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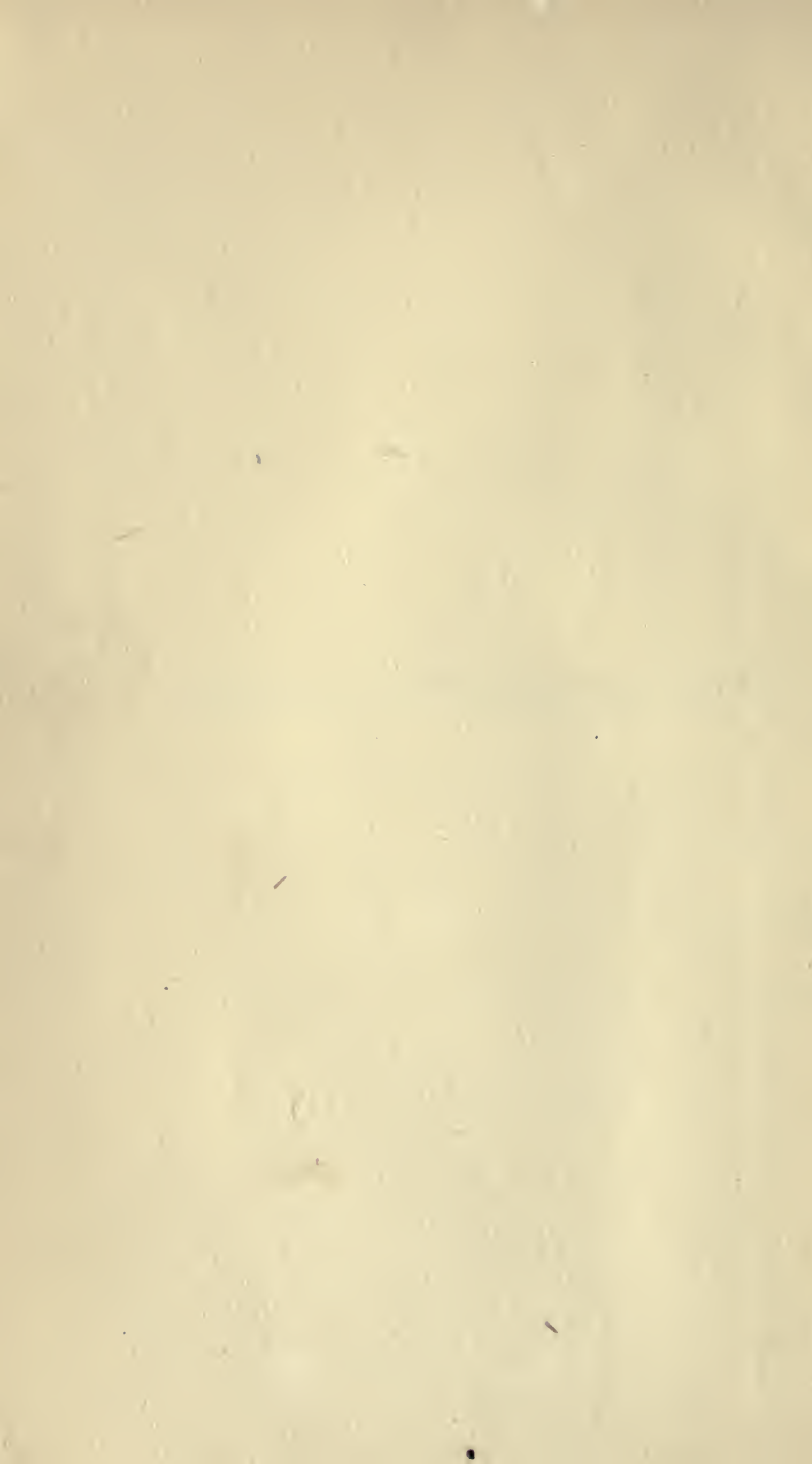




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TWENTIETH-CENTURY FRANCE





UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA

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*Sanjour*

THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

[Frontispiece.]



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M. RAYMOND POINCARÉ

THE HONOURED PRESIDENT OF

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

458101



## FRANCE AND ENGLAND

MAY 1, 1903

*Written for the inauguration of the Entente Cordiale and  
printed in the "Westminster Gazette."*

FAIR sister France, Britannia hails this day,  
Auspicious harbinger, delayed too long !  
In storied page, on canvas and in song,  
Shall live the advent of King Edward's May.

Our paths lie parallel by land and sea,  
A kindred spirit animates our laws,  
Together we have triumphed in the cause  
Of sovereign right and dear-bought liberty.

Thy sunny shores are England's pleasure-ground,  
Thy arts, thy letters, have their votaries here,  
And Albion's muse unto French hearts is dear.  
Why have we sat so long apart and frowned ?  
Let us no longer wiser moods withstand,  
But cherish peace and progress hand in hand !





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## A FOREWORD

I HERE acknowledge with grateful thanks the kindness of the President of the French Republic in allowing his portrait to appear as a frontispiece and accepting the dedication of this work.

I am also under great obligations to Messrs. Seely, Service & Co., the London Electrotype Agency, to M. Rosny, Aîné, to MM. Neurdein, Delagrave, Manuel, Pirou, the houses of Hachette and of Armand Colin, and last but not least to the French officials and friends for valuable help so ungrudgingly afforded.

MATILDA BETHAM-EDWARDS,  
*Officier de l'Instruction Publique, France, and  
Médaille d'Or, Anglo-French Exhibition, 1908.*

HASTINGS,  
January, 1917.



## INTRODUCTION

IN these pages is shown France rising as a Phoenix from its ashes after the turmoil and disruption of the Dreyfus Trial. The splendour, alike moral and intellectual of Twentieth Century France, as shown by its philosophers, critics, scientists and poets, is matched by her unimaginable territorial expansion. Since 1900 the Third Republic has become indeed Empress of the Sahara. Over a third of Africa, *i.e.* from Sierra Leone to Algiers, now waves the Tricolour, and in perfect safety through three thousand and odd miles the traveller may to-day make the wondrous journey, halting at Timbuctu, to change his bank notes or letters of credit!—on his way being hospitably entertained by French officers and their wives at the thickly set military stations, and seeing here and there giraffes extricating their necks from the telephone wires. And, as Sir Henry Stanley said, The Sahara is the nursery of French soldiers!

Nor is the picture of France proper, ethical, literary, educational, less astounding. On every side we English have something to learn.

“We come into the world,” writes M. Coste (“Sociologie objective”), “belonging to a nation we have not chosen. The ties of parentage, of education, community of language, traditions, habits and early memories implant in our bosoms a love of country

and a passionate feeling of duty to serve and defend it. But as civilization enlarges and international relations expand, it rarely happens that added to this country of our birth we do not add another of our adoption. We acquire its language, history, literature, arts, familiarize ourselves with it by travel, knit relations alike of business and friendship with its people, invest our spare capital in its undertakings. It is desirable that the choice of this second, supplementary, and freely adopted country, should not be made at haphazard; that, on the contrary, such choice should be dictated by reasoned-out sociological considerations. Only thus, up to a certain point can be brought about the ideological conception of the social contract."

For myself I cannot too much rejoice that partly by accident of birth—my maternal grandmother being French—and partly by choice, from childhood upwards France has been the land of my adoption.

And in writing of it and its people, to cite an ancient chronicler, "If I have done well and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired, but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto. And here shall be an end."

M. B.-E.



# TWENTIETH-CENTURY FRANCE

## CHAPTER I

THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC, 1900

### I

WHAT an object lesson was the spectacle with which France inaugurated the twentieth century! Just seven years after the last German helmet had disappeared from French territory, the Third Republic dumbfounded her enemies and staggered the world by an Industrial Exhibition of unrivalled splendour. Never before was witnessed such a display of intellectual forces—scientific, industrial, and æsthetic. Never was more proudly vindicated the motto of the *Ville Lumière*, that blazon of her emblematic ship,

*Fluctuat nec mergitur.*

Crowned by the Eiffel Tower, Paris dazzled the world.

By hundreds of thousands, by millions, and from remotest regions, flocked beholders, drawn hither, perhaps, as much by that eighth wonder of the world as by the World's Show itself. No less wonder-stricken than the naïve and untravelled, were jaded globe-trotters as they reached the upper platform. From a height quintupling that of our own Monument, their eyes would wander over an improvised

and fantastic city; palaces, domes, marts, gardens, mountains, lakelets, fountains, covering as wide an area as that of the Crystal Palace, *i.e.* just upon three hundred acres. And from early morning till just upon midnight the whole was a peopled panorama, a veritable Babel of tongues.

As good fortune would have it, I had spent many weeks with Parisian friends during the World's Fair on the Champ-de-Mars of 1878, and also during its successor on the opposite bank of the Seine a decade later. I could, therefore, measure the immense, I may say, the unimaginable pre-eminence of the centennial pageant.

Let me, however, here recall one or two features of those two *Expositions Universelles*.

In 1878 the literary colossus of the nineteenth century still lived. I rejoice that I saw Victor Hugo in such a moment of triumph. An International Literary Congress was held in the Théâtre Châtelet, and the final *séance* was a reception of France's grand old man just as Voltaire had been similarly glorified a century before. Invitations were sent out by the *Société des Gens de Lettres*, and for my own I was indebted to the poet Coppée. What a memory to possess! Could the successive phases of a much varied, much travelled life, ever blot it out? Can to-day's "world's earthquake" dwarfing Waterloo, dim its lustre?

The poet was already more than an octogenarian, but looked older. Intellectual *tours de force*, fiercest political passions and the bitterness of exile had doubled his later years. Olympian still was the grand head, but how dim his eyes, how feeble his voice as by the light of numerous wax candles he

read a brief address! With the peroration, indeed, came a flash of the old fire. Turning to the foreign delegates and majestically waving his right hand, he wound up with the words—

“Poets, novelists, philosophers, scientists, France salutes you!”

My gifted intermediary I was not allowed to thank in person; at the time I speak of he was invalidish, he said, and as he pathetically added, “Poor ignoramus that I am! I can only by means of an interpreter enjoy the gracious things that you have published about my verses!”

Very likely a certain shyness was the real obstacle. Far be it from me to accuse the poet of tergiversation; but just as any stick will serve to beat a dog with, so may the merest cold, headache, or fit of indigestion quite legitimately shut out an unwelcome visitor! Non-English-speaking, non-travelled Frenchmen do not, as a rule, seek the acquaintance of strangers. They relish *un nouveau frisson*, or new thrill in literature, art, the drama, or in real life, but not in the guise of a formal visit, most often the excuse being, *ma petite santé*, ‘my poor health.’

Another great figure of this experience was Gambetta. Twice I heard him electrify packed audiences by his tremendous voice and short, soul-stirring speeches. Of him, however, I have written elsewhere.

Collectively, never before had foreigners (Germans excepted), especially ourselves, been more warmly welcomed in France, although as a nation we were far from deserving the compliment.

Most striking also was the fraternal spirit

exhibited by Frenchmen towards each other. The disasters of 1870 had been surmounted. By superhuman efforts France had risen above evil fortune. Now, indeed, if ever, we might expect a cordial feeling animating all classes. And such, indeed, proved to be the case. It was delightful to find poor as well as rich participating in the general open door, and with a liberality worthy of imitation, alike civil and military authorities, public companies, and individual employers did their best to render such opportunities available. Thus the Salon was opened gratuitously on Sundays and Thursdays, also the Gobelins tapestry works and other sights for which a fee is usually charged. Every day two hundred soldiers were drafted off by the Minister of War for a visit to the Exhibition free of cost, while the remotest provinces furnished daily contingents of holiday-makers, many of these being sent at the public expense—civil servants, schoolmasters, rural postmen, and others. The blue blouse and the workwoman's cap were seen everywhere and in close proximity to the fashionable world. All class distinction was set aside. Again, the Exhibition became a rallying-point not only of friends and relations, but of provincials and colonists. French hospitality was most liberally exercised, and delightful was it to witness those meetings of old friends, many of them accosting each other with the familiar "thee" and "thou" of early days, and for the first time meeting since childhood. A blaze of national prosperity and pleasurable excitement had put class and class in good humour with each other and had united a nation often so divided on important matters.

A decade passed and, between France and

England, without "evil occurrent." As yet the affair of Fashoda had not set the two nations nagging at each other. Nor had the Dreyfus trial and our journalistic comments thereon brought Jacques Bonhomme and John Bull to fisticuffs.

But the fiat had gone forth. The centennial celebration of the Rights of Man, had cynically said Lord Salisbury, was no affair of the English people. Lord Lytton was summoned home by a diplomatic illness, and as a French officer remarked to me, not without a touch of bitter irony :—

"Think of it," he said, "Royalty in the Presidential cortège only represented by a black King!"

True enough. A full-blooded negro potentate was the sole crowned head accompanying poor President Carnot on his inaugural progress.

Lord Lytton's position must have been peculiarly unpleasant. Appreciating France as he did—and no English Ambassador was ever more appreciated by the French—how much, under favourable circumstances, might he have done to bring the two nations together. "The Last Days of Pompeii," his illustrious father's masterpiece, is as familiar to French readers, young and old, wise and simple, as to the English-speaking world. As it was, aided by his gracious wife, the poet who so worthily recalled an illustrious name, could only exercise large-hearted individual hospitality. His pseudonym, Owen Meredith, and his poems were comparatively unknown over the water, the personality of His Excellency Lord Lytton fascinated all with whom he came in contact.

Yet ten years later and the same sinister influences were at work. As in 1878 and 1889, and even more furiously than before, the devil's brew seethed, boiled

and bubbled. France and England scowled menacingly at each other. The Boer War and our neighbour's attitude towards it resulted in a general English boycott of their last and greatest exhibition. Splendid indeed was the British section, but pleasure-seekers and what is called the world, cut the great show dead. To say here, indeed, that you were off to Paris during the summer of 1900 was to dub yourself a Little Englander or renegade. The wonder is that no serious encounters took place in cafés and on the boulevards.

Meanwhile one incident happening later showed how very far out was Mr. Hamerton's forecast written about this time, "that courtesy was the most that could be expected of French and English relations." Even amid acrimonious political squabbles the two nations would kiss and be friends—a fact rendering all the more probable that pre-historic good-fellowship in which paleontologists believe !

In 1896 a catastrophe happened which, for the time being, completely silenced Anglo-French recrimination. An emigrant ship, the *Drummond Castle*, was wrecked off the coast of Ushant with its full complement of passengers on board. Among the victims were a considerable number of young girls and children, and one by one, defaced, bruised, covered with seaweed and slime, their bodies were washed ashore.

Then all the intense pitifulness of the pious Breton folks shone forth, hallowing, beautifying the awful tragedy. Each poor frame was tenderly washed, perfumed, and arrayed, not in common ceremonies, but in the richest grave-clothes to be had. Mothers brought out their little daughters' Sunday

best—were they not taking the place of the dead—acting a maternal part to these innocent beings? Wept and prayed over under homely roofs, each body was reverently and with all becoming ceremony conveyed to its last resting-place, the villagers following as mourners. The occasion suggested a little poem of my own which originally appeared in the *Daily News*, and which was ably and literally translated by M. Louis Batardy, whose rendering I give here—

Lentement, à regret, en ses remous si graves,  
 L'Océan ramena de sinistres épaves :  
 Des cadavres affreux, des enfants innocents  
 Que la gueuse avait pris en ses flots mugissants.  
 Par le roc mutilé, le visage morbide  
 Disparaissait caché sous un masque livide . . .  
 Et les braves Bretons les mirent au linceul  
 Puis, bien pieusement, suivirent leur cercueil  
 Le lugubre cortège, en prière s'avance.  
 " Sous la divine Croix, le sol chéri de France  
 Va recouvrir leurs os " . . . Qu'a jamais soit vanté  
 L'exemple de la noble et grande charité  
 Des marins de Bretagne allant conduire en terre  
 Ainsi que des parents, les morts de l'Angleterre.

This appeared in the *L'Écho de Givet*, August 30, 1896, accompanied by a warm tribute to British generosity and sympathy from the pen of the accomplished translator.

Vainly for over the quarter of a century had a great Victorian—one of our greatest—happily still with us, preached a saner, the only sane doctrine, namely a solid and far-reaching Anglo-French understanding. No less sincere than Mr. Frederic Harrison, the late eminent Professor Beesly and half a dozen equally enlightened men upheld their leader's views. Theirs was a voice crying in the wilderness. As well harangue the inmates of Bedlam on Bergson's

philosophy! No one listened, no one realized ever so faintly that there were seers in the land, that the oracles were not yet dumb!

So the unparalleled pageant in one respect proved a failure. Great and lesser Britain held aloof with considerable financial loss to Paris and to the French industrial world generally.

But as had happened on previous occasions, all was unanimity on native soil. The triumph of 1900 knit all hearts. In those glorious weeks, good fortune, as to-day, had silenced alike political, social and religious discords. Over the Trocadéro fluttered the Dove of Peace. Fraternity was the order of the day. Here is an illustration of the spirit prevailing.

During this eventful summer I quitted Paris for a spell, seeking quiet and repose in a Burgundian country-house to which I had a standing invitation; by its members indeed I was regarded as one of the family. In starting from Dijon on my return I learned that an extra express had been put on and that extra expresses were similarly speeding from all quarters to the capital and similarly crowded.

It was a second Fête of the Federation—a centennial commemoration of the first!

The twenty thousand heads of municipalities and communes, in other words, all the Mayors of the Third Republic had been invited to a banquet at the Elysée.

Next day from the windows of a friend's house I witnessed a sight never to be forgotten. Towards noon, one by one, amid the cheers and acclamations of enraptured crowds, procession after procession filed past; at the head of each were préfet, sous-préfet and député wearing official insignia, behind these the long train of mayors, most of them in black frock-coats,



all of course displaying Tricolour scarves. Here and there I descried a familiar figure, more than one Breton with broad-brimmed felt hat, long gay streamers and short black velvet jacket, and more than one in the still fanciful costume of Quimpère.

Later in the day, my host, himself a député, and hostess held a little reception. Mayors by twos and threes dropping in for a chat. The afternoon indeed was drawing to a close before poor President Loubet—for the second time that day—had got through his twenty thousand and odd handshakes and the portals of the Elysée were closed!

“Tell me one thing, General,” I said one day to an old friend as we dined together on a balcony of the Trocadéro, “European sovereigns and heirs-apparent all seem to have been invited by your Government. I shall soon see the Czar and Czarina at the great review near Rheims, and how many more royalties and semi-royalties have come and gone? Your country and Germany are at peace. As is well known there is one potentate who is dying—at least those say who ought to know—to see Paris and be seen of Parisians. Why should the Kaiser be left out of these invitations?”

The General’s reply was categorical:—“*If, chère Mademoiselle, the German Emperor were to appear now in the streets of Paris, no matter what unheard-of precautions might be taken for his safety, his life would not be worth a moment’s purchase.*”

If such was the case in a green tree what would things be in the dry?

So long as a foot of French soil remains under the German Ban, so long will the very name arouse “curses not aloud but deep,” so long will the bare

mention of amity between the two peoples arouse a sardonic smile or bitterest abjuration.

Only a modern Peter the Hermit, only one, in Carlyle's words, "dim in vision, subject to sudden cranks, a headlong, very positive and dull man," can contemplate a change here.

Like M. Romain Roland, folks must inhabit cloud-land to believe that babes born yesterday and destined to become Melchisedeks and old Parrs, will witness any improvement in French and German relations!

## II.

I will now stroll on paper through those acres upon acres devoted to modern and contemporary achievement, from my note-book particularizing a few marvels.

Foremost among individual exhibitions must be placed that of *Sous Terre* in the Trocadéro gardens.

The fame of the Paris lawyer—M. E. A. Martel, "The Columbus of the under-world"—had already reached our shores, he had indeed made explorations and discoveries in both islands.

French people never do anything by halves, and here we had the science of "grottologie" and "spéléographie"—M. Martel had to find words for his newly discovered science—illustrated in a practical form. Stepping downwards we began with a representation of prehistoric caves and grottoes, the series being carried on through successive ages and brought down to M. Martel's crowning discovery.

Farther on my friend, "the Columbus of the under-world," shall speak for himself. If under such guidance we could here visit Tartarean depths, above

ground we could gaze upon palpable transformations, mountain scenery in the heart of Paris. A year before I had somewhat incredulously visited the Swiss village that was to be. Indeed, I rather rallied my cicerone, the General, on his belief in such fairy-land. Where now my eye rested upon grey peaks, glittering cascades, and emerald uplands, at that time nothing was visible but a chaos of timber, confusion reigning on every side. Even the experienced Alpinist must have acknowledged that the illusion was perfect. Around an ancient Tyrolese church were now grouped picturesque châteaux, dairy-folk bustled about with their milkpails, cows and goats took their ease in airy stables or on home meadows, neighbours in their picturesque costumes chatted before the village inn over their glass mug of ale, whilst breaking the stillness came the roar of a mountain torrent, and from time to time the still more romantic sound of the Alpine horn and the *Ranz des Vaches*.

Nothing throughout the Paris Exhibition was prettier than the Swiss village, and nothing in the Swiss village prettier than a certain corner devoted to Alpine flowers. A tiny corner it was, but one over which flower-lovers lingered long. Here you could buy of a sturdy maiden, dressed in one of the pictorial costumes so common in Switzerland a generation ago, edelweiss and other mountain plants, all in bloom, all fresh as if growing on native soil, the price of each plant being a franc. Every day fresh supplies reached Paris from the Alps, whilst in the improvised bits of pasture around châteaux, dairy, and neat-house, field flowers, a correspondent informed me, were growing as on native soil.

But illusion did not stop here. Legendary and historic Switzerland were represented. We gazed upon the monument commemorating Tell's heroic stand against the Austrian oppression, and on the hostelry in which Napoleon dined when crossing the Great St. Bernard. And to complete the whole, as a fictitious Mont Blanc and Matterhorn proved too much even for French ingenuity, the splendid panorama of the Bernese Oberland, made for the Chicago Exhibition, gave the untravelled an idea of what mountain scenery is like. No annexe of the Exhibition was more frequented than this, especially with the country-folk who flocked to Paris from all parts. Less striking pictorially than these two, and appealing rather to the reason than the eye was another feature of the section devoted to *Terre et Mer*, earth and water.

Here were shown the implements used for the first measuring of the globe. Hardly credible, it seems—yet such is the case—that one of the most important expeditions organized for this purpose is due to the Convention. In his "Popular Lectures on Astronomy" the late Astronomer-Royal writes :

"There is one measure worth naming on account of the extraordinary times in which it was effected. It was the great measure extending from Dunkirk to Barcelona, afterwards continued to the Balearic Islands. It is worth mentioning because it was done in the hottest times of the French Revolution. We are accustomed to consider that time as one purely of anarchy and bloodshed; but the energetic Government of France, though labouring under the greatest difficulties, could find the opportunity of sending out this expedition, and completed a work

to which nothing equal had been attempted in England."\*

And in the Champ de Mars, we had perhaps before our eyes the very implements employed in the expedition referred to, an expedition, be it remembered, due to Danton and his colleagues of the Convention a hundred years before.

One interesting object in this section was at the time a riddle awaiting solution. Has it since been solved?

This was the petrified wood brought from Arizona, a territory of the United States of America, bounded by those of Nevada, Utah, the Mexicos, and California, and whose inhabitants are partly semi-civilized Indians. The wood has every appearance of marble—few marbles, indeed, approaching the beauty and delicate gradations of colour here seen. Pink, orange, pale green, deep ruby red, pure ivory white, are here exquisitely blended, a highly-polished slab forming as beautiful a surface as can well be conceived. The specimens vary in size from a few inches to several feet in circumference, prices rising from five francs to several thousand. The most interesting point about this Arizona wood remains to be noted. Not all the naturalists of the New World in 1900 had discovered the precise species of tree thus transformed into exquisite marble.

I add that I possess a tiny specimen at the service of any geologist who can enlighten me on the subject.

Then there was a perfect Water Garden. Just behind the Grand Palais you came upon a lovely little domain—lakelets, pools, and rocks given up to water lilies and other lovely plants that float on water or

\* Sir George Biddle Airy, 1866.

love its precincts. The entire arrangement was charming, and as every plant was labelled, a stroll here was as instructive as it was captivating to those of a botanical turn. This exquisite little water garden doubtless encouraged the taste for aquatic plants, so beautiful alike in form and colour and so decorative as a part of gardening.

And now to turn to what was after all the most striking fact about the Exhibition, namely its educational and ethical sections. Here was a case which should have been headed by Solomon's admonition—"Consider the ant and be wise"—Lord Avebury's famous work turned into an object lesson for grown-up children. As yet Fabre's minute studies of insect life, fully described later on, had not won for him a world-wide reputation. Crowds of spectators were always gathered round the afore-mentioned glass cases perpendicularly placed and showing the different kinds of ants at work. Each miniature settlement was explained by cards. The thought struck me that most probably an exhibition season or two would demoralize the ants, who, like other "exotiques" were here on show, and only bogus strugglers for life. How long it would take to reverse La Fontaine's fable and turn the ant into an idler and a parasite perhaps Fabre could have told us.

In the section devoted to hygiene and social science we came upon a pathetic group, blind men and women from the ateliers of Argenteuil, quietly pursuing their crafts amid the perpetual come-and-go of sightseers. Exquisitely made baskets, brushes, bags, and other articles were here made and offered for sale—doubtless those sightless workers vicariously learning a good deal, with the inner eye peopling

the Babel around them. The education of the blind here illustrated was of deep interest. And let it not be forgotten to-day. As our Wilberforce was the deliverer of the slave, so was a Frenchman the good angel of the blind. It is to Louis Braille (1809-1854) accidentally blinded at the age of three, that his afflicted brethren owe the consolation of consolations, the world of books. By means of the Braille type, to be mastered we are assured in fifteen days, the sightless can not only read but write!

And to-day an invention as great as printing itself has made the round of the civilized world. In Egypt, blind readers can earn a good livelihood by reading the Koran at funerals and other ceremonies. In China there are many blind persons, and an adroit member of the Scotch Bible Society's Missionaries, named Murray, has adapted the Braille system for use in Chinese.

But if the spectacle of those craftsmen and craftswomen was pathetic, how much more so was another object lesson, this time conveyed by similitudes, not by living figures. The madman rattling his chains belonged to pre-Revolutionary France, and was one of the most hideous blots on the *ancien régime*. We were here taken back to the lunatic asylum of a century and more ago, with pitiless realism being portrayed the victims of dementia as they were then treated, life-like figures, naked and chained, huddled together in a dark, bare dungeon. And most appropriately is this scene given in the Paris section, for it was in Paris, and also during the hottest time of the Revolution, that the madman's chains were knocked off, the whip taken from his keeper, and by kindness and rational treatment he was soon sitting

“clothed and in his right mind.” But the strangest part of this history is yet to come. It was Couthon, the would-be destroyer of recalcitrant Lyons, who suggested a demonstration of the new treatment before the Convention, and it was Couthon and his colleagues who introduced the modern system into the lunatic asylums throughout France. Truly has the historian of the Revolution averred: “The Terror was the epoch of grand ideas.” Was not a mad English King flogged later than that time?

This was held in the Petit Palais of which a word or two further on.

It was really worth while to make the journey to Paris for the sake of the motor cars and the captive balloons alone. Here we had a foresight of the locomotion by land and air of the future. The exhibition of French automobiles in the Section of the Ville de Paris showed us every imaginable variety of horseless vehicle, and after a little while one began to realize that a horseless brougham, victoria, landau, dog-cart, or chaise might be not only a most convenient and comfortable, but a really elegant thing. Nor did we find multitudinous shapes and styles only, but also an indulgence in colour especially suited to dull grey atmospheres. The hue of the car, moreover, made up for the missing colour of the horse. And if the noise of these rapid conveyances is annoying, how much more bearable is it to humane ears than the cracking of whips! A few years hence and we felt that without doubt this street nuisance of Paris would disappear altogether. “The cart-horse will be a grievance of the past,” we said, and so it has turned out.

The automobile may indeed be said to date from



this period. In the great dictionary of Hartzfeld and Darmsteter, published before this date, the names of automobile, and of course autobus, do not occur. Amongst other educational exhibits let me name that of the book, "L'Histoire du Livre." Here we have a compendium of bibliographical history from the earliest beginnings until our own time. Printing, illustration, binding, advertising, are put before us in all their stages, the bird's-eye view being marvellously arranged. The faculty of generalization is eminently a French one, and each of these retrospective sections was a triumph of method, arrangement, and decoration, the attractive part of the shows never for an instant being lost sight of. From this point of view all nations had here much to learn.

For art-lovers and æsthetes what a feast was here—and what staggering surprises! Where, for instance, should we look for taste and artistic feeling if not in the Italian section, and where for *naïveté* and crudeness if not from Norway and Sweden? The exact contrary was the case. Whilst showiness and even an approach to triviality characterized Italian decorative art, that of northern regions showed delicacy and refinement. Italian exhibits in terra cotta made a poor figure beside the exquisite *faïence* from Sweden, and it was gratifying to learn that the little *chefs d'œuvre* in grey and white porcelain sold largely and at high prices.

The *ne plus ultra* of tissues was reached by Greece. Few visitors to the Exhibition missed the pretty little Greek Pavilion and its cases of dress fabrics. Light as gossamer, silky as thistledown, unimaginably dainty in hue, the muslins, gauzes, call

them what we will, formed ideal material for summer or evening wear. Certain shades of mauve and yellow were inventions in colour. Of equal beauty and finish was a case of point lace, exhibited by the head mistress or superior of a girls' school. Neither the far-famed Alençon nor Venetian point outdid these specimens of the lace-maker's art. And equally striking in quite another way were the rich embroideries in silk and gold, handiwork of modern Penelopes and their maidens. Indeed, the smaller states often showed a marked supremacy over the larger. I well remember much coveted carpets from Serbian looms, thickest, softest, velvety pile with an oriental gorgeousness of colour subdued by matchless taste. How I longed for a long purse amid these and other treasures from that brave little kingdom!

And next to the English Manor House in the *Rue des Nations*, the structures of Finland and Greece carried the palm. The picturesque little structure of the former in pine wood was symbolically decorated with pine cones, squirrels, and owls, all so plentiful on Finnish soil, whilst inside were shown boat-building and fishing-tackle. From this charming little building we turned to the numerous representations of Finnish scenery in the Russian section of the Grand Palais. Most curious and romantic were the scenes, dark blue seas and brilliant autumn foliage, with quaint domestic bits, the whole very characteristic.

Among the historical exhibits of greatest interest was a plan with some remains of the Algerian Pompeii, the Roman city Timgad that had been quite recently unearthed. Timgad, now easily visited

by the tourist, is the Thamagas of Trajan, built A.D. 100 and the scene of the Donatist schism described by Gibbon in his third volume. Its complete submergence is attributed partly to earthquake and partly to the accumulation of alluvium caused by torrential rains. Since 1900 excavators have unearthed many buildings, among them villas, a Christian church, a Roman temple and a superb portrait of Virgil in bas-relief, and all being more or less in good preservation. Further on I particularize on this subject.

In the Hygiene Section of the City of Paris was the most historic bath in the world—namely, the identical one in which the Angel of Assassination, as Lamartine called Charlotte Corday, did Marat to death. A careful examination somewhat alters one's views of the deed and the doer. Marat's bath is a battered vessel of zinc, somewhat resembling an old-fashioned cradle. Therein taking his ease, the bather's body would be imprisoned as in a vice. However much we may sympathize with the Girondins and their aspirations, the sight of this death-trap destroys any sympathy we may before have felt with their champion and avenger. And as we all know now, or might do so if we turned to authorities on the subject, poor misguided Charlotte Corday in killing Marat only helped to bring about the Terror. Just as acted another noble, but even more misguided woman, Madam Roland, who never forgot Danton's personal slight, and her implacable hatred of that great man prevented a political truce that would probably have saved France from a Napoleon!

Yet may be mentioned one or two more reminders of that epoch in French History which evoked

from Fox the ejaculation, "By how far is this the greatest event in history and by how far the best!"

In the same section is a souvenir of Carlyle's "sea-green incorruptible," Robespierre's cravat, a band of white muslin having tiny folds, and yellow with age. Who knows how many times this bit of muslin may have been lovingly starched and ironed by the sisters to whom Robespierre was so dear? Of more pathetic interest were some trinkets worn by Lucille Desmoulins on her way to the scaffold, that gentle Lucille whose story has been familiarized by the delightful pen of the late M. Jules Claretie. Among other relics of this stormy period was shown a Revolutionary drum of well-worn appearance, that may have summoned volunteers to the enlisting tent, or—who knows?—stifled the last utterance of the unhappy Louis XVI. With regard to that silencing of the doomed King on the scaffold, M. Duruy, himself no partisan of the Revolution, observes in his "History of France" that the Revolutionaries herein only followed the example of the *ancien régime*. Just as beating drums drowned the King's voice at the foot of the guillotine, so had the dying protests of Protestant pastors, condemned to death far more horrible, been silenced by the soldiers of a Christian King.

A case of pocket weapons carried us back to St. Bartholomew and the League. The murderous implements here collected showed that Ravailiac, like William Tell, had taken care to provide himself with duplicates in case a first attempt should fail. The knife which robbed France of its greatest and most estimable King is not identified, but the

separate objects have a melancholy interest for students. "They are determined to have my life," again and again had said the gay Gascon of his enemies, the Jesuits, and with the gloomiest forebodings he set out for that fatal drive to the Arsenal. What with portraits, costumes, and other memorials, French History was indeed made to live, here reconstructed before our eyes.

Before taking leave of the Exhibition proper, I will mention an Imperial Exhibit—that of the present Kaiser.

To art-lovers few collections of the Champ de Mars were more suggestive than these. As is well known, Frederick II. was a liberal patron of French art, and now for the first time were exhibited old French masters, the Lancrets, Watteaus, and Paters, spoils of war from his descendants' Palace at Potsdam. The Pater series was a revelation to most English visitors, that delightful artist being little known among ourselves. But we had also the setting of the pictures—in other words, the furniture of the rooms in which they hung. Here we were compelled to be critical. This German reproduction of eighteenth-century French furniture was far from successful, and the decoration, to say the least of it, left much to desire. And, as a whole, the German Section bore out Mr. Frederic Harrison's scathing criticism in his "The German Peril" (1915). As this great writer truly avers, the outcome of Prussian militarism has been intellectual sterility. All the great ideas and inventions of the last half-century are due to France, England, Italy, and America—evolution, aviation, wireless telegraphy, the telephones, and others. Lister's great discovery of

antiseptics, the yearly saving of myriads of lives, might be added to the list. In art and literature also Germany can boast of no great name. All is mediocrity. Especially has the artistic faculty been deadened by militarism. Visitors could but compare the poverty of the German Section with the genius displayed by small States.

Militarism, like Jesuitism, has stultified German faculties. "An individual Jesuit," wrote John Stuart Mill, "is to the utmost degree of abasement the slave of his order." And "At no epoch," writes a French historian of Ignatius and his followers, "have their ranks produced a philosopher, poet, orator, or even scholar of the first rank." An apt comparison, and which comes into my mind when recalling the wondrous exhibition of 1900, and the poor show of the Prussian Empire.

### III. SIDE SHOWS

I mentioned just now the Grand Palais about which a word of explanation is necessary. Some years before the French State and the Municipality of Paris had made what urchins call a "swop," in other words, the former giving the site of the elegant little palace on the Champs Elysées called *le Petit Palais* in return for that of the *Grand Palais*, a still more sumptuous edifice facing the *Cours la Reine*. During the exhibition both were turned to excellent account, being not only full of interesting exhibits, but the gardens in which they stood, as they do today, affording charming lounges. Connoisseurs in ceramic art had a treat in the *Petit Palais*. This was a case of the rarest faïence in the world, that

famous Henri Deux ware, of which only fifty-three specimens exist. Five of these may be seen in the South Kensington Museum, the rest are scattered in various museums and private collections, chiefly of France.

