchic visages, purple with the fire and the wine. There was a man with a huge belly and a jovial face, noisily kissing a woman of the town, thickset and brawny. There was a sort of sham soldier, a "naquois," as the slang expression runs, who was whistling as he undid the bandages from his fictitious wound, and removing the numbness

from his sound and vigorous knee, which had been swathed since morning in a thousand ligatures. On the other hand, there was a wretched fellow, preparing with celandine and beef's blood, his "leg of God," for the next day. Two tables further on, a palmer, with his pilgrim's costume complete, was practising the lament of the Holy Queen, not forgetting the drone and the nasal drawl. Further on, a young scamp was taking a lesson in epilepsy from an old pretender, who was instructing him in the art of foaming at the mouth, by chewing a morsel of soap. Beside him, a man with the dropsy was getting rid of his swelling, and making four or five female thieves, who were disputing at the same table, over a child who had been stolen that evening, hold their noses. All circumstances which, two centuries later, "seemed so ridiculous to the court," as Sauval says, "that they served as a pastime to the king, and as an introduction to the royal ballet of Night, divided into four parts and danced on the theatre of the Petit-Bourbon." "Never," adds an eye witness of 1653, "have the sudden metamorphoses of the Court of Miracles been more happily presented. Benserade prepared us for it by some very gallant verses."

Loud laughter everywhere, and obscene songs. Each one held his own course, carping and swearing, without listening to his neighbor. Pots clinked, and quarrels sprang up at the shock of the pots, and the broken pots made rents in the rags.

A big dog, seated on his tail, gazed at the fire. Some children were mingled in this orgy. The stolen child wept and cried.

Another, a big boy four years of age, seated with legs dangling, upon a bench that was too high for him, before a table that reached to his chin, and uttering not a word. A third, gravely spreading out upon the table with his finger, the melted tallow which dripped from a candle. Last of all, a little fellow crouching in the mud, almost lost in a cauldron, which he was scraping with a tile, and from which he was evoking a sound that would have made Stradivarius swoon.

Near the fire was a hogshead, and on the hogshead a beggar. This was the king on his throne.

The three who had Gringoire in their clutches led him in front of this hogshead, and the entire bacchanal rout fell silent for a moment, with the exception of the cauldron inhabited by the child.

Gringoire dared neither breathe nor raise his eyes.

"*Hombre, quita tu sombrero*!" said one of the three knaves, in whose grasp he was, and, before he had comprehended the meaning, the other had snatched his hat – a wretched headgear, it is true, but still good on a sunny day or when there was but little rain. Gringoire sighed.

Meanwhile the king addressed him, from the summit of his cask, —

"Who is this rogue?"

Gringoire shuddered. That voice, although accentuated by menace, recalled to him another voice, which, that very morning, had dealt the deathblow to his mystery, by drawling, nasally, in

the midst of the audience, “Charity, please!” He raised his head. It was indeed Clopin Trouillefou.

Clopin Trouillefou, arrayed in his royal insignia, wore neither one rag more nor one rag less. The sore upon his arm had already disappeared. He held in his hand one of those whips made of thongs of white leather, which police sergeants then used to repress the crowd, and which were called *boullayes*. On his head he wore a sort of headgear, bound round and closed at the top. But it was difficult to make out whether it was a child’s cap or a king’s crown, the two things bore so strong a resemblance to each other.

Meanwhile Gringoire, without knowing why, had regained some hope, on recognizing in the King of the Cour des Miracles his accursed mendicant of the Grand Hall.

“Master,” stammered he; “monseigneur – sire – how ought I to address you?” he said at length, having reached the culminating point of his crescendo, and knowing neither how to mount higher, nor to descend again.

“Monseigneur, his majesty, or comrade, call me what you please. But make haste. What have you to say in your own defence?”

“In your own defence?” thought Gringoire, “that displeases me.” He resumed, stuttering, “I am he, who this morning – ”

“By the devil’s claws!” interrupted Clopin, “your name, knave, and nothing more. Listen. You are in the presence of three powerful sovereigns: myself, Clopin Trouillefou, King of

Thunes, successor to the Grand Coësre, supreme suzerain of the Realm of Argot; Mathias Hunyadi Spicali, Duke of Egypt and of Bohemia, the old yellow fellow whom you see yonder, with a dish clout round his head; Guillaume Rousseau, Emperor of Galilee, that fat fellow who is not listening to us but caressing a wench. We are your judges. You have entered the Kingdom of Argot, without being an *argotier*; you have violated the privileges of our city. You must be punished unless you are a *capon*, a *franc-mitou* or a *rifodé*; that is to say, in the slang of honest folks, – a thief, a beggar, or a vagabond. Are you anything of that sort? Justify yourself; announce your titles."

"Alas!" said Gringoire, "I have not that honor. I am the author – "

"That is sufficient," resumed Trouillefou, without permitting him to finish. "You are going to be hanged. 'Tis a very simple matter, gentlemen and honest bourgeois! as you treat our people in your abode, so we treat you in ours! The law which you apply to vagabonds, vagabonds apply to you. 'Tis your fault if it is harsh. One really must behold the grimace of an honest man above the hempen collar now and then; that renders the thing honorable. Come, friend, divide your rags gayly among these damsels. I am going to have you hanged to amuse the vagabonds, and you are to give them your purse to drink your health. If you have any mummery to go through with, there's a very good God the Father in that mortar yonder, in stone, which we stole from Saint-Pierre aux Boeufs. You have four minutes in which to fling your soul

at his head."

The harangue was formidable.

"Well said, upon my soul! Clopin Trouillefou preaches like the Holy Father the Pope!" exclaimed the Emperor of Galilee, smashing his pot in order to prop up his table.

"Messeigneurs, emperors, and kings," said Gringoire coolly (for I know not how, firmness had returned to him, and he spoke with resolution), "don't think of such a thing; my name is Pierre Gringoire. I am the poet whose morality was presented this morning in the grand hall of the Courts."

"Ah! so it was you, master!" said Clopin. "I was there, *xête Dieu*! Well! comrade, is that any reason, because you bored us to death this morning, that you should not be hung this evening?"

"I shall find difficulty in getting out of it," said Gringoire to himself. Nevertheless, he made one more effort: "I don't see why poets are not classed with vagabonds," said he. "Vagabond, Aesopus certainly was; Homerus was a beggar; Mercurius was a thief – "

Clopin interrupted him: "I believe that you are trying to blarney us with your jargon. Zounds! let yourself be hung, and don't kick up such a row over it!"

"Pardon me, monseigneur, the King of Thunes," replied Gringoire, disputing the ground foot by foot. "It is worth trouble – One moment! – Listen to me – You are not going to condemn me without having heard me" —

His unlucky voice was, in fact, drowned in the uproar which

rose around him. The little boy scraped away at his cauldron with more spirit than ever; and, to crown all, an old woman had just placed on the tripod a frying-pan of grease, which hissed away on the fire with a noise similar to the cry of a troop of children in pursuit of a masker.

In the meantime, Clopin Trouillefou appeared to hold a momentary conference with the Duke of Egypt, and the Emperor of Galilee, who was completely drunk. Then he shouted shrilly: "Silence!" and, as the cauldron and the frying-pan did not heed him, and continued their duet, he jumped down from his hogshead, gave a kick to the boiler, which rolled ten paces away bearing the child with it, a kick to the frying-pan, which upset in the fire with all its grease, and gravely remounted his throne, without troubling himself about the stifled tears of the child, or the grumbling of the old woman, whose supper was wasting away in a fine white flame.

Trouillefou made a sign, and the duke, the emperor, and the passed masters of pickpockets, and the isolated robbers, came and ranged themselves around him in a horseshoe, of which Gringoire, still roughly held by the body, formed the centre. It was a semicircle of rags, tatters, tinsel, pitchforks, axes, legs staggering with intoxication, huge, bare arms, faces sordid, dull, and stupid. In the midst of this Round Table of beggary, Clopin Trouillefou, – as the doge of this senate, as the king of this peerage, as the pope of this conclave, – dominated; first by virtue of the height of his hogshead, and next by virtue of an

indescribable, haughty, fierce, and formidable air, which caused his eyes to flash, and corrected in his savage profile the bestial type of the race of vagabonds. One would have pronounced him a boar amid a herd of swine.

"Listen," said he to Gringoire, fondling his misshapen chin with his horny hand; "I don't see why you should not be hung. It is true that it appears to be repugnant to you; and it is very natural, for you bourgeois are not accustomed to it. You form for yourselves a great idea of the thing. After all, we don't wish you any harm. Here is a means of extricating yourself from your predicament for the moment. Will you become one of us?"

The reader can judge of the effect which this proposition produced upon Gringoire, who beheld life slipping away from him, and who was beginning to lose his hold upon it. He clutched at it again with energy.

"Certainly I will, and right heartily," said he.

"Do you consent," resumed Clopin, "to enroll yourself among the people of the knife?"

"Of the knife, precisely," responded Gringoire.

"You recognize yourself as a member of the free bourgeoisie?"[12] added the King of Thunes.

"Of the free bourgeoisie."

"Subject of the Kingdom of Argot?"

"Of the Kingdom of Argot[13]."

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[12] A high-toned sharper.

[13] Thieves.

"A vagabond?"

"A vagabond."

"In your soul?"

"In my soul."

"I must call your attention to the fact," continued the king, "that you will be hung all the same."

"The devil!" said the poet.

"Only," continued Clopin imperturbably, "you will be hung later on, with more ceremony, at the expense of the good city of Paris, on a handsome stone gibbet, and by honest men. That is a consolation."

"Just so," responded Gringoire.

"There are other advantages. In your quality of a high-toned sharper, you will not have to pay the taxes on mud, or the poor, or lanterns, to which the bourgeois of Paris are subject."