Who originated Henri Deux ware ?

A woman ! Just as the discoverer of Kaolin (the white clay used in the manufacture of porcelain in France) was a woman, so this inimitable ware owes its origin to a certain châtelaine who, under domestic bereavements, sought consolation in artistic patronage. It was in 1524, at her château of Oiron, in Poitou, that Hélène de Hangest, herself an artist of no mean talent, opened the manufacture called Oiron or Henri Deux ware. The lady's *collaborateurs* were her librarian and another gentleman, equally skilful. On the death of all three the pottery fell into inexperienced hands, Oiron ware soon after disappearing altogether. The name of Henri Deux, by which it is generally known, arose from the numerous pieces bearing the monogram of the Prince to whom the lady's son was greatly attached.

Another side-show was that of Retrospective Childhood, devoted to the "delightful task of teaching the young idea to shoot," a task not perhaps so delightful as the laziest of poets deemed. Certainly as Thomson was too indolent to pull a luscious apricot from its stalk, but ate it bit by bit from the wall, a boy's school-room would have been to him a veritable inferno. These representatives of infantine and childish life were not only entertaining but highly instructive. We had here as an object lesson, centuries of infantine history, toys, dress, furniture and portraits illustrating successive periods, some of

these being illustrations of our primitive forefathers made to live in Rosny's pages. Now we gaze upon a bauble that might have quieted Andromache's boy when vainly crying for his father. Now upon balls, marbles and counters which were perhaps handled by the "boys and girls playing in the streets" of Jerusalem mentioned by the Prophet Zechariah.

Nor less interesting was this educational show of modern times.

Here was a Japanese school-room, groups of little scholars modelled and coloured to the life, the scene, a writing lesson. All being done by similitude, we could not, unfortunately, watch an ambidextrous course, little left hands being made no less adroit than the right, according to Japanese fashion.

Among other sights was the big telescope. A first question put to visitors returning from the exhibition was sure to be, "Did you look through the big telescope?" But this wonderful instrument was not there to be looked *through*, but to be looked *at*, the heat, dust, and perpetual motion rendering practical use impossible.

Another attraction was the fascinating little balloon trip enjoyed by tens of thousands. And fittingly may be named in connection with it, the first to entrust himself to that unstable element, the air, Montgolfier the elder, who was led to his great discovery by the inflation and upward flight of his wife's hooped petticoat. The lady's skirt happened to be near her husband's gas retort during some experiments, hence the stupendous invention which, like that of printing and every other, has wrought evil as well as good to unseeing humanity. The Montgolfier brothers wisely did not risk their lives



without due precautions. The first aviators were a cock, a duck, and a sheep, who, like John Gilpin's steed, at what thing they had above their heads, must "have wondered more and more." It is highly gratifying to learn that the animals thus immortalized came back to *terra firma*, as their historian expresses it, without having suffered the slightest inconvenience. A similar experience lately happened to a pig (October, 1916). Poor piggy was wanted for the larder "somewhere in France," and had to be transported by air-ship, he also not suffering *le moindre dérangement*. And after a successful flight of three hundred and twenty-four feet in the presence of crowds (1783), well indeed might spectators shout, "Behold, man is lord over a new empire; see, he takes possession of a measureless domain, the domain of the air!"

And now a few words about the first Industrial Exhibition, an invention which has been quite erroneously attributed to the much respected Prince Consort.

Although suggested and planned during the Convention, the first Industrial Exhibition was not opened until 1798, that is to say, in the Year Six of the Republic, the third of the Directory, and during Napoleon's campaign in Egypt. Bald as are the accounts given in contemporary records, we may, nevertheless, compute the importance of the scheme and the success with which it was attended.

What a contrast is presented by the description of that first modest show and the splendid industrial pageants attracting hundreds of thousands from the four quarters of the globe since! Little, perhaps, did the projectors of the earliest gathering together of

competitors in the arts, manufactures, and sciences forecast the gigantic proportions these assemblages were destined to take. Yet as surely as the oak tree is the product of the acorn, so surely must the celebration, crowned by the Eiffel Tower, be regarded as the outcome of the Industrial Exhibition opened on the same ground nearly a hundred years before.

The site then selected, as in 1900, was the Champ de Mars. The building erected for the purpose was an amphitheatre, at the back of which was a square enclosure adorned with porticoes, and here the more precious objects were placed. No charge was made to exhibitors for space, and they were bound to send their own inventions or manufactures only. The number of exhibitors did not exceed a hundred and ten, a paucity to be set down to other causes than indifference or want of enterprise. The opening day was fixed for September 18, but circulars of invitation seem not to have been sent out till the preceding month.

The slowness of postal communication, and the difficulty of transport, must be taken into account. Moreover, the departmental system had only existed for a few years, and the times were troubled. All kinds of hindrances and obstacles stood in the way of inventors.

The opening was made an occasion of fête and holiday, and was attended with as much state as possible. The prominent figure in the ceremony was François de Neufchâteau, the originator of the scheme; in fact, the real inventor of industrial exhibitions.

In an eloquent oration he now set forth the

advantages of competitive industry, and made a touching allusion to the modesty of this experiment.

“I look around in vain,” he said, “for exhibits from many departments, the inhabitants of which hardly, perhaps, were apprised in time to send in contributions. But if an idea so truly patriotic excites regret among those unable this time to come forward as competitors, the purpose of the Government will be fulfilled, and the Year Seven of the Republic and the second Industrial Exhibition to be held then, will testify all that emulation can do in stimulating a free people, friendly to the industrial arts.”

During the exhibition, which lasted thirteen days, the porticoes were illuminated, orchestral concerts were given, and the period was one of prolonged gala.

Now we come to a very interesting record; that of the awards. We read of no medals being given, only honourable mention.

On the 29 Vendémiaire (October 20) the jury selected the following exhibitors as deserving approval.

Erard, Paris, for improvements in the harp. Leonard, Lyons, for wall-papers imitating muslin. Argand and Montgolfier, Paris, for hydraulic machines. William Robinson, for a spinning jenny. Whether this English exhibitor was a resident in Paris or not is not stated. Most likely he lived in France, as an international commerce was impracticable in the state of Europe.

Five other names occur, all of Parisian manufacturers and artisans, the inventions being respectively in printing, watch-making, and stuffs made from

horsehair and vegetable fibre. Industrial exhibitions were held on a much larger scale in 1801, 1802, and 1806. Two were held in the reign of Louis XVIII., one under Charles X., and three under Louis Philippe, namely, in 1834, 1839, 1844. The Prince Consort revived the idea, and the after-history of these colossal gatherings is familiar to all.

I have against my will been forced to mention the coldness existing between France and England in this great year. Fortunately all is now changed, let us hope for good, and that

"In storied page, in pageant and in song,  
Shall live the memory of King Edward's May."

The royal initiative and official action of 1903 inaugurated a new era. An understanding based upon "all-saving common sense," common interests, and the fitness of things has brought nations together. And of the many evidences of good-fellowship, the Franco-British Exhibition of 1908 was the most gratifying, and, when we review the past, surely the most astounding!

For what Utopian, what French or English dreamer, could have foreshadowed the Tricolour and Union Jack fluttering over a British-Franco Exhibition on the banks of the Thames? Truly, as the Greek tragedian wrote, "Things which we looked for are not accomplished, and unthought of events have the gods brought to pass."

#### IV. TIMGAD

I conclude this round with a brief account of the "Numidian Pompeii," alluded to in a former page. The accompanying illustration conveys but a feeble



TIMGAD, THE ALGERIAN POMPEII.

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notion of the Roman city disinterred in Algeria twenty years ago.

Timgad, or the Roman Thamugas, lies near the Aures mountains and twenty-two miles from Batna, which town is halfway by rail from Constantine to Biskra.

Little thought nineteenth-century English and American tourists as they sped through this region by express train, what marvels were in store for their successors.

Here in the immense solitude now rise splendours only matched by those of Pompeii, temples, colonnades, forum, triumphal arch statues, all open to the view, standing out against the burning African heavens.

In times of peace and plenty to "stand beside a city disinterred," in other words, to visit Timgad, were an easy pleasure or archæological trip enough. Enforcedly stay-at-home travellers to-day or in the future, may realize the short-lived glories of Trajan's Metropolis without fatigue or expense. As before a series of dissolving views, French artists and photographers\* lead us from scene to scene, monument to monument, each beautifully rendered.

First let us note the public buildings of this sumptuous city. Temples, theatres, baths, market-places, how do these lose interest by comparison with the library.

In the early years of Christianity, Thamugas had its Sir Thomas Bodley, a founder as generous as the great Oxonian a millennium and half later.

Not only can the noble proportions of the building

\* "Les villes d'Art célèbres, Carthage, Timgad, par René Cagnat de l'Institut." Paris. 4 francs. Laurens, 1912.

itself be accurately ascertained from the ruins, but fragments pieced together record the following inscription :—

“ By testamentary deed of Marcus Julius Quintianus Flavius Rogatianus, senator, bequeathed to the treasury of Thamugadi, his country, the library has been built at the cost of 400,000 sesterces ” (*i.e.* £3333 6s. 8d.).

Both without and within the library of the African patrician was of great elaborateness. From the arrangements of the interior perhaps modern architects might get ideas ! Economy of space seems to have been one object, decorativeness another. Thus statues, busts, bas-reliefs, and other commemorations of great writers are supposed to have filled the corridors. Hitherto none has been found.

It has been calculated that the central and side libraries altogether contained 23,000 volumes. This may seem a very small number, but the word volume did not in those days designate a handy octavo or small quarto, but large weighty tomes requiring a good amount of space. We must also remember the circumscribed meaning of literature before printing was invented.

Next in interest comes domestic architecture, the dwelling, the shop, the tomb. These wealthy citizens inhabited Greco-Roman villas of the Pompeiian type.

One house of especial splendour serves as a specimen.

This belonged to one Sertius, who at his own expense had built the neighbouring Market-place. His palace, for indeed it well deserved the name, was planned not only for comfort and enjoyment, but on hygienic principles. Hot and cold baths were



ornamented with statues of Æsculapius and Hygiea, god and goddess respectively of the healing art and of sanitation.

The magnificent apartments of the owners were paved with rich mosaics, and opened upon a courtyard, palms and flowers as in the East, grouped round a marble-encircled fountain.

The description and pictorial illustrations of this and other houses recall the "Arabian Nights," and to myself and other happy visitors, the Alhambra.

To understand the universal ruin that overtook Trajan's Numidian capital, we must now leave these fascinating pages and turn to those of an English historian. In his third volume, Gibbon describes with more than his usual irony the distracted condition of the Church in Numidia and Mauretania during the reign of Constantine, that is to say, two centuries later than Trajan. But the historian of historians when dealing with this subject does not mention Thamugas. "While the flames of the Arian controversy," he tells us, "consumed the vitals of the empire, the African provinces were infested by their peculiar enemies, the savage fanatics who under the name of circumcellions\* formed the strength and scandal of the Donatist party, followers of that African primate Donatus, who by his superior abilities and apparent virtues, was the firmest support of his followers."

Terrible is the picture of Northern Africa at this time, and again I cite Gibbon—

"The peasants who inhabited the villages were a ferocious race, who had been imperfectly reduced

\* Ascetics who wandered from house to house of the peasants (*circum-cellas*).

under the authority of the Roman laws; who were imperfectly converted to the Christian Faith, but who were actuated by a blind and furious faith in their Donatist teachers."

The horrors that ensued matched those of later religious wars, and are easily understood after reading Gibbon's pages.

In years to come the African Pompeii will no doubt attract visitors from all parts of the globe. The discoveries in Crete are hardly of more absorbing interest.

## CHAPTER II

### THE EMPRESS OF THE SAHARA

#### I

“Wide Afric, doth thy sun  
Lighten, thy hills enfold a city as fair  
As those which starred the night o’ the elder world?  
Or is the rumour of thy Timbuctoo  
A dream as frail as those of ancient times?”

TENNYSON, *Prize Poem*, 1825.

How will the next Exhibition of Industry in Paris eclipse all the marvels I have attempted to describe in the foregoing pages?

When the twentieth century opened the Third Republic already possessed a colossal France beyond seas. Over vast territories of Asia, Africa, America, and Oceania, the Tricolour proudly waved, whilst other regions owned French suzerainty, and during the last few years have been incorporated into the parent State. Slowly and piecemeal the vast aggregate has been formed. Just as the tiny kingdom of the first Capet, through successive centuries, has become the splendid hexagon we know to-day, so her fourteenth-century settlements in Senegal and Guinea were the beginning of a Greater and yet Greater France.

Sauntering through the ephemeral city, crowned by the Eiffel Tower and its environments, at every turn I was reminded of this fact.

As in a series of dissolving views, the mighty

Empire was personally and pictorially brought before my eyes. Each figure represented a remote but intensely patriotic France, each a proud and loyal foster-son, to-day for the first time visiting the land of his dreams.

Now I recognized a type familiar to me years ago, one of those magnificent Arab chiefs moving so stately and so entirely at ease in crowded salons of Algiers, alike governmental and private. With his compeers of African memory, he still wore long white burnous and turban, and looked every inch the accomplished gentleman and citizen of the world.

And now I would come upon the very antipodes of the majestic Sheikh, a negro minstrel from the banks of the Gaboon, the inner skin of his fore-fingers whitened by over-much fiddling; no pleasure-seeker he, but drawn to the great raree-show in quest of daily bread.

Then I would turn into the little Annamite Theatre and there imagine myself witnessing a second Morgiana, so oriental the entourage and the dancer. But I am sure I should have preferred the performance of the first. The *danseuse* before me, with her half-closed, almost invisible eyes, sinuous and suggestive movements of body, limbs and hands, truth to say, made no fascinating spectacle. Morgiana certainly danced the Forty Thieves to their doom, but her too skilful, too meaning, rival from the lately acquired French territory would not dance away evil dreams and temptations.

Exotics everywhere! Inside the exhibition proper, and alike in the gardens and side-shows, we were jostled by these at every turn. Not a moment but we were reminded of Colonial France.

And by no representatives here more strikingly than by the faultlessly-tailored black, brown and yellow complexioned mayors, deputy-mayors, justices of the peace, schoolmasters and the rest. One and all had come by official invitation and all wore either the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour, the blue of Public Instruction or the Academy, or the orange decoration of Agricultural Merit.

These proud and happy functionaries perhaps constituted *the* feature of the exhibition. For, more than any other class, did they not stand for French greatness, symbolize the principles from which that greatness had sprung?

In the old world, Athens had been the originator of citizenship. So in the modern, the motto, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," has bound millions upon millions to France by "hooks of steel."

## II

Alas! that I here dare not echo the poet's hope, May I be there to see!

The next Paris Exhibition—a next, assuredly may be counted on—must inevitably dwarf the pageant of 1900, and render almost insignificant its colonial features.

Hardly had the ephemeral city vanished, hardly had the twentieth century counted half a dozen years, when France became the Empress of the Sahara. Quietly and with little noise outside French territories, the Tricolour was hoisted over a third of Africa. And to-day the mythical Timbuctoo, subject of Tennyson's prize poem and of Thackeray's merry quatrain, is a progressive capital,

a cosmopolitan metropolis at which travellers can change their Bank of England notes !

The wondrous story has been told for us by an English soldier, and his volume is worthy to rank with Belt's famous "Naturalist in Nicaragua" and other classics of modern travel.\* Captain, now Lieut.-Colonel, Haywood had long wished, he tells us, to explore the ramifications of the Upper and Lower Niger, and from Timbuctoo cross the Sahara Desert, striking due north to Algiers. Being luckily quartered at Freetown, the capital of British Sierra Leone, he obtained six months' leave of absence, and on the 6th of January, 1909, set out on his dangerous and eventful journey.

No traveller could have been better equipped both mentally and bodily. Of splendid physical powers he must have been, or he would never have returned to tell the tale. A scientist and accurate observer, he took minute notes, alike topographical, geological, botanical, atmospheric, whilst as a lover of the chase, animal life particularly attracted him.

Gratifying is it to find that, almost without a hitch, his vast plans were carried out. On arriving at Algiers in June of the same year, he writes: "I had travelled 3758 miles across Africa, 1560 of which had been through the Sahara. The whole journey had occupied six months and two days."

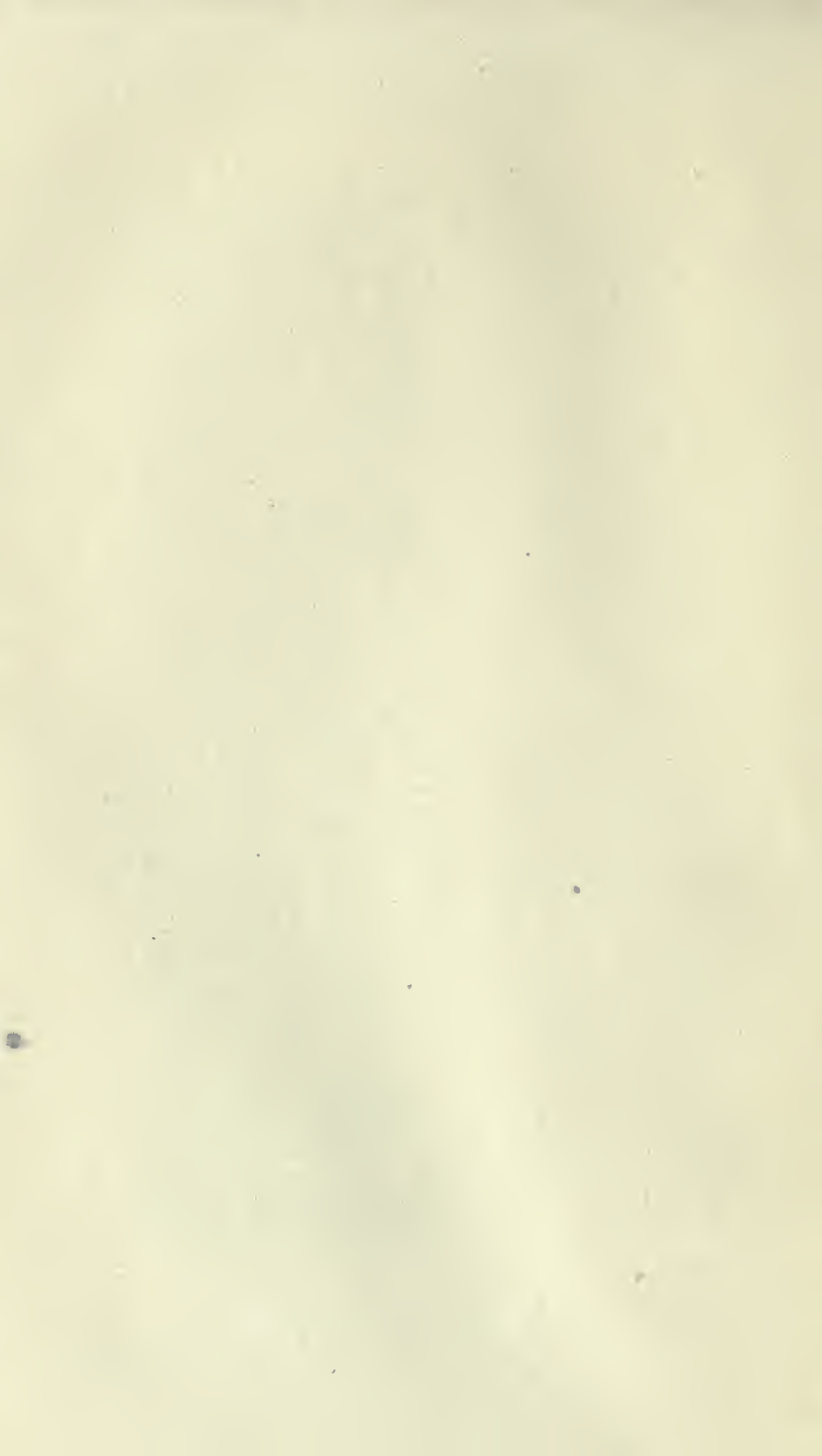
Equally gratifying is it to learn that the gallant Lieut.-Colonel remains on active service in Africa, and no matter where stationed, I trust that this tribute from a countrywoman will find him.

\* "Through Timbuctoo and Across the Great Sahara," by Capt. A. H. W. Haywood, F.R.G.S., Royal Artillery (Seeley, Service and Co., London, 1912).



TIMBUCTU, CAPITAL OF THE SAHARA.

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Those 3758 miles, from start to finish, had been through French territory, and from start to finish the Englishman was helped in every possible way by French officials, at stage after stage being welcomed in comfortable and cultured homes, wives, with the courage of their race, cheerfully presiding—not over firesides, none wanted in such a zone—but household gods, often hundreds of miles from a French sister in exile.

For the hitch alluded to I refer readers to the book itself, but will here dip into it halfway, introducing them to the capital of this vast empire in the writer's own words :—

“On ascending a slight rise in the road, Timbuctu,\* the mysterious city, suddenly came into view.

“As I saw it the scene spread out before me was a strange one. In a slight depression was the town itself, a conglomeration of sandy-brown buildings with flat roofs, while here and there a minaret obtruded its pointed summit. Most prominent of all were three mosques, one at the east, another in the centre, and the third at the west of the town. At the extreme western corner were three solitary palm-trees, behind which as I approached the sun was setting, and as its last rays caught the sombre-hued houses they were lit up, standing out more clearly from the surrounding desert which they so closely resembled.

“There was something rather fascinating about this quaint desert city, so solemn and subdued did it appear to be. But on the whole my feelings were those of disappointment, for I had expected a far more imposing-looking place. I had pictured to

\* Thus spelt throughout the author's pages.

myself a town of fine Moorish buildings, minarets, palaces and the bright appearance of an Oriental city. It had seemed to me that the influence of the Moorish occupation must be strongly impressed on Timbuctu, but this is not so to any extent. In point of fact, except for the three mosques just named, the general appearance of the town was very much like many others on my journey through Western Soudan, anyhow in the distance, Timbuctu's chief difference lies rather in her surroundings than in her individuality. She is alone in the desert. The desert surrounds her on every side."

Warmly welcomed by the Commandant and his colleagues, our traveller proceeded to change his drafts and "explore the sights of the place."

The word "Sight-seeing" at Timbuctu arouses a smile, but indeed this desert city possesses many sights of great interest. The houses of explorers, all those which have been identified since the French occupation, are kept in good repair. Among them figures that of our own countryman Major Laing, treacherously murdered by Mohammedan fanatics in 1826; of René Caillé, 1828; of Barth, 1853; of Lenz, an Austrian, 1880.

The chief trade of Timbuctu is salt, and although the city lies embedded in sand, and "it is nearly always blowing gales of sand," Captain Haywood assures us that it is a most healthy place, and that illness of any sort is uncommon. Doctors, we must suppose, are not needed, and who knows? In the future, invalids may thus vary Thackeray's lines:—

"Poor invalid, oh, would I were  
On the plains of Timbuctoo!"

The capital of the Sahara may prove a health





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A STREET SCENE NEAR TIMBUCTU.

resort of future generations. Folks live to an immense age in this dry climate, thus attaining what Mme de Sévigné declared should be man's allotted span, namely, a round hundred years.

Without affectation, in the simplest and therefore the most effective style, the gallant captain jots down his daily experiences, no striking characteristic of the world around him either animate or inanimate escaping his vigilant eye. Now he gives us a most diverting account of that surliest of domesticated creatures, the man-hating, unlovable but here indispensable camel, "who seems to have the characteristic of most desert nomads, who dislikes mankind cordially and takes no pains to conceal the fact." And here is a trait resembling that of cats. "I have known camels in the Sahara," writes our author, "who have not had anything to eat for several days, refuse food after having been ill-treated, preferring to die rather than to accept any favour from the person who had beaten them." We do not read of ill-treatment as a rule: patience and perseverance are the best methods in dealing with these four-footed emulators of Diogenes.

To differentiate the numerous tribes with which the explorer came in contact would appear a task of greater difficulty than the description of a camel: nothing daunted by names or numbers he hits off the characteristics of the Fulani, the Habbés, the Bosos, the Sonrhais, the Garangis and many others. One striking gift these people possess, rather it may be said that the desert has developed in them a superhuman independence of ordinary knowledge and helps to knowledge. Having once traversed hundreds of miles through trackless wastes to a given point

without compass, mile-stones or finger-posts, sands, sands, sands on every side, they will find their way to that spot again!

Vegetation and plant-life possessed a peculiar interest for our versatile traveller. Take, for instance, his little dissertation on dates.

At the oasis of Insalah he went for a ride in the palm groves, and we have the following facts about this vegetable manna in the desert. There are many varieties of the fruit, which is harvested in September or October. It is the finer kind that is familiar to ourselves. If rain falls in any quantity where dates are growing, the crop is ruined, it requires plenty of irrigation at the roots but not above. Nomads flock from all parts to the oasis, these hawkers carrying a camel-load of dates for sale farther south. Camels and ponies are fed upon dates.

Some bits of information here given us are quite startling, *renversant*, as the French say. Thus snow falls in the desert. At least Captain Haywood was so assured, and on good authority.

Of other little known facts he had proof at first hand. Amid these trackless wastes lie prehistoric remains, himself picking up arrow-heads and small axes. Indeed there is little doubt that instead of the wilderness being made to blossom as the rose, the Sahara exemplifies a reverse problem, and that ages ago it was not the barren waste of to-day.

With regard to the economic prospects of this vast territory, the Captain is by no means hopeful; but as a still greater traveller, the late Sir Henry Stanley, said—(the famous explorer's expression I give in tamer fashion)—“The Sahara will prove to

France a nursery of soldiers." And visitors to the next Industrial Exhibition in Paris will surely see a marvellous addition to the Colonial Army of the Third Republic, regiment upon regiment of splendid soldiers, whose fathers and grandsires were the fierce tribesmen mentioned in these pages.

Here is a vignette, the traveller and his escort being on the march—

"If it was a moonlight night I used to walk for several hours, but on a dark night walking was not so pleasant. The country here was unusually open, and it was possible to march, even on a moonless night, without fear of the camels coming to grief.

"It was a strange place this desert, and gave me a queer, eerie feeling. On all sides a death-like stillness prevailed; for hours, and sometimes for days we would walk without seeing a single soul. For miles there would be no signs of animal life, then suddenly a herd of gazelles would come into view, feeding on the scrubby grass; at the sight of the caravan away they would scamper, frightened at the unwonted sight of man."

And here is another striking description. The caravan was now at Kidal, where its chief was most hospitably entreated by the French officers stationed there. Kidal, be it added, lies halfway between Timbuctoo and the oasis of Insalah.

"When marching by moonlight the scene was indescribably beautiful. The white sand of the oued (or dried-up watercourse) in which we were walking, was lit up to look like a white sheet by the brilliant moonbeams; on all sides of us was this dazzling sheen spread over the surface of the ground, while in the distance one might have fancied there were the

waters of a lake, so silvery crystal did the sand appear. The rocky hills on the east and west caught the glint of the moon's rays, standing out sharply defined against the deep blue of the starlit sky. The jagged peaks, which were, perhaps, succeeded by a rugged ridge, running thus for miles into the far-off horizon, looked for all the world like the towers and crenellated battlements of some ancient fortress. The grandeur of the sight filled me with a sense of awe, and how many times did I not deplore my inability to sketch! On such a night the Sahara loses half its terrors. The arid nature of the landscape is concealed under the cloak of night, and softened by the gentle rays of the moon.

“Even when I was walking it used to get quite chilly towards midnight, and I longed for the comforting warmth of my coat, which had been stolen some time previously.”

Arrived at the oasis of Insalah, the traveller's worst hardships were over. Here he found a fine library well equipped with books on desert travel, and here he was welcomed by French comrades in arms.

“The last morning of my stay,” he writes, “I was the guest of the officers at *déjeûner*. I was much honoured at being the recipient of many kindly-expressed wishes from the good friends I had made there, and as they stated, it was rather a unique occasion for an English officer to be entertained in the Sahara by officers of the French Army. Many and fervid were the words in which the Commandant hoped for the continuance of the Entente Cordiale, and I could only reply that, judging from my experiences whilst travelling through the vast country



which was ruled under the French flag, there seemed little likelihood of the good feeling between our two countries not enduring for many years to come."

From this point to Ouargla, a stretch of 390 miles, traversed in fifteen days, the caravan reached civilization and our traveller's indescribable luxury of a proper bath; his tin travelling bath had proved so unwieldy an object on camel-back that he had presented it to a French official hundreds of miles behind.

From Biskra—pretty well known to English valetudinarians and artists—the Captain took train to Algiers, thence catching the first available steamer to Marseilles, where he arrived on the 11th of June after adventures perilous as Othello's own and hardly less captivating than those of Sinbad.

## CHAPTER III

A GREAT NATURALIST—J.-H. FABRE

### I. VILLAGE PEDAGOGUE AND SUB-PROFESSOR

I NOW introduce my notes on intellectual progress by three leading names, in each case the word "genius" may safely be used.

Supremely in the fields of science and nature study France leads the way. There lately died a nonagenarian hardly known by name outside immediate scientific circles, the simplest, least pretentious being imaginable, who will live in history with the Plinys of old and with the Darwins of modern times.

Three-quarters of a century ago, Michelet poetized natural, as he did political history, but maybe his volume ("L'Insecte," 1857) set Fabre upon the path which was to lead to a life-study and immortalize his name.

As have been so many, perhaps, most illustrious Frenchmen, the greatest naturalist of our time was peasant-born. He has told us that his parents were "ploughmen, sowers of rye, and cowherds," his childhood being spent amid the humblest surroundings. Jean-Henri Fabre, to-day of world-wide fame, was born in 1823, just seven years before, in a worldly sense, his more favoured neighbour, Mistral,





J. H. FABRE, "THE VIRGIL OF THE INSECT WORLD."  
*[To face p. 45.]*

the resuscitator of Provençal poetry, in both cases romantic surroundings developing the imaginative faculty.

Saint Léon, in the Haute Garonne, Fabre's birthplace, is a commune in the Rouergue, a lofty plateau of the Aveyron and ancient name of that Department. The district is locally known as a *seigle* or rye-growing area, the poor soil producing no other corn. The region had ample compensations for such a mind. Wide horizons, the blue Cévennes, the woods close by in which he gathered wild flowers and hearkened rapturously to the "soft notes of the bell-tinkling frog" (*Crapaud sonneur*)—all rural sights and sounds were to Fabre, educational, in philosophic phrase, formative.

As I know from my own wayfarings to and fro, the scenery of the Aveyron and its adjoining Department is delightfully varied and picturesque, and throughout the vast library of Fabre's works we see how much he owed to early environment.

Nothing is more erroneous than to label the author as an entomologist, pure and simple. Modesty itself, Fabre himself resented the designation. In a far larger sense is he to be numbered with his forerunners, the Amyots, the Fléchiers, the Méziers and D'Alemberts of Alphonse Karr's little biographical dictionary.\*

"One of the purest glories of France, admirable as a man, a great *savant*, a profound poet, the Virgil of the insect world"—such is Rostand's tribute, whilst another and equally distinguished writer, Romain Rollin, has even more happily bestowed

\* "La Vie de J.-H. Fabre," par Dr. G. V. Legros : Paris, Delagrave. "Les Paysans illustres.—Plutarque des compagnes," par M. Alphonse Karr. Paris, 1838.

upon the peasant-born naturalist this epithet: "The good magician, familiar with the language of the innumerable insects peopling the fields."

An apt scholar, a born mathematician, Fabre began to teach at a time when other youths enter upon their collegiate studies. At nineteen, provided with a teacher's diploma, we find him installed in the secondary school or college of Carpentras (Vaucluse), his salary being just £28 a year, and no pension awaiting him on superannuation. Two years later he married and having successfully passed the higher examinations in mathematics and physics, was appointed professor of the latter science at Ajaccio, with a stipend falling short by a few pounds of Goldsmith's immortal vicar's forty pounds a year.

His sojourn in Corsica proved a powerful stimulant to nature study. The rich flora of the island especially directed Fabre's attention to botany, and its shores to the study of shells, all the while, mathematical problems by no means being neglected. He tells us how the solution of one problem, this of his own setting, kept him awake for several nights. But roamings in the marshy plains of Corsica induced fever; he was obliged to return home and after a long and painful convalescence, was awarded a sub-professorial chair at the Lycée of Avignon. His nomination occurred in 1855. Fabre was now thirty-two, and this post he held for twenty laborious years, all the while receiving a lesser salary than at Ajaccio. Indifferent to worldly advancement, all his faculties bent towards one end, the whilom village schoolmaster had not been at pains to qualify himself for the highest University grades. He was content to remain a Bachelor of science and a *professeur adjoint*

or sub-professor. Adding to his miserable stipend by private lessons, lectures and later, literary earnings, he settled down.

For the first time he began to write for others as well as for himself. The minute observer, to whom the structure of a mite was no less interesting than that of a mammoth, now took up the pen. Two papers, to be mentioned further on, were followed by immediate recognition and honours. "These true *chefs d'œuvre* of scientific study," as his biographer calls them, brought him the Montyon Prize of the Institute, and in the "Origin of Species" Darwin describes the author and his future adversary as the "inimitable observer." Meantime his circumstances improved. The Lycée named him professor of geometry, with additional emoluments, the city that of Curator of the Municipal Museum, also a paid office. And meantime, the great naturalist neglected no domestic duties. An admirable husband and father, he supervised the education of his boys and girls, they in turn becoming not only his sympathizers but helpers. If ever a man was born to teach, it was Fabre. Deeply interested in the education of girls, it was of his daughter Antonia he often took counsel, asking her suggestions "on the chemistry of domestic economy from the conduct of washing day, to the preparation of daily soup, that indispensable *pot-au-feu*."

## II. HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH JOHN STUART MILL

In the eighties, Fabre's chemical experiments attracted the attention of the third Napoleon's great minister, the educationalist and historian, Duruy.

Himself a son of the people, his relations with the modest scientist and *savant* became more than cordial. At this time efforts were being made in France to replace the slow and primitive method of extracting dyes from madder by scientific methods. Here Fabre's long-continued, patient researches and fond dreams were suddenly brought to nought. The discovery of the coal-tar dye called Alizarin not only ruined his hopes, but for once and for all, the culture of madder throughout the Vaucluse.

When exploring this department just twenty-two years ago, a peasant said sadly to me—

“Madder, madame, used to pay our way alike in good seasons and in bad. We just manage to live nowadays, but when madder was cultivated it was our own fault if we did not lay by!”

Vineyards and other crops supplanted the wealth-giving *Rubia*, so-called from the blood-red dye it produces.

The interview with Duruy, however, brought Fabre honours which perhaps he esteemed lightly, and what was really dearest to his heart, encouragement in his life-work. The minister summoned him forthwith to Paris, the insignia of the Legion of Honour was straightway fastened to his breast, he was invited to the Tuileries, there being graciously received by the Emperor and his beautiful wife, and—offered the post of tutor to the ill-fated Prince Imperial! An accident, to which Fabre attached much more importance than decorations and Imperial courteousness, occurred about this time.

One day by chance he met John Stuart Mill in the museum Requier (founded by a local naturalist of that name), a room of which had been set aside



for his lectures. After their first interview, the philosopher received him at his home, now only cheered by the presence of his devoted daughter-in-law, Helen Taylor. Mrs. Mill had died a year before. The two men became, if not friends in the ordinary acceptation of the word, at least close associates. "In Fabre's company," writes M. Legros, "Mill resuscitated his early interest in flowers and shrubs and joined the naturalist in his rambles."