"So be it," said the poet. "I agree. I am a vagabond, a thief, a sharper, a man of the knife, anything you please; and I am all that already, monsieur, King of Thunes, for I am a philosopher; *et omnia in philosophia, omnes in philosopho continentur*, – all things are contained in philosophy, all men in the philosopher, as you know."

The King of Thunes scowled.

"What do you take me for, my friend? What Hungarian Jew patter are you jabbering at us? I don't know Hebrew. One isn't a Jew because one is a bandit. I don't even steal any longer. I'm above that; I kill. Cut-throat, yes; cutpurse, no."

Gringoire tried to slip in some excuse between these curt words, which wrath rendered more and more jerky.

"I ask your pardon, monseigneur. It is not Hebrew; 'tis Latin."

"I tell you," resumed Clopin angrily, "that I'm not a Jew, and that I'll have you hung, belly of the synagogue, like that little shopkeeper of Judea, who is by your side, and whom I entertain strong hopes of seeing nailed to a counter one of these days, like the counterfeit coin that he is!"

So saying, he pointed his finger at the little, bearded Hungarian Jew who had accosted Gringoire with his *facitote caritatem*, and who, understanding no other language beheld with surprise the King of Thunes's ill-humor overflow upon him.

At length Monsieur Clopin calmed down.

"So you will be a vagabond, you knave?" he said to our poet.

"Of course," replied the poet.

"Willing is not all," said the surly Clopin; "good will doesn't put one onion the more into the soup, and 'tis good for nothing except to go to Paradise with; now, Paradise and the thieves' band are two different things. In order to be received among the thieves,[14] you must prove that you are good for something, and for that purpose, you must search the manikin."

"I'll search anything you like," said Gringoire.

Clopin made a sign. Several thieves detached themselves from the circle, and returned a moment later. They brought two thick posts, terminated at their lower extremities in spreading timber

[14] L'argot.

supports, which made them stand readily upon the ground; to the upper extremity of the two posts they fitted a cross-beam, and the whole constituted a very pretty portable gibbet, which Gringoire had the satisfaction of beholding rise before him, in a twinkling. Nothing was lacking, not even the rope, which swung gracefully over the cross-beam.

"What are they going to do?" Gringoire asked himself with some uneasiness. A sound of bells, which he heard at that moment, put an end to his anxiety; it was a stuffed manikin, which the vagabonds were suspending by the neck from the rope, a sort of scarecrow dressed in red, and so hung with mule-bells and larger bells, that one might have tricked out thirty Castilian mules with them. These thousand tiny bells quivered for some time with the vibration of the rope, then gradually died away, and finally became silent when the manikin had been brought into a state of immobility by that law of the pendulum which has dethroned the water clock and the hour-glass. Then Clopin, pointing out to Gringoire a rickety old stool placed beneath the manikin, – "Climb up there."

"Death of the devil!" objected Gringoire; "I shall break my neck. Your stool limps like one of Martial's distiches; it has one hexameter leg and one pentameter leg."

"Climb!" repeated Clopin.

Gringoire mounted the stool, and succeeded, not without some oscillations of head and arms, in regaining his centre of gravity.

"Now," went on the King of Thunes, "twist your right foot round your left leg, and rise on the tip of your left foot."

"Monseigneur," said Gringoire, "so you absolutely insist on my breaking some one of my limbs?"

Clopin tossed his head.

"Hark ye, my friend, you talk too much. Here's the gist of the matter in two words: you are to rise on tiptoe, as I tell you; in that way you will be able to reach the pocket of the manikin, you will rummage it, you will pull out the purse that is there, – and if you do all this without our hearing the sound of a bell, all is well: you shall be a vagabond. All we shall then have to do, will be to thrash you soundly for the space of a week."

"*Ventre-Dieu*! I will be careful," said Gringoire. "And suppose I do make the bells sound?"

"Then you will be hanged. Do you understand?"

"I don't understand at all," replied Gringoire.

"Listen, once more. You are to search the manikin, and take away its purse; if a single bell stirs during the operation, you will be hung. Do you understand that?"

"Good," said Gringoire; "I understand that. And then?"

"If you succeed in removing the purse without our hearing the bells, you are a vagabond, and you will be thrashed for eight consecutive days. You understand now, no doubt?"

"No, monseigneur; I no longer understand. Where is the advantage to me? hanged in one case, cudgelled in the other?"

"And a vagabond," resumed Clopin, "and a vagabond; is that

nothing? It is for your interest that we should beat you, in order to harden you to blows."

"Many thanks," replied the poet.

"Come, make haste," said the king, stamping upon his cask, which resounded like a huge drum! "Search the manikin, and let there be an end to this! I warn you for the last time, that if I hear a single bell, you will take the place of the manikin."

The band of thieves applauded Clopin's words, and arranged themselves in a circle round the gibbet, with a laugh so pitiless that Gringoire perceived that he amused them too much not to have everything to fear from them. No hope was left for him, accordingly, unless it were the slight chance of succeeding in the formidable operation which was imposed upon him; he decided to risk it, but it was not without first having addressed a fervent prayer to the manikin he was about to plunder, and who would have been easier to move to pity than the vagabonds. These myriad bells, with their little copper tongues, seemed to him like the mouths of so many asps, open and ready to sting and to hiss.

"Oh!" he said, in a very low voice, "is it possible that my life depends on the slightest vibration of the least of these bells? Oh!" he added, with clasped hands, "bells, do not ring, hand-bells do not clang, mule-bells do not quiver!"

He made one more attempt upon Trouillefou.

"And if there should come a gust of wind?"

"You will be hanged," replied the other, without hesitation.

Perceiving that no respite, nor reprieve, nor subterfuge was

possible, he bravely decided upon his course of action; he wound his right foot round his left leg, raised himself on his left foot, and stretched out his arm: but at the moment when his hand touched the manikin, his body, which was now supported upon one leg only, wavered on the stool which had but three; he made an involuntary effort to support himself by the manikin, lost his balance, and fell heavily to the ground, deafened by the fatal vibration of the thousand bells of the manikin, which, yielding to the impulse imparted by his hand, described first a rotary motion, and then swayed majestically between the two posts.

"Malediction!" he cried as he fell, and remained as though dead, with his face to the earth.

Meanwhile, he heard the dreadful peal above his head, the diabolical laughter of the vagabonds, and the voice of Trouillefou saying, —

"Pick me up that knave, and hang him without ceremony." He rose. They had already detached the manikin to make room for him.

The thieves made him mount the stool, Clopin came to him, passed the rope about his neck, and, tapping him on the shoulder, —

"Adieu, my friend. You can't escape now, even if you digested with the pope's guts."

The word "Mercy!" died away upon Gringoire's lips. He cast his eyes about him; but there was no hope: all were laughing.

"Bellevigne de l'Etoile," said the King of Thunes to an

enormous vagabond, who stepped out from the ranks, “climb upon the cross beam.”

Bellevigne de l’Etoile nimbly mounted the transverse beam, and in another minute, Gringoire, on raising his eyes, beheld him, with terror, seated upon the beam above his head.

“Now,” resumed Clopin Trouillefou, “as soon as I clap my hands, you, Andry the Red, will fling the stool to the ground with a blow of your knee; you, François Chante-Prune, will cling to the feet of the rascal; and you, Bellevigne, will fling yourself on his shoulders; and all three at once, do you hear?”

Gringoire shuddered.

“Are you ready?” said Clopin Trouillefou to the three thieves, who held themselves in readiness to fall upon Gringoire. A moment of horrible suspense ensued for the poor victim, during which Clopin tranquilly thrust into the fire with the tip of his foot, some bits of vine shoots which the flame had not caught. “Are you ready?” he repeated, and opened his hands to clap. One second more and all would have been over.

But he paused, as though struck by a sudden thought.

“One moment!” said he; “I forgot! It is our custom not to hang a man without inquiring whether there is any woman who wants him. Comrade, this is your last resource. You must wed either a female vagabond or the noose.”

This law of the vagabonds, singular as it may strike the reader, remains to-day written out at length, in ancient English legislation. (See *Burington’s Observations*.)

Gringoire breathed again. This was the second time that he had returned to life within an hour. So he did not dare to trust to it too implicitly.

"Holà!" cried Clopin, mounted once more upon his cask, "holà! women, females, is there among you, from the sorceress to her cat, a wench who wants this rascal? Holà, Colette la Charonne! Elisabeth Trouvain! Simone Jodouyne! Marie Piédebou! Thonne la Longue! Bérarde Fanouel! Michelle Genaille! Claude Ronge-oreille! Mathurine Girorou! – Holà! Isabeau-la-Thierrye! Come and see! A man for nothing! Who wants him?"

Gringoire, no doubt, was not very appetizing in this miserable condition. The female vagabonds did not seem to be much affected by the proposition. The unhappy wretch heard them answer: "No! no! hang him; there'll be the more fun for us all!"

Nevertheless, three emerged from the throng and came to smell of him. The first was a big wench, with a square face. She examined the philosopher's deplorable doublet attentively. His garment was worn, and more full of holes than a stove for roasting chestnuts. The girl made a wry face. "Old rag!" she muttered, and addressing Gringoire, "Let's see your cloak!" "I have lost it," replied Gringoire. "Your hat?" "They took it away from me." "Your shoes?" "They have hardly any soles left." "Your purse?" "Alas!" stammered Gringoire, "I have not even a sou." "Let them hang you, then, and say 'Thank you!'" retorted the vagabond wench, turning her back on him.

The second, – old, black, wrinkled, hideous, with an ugliness conspicuous even in the Cour des Miracles, trotted round Gringoire. He almost trembled lest she should want him. But she mumbled between her teeth, "He's too thin," and went off.

The third was a young girl, quite fresh, and not too ugly. "Save me!" said the poor fellow to her, in a low tone. She gazed at him for a moment with an air of pity, then dropped her eyes, made a plait in her petticoat, and remained in indecision. He followed all these movements with his eyes; it was the last gleam of hope. "No," said the young girl, at length, "no! Guillaume Longuejoue would beat me." She retreated into the crowd.