"Always sad, reserved, distant, he seldom spoke, but Fabre comprehended that such apparent impassibility veiled rigorous uprightness of character, an intimacy to be relied upon, a capacity of singular devotion and rare warmth of heart.

"Thus they sauntered side by side in the open country, each thinking his own thoughts, each as completely apart from the other as if they were treading parallel but separate roads."

Whilst the poetry of nature, especially flowers, captivated Fabre, to Mill, botany was interesting as a study of species and classifications. How accurate and minute were his observations is testified by illustrations in his famous work upon Logic.

What a pity that we have no portraiture, not so much as a snapshot of this extraordinary pair, the peasant-born naturalist, greatest observer of his epoch, the thinker, equally foremost among his contemporaries!

It was in 1870 that I heard Mill speak in London on Woman's Suffrage, and at the time I thus worded my impression of him, an impression I should modify were I writing to-day: "... His countenance, in its look of final conviction, of a thinker whose mind upon weighty subjects was irrevocably made up, from

whose ethical verdicts there was no appeal, had something awful, even sublime, in its rigidity and marble-like implacableness. You felt, as you gazed, that chance, destiny, inclination and human weakness exercised no sway whatever over this man, that here were the immovable purpose, iron will and unflinching self-oblivion of which, for good or for evil, the world's umpires and leaders are made."

Yet so awe-inspiring a personality was capable of the most tender affection and delicate kindness. When dire misfortune overtook the companion of these rambles, when driven from Avignon by the reactionary cabals which had not spared his powerful friend and protector Duruy, it was Mill who set him on his feet again.

Fabre took refuge at Sérignan, near Orange, but at this time France was in the throes of invasion, the sale of his books stopped, the modest sums obtained by lectures also failed him, and, meanwhile, domestic expenses had increased. Sore beset, he had recourse to Mill. The philosopher was just then in London, having been returned for the constituency of Westminster, but letters followed him, and by return of post, Fabre received a draft for three thousand francs. The money was sent, as a matter of course, in that quiet, unobtrusive manner that leaves no room for false shame. Mill did not even ask a formal acknowledgment of the loan. To the honour of the other it must be mentioned that, before his generous friend died suddenly two years later, a part of the loan had been repaid.

Pasteur had long before visited Fabre, and in "L'Insecte" is given a lively account of the interview. The host introduced his celebrated compeer

to what to him was a novel subject, namely, the cocoon and study of the silk-worm, prelude to one of Pasteur's greatest achievements.\*

"Ignorance has something good about it," wrote Fabre, à propos of this visit. "An inquirer entering any new field free from prejudice and foregone conclusion is better off than one who is a neophyte."

What indeed his great fellow-walker about Avignon calls "halfness" or semi-knowledge, in fine, a smattering, is fatal to sound judgment.

### III. THE DISCOVERER AND HIS WORK

*De fimo ad excelsa* was Fabre's motto, and throughout his marvellous incursions into a hitherto unknown world, his rule was to stick to realities, to infer nothing, to record facts only. Hence the value of his six volumes on insects. Therein he tells us only what he had learned with his own eyes. Novel and enthralling as are his pages as a whole, it must be confessed that many of the revelations therein are far from agreeable reading.

The feline torture inflicted upon a mouse before being eaten by his captor, the methodical and epicurean way in which a thrush dines off a snail and a spider dismembers a fly for a meal, the chasing and gobbling up of fish by each other in the sea, initiate the simplest of us into the tragedy of Nature, the daily hourly butchery, vivisection and cannibalism which are the fixed rules and not the exceptions throughout the animal world.

We must study Fabre to realize how merciless here is instinct, by what barbarous and subtle

\* I allude to his triumphant war waged against the phylloxera.

means is attained its sole, undivided object, that of propagation.

Take for example the *Sphex*, our author designating by the Greek generic name an especial species of wasp.

This horrible insect, garotter and hypnotizer in one, carries off a worm, caterpillar, or grasshopper, paralyses it with a sting in some non-vital part, thus providing wholesome food for the expected larva. The moment arrived, during two whole weeks the female wasp cuts up her prey bit by bit for her numerous progeny, taking care to leave the vital portions intact to the last. Otherwise before the feast were ended the meat would become uneatable.\*

Turning from this and many another equally repellant story, we come upon entertaining incidents.

Thus a tiny parasite of the mason bee, a "mere gelatinous speck," and as usual by Fabre given the Greek name of *Leucospis*, well knows that there is never more than room and nourishment for one intruder in a cell. So, no sooner has the new-comer entered its abode to be, than the hardly visible creature during several days hunts high and low, inspects every corner and every approach before settling down here to deposit her eggs and find honey for her brood.

A wild bee, here called the *Chalicodome*, a wasp called the *Cerceris*, carried blindfold miles from their native haunts and set free in regions unknown to them, will find their way back, often after a considerable absence. "It is not a feat of memory," writes

\* These chapters have been translated into English under the title of "The Hunting Wasp." London : Hodder and Stoughton.

Fabre, "but a special instinct that here guides them, and they act by virtue of faculties we cannot pretend to explain."

The eyes of the wasp mentioned above are so microscopic, he tells us, as to distinguish objects absolutely invisible to human sight even when aided by optical instruments.

The defect, although in one sense the cardinal value, of Fabre's works, is their extraordinary exactness. There is almost an eeriness in his description, say, of spiders—the courtship of the male, the thoroughly carried-out duties of his partner—acting as midwife, nurse, educatress, in one.

But Fabre knew well enough that the mind, in Montaigne's words, must have its back-shop, its sanctum and temporary retirement from life-work, however engrossing. The peasant-born scientist understood the value of mental culture. After the day's labours he would turn to favourite authors, poring over his favourite Virgil—always read in Latin—over La Fontaine, La Bruyère, Paul Louis Courier, Béranger and Michelet. Strangely enough neither Racine nor Molière attracted him. Buffon's too rhetorical style, he disliked. The only naturalist for whom he seems to have felt strong sympathy was the Swiss-French, Audubon.

And no less happy than this famous fellow-worker, Fabre's achievements were crowned ere it was too late. Cuvier's verdict on "The Birds of America," delivered before the French Academy of Science in 1828, "the most magnificent monument which has as yet been erected to ornithology," forestalled Audubon's death by nearly a quarter of a century.

The apotheosis of the other came when he had long over-passed the Psalmist's allotted span.

Fabre had reached his eightieth year when a grand fête was given in his honour. He had now become bodily feeble, indeed he could only walk with the support of an arm, and his once fine eyesight had become impaired by excessive use. Cheerfulness of spirits he still possessed, and was thus able to realize and enjoy the honours now heaped upon him.

The highest that the Third Republic can bestow on a civilian was already his; for forty years the Red Ribbon had decorated his homely garb. But on this great day he received the higher grade of that Order and not only national homage, not only the tribute of his most distinguished contemporaries, but what perhaps he valued beyond all these, a popular ovation. He woke up to the consciousness of popularity to hear—

“ . . . the people's voice,  
The proof and echo of all human fame.”

The banquet given in the *café* of Sérignan, his home of so many years, was followed by glorification after glorification. Greetings from the *Institut* were delivered by a foremost member, M. Edmond Perrier, himself a naturalist and author of many valuable works.

Next came the presentation of Fabre's portrait, a medallion in gold, the profile in bas-relief being the work of M. François Sicard, the well-known sculptor.

Among friends and admirers unable to be present was Romain Rollin, the author of *Jean Christophe*, who had thus written to the Committee of the fête:—  
“ J.-H. Fabre is one of the Frenchmen I most admire.

I have long read and loved his books, as true *chefs-d'œuvre* as are works of art."

Edmond Rostand, the author of the plays *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *L'Aiglon*, wrote as follows, his letter being read at table:—"Prevented from being present, my heart is with you, met to-day to do honour to one of the purest glories of France, the great *savant*, the genial and profound poet, the Virgil of the insect world, the noble figure with the black felt hat who has made Sérignan an appendant to Maillane" (the home of Mistral).

Little wonder that the octogenarian could not articulately express himself. Oblivion, cares, hardships, had moved him not at all. Recognition brought joyous tears, others weeping with him.

Fabre died in October, 1915.

## CHAPTER IV

### PREHISTORIC ROMANCE

THE celebrated brothers, Joseph Henri and Justin Bèox, whose pseudonym is Rosny, were born respectively 1856-1859, and were educated at Brussels. *La Guerre du Feu*\* was preceded by *Vamireh*, *Eryimat* and numerous novels dealing with modern or contemporary society.

But it is as prose poets taking in hand unrecorded æons that these writers have attained unique fame. They have peopled their canvases with human beings when indeed time was not, that dim, far-off yesterday when, in the words of the old Greek poet, translated by Mrs. Browning:—

“ . . . Men first beholding beheld in vain,  
And hearing heard not, but like shapes in dreams,  
Mixed all things wildly down the tedious time,  
Nor knew to build a house against the Sun  
With wicketed sides, nor any woodcraft knew,  
But lived like silly ants, beneath the ground  
In hollow caves unsunned. There came to them  
No steadfast sign of winter, nor of spring  
Flower-perfumed, nor of summer full of fruit.  
But blindly and lawlessly they did all things. . . .  
If a man  
Fell sick, there was no cure, nor esculent,  
Nor chrism, nor liquid, but for lack of drugs  
Men pined and wasted.”

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\* “*La Guerre du Feu*,” par J.-H. Rosny. Collection Illustrée. Pierre Lafitte and Cie.



Not in these pages do we come upon Lilliputians, Brobdingnagians, Houyhnhnms, Sindbad's one-eyed cannibal and old Man of the Sea. These are mere figments, playful creations for the nursery compared to the monstrosities encountered by the hero of *La Guerre du Feu*, the most popular of the Rosny series. Mammoths, besides which the tallest man looked a midget, lions, bears and elephants, gigantic forefathers of historic races, embryonic and misshapen human forms, hideous red dwarfs, blue-skinned creatures, half men, half apes, and more hideous than all, men without shoulders, a cylindrical type dying out—all these figures are depicted with so much force and simplicity that we seem to gaze upon them in a series of dissolving views. Greatly daring, I have ventured upon rendering some passages into English, describing our primeval ancestors, of whom it is written in the Bible, "There were giants in those days."

## I. THE COUNCIL

"The tribe of the Oulhamr fled during the terrible night. Demented by fatigue and suffering, nothing seemed to matter but their supreme calamity. Fire was dead: from generation to generation, four women and two warriors had kept it alive in three separate enclosures, by day and night plying it with aliment. Throughout the densest obscurity, its flame had been sheltered from rain and flood, emitting a bluish light in the morning and a red glow at night. That dread aspect had held aloof alike the Lion, Bear, Mammoth, Tiger and Leopard, its flame had protected man from the whole world. Fire represented every

satisfaction, the savoury odour of meat, the sharpened weapon, the broken stone, the warmed limbs, personal safety alike in pathless waste, forest and cavern. Fire stood for father, guardian and rescuer, yet fiercer even than the Mammoth when escaping from its hold and devouring herbage and trees.

“Fire was no longer to be had! The foe had destroyed two of its asylums, in the third, during their flight, they had seen the feeble flicker gradually wane, lose colour and diminish. So faint it grew that soon heat failed to kindle the dry grass within reach. Then it swayed to and fro like a sick animal, the wind stirring a heap of ashes. Fire had died out.

“Despoiled, the Oulhamr hurried forward. No stars were shining in the darkness; following their guides now they gained higher ground. Three generations of tribesmen had made the same journey, but never under black heavens. Day was dawning when they approached the Savanna.

“Dim rays penetrated the chalky heights, the wind rose, stirring the dark bituminous pools; water-plants opened their buds, lizards just moved amid arrow-heads and yellow lilies. A heron rose, settling on a burnt-out stump. The plain was before them veiled with rosy vapour. . . . The full light of morning now fell upon marshland and waste, bringing joy with it and refreshment to plants. Silvery streaks played upon the bluish-green islets, pale gold and pearly tints coloured the schistous rocks, a soft breeze stirred alder and willow. And now white and yellow water-lilies brightened the ponds, whilst around blossomed loosestrife and spurge, sundew and orpine, willow-herb, cuckoo-pint and flax, water-hens

and dabchicks plashed among the reeds and grasses, above fluttered cranes and plovers, whilst in the creeks pike might be seen pursuing the tench. The last dragon flies of the season zig-zagged like shafts of lazulite.

“Faouhm, the leader of the tribe, raised his arms towards the sun with a prolonged groan. ‘What will the Oulhamr do without Fire?’ he shouted. ‘How will they exist in the plain and in the forest? Who will protect them against the darkness and cold of winter? They will have to eat raw flesh and bitter herbs, they will be no longer able to restore their torpid limbs, the spear will remain blunt. The lion, the bear, the tiger, the hyena will devour them during the night. Which of you will recover Fire? That one shall be the brother of Faouhm; he shall receive three portions of the chase, four portions of spoil; he shall receive as his partner my sister’s daughter, Gammla, and if I die, the club of command.’

“Then arose Naoh, son of the Leopard, and said—

“‘Give me two swift-footed warriors and I will recover Fire from the sons of the Mammoth or the devourers of men who hunt by the banks of the Double Stream.’

“Faouhm did not eye the speaker favourably. Naoh was the tallest man of his tribe, his shoulders still broadened, no other was so agile or so hardy. He had overcome Moûh, son of Urus, whose strength approached his own. For these reasons Faouhm feared him, allotting dangerous enterprises, exposing him to death.

“Naoh did not like his chief, but he was always

moved by the sight of Gammla, slender, alert, mysterious, with hair like foliage. As his wife she would ever be gently treated, the change wrought by fear on any countenance being distasteful to him. In earlier days Faouhm would have ill received Naoh's offer, but the present disaster made him compliant. Perchance this alliance with the son of the Leopard might prove advantageous, and if not he could bring about his destruction. . . . Turning to the young man, he said—

“‘Faouhm has only a word to say. If thou bringest back Fire, thou shalt have Gammla and without ransom. Thou wilt become the son of Faouhm.’

“With arm upraised, slowly, boldly, and disdainfully the words were uttered. Then he made a sign to Gammla. She moved forward, trembling, her changeful eyes full of fiery tears.

“The chief's rough hand was laid on her shoulder.

“‘Which daughter of men has a finer frame? She can carry a hind on her shoulder, can march without lagging from sunrise to sunset, can endure hunger and thirst, can dress the skins of beasts, can swim across a lake. She will bear imperishable offspring. If Naoh brings back Fire, he will come and take her without a gift of axes, horns, shells or furs!’ . . .

“Straightway sprang up Aghoo, son of the Aurochs, himself hairiest among his tribe. With fierce jealousy he spoke—

“‘Aghoo will conquer Fire. With his brothers he will lie in wait for our enemies beyond the river. Either he will be struck by spear or hatchet, by teeth of tiger, claw of lion, or he will restore Fire to

the Oulhamr, without which they are helpless as stags and antelopes.'

"Nothing was seen of the speaker's face but heavy lips and murderous eyes. Short stature exaggerated his long arms and high shoulders, his whole being suggesting dogged, merciless strength. None as yet could measure his strength—it had not been pitted against that of Faouhm, Mouh or Naoh; all knew it to be enormous. In no pacific contest did he ever take part—all those who had challenged him had either been laid low, had lost a limb or the head with which to adorn his trophies.

"With two brothers hairy as himself, and several women, he lived aloof from the tribe, the latter reduced to tyrannous slavery. Whilst the Oulhamr were pitiless towards themselves and furious towards their foes, excess of these virtues among Aghoo and his people made them feared. . . .

"Faouhm detested Aghoo no less than Naoh, and he dreaded him more. The three hirsute brothers seemed invulnerable; whoever waged war with them was sure to perish.

"Again and again had the chief vainly sought their alliance. Incapable of trusting others, either in word or deed, angered by advances, understanding no other flattery but terror, they remained aloof and immured.

"Faouhm, equally defiant and equally fierce, possessed nevertheless the qualities of a commander. With rugged deference he replied—

"'If the son of the Aurochs restores Fire to the Oulhamr, Gammla will be his without ransom; he will become the second man of the tribe, whom all warriors will obey in the chief's absence.'

“Aghoo heard, his eyes full of menace.

“‘The daughter of the swamp will belong to a son of the Aurochs. He who lays hand upon her will be destroyed.’

“Infuriated, Naoh took up the challenge.

“‘She will belong to the destroyer of Fire,’ he cried.

“‘Aghoo will restore it!’ vociferated the other.

“The two men confronted each other. Hitherto no enmity had existed between them. Conscious of their strength, without common interests and without a sense of rivalry, they had never hunted together and had seldom met. Faouhm’s speech aroused mutual hate.

“Only the day before Aghoo had not noticed Gammla as she passed him on the waste, now he regarded any competitor for her hand as his mortal enemy. No necessity was there for him to make resolutions. Passion stirred every fibre.

“Naoh well understood this, and instantaneously, with the right hand seized his spear and with the left his hatchet. By Aghoo, silent, morose, formidable, stood his brothers, both strangely resembling him, but fiercer, stronger, suppler than their elder, their eyes scintillating.

“The trio, agog for murder, glared at Naoh; but a tumult arose among the tribesmen, even those who blamed Naoh for not falling upon the other, were averse to his destruction. He had promised to bring back Fire, and was known to be fertile in resources and indefatigable and skilled in keeping the feeblest flames alive. He was trusted and looked upon as a harbinger of good fortune.

“Aghoo also was patient, cunning, and enterprising. The Oulhamr recognized the advantage of

two-fold effort. Partisans of the pair ranged themselves ready for a fight.

“But the son of the Aurochs wanted no contest to-day.

“‘Shall our tribe disappear from the surface of the world?’ he exclaimed. ‘Do the Oulhamr forget how our men of war have been destroyed by the enemy and by floods? Every male who can wield the hatchet and the spear must live. Naoh and Aghoo are valiant hunters and alike in the forests and throughout the Savanna, if one of these should perish it is as if four had died. The daughter of the Swamp shall serve the restorer of Fire. The tribe wills it.’

“‘So shall it be,’ shouted a chorus of harsh voices in concourse.

“And formidable alike in numbers and in bodily strength, the women echoed the cry. ‘Gammla shall belong to the recoverer of Fire!’

“Aghoo shrugged his rough shoulders. He execrated the crowd, but was too politic to brave it. Confident of forestalling Naoh, he held back, awaiting the duel that should surely prove fatal to his rival.

## II. THE COUNTRY OF THE WAH

“Naoh and his companions watched the approach of the horde, a woman at their head. He asked himself whether these did not belong to the wretched race who knew not how to warm their limbs in bitter cold, to disperse the darkness of night, and to cook their food. Goûn, his aged companion, averred that such hordes did exist, not endowed with the wolf’s instinct, possessed with only rudimentary organs of

scent and hearing. Overcome with compassion at the thought he determined to show them how fire might be kept alive. Suddenly he caught sight of a female figure bending down amid the willows and sharply striking one stone against another. Soon sparks shot forth, these were followed by a little red flame, quickly spreading along the dry grasses, then tuft after tuft blazed, the woman blowing upon them softly. Rapidly, brushwood and branches became alight.

“The Son of the Leopard stood transfixed. In astoundment he asked himself, ‘The Wah, the men without shoulders, do they then hide fire in stones?’

“Approaching the woman he tried to make her talk; she turned away with defiance. Then remembering that this man had rescued her people from the Red Dwarf, she held out her stones. Naoh examined them narrowly and finding no crack or fracture he grew more and more bewildered. He turned them over in his hands; they were cold. ‘How,’ he mused, ‘being cold can these stones contain Fire?’

“Then he gave them back, overcome with the fear and disconcertment ever aroused in the mind of man by mystery.

“Naoh lingered among the Wah in order to unravel the mystery of fire, still to him a subject of dread. By degrees he became reassured. He began to comprehend the speech and gestures of the people; soon he had mastered the sense of a dozen words and of thirty signs, mute language of the race. From the first he had suspected that the Wah did not enclose fire in stones, but that it was therein naturally, feeble at first, but a devourer when at large. No sooner did



he acquire the certainty that it was not so, than confidence took the place of distrust. He learned that to emit fire, the stones must be of different kinds, one of flint, one of pyrite. Having attained the emitting of sparks he tried to produce a flame. But for some time he could not succeed in burning the driest stalk.

“One twilight, in very dry weather, the Wah lighted two big fires. Naoh collected some dry sticks, and placing them close to his stones, struck them with all his force. Effort after effort failing him, he again declared to himself that the tribe were withholding their secret. One more blow with might and main he gave. Then indeed a branch caught fire, the tiny flame spread, setting ablaze all within reach.

“Stock-still, breathless, stood Naoh with eyes fierce as when he had overcome the tigress, stolen fire from the Kzamms, made compact with the Mammoth, and brought down the chief of the Red Dwarfs.

“For he had conquered a power hitherto possessed by none of his ancestors. Henceforth he had secured fire for generations to come.

### III. SEE THE CONQUERING HERO COMES!

“Bounding forward, Faouhm shouted :

“‘They come—the Oulhamr!’

“‘Is it Aghoo and his brothers or Naoh and his companions?’ asked Goûn, voicing the thought of the assembled crowd.

“‘It is the Son of the Leopard,’ murmured the Chief, with subdued joy, for he feared the return of the ferocious Aghoo.

“As for the rest they only thought of fire. If

indeed Naoh brought it back all were ready to kneel before him ; had he failed in his mission, as ready were they to howl him down as a weakling.

“ At last Naoh came in sight. In the darkness following twilight, he appeared, Faouhm shouting— ‘ Fire ! Naoh brings back fire ! ’

“ A frenzy overtook the multitude. Some became motionless, as if by a deadly blow. Others rose to their feet, careering wildly and uttering hoarse cries—and the fire was there !

“ In his hands Naoh held up the imprisoned flame, a tiny red light issuing from its stone trap. So feeble was the blaze that a child could have extinguished it with a flint. But every one understood the immense force thereby generated. Breathless, stricken dumb, fearing lest the sight should vanish, they gazed with dilated eyeballs. The crowd drew back, Naoh, Faouhm, Gammla, and Nam ; Gaw and the veteran Goûn led the way. At the foot of the rock the tribesmen collected sticks, bents, and branches. When the pile was heaped high the Son of the Leopard set it alight. Spreading rapidly, soon the flare mounted, dispersing the darkness of night, sending the wolves slinkingly back to their lairs. Then Naoh turned to the great chief and said :

“ ‘ I, the Son of the Leopard, has he not fulfilled his promise ? And the head of the Oulhamr—will he in turn fulfil his ? ’

“ As he spoke he pointed to Gammla, her figure prominent in the reddish glare. She was trembling not with fear but with pride, absorbed in the general admiration of Naoh.

“ ‘ Gammla shall be thy wife according to promise,’ replied Faouhm, almost humbly.

“ ‘And Naoh shall command the tribe,’ was the bold shout of the aged Goûn.

“ This was said not in order to mortify the great chief, but to prevent dangerous rivalry. At such a moment not a man dared to gainsay him. Every hand waved, every countenance glowed with exaltation.

“ But Naoh only saw Gammla’s beautiful hair and clear eyes. Conscious that one head could not command the Oulhamr, he shouted :

“ ‘ Faouhm and Naoh will command the tribe.’

“ Taken aback, all became mute, whilst, for the first time in his life, the fierce-hearted Faouhm felt drawn towards a man who was not his sister’s son.

“ Meantime, the veteran Goûn, most curious man of the race, was impatient to hear the warrior’s adventures, and Naoh’s brain was full of them, all fresh as if they had happened yesterday. Words were few, in these days, sentences disjointed, speech loud and abrupt.

“ He told of his encounter with the Grey Bear, the Giant Lion, the Mammoth, the Cavern Bear, of the Blue-skinned men, the Red Dwarfs, and the rest.

“ Of his discovery he said nothing. Partly from mistrust, partly from ruse, he withheld the secret acquired from the Wah.

“ The roar of the flaming pile accompanied his recital, Nam and Gaw acclaiming each episode. Narrating his own story the vanquisher’s voice penetrated each hearer, making hearts beat quickly.

“ And Goûn vociferated :

“ ‘ Among our fathers lived no warrior comparable to Naoh. And there will be none like him neither of our children, nor children’s children.’

. . . . .

“ Faouhm, catching Gammla’s tresses, led her to the feet of the hero.

“ ‘Take her. She shall be thy wife. She is no longer under my protection. Henceforth she will bend down before her master. Does she disobey thee, her life is in thy power.’

“ Naoh, touching Gammla by the hand, raised her gently.

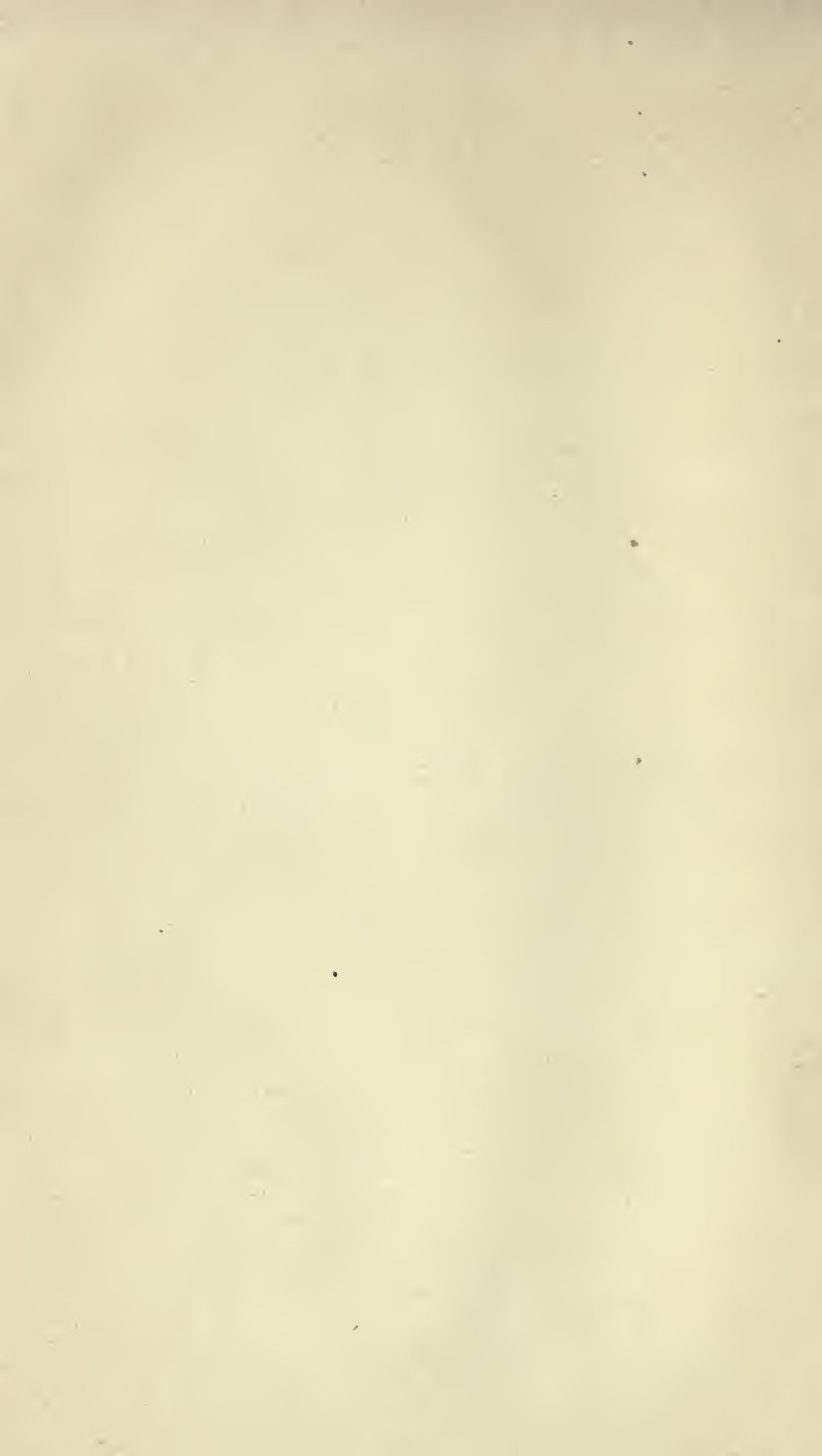
“ Seasons past counting lay before them.”



E. A. MARTEL,

“THE COLUMBUS OF THE NETHER WORLD.”

[To face p. 68.]



## CHAPTER V

THE COLUMBUS OF THE NETHER WORLD—E. A. MARTEL

FABRE has opened a new field of nature study. The brothers Rosny have done the same for romance; E. A. Martel may fittingly make up the quartette. The first introduces us to the infinitely little in the scale of created beings, his pages being a revelation to every naturalist. The second authors bring before us pictures of life when "men first beholding beheld in vain, and hearing heard not."

The famous Paris lawyer has revealed the marvels of the world beneath our feet, penetrating abysses never before trodden by man. M. E. A. Martel was born in 1859, and educated at the Lycée Condorcet, Paris.

It was in 1890 that his first work of underground exploration appeared—"Les Cévennes."\* Padirac, in the department of the Lot, is M. Martel's grandest discovery, and alas! it has long since paid its scot to fame. Its stalactite caves, grottoes, Stygian river and lakelets, have been purchased by a company, and to-day the most timid travellers may safely fancy themselves in Kubla Khan's pleasure-house—

"Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea."

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\* In this work, my friend honours me with citations from my volume "On the Roof of France."

But the first attempt at a descent was regarded as sheer insanity.

“You can get down easily enough, gentlemen,” cried the village folk to M. Martel and a companion, adventuresome as himself, “but you will never get up again.”

The curés of the neighbouring villages were equally emphatic. Yet, strange as it may seem, the frightful maw of the cavern, as M. Martel terms it—an opening three hundred feet in circumference and a hundred feet broad—had never been fenced round!

The intrepid explorer since then has traversed miles of underground rivers in a folding indiarubber canoe, has bivouacked in caverns two thousand and odd feet below the earth's surface, visited natural marvels for the first time gazed upon by man, and, it is hardly necessary to add, immensely added to our knowledge of subterranean flora and fauna, to say nothing of affording new geological and palæontological data. Indebted as is the scientific world, and as are all interested in research generally, to M. Martel, we must not suppose that these “hair-breadth 'scapes and imminent danger” were undertaken solely from scientific ardour. This hard-headed member of the Paris bar is first and foremost an enthusiast. Nothing delights him so much as the prospect of discovering new realms in the bowels of the earth, of descending several thousand feet on a ladder of ropes, of punting along some Styx or Avernus by aid of a pocket lantern, of illuminating for the first time wondrous caverns of stalactite and stalagmite—in fine, of perils dire, manifold and unimagined. By force of habit, the most tremendous dangers





THE DESCENT INTO PADIRAC.

[To face p. 70.]



appear trifles hardly worth considering, and although the Columbus of the nether world has had more than one narrow escape, he remains indefatigable as ever. The merest outline of his enterprises, and the results thereby attained, would fill a volume.\* Not content with a survey of underground France, the traveller began and has partly achieved what may be called a survey of underground Europe, visiting Hungary, Austria, the Balearic Isles, Belgium, Greece, Spain, Norway, and our own shores.

Here, in M. Martel's own words, is a brief account of a typical excursion:—

“Several years ago,” he writes,† “I was invited by His Imperial Highness the Archduke Louis Salvator of Austria, the learned and generous owner of the Miramar estates near Palma, to carry out the exploration of Dragon's Cave. It was only in September, 1896, that I was able at length to carry this scheme into execution. But, thanks to the facilities granted by His Highness, and with my folding canvas boats, I was pleased and happy in carrying out at the Cueva del Drach a very satisfactory subterranean investigation. I found one of the largest underground lakes known in the world, which I named Lake Miramar, five hundred and seventy feet long, one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five feet wide, fifteen to thirty feet deep. What a marvel is this mysterious and so long unknown pool, black as night, but sparkling under magnesium light with all the splendours of the diamond! The vaults and walls are covered with sharp, thin stalactite needles,

\* “Les Cévennes,” 1890, 8 fr.; “Les Albîmes,” 1894, 16 fr.; “Irlande et les Cavernes anglaises,” 1897, 6 fr. Paris, Delagrave.

† See the *Geographical Journal* for November, 1897.

the roof is supported at intervals by stalagmite columns, resembling the Egyptian and Indian pillars of Karnac and Kailaça. All these concretions are pure white, like ermine, without any spot of clay. It presents the greatest contrast to Gaping Ghyll, being a scene of beauty, just as the Yorkshire abyss is of frightful gloom, stupefying to human eyes. This Dragon's Cave, a mile and a half long, is not only a picturesque curiosity, all its large and small lakes are on the same level as the sea, with which they communicate through narrow clefts; they are half salt and half fresh water, and a hydrological marvel, of which I give a fuller scientific account elsewhere.\* For geographers, I only say that the cavern is a mere sea-cave formed by the Mediterranean waves, and not an underground river, but a sea-cave of unusual size, unparalleled elsewhere, at least on European shores. It is said that California, Cuba, and Jamaica possess also grand caves of the same kind. When and by whom will they be scientifically explored?"

These last-mentioned monster caves and underground rivers and lakes in the Cévenol region seem as we read more like phantasmagoria of Jules Verne than sober fact. In his principal work, "Les Abîmes," we are enabled to realize the tremendous risks and physical exertion entailed upon M. Martel and his companions. The most terrifying feature of this experience was the fact of utter darkness. As the boat capsized their lights were extinguished, and only by virtue of the greatest possible coolness and presence of mind were they saved from a horrible fate. The pair had taken care as they punted along

\* "Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Sciences," 14 Juin 1897.

to note every feature by the way. Thus they swam close to the nearest ledge, their shouts bringing the other members of the party, who were waiting for news of them on what may be called the shores of this Avernus.

Upon another occasion, as M. Martel was descending the awful Bramabiau on a ladder of ropes, his light went out, and his match-box proved refractory. For three-quarters of an hour he remained thus, around him the blackness of night, several hundred feet separating him alike from the familiar world above and the unknown Tartarean regions below. A false movement, the least little fit of nervousness, and he must have fallen a victim to his *spéléological* ardour, and paid the penalty of his daring.

The energies of our *spéléologist* are by no means confined to practical exploration. M. Martel founded a society having for its object underground research. This "Société de Spéléologie," now numbering several hundred members, with an accredited organ, *Spelunca*, holds—rather held—its sittings in Paris, a general meeting taking place once a year in the neighbourhood of cavernous regions. *Spelunca*, published quarterly with views, plans and maps, gave an immense amount of information, that is to say, facts concerning palæontology, hydrology, and many more "ologies." Of course such activity has been set aside during the war. The uninitiated in such subjects can but applaud the many-sided ardour displayed in those pages.

M. Martel, as I have said before, is a hard-working member of the Paris Bar. As, in 1905, he bustled into the salon of my hotel, the orthodox

legal portfolio\* under his arm, in his person the man of the law to the life, it is difficult to imagine him punting on an underground lake, suspended midway between heaven and earth, or soaring up to the clouds in a balloon, for the Columbus of the nether world has had some experience of aerial navigation as well. In company of his wife, an unpretentious, high-spirited and charming lady, he some years ago made a highly successful voyage into cloudland.

“I am very sorry to have only half-an-hour at my disposal,” he said, using English speech with ease and correctness, “but, as usual, I am quite overdone; the law courts are now, as you know, open” (the month was October), “and I want, if possible, to manage a little expedition with my wife before winter sets in.”

“A subterranean expedition, of course?”

“Precisely—in Spain—a vast field still remaining unworked, and the pursuit is enthralling.”

“The dangers attending such researches must, I should say, considerably detract from your enjoyment?” I said. “And, by the way, how comes it to pass, M. Martel, that you have wholly relinquished balloon adventure?”

“I will answer your questions as they come. Certainly underground discovery is not without risks, but these may be minimized, almost nullified, by the skilful explorer. Aerial enterprise is infinitely more dangerous” (how changed might be his views to-day!), “and, till we can obtain command of our balloons, must ever remain so. In testing the crust of the earth we do command circumstances. Of

\* Oddly enough, this indispensable article is called *une chemise*.

course, unforeseen accidents will occur, but up to the present time, during my ten years' exploration, none have happened of a serious, much less fatal, nature."

"In your own case, I imagine a certain savour of peril imparts exhilaration?"

M. Martel did not deny the delicate impeachment, but continued :

"You see, Mademoiselle, we have now well-trained guides—rather assistants, men who know the regions under survey, well, and on whose coolness, intelligence and bodily strength we can place fullest reliance. Three essentials are necessary—good ropeladders, devoted associates, and an ample fund of daring, initiative, and powers of endurance. With such forces as these, I have visited, in ten years, three hundred caverns, for the most part unknown, one hundred and twenty abysses, two thousand feet deep, hitherto unexplored, and traversed upwards of thirty English miles of subterranean rivers and galleries."

The name of the explorer has long been familiar to our own scientists. On the occasion of the Sixth International Geographical Congress held in London in July and August, 1895, M. Martel, as delegate of the Spéléological Society, read a paper, concerning cave-lore in general, and the desirability of encouraging the study. A fact that has immensely swelled the number of French enthusiasts is the organization of what may be called a museum of subterranean zoology in Paris. This is the work of M. Milne-Edwards, the learned Director of the *Jardin des Plantes*. It is believed that much light may thereby be thrown on the origin of species.

For his favourite subterranean globe M. Martel claims sublimity only second to that of the heavens above. And any of us who have seen the marvels of a stalactite cave only illuminated by a candle or two can well believe our explorer.

Here is what the traveller in eastern France can gaze upon to-day without any other risk than that of wetting his shoes—

“We follow the windings of these sombre underground palaces. In some places the stalactite roofs are lofty, in others we have to bend our heads as we pass from one vaulted chamber to another; here we see a superb column supporting an arch, there a pillar in course of slow formation, everywhere the strangest, most fantastic architecture—an architecture, moreover, that is the work of ages, one petrifying drop after another doing its apportioned work, arch, roof, and column formed by a process so slow that the lifetime of a human being hardly counts in the calculation.” \*

The caves thus described, and visited by the present writer many years since are those of Baume-les-Dames, near Besançon; a modest adventure enough, and a comparatively tame experience compared to those of M. Martel, veritable Columbus of the nether world. Padirac now is equally easy.

\* “Holidays in Eastern France.” 1879. Hurst and Blackett.



## CHAPTER VI

### TWO LITERARY MONUMENTS

#### I. A GREAT DICTIONARY \*

A PATHETIC interest attaches to this great work. M. Arsène Darmsteter, who, we believe, we are right in calling its projector, was one of two brothers, both rarely gifted, and both snatched from their labours in the prime of life. Arsène and James Darmsteter were Jews, and though living in Paris, where they held professional chairs, they numbered many English friends. On the death of Arsène in 1888, the French Government presented his widow with a pension in the usual shape of a "bureau de tabac." The distinguished Orientalist, his brother, who had married an English lady, died a few years later. The career of these philologists recalls Browning's "Grammarians' Funeral." Of either it might be said—

"So, with the throttling hands of Death at strife,  
Ground he at grammar:  
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife  
While he could stammer . . . .  
This man decided not to Live, but to Know."

Fortunately the survivor of this dual undertaking has been aided in the task of revision, also in writing

\* "Dictionnaire Général de la Langue Française," par Adolphe Hatfeld et Arsène Darmsteter, avec le Concours de M. Antoine Thomas. Paris: Delagrave.

the introductory treatise, by Arsène Darmsteter's pupil, M. Thomas, now professor at the Sorbonne. Thus the work was carried out as originally planned, and it is interesting to learn that the lexicon itself was completed before the lamented death of its originator.

Word-books are not necessarily superseded, as is seen from the list of authorities here cited. There are, however, many reasons why the Hatzfeld-Darmsteter work must naturally appeal to a public enormously in excess of that reached by Littré's great Dictionary, which these writers describe as "the most colossal effort ever made to bring together and monumentally build up, the principal documents relating to the history, usage, and significance of words in the French language." In the first place, we have here, instead of four folios, two not too cumbersome octavo volumes; in the second, the cost is five and twenty shillings, instead of four guineas; and lastly, whilst answering all the purposes of a lexicon, this is a dictionary framed on a new and strictly scientific plan.

Their plan and the points of divergence from Littré's work with which the compilers set out, cannot be better given than in their own language.

"The work now presented to the public is a Dictionary of the French Language from the commencement of the seventeenth century down to our own day. Its aim is not only to define words as written or spoken, to determine their different employment, to indicate their legitimate usage, but also to explain such usage and make clear its origin. It is an analytic Dictionary, giving the use and changes of our language throughout three centuries, and setting

forth the causes that have brought about such changes. Whilst endeavouring to supply a general want, whilst ever keeping before our minds the necessity of clearness and intelligibility, we have all along strictly observed the rules of historic method. Since words arise, develop, and are subject to transformation, they have naturally a history. Such a history does not address itself to the erudite alone, it interests perforce all who would fain know the precise meaning of the words they employ. For, in the language of an eminent writer—‘Erudition is here not an object, but an instrument; and the historic element is introduced in order to complete an idea ordinarily too restricted!’ (Littré’s Preface). But is the history of a word accurately presented by a mere catalogue of modifications and usages? Seeing that we are dealing with language—that is to say, a phenomenon perpetually transformed by the agency of human intellect—should the historic method stop short here? Can we aver with the writer just cited that ‘accepted usage of a word is in itself an explanation of such usage’ (Littré’s Preface), an argument excluding other and weightier influences? We hold a contrary opinion, and this opinion is the justification of our undertaking. The historic method does not consist in merely giving the primitive significance of a word and cataloguing its various meanings. Such an accumulation of facts being verified, we have to show the links that bind them together. How can we properly marshal the successive modifications of a word unless, at the same time, we demonstrate the reason for such an order? If political events have their *raison d’être*, the mere enumeration of them becomes chronology instead of history.

Similarly, if language is the expression of thought, words cannot pass from their primitive sense to derived and figurative meanings without following a certain order capable of being rationally explained. In the laws of thought the historian of words will find the cause of their transformation."

The Introduction, which is full of interest for the student, is followed by a Treatise on the formation of the French language, of the highest value to philologists and grammarians. It is divided into four parts. The first treats of origin, the manifold sources from which the French vocabulary as in present use has been derived—namely, Latin, Celtic, German, Slavonic, Semitic, etc., to these being added the words created, so to say, not by the people, but by the learned and literary men from the Renaissance down to our own day. The second part takes in hand the phonetic character of the French language, showing the laws which have gradually modified pronunciation, laws, so our authors hold, asserting themselves with an almost invariable uniformity.

The third part deals with the historical development of grammatical forms. Here we are introduced to a new system of declensions and conjugations, the result of which is much light thrown upon the origin and formation of French grammar. The fourth part is devoted to syntax and its variations, showing how the freer French construction has logically and systematically succeeded the Latin. Treatise and Lexicon thus complete each other. The one is a synthesis of facts analysed in the second. For general students, perhaps, this learned dissertation may prove a hard nut to crack, but all able to read French will delight in the Introduction. "Every

word," write our authors, "is a problem to be solved." This is the principle on which their tremendous, but doubtless delightful, task was carried out. Thus, under the head of Nomenclature, we find that many of the errors corrected had arisen from mispronunciation. This has been, especially the case with technical terms, a most curious instance being cited in point. A celebrated architect, whose name is not given (query, M. Viollet Leduc), describes certain ornaments in a building of his own construction as "berclés," but, as MM. Hatzfeld and Darmsteter discovered, "berclés" was simply a mispronunciation of the word "bertelé," and in its turn, "bertelé" is a mispronunciation of "brétélé" the exact word. Turning to the dictionary we thus find derivation, etymology, technical meaning, and date of a word's first appearance in French prose—in fine, its history.

Etymology, as our authors remind us, is a branch of grammatical science that has made enormous strides within recent years. Under this head many interesting rectifications are mentioned in these introductory pages. All theatre-goers in Paris are familiar with the name "ouvreuse," and "ouvreur," applied to doorkeepers. But hitherto in certain French dictionaries the same designation as applied to kneaders of pulp in paper manufactories is set side by side with the above, whereas the one is a form of "ouvrir" from the Latin "operire," to cover, for which "aperire," to open, was popularly substituted, whilst the other is derived from "operare," to manipulate. These instances are quoted as showing the minute investigation to which every word has been subjected.

How many of us who have spoken French all our lives have taken the trouble to inquire why certain feminine substantives invariably take a masculine form of adjective? Yet the reason is simple enough. We say "grand mère," "grand croix," "grand messe," because the Latin "fortis" and "grandis" had the same terminations for both genders.

Not the least interesting portion of the treatise is that devoted to the incorporation of foreign words into the French vocabulary. With regard to English words our authors have included fewer than those admitted by the Academy. Thus, lady, miss, miladi, porter, whig, whiskey and some others are here omitted; on the other hand, a considerable number of Anglicisms are used in French unitalicized, just as we use such Gallicisms as valet and chaperon. Among French instances in point are abolitionist, cottage, jury, grog, dandy, corporation, whist, water-proof, and the list is daily increasing.

One point to note is the very small number of importations from the Hebrew. This paucity of Biblical words is, of course, due to the fact that France is a Catholic country, and that the Bible has never been there, as here, the one book—the literature—of the people. The French occupation of Algeria, on the other hand, has enriched the language with a good many Arabic terms, military, administrative and economic.

But there is one word in the entire list of importations which is even more interesting than the scanty list of Gaulish and Celtic survivals. This, with certain reservations, our authors set down as of Basque origin. The problem of the Basque language remains unsolved, but in the word "orignac,"

denoting a variety of antelope, MM. Hatzfeld and Darmsteter are disposed to discover such an origin. The curious part of it is that the term has come round to France from French Canada, whither emigrated many natives of Bayonne and its neighbourhood in the sixteenth century, victims of religious persecution. With regard to "argot," these philologists have shown great reserve. For the slang of students' drinking bouts and the music-hall we must go elsewhere. But we have here a small number of words that may be called the vocabulary of mis-doers, current coin of thieves, house-breakers, and the criminal class generally, such are "caboulot," a low cabaret, "escarpe," a burglar assassin, "trimer," to be at pains for nothing. "Mioche" here classified, and which may be translated by "kid," applied to children, is not, however, used by disreputable parents only. You will hear highly educated fathers speak endearingly of their "mioches." Did space permit we could point out many other interesting features of this great dictionary. I will only add that the pronunciation has been regulated in accordance with that of cultivated Parisian society and of the Comédie Française.

## II. THE HISTORIAN OF THE REVOLUTION \*

M. Aulard is the first living authority on the history of the French Revolution, and in one sense his work here treated of—the labour of twenty years—may lay claim to finality. Authentic documents concerning the period taken in hand (1789–1804) are not of course inexhaustible. It may, however,

\* "Histoire Politique de la Révolution Française." Armand Colin, Paris, 1901.

be safely averred that in so far as contemporary records are available, little or nothing remains for future historians in the same field. As M. Aulard takes care to emphasize in his prefatory note, his object has been, not the making out of a case or the elaboration of a thesis, but the elimination of facts, the historic method applied to the study of a period hitherto distorted by passion and legend.

At first sight this bulky volume may repel even readers to whom the French Revolution is as fascinating a subject as history can offer. A heavy, unhandy volume of eight hundred closely-printed pages is not lightly to be entered upon in these busy days. But, whilst for the hard student M. Aulard's work is invaluable, for the ordinary reader, as some of my citations will show, it abounds in interest and suggestion. The bulkiness and unhandiness of the volume are accounted for by the fact of prior issue in instalments, now a favourite form of publishing important works in France. These monthly parts, or *livraisons*, always in large octavo, are pleasant enough to read and to hold as they come out, when bound together, the result is somewhat uninviting.

M. Aulard divides his history into four parts. The first, 1789-1792, deals with the origin of the democratic spirit and of the Republican idea; the second, 1792-1795, with the Democratic Republic; the third, 1795-1799, with the Bourgeois Republic; the fourth, 1799-1804, with the "République plébiscitaire."

"We must here," writes M. Aulard, "select and make prominent such facts as have exercised a direct and palpable influence upon political evolution. The



monarchical *régime*, universal suffrage, the constitution of 1793, revolutionary government, the constitutions of the years III. and VIII. of the Republic, the movement of ideas preparing, establishing, and modifying these institutions, the changes of public opinion, the struggle of progressiveness and tradition, the new forces arrayed against old systems, the principle of intellectual liberty opposed to clerical authoritativeness, herein, above all, is to be traced the political growth of France. Other forces were, of course, at work, but in a less degree; for example, military events, diplomatic and financial transactions. These we must be familiar with, but it suffices to know them and their results. I have omitted, then, from my work, the military, diplomatic, and financial history of the period in hand. No historic work suffices of itself, my own with the rest, takes for granted, exacts, the reading of others. The field thus circumscribed, twenty years' research have enabled me to examine the laws promulgated under the Revolution, the leading newspapers, the correspondence, speeches, and biographies of foremost personages, as well as documents relating to elections and trials. I think I may say that I have neglected no source of any importance, also that every assertion is directly drawn from such sources."

These prefatory remarks prepare the reader tolerably acquainted with Revolutionary history for many surprises. Nor will he be disappointed. Let us, for instance, take the Democratic idea, the genesis of that theory now represented by the Third Republic. Whence arose a notion so subversive of tradition in France, so at variance with experience, so remote from contemporary influences?

M. Aulard's answer, the answer of plain fact, is what our French neighbours call *renversant*, upsetting preconceived ideas and convictions. "The first point we have to consider, and it is a weighty one," continues our author, "is that on the convocation of the States General in 1789 there existed no such thing as a Republican party in France. The best witness of such a fact lies in the *Cahiers*, or petitions, sent up from the different communes. From the workmen, the peasants especially, emanates a single cry, one unanimous appeal, 'to our good King, our father!' But if the people were not Republican, surely we should find the nucleus of such a party in clubs, academies, intellectual spheres or centres? On the contrary, there is no evidence whatever of any plan, individual or concerted, for the establishment of a Republic in France. The Monarchy was to be reformed, not abolished."

In proof of this assertion, M. Aulard cites the chief leaders of thought anterior to the events of '89. Montesquieu, Voltaire, D'Argenson, Diderot, D'Holbach, Rousseau, Mably, none of whom, whilst advocating reforms of the Monarchical system, declared themselves in favour of a Republic. Nor at this period did living writers of note enunciate Republican theories. Even the Abbé Raynal, in 1781, had warned his countrymen against undue enthusiasm for the young Republic of the United States.

Condorcet, a Republican two years later, was as yet an upholder of the Monarchy. The future members of the Convention—Robespierre, Danton, Saint Just, Vergniaud, Collot d'Herbois, Brissot, at this time were all Monarchists.

Having showed us that whilst the nation remained strictly Monarchical, the French mind was being gradually prepared for the reception of the Republican idea, M. Aulard next traces the origin of this idea as applied to France itself, this origin being a feminine brain. The foundress of the French Republic was a woman !

The heroic personality of Madame Roland will at once occur to every reader, but no such thing ! M. Aulard introduces us to a comparatively unknown figure in the portrait gallery of these stormy times, a figure wholly unlike the "Queen of the Gironde," or Lamartine's "Angel of Assassination." The genius of the Revolution, the foundress of the Republic, was a woman to whom most of us are here introduced for the first time.

"In September, 1790," writes M. Aulard, "a *littérateur* and politician named La Vicomterie, published a pamphlet on kings and people, in which occurred the words, "I am a Republican, I denounce Kings!" In the following month the *Mercure National* proclaims its adhesion to the same ideas. This little-known journal is of very great historic importance, not only on account of its foreign intelligence, but also because it was the organ of the Republican party from the very beginning, also of a salon presided over by a literary lady, and which salon formed the rallying point of that party. I here speak of Mme Robert, daughter of the Chevalier de Keralio, professor at the Military School, member of the Academy of Science, and editor of the *Journal des Sciences*. This lady, following in the steps of her mother, an authoress, had published novels, works of history, and translations. She was thirty-

three when she married François Robert, an Advocate of Liège, a worthy man of mediocre capacities, but loyal, sincere, an ardent Republican, member of two clubs of the Jacobins and Cordeliers, and, later, a representative of Paris in the Convention. Mme Roland, who had no liking for Mme Robert, and made merry over her dress, admitted in her memoirs that she was very clever and gifted with insight and tact. A patriot in 1790, that is to say, a patriotic Democrat, at a time when so many others contented themselves with the Bourgeois *régime* of 1789, a Republican patriot when Mme Roland still remained a Monarchist, Mme Robert appears to have been in reality the foundress of the Republican party." Here it may be mentioned, by the way, that a few pages of Mme Roland's famous memoirs are devoted to the Roberts, but the genius of the Girondin party was what Dr. Johnson liked, a good hater, and these souvenirs were written under circumstances far from conducive to a judicial frame of mind. "In fine," continues M. Aulard, "by December, 1790, a Republican party exists, but its origin is not to be sought in workshops, faubourgs, or popular centres. The Republic, now for the first time advocated, is partly bourgeois, partly aristocratic, and its first adherents consist of a handful of cultured people, a literary woman, an Academician belonging to the noblesse, an advocate, and one or two pamphleteers, an *élite* so numerically trifling that Mme Robert's sofa might have seated them all. The party had, at least, an existence, a mouthpiece, a watchword, a hearing. It had on its side the logical sequence of events and the future. It awaited the false step of Royalty that should prove its opportunity.

That opportunity, namely, the flight to Varennes, was soon to come.

The second part of M. Aulard's work, dealing with the establishment of the *République démocratique* and the struggle of the Girondins and Montagnards, is equally illuminating and suggestive. Thus is Robespierre portrayed: "Whilst Marat only became generally popular after his assassination, Robespierre was the favourite of entire France. People saw in him the apostle, the initiator of Democracy. His appearance ingratiated him with the crowd, folks liked his dress, the correct costume of a *petit rentier*, i.e., one of small independent means of the *ancien régime*, his powdered hair, his avoidance of the Phrygian cap, and of any approach to conspicuousness; they liked his Academic style, his serious utterances, his horror of a joke. When he declared that no one enjoying an income of more than three thousand francs (£120) a year could be virtuous, he was found adorable. According to his views, virtue and a mediocre fortune were synonymous. His political system, so he professed, began and ended in the promotion of virtue and the confusion of vice. He loved the people, humanity at large, he was ready to die for his country, but he adored, he made a parade of self, of the Ego. With Mme Roland, he was implacable in his hatreds. If that magnanimous woman prevented the Girondists from reconciliation with the Montagnards, we may aver with equal force that Robespierre, however magnanimous in principle, prevented the Montagnards from joining hands with the Girondins." Here is M. Aulard's appreciation of Danton: "Politically speaking, Danton had no system, unless it be a

system to shape one's course according to reason, or rather reason enlightened by the teachings of history. A democrat he certainly was, but his programme of founding a democracy consisted in educating the people. He never anticipated public opinion. He was what we may call a Republican of the hour. Since the Republic exists, let us by its agency save France and the Revolution, was his theory. His method was one of spontaneous action, politically speaking, of living from hand to mouth, meeting difficulties, opposing obstacles, as they came. Danton was what in our days we should call an opportunist, using the word in a favourable sense. Danton follows in the steps of Mirabeau, as Gambetta followed in the steps of Danton." Whilst the Constituent Assembly had represented the States General of former times, and the Legislative Assembly the bourgeois, the electoral privilege depending on certain qualifications as in England, with the establishment of the First Republic was inaugurated universal suffrage.

All that M. Aulard has put together about the procedure of elections to the Convention is very interesting. Space, however, admits here of indicating only a few points in this most valuable work. I will quote one or two highly suggestive remarks from the closing pages :

"It seems to me," finally adds the writer, "that the facts given in this book take from the words, the French Revolution, a sense wholly equivocal. We have got into the habit of putting under the same head, on the one hand, the principles which constitute the French Revolution and the acts conformable thereto, on the other, the period during

which the Revolution took place and acts, alike conformable or contradictory to those principles. Such confusion is as fatal to truth as it is serviceable to reactionary writers, since it enables them to invest the Revolution with a sort of personality—laying to its account transactions of most regrettable kind, and often in themselves opposed to the revolutionary spirit. For example, could any deed be more anti-revolutionary than the execution of the Dantonistes and the Hebertistes or the suppression of universal suffrage in the year III. of the Republic? Such mood of speech—the Revolution did this or that—has brought about the notion of some wholly capricious, incoherent, and sanguinary force. Its principles have thus been discredited, above all by those who denounce them as Satanic, having in view a government of the people by directly opposite means. I think that this confusion is here cleared up. The Revolution consisted in the Declaration of the Rights of Man formulated in 1789, completed in 1793, and in the endeavours to realize such declaration. The counter-revolution consists in the attempt to force the convictions of Frenchmen from that direction—in other words, from a course enlightened by the teachings of history.”

The gist of M. Aulard's work is conveyed in these sentences.

## CHAPTER VII

### BOOK-MINDEDNESS

#### I. THE HOUSE OF HACHETTE

IF contemporary France can show no resplendence in imaginative literature, no dazzling harvest of poetry or romance, intellectually, she reigns supreme.

No former epoch has produced such masterpieces in criticism, erudition, philosophy and science. No other country to-day produces so many writers of the very first rank in these fields. Another and by far the most striking feature of twentieth-century book-mindedness, is the attention paid to our own literature.

In his famous work on Shakespeare, M. Jusserand reminds us that to Boileau (1636-1711) our great dramatist's very name was unknown, whilst throughout the eighteenth century and at a time when the finishing education of young noblemen was a trip on the Continent, when French and English of the upper classes held friendly intercourse, our literature was a *terra incognâta* on the other side of the Channel. In fact, the aristocratic and supposedly educated classes were as ignorant as a certain Breton housewife on another subject.

"Now do tell me, Monsieur," this good woman asked of my good friend the late genial Max O'Rell



(Paul Blouet). "You have been in England. Are there any railways in that country?"

Through the Victorian era, as we all know, it was the fashion here to deride our neighbours even among writers who ought to have known better. When our novelists, among them the greatest, Dickens himself, wanted a villain, it was sure to be a Frenchman, and insultingly is the nation caricatured in one of his novels by a pre-Victorian wit, that strange genius, Thomas Love Peacock. I will not quote what was supposed to be witticism, but would be altogether ludicrous at any time.

But good novels, like pretty fashions, will find their way through any impediments devised by man. Dickens, Miss Braddon, above all, "The Last Days of Pompeii," in translation, were favourite reading of young or old in France, no matter how strained might be Anglo-French relations.

Further on some foremost writers shall speak for themselves. I will here confine myself to recent studies of English authors and monumental works brought out by leading publishers within recent years.

"Nature's sternest painter and her best," we should hardly deem attractive to novel-readers over the water. Yet Crabbe has found a biographer, critic and translator in one.\* It speaks much for the general interest in our literature that a publisher and public should be found for this comprehensive and bulky work—688 pages of large 8vo—devoted to an insular genius, a poet hardly less homely than Robert Bloomfield. But the way had long before

\* "Un Poète Realiste Anglais," par R. Huchon, Docteur ès Lettres. Paris (Hachette), 1906.

been prepared for M. Huchon's laborious undertaking. "Paul and Virginie" and Rousseau had long before turned French readers to the study of Nature and simplicity. Was not Thomson's "Seasons" the consolation of Madame Roland's prison hours, his enchanting descriptions, as she tells us in her own exquisite language, transporting her from terrible scenes into intellectual regions.

To few of our greatest poets has such a tribute been paid by a foreign critic as we have here, M. Huchon gives French readers a piece of literary history, the poet's epoch being agreeably described and his own works analysed, beauties and defects being pointed out with critical acumen. A copious index is added to the volume.

In a letter to the author I animadverted upon some of his severities regarding Suffolk and its people. Being myself a Suffolker born and bred I was put upon the defensive regarding many points. In a cordial spirit the author wrote:—

"You tax me, Mademoiselle, with injustice, but I did not intend to aver in the first passage, cited by you, that your country folks were without a feeling for Nature. In a certain sense Crabbe possessed this feeling, and you possess it in a high degree."

Then comparing Italian scenery as presented by Turner with the "flat, grey and monotonous East Anglian landscape," he adds:—

"It is with Nature as with woman's beauty, love often being inspired by qualities, not by loveliness. Thus early impressions, memory, and habit may lend an irresistible charm to scenery. You perceive that we had in mind different things, I referred to the sense of beauty, you to the feeling for Nature,

to my mind the latter not existing without the former."

There is no French poet who can be bracketed with Crabbe, none combining such homeliness with such depth of penetration: a translation, however excellent, cannot render justice either to his style or to his subjects. But all the same our neighbours may learn much from M. Huchon's curiously un-French volume. I say un-French, because alike in biography, criticism or anything else, his compatriots are ever of Voltaire's opinion concerning literature—"Who, I should like to know, likes lengthiness in anything?"

Another and much handier, more easily read volume, and issued by the same great house, is M. Douady's Monograph on Hazlitt.\*

The learned professor prefaces his work thus:—"In France William Hazlitt is hardly known by name; we hope that this sketch of his life may win readers for him here."

True enough is an excellent summary of English literature, issued by another great house,† with translations the name of this great critic does not occur.

Yet of all English writers, Hazlitt is perhaps the most akin to his French brethren. What an epigrammatist, what a critic in La Bruyère's sense, the best, the only sense of the word,‡ was the author of

\* "Vie de William Hazlitt, L'Essayiste," par Jules Douady, Professeur a l'École Navale. Hachette, 1907.

† "Les littérateurs Étrangers—Angleterre," par H. Dietz. Colin. Paris, 1894.

‡ "Il y a dans l'art un point de perfection, comme de bonté ou de maturité dans la nature; celui qui le sent et qui l'aime a le gout parfait: celui qui ne le sent pas et qui l'aime en deçà ou au delà a le goût defectueux. Il y a donc un bon et un mauvais goût: l'on dispute des goûts avec fondement."

“Men and Manners,” “Characteristics,” these among other masterpieces!

Adequately prepared, M. Douady put pen to paper. The biographer's first step was to obtain the atmosphere of his story. Well provided with letters introductory, he undertook a literary pilgrimage, everywhere, he tells us, being most cordially welcomed. At Winterslow, Mr. Witte, the village schoolmaster, acting as cicerone, showed him the site of the cottage in which Hazlitt spent his honey-moon and on one occasion entertained Charles and Mary Lamb. In the Pheasant Inn, formerly Winterslow Hall (should not Hall be Hut? but I cite from the French book), M. Douady mused within the walls redolent of the *Plain Speaker* and *Table Talk*. At Wem the Minister of the Congregational Church introduced him to the occupants of Hazlitt's early home. No tourist, we learn, has ever visited the spot! But as the French devotee tells us, for himself, the old ramshackle building was fully peopled.

M. Douady's “little book,” as he modestly called it in a letter to myself, is just the kind of work in which French writers excel. By some innate gift or perception they manage to exorcise the demon of triteness, ennui is banished by bell, book and candle, redundancy is snuffed out. One and all bear in mind another of Voltaire's golden maxims—“Ennui is the greatest of all defects in literary works.”

Hazlitt's tragic career requires exactly such treatment at the hands of a biographer as it here receives, and the volume before us may be read with the absorption of a novel. It is a striking contrast to M. Huchon's ponderous work, but both testify to the

painstaking interest taken by contemporary France in our English letters and their history.

Far more sympathetic a subject is this writer's than that of his forerunner, the biographer of the Suffolk parson-poet, and subtly and delicately it is treated.

Take, for instance, the pages devoted to the "Liber Amoris," Hazlitt himself, master-critic as he was, could not have handled such a theme better or with more psychological insight. The book in its entirety is as absorbing as a romance.

Section XVIII. of the Libraire Hachette or list devoted to Romans Étrangers show the indebtedness of English novelists, more especially modern writers. Some Victorian masterpieces, notably "The Last Days of Pompeii," may almost be called a French classic. "Monte Cristo" is hardly more familiar to readers old and young, wise and simple. Of Dickens' works perhaps "David Copperfield" comes next in popularity. This, however, is too wide a subject to enter upon here.

This foremost publishing house has done in the past for French readers what the equally great Tauchnitz firm has done for English readers on the Continent.

Little libraries in themselves are many of these publications, and many of them to be had in superb bindings, with fine illustrations, the sets costing several pounds.

But publishing and bookselling in France, like everything else, is a case of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.

Whilst the wealthy can add to their libraries the magnificent series, "Les Grands Écrivains de France,"

the illustrated "Histoire de France," in eighteen volumes, the fine edition of Saint-Simon of which as yet only twenty-seven of the projected forty volumes have appeared, these publications being a mere handful from a sheaf, the workman can procure the masterpieces of national literature for twenty-five centimes. From the Boulevard Saint Germain appears this marvellous twopenny-half-penny series, handy to hold, well printed, and illustrated.

The delightful Chronicles of Froissart, the *chef's d'œuvre* of Molière and his contemporaries, of Rousseau and his epoch, Condorcet's celebrated work on Human Progress,\* rather perfectibility—never was a period of such unbounded optimism as the writer's—all are to be had, and much more. Thus in three of these pocket volumes is given an admirable history of England, social, political, and economic, with excellent maps and vignettes, among them figuring Abbotsford, Eton College, and an Irish landscape! For fivepence may be had Dr. Saffray's admirable little work on medicinal plants,† a practical treatise on herb culture, with illustrations, a subject just now to the fore among ourselves and well worth translating.

But before turning to the lists of another famous publishing house, I must not omit one more highly important speciality of this one. A late eminent scholar and editor, Dr. Holden, wrote to me some years since as follows:—

"No period of French history has been so favour-

\* "Esquisse d'un tableau historique du Progrès de l'esprit humain." 1794.

† "Les Remèdes des Champs."

able to learning as that of the Third Republic. The editions of Greek and Roman writers published by Hachette are far superior in scholarship and literary quality to any works of the kind issuing from German printing-presses of our day."

What French authors can do when taking up Plutarch's theme may be shown in a single volume, the work of a voluminous but equal writer. I allude to the fascinating sketch of Cicero and his friends by G. Boissier.

Yet a word or two concerning what is to be the final edition of the most famous memoirs ever written.

Saint-Simon was the only person Louis XIV. feared. The so-called *Roi-Soleil*, who was the incarnation of sensuality, vain-gloriousness and tyrannic will, who allowed his slavish courtiers to uncover their heads and curtsy when passing his empty bed, quailed before the penetrating eye of his future chronicler. Saint-Simon saw him through and through, and the arch-autocrat, although he was as ignorant as the veriest hodman in his capital, felt this and shook in his shoes.

To be ignorant of these astounding pages in any form—for cheap editions abound—is to miss one of the culminating achievements of literature. Not only was Saint-Simon a clear-sighted politician, he was as magistral when dealing with words as with facts.

Alone with Catinat, the great General, and Vauban, the equally celebrated military engineer, he set his face against that most shameless crime and political blunder in French history, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The trio foresaw the awful consequences to follow, immediate industrial ruin,

seeds of discord, civil war and bloodshed thereby sown broadcast.

As a portrait painter Saint-Simon stands without a rival. In a sentence, in a word, he brings his unconscious sitter before you. A characteristic is etched into the reader's memory no less than by the brush of a Rembrandt and Titian. And he ever finds the one word—there is but one, as wrote La Bruyère—that exactly fits the thought we wish to express. Take, for instance, his pen picture of the younger Pontchartrain, son of the incompetent *Contrôleur général des Finances*, or, as we should say, Chancellor of the Exchequer (1643–1727), “Mathematically detestable,” is the sentence passed upon him by Saint-Simon. Could any word add to its meaning? A page chosen at random of these memoirs affords matter for thought and study.

## II. THE HOUSE OF ARMAND COLIN

Let me particularize one or two of the monumental works which are the speciality of this firm. First and foremost comes the “History of France” in twelve volumes—each sold separately—from the fourth century down to our own time, conjointly edited by M. Ernest Lavisse and my late friend M. Alfred Rambaud. Thus, would we turn to the Religious Wars or the Revolution, we obtain scholarly summaries of each subject.

Then we have also, complete in eight illustrated volumes, the history of French literature and the French language, the editor M. Petit de Julleville, being assisted by no less than fifty collaborators, each in his own field no less distinguished than himself. Here, again, we may make a selection. In the



third volume, for instance, students of the Renaissance can delight in the poets of the Pleiad and the great prose writers who were their contemporaries; they can also behold a facsimile of Rabelais' autograph on a manuscript of Montaigne, bearing daté 1588, with portraits of himself, Marot, Amyot, and many others. These superb eight volumes form a most precious contribution to twentieth-century French literature.

A history of "Religious Art in France," with many beautiful illustrations forming a single volume and costing one pound only, is accessible to all. A small folio, this beautiful book cannot be pocketed by tourists so as to help them on the spot, but it is one to read before and after French travel, and remains a precious reminder of impressions.

Two sumptuous works are appearing volume after volume, and we do not learn that the war has interfered with their publication.

The first is an illustrated history of Art from Christian times down to the present day. Ten superb volumes have already been issued, these containing 2848 engravings and 60 coloured plates. The name of the editor, M. André Michel, *Conservateur* (Curator) of the National museums, speaks for itself.

Another immense undertaking is the "History of the French Language,"\* edited by M. Ferdinand Brunot, four volumes of which have already appeared, and which have attracted much favourable notice here and in Continental and American reviews.

A most useful publication within the reach of very small purses and very busy folks, is the Armand Colin series of selections from famous writers, more

\* "Histoire de la Langue Française des origines à 1900."

especially French writers, and including classics as well as modern and contemporary works. Thus for two francs we can get as much as most of us have time for, of Rabelais, Marivaux, Voltaire, Renan, Stendhal, Zola, Anatole France, and Paul Bourget. I pick eight names out of a score. Outsiders appear in translation with short biographical and critical introductions by authors of the first rank.

We find on this list the names of Goethe and Schiller, Tolstoï and Tourgenieff, Shakespeare, Dickens, George Eliot, and even Wells and Kipling!

It is a happy circumstance for the literary *Entente Cordiale* that the senior of the present firm, M. Max Leclerc, knows English life, and especially our educational system, perhaps better than any Frenchman living. Long sojourns among us have enabled him to write two of the most informing books ever penned by a foreigner.

The first treats of English education, collegiate and popular; the second, of society and the professional classes, both combining large views with sympathetic insight.

These works ought to be translated for, alas! the still numerous readers to whom French is as unfamiliar as Gujarati itself.\* The second volume named received distinction, being crowned, in other words, awarded the prize of that year.

In the following pages, some of the works appearing from the Armand Colin press will speak for themselves.

I must not pass over the growing appreciation of Wordsworth, notably due in France to a devoted

\* "L'Education des classes moyennes et dirigeantes en Angleterre,"  
"Les Professions et la Société en Angleterre." Each 4 francs. 1894.

admirer, M. Légouis, author of that little masterpiece, "La Jeunesse de Wordsworth."\* The poet's American biographer in the first volume of his exhaustive work,† frequently cites his French fellow-writer, and with the utmost admiration. Of the above-named work, one of a long list, Mr. Harper truly writes that it is a new departure in literary biography. Why is it not translated into English? A fitting companion would it be to such monographs, for instance, as Mr. Gosse's "Memoir of Coventry Patmore." The accomplished professor of English language and literature at the Sorbonne, not content with critical interpretation, has undertaken and not without success, the task of translation and in verse. After all, Wordsworth was essentially the poet of the Revolution, little wonder therefore that the *Prelude* should have immense attraction for French readers.