"You are unlucky, comrade," said Clopin.

Then rising to his feet, upon his hogshead. "No one wants him," he exclaimed, imitating the accent of an auctioneer, to the great delight of all; "no one wants him? once, twice, three times!" and, turning towards the gibbet with a sign of his hand, "Gone!"

Bellevigne de l'Etoile, Andry the Red, François Chante-Prune, stepped up to Gringoire.

At that moment a cry arose among the thieves: "La Esmeralda! La Esmeralda!"

Gringoire shuddered, and turned towards the side whence the clamor proceeded.

The crowd opened, and gave passage to a pure and dazzling form.

It was the gypsy.

"La Esmeralda!" said Gringoire, stupefied in the midst of

his emotions, by the abrupt manner in which that magic word knotted together all his reminiscences of the day.

This rare creature seemed, even in the Cour des Miracles, to exercise her sway of charm and beauty. The vagabonds, male and female, ranged themselves gently along her path, and their brutal faces beamed beneath her glance.

She approached the victim with her light step. Her pretty Djali followed her. Gringoire was more dead than alive. She examined him for a moment in silence.

"You are going to hang this man?" she said gravely, to Clopin.

"Yes, sister," replied the King of Thunes, "unless you will take him for your husband."

She made her pretty little pout with her under lip. "I'll take him," said she.

Gringoire firmly believed that he had been in a dream ever since morning, and that this was the continuation of it.

The change was, in fact, violent, though a gratifying one. They undid the noose, and made the poet step down from the stool. His emotion was so lively that he was obliged to sit down.

The Duke of Egypt brought an earthenware crock, without uttering a word. The gypsy offered it to Gringoire: "Fling it on the ground," said she.

The crock broke into four pieces.

"Brother," then said the Duke of Egypt, laying his hands upon their foreheads, "she is your wife; sister, he is your husband for four years. Go."

CHAPTER VII. A BRIDAL NIGHT

A few moments later our poet found himself in a tiny arched chamber, very cosy, very warm, seated at a table which appeared to ask nothing better than to make some loans from a larder hanging near by, having a good bed in prospect, and alone with a pretty girl. The adventure smacked of enchantment. He began seriously to take himself for a personage in a fairy tale; he cast his eyes about him from time to time to time, as though to see if the chariot of fire, harnessed to two-winged chimeras, which alone could have so rapidly transported him from Tartarus to Paradise, were still there. At times, also, he fixed his eyes obstinately upon the holes in his doublet, in order to cling to reality, and not lose the ground from under his feet completely. His reason, tossed about in imaginary space, now hung only by this thread.

The young girl did not appear to pay any attention to him; she went and came, displaced a stool, talked to her goat, and indulged in a pout now and then. At last she came and seated herself near the table, and Gringoire was able to scrutinize her at his ease.

You have been a child, reader, and you would, perhaps, be very happy to be one still. It is quite certain that you have not, more than once (and for my part, I have passed whole days, the best employed of my life, at it) followed from thicket to thicket, by the side of running water, on a sunny day, a beautiful green or blue dragon-fly, breaking its flight in abrupt angles, and kissing

the tips of all the branches. You recollect with what amorous curiosity your thought and your gaze were riveted upon this little whirlwind, hissing and humming with wings of purple and azure, in the midst of which floated an imperceptible body, veiled by the very rapidity of its movement. The aerial being which was dimly outlined amid this quivering of wings, appeared to you chimerical, imaginary, impossible to touch, impossible to see. But when, at length, the dragon-fly alighted on the tip of a reed, and, holding your breath the while, you were able to examine the long, gauze wings, the long enamel robe, the two globes of crystal, what astonishment you felt, and what fear lest you should again behold the form disappear into a shade, and the creature into a chimera! Recall these impressions, and you will readily appreciate what Gringoire felt on contemplating, beneath her visible and palpable form, that Esmeralda of whom, up to that time, he had only caught a glimpse, amidst a whirlwind of dance, song, and tumult.

Sinking deeper and deeper into his revery: "So this," he said to himself, following her vaguely with his eyes, "is la Esmeralda! a celestial creature! a street dancer! so much, and so little! 'Twas she who dealt the death-blow to my mystery this morning, 'tis she who saves my life this evening! My evil genius! My good angel! A pretty woman, on my word! and who must needs love me madly to have taken me in that fashion. By the way," said he, rising suddenly, with that sentiment of the true which formed the foundation of his character and his philosophy, "I don't know

very well how it happens, but I am her husband!"

With this idea in his head and in his eyes, he stepped up to the young girl in a manner so military and so gallant that she drew back.

"What do you want of me?" said she.

"Can you ask me, adorable Esmeralda?" replied Gringoire, with so passionate an accent that he was himself astonished at it on hearing himself speak.

The gypsy opened her great eyes. "I don't know what you mean."

"What!" resumed Gringoire, growing warmer and warmer, and supposing that, after all, he had to deal merely with a virtue of the Cour des Miracles; "am I not thine, sweet friend, art thou not mine?"

And, quite ingenuously, he clasped her waist.

The gypsy's corsage slipped through his hands like the skin of an eel. She bounded from one end of the tiny room to the other, stooped down, and raised herself again, with a little poniard in her hand, before Gringoire had even had time to see whence the poniard came; proud and angry, with swelling lips and inflated nostrils, her cheeks as red as an api apple,[15] and her eyes darting lightnings. At the same time, the white goat placed itself in front of her, and presented to Gringoire a hostile front, bristling with two pretty horns, gilded and very sharp. All this took place in the twinkling of an eye.

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[15] A small dessert apple, bright red on one side and greenish-white on the other.

The dragon-fly had turned into a wasp, and asked nothing better than to sting.

Our philosopher was speechless, and turned his astonished eyes from the goat to the young girl. “Holy Virgin!” he said at last, when surprise permitted him to speak, “here are two hearty dames!”

The gypsy broke the silence on her side.

“You must be a very bold knave!”

“Pardon, mademoiselle,” said Gringoire, with a smile. “But why did you take me for your husband?”

“Should I have allowed you to be hanged?”

“So,” said the poet, somewhat disappointed in his amorous hopes. “You had no other idea in marrying me than to save me from the gibbet?”

“And what other idea did you suppose that I had?”

Gringoire bit his lips. “Come,” said he, “I am not yet so triumphant in Cupido, as I thought. But then, what was the good of breaking that poor jug?”

Meanwhile Esmeralda’s dagger and the goat’s horns were still upon the defensive.

“Mademoiselle Esmeralda,” said the poet, “let us come to terms. I am not a clerk of the court, and I shall not go to law with you for thus carrying a dagger in Paris, in the teeth of the ordinances and prohibitions of M. the Provost. Nevertheless, you are not ignorant of the fact that Noel Lescrivain was condemned, a week ago, to pay ten Parisian sous, for having carried a cutlass.

But this is no affair of mine, and I will come to the point. I swear to you, upon my share of Paradise, not to approach you without your leave and permission, but do give me some supper."

The truth is, Gringoire was, like M. Despreaux, "not very voluptuous." He did not belong to that chevalier and musketeer species, who take young girls by assault. In the matter of love, as in all other affairs, he willingly assented to temporizing and adjusting terms; and a good supper, and an amiable tête-a-tête appeared to him, especially when he was hungry, an excellent interlude between the prologue and the catastrophe of a love adventure.

The gypsy did not reply. She made her disdainful little grimace, drew up her head like a bird, then burst out laughing, and the tiny poniard disappeared as it had come, without Gringoire being able to see where the wasp concealed its sting.

A moment later, there stood upon the table a loaf of rye bread, a slice of bacon, some wrinkled apples and a jug of beer. Gringoire began to eat eagerly. One would have said, to hear the furious clashing of his iron fork and his earthenware plate, that all his love had turned to appetite.

The young girl seated opposite him, watched him in silence, visibly preoccupied with another thought, at which she smiled from time to time, while her soft hand caressed the intelligent head of the goat, gently pressed between her knees.

A candle of yellow wax illuminated this scene of voracity and revery.

Meanwhile, the first cravings of his stomach having been stilled, Gringoire felt some false shame at perceiving that nothing remained but one apple.

"You do not eat, Mademoiselle Esmeralda?"

She replied by a negative sign of the head, and her pensive glance fixed itself upon the vault of the ceiling.

"What the deuce is she thinking of?" thought Gringoire, staring at what she was gazing at; "'tis impossible that it can be that stone dwarf carved in the keystone of that arch, which thus absorbs her attention. What the deuce! I can bear the comparison!"

He raised his voice, "Mademoiselle!"

She seemed not to hear him.

He repeated, still more loudly, "Mademoiselle Esmeralda!"

Trouble wasted. The young girl's mind was elsewhere, and Gringoire's voice had not the power to recall it. Fortunately, the goat interfered. She began to pull her mistress gently by the sleeve.

"What dost thou want, Djali?" said the gypsy, hastily, as though suddenly awakened.

"She is hungry," said Gringoire, charmed to enter into conversation. Esmeralda began to crumble some bread, which Djali ate gracefully from the hollow of her hand.

Moreover, Gringoire did not give her time to resume her revery. He hazarded a delicate question.

"So you don't want me for your husband?"

The young girl looked at him intently, and said, “No.”

“For your lover?” went on Gringoire.

She pouted, and replied, “No.”

“For your friend?” pursued Gringoire.

She gazed fixedly at him again, and said, after a momentary reflection, “Perhaps.”

This “perhaps,” so dear to philosophers, emboldened Gringoire.

“Do you know what friendship is?” he asked.

“Yes,” replied the gypsy; “it is to be brother and sister; two souls which touch without mingling, two fingers on one hand.”

“And love?” pursued Gringoire.

“Oh! love!” said she, and her voice trembled, and her eye beamed. “That is to be two and to be but one. A man and a woman mingled into one angel. It is heaven.”