The long catalogue of twentieth-century French works dealing with English authors must be here curtailed. I have only endeavoured to indicate their nature and importance.

Nor can I describe other intellectual achievements of the last sixteen years. Scientific discovery, economics, philosophy and metaphysics, I must perforce leave to more competent hands.

It is not within my compass to treat of Fouillée, Coste, Bergson and others who have opened new tracks throughout the limitless ocean of Thought. Each of these great creative thinkers deserve, and some have already found, capable interpreters here and indeed throughout Europe.

\* Paris, Hachette, 1900.

† London, 1916.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CHARACTERISTICS

#### I. THE NOVELISTS

AFTER forty and odd years' experience of French life, both in town and country, and of all sorts and conditions of men, I unhesitatingly aver its leading characteristic to be *terre-à-terre* or humdrum respectability. The most versatile, most acutely endowed and wittiest people of the Western world stand for domesticity itself. On a French hearth the altar-fire is never allowed to flicker out, no ruthless hand is ever laid upon time-honoured Lares and Penates; from generation to generation heirlooms, alike the priceless and the homely, are held sacred. The ancestral home is the national Palladium. Hence it comes about that our neighbours good humouredly twit ourselves as mere nomads. "You invented the word 'home,'" they say, "but never live in one. Here to-day, there to-morrow, what is home to you?"

Nothing indeed more astonishes them than the happy unconcern with which English folks flit from abode to abode, domicile it cannot be called. Here only the storied castle, the historic mansion can claim such a title.

The permanence of the French dwelling is easily accounted for. Eighty per cent. of rural householders

live under their own roofs, often "a poor thing, but 'tis my own," they could say with Touchstone.

More striking still is the almost invariable freehold possessed by the professional classes. From the pages of the French "Who's Who?" ("Qui êtes vous?") we find that doctors, lawyers, authors, actors and the rest are generally two-housed, that is to say, they rent a Paris flat and spend the long vacation in inherited château or unpretending country house.\* Just as our aristocracy and American millionaires have their seats and town residences, so the untitled gentry of France have two addresses in the Directory and on their visiting-cards. With hardly an exception, I find that our favourite or best known novelists are in this happy position. Thus the brothers Margueritte have country-houses near Fontainebleau. Marcelle Tinayre, Marcel Prévost, René Bazin, Henry Bordeaux are equally fortunate, and so are Edmond Rostand, his fellow-dramatists, musicians, journalists, and others whose names are familiar to English admirers.

The raillery as to our nomadic habits gives place to shocked surprise when our French friends learn that we let our houses furnished! That, without a scruple, strangers are admitted into the *sancta sanctorum*, the home, seems in their eyes an insult to household gods, a positive dereliction of duty. In astoundment they lift up their hands with the reiterated "Mon Dieu, mon Dieu!" ever expressive of the inexpressible.

If the home is a fixture, not to be quitted except by dire necessity, the same holds good with its

\* See "L'Habitation en France," by the late M. de Foville, official statistician.

contents. There is no snobbery as to antiquated fashions, no feminine sighs called forth by faded carpets and out-of-date furniture.

For thirty and odd years I visited the town and country-house of rich wine-growing friends in Burgundy. Neither at Dijon nor at Gemeaux, half an hour off by rail, could I ever discern the slightest change in familiar objects. Renovation had not found its way here. Salons, dining-rooms, bed-chambers from year to year remained untouched, not a yard of crepon, not a new paper on the walls, not a new door-mat, caught the eye. And another generation hence, I dare say, things would be the same.

And now I will mention a second and still greater shock given to French folks by an insular habit, which throws even more light on national divergencies.

The fact of allowing strangers to make themselves at home in our drawing and bedrooms and to use our furniture, may pass for a practical habit of eminently practical people. But money-loving in excess as our neighbours are supposed to be, one form of English liberality strikes them as the height of indelicacy. This is the cheque so often substituted for a wedding gift, brides and bridegrooms here often receiving cheques by the dozen instead of plate, jewels, or furniture. In French eyes, the money-gift on these occasions would be regarded as an insult, and as such returned.

To account for what look like prejudices, we must go to the beginning of French history and dive deep into the arcana of social life.

The peasant freehold, set as much store by as the

ancestral chateau, dates from the Crusades. Even at that time the patient, thrifty countryman had his stocking-full, and his little hoard helping to pay the seigneur's ransom, was reimbursed in kind. He was awarded *un lopin de terre*, an acre or two of his great but impoverished lord. The Crusades made Jacques Bonhomme owner of the soil. And in the archives of a Burgundian village, I know, may be seen title-deeds of later acquisitions, the original field or vineyard being added to, women often figuring in purchases. Thus in 1572 a certain Girarde (*née Sirene*), wife of Claude Pacotte, is named as co-purchaser.

Here we have an explanation of French repugnance to the thought of money gifts at a wedding. Except among the *déclassé*, *i.e.* the ne'er do weel, the thriftless, no bride, whether lowly or of the highest rank, is undowered. No Frenchman could be rudely awakened to his new responsibilities as was the hero of "The Angel in the House," by the happy-go-lucky command, "Felix, will you pay?" On his wedding tour the new-made wife, a well-to-do vicar's daughter, wanted a pair of sand-shoes—and, quite naturally, was penniless.

From earliest times and in all ranks, the French wife has been dowered. Elsewhere I have described the marriage of a gamekeeper's daughter, and how, with no little ceremony, the contract was drawn up by the village notary and his clerk, the bride's portion in land, goods and money being strictly tied down to herself and her children.

The home and wedlock! These are the cornerstones of French civilization, like the Pyramids immutable and indestructible. Changes, social, political and intellectual, we must be prepared to see,

but "when the heavens fall," as said the ancient Gauls, and not before, will the domestic altar become flameless and brides go as beggar-maids to their new home.

In other fields there is a perpetual ebb and flow. Who, for instance, could have foreseen the resuscitation of the domestic novel, "La Terre," "Madame Bovary," "L'Héritier" superseded by romance naïve and guileless as "La Princesse de Clèves," "Marianne," and "Paul et Virginie"? Zola, Flaubert and Maupassant set aside for followers of Madame de La Fayette, the Abbé de Saint Pierre, and Marivaux? Yet such is the case. A new school of novelists has sprung up and come to the fore within the last decade, a school recalling our mid-Victorians, and if wanting in their force and humour, not less trustworthy as portrayers of contemporary life. Of the foremost among these twentieth-century writers I have written fully elsewhere. I will here only outline one or two typical stories.

"Stéphanie," by M. Paul Adam, the brilliant author of "La Bataille d'Uhde," without being in the least *un roman à thèse*, turns upon that characteristic of the French nation, nepotiousness, an apter word here than nepotism, and opens a wide field for discussion. The hero, an uncle in the prime of life, set down as a confirmed old bachelor, and so considering himself, is surrounded by greedy nephews and nieces, who already regard his property as their own, parents and elders in every way upholding such views. So plain, indeed, does the scheming become, and so indelicately do both old and young comport themselves, that the uncle at last becomes desperate. He finds himself surrounded by a veritable Chinese wall



of hangers-on, and resolves upon an effort of self-deliverance. The bachelor falls in love—or tries to fall in love—with a not very interesting and designing little personage, who gives the name to the story. But, strive as he may, the humorously disconsolate victim is worsted and yields to family sentiment—a predominant factor in French life. The Code civil does not, of course, entail with regard to nephews and nieces, but, as an old Frenchman once observed to myself, “These young folk are regarded as heirs of childless uncles and aunts, and this makes them more affectionate. *Ça leur rend plus affectueux.*” The value of such affection is disputable.

Unlike most French novels for family circles, that is to say, free from pages unreadable in the home, this story is very amusing and lively, and abounds in character drawing and ironic touches.

“Le Maître des Foules,” by Louis Delzons—alas! the late Louis Delzons—is characterised, as were its predecessors, by strength, unity of purpose, and strict adhesion to native soil. We are not here introduced to cosmopolitan bridge and tennis players, their dialogues being interspersed with the latest terminology of the games and slang. “Le Maître des Foules” is a picture of French middle-class life in the twentieth century, a picture neither idealised nor coarsened, neither melodramatic nor sentimental, but abounding in the tragedy of every day. Two characters dominate the rest, although each has life and individuality. Manès, the hero, ex-professor, ill-favoured of person, without fortune, but ambitious and a born orator, loves Germaine Grandier, a beautiful, high-spirited and accomplished girl, and, like himself, having her way to make in the world. She returns his love,

so she thinks, but not passionately enough to risk poverty and vicissitudes by his side. So she marries Vambard, a widower and multi-millionaire, supposedly become so by means of his factories, but in reality through speculations. The marriage is purely one of *convenance*. Vambard wants a handsome, sprightly lady to preside at his sumptuous table and chaperon his young daughter; on her side, Germaine coolly accepting luxury and an allowance for her somewhat unpleasant mother. Meantime Manès goes to a mining district in his native province, takes part in one strike, averts another, gets named deputy by force of personal and mental qualifications, becomes a leader of men, and overturns the Government! The story ends somewhat enigmatically. Germaine in the last scenes rises in our estimation whilst Manès sinks. The heroine finds—when it is too late—that all the while she has returned her lover's passion, but will only break legally—the word "loyally" hardly meets the case—with her husband. Manès' proposal is that of a vulgar *boulevardier*. Another story telling us of Manès, the Minister of *Travaux publics*, and of the divorced Germaine, would be interesting. His arraignment of the Ministry he overturned seems somewhat vague, and his oratory redolent of the Revolutionary leaders. To those familiar or no with the sittings of the French Chamber, so unlike anything in our own House of Commons, M. Delzons' Parliamentary scenes are instructive and entertaining.

"Ciel Rouge," by Claude Ferval, *nom de plume* of Madame la Baronne Aimery de Pierrebourg, whilst a study of domestic life, is also didactic. As might be expected from a convent-bred authoress, she takes

up the reactionary cause. Her novel joins the clerical crusade against divorce.

The young girl has only of late years become the heroine of a novel. Hitherto it has ever been the wife, *divorcée* or widow, never *la jeune fille*. It is only in English novels that French maidens play the principal part. Even the late *doyen* of English romance falls into the common error. The Renée of "Beauchamp's Career," an aristocratic young lady who indulges in sentimental *tête-à-tête* with her English adorer, who walks and floats in a gondola alone with him and openly reciprocates his amorous outpourings, never existed except in the writer's imagination. No daughter of a humble *bourgeois* or peasant farmer could so far forget the ABC of decorum.

The French girl, proving too unromantic a subject, *la jeune femme* takes her place. She has either a husband of whom she is tired or a husband who is tired of her—and, of course, a lover—marital storms being finally quelled by some delightful mother or mother-in-law. In drawing old ladies French novelists are unrivalled. And as Horace Walpole wrote, "There are no old people in France." "Ciel Rouge" turns upon a duel, the jealous husband having run his wife's admirer through the body. She has not, it must be mentioned, sacrificed duty and honour, the usual child in such stories being her guardian angel.

As an argument against divorce, the novel must be pronounced singularly unfortunate. Not even M. de Kermor's charming old mother could render the reunion of her insensate daughter-in-law and Draconian son anything short of a terrestrial inferno.

It is not only middle-class life that to-day occupies the French novelist, alike the world-famous and the aspirant. The latter name no longer applies to Mlle Hamad, the authoress of "Chez Eux" (1910), her latest story having found a place in "La Revue des Deux Mondes," the highest honour within literary reach.

This lady has more especially devoted her pen to the artizan class, and indeed the above-named story, as she informed me herself, may be called autobiographical. She relates personal experiences of a large workmen's block in the heart of Paris, every simple, unadorned page proving a revelation to the uninitiated. What indeed do we find? The very Antipodes of conditions in England regarded as almost ideal.

In her pleasant reminiscences lately published, the American wife of a French minister related how she found it impossible to play the Lady Bountiful. The experiment was amiably tried during the long vacation, but utterly failed. No Lady Bountifuls are needed throughout industrial and rural France.

The well-intentioned efforts of English philanthropists and social workers, if followed in French industrial centres, would be similarly resented. University men and society women settling down as amateur missionaries, moral and practical, would be promptly and cruelly disillusioned. Anything like meddle-making from without is *lèse majesté* in French eyes.

Thus, when Mlle Hamad became a tenant of the block, she found that her fellow-inmates were as absolutely free from intrusion as aristocrats in their ancestral castles. No district visitors crossed the

threshold, no lay or clerical busybodies disturbed the housewife amid her labours or her husband in his leisure, offering well-intentioned instruction as to their parental duties. From the first day of January to the last of December the good people were let alone.

And herein lies the moral of the story.

These hard-working and, for the most part, dignified men and women did not look to others for Sweetness and Light. They preferred to become their own reformers, to work out social and intellectual salvation themselves. In our long chats when we were neighbours near Paris, the authoress related to me the genesis of her book. She is an enthusiast for her subject, and from this unaffected narrative may be gathered a clear insight into French artizan life, far more so than from volumes devoted to statistics and psychology.

It is related of George Eliot that she read forty volumes concerning the modern Jew before writing "Daniel Deronda." Little wonder that when naïvely mentioning the fact to a Jewish visitor, he replied—

"Madam, you would have done better to talk to forty Jews."

Mlle Hamad, like Mary, chose the better part. Neither carried away by theories nor enthusiasm, she made up her mind, first to master her subject, then to write about it. For a time she became one of the people, settled down to hugger-mugger—I have the authority of Fuller for using the word—with the work-a-day world. Perhaps this is easier in France than anywhere else, that is, if you set about it in the right way. To perfect at-homeness and

inborn good-fellowship I attribute what success I have had myself in dealing with peasant-folks in my numerous works on rural France.

The dainty Parisian who figures as the heroine of the story, found amid her new associates, as among the old, alike the best, medium and worst of human nature strangely intermingled, the first predominating. Oddly enough as it may sound to English readers, the young widow Mme Juliette Fabian, lodged with these working people, occupying one small room, and for one reason—because she could not live in her own rank upon £120 a year! How many English gentlewomen stranded on this income can live decently in a flat and in a reputable neighbourhood upon the sum, even finding a few pounds annually for charity? But on this subject see note to Chapter IX.

Mlle Hamad's narrative is written for the heart, from personal experience and without any attempt at style, perhaps for that very reason producing all the more effect on the reader's mind. For many reasons it deserves translation into English. Excellently intended men and women among ourselves interfere too much with those who, in birth, breeding and education, belong to lower social strata. The self-constituted missionaries do not allow such neighbours to work out their own intellectual salvation. With these wise words, Mlle Hamad concludes what is a very interesting story as well as a great economic and ethical lesson:—

“The great error” (of social workers and economists) “is to separate classes, the crime of rendering them enemies. For any set of human beings to live apart is to ignore and misunderstand each other. To

seek in every direction hearts that can beat in unison with our own—such is the mission of fraternity.”

Alike the most dramatic and quietest, the delineators of society, so-called, and of ordinary folks take up the theme. There is hardly a phase of domestic life that is not to-day portrayed in fiction.

M. Henry (note the prevailing anglicizing of French names) Bordeaux's essentially French novel, *La Croisée des chemins*, deals also with middle-class life. We have here no would-be English types, and no anglicisms. Folks do not reiterate “Play” over lawn tennis, or in every sentence use English colloquialisms. The subject is thoroughly French, and for once we have no history of a fascinating and erring wife, *divorcée* or widow. The unmarried heroine is a young, beautiful and—needless to say—always perfectly dressed Parisian. Indeed, all French novelists of the other sex might be supposed to get hints from the Paquins and Worths, so minutely and elaborately are their ladies' dresses always described.

To enter thoroughly into the spirit of this life-story we must have been familiarized on French soil with narratives of a white elephant in the shape of *une succession*, in other words, property, or the reversion of property, handicapped with debts and charges.

Pascal Rouvray is a brilliant young doctor in Paris, fairly on his way to fame, fortune and a most desirable marriage, when he receives a telegram from Lyons announcing the death of his father, he also a medical man of high position in that great city. But the elder Rouvray had been the victim

of a most cruel *succession*, heroically striving throughout life to pay off the financial burdens encumbering the ancestral estate, and all the while keeping his anxieties and responsibilities to himself.

Here, then, comes Pascal to the parting of the ways. Shall he, must he renounce the dazzling career dreamed of and already entered upon in the capital, or what, from a pecuniary point of view, is much more certain, take up his father's practice, prevent his mother's patrimony from absorption, educate his young brother and sister—and, above all, perhaps relinquish his love? For in this case passion and worldly advantage have been allied. The young scientist has fallen deeply in love with the handsome, elegant, spirited Laurence Avenière, Parisian of Parisians. Will she follow him into what, to her, would be dreary exile?

Conscience, or rather that intensity of family feeling so characteristic of French natures, decides Pascal. Individualist as he is, he chooses self-sacrifice, hoping against hope that Laurence will follow his example. She fails him, and there the first portion of the story ends, the second taking up the hero's fortunes thirteen years later. By this time his duty has been nobly but coldly done. He returns to Paris, there to take up the dreamed-of career of former days, and there to meet the same evil genius that worldly Parisian to whom love only meant power and social advancement. The old spell is cast over Pascal's unforgetting love, wife and children are momentarily relegated to a secondary place, when a most dramatic scene, a scene to which only Sarah Bernhardt could do justice, cuts the Gordian knot.

None of his fellow-novelists are better known



here than this powerful writer, and an English version of his popular *La Maison* ("The House," Dent), lately issued, will increase his popularity. The Paris edition appeared in 1913. The title bespeaks France, not in part, but as a compact, indivisible, impregnable, whole. The opening pages may be called a *résumé* of French life, a sublimate of component elements, a crystallization of widely diverse adjuncts. I cannot refrain from translating this brief introduction—

"Where are you bound for?"

"To the house."

Thus reply little boys and girls on their way from school or from the fields. Bright and clear shine their eyes as the grass after rain, unless checked, spontaneous in their speech as the shooting of plants. Space at their entire command, unhampered in their growth.

"Where are you going?"

They do not say, "We are returning home." Nor do they say, "We are going back to our house." They simply say, "To the house." Maybe they speak of a poor, one-storeyed hovel; all the same it is "the house." There is only one house in the world for them, later on there may be others, but that is not so sure.

Even young men and young women, married and elderly folks, similarly express themselves. They did this "at the house," say they. One might suppose them speaking of their actual abode, not at all; they have in mind the home of their childhood, that which belonged to their parents and which perhaps they failed to keep, or in which they changed their modes of life; all the same unchangeable it remains

in the memory, "you see there are not two houses in the world."

And if in the French sense this holds good, equally may the dictum apply to the household. Perhaps, in the Western world, only in Greece is found any similitude.

A dozen generations have often been born, have lived and died, under the same roof. To-day you are pretty certain to find representatives of three. With ourselves a bride would be hard put to it indeed for a home of her own, if a mother-in-law, and perhaps a stray aunt and uncle were tacked to the bargain. And desperately in love as Romeo himself must that Englishman be who rather than renounce his adored one adopts her fond mamma as well. In the French home and in the novel, no more ingratiating figure is found than the inevitable *bonne maman*.

M. Bordeaux' portrait gallery introduces us to a variety of characters. First naturally comes the head—rather is he sub-head, the grandfather occupies the seat of honour till he voluntarily renounces it—of the house, whose footstep none ever mistakes for another's. Was there any question at issue, any vexation to be smoothed down, any threatened catastrophe? No sooner did somebody exclaim, "He is there!" than disquietude vanished.

Then comes the mother. "Peace emanated from her presence. She was the soul of the house, thereby irradiated, as thought irradiates the countenance."

Next with Rembrandt-like touch, is etched the unlovable old grandfather, with his sarcastic little laugh, "that at once gave him the better of his interlocutors. Never have I heard anything more

disconcerting than that little laugh, making you at once feel that you were a simpleton." His one amusement and sole occupation was his violin; the instrument was to him as a living pet, but he never played except for himself and in his own room.

And then how we seem to know the great-aunt Dine, diminutive of Bernardine, with her capacity for story-telling and inventing new words!

"Let me apostrophize you, dear great-aunt Bernardine. If childish memory recalls something of a racket, one of those mules which cannot trot without jingling bells, an uproar announcing a procession, I owe it to your tales and songs. Whenever I recall my childhood, which is every day, thus full of movement, thus joyously is the summons answered. And because it is so, I could never complain of my lot. At every turn of the road the past comes back laden with spring flowers.

"Aunt Dine kept strict watch over the house. No one must approach her without clean hands, that is to say, with an easy conscience. One day when supervising the weekly bread-baking our maid was about to prepare the dough, Aunt Dine caught her arm—

"What are you thinking of, my good girl? You forgot the sign of the cross."

This observance was never omitted in respectable houses, adds our author. "Before my father cut a new loaf he performed the same act. When the grand-sire took his place, I always noticed that it was passed by. This was one of my early astonishments. Already I began to understand the meaning and weight of divergencies in religion."

After the parents and grandsires, the children! This story might well have had "The Family" for

title. What, cry English readers, the family in France, a country of only children, in which the very name of nursery is unknown—could any more preposterous name be given to a novel? But true it is, this house, and it is no exception, was the home of seven lively boys and girls! Larger groups I could describe from personal experience. Seven little sisters I have met at a dinner given in honour of their elder's first Communion, the heroine of the fête being just thirteen. Four sturdy boys are the pride of another Darby and Joan, five brothers and one sister of a third, and so on and so on. And more than one bachelor have I known, devoted to the orphaned children of cherished brother and sister, wedlock and parentage given up for their sakes.

Instructive as is this picture of threefold family life, I cannot say that it is an agreeable one, or in accordance with my own experiences. None, familiar to me in France, and I have known many, were so utterly wanting in charm, gaiety and *entrain*. It is a story of discords. The insupportable old Voltairean, invariably called *Grandpère* with his irritating little laugh—the equally insupportable narrator of the chronicle, his grandson—the sharp-tongued Aunt Dine—the household generally, form a very unsympathetic group, two figures redeeming the rest, those of the father and mother. The village doctor is a dignified and admirable type, whilst the mother beautifies, etherealizes the picture. In the words of Wordsworth—

“Her very presence such a sweetness breathed,  
That flowers and trees and even the silent hills,  
And everything she looked on, should have had  
An intimation how she bore herself  
Towards them and to all creatures.”

The motto of this book might be taken from its own pages (343). "It is a poem of the soil, the race, the family."

Admirable as are the moral and social qualities of the French middle classes, the æsthetic sense too often is lacking. It is here that M. Boyslève's story will be found illuminating. "*La jeune fille bien élevée*" \*—i.e. conventionally brought up—only risked the loss of that all-sufficing endowment because she developed musical tastes! Owing to family losses she finds herself dowerless, the forfeiture being atoned for, she feels, by these newly-discovered gifts. No sooner, however, do her parents discern the working of the girl's mind than they determine to marry her, willy-nilly. Marriage, at least, was respectable, whereas the career of a professional musician was not. So after many matrimonial peripatetics such a calamity was avoided by the advances of a priggish but well-placed architect, ten years the demoiselle's senior; the mother's farewell after the wedding ending thus, "Never forget, my daughter, that your husband has chosen you because you have been *bien élevée*."

This is the theme, and of plot the story possesses none. The touch of a master hand lies elsewhere. We have here, as focussed on a Dutch canvas, French provincial life, every figure is a distinct personality, every incident is part and parcel of the little domestic drama, not a scene, not a conversation could be left out. Nor is the background forgotten, and herein comes under notice another feature of the new fiction. Local colour contributes to the reality of these

\* To this author I have devoted a chapter in "French Men, Women, and Books." Chapman & Hall, 1910.

realistic but non-repellent studies. Those of us who number good friends among the French bourgeoisie feel here transported to familiar scenes and circles. Skilfully, too, does M. Boyslève put the story into the heroine's mouth. One fancies all the while that instead of a man's novel, we have a young girl's diary in our hands.

To show *how* with what ardour would-be regenerators of society have set to work may be gauged by M. Andre Couvrere's anti-alcoholic novel, "La Source Fatale," 1901. If ethics are not as yet scientific in France, at any rate writers of this type approach ethical problems in a scientific spirit. "La Source Fatale" is no mere story of degradation and ruin gradually brought about by drink. It is the diagnosis from day to day of moral disease due to physical causes. French novel-readers can stand anything but twaddle; for what they call *les sublimes horreurs* they entertain warm admiration. But the sublime horrors of this powerful story are no figments of the imagination. In following his wretched hero through the various stages of alcoholic poisoning, the author shows all the realism of the pathologist. This work forms one of a series dealing with social problems.

The trend of Twentieth-Century drama is equally realistic in the higher sense and equally ethical. Take, for instance, René Bazin's popular play, *Les Remplaçantes*, a dramatized version of his novel, "Donatienne." And it is at the same time a moving re-echo of Rousseau's crusade against wet nursing. How vainly the great Socialist and his followers have preached to women on their maternal duties for upwards of two centuries a stroll in any public

garden tells us. Alike in Paris and in provincial recreation grounds, there are the inevitable wet-nurses with their long cloaks and streamers, blue ribbons worn in the case of girls, red when the nursling is a boy. Rows upon rows of foster-mothers, stout, rubicund, over-fed, often of coarse appearance, spend hours in the shade, suckling their charges with the greatest gusto, "changing" their swaddling clothes as complacently as if they were in a chamber. I do not say nursery, since the whole house is a French child's nursery. There these wet-nurses while away the hours, apparently forgetful of their own infants left behind.

A few women, with the noblest intentions, as openly and as free from *mauvaise honte*, proclaim themselves disciples of the Genovese. Ladies moving in fashionable society will proudly have Monsieur or Mademoiselle Bêbé brought to them when dining out or at the theatre, for the maternal repast.

Even lady barristers, so Colette Yver informs us, retire in the severe precincts of the Palais de Justice for the fulfilment of their duties. But the wet-nurse flourishes as of old, living on the fat of the land, doing nothing but sit in the sun and replenishing baby, at any cost keeping it in first-rate condition for the prize to supplement high wages, namely a gold watch and chain when her task is ended.

Amongst ethical plays, M. Hervieu's *La Course au Flambeau* is the most remarkable, and Mme Réjane's impersonation of the heroine is a thrill to remember. Now, I have seen the greatest French actors and actresses in their most famous rôles during the last forty and odd years. Never has any piece

of acting struck me more than Mme Réjane's in this purely domestic drama.

The moral of the story is a scathing attack on parental adulation, that child-worship beginning with the cradle and, for weal or woe, only terminating with the grave—or broken hearts.

The great actress typifies a middle-class mother absolutely wrapt up in her only child and her fortunes, the immortal Sévigné herself not more blindly idolatrous of a most commonplace daughter.

The equally commonplace object of maternal adoration here has naturally been provided with a suitable partner, and, in so far as human efforts can go, everything that makes existence comfortable and happy. And with the natural egotism of a spoiled child, the bride-elect takes such good fortune as a matter of course. What on earth were other people's feelings to her?

And, as it happened, in this case she was not making the parental, rather the maternal, home desolate. So entirely was she the apple of her mother's eye, so ruthlessly, so desperately had that mother sacrificed her own, her husband and his worldly interests, that the marriage was not to mean separation. The son-in-law could not remain under the roof of his wife's parents. Business called him out of France, enforced exile meaning less than nothing to one of the family quartette. For the mother existed neither Eastern nor Western Hemisphere, neither Arctic snows nor tropical heat, neither home nor ties. In one world only she lived, the world meant only her daughter. But there was another in similar case, and she in turn had been



doubly a child-idolater, the *bonne maman*, the grand-mamma.

With unbounded exultation Madame unfolded to her mother the successful arrangement. The head of the house had, of course, fallen in with her plan. She was not to be bereft of what was dearer than life itself. All four would embark for a new home together.

The white-haired aged lady listened without once opening her lips. When the narrator came to an end, her own name not having been so much as mentioned, her face changed to deadly paleness, and before uttering it, her looks clearly expressed the query—

“And what is to become of me?”

Too effusively happy to weigh her words, mother answered mother with queries of no softening nature. Had not the grandmother, in turn, quitted her own parents? Was it not the allotted portion of women to put their children even before those who had borne them?—and so on.

Carried away by almost frenzied joy at being freed from a horrible nightmare, the daughter forgot filial respect, uttered angry words of recrimination, and the pair parted.

Naturally the outburst was followed by a quick change of feeling, and here comes the final scene.

A piercing cry rang throughout the crowded theatre, freezing the blood of the hearers—

“Mother!”

Not a word more. It was a dead face that now mutely reproached. The grandmother had reached her chamber and sat down—to die. The white marble-like features still—at least so the distraught

gazer felt—wore an awful expression of reproach. The better frame of mind, the desire to make amends, had come too late!

## II. THE POETS

Later-day, if not all twentieth-century poets, have followed in the same footsteps, glorifying home, native village, the domestic affections, and with one or two poems this part shall conclude. As a most original writer, himself a poet, has said—

“Neither painting, music, statuary nor prose equals that superhumanly adorable thing—beautiful verse.”

Another dictum of Barbey d’Aurevilly, a genius if ever any existed, may well be added. “I have never believed in great talent without morality. Talent (or genius) is as much a question of soul as intelligence itself.”

Domestic poetry of France, translations of which I have published elsewhere,\* cannot be better studied than in the little volume compiled for state schools by M. Merlet.† It may be new to some readers that some of the most touchingly devotional poetry ever written belongs to nineteenth and twentieth-century France, and I have here cited from one or two poets of the foregoing. As yet France has produced no poetic George Sand, no Elizabeth Barrett Browning, but poetesses she can boast of from the days of Louise Labé (1526–1556) downwards.

\* See also “French Men, Women, and Books.” Chapman & Hall, 1900.

† “Choix de Poètes du XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle,” par Gustave Merlet, Inspecteur général de l’Université, Paris. A. Colin.

To show how completely the home, the family, have constituted the national ideal, I make two steps backward.

Nothing in the whole range of French fireside poetry surpasses the charm and artlessness of "Il pleut, Bergère, il pleut." It was written in the throes of the Revolution by one of its most remarkable apostles and victims. Here, amid the throes of political passions and civil war, we find the poet's eyes yearningly turned homeward. We see also that then, as now, marriage was no happy-go-lucky affair, hastily made up by boys and girls as with ourselves, but a compact entered upon with due solemnity and regard to the future. The hand of the shepherd maid was to be formally demanded by her suitor's parents, and awaiting the morrow, she was placed under sisterly care and her little flock were duly housed. This gem Renan could never hear sung or recited without tears.

It is, above all, heart and the ring of sincerity that touch us in the following pieces, with the foregoing rendered *tant bien que mal* into English.

The *Neiges d'Antan*, by André Theuriet (1833-1907), the late beloved story-teller, I call Darby and Joan. Many a pair, in recalling this life-like picture, have I seen and known during my French sojourns. Such worthy souls have not, perhaps, the very slightest notion that, in their homely persons and amid oft-times what look like penurious surroundings, they represent what is best and holiest in their country.

## THE RAIN IS FALLING, SHEPHERD MAID.

(Il pleut, Bergère, il pleut.)

## I.

The rain is falling, shepherd maid,  
 A storm is coming fast,  
 Let's hasten to some friendly shade  
 And shelter till 'tis past.

## II.

Hark how the big drops patter down,  
 The water runs in streams,  
 Whilst from yon clouds that darkly frown,  
 Fiercely the lightning gleams.

## III.

The thunder growls, my shepherd maid,  
 Delay not, take my arm,  
 Gather your sheep, be not afraid,  
 We're near my mother's farm.

## IV.

Ah ! there she stands, the housewife dear,  
 And with her, sister Anne;  
 See both, a visitor is here,  
 Beguile her as you can.

## V.

With sister Anne, sit down, *ma mie*,  
 The peat shall soon burn bright :  
 Your little flock shall cared for be,  
 And folded for the night.

## VI.

Good-night, good-night, my shepherd maid,  
 The storm has passed away,  
 But sister makes your little bed,  
 There sweetly dream till day.

## VII.

To-morrow, with my mother, I  
 May fortune us betide !  
 Unto your father we will hie,  
 And ask you for my bride.

FABRE D'EGLANTINE (1755-1794).

## DARBY AND JOAN.

## I.

Fast fall the big snowflakes, the cheerful logs blaze,  
Half waking, half dreaming, the old couple gaze  
On blurred window-panes, now with tear, now with smile,  
Each is living once more a far-off erstwhile.

## II.

"Wife mine," said the good man, his voice fond and low,  
"Mindst thou of a snowstorm, ah! how long ago!  
Proud lover was I then, yet fearful to tell,  
The secret, already, thou knewest full well."

## III.

Sighed softly the matron—"As if yesterday  
To myself happed that walk through the snow-cumbered way.  
Blue with cold were thy hands, and hoary thy curls,  
Not with years as to-day but with wind-driven swirls."

## IV.

"Whilst I," smiled the grandsire, "in sight of the farm,  
Like aspen leaf trembled when giving my arm,  
Together we plodded through mire and through snow,  
I wondering in silence, maybe—does she know?"

## V.

"As for me," she replied, "I hung down my head,  
Not wholly unwilling to have my thoughts read,  
How came it I wist not, without yea or nay,  
When reached was the farmhouse there seemed naught to say."

## VI.

Fifty years 'tis since then, a long time ago,  
Fifty years have we lived, our hearts beating as one.  
"Dear woman," he murmured, "and no date to me,  
So dear as that walk with my partner to be!"

## VII.

"My life's mate," said she, "though whitened by Time  
As fields in the snowstorm our locks—in their prime,  
Thine raven, mine chestnut, yet glows in each breast,  
Warm as ever, our love, of all gifts, the best."

## VIII.

“With hands closely knitted, the last stage in view,  
Grant Heaven together we bid earth adieu,  
Undivided by death may husband and wife  
Undivided pass on to Infinite Life.”

ANDRÉ THEURIET (1833-1908).

Here is a touching scene—

## THE TWO PROCESSIONS.

(Les deux Cortèges.)

Contrasted groups at the cathedral meet.  
A doll-like coffin borne on liliated bier,  
Grief-stricken, past relief of sob or tear,  
A mother follows with unsteady feet.  
The second band, each countenance elate,  
The font approaches, that, too, lily-crowned,  
Parents, grandsires, and sponsors gathered round  
A precious, prayed-for birth to consecrate.  
Funereal and chrysmal rites are paid  
In chapels wide apart, and as before  
The two processions meet within the door,  
Then by their prayers to self-oblivion led.  
The black-robed mother on the nursling smiled,  
The other's tears flowed for her coffin'd child!

JOSEPHIN SOULARY (1815).

And here is heard the voice of Faith—

## THE BEREFT ONE.

(Qui me consolera ?)

1.

Who shall console me? I, as heretofore,  
Learning made answer, problems numberless  
Will lift thy spirit from its dire distress.  
To books I fled, but read them weeping sore.

2.

Who shall console me? I, Vanity replied,  
Thy years excuse, seek refuge in the world.  
Join the gay throng, with gold and gems imperaled.  
I doffed my sables, still despairing sighed.

## 3.

Who shall console me? I, came Travel's voice,  
 Away, away, with some enraptured band,  
 Set out for far-off legendary land.  
 I went, but in new scenes could not rejoice.

## 4.

Who shall console me? To no purpose sought  
 Were these, love also, human sympathy were dumb.  
 From my own heart's depths must sustainment come.  
 God-given peace, without which all is nought.

MME DESFORDES VALMORE (1786-1859).

## HAD I BUT KNOWN!

(Hélas! si j'avais su!)

Had I but known, when day by day,  
 Thy childish ardour urging on,  
 That thou wert soon to fade away,  
 Books, slate, and maps aside I'd thrown.  
 Had I but known!

With butterfly and bird and flower  
 Bright as their little lives, thy own,  
 By thee, each radiant summer hour,  
 Mid woodland glories should have flown.  
 Had I but known!

When January, gustful, made  
 Through snow-tipped boughs a dreary moan,  
 Mid piled-up toys thou shouldst have played,  
 A fairy queen upon her throne.  
 Had I but known!

Fictive, alas! thy early bloom:  
 A few short years in promise grown,  
 Then wert thou summoned to the tomb,  
 And now I sit and sigh alone.  
 Had I but known!

HEGISIPPE MOREAU (1810-1838).

## RUSTIC HOSPITALITY.

(Charité.)

The farm-folk dine: a grateful steam  
 Of soup, like incense, clouds the board;  
 Each, quitting plough and stabled team,  
 Now takes his place without a word.

About them clings the healthful air  
 Of fresh-stacked haulm and upturned mould;  
 Upon the shelves the copper ware  
 Gleam as if made of burnished gold.

A tattered starveling blocks the door  
 With outstretched hands and piteous whine.  
 "Sit, brother, sit, there's ample store,  
 None hungry go, when farm-folks dine!"

ROBERT CAZE (1815).

With this exquisite hymn I tie up my garland.

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN."

(La prière pour tous.)

I.

'Tis not for me to intercede,  
 As proxy for the human race,  
 Have I not ample cause to plead,  
 Myself, a sinner, seeking grace?

II.

No, if from earth by vice defiled,  
 Should be upraised a prayer to-day,  
 That voice be yours, oh! little child,  
 Who hardly know for whom you pray.

III.

Whilst on ourselves temptations dire,  
 And pitfalls deadly ever wait,  
 Let children's prayers, cherubic quire,  
 Like incense mount to Heaven's gate.

VICTOR HUGO (1812-1885).

### III. THE DRAMATISTS

"Est-il vrai qu'on rit toujours à Paris?" ("Are folks perpetually laughing in Paris?") asks Candide of his friend Martin. The question would not now be answered in the affirmative. "Truth to tell, Paris weeps, and food for tears rather than laughter at the present time best suits her mood." Thus I wrote in the early years of 1910. To take our chance at a



Parisian theatre may prove the reverse of entertaining, in the accepted sense of the word. French playgoers patronize the stage not to be amused, but to be sternly moralized. One by one the vices or follies of modern life are there held up to reprobation or ridicule. It is the playwright instead of the pulpit orator who attacks the public conscience. Here an audience is made to realize the disastrous effects not only to the home, but to the patrie, of making idols of one's children, there the evils of wet-nursing as systematically carried on in France. *La Course au Flambeau* and *Les Remplaçantes*, dealing respectively with these subjects, have been the successes of seasons. If I remember rightly, there is hardly a line in the first-mentioned piece that called forth a smile. Well pleased to have wept, grave as a revivalist congregation the theatre-goers dispersed.

Of even sterner stuff is Octave Mirbeau's great and terrible play—called a comedy!—*Business is Business* (*Les Affaires sont les Affaires*), lately given in London.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FRENCHWOMAN

#### I. AS HOUSEWIFE

IF I wished to characterize the average Frenchwoman in a sentence, I should quote Dr. Primrose's appraisal of his wife, the partner he had chosen for "such qualities as would wear well." Most English folks doubtless set her down as a very different type. Misleading French novels, want of acquaintanceship, lastly, insular prejudice, account for notions that amount to veritable caricature. Our sisters over the water are taken to be fascinating creatures of the butterfly kind, models as far as millinery and nicely-fitting gowns go, but hardly worth considering from a higher standpoint. Frivolous, worldly, unreliable, they are surely the last who have aught to teach us!

It would, of course, be absurd to describe the French wife and mother in Wordsworth's words. A perfect woman does not exist in any country, but—

". . . Nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort and command,"

is certainly the Frenchwoman.

Many admirable attributes she may claim as her own, some worthy of emulation. To begin with, she is first and foremost the wife and

mother—no mere household drudge, as in Germany, but an accomplished housewife, one who, alike in the middle and working classes, puts domestic duties before every other, turns everything to account, and keeps a persistent eye fixed on the future. To live from hand to mouth is very rarely a French procedure. Folks always contrive to have a margin, to make a provision for their children, and to be “kind to their old age.”

Now, France being a highly protected country, the cost of living is a third dearer than with ourselves, whilst salaries and wages are a third lower. We can, therefore, understand the responsibilities laid upon the housekeeper having only small means at her disposal. Every franc of income, every sou of wages must be laid out to the best possible advantage, not so much as a centime wasted. The clever mistress of a middle-class or artisan home manages to overcome tremendous difficulties—firstly, because she is eminently practical; and secondly, because she does not live in terror of her next-door neighbour. She refrains from buying carpets or curtains just because Mrs. Jones or Mrs. Smith has done so. And if she finds that a margin and a cook or even a “Tilly Slowboy” are incompatible, she renounces the luxury of having some one to prepare the family dinner and open the door, she puts pride in her pocket, goes to market herself, and with the help of a charwoman makes the domestic machine roll evenly.\*

\* “M. B. E. writes: The English wife of a French business man, of course serving in the war, paid me a visit last week. Throughout her married life of sixteen and odd years her home has been in one of the rich cities ruined by the Huns. She is now in England, where her

If Mrs. Grundy is set at naught, so also there is no sacrifice a French housewife will not readily encounter for the well-being of her family. Personal comfort, to say nothing of luxury or amusement, is never indulged in at the expense of family interests. The adage I apply to the average French-woman. Exceptions to the rule exist in France as elsewhere.

A working-man's wife is even more in need of domestic attainments than the partner of lawyer or doctor. As a French business woman once observed to me, "The condition of a working-man depends entirely upon the wife."

In her case the word "snobbery" is no more appropriate than to that of the professional man's wife. Public opinion is nevertheless nicely observed in one respect. Rags, slatternliness, shoes only fit for the dustbin, she dreads as some of my own

children are being educated, and this is what she told me: 'The cost of living in England at the present time is considerably below that in France *before the war*.' And my friend is living in a health resort, not in an out-of-the-way village. Let me particularize from my own experience. When last in Paris, now several years ago, bananas, be it remembered grown in French Africa, cost 2*d.* apiece, whilst three a penny were sold by Hastings hawkers. For a single box of matches since 1871 French folks have paid a penny; to-day here 7½*d.* is the price of a dozen boxes of Bryant and May's, pre-war price being 2½*d.* and 3½*d.* Take the following items from my note-books. In 1904 Parisians paid £2 1*s.* per ton of coals, and with regard to other fuel here is a curious incident: When staying somewhat later than usual at a favourite Dijon hotel I was obliged to have a fire, and 2*d.* was charged per log. A Dijonnais friend informed me that this was no excessive charge! Forests, be it remembered, to a large extent are State property, and some at certain intervals are cut for fuel. These are called *taillis*. As just ten years ago I wrote, from a postcard upwards—there are no halfpenny postcards in France—we may safely assume that every commodity costs a third more on the other side of the Channel."—From the *Westminster Gazette*, May 10th, 1916.

countrywomen dread a neighbour's inquisitorial eye. Thus you may traverse France from end to end without encountering tattered garments or dilapidated foot-gear. An English friend, who for the first time had made long journeys in France, told me that she was struck by nothing more than the good clothes and shoes of the peasant children. France is, indeed, the best shod nation in the world.

The secret of general tidiness among the working-classes is this—finery is eschewed, serviceableness, appropriateness, economy, are the only things thought of. And here I will mention a fact related to me by a French friend. Working-folks, he assured me, alike men and women, always keep a neat black suit or costume by them for funeral and ceremonial use. Thus, if overtaken by sudden bereavement or if the head of the house is called to take part in some public function, fitting clothes are always ready. Husband and wife do not wake up to find themselves confronted with a disconcerting problem. Of course, if fashion were followed, such a solution would be impossible. But "to look like other people" is not regarded as a necessity by the French work-a-day world.

A gratifying sight it is to see village youngsters pouring into the national school. One and all wear pinafores—or, more properly speaking, tunics—of strong, black, washable cotton or stuff, which, with sleeves and fastened round the waist, afford a great protection to frock, jacket, and knickerbockers. Boys up to fourteen, or even later, wear socks instead of stockings, which is another economy. We all know the tatterdemalion appearance of boys' stockings when darned or frayed out at the knee. Socks for

growing boys are a saving alike of soap, darning-cotton, time, and eyesores!

In the kitchen the most studious economy is practised.

Michelet wrote, "What puts a working-man in good humour when returning home after his day's work? It is the plateful of hot, savoury soup that his wife sets before him." In the humblest home soup is ever one of the mistress's chief concerns. When meat cannot be afforded, the water in which a vegetable has been boiled serves as stock, a bit of butter, a handful of farinaceous food, salt and pepper, make up a wholesome and appetising meal. Again, odds and ends of cold or tinned meat are not set before a tired and hungry man. The French housewife cuts up the first, puts the pieces in a frying-pan over the fire, adds a little butter, a pinch of finely-minced onion, garlic, or other pot-herbs, the result being, as I can testify from experience, a dish for an epicure.

There is one thing of which cooks and housekeepers in France are not apt to be economical, and that is—time. The secret of good cooking, as I have learned during my French sojourns, lies here. That unrivalled soup called *pot-au-feu*, for instance, requires attention throughout two days. On the first morning the meat is cooked with salt and water, on the next it must simmer with vegetables till clarifying; haste is here fatal to success.

The economy practised by the middle and working classes in France immensely lightens the housewife's task. We are in the habit of regarding the French as an essentially pleasure-loving nation, whereas in reality they are nothing of the kind. Excursions,

company, and entertainment are not compatible with the national ideal—namely, a dignified and independent old age.

I will here relate a few minutes' conversation I once had with the *concierge* or doorkeeper of a Parisian flat. Whilst the good woman's husband was climbing to the fifth storey, in order to see if my friend were at home, I chatted with her below.

“We have been here just upon twenty years,” she explained, “but we intend to retire shortly. My husband is turned sixty, I am verging that way, and as we have no children, we think of settling in Brittany near our relations. Being childless, we have purchased with our savings a joint annuity bringing in fifteen hundred francs (£60) a year. It is not much, but will suffice for our needs in the country.”

This little story is not only illustrative, it gives the keynote to French life and character. Our neighbours have taken to heart the apologue of their great fabulist. France is the ant of nations, an example to those who sing away summer days and golden opportunities like La Fontaine's grasshopper. And the Frenchwoman, who with the rest of her sex is not exempt from failings, may certainly be described as “the wise woman who ordereth her house.”

## II. DRESS

Why are French women the best dressed in the world? The answer is easy enough.

To begin with Madame, who is not under the necessity of economizing in the least little particular, who can expend a thousand francs upon an article of dress, gown, mantle, or bonnet, as the case may

be, for which a second lady could only afford a hundred francs, and for which a third would think twice before paying ten francs. How comes it that whilst the general effect is so admirable, no salient points strike the eye? Who ever says of a French-woman, "What a charming hat [she wears!]"—I substitute the word "hat" as bonnets are fast becoming survivals—or, "How becoming is Mme So-and-So's costume!" or "Yonder lady's mantle is quite perfection!" We simply take it for granted that here, in the fullest sense of the word, are well-dressed women. And if we go to the root of the matter, we shall find that the secret lies in simplicity. Just as in French cookery no flavour must predominate, so in dress no detail must throw the rest into the shade. A flower or feather too much, a superfluous bit of trimming, any kind of ornamentation that does not seem to serve a purpose or as a complement is scrupulously avoided. And examine a dress fresh from the hands of a French dress-maker! It is always as easy to put on as a glove or a shoe. There are no complications requiring the aid of a lady's maid. You are not under the necessity of looking for a hook here, a loop there. The whole has been put together with mathematical simplicity. English fashion is here to blame, not the dress-maker. We are too fond of redundance and elaboration, too apt to mistake them for elegance. In France, finery for finery's sake is avoided. How is it, again, some may ask, that the wife of a modestly-paid functionary or professional man can contrive to look as well-dressed as a lady to whom money is no object? First and foremost, because not only does she cultivate simplicity, but, in equal degree,



modishness; in other words, she contrives to follow the fashion. This, on narrow means, is not easy, but it is to be done by virtue of time, patience, and ingenuity. Thus last year's sleeve, bodice, or skirt will undergo a process of remaking or readjusting; last year's bonnet or hat will be taken to pieces and arranged anew to look as if just purchased.

No part of a lady's toilette must suggest a bygone season. Dowdiness in dress is an unpardonable sin, a case of high treason.

Another secret—the secret—of French dress is appropriateness. Our sisters beyond La Manche take great care to have clothes suiting personality, circumstances, and the weather. Years no longer count. It is not considered necessary now-a-days for a woman to “uglify” herself because, as our neighbours politely put it, she is of a certain age. A sexagenarian may therefore, in one respect, present as charming an exterior as her granddaughter. Her dress will be every whit as becoming and modish. Alike rich and poor, old and young, will have costumes that match the time of the year and the occasions on which they are worn.

And to-day, during this agonized period of storm and stress, the first lady of France, Mme Poincaré, sets the example of extreme plainness and simplicity in her attire, no better could be given.

I well remember three pretty English sisters who, many years ago, were boarding in a French family of my acquaintance. Their parents were far from rich, yet each girl possessed a very handsome sealskin jacket. The trio thus habited evoked much admiration. But when warm spring weather came and Frenchwomen donned light garments, the sisters still

wore their heavy furs, and for the very good reason that they had nothing else with which to replace them. The acquisition of the sealskins had evidently swallowed up a year's allowance. Such an error would never be committed in France, and to dress appropriately is to dress well.

Lastly comes the indispensable element of completeness. Headgear however charming, a costume however attractive, boas or tippetts however choice, are never made to compensate for shortcomings in any other respect. The French nation, as I have said, is the best shod in the world, and perfectly-fitting, suitable shoes are considered of no less importance than a gown. Gloves, too, are selected and worn with equal care, and it is the same with everything else. Just as an artist bestows as much pains upon the accessories of a picture as upon the leading feature, so a Frenchwoman has ever in view general effect—her entire appearance. Hence the agreeable impression produced by the streets of Paris. Whether we glance at the milliner's assistant tripping across the street with a cardboard bonnet-box on her arm, or the *élégante* alighting from her automobile at the great mart of the Trois Quartiers, we are struck with an indefinable something that is wholly native and not easy of imitation.

And here let me cite a comforting witticism of the first Lord Lytton, "No really well-dressed woman ever looks ugly."

### III. CARRIAGE

A famous line of Virgil often recurred to my mind when I used to take my half-yearly holiday in Paris. Having escaped shipwreck off the Libyan

coast, pious Æneas, as we know, meets Venus, his mother, disguised as a huntress. Neither ambrosial locks shedding perfume nor complexion divinely rosy-red betrayed the secret. It was not till she moved away that "by her gait the goddess was revealed."

Now, without comparing Frenchwomen to goddesses, it must be admitted that they possess the art of walking—by their gait they are revealed. Observe a Parisienne cross the crowded street, whether a fashionable lady or a milliner's assistant, she will do it in the most composed, most graceful fashion, the head held straight, the feet deliberately planted, anything like trepidation or skurry carefully avoided. One might suppose that the graceful crossing of a street was as universally taught in France as the catechism! Up to a certain point such, indeed, is the case. The art of walking comes to Frenchwomen partly by inheritance and partly by acquisition. To-day, as during Mme de Maintenon's *régime*, personal carriage is regarded as a matter of the first importance. Sinister as was the political rôle played by Louis XIV.'s uncrowned queen, to the educationalist perhaps every countrywoman living owes something of her charm. For Mme de Maintenon founded a school of manners: she was first and foremost a teacher of etiquette and social obligation. At the age of eighty-two she summoned six young ladies of St. Cyr, and discoursed to them upon the art of *savoir-vivre*, these six being charged with the transmission of her precepts to the rest.

"I have not sent for you to-day, my children," she said, "for the purpose of catechizing you, but to say a few words on subjects of politeness and good

breeding. Since God has given you high birth, acquire the manners as well as the sentiments of such origin, and bear in mind that no matter your good qualities, your talents and your merit generally, unless you are thus schooled (*si vous ne savez pas vivre*) you will become insufferable to all decent folks."

Then, after many counsels and hints of acceptability in our own day, she insists upon the importance of a graceful and dignified carriage. "Let every movement be quiet and gentle," she added, "let your attitude be always composed, hold yourselves well, carry the head erect."

From Mme de Maintenon's epoch until recent years, generations of French girls have been educated in convent schools, acquiring, if little in the way of solid instruction, at least good manners and deportment. All this is now changed owing to the obligation of proficiency in teachers, and the opening of Lycées for girls. Daughters of rich and aristocratic houses, accompanied by a *promeneuse* or chaperone, attend private classes, those of the middle ranks go to the Lycée.

Immense attention is still paid in the home to carriage and deportment, etiquette has a literature of its own, and leading authorities dwell with emphasis on these matters.

"Ease and gracefulness," writes one (*Usages du Siècle*), "should be the motto of a woman: possessing ease, she will be without awkwardness on the one hand and undue assurance on the other, whilst gracefulness renders her sympathetic to all."

Another well-known authority (Baronne Staffe) writes:—"Mothers do well when they constantly say to their children, 'Hold yourselves properly, sit

upright,' since a lounging attitude indicates an indifference sure to end in forgetfulness of personal dignity, and in idleness."

But whilst jerks, contortions, an ungainly pose are to be avoided, stiffness and artificiality must equally be regarded as a snare. A graceful easy carriage, if properly inculcated in childhood, becomes second nature in after life.

Certainly such matters receive much more attention over the water than among ourselves. Hence it comes about that to see a little French girl curtesy to her elders, or a Parisian cross the street, is a revelation. And Frenchwomen, without doubt, have acquired the art of walking. Without hurry or flurry, with head erect and skirts gracefully caught up, they are every whit as graceful out of doors as they are in the drawing-room.

The same can hardly be said of English girls at the present time. If belonging to the rich or leisured classes, they spend a considerable part of the year in the open air, with great advantage doubtless to health, animal spirits and physique. From another point of view, tennis, golf, hockey and the rest are less advantageous. Pleasant as is the picture of a girl golfer, for instance, cheering as is the contemplation of glowing health and robustness, one turns away with a sigh. Swinging her arms as she goes, taking long strides, wearing a frock up to her knees, the most unbecoming head-gear imaginable, she quickly disenchants the beholder. Nor is this gait confined to the golf links. The young English lady of the present day swings her arms and takes long strides on her daily walks as if she were competing in a walking match.

One of George Eliot's excellent women contemptuously describes the other sex as creatures "who stand straddling in the rain." But the man in the street has the excuse of not having received lessons in deportment. And perhaps if we watch a girl golfer and a charwoman on the high road, the latter is not the more graceless figure of the two. Vainly we look for a quiet, measured, dignified carriage in "those delicate vessels," again to quote the great novelist, "by whom are transmitted the precious flame of human affection."

Mme de Maintenon was right in insisting upon this accomplishment. Would that some voice potent as was hers in her own day, would fulminate against the swinging arms, long strides, "cutty sarks," and bouncing ways of young Englishwomen in the Twentieth Century!

Here, it may be mentioned, walking for walking's sake was quite a novel recreation of beaux and fine ladies of the *Ancien Régime*. About the year 1766 a friend and disciple of Rousseau, Dr. Tronchin, taught the elegant world the hygienic and beautifying uses of daily exercise. To walk was called, after him, *tronchiner*, and toilettes and shoes were devised expressly for the purpose—certainly not of that ilk favoured here to-day!

#### IV. CONVENT SCHOOLS AFTER THE WAR

Among the changes brought about by the war, none certainly will be more revolutionary than those affecting the education of French and Belgian girls and their future as citizens.

Let me make these two points quite clear, first dealing with convent schools in France.

The Third Republic lost no time in taking drastic measures on this subject. Before the passing of the famous Ferry Acts in 1881, a woman teacher, either in public or private schools, only needed a certificate of capacity from her bishop. His so-called *lettre d'obédience* did duty for official diploma. The Ferry Law prohibits both sexes from teaching, either in public or in private, without properly attested qualifications. A nursery governess must now be furnished with her educational certificate.

The *Lycée* or public day-schools for girls, another creation of the same Acts, completed the reformation and dealt a first blow to the convent schools. What education was like within such walls, the following story will show:—

In 1889, I was staying with the wife of a French officer who had been a pupil in the ultra-aristocratic convent school of Sacré Cœur. She had taught herself English, and indeed translated a novel of my own ("Kitty," Calmann Levy).

"Ah!" she said one day, "if only I had received a good education! Think of it, *chère amie*, at Sacré Cœur, French history ended in 1789—after that date, the deluge! Not so much as a word concerning the Revolution were we allowed to learn."

Another friend, a chatelaine and septuagenarian in Burgundy, when we were talking of schools and education, put her experiences into a nutshell.

"At the convent I learnt absolutely nothing!" she said.

In so far, therefore, as intellectual attainments are concerned, the enforced certificate of proficiency

and the *Lycée* for girls now answer every purpose. A French girl leaves school to-day well equipped for society, a profession or trade, and the duties of wife and mother. But the conventual system is not yet destroyed root and branch. It still exists as a vast charity organization, the evils of which were demonstrated in a novel, the "best seller" here a few years ago.

I smiled to myself when a translation of "Marie-Claire" went into countless editions. To the best of my remembrance not a single English critic accounted for its tremendous vogue on both sides of the Channel. The pathetic story, written by a working-girl, was a novelty, no more. But the gist of "Marie-Claire" was clear only to French readers and outsiders conversant with its theme. Unwittingly, the naïve authoress laid bare the very plague-spot against which Jules Simon had thundered well-nigh half a century before! The heroine, telling, as it was believed, the authoress's own story, is a waif cared for by pious nuns in one of their orphanages. She works out-of-doors, and although thrown alone among peasant farmers and their labourers, is by them well treated. The helpless little orphan is respected. But she displeases the holy women, her protectors, and what do they do? When she is eighteen, forty francs are placed in her hands and she is turned adrift, sent to Paris to earn her living as best she can! Her history ends here, but we can guess the terrible sequel of many another "Marie-Claire." Herein lay the secret of a phenomenal literary success in France—another nail had been driven into the coffin of the conventual system.

It is not only the school but the system that



will disappear after the war. Of this we may be sure.

I now come to my second point, namely, the economic value of women as shown in France to-day.

English journalists, Red Cross workers and others over the water tell us of the way in which French women of all ranks and conditions have come to their country's rescue. Of all daughters of Eve, the Frenchwoman is the most Protean, capable of doing anything that comes to hand, and although, perhaps, a novice, of doing it well. And she is also by far the most business-like and the most enduring of her sex. At the present time, roughly speaking, woman, a veritable Atlas, bears the industrial and economic burden of France on her shoulders. From end to end of the "splendid hexagon," industry and agriculture alike are in the hands of what our old-fashioned poets called "the fair." Whilst not a man of military age is to be seen in civilian dress, the colossal machinery goes on and without a hitch as in times of profound peace.

Just realize what this means! The economic value of women being thus attested, is it at all likely that the cloister, that last relic of the Dark Ages, will long survive? Capable, intelligent, healthy girls will no longer be allowed or allow themselves to spend a death-in-life within four walls. Public opinion will put down an anomaly no less antiquated and monstrous than Juggernaut and Suttee. The deadening puerilities and unwholesome *régime* of the convent will be changed for action and the fulfilment of rational duties. All-saving common-sense will deal its death-blow. Life-long incarceration within convent walls by generations of

Frenchwomen yet unborn will be considered no less of a horror than the burying alive of fallen nuns in mediæval times. And will another fruitful result fail to follow? The absolute power wielded by Lady Superiors and Abbesses, no less demoralizing to themselves than harmful to their victims, will disappear also.

#### V. FRENCH MOTHERS AS COACHES

A Frenchwoman is never seen to greater advantage than in the evening hour devoted to "the children's lessons." As we all know, boys and girls in France pass through final examinations much earlier than our own. A youth of eighteen has often finished his collegiate studies, a girl of the same age is often equally the possessor of her final diploma.

And if she is not with her brother under the necessity of choosing a career, as a great French writer has observed: "No superfluous addition to a maiden's trousseau is her *brevet* or scholastic diploma." Whether such a certificate answers to our own Junior or Senior Local, or to higher degrees, it is regarded with satisfaction.

Two circumstances account for what here looks like precocity.

In the first place, French scholars of both sexes are kept much closer to their studies than our own. A French brother and sister, of twelve and fourteen respectively, came to England lately, and are day pupils in good schools. My young friends are overjoyed at the change. Instead of working four hours both morning and afternoon, with only a very short break, they here work only three, the day's course

being thus shortened by nearly two hours. Only educationalists can pronounce judgment upon the matter from one point of view ; on another, namely, the physical, only the medical world must be consulted. As we should naturally expect, the French method is educative as well as educational. Taste, the faculty of observation, the artistic sense, are developed, and character is formed. It could not be otherwise in the case of so highly cultured and so intellectual a nation.

A French course is largely literary. Thus boys and girls from childhood upwards become familiarized with the national classics. Cite anonymously any famous passage from Racine, Corneille and La Fontaine before youngsters, and it will be at once identified. Take young folks to the Louvre, round the Salon, or any other art exhibition, and you will be surprised at their quick appreciation of high qualities.

And now I come to my second point—to the real, the primary foundation of education in France. It is the mother who prepares the way alike for the Lycée and the college.

The supervision of her children's lessons is undertaken no less seriously by a French mother than the preparation for their first Communion. No matter how ardent her duties, no matter her position in life, maternal responsibility is never shirked here. Matrons may belong to the busy or leisured class, one and all are ambitious for their children. The son must get to the top of his class, his sister must strive for the same place.

The four o'clock collation, replacing our tea, consists of bread and chocolate in winter and bread

and fruit in summer. This little repast over, preparations must be made for the morrow's tasks. No play before duty! Among her little students sits the patient monitress, by her supervision smoothing difficulties, in the words of the great Rabelais, rendering the evening's lessons "more like princes' pastime than scholars task-work." Let it not be thought for a single moment that she exceeds her legitimate *rôle*. What she does is to interest and to compel attention; to help in the accepted sense of the word, so dishonourable in itself, would defeat her object. Moreover, such interference would at once be detected. The boy or girl are guided, gently compelled to exercise their reasoning faculties, and, having realized the task before them, to do their very best.

In the case of motherless children or those of colonial parents, sent to France for their education, some one always replaces the maternal "coach."

During one of my long sojourns at Dijon, I witnessed an instance of this kind.

An officer of my acquaintance, and at that time busiest of the busy in superintending the construction of forts, suddenly became the vicarious head of a family, a pseudo "paterfamilias." In other words, he had welcomed to his bachelor establishment his brother's wife and her two children from South America. The girl of three was left to her mother's care, an imperfectly educated but lady-like Frenchwoman. The boy of nine was sent to the Lycée.

What did his uncle do? Every evening the Commandant shut himself up with the boy, kindly but resolutely allowing no pastime till his lessons were prepared for the morning.

A more tender-hearted man I never knew, but

with regard to the nephew under his care, he was inflexible.

“Everything depends on the boy’s early years,” he said to me, “and to the place he holds in his class. I tell Louis he must rise to the top and stay there.”

Many tears and much sullenness this good uncle received by way of payment, and not a few ill turns from the mother. But ten years later, when the uncle and nephew dined with me in the Burgundian capital, I could discern satisfaction on the one side and affectionate gratitude on the other.

This story, however, is by the way. It shows what stress is laid in France on a child’s intellectual beginnings, and how strongly parents and guardians here feel their responsibility. Just as in the matter of religious teaching and preparation for the first Communion, not all is left to the priest, so in education, not all is left to the pedagogue and the schoolmistress.

## V. MARRIAGE AND MATCH-MAKING

It seems to me that no feature more distinctly characterizes our domestic life, or more forcibly brings out a comparison with former phases, than the relations of mother and daughter. Even more striking is the comparison with France, a country in which the family is not, as in England, a periodic condition, a temporary bond. From the cradle to the grave a Frenchman or Frenchwoman belongs as essentially to the paternal roof-tree as did members of a Highland clan. And from the marriage day, husband and wife enter upon another relationship equally binding.

Here daughters and sons-in-law are adopted in the letter only, in France they become children *de jure* and *de facto*, bound to their new parents by strictest moral and legal ties. According to the Code Civil both men and women are responsible for the maintenance of widowed or needy parents-in-law.

I mention these facts, as they throw much light on French life generally, and its divergence from our own, a divergence above all conspicuous in the matter of maternal and filial relations. Many—do I exaggerate in saying most?—English mothers and their unmarried daughters live separate lives. Perhaps no domestic tie is so strong, close and permanent as that of a mother and daughter in France.

From infancy upwards a girl is her mother's perpetual companion; with growing years the intimacy and confidence being strengthened, every daily circumstance bringing the pair together. There is one point I should especially note, and that is the immense care bestowed by French mothers upon the religious education of their children. No one who has not lived among our neighbours, for instance, can realize the importance attached to the *première communion*, the conspicuousness accorded this event. The first Communion is indeed the one leading event of childhood, commemorated by family gatherings and mementoes treasured throughout life.

No less assiduous is the attention paid to education, the choice of friends, of books, of amusements. French matrons are not all, as here, philanthropists, social workers, and members of political or other clubs. They have, therefore, more time for the home and its duties, and if sometimes such concentration certainly leads to narrowness, as certainly domestic life gains.

It will often occur that barely twenty years divide mother and daughter; as far as tastes and habits go they are therefore on the footing of elder and younger sister, sharing each other's confidences, taking counsel together—a delightful subject of contemplation! Such close companionship, moreover, must be the best possible preparation for marriage, which in France is happily the usual lot. In England a certain disintegration, perhaps I should say differentiation, of family life is inevitable; a mother can hardly be the inseparable companion and close confidant of a dozen daughters, and wedlock among a colonial people often entails life-long separation. But it seems to me that home life in England loses a great deal by the exaggerated independence of young girls and the separate lives led by mothers and daughters.

We hear of moneyed maidens quitting luxurious homes in order to enjoy existence *en garçon* in flats, even of middle-class girls having a room set apart for them “in which to receive their friends”!

And are not chaperones out of date, and do not young daughters of fashionable houses now send out invitations for dances, luncheons, and picnics?

To myself, accustomed as I am to French ways and ideals, such aloofness of parents and their unmarried daughters comes as a little shock. Without in the least undervaluing the qualities of self-reliance and early habits of independence, I think we have something here to learn from our neighbours.

There can hardly be any doubt, too, that French mothers look much more anxiously to the future than Englishwomen. A daughter's future is not left to take care of itself. At the risk of appearing a champion of the match-maker, I must here say a word for

French parents and the so-called *mariage de convenance*. So much happiness and well-being depends upon wedlock, that it seems only natural for mothers to further suitable unions, and in so far as possible hinder those fraught with danger. The bonds uniting mothers and daughters in France prevent such mediation from looking like interference. Might not many disastrous marriages be prevented here if the same sisterly relations existed, and if the same sense of responsibility were realized on the part of mothers ?

There is another point, this appropriate to Mlle Hamad's book (see chapter on novels). Is not the sense of philanthropic duty somewhat exaggerated by the average British matron ? In one of his witty *causeries* Mr. Chesterton lately said that if a Socialist revolution took place the streets of London would flow with the blood of philanthropists. I am inclined to think that there is some truth in the satire, and that what is called social work is considerably overdone. On the same subject, who ever spoke wiser words than Sir Walter Scott ? "I dislike all such interference," he said to some one who talked of providing the poor with culinary recipes, "all your domiciliary, kind, impertinent visits—they are felt pretty much as insults, and do no manner of good ; let people go their own way in God's name. How would you like to have a nobleman coming to you to teach you how to dish up your beefsteak into a French kickshaw ? Consider it a sin to do anything that can tend to make them (the poor) lose the precious feeling of independence."

The laws affecting women are so fully set forth in a former work ("Home Life in France"\*) that I

\* Methuen, 7th edition.



do not repeat myself here. I add, however, this note just come to hand.

“*Daily News*, June 7, 1916. From our Correspondent, Paris.—As a result of the war women in France are finding their legal rights substantially enlarged.

“In the Paris Law Courts yesterday a contractor who sought an exemption from the execution of his contract with a landlord on the ground that it was signed only by the latter’s wife, lost his case, the Court declaring that the contract was perfectly valid, the wife having acted with the tacit approval of her husband. It should be noted that, according to French law, a married woman cannot enter into any legal agreement without the signed authorization of her husband.

“The Court, in rendering its judgment, submitted that it is desirable in the industrial, commercial and economic interests of the country, to extend the powers of women who are ready to carry on the work of the men while the latter are with the colours.”

## VI. VOLUNTARYISM *VERSUS* UTILITARIANISM

Perhaps on no subject is the English mind more prejudiced than on that of the arranged marriage. In no social field are Anglo-French theories and methods more directly opposed. The only country in the Western world that shows any approach to French systems is Greece: the marriage vow, which, as Disraeli truly says, is the most momentous act of individual life, there as throughout the Republic, is

no mere happy-go-lucky compact. The future welfare, both material and social, of sons and daughters occupies parents long before they attain maturity. In France, no sooner the first Communion is over than anxious mothers cast about their eyes for suitable sons and daughters-in-law. The reasons are obvious. French family life is a "Close Ring,"\* how completely only personal experience can make clear.

Here is an instance in point.

"That nice girl yonder will never find a husband, more's the pity," one day observed my hostess at Dijon.

I glanced at the young lady, who was neither deformed nor ill-favoured, on the contrary, attractive looking.

"I must tell you why," the lady went on. "The poor child's father has just become bankrupt."

What, thought I, taken aback, eight hundred years after the Ten Tables, the prophet Jeremiah having revoked that terrible Commandment, "the sins of the father," etc., and in the nineteenth century it holds good in France! But on cooler reflection I realized the ethical side of the question, and how much light was thereby thrown upon family life and paternal duty.

If, according to French law, bankruptcy is no longer actually criminal, if an insolvent debtor is not to-day compelled to stand green-capped before the Exchange, the stigma remains. Hardly conviction for fraud more indelibly blots the family escutcheon. Balzac's *César Birotteau* may be set against Walter Besant's *All in a Garden Fair*, to show the different views of bankruptcy held in France and England.

\* "A Close Ring," by M. B.-E. Arrowsmith.

The colony of City insolvents living merrily with their wives and daughters in a suburban retreat must be regarded as simple pleasantry by our neighbours. Its predecessor is a great tragedy.

We can understand why the sin of French fathers descends upon the children. English men and women, in a certain and necessary sense, are so many units. Each lives his or her own life, often separated from the original home by thousands of miles. Who of us could not name relations in every British colony? But our neighbours are essentially a stay-at-home people, and kinsfolk cling to each other in a manner wholly incomprehensible to ourselves.

“Oh! my little Jeanne, could I only follow thee!” was the tearful, almost agonized cry of a grandmother of my acquaintance as bride and bridegroom drove off on their honeymoon.

Would not an English grandame instead have wiped away a joyful tear with the ejaculation—

“Thank God, one at least off our hands and provided for! Now we must set to work to find husbands for Ethel, Clara, Mabel, Annie, and then there are the sweet little twins!”

The comparison may seem a trifle unkind, but we must remember that Jeanne was “the only daughter of her father’s house,” whereas most English brides can be followed by half a dozen or more sisters to the altar, thus more than making up for the absent darling.