The street dancer had a beauty as she spoke thus, that struck Gringoire singularly, and seemed to him in perfect keeping with the almost oriental exaltation of her words. Her pure, red lips half smiled; her serene and candid brow became troubled, at intervals, under her thoughts, like a mirror under the breath; and from beneath her long, drooping, black eyelashes, there escaped a sort of ineffable light, which gave to her profile that ideal serenity which Raphael found at the mystic point of intersection of virginity, maternity, and divinity.

Nevertheless, Gringoire continued, —

“What must one be then, in order to please you?”

"A man."

"And I – " said he, "what, then, am I?"

"A man has a hemlet on his head, a sword in his hand, and golden spurs on his heels."

"Good," said Gringoire, "without a horse, no man. Do you love any one?"

"As a lover? – "

"Yes."

She remained thoughtful for a moment, then said with a peculiar expression: "That I shall know soon."

"Why not this evening?" resumed the poet tenderly. "Why not me?"

She cast a grave glance upon him and said, —

"I can never love a man who cannot protect me."

Gringoire colored, and took the hint. It was evident that the young girl was alluding to the slight assistance which he had rendered her in the critical situation in which she had found herself two hours previously. This memory, effaced by his own adventures of the evening, now recurred to him. He smote his brow.

"By the way, mademoiselle, I ought to have begun there. Pardon my foolish absence of mind. How did you contrive to escape from the claws of Quasimodo?"

This question made the gypsy shudder.

"Oh! the horrible hunchback," said she, hiding her face in her hands. And she shuddered as though with violent cold.

"Horrible, in truth," said Gringoire, who clung to his idea; "but how did you manage to escape him?"

La Esmeralda smiled, sighed, and remained silent.

"Do you know why he followed you?" began Gringoire again, seeking to return to his question by a circuitous route.

"I don't know," said the young girl, and she added hastily, "but you were following me also, why were you following me?"

"In good faith," responded Gringoire, "I don't know either."

Silence ensued. Gringoire slashed the table with his knife. The young girl smiled and seemed to be gazing through the wall at something. All at once she began to sing in a barely articulate voice, —

Quando las pintadas aves,
Mudas estan, y la tierra– [16]

She broke off abruptly, and began to caress Djali.

"That's a pretty animal of yours," said Gringoire.

"She is my sister," she answered.

"Why are you called 'la Esmeralda?'" asked the poet.

"I do not know."

"But why?"

She drew from her bosom a sort of little oblong bag, suspended from her neck by a string of adrézarach beads. This bag exhaled a strong odor of camphor. It was covered with green silk, and bore in its centre a large piece of green glass, in imitation of an emerald.

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[16] When the gay-plumaged birds grow weary, and the earth —

"Perhaps it is because of this," said she.

Gringoire was on the point of taking the bag in his hand. She drew back.

"Don't touch it! It is an amulet. You would injure the charm or the charm would injure you."

The poet's curiosity was more and more aroused.

"Who gave it to you?"

She laid one finger on her mouth and concealed the amulet in her bosom. He tried a few more questions, but she hardly replied.

"What is the meaning of the words, 'la Esmeralda?'"

"I don't know," said she.

"To what language do they belong?"

"They are Egyptian, I think."

"I suspected as much," said Gringoire, "you are not a native of France?"

"I don't know."

"Are your parents alive?"

She began to sing, to an ancient air, —

Mon père est oiseau,
Ma mère est oiselle.
Je passe l'eau sans nacelle,
Je passe l'eau sans bateau,
Ma mère est oiselle,
Mon père est oiseau.[17]

[17] My father is a bird, my mother is a bird. I cross the water without a barque, I cross the water without a boat. My mother is a bird, my father is a bird.

"Good," said Gringoire. "At what age did you come to France?"

"When I was very young."

"And when to Paris?"

"Last year. At the moment when we were entering the papal gate I saw a reed warbler flit through the air, that was at the end of August; I said, it will be a hard winter."

"So it was," said Gringoire, delighted at this beginning of a conversation. "I passed it in blowing my fingers. So you have the gift of prophecy?"

She retired into her laconics again.

"Is that man whom you call the Duke of Egypt, the chief of your tribe?"

"Yes."

"But it was he who married us," remarked the poet timidly.

She made her customary pretty grimace.

"I don't even know your name."

"My name? If you want it, here it is, – Pierre Gringoire."

"I know a prettier one," said she.

"Naughty girl!" retorted the poet. "Never mind, you shall not provoke me. Wait, perhaps you will love me more when you know me better; and then, you have told me your story with so much confidence, that I owe you a little of mine. You must know, then, that my name is Pierre Gringoire, and that I am a son of the farmer of the notary's office of Gonesse. My father

was hung by the Burgundians, and my mother disembowelled by the Picards, at the siege of Paris, twenty years ago. At six years of age, therefore, I was an orphan, without a sole to my foot except the pavements of Paris. I do not know how I passed the interval from six to sixteen. A fruit dealer gave me a plum here, a baker flung me a crust there; in the evening I got myself taken up by the watch, who threw me into prison, and there I found a bundle of straw. All this did not prevent my growing up and growing thin, as you see. In the winter I warmed myself in the sun, under the porch of the Hôtel de Sens, and I thought it very ridiculous that the fire on Saint John's Day was reserved for the dog days. At sixteen, I wished to choose a calling. I tried all in succession. I became a soldier; but I was not brave enough. I became a monk; but I was not sufficiently devout; and then I'm a bad hand at drinking. In despair, I became an apprentice of the woodcutters, but I was not strong enough; I had more of an inclination to become a schoolmaster; 'tis true that I did not know how to read, but that's no reason. I perceived at the end of a certain time, that I lacked something in every direction; and seeing that I was good for nothing, of my own free will I became a poet and rhymester. That is a trade which one can always adopt when one is a vagabond, and it's better than stealing, as some young brigands of my acquaintance advised me to do. One day I met by luck, Dom Claude Frollo, the reverend archdeacon of Notre-Dame. He took an interest in me, and it is to him that I to-day owe it that I am a veritable man of letters, who knows Latin

from the *de Officiis* of Cicero to the mortuology of the Celestine Fathers, and a barbarian neither in scholastics, nor in politics, nor in rhythmics, that sophism of sophisms. I am the author of the Mystery which was presented to-day with great triumph and a great concourse of populace, in the grand hall of the Palais de Justice. I have also made a book which will contain six hundred pages, on the wonderful comet of 1465, which sent one man mad. I have enjoyed still other successes. Being somewhat of an artillery carpenter, I lent a hand to Jean Mangue's great bombard, which burst, as you know, on the day when it was tested, on the Pont de Charenton, and killed four and twenty curious spectators. You see that I am not a bad match in marriage. I know a great many sorts of very engaging tricks, which I will teach your goat; for example, to mimic the Bishop of Paris, that cursed Pharisee whose mill wheels splash passers-by the whole length of the Pont aux Meuniers. And then my mystery will bring me in a great deal of coined money, if they will only pay me. And finally, I am at your orders, I and my wits, and my science and my letters, ready to live with you, damsel, as it shall please you, chastely or joyously; husband and wife, if you see fit; brother and sister, if you think that better."

Gringoire ceased, awaiting the effect of his harangue on the young girl. Her eyes were fixed on the ground.

"'Phoebus,'" she said in a low voice. Then, turning towards the poet, "'Phoebus', – what does that mean?"

Gringoire, without exactly understanding what the connection

could be between his address and this question, was not sorry to display his erudition. Assuming an air of importance, he replied, —

"It is a Latin word which means 'sun.'"

"Sun!" she repeated.

"It is the name of a handsome archer, who was a god," added Gringoire.

"A god!" repeated the gypsy, and there was something pensive and passionate in her tone.

At that moment, one of her bracelets became unfastened and fell. Gringoire stooped quickly to pick it up; when he straightened up, the young girl and the goat had disappeared. He heard the sound of a bolt. It was a little door, communicating, no doubt, with a neighboring cell, which was being fastened on the outside.

"Has she left me a bed, at least?" said our philosopher.

He made the tour of his cell. There was no piece of furniture adapted to sleeping purposes, except a tolerably long wooden coffer; and its cover was carved, to boot; which afforded Gringoire, when he stretched himself out upon it, a sensation somewhat similar to that which Micromégas would feel if he were to lie down on the Alps.

"Come!" said he, adjusting himself as well as possible, "I must resign myself. But here's a strange nuptial night. 'Tis a pity. There was something innocent and antediluvian about that broken crock, which quite pleased me."

BOOK THIRD

CHAPTER I. NOTRE-DAME

The church of Notre-Dame de Paris is still no doubt, a majestic and sublime edifice. But, beautiful as it has been preserved in growing old, it is difficult not to sigh, not to wax indignant, before the numberless degradations and mutilations which time and men have both caused the venerable monument to suffer, without respect for Charlemagne, who laid its first stone, or for Philip Augustus, who laid the last.

On the face of this aged queen of our cathedrals, by the side of a wrinkle, one always finds a scar. *Tempus edax, homo edacior*[18]; which I should be glad to translate thus: time is blind, man is stupid.

If we had leisure to examine with the reader, one by one, the diverse traces of destruction imprinted upon the old church, time's share would be the least, the share of men the most, especially the men of art, since there have been individuals who assumed the title of architects during the last two centuries.

And, in the first place, to cite only a few leading examples, there certainly are few finer architectural pages than this façade, where, successively and at once, the three portals

[18] Time is a devourer; man, more so.

hollowed out in an arch; the broidered and dentated cordon of the eight and twenty royal niches; the immense central rose window, flanked by its two lateral windows, like a priest by his deacon and subdeacon; the frail and lofty gallery of trefoil arcades, which supports a heavy platform above its fine, slender columns; and lastly, the two black and massive towers with their slate penthouses, harmonious parts of a magnificent whole, superposed in five gigantic stories; – develop themselves before the eye, in a mass and without confusion, with their innumerable details of statuary, carving, and sculpture, joined powerfully to the tranquil grandeur of the whole; a vast symphony in stone, so to speak; the colossal work of one man and one people, all together one and complex, like the Iliads and the Romanceros, whose sister it is; prodigious product of the grouping together of all the forces of an epoch, where, upon each stone, one sees the fancy of the workman disciplined by the genius of the artist start forth in a hundred fashions; a sort of human creation, in a word, powerful and fecund as the divine creation of which it seems to have stolen the double character, – variety, eternity.