In the early stages of the present war a movement was set on foot for pairing off of our disabled soldiers, many having no home or family circle. The well-intentioned plan was soon set aside, its funda-

mental idea being utterly antagonistic to the national character. Asked at the outset to express my ideas on the subject in the pages of the *Weekly Dispatch*, I wrote as follows :—

“Our own English voluntaryism run mad is responsible for the unhappy and wretched marriages so common here in all ranks. Girls of the working classes, not yet put into long frocks, may be seen arm-in-arm with lads of fifteen or sixteen, as the phrase goes, “keeping company together.” In France, except among the so-called *déclassés*, *i.e.* the riff-raff, the vagrant class, a young girl is never allowed out of doors alone with a lover. A workman’s daughter learns decorum as strictly as any demoiselle of the château. With ourselves, mere boys and girls of the better ranks also, I am told, take their lives into their own hands, throw conventions to the winds, cycle whole days together, and even taxi to the theatre or music-hall unchaperoned !

“French views on marriage as a social compact entirely differ from our own. When a daughter is born to a professional man, unless, as is often the case, he possesses an ancestral little property, no sooner is she baptized than her dowry commences. Year in, year out, the initial sum is added to, till the usual middle-class dowry, namely, a thousand pounds, is reached, the said sum being tied down to herself and children on her marriage. How greatly such a system contributes to the after peace of the household and the daughter of the pair, when in her turn she marries, is easily guessed. The marriage contract of a gamekeeper’s daughter is drawn up with no less care than that of a millionaire’s heiress.”

It was necessary to make these points clear before

coming to my last and more relevant observation as to the effect of these arranged marriages on character and in after life. Not only do parents try their best to secure suitable partners for their sons and daughters, but in the case of friends and relations, bachelors and single women are often happily paired off through kindly mediation. The man of forty, the woman of thirty—in French eyes already an old maid—how many of these owe their happiest years to outsiders, to some sympathetic friend who has brought two lonely folks together!

Of all people the French are pre-eminently logical. They never do things by halves, at haphazard and often happy-go-lucky fashion. Thus it was with their monetary system, thus it has been with their public education, and thus it is with social codes. The main object is ever kept in view, problems being worked out with mathematical certainty. Logic and sweet reasonableness carry our great friends through every task however Herculean.

For myself I have found wedded life in France uniformly peaceful and happy. The deep affection that grows with age I have often seen quite tragically exemplified. Here is one instance of many. The late celebrated novelist, Victor Cherbuliez, with whose warm friendship I was honoured, never held up his head after the loss of a beloved partner. Life had become empty to him, he told me in a pathetic letter. Another friend I knew, member of a veritable wine-growing clan in Burgundy, lost his wife, he being still middle-aged at the time. His daughter had married. The solitude and the loss killed him.

“Poor Edmond! You will not see him again at Gemeaux,” said his aunt, my Dijon hostess, to me

some years ago, as we were setting off for her country house in the above-named village. "Did I not tell you? After the death of his wife, whom you knew, the poor fellow lost all interest in life. His health remained good as ever. He was hardly sixty. He simply died because he could not take the trouble to live!"

We must also remember that marriage is regarded as a woman's destiny, that the dignity of *bonne maman*, i.e. granny, is the height of a Frenchwoman's ambition. The title of *Madame la Présidente* and address *Palais de l'Elysée* on her visiting card, the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour fastened to her corsage betokening literary, artistic, philanthropic, or social services, all these are mere dross beside that coveted position. Only to hear a bantling lisp out "bonne maman," is to feel that, in spite of what a grandiloquent commercial traveller I knew used to call "little contingencies and delinquencies," life has been no failure and to die happy!

As to the young fry, if children can be said to adore anything but the contents of the sweetshop, it is certainly *bonne maman*, and so it is with youths and maidens when the name is changed to *grandmère*. No more beautiful relationship exists than that between the penultimate and rising generation.

The village urchin who, no matter how rustic and uncouth, never dreams of accosting his grandmother except bareheaded, illustrates this fact. The father's or mother's mother seems indeed a sacred personality, such respect being doubtless a Latin inheritance, in the blood.

Poet after poet has idealized the grandmother and grandparentage generally, none with the passion





Colette Guérin

[To face p. 163.]



and exaltation of Victor Hugo. Here are two citations versed by myself :—

“TO MY LITTLE JEANNE.”

A year old yesterday! You winsome thing,  
 Joyous as nestling twittering in the spring  
 You babble on the turf beneath the trees,  
 My Jeanne, the rosy-mouthed—and when to please  
 I let your tiny fingers turn the page,  
 The pictured tome of poet or of sage.  
 I deem no book was writ howe'er divine,  
 Worth half this tiny one-year old of mine.  
 And when on us you gaze with wond'ring eye,  
 We feel somehow God's presence to be by.

Ah, that's an age indeed! You've lived a year,  
 By turns you leap for joy, shed quick-dried tear.  
 The childish heaven taste. Your universe  
 Enclosed in arms of mother, father, nurse,  
 On you, Aurora smiles, herald of day,  
 Whilst I, your grandsire, wends his western way.

## VII. WOMEN BARRISTERS

To get a clear idea of this subject readers should turn to a popular, I am inclined to say, famous novel originally issued in 1909, “*Les Dames du Palais*,” and which to-day appears in its 29th edition.\*

I translate the opening pages of this striking story, which, if read, unless I much mistake, will send many readers, especially propagandists of sex equality, to the book itself.

Well I remember my visit to the Palais de Justice, when a girl student in Paris years, nay, decades ago. Thither conducted by a friendly French barrister, with almost a feeling of solemnity, I paced the historic *Salles des Pas Perdus*, the hall of wasted

\* “*Les Dames du Palais*,” Roman par Colette Yver, Calmann Lévy, Paris. 29th edition.

footsteps, *i.e.* of briefless barristers. How little could any beholder then have dreamed of such a scene as the following :—

The speaker, André Vélines, himself a young advocate, is pointing out to his grandmother his leading feminine colleagues among the crowd.

“Yonder is old Angély”—Madame and Mademoiselle are dropped here as in speaking of prima donnas—“the foundress of a Reformatory for young criminals and oracle of girl law-students; the old lady” (just fifty) “no longer accepts briefs but teaches the science of law in girls’ Lycées, and so penetrating is her judgment, so sure is her advice, that full-blown advocates consult her, *sub rôsa*. Then yonder is a certain dame Clémentin, for whom I cannot say much, but who gets plenty to do, and by the by, is wife of an advocate. Then that admirable creature, the unfortunate Martinal, a young widow burdened with children, whose plodding-on is pitiful to behold, and near her the great *feministe*” (suffragette), “Madame Surgères, next the amateur barrister, Madame Debreyre, and to end with, the beautiful Isabelle Gérolle, ornament of the Bar, and wife of a surgeon.”

But cap, doctoral gown, and legal portfolio, the latter so oddly named *chemise*, these replacing feathers, skirts, muffs, and reticules, do not happily destroy romance. What old-fashioned writers called the tender passion is not exorcised by bell, book, and candle from the Palais de Justice and the *Salle des Pas Perdus*.

Already Vélines had lost his heart, and to a very attractive young lady barrister, or rather, as we should say, “one eating her dinners.” This was the

lovely Henriette Marcadieu, all grace, sprightliness, and verve, and devoted, as himself, to her profession.

“The sight of you, Mademoiselle, almost reconciles me to the idea of women doctors and lawyers, in their callings, aping the other sex,” exclaimed the old lady from the country.

“Oh! our profession does not hinder us from being women,” gaily replied Henriette.

And, later on, admirably described, comes a love-scene.

In the Hall, Number one, now crowded, an important trial was drawing to a close. It was a case of divorce in fashionable circles, and the great Blondel, ex-Bâtonnier,\* began his summing up. The two lovers contrived to find themselves together, with one ear given to the solemn utterances from the tribunal, with the other to mutual confessions.

“Does it not annoy you to be alone here, stared at by the crowd, only yourself to rely on?” asked Vélines.

“At first, certainly I felt ill at ease. I am used to such things now,” was the reply.

“Would you not feel happier if, instead of such isolation and feeling of conspicuousness, you had the support of—of a friendship always at hand—of a companion?”

The secret was out, but coquetry, no more than love, is banished from the temple of Themis. The voice of the great barrister went on, as it seemed interminably. Not too long for his youthful emulators. By the time the peroration began they understood each other.

“How you will be beloved!” whispered Vélines.

\* Temporary President or chief elected by his brother advocates.

"Silence!" cried Henriette. "Now comes the verdict. We are here to listen, remember."

The authoress of this thorough-going and brilliant work has not, so at least I take it, elected to preach a novel whilst adorning a tale. She has simply set herself to describe a new and very remarkable phase of contemporary life, giving its lights and shadows with strictest impartiality.

Two reflections must occur to those deeply interested in the question of women less lawyers, but the book apparently attracts all classes.

The first point is the generosity displayed in a considerable measure by members of the French Bar to their new rivals. And this attitude is not confined to men making their way, but is shared by their leaders. Jealousies will of course occur among the students, yet good fellowship exists alike among the aspirants and the successful.

On the whole, the admission of women to the Palais de Justice so far works better than might be expected. When barrister mates with barrister, and the wife's clients outnumber her husband's, there is, of course, a dire break-up of fireside happiness. But connubial differences arise often enough from other causes. One conclusion, however, inevitably forces itself upon the mind. A certain stumbling-block is not to be got over by the most pronounced *feministe*. Women cannot, in vulgar phrase, have their cake and eat it. They cannot enjoy both sides of life, the triumphs of a professional career and the joys of motherhood. A woman, that is to say a young woman, must choose between the two.

The heroine of the story, Henriette Vélines, a beautiful and bewitching young barrister of twenty-

five, weds a colleague just ten years older, both being devoted to their profession, both entering upon their calling under the most favourable circumstances.

A year or two later, when Madame's brilliant successes threatened to leave Monsieur's far behind, Henriette wakes up to find a Chinese Wall suddenly dividing her from her adored career.

The baby appears! And, if as the proud mother had once lightly said—the legal cap and gown did not unsex a woman, maternity speedily sent the proud accoutrements flying. Nature had re-affirmed her irrevocable law. Socially the world may be turned upside down a thousand times. Motherhood remains. Henriette did not at once bow before the Eternal decree. She still tried to maintain, even to advance her position. But after the Chinese Wall appeared another and as unmistakable a portent. The wedded barristers, each working hard and receiving clients in their separate chambers, gradually discovered that instead of knitting closer, the marriage tie divided them. Then indeed, and only just in time to avoid a final disunion, Henriette acknowledged the truth. The legal cap and gown did not unsex a woman, but she could not keep two altar fires burning, that to Themis and that to the Lares and Penates.

The noblest figure in the book is the old maid of fifty, the impolitely styled "old Angély," but whom all nevertheless revered. Good as she was wise, she thus admonished her young colleagues at one of her weekly gatherings. Apropos of a heated discussion concerning matrimonial relationship, she said—

"When women seek a rule for the conduct of life, it is less a question of determining their rights

as their duties. *Féministes* " (i.e. Suffragettes) " would do well to remember this, my good Madame Surgères," the lady named having violently attacked the other sex.

No wonder that even the *Bâtonnier*, Fabrezan himself, bowed before *la vieille Angély*. She had indeed bearded the Douglas in his den and found him in a fit of violent anger. The matter she had come about regarded a girl barrister, whereupon the great man cried :—

" Oh ! you see the result ! A few chignons under the cap and the profession loses its virile character, disorder seethes, troubles begin. What on earth do we want with all these women here ? "

" Fabrezan, Fabrezan, you forget that you are addressing myself ! "

" Ah ! no, my good Angély, it is not of you that I speak. You—you are much less of an advocate than a Saint Vincent de Paul in petticoats. "

And after a skirmish in which the great lawyer had the worst of it and had calmed down—

" Give me your hand that I may kiss it, " he added, promising never to commit what he called the sin of causing her vexation.

One criticism I venture to make. It is difficult to reconcile the two Henriettes in the person of the heroine—the first, eminently feminine, lovely, of course, perpetually laughing, one might say, perpetually on the giggle, always demonstratively in love—till quarrels come, a love-sick girl, snatching every opportunity for a kiss and embrace ; the second, an ardent, clear-headed, penetrating legislator, in a sharp duel defeating one of the foremost counsel of the French Bar. No, such divergences are altogether



*Photo: Manuel.*

MME MIROPOLSKI, ADVOCATE.

[To face p. 168.]





irreconcilable. And only our great Charlotte Brontë ventured upon that novelty—an ugly heroine! In France it would never do. Henriette must be a beauty.

It is to be hoped that *Les Dames du Palais* will soon find an English translator.

In the last General Census of France, viz. March 5, 1911, thirty-one women members of the Bar were named.\* Doubtless the next Census will show a great increase of numbers. Many lady barristers have won considerable distinction in their calling, especially the *advocate* whose portrait honours these pages.

\* I am indebted for this information to the courtesy of M. le Directeur de la Statistique Générale de la France.

## CHAPTER X

### THE VANISHED SALON

“The worst talker is he who has nothing to say.”—VOLTAIRE.

SAD it is, but true! With the literary salon has vanished conversation carried to the point of a fine art. Men and women talk, but they no longer converse in the traditional sense of the word. The art of conversation has indeed had no protracted reign. Its zenith was reached under the famous Madame Geoffrin and still more famous Mademoiselle de Lespinasse; its nadir followed the closing of Madame Mohl's doors a century later. “Happy period,” wrote Sainte-Beuve of a former epoch, “when existence was devoted to sociability, and every circumstance was rendered subservient to the most engaging intercourse, the choicest conversation!”

The eighteenth century was a talking age. Interchange of ideas upon every conceivable topic formed the staple occupation of cultivated, leisurely folks. In one sense, the age may also be called a second Renaissance. A succession of startling scientific discoveries had recently been made; poets, philosophers, great personages and fine ladies now threw themselves heart and soul into the latest revelations mathematical, geographical, astronomic. Newton and Locke had given an impetus which was followed throughout Europe, especially in France. Never

in any period of the world's history did people talk so much, so well, and to so much purpose. Hence the *éclat* of the eighteenth-century salon.

The two above-mentioned contemporaries of Voltaire played a leading part in this brilliantly intellectual cycle. Mademoiselle de Lespinasse has recently been introduced to the general English reader by a novel based on her story.\* Equally renowned as a cultivator of conversation was her friend Madame Geoffrin. The history of both women is curious and very characteristic. Like most of the great men she invited to dinner weekly, Madame Geoffrin belonged strictly to the bourgeois or middle-class. The daughter of a valet in the service of the Royal Family, married at fifteen to a rich nonentity, she combined the prim sedateness of her social status with the romantic tendency of her time. This lady it was who released Stanislaus Poniatowski from prison by paying his debts, a service he repaid by an invitation to his Court when named King of Poland. Her journey was the only one of a long life spent exclusively within the boundaries of Paris and as exclusively devoted to table-talk.

Madame Geoffrin's sole schooling had been conversational, nothing more. Brought up by a grandmother, "who talked so agreeably of things she knew nothing whatever about that no one regretted her want of information, and whose clear intelligence and mental alertness and perspicacity stood in place of knowledge and instruction," the little girl learned to read, to reason, and to express herself adequately. "My grandmother made me think," she wrote to her

\* Mrs. Humphry Ward's charming and popular "Lady Rose's Daughter."

grand friend Maria Theresa. The austere bourgeoisie, who dressed with Quakerish sobriety and tied her cap under her chin *à la Maintenon*, was on intimate terms with kings and queens as well as with *beaux esprits* and philosophers.

The secret of Madame Geoffrin's success as a hostess did not, however, lie in conversational gifts. She had taken La Bruyère's maxim to heart: "The art of conversation consists less in displaying it one's self than in developing the powers of others." She gave the keynote, others supplied the melody.

There was one difference between her salon and that of Mademoiselle de Lespinasse. The Egeria of D'Alembert, the middle-aged authoress of immortal love letters, could not afford hospitality. Her visitors dropped in from five to nine o'clock for the sole purpose of talking. No refreshments were offered. Madame Geoffrin, on the contrary, being rich, gave bi-weekly dinners—dinners, to quote Dr. Johnson, "worth inviting a man to." Only men—and one lady, *i.e.* Mademoiselle de Lespinasse — were invited, the hostess being of opinion that the presence of her own sex at a dinner distracted the attention of the other, and rendered conversation fragmentary. These brilliant dinners were followed by choice and restricted suppers, one or two ladies, queens of the *grand monde*, being admitted to the latter.

Mademoiselle de Lespinasse made up for want of position, fortune and good looks by intellectual and social endowments. Her personality must have been magnetic, for as a very young and quite inexperienced girl she took captive that *blasée* leader of society and woman of the world, Horace Walpole's correspondent the Marquise du Deffand. When after ten years'

partnership, the pair quarrelled, Mademoiselle de Lespinasse inaugurated a literary centre of her own, outshining the salon of her patroness. The most eminent men, the most distinguished women, became *habitués* of the Rue de Bellechasse. During four successive hours daily the hostess would by turns talk enchantingly, and, in the words of a contemporary, communicate intellectual alertness to her guests. "Our minds, our characters, were so well known to her," adds Marmontel, "that a word from her lips sufficed to bring out both." And, like another celebrated Frenchwoman, the heroic Madame Roland, she possessed in its entirety her own language, rich in ideas, she ever expressed them in choice and forcible French.

Madame Récamier's salon bridged over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and Madame Mohl's, which closed its door with the fall of the Second Empire, may be said to terminate the series. The cold, statuesque lady preceding her, reigned as a queen of beauty, swaying men rather by personal exquisiteness than wit or eloquence. It is now confidently believed that Madame Récamier's nominal husband was her own father! Amid the perilous days of the Revolution, alike her life and her honour had been saved by this fictitious marriage.

During the Franco-Prussian war a quaint little old lady was visiting one English friend after another, bringing with her associations of a literary epoch long past, recalling Madame Récamier, Chateaubriand, and other great figures already historic. This was Madame Mohl, *née* Mary Clarke, wife of the learned Orientalist, Jules Mohl, a German by birth but French by naturalization, and a professor of

Persian at the Collège de France. Without fortune, without personal attraction, without geniality, Madam Mohl had nevertheless throughout her long life enjoyed social success. A *habituée* of the brilliant circles over which Madame Récamier had queened it, Madame Mohl held a distinguished salon of her own during the Second Empire. Wits, savants, artists—all were welcomed on one condition. The Open Sesame of the Rue du Bac was conversational aptitude, folks able to keep the battledore and shuttlecock going. The hostess was what our neighbours call *malicieusement spirituelle*. Her *à-propos* and *mal-à-propos*, her *bons mots* and epigrams were often very ill-natured, even ill-bred. The point, the sparkle, the comicality of such sallies made them pass muster. And who for a moment could have supposed this hard-featured, sharp-voiced, jerky little woman of the world to have been doubly a second Julie de Lespinasse, heroine of a dual romance as passionate and prolonged as that immortalized in her forerunner's story? Yet so it was, and in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for December, 1912, her correspondence with a French author almost unknown to fame, named Claude Fauriel, was given to the world. The two romances possess similarity, and at the same time divergence equally strong. Both ladies were middle-aged, both fell desperately in love with two men at the same time, both had been denied beauty and fortune, such gifts being compensated by spirit and intellect. Here semblance ends. Julie wrote in her native tongue and wielded a ravishing pen. Familiar as was Mary Clarke with colloquial French, she possessed no literary instinct. What she had to say was said in the bluntest, most straightforward manner, difficulties

of construction and grammatical pitfalls being avoided. But the difference between the two was deeper. Julie de Lespinasse was a fascinating personality, and Mary Clarke, although found by some magnetic, was her exact opposite. Whilst Julie's letters to her two lovers are one prolonged outpouring of devotion, the other's to Claude Fauriel, continued throughout ten years, are a perpetual plaint. To her second lover, no less a personage than Victor Cousin, she did not apparently write at all. The love-making was carried on *vivâ voce* and by innocent endearments. One extraordinary feature of this correspondence is Mary Clarke's profound—nay, absolute—inability to read character. Acrimonious, fiercely jealous, perpetually asking bread when only stones were to be had, she long remained the subject of a pitiful delusion. From the onset it was perfectly clear that Fauriel, a self-coddling dilettante of fifty, moreover for twenty years the acknowledged lover of the great Condorcet's widow, had no intention whatever of marrying any one. Nor were his intentions, any more than Cousin's, in the very least dishonourable. To both men a sentimental friendship more than sufficed. A single sentence of Fauriel to his *douce chère amie* in an early letter must have opened the eyes of any woman not blinded by passion. "I could wish," he wrote, "that in every step you take there should be some inducement wholly irrespective of myself, in fact, that your decisions should ignore my very existence."

But throughout ten years Mary Clarke hoped against hope, even venturing herself on the word "marriage" in her letters. It was not till November, 1843, that the final separation came, her last note

being a wail of despair. "Adieu; I have no longer sufficient courage to wish to see you again, not knowing whether an interview would give you pleasure or enough pleasure. Moderation I execrate."

Two years later she married M. Mohl, who died in 1876, herself living to be ninety-three. She must have been long past eighty when, frisking about in curls and *robe décolletée à la Récamier*, she visited England as a guest of Madame Bodichon, the foundress of Girton, in whose house we met.

The astounding part of this self-revelation remains to be told. The correspondence is published in strict accordance with Madame Mohl's testamentary instructions dated 1855!

Many circumstances account for the dying out of the literary salon under the Third Republic.

Neither a free press nor free speech had existed under the Imperialist *régime*. What with the awakening of the political spirit and the passionate fervour of parties, other interests became relegated to the background. In small groups people met together, no longer for the discussion of literature, the arts, and science, but for the threshing out of political and social questions.

If conversation as a fine art no longer flourishes in France, our neighbours have by no means lost the gift of easy, lucid, and copious expression. The French mind is logical, and as a vehicle of expression the French language is unrivalled. It is rare indeed here to hear random thoughts haltingly put together.

Especially noticeable is this among the young. A youth, for instance, will pay a visit of ceremony to a recent hostess. Without the slightest hesitation or awkwardness he will at once enter upon some topic



of the hour, do his best to prove entertaining, and having, in French phrase, "been at the cost of conversation" (*fait les frais de la conversation*) for a quarter of an hour, then he will make his obeisance and take leave. The peasant will also think before opening his lips, framing his speech deliberately, and among all classes natural aptitudes and a tendency to reason are fostered by education and bringing-up.

Declamation is assiduously taught at school. With ourselves, unfortunately, too often prevails the national happy-go-lucky, hit-or-miss, take-me-or-leave-me method of expressing our thoughts. We are apt to neglect the conversational developments of children, and social intercourse does not repair the omission.

## CHAPTER XI

JACQUES BONHOMME

### I. AS REPUBLICAN

By what process the French peasant has become a republican is a question which has often been raised but seldom received anything like a satisfactory answer. How has Jacques Bonhomme, proverbially conservative in faith, politics, and social habits, become, as he now evidently is, saturated with the Republican idea? The problem is interesting, and the solution of it full of instruction and encouragement for all political reformers. In fact, the experiences of the last forty years affords a further illustration of what has lately been brought home to ourselves—namely, the force of the written word, the tremendous lever of the press, in politically educating the people. The crusade against Clericalism, Imperialism, and the Napoleonic idea began under the MacMahon Septennate—that surreptitious Republic, as Gambetta described it, foisted upon France like Leah upon Jacob, instead of the true Rachel. But in those days of gloom and uncertainty the motto of propagandists was, in the words of Juliet's nurse, "Be wary, look about." The eye and the ear of the enemy were at every keyhole, all kinds of press persecutions were unscrupulously carried on, and anything like the spirited political campaigns before witnessed in the country was out of the question.

I well remember how easy it was then to miss, yet for the initiated to discover certain little books, pamphlets, and tracts sown in secret, sown nevertheless broadcast through the country. Take, for instance, a large book-seller's shop in the city of Nantes in the years 1875 and 1876. One enters it with the air of a literary *flâneur*, and while glancing at the last new novel or poem here, or turning over a heap of serials there, soon finds what one wants. Slipped between nondescript volumes, placed sideways on the top of books seldom asked for, or stowed away in dusty corners, are copies of publications which have played a very important part in educating the French people, and which afford a striking example of the self-denial, perseverance, and long-suffering of their instructors. Whilst orators and journalists were doing their work, historians, political economists, and men of science stepped in to supplement it by the most astounding little volumes ever issued, at prices ranging from a halfpenny to threepence. We will begin with the halfpenny series, published under the title of "L'Instruction Républicaine," and having for its motto the word "enlightenment." "Let us enlighten ourselves," wrote M. Jules Barni in the opening number. "Ignorance and despotism have lost us. Instruction and the Republic can save." Under its banners "L'Instruction Républicaine" enlisted illustrious names in French letters—namely the great historian the late M. Henri Martin. Perhaps no more telling argument against the Napoleonic legend exists in all French literature than his contributions entitled, "Les Napoléons et les Frontières de la France," and "Hoche et Bonaparte." The first—the price of which, on account of the map appended

to it, was raised to ten centimes, instead of five—is a marvel of point and historic condensation. The last is a brilliant historic parallel with an unanswerable moral. M. Henri Martin's fellow-writers in this series took up the same theme, some in a sarcastic, some in a blunt and bitter strain. Here are the titles of a few of these booklets, veritable barbed arrows which could not miss their mark: "La Guerre de Mexique," "La Police Impériale," "Ce que serait un Nouvel Empire"—these among others, and all, be it remembered, either by established writers or men of mark in the political world. Next in importance to this extraordinary halfpenny series—for in a country so economical as France cheapness must always be taken largely into account—comes the "Bibliothèque Démocratique." This little library needs, unfortunately, a much longer notice than can now be given to it; all the more so as many of the volumes have long since been out of print, and many more, which had been prohibited under the MacMahon *régime*, were never re-issued. It is only necessary to mention the auspices under which the series appeared in order to afford a fair notion of its scope and character. The "Bibliothèque Démocratique," supported by Louis Blanc, Gambetta, Henri Martin, A. Esquiros, Victor Schœlcher, Ath. Coquerel, Émile Arago, Edgar Quinet, not only brought out new works of its *collaborateurs*, but issued reprints of well-known historical, political, and social treatises; for instance, Charles Fourier's "Association, ou le Travail Attrayant" and Henri Martin's monograph on Jeanne d'Arc. Here [also Bonapartism is met by arguments as merciless as they are unanswerable, and any future historian of the *coup d'État* and the

*déportations* of Louis Napoleon would find most valuable material in some of these little volumes—"Le Coup d'État en Province," and so on. But able and pointed as are these contributions to what may be called anti-Napoleon literature, the real purpose of the undertaking must be sought elsewhere. The "Bibliothèque Démocratique" did not so much set about to enunciate political principles or teach history as to unveil Clericalism, to show up Jesuitical doctrines as they affect family life, the marriage tie, the home. "La Confession," "La Supersitition," "Le Mariage des Prêtres," are titles that speak for themselves; and, the pieces to which they belong being written by men in earnest and of ability, it is little wonder that they were prohibited immediately after their appearance and were kept on back shelves of book-shops. How, indeed, it will be asked, did such works, then, find their way into the hands for which they were designed? And truly the business of dissemination required extraordinary tact and considerable knowledge of human nature. It does not follow that because a book is put under the ban nobody reads it. Often quite the opposite effect is produced; as was the case with these little brown volumes, so harmless in appearance, such firebrands in reality, which, though prohibited and hunted down, did their work. There are more ways than one of instructing your neighbours in politics; and though at this time it was almost as difficult to propagate Republican ideas as it had been under the Empire, there were no sumptuary laws affecting private hospitality. A country gentleman, a jovial *vigneron* of strong Republican leanings, could invite his neighbours in the humbler walks of life to a Sunday dinner

or breakfast, ostensibly to discuss the harvest and the vines ; but what should prevent a talk on politics and *la situation* ? What should hinder the host from bringing out a pile of these little brown volumes and slipping them into the pockets of the blue blouses around him ? Again, Madame, his wife, while on perfectly friendly terms with M. le Curé and the *bonnes Sœurs*, or nuns, has her lending library, and when on her rounds among the neighbours, instead of distributing religious tracts, brings from her reticule a pamphlet with some such title as this : “ L’Empereur a-t-il été trahi ? ” or “ Qui a voulu la Guerre de 1870 ? ” or “ L’Homme de Sedan.” The French peasant can put two and two together as well as anybody, and for the most part believes what books tell him. In these years they had told him the truth, and he naturally became the wiser.

Nor must it be supposed that the educators of the masses in France have only one aim—namely, to make them staunch Republicans. Far from it, as another deeply interesting series of halfpenny books can testify—the so-called “ *Éducation Populaire*,” a serial publication embracing sixty and odd volumes on history, geography, hygiene, grammar, elementary science, and extracts from classic French writers among other things. One has only to glance at the contents of one of these last-mentioned volumes, and see what a fine halfpennyworth of literature was here offered to the French workman. First, then, we have in brief the story of Leonidas at Thermopylæ, extracted from Rollin ; next, a second passage from Rollin on the advantages of study ; then we come to that noble dialogue of Bayard and the Constable de Bourbon from Fénelon, which concludes with “ *Écoutez,*

Bayard, mourant comme il a vécu, et ne cessant de dire la vérité." A passage from Fontenelle follows on the uses of science; and another from the same author on America before its invasion by Columbus. As a variety comes next "Le Bavard," from La Bruyère's "Caractères," "La Politesse un devoir," and "Les Avantages Réels de l'Instruction," from Fleury, with nine more extracts, grave and gay, comprising passages from Mascaron, Bourdaloue, La Fontaine, and Mme. de Sévigné. Such little volumes might be welcome to the possessors of well-furnished libraries, while to a needy student, pressed alike for time and money, they proved invaluable. A pathetic interest of another kind, moreover, is attached to these cheap publications in France. It must be borne in mind that their projectors were often far from rich, and that the work of educating the people was carried on in a great measure by dint of rigid economy and self-sacrifice. I remember encountering in the heart of Franche-Comté one of these public-spirited promoters of popular education who had devoted sixteen hundred pounds out of very moderate means to this noble object. Books, newspapers and public discussion did the rest. One by one the strongholds of the reactionary principle fell. The victorious combatants retired weary enough but full of hope and confidence. And the stranger to-day sojourning in France hardly fails to notice one fact wherever he bends his steps. He will revisit scenery made familiar to him years before and find the landscape just the same. But the peasant, the blue-bloused, blue-pantalooned figure so picturesque in Millet's canvas, is no longer what he was. He reads! While resting under the trees that his team may drink, while

snatching a hasty meal in the interval of labours, while trotting his trusty steed to market with his butter and eggs, he reads ; and having once taken to reading, much as an inquisitive child takes to story-books, it is not at all likely that all the curés in the world can stop him.

## II. AS TAXPAYER

Just as one day the immortal M. Jourdain discovered to his astoundment that he had been speaking in prose all his life, so John Bull and Jacques Bonhomme are finding out that they have all along been the best possible friends without knowing it. This happy consummation does not stand in the way of a much more intimate knowledge and criticism of each other's idiosyncrasies ; on the contrary, the taking root of the *Entente Cordiale* can but result in many useful lessons to both.

In no respect, perhaps, does a Frenchman differ from his bluff neighbour more than in his character of taxpayer. Whether he be rich or poor, Jacques Bonhomme delights in nothing so much as in paying his taxes ! An Englishman's attitude towards the rate collector is certainly the reverse of enthusiastic. Some years since at a Hampstead police court over a thousand summonses for rates, only twenty of which were against passive resisters, came before the magistrates, and about the same time three hundred rate defaulters were arraigned by the Bench at a much-frequented watering-place, numbering between sixty thousand and seventy thousand souls. Frequently, too, we find the Chancellor of the Exchequer publicly acknowledging " conscience money " of rich recalitrants.



They manage these things better in France. "At the present time," wrote M. Rambaud, in his "Histoire de la Civilisation Française," vol. iii. 1900, "taxes are collected throughout France with unimaginable ease and good-will on the part of the population. Very rarely, indeed, do ratepayers give any trouble to the authorities, whilst batches of recalcitrants are unknown." On this subject a Conseiller Général lately interrogated by myself was emphatic. "Hundreds of rate defaulters in a single town? Never, *au grand jamais*," he said, "is such a thing heard of among ourselves." Defaulters, of course, there are from time to time. First in the category occur victims of illness, accident or misfortune; next come those laggards who are actuated by what a Yankee would call "sheer cussedness," people who think it clever to give the public functionaries trouble; thirdly, are the defaulters proper, ratepayers who cannot pay because, like their English fellows, they do not regulate expenditure by income or wages. On the whole, the number of all three sets is very inconsiderable. In the words of the local magnate just quoted, "M. Rambaud is right. Thanks to the logic of our fiscal system and to the good sense of the average Frenchman, taxes in the present day are collected with little trouble. The vast majority of my countrymen understand that each according to his means must contribute to the national revenues."

The word "contribution" partly explains so satisfactory a state of things. "There are some titles that very generally good men do not swallow," once said Oliver Cromwell. After the *ancien régime* the name of *impôt*, standing as it did for taxes arbitrarily imposed and collected, was one that Frenchmen,

alike the good, bad, and indifferent, could not swallow. The Revolution, in inaugurating a new and legitimate fiscal system, altered its name. A French citizen does not now pay taxes, he sends in his contributions to the maintenance and dignity of the State. His capacity of so contributing, indeed, constitutes a title of honour, his right to citizenship. Hence the indomitable thrift seen in France and the opprobrium attached to insolvency.

A second explanation of Jacques Bonhomme's alacrity in paying taxes is that for the most part he lives rent-free. An official statistician of France, the late M. de Foville (see his "l'Habitation en France"), shows that whilst in many departments, eighty and even ninety per cent. of the population occupy houses that belong to them, taking towns and rural districts together, two-thirds of French householders are similarly situated, are, in fact, freeholders. Country folks, therefore, having no rent to pay, can afford to welcome the *Percepteur*, or collector of revenues, with a smile, aye, and regale him with their best!

A third explanation of this cheerful rate-paying—or, to put it properly, this sending in of annual contributions—is at hand. Any examination of the French fiscal system would be out of place here. One feature, however, I must mention. We have all heard of the *Corvée*, or arbitrary keeping up and making of roads enforced by the *ancien régime*. But at the present day, roads are still kept up by what may be called a tax in kind instead of a money payment. The law of May 21, 1836, whilst borrowing an idea from the hated *Corvée*, is in reality a most fortuitous one, and exactly suited to exigencies and

the French character. This article of the Code Civil authorizes municipal authorities of every commune to exact from adults until their sixtieth year three days' annual labour, with use of a horse and cart, for the keeping up of the local roads, or an equivalent in money may discharge the claim. By this arrangement taxation is lessened and much economy effected, the work of contractors being far more expensive than that of the peasants. The law, furthermore, is strictly logical, the roads being kept in repair by those who use them.

I will now say a few words about the treatment of defaulters, beginning with the first category, namely, those persons who throw themselves upon the mercy of the authorities by reason of confirmed illness, accident or misfortune. These are gently dealt with, their arrears being struck off the assessors' books as irrecoverable, or they are made good out of the municipal budget. This class of defaulters, I am assured, is excessively small. I next come to the category of so-called *mauvais drôles*, or would-be wags—men who delight in tomfoolery and vain-gloriousness. Such passive resisters are mulcted by a fine or threatened with a seizure of their goods, a threat that is seldom allowed to take effect. No sooner do the bailiffs appear than the arrears are forthcoming. Not long ago I heard of such a defaulter. This eccentric man always withheld his rates, amounting to 1,800 francs yearly, till the last moment. On receiving a "sommation" or summons, he will pay a thousand francs. On the door being opened by the *huissier* or bailiff he hands over the balance.

It will be seen that recalcitrant ratepayers in France are not so drastically treated as with us. No

defaulter, whatever may be the reason of non-payment, can be put in prison. He may be fined, his goods may be seized and publicly sold by auction, but his person remains inviolate. The debtor to the State is never classed with felons.