And what we here say of the façade must be said of the entire church; and what we say of the cathedral church of Paris, must be said of all the churches of Christendom in the Middle Ages. All things are in place in that art, self-created, logical, and well proportioned. To measure the great toe of the foot is to measure the giant.

Let us return to the façade of Notre-Dame, as it still appears

to us, when we go piously to admire the grave and puissant cathedral, which inspires terror, so its chronicles assert: *quae mole sua terrorem incutit spectantibus*.

Three important things are to-day lacking in that façade: in the first place, the staircase of eleven steps which formerly raised it above the soil; next, the lower series of statues which occupied the niches of the three portals; and lastly the upper series, of the twenty-eight most ancient kings of France, which garnished the gallery of the first story, beginning with Childebert, and ending with Phillip Augustus, holding in his hand "the imperial apple."

Time has caused the staircase to disappear, by raising the soil of the city with a slow and irresistible progress; but, while thus causing the eleven steps which added to the majestic height of the edifice, to be devoured, one by one, by the rising tide of the pavements of Paris, – time has bestowed upon the church perhaps more than it has taken away, for it is time which has spread over the façade that sombre hue of the centuries which makes the old age of monuments the period of their beauty.

But who has thrown down the two rows of statues? who has left the niches empty? who has cut, in the very middle of the central portal, that new and bastard arch? who has dared to frame therein that commonplace and heavy door of carved wood, à la Louis XV., beside the arabesques of Biscornette? The men, the architects, the artists of our day.

And if we enter the interior of the edifice, who has overthrown that colossus of Saint Christopher, proverbial for magnitude

among statues, as the grand hall of the Palais de Justice was among halls, as the spire of Strasbourg among spires? And those myriads of statues, which peopled all the spaces between the columns of the nave and the choir, kneeling, standing, equestrian, men, women, children, kings, bishops, gendarmes, in stone, in marble, in gold, in silver, in copper, in wax even, – who has brutally swept them away? It is not time.

And who substituted for the ancient gothic altar, splendidly encumbered with shrines and reliquaries, that heavy marble sarcophagus, with angels' heads and clouds, which seems a specimen pillaged from the Val-de-Grâce or the Invalides? Who stupidly sealed that heavy anachronism of stone in the Carlovingian pavement of Hercandus? Was it not Louis XIV., fulfilling the request of Louis XIII.?

And who put the cold, white panes in the place of those windows, "high in color," which caused the astonished eyes of our fathers to hesitate between the rose of the grand portal and the arches of the apse? And what would a sub-chanter of the sixteenth century say, on beholding the beautiful yellow wash, with which our archiepiscopal vandals have desmeared their cathedral? He would remember that it was the color with which the hangman smeared "accursed" edifices; he would recall the Hôtel du Petit-Bourbon, all smeared thus, on account of the constable's treason. "Yellow, after all, of so good a quality," said Sauval, "and so well recommended, that more than a century has not yet caused it to lose its color." He would think that the sacred

place had become infamous, and would flee.

And if we ascend the cathedral, without mentioning a thousand barbarisms of every sort, – what has become of that charming little bell tower, which rested upon the point of intersection of the cross-roofs, and which, no less frail and no less bold than its neighbor (also destroyed), the spire of the Sainte-Chapelle, buried itself in the sky, farther forward than the towers, slender, pointed, sonorous, carved in open work. An architect of good taste amputated it (1787), and considered it sufficient to mask the wound with that large, leaden plaster, which resembles a pot cover.

'Tis thus that the marvellous art of the Middle Ages has been treated in nearly every country, especially in France. One can distinguish on its ruins three sorts of lesions, all three of which cut into it at different depths; first, time, which has insensibly notched its surface here and there, and gnawed it everywhere; next, political and religious revolution, which, blind and wrathful by nature, have flung themselves tumultuously upon it, torn its rich garment of carving and sculpture, burst its rose windows, broken its necklace of arabesques and tiny figures, torn out its statues, sometimes because of their mitres, sometimes because of their crowns; lastly, fashions, even more grotesque and foolish, which, since the anarchical and splendid deviations of the Renaissance, have followed each other in the necessary decadence of architecture. Fashions have wrought more harm than revolutions. They have cut to the quick; they have attacked

the very bone and framework of art; they have cut, slashed, disorganized, killed the edifice, in form as in the symbol, in its consistency as well as in its beauty. And then they have made it over; a presumption of which neither time nor revolutions at least have been guilty. They have audaciously adjusted, in the name of "good taste," upon the wounds of gothic architecture, their miserable gewgaws of a day, their ribbons of marble, their pompons of metal, a veritable leprosy of egg-shaped ornaments, volutes, whorls, draperies, garlands, fringes, stone flames, bronze clouds, pudgy cupids, chubby-cheeked cherubim, which begin to devour the face of art in the oratory of Catherine de Medicis, and cause it to expire, two centuries later, tortured and grimacing, in the boudoir of the Dubarry.

Thus, to sum up the points which we have just indicated, three sorts of ravages to-day disfigure Gothic architecture. Wrinkles and warts on the epidermis; this is the work of time. Deeds of violence, brutalities, contusions, fractures; this is the work of the revolutions from Luther to Mirabeau. Mutilations, amputations, dislocation of the joints, "restorations"; this is the Greek, Roman, and barbarian work of professors according to Vitruvius and Vignole. This magnificent art produced by the Vandals has been slain by the academies. The centuries, the revolutions, which at least devastate with impartiality and grandeur, have been joined by a cloud of school architects, licensed, sworn, and bound by oath; defacing with the discernment and choice of bad taste, substituting the *chicorées* of Louis XV. for the Gothic lace, for

the greater glory of the Parthenon. It is the kick of the ass at the dying lion. It is the old oak crowning itself, and which, to heap the measure full, is stung, bitten, and gnawed by caterpillars.

How far it is from the epoch when Robert Cenalis, comparing Notre-Dame de Paris to the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, *so much lauded by the ancient pagans*, which Erostatus *has* immortalized, found the Gallic temple "more excellent in length, breadth, height, and structure."[19]

Notre-Dame is not, moreover, what can be called a complete, definite, classified monument. It is no longer a Romanesque church; nor is it a Gothic church. This edifice is not a type. Notre-Dame de Paris has not, like the Abbey of Tournus, the grave and massive frame, the large and round vault, the glacial bareness, the majestic simplicity of the edifices which have the rounded arch for their progenitor. It is not, like the Cathedral of Bourges, the magnificent, light, multiform, tufted, bristling efflorescent product of the pointed arch. Impossible to class it in that ancient family of sombre, mysterious churches, low and crushed as it were by the round arch, almost Egyptian, with the exception of the ceiling; all hieroglyphics, all sacerdotal, all symbolical, more loaded in their ornaments, with lozenges and zigzags, than with flowers, with flowers than with animals, with animals than with men; the work of the architect less than of the bishop; first transformation of art, all impressed with theocratic and military discipline, taking root in the Lower Empire, and

[19] *Histoire Gallicane*, liv. II. Periode III. fo. 130, p. 1.

stopping with the time of William the Conqueror. Impossible to place our Cathedral in that other family of lofty, aerial churches, rich in painted windows and sculpture; pointed in form, bold in attitude; communal and bourgeois as political symbols; free, capricious, lawless, as a work of art; second transformation of architecture, no longer hieroglyphic, immovable and sacerdotal, but artistic, progressive, and popular, which begins at the return from the crusades, and ends with Louis IX. Notre-Dame de Paris is not of pure Romanesque, like the first; nor of pure Arabian race, like the second.

It is an edifice of the transition period. The Saxon architect completed the erection of the first pillars of the nave, when the pointed arch, which dates from the Crusade, arrived and placed itself as a conqueror upon the large Romanesque capitals which should support only round arches. The pointed arch, mistress since that time, constructed the rest of the church. Nevertheless, timid and inexperienced at the start, it sweeps out, grows larger, restrains itself, and dares no longer dart upwards in spires and lancet windows, as it did later on, in so many marvellous cathedrals. One would say that it were conscious of the vicinity of the heavy Romanesque pillars.

However, these edifices of the transition from the Romanesque to the Gothic, are no less precious for study than the pure types. They express a shade of the art which would be lost without them. It is the graft of the pointed upon the round arch.

Notre-Dame de Paris is, in particular, a curious specimen of

this variety. Each face, each stone of the venerable monument, is a page not only of the history of the country, but of the history of science and art as well. Thus, in order to indicate here only the principal details, while the little Red Door almost attains to the limits of the Gothic delicacy of the fifteenth century, the pillars of the nave, by their size and weight, go back to the Carlovingian Abbey of Saint-Germain des Prés. One would suppose that six centuries separated these pillars from that door. There is no one, not even the hermetics, who does not find in the symbols of the grand portal a satisfactory compendium of their science, of which the Church of Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie was so complete a hieroglyph. Thus, the Roman abbey, the philosophers' church, the Gothic art, Saxon art, the heavy, round pillar, which recalls Gregory VII., the hermetic symbolism, with which Nicolas Flamel played the prelude to Luther, papal unity, schism, Saint-Germain des Prés, Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie, – all are mingled, combined, amalgamated in Notre-Dame. This central mother church is, among the ancient churches of Paris, a sort of chimera; it has the head of one, the limbs of another, the haunches of another, something of all.

We repeat it, these hybrid constructions are not the least interesting for the artist, for the antiquarian, for the historian. They make one feel to what a degree architecture is a primitive thing, by demonstrating (what is also demonstrated by the cyclopean vestiges, the pyramids of Egypt, the gigantic Hindoo

pagodas) that the greatest products of architecture are less the works of individuals than of society; rather the offspring of a nation's effort, than the inspired flash of a man of genius; the deposit left by a whole people; the heaps accumulated by centuries; the residue of successive evaporations of human society, – in a word, species of formations. Each wave of time contributes its alluvium, each race deposits its layer on the monument, each individual brings his stone. Thus do the beavers, thus do the bees, thus do men. The great symbol of architecture, Babel, is a hive.

Great edifices, like great mountains, are the work of centuries. Art often undergoes a transformation while they are pending, *pendent opera interrupta*; they proceed quietly in accordance with the transformed art. The new art takes the monument where it finds it, incrusts itself there, assimilates it to itself, develops it according to its fancy, and finishes it if it can. The thing is accomplished without trouble, without effort, without reaction, – following a natural and tranquil law. It is a graft which shoots up, a sap which circulates, a vegetation which starts forth anew. Certainly there is matter here for many large volumes, and often the universal history of humanity in the successive engrafting of many arts at many levels, upon the same monument. The man, the artist, the individual, is effaced in these great masses, which lack the name of their author; human intelligence is there summed up and totalized. Time is the architect, the nation is the builder.

Not to consider here anything except the Christian architecture of Europe, that younger sister of the great masonries of the Orient, it appears to the eyes as an immense formation divided into three well-defined zones, which are superposed, the one upon the other: the Romanesque zone[20], the Gothic zone, the zone of the Renaissance, which we would gladly call the Greco-Roman zone. The Roman layer, which is the most ancient and deepest, is occupied by the round arch, which reappears, supported by the Greek column, in the modern and upper layer of the Renaissance. The pointed arch is found between the two. The edifices which belong exclusively to any one of these three layers are perfectly distinct, uniform, and complete. There is the Abbey of Jumiéges, there is the Cathedral of Reims, there is the Sainte-Croix of Orleans. But the three zones mingle and amalgamate along the edges, like the colors in the solar spectrum. Hence, complex monuments, edifices of gradation and transition. One is Roman at the base, Gothic in the middle, Greco-Roman at the top. It is because it was six hundred years in building. This variety is rare. The donjon keep of d'Etampes is a specimen of it. But monuments of two formations are more frequent. There is Notre-Dame de Paris, a pointed-arch edifice, which is imbedded by its pillars in that Roman zone, in which are plunged the portal

[20] This is the same which is called, according to locality, climate, and races, Lombard, Saxon, or Byzantine. There are four sister and parallel architectures, each having its special character, but derived from the same origin, the round arch.Facies non omnibus una,No diversa tamen, qualem, etc.Their faces not all alike, nor yet different, but such as the faces of sisters ought to be.

of Saint-Denis, and the nave of Saint-Germain des Prés. There is the charming, half-Gothic chapter-house of Bocherville, where the Roman layer extends half way up. There is the cathedral of Rouen, which would be entirely Gothic if it did not bathe the tip of its central spire in the zone of the Renaissance.[21]

However, all these shades, all these differences, do not affect the surfaces of edifices only. It is art which has changed its skin. The very constitution of the Christian church is not attacked by it. There is always the same internal woodwork, the same logical arrangement of parts. Whatever may be the carved and embroidered envelope of a cathedral, one always finds beneath it – in the state of a germ, and of a rudiment at the least – the Roman basilica. It is eternally developed upon the soil according to the same law. There are, invariably, two naves, which intersect in a cross, and whose upper portion, rounded into an apse, forms the choir; there are always the side aisles, for interior processions, for chapels, – a sort of lateral walks or promenades where the principal nave discharges itself through the spaces between the pillars. That settled, the number of chapels, doors, bell towers, and pinnacles are modified to infinity, according to the fancy of the century, the people, and art. The service of religion once assured and provided for, architecture does what she pleases. Statues, stained glass, rose windows, arabesques, denticulations, capitals, bas-reliefs, – she combines all these

[21] This portion of the spire, which was of woodwork, is precisely that which was consumed by lightning, in 1823.

imaginings according to the arrangement which best suits her. Hence, the prodigious exterior variety of these edifices, at whose foundation dwells so much order and unity. The trunk of a tree is immovable; the foliage is capricious.

CHAPTER II. A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PARIS

We have just attempted to restore, for the reader's benefit, that admirable church of Notre-Dame de Paris. We have briefly pointed out the greater part of the beauties which it possessed in the fifteenth century, and which it lacks to-day; but we have omitted the principal thing, – the view of Paris which was then to be obtained from the summits of its towers.

That was, in fact, – when, after having long groped one's way up the dark spiral which perpendicularly pierces the thick wall of the belfries, one emerged, at last abruptly, upon one of the lofty platforms inundated with light and air, – that was, in fact, a fine picture which spread out, on all sides at once, before the eye; a spectacle *sui generis*, of which those of our readers who have had the good fortune to see a Gothic city entire, complete, homogeneous, – a few of which still remain, Nuremberg in Bavaria and Vittoria in Spain, – can readily form an idea; or even smaller specimens, provided that they are well preserved, – Vitré in Brittany, Nordhausen in Prussia.

The Paris of three hundred and fifty years ago – the Paris of

the fifteenth century – was already a gigantic city. We Parisians generally make a mistake as to the ground which we think that we have gained, since Paris has not increased much over one-third since the time of Louis XI. It has certainly lost more in beauty than it has gained in size.

Paris had its birth, as the reader knows, in that old island of the City which has the form of a cradle. The strand of that island was its first boundary wall, the Seine its first moat. Paris remained for many centuries in its island state, with two bridges, one on the north, the other on the south; and two bridge heads, which were at the same time its gates and its fortresses, – the Grand-Châtelet on the right bank, the Petit-Châtelet on the left. Then, from the date of the kings of the first race, Paris, being too cribbed and confined in its island, and unable to return thither, crossed the water. Then, beyond the Grand, beyond the Petit-Châtelet, a first circle of walls and towers began to infringe upon the country on the two sides of the Seine. Some vestiges of this ancient enclosure still remained in the last century; to-day, only the memory of it is left, and here and there a tradition, the Baudets or Baudoyer gate, "Porte Bagauda".

Little by little, the tide of houses, always thrust from the heart of the city outwards, overflows, devours, wears away, and effaces this wall. Philip Augustus makes a new dike for it. He imprisons Paris in a circular chain of great towers, both lofty and solid. For the period of more than a century, the houses press upon each other, accumulate, and raise their level in this

basin, like water in a reservoir. They begin to deepen; they pile story upon story; they mount upon each other; they gush forth at the top, like all laterally compressed growth, and there is a rivalry as to which shall thrust its head above its neighbors, for the sake of getting a little air. The street glows narrower and deeper, every space is overwhelmed and disappears. The houses finally leap the wall of Philip Augustus, and scatter joyfully over the plain, without order, and all askew, like runaways. There they plant themselves squarely, cut themselves gardens from the fields, and take their ease. Beginning with 1367, the city spreads to such an extent into the suburbs, that a new wall becomes necessary, particularly on the right bank; Charles V. builds it. But a city like Paris is perpetually growing. It is only such cities that become capitals. They are funnels, into which all the geographical, political, moral, and intellectual water-sheds of a country, all the natural slopes of a people, pour; wells of civilization, so to speak, and also sewers, where commerce, industry, intelligence, population, – all that is sap, all that is life, all that is the soul of a nation, filters and amasses unceasingly, drop by drop, century by century.

So Charles V.'s wall suffered the fate of that of Philip Augustus. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Faubourg strides across it, passes beyond it, and runs farther. In the sixteenth, it seems to retreat visibly, and to bury itself deeper and deeper in the old city, so thick had the new city already become outside of it. Thus, beginning with the fifteenth century,

where our story finds us, Paris had already outgrown the three concentric circles of walls which, from the time of Julian the Apostate, existed, so to speak, in germ in the Grand-Châtelet and the Petit-Châtelet. The mighty city had cracked, in succession, its four enclosures of walls, like a child grown too large for his garments of last year. Under Louis XI., this sea of houses was seen to be pierced at intervals by several groups of ruined towers, from the ancient wall, like the summits of hills in an inundation, – like archipelagos of the old Paris submerged beneath the new. Since that time Paris has undergone yet another transformation, unfortunately for our eyes; but it has passed only one more wall, that of Louis XV., that miserable wall of mud and spittle, worthy of the king who built it, worthy of the poet who sung it, —

Le mur murant Paris rend Paris murmurant.[22]

In the fifteenth century, Paris was still divided into three wholly distinct and separate towns, each having its own physiognomy, its own specialty, its manners, customs, privileges, and history: the City, the University, the Town. The City, which occupied the island, was the most ancient, the smallest, and the mother of the other two, crowded in between them like (may we be pardoned the comparison) a little old woman between two large and handsome maidens. The University covered the left bank of the Seine, from the Tournelle to the Tour de Nesle,

[22] The wall walling Paris makes Paris murmur.

points which correspond in the Paris of to-day, the one to the wine market, the other to the mint. Its wall included a large part of that plain where Julian had built his hot baths. The hill of Sainte-Geneviève was enclosed in it. The culminating point of this sweep of walls was the Papal gate, that is to say, near the present site of the Pantheon. The Town, which was the largest of the three fragments of Paris, held the right bank. Its quay, broken or interrupted in many places, ran along the Seine, from the Tour de Billy to the Tour du Bois; that is to say, from the place where the granary stands to-day, to the present site of the Tuileries. These four points, where the Seine intersected the wall of the capital, the Tournelle and the Tour de Nesle on the right, the Tour de Billy and the Tour du Bois on the left, were called pre-eminently, "the four towers of Paris." The Town encroached still more extensively upon the fields than the University. The culminating point of the Town wall (that of Charles V.) was at the gates of Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin, whose situation has not been changed.

As we have just said, each of these three great divisions of Paris was a town, but too special a town to be complete, a city which could not get along without the other two. Hence three entirely distinct aspects: churches abounded in the City; palaces, in the Town; and colleges, in the University. Neglecting here the originalities, of secondary importance in old Paris, and the capricious regulations regarding the public highways, we will say, from a general point of view, taking only masses

and the whole group, in this chaos of communal jurisdictions, that the island belonged to the bishop, the right bank to the provost of the merchants, the left bank to the Rector; over all ruled the provost of Paris, a royal not a municipal official. The City had Notre-Dame; the Town, the Louvre and the Hôtel de Ville; the University, the Sorbonne. The Town had the markets (Halles); the city, the Hospital; the University, the Pré-aux-Clercs. Offences committed by the scholars on the left bank were tried in the law courts on the island, and were punished on the right bank at Montfauçon; unless the rector, feeling the university to be strong and the king weak, intervened; for it was the students' privilege to be hanged on their own grounds.

The greater part of these privileges, it may be noted in passing, and there were some even better than the above, had been extorted from the kings by revolts and mutinies. It is the course of things from time immemorial; the king only lets go when the people tear away. There is an old charter which puts the matter naively: apropos of fidelity: *Civibus fidelitas in reges, quae tamen aliquoties seditionibus interrypta, multa peperit privileyia*.

In the fifteenth century, the Seine bathed five islands within the walls of Paris: Louviers island, where there were then trees, and where there is no longer anything but wood; l'ile aux Vaches, and l'ile Notre-Dame, both deserted, with the exception of one house, both fiefs of the bishop – in the seventeenth century, a single island was formed out of these two, which was built upon and named l'ile Saint-Louis – , lastly the City, and at its point,

the little islet of the cow tender, which was afterwards engulfed beneath the platform of the Pont-Neuf. The City then had five bridges: three on the right, the Pont Notre-Dame, and the Pont au Change, of stone, the Pont aux Meuniers, of wood; two on the left, the Petit Pont, of stone, the Pont Saint-Michel, of wood; all loaded with houses.

The University had six gates, built by Philip Augustus; there were, beginning with la Tournelle, the Porte Saint-Victor, the Porte Bordelle, the Porte Papale, the Porte Saint-Jacques, the Porte Saint-Michel, the Porte Saint-Germain. The Town had six gates, built by Charles V.; beginning with the Tour de Billy they were: the Porte Saint-Antoine, the Porte du Temple, the Porte Saint-Martin, the Porte Saint-Denis, the Porte Montmartre, the Porte Saint-Honoré. All these gates were strong, and also handsome, which does not detract from strength. A large, deep moat, with a brisk current during the high water of winter, bathed the base of the wall round Paris; the Seine furnished the water. At night, the gates were shut, the river was barred at both ends of the city with huge iron chains, and Paris slept tranquilly.

From a bird's-eye view, these three burgs, the City, the Town, and the University, each presented to the eye an inextricable skein of eccentrically tangled streets. Nevertheless, at first sight, one recognized the fact that these three fragments formed but one body. One immediately perceived three long parallel streets, unbroken, undisturbed, traversing, almost in a straight line, all three cities, from one end to the other; from North to

South, perpendicularly, to the Seine, which bound them together, mingled them, infused them in each other, poured and transfused the people incessantly, from one to the other, and made one out of the three. The first of these streets ran from the Porte Saint-Martin: it was called the Rue Saint-Jacques in the University, Rue de la Juiverie in the City, Rue Saint-Martin in the Town; it crossed the water twice, under the name of the Petit Pont and the Pont Notre-Dame. The second, which was called the Rue de la Harpe on the left bank, Rue de la Barillerié in the island, Rue Saint-Denis on the right bank, Pont Saint-Michel on one arm of the Seine, Pont au Change on the other, ran from the Porte Saint-Michel in the University, to the Porte Saint-Denis in the Town. However, under all these names, there were but two streets, parent streets, generating streets, – the two arteries of Paris. All the other veins of the triple city either derived their supply from them or emptied into them.

Independently of these two principal streets, piercing Paris diametrically in its whole breadth, from side to side, common to the entire capital, the City and the University had also each its own great special street, which ran lengthwise by them, parallel to the Seine, cutting, as it passed, at right angles, the two arterial thoroughfares. Thus, in the Town, one descended in a straight line from the Porte Saint-Antoine to the Porte Saint-Honoré; in the University from the Porte Saint-Victor to the Porte Saint-Germain. These two great thoroughfares intersected by the two first, formed the canvas upon which reposed, knotted

and crowded together on every hand, the labyrinthine network of the streets of Paris. In the incomprehensible plan of these streets, one distinguished likewise, on looking attentively, two clusters of great streets, like magnified sheaves of grain, one in the University, the other in the Town, which spread out gradually from the bridges to the gates.

Some traces of this geometrical plan still exist to-day.

Now, what aspect did this whole present, when, as viewed from the summit of the towers of Notre-Dame, in 1482? That we shall try to describe.

For the spectator who arrived, panting, upon that pinnacle, it was first a dazzling confusing view of roofs, chimneys, streets, bridges, places, spires, bell towers. Everything struck your eye at once: the carved gable, the pointed roof, the turrets suspended at the angles of the walls; the stone pyramids of the eleventh century, the slate obelisks of the fifteenth; the round, bare tower of the donjon keep; the square and fretted tower of the church; the great and the little, the massive and the aerial. The eye was, for a long time, wholly lost in this labyrinth, where there was nothing which did not possess its originality, its reason, its genius, its beauty, – nothing which did not proceed from art; beginning with the smallest house, with its painted and carved front, with external beams, elliptical door, with projecting stories, to the royal Louvre, which then had a colonnade of towers. But these are the principal masses which were then to be distinguished when the eye began to accustom itself to this tumult of edifices.

In the first place, the City. – "The island of the City," as Sauval says, who, in spite of his confused medley, sometimes has such happy turns of expression, – "the island of the city is made like a great ship, stuck in the mud and run aground in the current, near the centre of the Seine."

We have just explained that, in the fifteenth century, this ship was anchored to the two banks of the river by five bridges. This form of a ship had also struck the heraldic scribes; for it is from that, and not from the siege by the Normans, that the ship which blazons the old shield of Paris, comes, according to Favyn and Pasquier. For him who understands how to decipher them, armorial bearings are algebra, armorial bearings have a tongue. The whole history of the second half of the Middle Ages is written in armorial bearings, – the first half is in the symbolism of the Roman churches. They are the hieroglyphics of feudalism, succeeding those of theocracy.

Thus the City first presented itself to the eye, with its stern to the east, and its prow to the west. Turning towards the prow, one had before one an innumerable flock of ancient roofs, over which arched broadly the lead-covered apse of the Sainte-Chapelle, like an elephant's haunches loaded with its tower. Only here, this tower was the most audacious, the most open, the most ornamented spire of cabinet-maker's work that ever let the sky peep through its cone of lace. In front of Notre-Dame, and very near at hand, three streets opened into the cathedral square, – a fine square, lined with ancient houses. Over the south side of this

place bent the wrinkled and sullen façade of the Hôtel Dieu, and its roof, which seemed covered with warts and pustules. Then, on the right and the left, to east and west, within that wall of the City, which was yet so contracted, rose the bell towers of its one and twenty churches, of every date, of every form, of every size, from the low and wormeaten belfry of Saint-Denis du Pas (*Carcer Glaueini*) to the slender needles of Saint-Pierre aux Boeufs and Saint-Landry.

Behind Notre-Dame, the cloister and its Gothic galleries spread out towards the north; on the south, the half-Roman palace of the bishop; on the east, the desert point of the Terrain. In this throng of houses the eye also distinguished, by the lofty open-work mitres of stone which then crowned the roof itself, even the most elevated windows of the palace, the Hôtel given by the city, under Charles VI., to Juvénal des Ursins; a little farther on, the pitch-covered sheds of the Palus Market; in still another quarter the new apse of Saint-Germain le Vieux, lengthened in 1458, with a bit of the Rue aux Febves; and then, in places, a square crowded with people; a pillory, erected at the corner of a street; a fine fragment of the pavement of Philip Augustus, a magnificent flagging, grooved for the horses' feet, in the middle of the road, and so badly replaced in the sixteenth century by the miserable cobblestones, called the "pavement of the League;" a deserted back courtyard, with one of those diaphanous staircase turrets, such as were erected in the fifteenth century, one of which is still to be seen in the Rue des Bourdonnais. Lastly, at

the right of the Sainte-Chapelle, towards the west, the Palais de Justice rested its group of towers at the edge of the water. The thickets of the king's gardens, which covered the western point of the City, masked the Island du Passeur. As for the water, from the summit of the towers of Notre-Dame one hardly saw it, on either side of the City; the Seine was hidden by bridges, the bridges by houses.

And when the glance passed these bridges, whose roofs were visibly green, rendered mouldy before their time by the vapors from the water, if it was directed to the left, towards the University, the first edifice which struck it was a large, low sheaf of towers, the Petit-Châtelet, whose yawning gate devoured the end of the Petit-Pont. Then, if your view ran along the bank, from east to west, from the Tournelle to the Tour de Nesle, there was a long cordon of houses, with carved beams, stained-glass windows, each story projecting over that beneath it, an interminable zigzag of bourgeois gables, frequently interrupted by the mouth of a street, and from time to time also by the front or angle of a huge stone mansion, planted at its ease, with courts and gardens, wings and detached buildings, amid this populace of crowded and narrow houses, like a grand gentleman among a throng of rustics. There were five or six of these mansions on the quay, from the house of Lorraine, which shared with the Bernardins the grand enclosure adjoining the Tournelle, to the Hôtel de Nesle, whose principal tower ended Paris, and whose pointed roofs were in a position, during three months of the year,

to encroach, with their black triangles, upon the scarlet disk of the setting sun.

This side of the Seine was, however, the least mercantile of the two. Students furnished more of a crowd and more noise there than artisans, and there was not, properly speaking, any quay, except from the Pont Saint-Michel to the Tour de Nesle. The rest of the bank of the Seine was now a naked strand, the same as beyond the Bernardins; again, a throng of houses, standing with their feet in the water, as between the two bridges.

There was a great uproar of laundresses; they screamed, and talked, and sang from morning till night along the beach, and beat a great deal of linen there, just as in our day. This is not the least of the gayeties of Paris.

The University presented a dense mass to the eye. From one end to the other, it was homogeneous and compact. The thousand roofs, dense, angular, clinging to each other, composed, nearly all, of the same geometrical element, offered, when viewed from above, the aspect of a crystallization of the same substance.

The capricious ravine of streets did not cut this block of houses into too disproportionate slices. The forty-two colleges were scattered about in a fairly equal manner, and there were some everywhere. The amusingly varied crests of these beautiful edifices were the product of the same art as the simple roofs which they overshot, and were, actually, only a multiplication of the square or the cube of the same geometrical figure. Hence they complicated the whole effect, without disturbing it;

completed, without overloading it. Geometry is harmony. Some fine mansions here and there made magnificent outlines against the picturesque attics of the left bank. The house of Nevers, the house of Rome, the house of Reims, which have disappeared; the Hôtel de Cluny, which still exists, for the consolation of the artist, and whose tower was so stupidly deprived of its crown a few years ago. Close to Cluny, that Roman palace, with fine round arches, were once the hot baths of Julian. There were a great many abbeys, of a beauty more devout, of a grandeur more solemn than the mansions, but not less beautiful, not less grand. Those which first caught the eye were the Bernardins, with their three bell towers; Sainte-Geneviève, whose square tower, which still exists, makes us regret the rest; the Sorbonne, half college, half monastery, of which so admirable a nave survives; the fine quadrilateral cloister of the Mathurins; its neighbor, the cloister of Saint-Benoit, within whose walls they have had time to cobble up a theatre, between the seventh and eighth editions of this book; the Cordeliers, with their three enormous adjacent gables; the Augustins, whose graceful spire formed, after the Tour de Nesle, the second denticulation on this side of Paris, starting from the west. The colleges, which are, in fact, the intermediate ring between the cloister and the world, hold the middle position in the monumental series between the Hôtels and the abbeys, with a severity full of elegance, sculpture less giddy than the palaces, an architecture less severe than the convents. Unfortunately, hardly anything remains of these monuments,

where Gothic art combined with so just a balance, richness and economy. The churches (and they were numerous and splendid in the University, and they were graded there also in all the ages of architecture, from the round arches of Saint-Julian to the pointed arches of Saint-Séverin), the churches dominated the whole; and, like one harmony more in this mass of harmonies, they pierced in quick succession the multiple open work of the gables with slashed spires, with open-work bell towers, with slender pinnacles, whose line was also only a magnificent exaggeration of the acute angle of the roofs.

The ground of the University was hilly; Mount Sainte-Geneviève formed an enormous mound to the south; and it was a sight to see from the summit of Notre-Dame how that throng of narrow and tortuous streets (to-day the Latin Quarter), those bunches of houses which, spread out in every direction from the top of this eminence, precipitated themselves in disorder, and almost perpendicularly down its flanks, nearly to the water's edge, having the air, some of falling, others of clambering up again, and all of holding to one another. A continual flux of a thousand black points which passed each other on the pavements made everything move before the eyes; it was the populace seen thus from aloft and afar.

Lastly, in the intervals of these roofs, of these spires, of these accidents of numberless edifices, which bent and writhed, and jagged in so eccentric a manner the extreme line of the University, one caught a glimpse, here and there, of a great

expanse of moss-grown wall, a thick, round tower, a crenellated city gate, shadowing forth the fortress; it was the wall of Philip Augustus. Beyond, the fields gleamed green; beyond, fled the roads, along which were scattered a few more suburban houses, which became more infrequent as they became more distant. Some of these faubourgs were important: there were, first, starting from la Tournelle, the Bourg Saint-Victor, with its one arch bridge over the Bièvre, its abbey where one could read the epitaph of Louis le Gros, *epitaphium Ludovici Grossi*, and its church with an octagonal spire, flanked with four little bell towers of the eleventh century (a similar one can be seen at Etampes; it is not yet destroyed); next, the Bourg Saint-Marceau, which already had three churches and one convent; then, leaving the mill of the Gobelins and its four white walls on the left, there was the Faubourg Saint-Jacques with the beautiful carved cross in its square; the church of Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas, which was then Gothic, pointed, charming; Saint-Magloire, a fine nave of the fourteenth century, which Napoleon turned into a hayloft; Notre-Dame des Champs, where there were Byzantine mosaics; lastly, after having left behind, full in the country, the Monastery des Chartreux, a rich edifice contemporary with the Palais de Justice, with its little garden divided into compartments, and the haunted ruins of Vauvert, the eye fell, to the west, upon the three Roman spires of Saint-Germain des Prés. The Bourg Saint-Germain, already a large community, formed fifteen or twenty streets in the rear; the pointed bell tower of Saint-Sulpice

marked one corner of the town. Close beside it one descried the quadrilateral enclosure of the fair of Saint-Germain, where the market is situated to-day; then the abbot's pillory, a pretty little round tower, well capped with a leaden cone; the brickyard was further on, and the Rue du Four, which led to the common bakehouse, and the mill on its hillock, and the lazar house, a tiny house, isolated and half seen.

But that which attracted the eye most of all, and fixed it for a long time on that point, was the abbey itself. It is certain that this monastery, which had a grand air, both as a church and as a seignory; that abbatial palace, where the bishops of Paris counted themselves happy if they could pass the night; that refectory, upon which the architect had bestowed the air, the beauty, and the rose window of a cathedral; that elegant chapel of the Virgin; that monumental dormitory; those vast gardens; that portcullis; that drawbridge; that envelope of battlements which notched to the eye the verdure of the surrounding meadows; those courtyards, where gleamed men at arms, intermingled with golden copes; – the whole grouped and clustered about three lofty spires, with round arches, well planted upon a Gothic apse, made a magnificent figure against the horizon.

When, at length, after having contemplated the University for a long time, you turned towards the right bank, towards the Town, the character of the spectacle was abruptly altered. The Town, in fact much larger than the University, was also less of a unit. At the first glance, one saw that it was divided into many masses,

singularly distinct. First, to the eastward, in that part of the town which still takes its name from the marsh where Camulogènes entangled Caesar, was a pile of palaces. The block extended to the very water's edge. Four almost contiguous Hôtels, Jouy, Sens, Barbeau, the house of the Queen, mirrored their slate peaks, broken with slender turrets, in the Seine.

These four edifices filled the space from the Rue des Nonaindières, to the abbey of the Celestins, whose spire gracefully relieved their line of gables and battlements. A few miserable, greenish hovels, hanging over the water in front of these sumptuous Hôtels, did not prevent one from seeing the fine angles of their façades, their large, square windows with stone mullions, their pointed porches overloaded with statues, the vivid outlines of their walls, always clear cut, and all those charming accidents of architecture, which cause Gothic art to have the air of beginning its combinations afresh with every monument.

Behind these palaces, extended in all directions, now broken, fenced in, battlemented like a citadel, now veiled by great trees like a Carthusian convent, the immense and multiform enclosure of that miraculous Hôtel de Saint-Pol, where the King of France possessed the means of lodging superbly two and twenty princes of the rank of the dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy, with their domestics and their suites, without counting the great lords, and the emperor when he came to view Paris, and the lions, who had their separate Hôtel at the royal Hôtel. Let us say here that a prince's apartment was then composed of never less than

eleven large rooms, from the chamber of state to the oratory, not to mention the galleries, baths, vapor-baths, and other "superfluous places," with which each apartment was provided; not to mention the private gardens for each of the king's guests; not to mention the kitchens, the cellars, the domestic offices, the general refectories of the house, the poultry-yards, where there were twenty-two general laboratories, from the bakehouses to the wine-cellars; games of a thousand sorts, malls, tennis, and riding at the ring; aviaries, fishponds, menageries, stables, barns, libraries, arsenals and foundries. This was what a king's palace, a Louvre, a Hôtel de Saint-Pol was then. A city within a city.

From the tower where we are placed, the Hôtel Saint-Pol, almost half hidden by the four great houses of which we have just spoken, was still very considerable and very marvellous to see. One could there distinguish, very well, though cleverly united with the principal building by long galleries, decked with painted glass and slender columns, the three Hôtels which Charles V. had amalgamated with his palace: the Hôtel du Petit-Muce, with the airy balustrade, which formed a graceful border to its roof; the Hôtel of the Abbe de Saint-Maur, having the vanity of a stronghold, a great tower, machicolations, loopholes, iron gratings, and over the large Saxon door, the armorial bearings of the abbé, between the two mortises of the drawbridge; the Hôtel of the Comte d' Etampes, whose donjon keep, ruined at its summit, was rounded and notched like a cock's comb; here and there, three or four ancient oaks, forming a tuft together like

enormous cauliflowers; gambols of swans, in the clear water of the fishponds, all in folds of light and shade; many courtyards of which one beheld picturesque bits; the Hôtel of the Lions, with its low, pointed arches on short, Saxon pillars, its iron gratings and its perpetual roar; shooting up above the whole, the scale-ornamented spire of the Ave-Maria; on the left, the house of the Provost of Paris, flanked by four small towers, delicately grooved, in the middle; at the extremity, the Hôtel Saint-Pol, properly speaking, with its multiplied façades, its successive enrichments from the time of Charles V., the hybrid excrescences, with which the fancy of the architects had loaded it during the last two centuries, with all the apses of its chapels, all the gables of its galleries, a thousand weathercocks for the four winds, and its two lofty contiguous towers, whose conical roof, surrounded by battlements at its base, looked like those pointed caps which have their edges turned up.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.