What with the facts adduced above and many others that could be supplied did space admit, we can easily understand how it comes about that Jacques Bonhomme shines as a taxpayer. One more circumstance I must mention. Until the establishment of the Third Republic and the setting in of a pacific and prosperous era, national revenues were not collected with "unimaginable ease and goodwill" on the part of the population. It was not, indeed, till 1877, that the hated functionary, called *garnisaire*, or bailiff, was abolished. Up till that date the State arrogated to itself the rights enjoyed by English landlords. Just as here a bailiff (rustically called a "bum"), can be put in possession of a tenant's house for overdue rent, so formerly the *garnisaire* (a word coined from *garnison*, garrison), could plant himself under the roof of a rate defaulter. Indomitable thrift, inherited habits of self-control, must be set down as the primary causes of the happy condition here described.

## CHAPTER XII

### DEVELOPMENTS

#### I. MANUALS OF CIVIC DUTY

LET us hope that one result of the next Moral Educational Congress will be the introduction of such manuals into our primary schools. I have before me one of the very numerous French school-books in common use, which might very well serve as a model for ourselves ("Education morale, à l'usage des Écoles primaires et secondaires," par M. Mézières; Paris, Delagrave). This little work is divided into two sections for the use respectively of children from nine to eleven and from eleven to thirteen, and into two courses, moral, preceding civic, instruction. Under the head of the first are treated duty to God, parents, family, serving-folks, teachers, neighbours; last, but not least, to oneself, and to animals; under the second head, namely duty to mother country, are treated respect for law and its administrators, pride in dignified citizenship and loyalty to the national flag—all these subjects being illustrated by anecdotes, many, it is interesting to note, being from English History and Biography. Hampden, Newton, Jeremy Bentham, George Stephenson, Henry Martyn, are brought under contribution to point a moral or adorn a tale. Cut-and-dry maxims are thus replaced by story, and little woodcuts further enliven the pages.

An early section is devoted to duty towards the Creator, which is indeed an exordium to reverence—the first attribute, according to Goethe, to be instilled in the young. It must be remembered that State education throughout France and its now tremendous and ever-increasing Colonial Empire is of necessity strictly non-sectarian. This and other manuals are placed in the hands alike of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Mohammedan children of both sexes. Thus the chapter in question begins: “Who then created the world around us, woods, meadows, rivers, and all living creatures, the sun that warms us, the myriads of stars that illumine the heavens on summer nights? My children, you have already answered the question. An august Name was just now on your lips, a Name you must never pronounce without reverence—the name of God.” Then follows the conception of God in the moral world:—

“You know the difference, my children, between right and wrong. You feel pleasure when you have acted rightly, and regret when you have deserved blame. You are conscious of an idea of goodness you cannot attain to, an idea of a Perfect Being, namely God. It is God who has given you this idea, in order that you may endeavour to resemble Him by goodness. The more virtuous you become, the clearer will be your notion of God. Our duties towards God are to hearken to the voice of conscience and reason, to cultivate obedience, reverence, and love.”

With equal insistence are taught the social, patriotic and humanitarian, above all, the filial obligations of every boy and girl born under the French flag. They learn how a Roman general on

his triumphant way to the capitol descended from his chariot to embrace his father, an old and obscure citizen among the lookers-on. This act, as some of us will remember, was repeated by ex-President Loubet when he officially entered his native town a few years ago. They are also told how the poet Wordsworth ever regarded his sister as his good angel, another lesson to some purpose. English wayfarers in France will not fail to have noticed the deference paid by all classes to grandparents. Truly, as wrote Horace Walpole in 1776, "old people in France are never out of fashion." The youthful rustic, whether docile or hooligan, ever doffs his cap in the presence of grandmother or grandsire. And if the respect paid is sometimes on the surface, we ever find warmth of affection between the passing and rising generation. Politeness, affability and good fellowship to masters, schoolmates and others, no matter of what class, are especially enjoined. Self-respect no less so is enforced. The little citizen must so comport him or herself that there can be no shame, no holding back, no retributive underhandedness. Justice and charity also form texts of interesting and often entertaining chapters. Here is a golden little sermon: "Charity can dispense a ray of sunshine in the most wretched home. Charity cannot always be generous, but it can offer sympathy and devotion, all that is best and tenderest of humanity. An affectionate word, a tear that comes from the heart, will soften many a grief. Never refuse the unhappy the consolation of feeling that their sorrows are shared."

The duty of kindness—alas! much needed here—to animals, small and great, is strictly insisted upon. The following anecdote might with advantage be

printed on a card and hung up in our own schools alike for rich and poor:—The great artist, Gros (1771–1835), on the entrance of his pupils noticed one morning that a lad had pinned a live butterfly to his hat, and that the poor little creature was still fluttering. “What!” cried the outraged artist, “unhappy youth, is this your only way of appreciating beauty? You find a lovely, living thing and your first thought is to make it suffer. Quit my studio forthwith, and never venture to enter it again!” Further on we read: “It has been said, my children, that your age is pitiless (La Fontaine). You are, above all, pitiless whilst you are ignorant. If you considered and realized the harm that you do, you would not do it. Think for a moment: an animal suffers pain like yourself, an animal, like yourself, has affection: realize all this, and you would no longer snatch young birds from their nests, remembering that by these, as by children, pain, loneliness and hunger are felt. Insects as well as birds and animals are sensitive to ill-usage. The boy or girl who finds amusement in ill-treating a butterfly, moth or fly, commits a bad action. Beware of thus hardening your heart.”

This excellent moral lesson belongs to the section intended for the elder scholars:

“Never take upon yourselves to judge the religious opinions of others: respect liberty of conscience, as you wish your own to be respected. Are you not, every one of you, children of the same Parent, the servants of the same Master, and are there not many provinces in the Kingdom of God? ‘Goodness,’ wrote the English Bentham, ‘attracts goodness.’” (The same sentiment, the word “amiability” being used, is expressed by Herbert Spencer in his *Ethics*.)



“ ‘ With very little trouble we can sow the seeds of courteousness and charity. Some of the seeds must inevitably fall on good soil, disseminating the germs of benevolence : all will prove a source of happiness to the sower.’ ”

“ The English poet Rogers tells the story of a much-beloved little girl who was asked, ‘ How is it that every one loves you ? ’ She replied, ‘ Because I love every one.’ ”

Excellent, too, are the little sermons on personal cleanliness and decency of language and conduct. In fact, with certain conditions and abridgments, this book might very well be translated for our own National Schools.

The would-be writer or compiler of a manual after such a pattern might consult among others a little work to which Jules Simon devoted his leisure over a generation ago, and still to be had in Hachette’s invaluable “ Bibliothèque des Écoles et des Familles.” This “ Livre du petit Citoyen,” which is in the form of a dialogue between master and pupil, is divided into fifteen chapters, dealing respectively with law, taxation, military service, the parliamentary vote, the administration of justice, and the various official duties which the humblest French citizen may aspire to fulfil. The principles of the Republican constitution and the machinery of Government are explained in terms unmistakably clear and comprehensive, and wherever we open the little volume we light upon some piece of exact information concerning subjects upon which only *le petit citoyen* may be very hazy. Among the shrewd commentaries illustrating every proposition, I cite the following *à propos* of the Chamber of Deputies—a remark as appropriate

to-day on this side of the Manche as in Paris fifty years ago: "We must keep our minds fixed upon law, not upon the uproar of those who make laws. Men assembled together in England and in America, as well as in France, are always more or less like big children and given to *tapage!*"

Those who, like the present writer, had the privilege of listening to M. Jules Simon in his apogee, one of the fieriest, most excitable, nineteenth and twentieth-century orators, must perforce accuse him also of no little *tapage*.

## II. EDUCATIONAL

Two magnificent and unique museums opened in Paris within the last fifteen years seem to have escaped the notice of English writers on France. A few words will perhaps induce English visitors in the French capital to inspect these twentieth-century galleries, the "Salle des Moulages," in the Pavillon Sully of the Louvre, and the "Musée Anthropologique," in the Jardin des Plantes. The first-mentioned collection enables us to study the world-famous marbles of antiquity without making the journey to Rome, Florence, Naples, and other great artistic centres. Here we find exquisite casts of the Elgin Marbles, the beautiful Clytie, and other reproductions from the British Museum; the boy with the thorn, the Laocoon, the piping faun, are, of course, here also, and many visitors, like myself, will doubtless linger long before the bust of Scipio Africanus and the statues of Aristides and Demosthenes. We have before our eyes the choicest achievements of classic art; and as we gaze on this display of physical beauty

the human form in its perfection, we feel tempted to aver that physical beauty of an ideal type is lost to the world. Where can we look for it? Beauty is here the essential, the sole justification of art. How opposed a view to modern theories! As I write I recall a marble group, otherwise artistic enough, by Max Claudel, seen by me in his native place of Salins (Jura). The sculptor represents a peasant woman stooping over her child and wiping its nose with her fingers! Could domestic art stoop lower? Yet the design is otherwise full of grace and the execution admirable.

The collections so splendidly housed in the Jardin des Plantes (enter by the Rue Buffon) remind us of all that French citizens and the world in general owe to the Government of the Republic; of the lavish expenditure in time, money, and thought in the highest objects towards which the mind of man can be directed. This new museum is Tripartite; the ground floor being devoted to anatomy, the first to palæontology, the second to anthropology. Thus, therefore, we have these vast sciences placed before us in a series of object lessons. We proceed from generals to particulars, from A B C to the finished language, the brief survey comprehending a study of countless ages and cycles of ages, scientific researches of many countries and many generations. It is, above all, the uppermost storey which commands notice. Here we have skeleton man represented in all its forms, beginning with the lowest types in the scale of humanity and rising to the highest. There is something inexpressibly weird and uncanny in these serried arrays—skeleton upon skeleton standing close together as soldiers at drill. Above these are placed

tiers of skulls, the whole forming a spectacle from which all but scientific enthusiasts must soon turn away as from ghost-land. Anthropologists may here compare the craniums of the long-headed and broad-headed races down to the minutest particular. The Palæontological Gallery is no less complete but less novel, it being formed from the nucleus already existing in the Jardin des Plantes.

One thought here strikes one. How much more fortunate were those monster prehistoric creatures than are their pigmy descendants! No vivisectors, no schools of preventive medicine in those days, no inquisition for the animal world! Yet another thought arises! What with so-called sport, vivisection, and artificial existence, how puny will be the show of our own animal world to generations, perhaps—who shall say?—destined to gaze upon such collections as these when the empire of the world is transferred to the heart of Africa!

France now boasts of its prehistoric romance, and all visitors to this wonderful—and somewhat creepy—world of skeletons should read the brother Rosny's series before described.

### III. HUMANITARIAN

It must not for a moment be supposed that the great humanitarian movement advocated in these pages is ignored in France. In certain respects, indeed, our friends are forerunners. We have not as yet an order of merit for our noble dogs, however many lives they may have saved. Such an order does exist in France, and in the *Daily News* some years ago an amusing account was given of Sultan, a "chien

décoré." The Paris Society for the Protection of Animals was awarding its prizes, and in due order the worthy Newfoundlander, who had lately saved a would-be suicide from drowning, was called up to receive his prize collar. The applause, however, was so tremendous that poor Sultan, being of that modest disposition ever accompanying true merit, to use a colloquialism, had bolted. The President laughingly handed the collar to Sultan's master, who promised to convey the customary congratulation.

Among the awards was a splendid Sèvres vase, presented by the President of the Republic to a butcher named Burneau, the inventor of a system by which oxen are slaughtered painlessly.

Another most encouraging sign is the utter failure to establish bull-baiting in Paris. An attempt was made to acclimatize this horrible sport in the French capital during the Exhibition of 1889, but a year or two later the bulls were sent home and the decorations and paraphernalia sold by auction, fetching, I am happy to say, a mere song. But this is not all. A most influential petition was afterwards presented to the Chamber begging the immediate and total prohibition of bull-baiting as still practised at Nîmes and Arles. Among the foremost petitioners was the celebrated critic and writer, the late M. Francisque Sarcey, who expressed his utter abhorrence of the so-called sport.

But even these movements are of less importance than the great efforts now being made through the agency of the Minister of Public Instruction. The object aimed at is the prevention of cruelty to animals generally and the destruction of birds. M. Spuller,

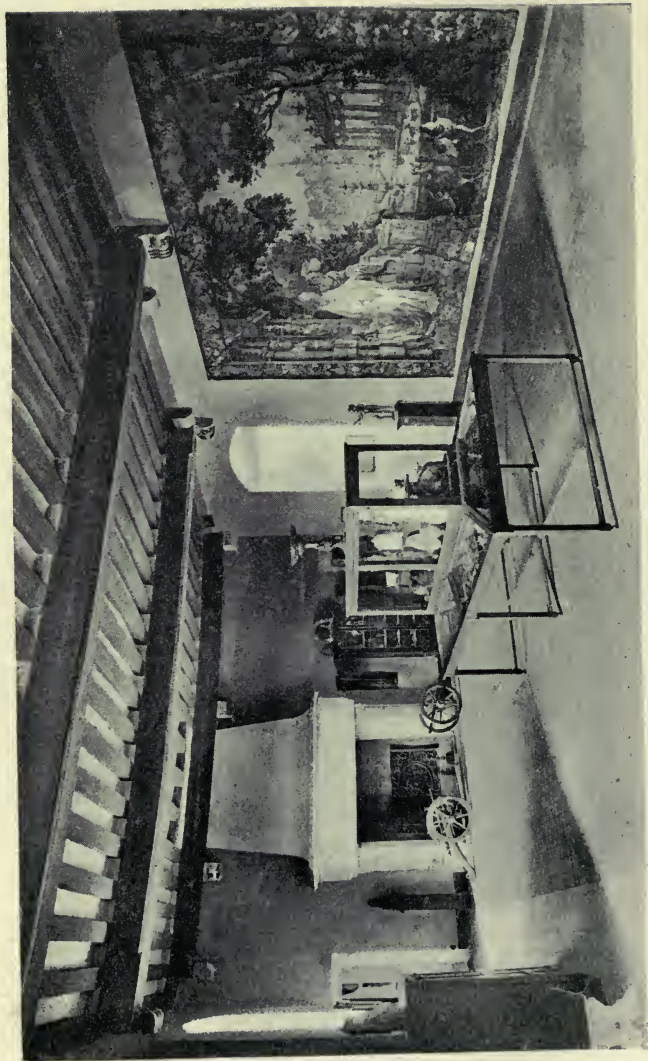
former Minister of that Department, at once entered into the views of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, who initiated the movement, and sent a circular to educational inspectors, suggesting school societies having the same object. M. Spuller himself drew up the statutes of these humane clubs. All members sign a promise to be kind, pitiful and just to domestic animals, not to torment, tease, hunt or startle them, to abstain from the destruction of birds, and not to destroy birds' eggs. Pupils who give an example of perseverance in kindness, compassion and justice are to receive prizes. If any member rob a bird's nest, or is guilty of cruelty, he is to be severely reprimanded and good marks taken away. If he continue such acts, the Mayor of the Commune is to be informed of the fact. We cannot therefore now accuse French authorities of indifference on this subject. I would also add that for many years the following has been set as a copy in national schools :—" You must not rob birds' nests of eggs or young birds. There is a fine for doing so."

It may not be generally known that an active Anti-Vivisection Society exists in Paris, and that English members are welcomed. The address of the honorary secretary is 22, Rue Matignon, Paris. Greatly to my regret, I have been unable to accept invitations to the annual meetings held on the 15th of June, 1893. I am proud to number ardent Anti-Vivisectionists among my French friends of both sexes.

#### IV. ÆSTHETIC

Municipal enterprise and liberality are rapidly transforming certain French townlings and villages





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THE MUSEUM OF NEMOURS.



east of Paris. Thus, the village of Bourron, on the eastern border of Fontainebleau, and numbering only a thousand and odd souls, is shortly to have a new handsome Mairie, or Town Hall, and a museum! It is also to be forthwith lighted by electricity. Bourron, familiar to readers of Balzac's "Ursule Mirouet," although a mere village, is one of the richest communes in the Seine-and-Marne, and adjoins the artistic little centre of Marlotte. Not to be behind its neighbour, Bourron last spring opened an embryo museum in the Mairie; loans and gifts poured in, the village folks testified the greatest interest in the matter; hence the project of a permanent building.

A good many artists and literary people live at Bourron and Marlotte, among the latter being the brothers Marguerite. It is certain that the example here set will be followed elsewhere, and that other communes connected with great artistic names will become *villages d'art*.

"What" (writes one enthusiast) "does not France owe to her villages? She owes to them her greatest landscape painters, Rousseau, Corot, Daubigny, Millet, and how many more? We all love our villages, but have hitherto neglected them. Let alike artists, *littérateurs*, and residents combine to make of their modest Mairies artistic centres, thus developing in the peasant a love of the beautiful."

This is indeed what he most needs. And this is what he is now getting. Great efforts are also being made to stop artistic "raiders," Americans and others always on the look-out for curios in country villages.

Nemours, scene of "Ursule Mirouet," now boasts of a very handsome museum, in which a distinguished

English artist, residing at Marlotte, takes the keenest interest.

On this subject he writes :—

“ There are no village museums properly speaking, but what happened some years ago was this. There is a man called Moreau Vauthier who lives at Bourron in the summer, he is the son of a celebrated sculptor of the third Empire. He paints and writes in ‘ Lectures pour Tous,’ and works for Hachette. Many years ago he was struck with the idea that as this region used to be very much frequented by artists it would be a good idea to ask every artist who worked here for any length of time to contribute a picture, which would be placed in the Mairie of the village he worked in, thereby doing two things, making what may be later on a source of interest and perhaps money to the Commune, and decorating the country Mairies round Fontainebleau which were nearly always bare and dreary beyond description. The idea has taken on very well, and all the Mairies round Fontainebleau have adopted his idea with more or less success. The best I have seen is at Grez, one reason being that the place was the most attractive to artists.

“ The Mairie at Bourron is the most dismal and hideous place, as just before the War they were going to make a new one, but of course that is all over now, but they have got rather a good collection of drawings and pictures ; but some artists would not give, and there were rows, because some wanted these collections to be placed under State protection and become museums, like that of Nemours, which is a State museum.

“ These collections are of pictures, drawings, books,

sculpture, anything which has an interest on account of having a connection with that particular village. The pictures are the absolute property of the mayor and village council, and if the commune should become hard up, they could sell these things, therefore some artists said they would not give on that account, but I think it was generally because they were Boches or too mean. It is a capital idea, and I am sure will be a great success some day."

#### V. STIMULATIVE

All who run may read French history, every city, town, townling, village, and even many a hamlet contributing to the chronicle. The National Valhalla is only one feature of patriotic gratitude and devotion. Oft-times ungrateful to its saviours during their lifetime, the Republic never fails in doing homage to the dead. The "mightiest" of any country or epoch, like David's captains, are often reckoned by threes; for Thiers, Victor Hugo, Gambetta, there is room in the Pantheon: for the rank and file, the army of men and women "*qui ont bien mérité de la patrie*," as the formula goes—who have deserved well of the Motherland—remains a simpler, less costly, but in one sense quite as durable an immortality. History cannot be unmade; historic verdicts can, however, be repudiated. By a stroke of the pen how many Napoléonvilles, Rue Bonapartes, and the rest, were re-christened in France and in the France beyond sea after Sedan? Doubtless the palimpsest was not effected without considerable outlay and botheration. But the change was everywhere made. Already in

1875, when revisiting Pontivy, in Morbihan, Brittany, I found the Napoléonville of four years before discarded. Roche-sur-Yon, in the Vendée, had already twice changed its name, Bourbon-Vendée having replaced the Napoléon-Vendée of the First Empire. In Algeria, similarly, the Napoléonvilles, one and all have undergone titular transformation.

We are here, however, concerned not with towns and men recalling David's "mightiest," but with the hundreds and thousands of names rendering street nomenclature throughout France a historic record, linking public workers in every field with their individual epoch and with the scenes of their labours. Take the city of Dijon as an instance. No sooner is the railway station left than you come upon the Place Rude, a statue of the famous nineteenth-century sculptor adorning a handsome square. A little further on, and the Place Rameau (1683-1764) with its monument, recalls another celebrated Dijonnais, that charming composer whose music is perhaps more in vogue to-day than at any former period. Proceed on your way, and two long streets bring to mind the ghastliest page in French history, namely the massacre of St. Bartholomew. It was owing to Chabot-Charny, at that time Governor of Burgundy, and Jeannin, Conseiller of the Dijon Parliament, that this province did not disgrace itself by wholesale slaughter. The refusal of Chabot-Charny to execute Royal orders is attributed, writes M. Henri Martin (vol. ix., p. 340) to the counsels of the wise legist. Jeannin's attitude is all the more noteworthy as he was a good Catholic, with Michel de l'Hôpital and a mere remnant, thus anticipating by centuries the principle of religious tolerance. No French city,





MONUMENT TO ROSA BONHEUR.

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perhaps, boasts of so many sons distinguished in various fields as the capital of Burgundy, others, besides the above-named, giving names to its streets. Dijon's distinction is multiform, but some towns, and even townlings, are remembered by one great name only.

Thus La Châtre, in the Indre, from end to end breathes, speaks of George Sand. Her statue in marble, standing in a beautifully kept little public garden, glorifies the place. And there are George Sand streets elsewhere: the memory of the great romancer and unrivalled stylist is not commemorated at La Châtre only.

Street nomenclature in France is by no means unisexual. There is a Rosa Bonheur Street at By, near Fontainebleau, to say nothing of the handsome, if somewhat grotesque, monument of a bull erected to her memory in that town. Hardly do you find a French village without some such testimony to its especial worthies. Thus a street in Marlotte—a second Barbazon on the opposite edge of Fontainebleau Forest—has its Rue Mürger, the author of the “*Scènes de la Vie de Bohême*,” who at one time lived in the quarter. Beyond Fontainebleau, on the great Lyons-Mediterranean line, the picturesquely placed little town of Nemours, similarly recalls a distinguished palæologist named Doigneau. The monument raised to his memory a few years back is thus inscribed:—“To Edmond Doigneau, erected by his native town and friends, 1825–1891.” Another little town of Eastern France, recently described by myself, by name Provins, recently celebrated the centenary of its one poet, Hégésippe Moreau, in elaborate and most picturesque fashion.

The inauguration of the monument—and, doubtless, street christening—was preceded by an open air play and recitations from his works, an apotheosis worthy of a Burns! There are, of course, scores—nay, hundreds—of Rue Thiers, Rue Gambetta, Rue Victor Hugo, and Rue Balzac throughout the length and breadth of France and its now enormous colonial territories. But Paris does not forget the tributes owed to its less famous children. Take up a guide, run through the list of streets alphabetically, and you will find that the civic holds its own against the military.

Among the A's figures the Abbé de l'Épée, first teacher of the deaf and dumb (1712–1788). Among the B's come artists, musicians, scientists, and song-writers, from Bernard Palissy, the great potter, done to death as a Huguenot in 1588, down to Bastien-Lapage, the artist, who died in the prime of life and in the zenith of his fame, just forty years ago. Running through the criss-cross row, we find the same delightful supremacy, arts of peace throwing into shade arms and *la gloire* of tradition. One name among those of Daubigny, Daguerre, Darboy, Dumas, Diderot, and the rest, makes us pause. Even to those fairly acquainted with French literature, the hyphened Desbordes-Valmore may well convey no suggestion. But if we turn to anthologies of nineteenth century poets, the matter is explained. Mme Desbordes-Valmore (1786–1859) was a poetess whose simple and pathetic poems and stories for children have kept her name alive. French poetry is no pastime of idle hours: its rules are as strict and complicated as those of Latin versification. This lady could not only write musical lyrics, but



achieve a sonnet. Among women thus memorialized we find an educationalist whose name may perhaps be familiar to English pioneers in the same field.

Mme Pape-Carpentier, who died in 1878, age sixty-three, was a great educational reformer and if not the inventor, she was the adapter of the object-lesson, and the introducer of the Kindergarten system into French primary schools. Her little manual on the subject called "Leçons de Choses," the first work of the kind published in France, was crowned by the French Academy seventy years ago. Opposition was raised by a few members, whereupon Victor Hugo arose and read a few pages aloud. "I ask you, gentlemen," said the poet, "if a work conceived and carried out in such a manner is not worthy of your suffrages?" The vote was carried, and a prize of 3,000 francs was awarded to Mme Pape-Carpentier. Her life-work was enormous, and not a French child to-day but is her debtor. Other feminine contributions to street nomenclature are those of Jeanne Hachette, of course the great Sévigni (when shall we have a Boadicea, a Frances Buss, or a Bodichon Street?), whilst in Paris and throughout French towns, at every turn, we come upon some reminder of illustrious natives. Of these, the majority noted by the *boulevardier* as he strolls through the capital date from the Third Republic. Among them we find Littré, whose mouth as a teacher was closed by the myrmidons of the second Napoleon; Victor Cousin, who shared the same fate; Louis Blanc and Ledru Rollin, both exiled on account of their political opinions, Henri Martin also, the three latter being among the "Republicans of '30." Thus, whilst

among ourselves street nomenclature chiefly recalls builders, local speculators, and international quarrels, on the other side of the Manche the subject is made a source of instruction and a stimulus of ambition in noble and pacific fields.

## V. AN ÁPROPOS

One obvious fact in this modern history of France is worth recalling. It is this : that all the triumphs of the last fifty and odd years have been won by civilians. As splendid an army as ever marched to battle was swept away in 1870-1 like chaff before the wind. And why ? The story has now been told over and over again, but more poignantly than ever in the contribution of the late M. Claretie to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. And when the fortunes of the country seemed all but hopeless, when her brave soldiers by the hundred thousand filled German prisons, when her capital was besieged, her frontiers were laid bare, her whole territory swarmed with hostile forces—who came to the rescue ? Who vindicated the honour of France, organized national defence, liberated native soil, and re-constituted that army of traditions so splendid ? Gambetta, the grocer's son of Cahors, De Freycinet, the mining engineer, *le petit bonhomme*, Thiers, the man of letters. For these facts we need not go to recondite sources. Every child now spells them out of his historic manual in the primary school.

In making the obvious and irrefragable reflection, I am not attacking the army. The military fiascos of the Franco-Prussian war, the interference of the

Ex-Empress, the fatal delays of MacMahon consequent on divided counsels, the intractableness of Aurelles de Paladines, the dubious shilly-shallying of Trochu, the treachery of Bazaine, even the miserable intrigues of Boulanger, do not reflect on the army itself. Never did troops more heroically face destruction than in 1870-1. Even that "respectable old drill sergeant," William I., as the late Professor Beesly calls him, shed tears as he watched the slaughter of Frenchmen at Sedan. "Ach! die tapfere Kinder!" (the brave boys) he cried, when he saw band after band mounting the fatal breach. But, after all, what feat in arms can compare with the achievement of "le petit bonhomme Thiers" in pacific fields? He was bidden to move mountains, and he did move them, not by miracles, but by the Gallic virtues of imperturbable tenacity, verve, and elastic temperament, gifts that indeed seem to partake of miraculousness. The history of his dealings with Bismarck is a chapter that all interested in France and in this question—Civilian *versus* Military—should read. It is the record of a stupendous, an almost superhuman, victory over adverse circumstances. The man of letters, working quietly in his study, repaired a step at a time, the unimaginable havoc wrought by treachery and incompetence in the camp, and also the aloofness of so-called friendly nations who stood by. And to-day we are suffering from Gladstone's refusal to interfere from another statesman's utterance—"Let us not throw ourselves into the bloody welter!"—also from incomprehensible national in-consequence and what, till the great Seventh Edward came into his own, seemed ineradicable prejudice.

But all this belongs to the past, and at the present time we are happily reminded of one of Voltaire's truest and wisest sayings — "When a Frenchman and an Englishman agree upon any subject we may be quite sure they have reason on their side."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### FRENCH AND GERMAN RELATIONS IN THE FUTURE

CAN any dispassionate observer entertain Utopian theories on this subject? I ask the question apropos of M. Romain Rolland's much talked-of volume "Above the Battle" (*Au dessus de la Mêlée*), of which the *Westminster Gazette* truly wrote—"The gist of the matter is that peoples at war must be *in* the battle, not *above* it." The biographer of that very washed-out hero of romance "Jean Christophe" in no less than ten volumes, again to quote the same critic—"asks too much of his compatriots, at this moment, when he expects them to fix their eyes not on victory, but on the peace which is to follow, and to look forward to the day when they will stretch out the hand of friendship to their neighbours across the Rhine."

Let us look back a little. Just forty years ago, *i.e.* from August, 1874 to August, 1875, I spent an unbroken twelvemonth at Nantes, my hostess being the widow of a former Préfet of the Loire Inférieure, the well-known physician and philanthropist, Dr. Ange Guépin. Never did a layman better deserve such a name! Of his career I have written elsewhere.\*

\* "Anglo-French Reminiscences." Chapman and Hall, 1899. Tauchnitz edition, 1900.

That sojourn under a French roof was followed by yearly and most often half-yearly visits across the Channel, upon each occasion being equally fortunate. Owing to a chain of happy circumstances, not only did I thus obtain an intimate knowledge of the country agriculturally, economically and picturesquely speaking, but of all sorts and conditions of men.

In more than one household, I had a second home to which I could invite myself whenever I pleased. I was indeed regarded in one as a future member of the family.\* Moreover, to have a French friend is to be able to count upon a legion. Thus from end to end of the great hexagon, to cite Bunyan, I found "harbour and good company."

Of all the invitations pressed upon me, one, I may say, must be set down as absolutely unique. An affable and highly educated priest from Nancy to whom I had been introduced at Dijon, begged me, when visiting his part of the world, to make his presbytery my *pièd à terre* whilst exploring the neighbourhood.

Think of it, a Protestant lady, hardly middle-aged, unmarried, unaccompanied, becoming the guest of a Catholic priest! But as my French hostess, herself a devout Catholic, remarked with a re-assuring smile—

"Pray accept. Being an Englishwoman you could do so without the slightest hesitation."

To my regret, the opportunity of acceptance never came. Not till years later did I visit and re-visit Nancy, and upon both occasions having a friend with me. But the visit missed would have been a rarer experience than the dozens upon dozens enjoyed.

\* A domestic Anglo-Entente frustrated by untoward circumstances.

How endearing nevertheless was each; what delightful memories all left behind! I spread the French map before me and as my eyes wander from familiar name to name, I recall a succession of red-letter days.

And what throughout these rich and varied years were my experiences upon this point? What did I find the attitude of French and Germans towards each other? In these pages I confine myself entirely to France proper, Germanized Alsace and the Germanized portion of Lorraine I leave out altogether.

How far were the brutalities, exactions and mutilations of conquered territory forgotten? Social circles from the uppermost to the lowest layer,—had any fellow-feeling for Germany filtered through these?

Be it borne in mind that my forty and odd years' record included intercourse with every section of French life, political, military, professional, literary, artistic, commercial and agricultural. Among the friends who helped me in my studies for "French Home Life" were two officers, the first, a General in high command, the second a Commandant, both officers of the Legion of Honour. From Paris for years I regularly received the New Year's greetings of a small shopkeeper in the Rue St. Honoré and from a rich tradeswoman who entertained me not only at the back of her wholesale premises in the Rue de Sentier, but in her *cottage orné* a few miles outside the city, these annual visits *inter alia*. In Nantes, Bordeaux, Lyons, Nîmes, Dijon, Rheims, visited and revisited by me, I was welcomed into highly cultivated social centres—Protestant and Catholic.

As to the country, from Marseilles to Cap Finisterre,

from Oloron on the Franco-Spanish frontier to Nancy, almost within a stone's throw of the German flag-staff, I have laboriously journeyed, in all humility emulating my great forerunner "that wise and honest traveller," as Lord Morley calls Arthur Young. Provided with an infallible *Open Sesame* in the shape of a letter or card, at each halt studying agricultural methods under guidance of a State professor of agriculture, gentleman farmer or peasant owner, I was thus introduced into the other half of French population, the half whose interests are bound up in the soil.

The answer to the question asked above is no long or circumlocutory one. French and Germans remained utterly aloof. An invisible Chinese wall kept the two nationalities entirely and implacably apart.

At the risk of appearing ostentatious, I will particularize a little.

According to the Roman poet, no truer authority, nothing adds greater weight to any statement than names and other signs of identification. Here therefore, I name some styles and titles, beginning with Paris.

In the capital, among my most cordial entertainers were the late eminent *Directeur de l'Administration des Monnaies et des Medailles*, or as we should say, Master of the Mint, and his wife, M. de Forille. Often have I joined their large family party in the Rue de Bellechasse, in their country house fifteen miles from Paris, and upon one occasion I visited them at Wimereux near Boulogne, where they had taken a *châlet* for the season.

Another house open to me in the capital was the mansion of a lady belonging to the *noblesse*, and who



had been a friend of the Ex-Empress Eugénie. At her afternoon receptions, near the Parc Monceau, the street would be lined from end to end with carriages and motor-cars, so vast was the Countess de M——'s acquaintance, so fashionable her musical and literary At Homes. In her husband's historic château in Germanized Lorraine I spent many days.

Not to catalogue all the Parisian stages in my long experiences, I will only mention a deputy and his wife, both highly cultivated, both having cosmopolitan tastes and interests, and ample means of gratifying the genius of hospitality with which they were possessed.

Did I then never catch sight of a German physiognomy, never hear Germanized French in the dozens upon dozens of French homes into which I was so warmly welcomed?

Yes, once, once indeed, but once only!

Thus came about the exception. A late well-known French authoress happened to be connected by marriage with a German family. Some years ago I was staying with this very dear friend at Meudon. An enchanting time we had together, with long talks of the great folks she had known, George Sand, Flaubert and others of a past epoch. On Sunday afternoons, friends came by river to take tea in the garden. One day a young German governess sent in her card. She had discovered the distant relationship, and my hostess, being amiable of the amiable, and pleased rather than annoyed by the intrusion, made her welcome. Here just appreciable ties of blood, not friendship proved the factor. The lady being elderly, an invalid and unprovided with a niece, was really very glad to have a well-educated, agreeable and handy girl with her during her *villeggiatura*.

Thus was brought about the solitary fact of Franco-German intercourse that has come under my notice throughout just upon half a century.

Next let me give my remembrances of that half-way house between the home and the hotel. I mean the private boarding-house or *pension de famille* and the so-called hotel-pension found in every French health resort, whether inland, spa or by the seaside. Of both types I have had a very varied experience.

It was at Couilly near Meaux, just ten years after the Treaty of Versailles, that I spent many weeks in a boarding-house, no publicly advertised one this, no large board bearing the words *Pension de famille* by the front gate. The admirable mistress of the establishment was a well-educated widow reduced in circumstances, who during the winter received American girl-students in her Paris flat. Being well-connected, her inmates were chiefly obtained through private introductions, but her name was on the list of one or two house-agents. Both in the Avenue Villiers and at Couilly, her rooms were hardly ever empty, the first being shut up during the long vacation, the other from "la rentrée des classes," or as we should say, re-opening of schools in October till June.

Whom did I find in the handsome country house, with its pleasure-grounds on the banks of the Marne? An American family, two Scotsmen and their wives, three or four Parisians, professional men and women magnetized thither by the lovely scenery, river bathing, excellent accommodation and prevailing sociability. We made up indeed a large family party. Among these happy holiday-makers, you might as well have looked for a Maori or an Esquimaux as a German!

A few years later with an English friend, I spent the month of September in a large and locally famous *pension* at Gérardmer in the Vosges, and only a few hours' distance from the German frontier.

Here surely, fifteen years after the war, I might have expected to find at least a sprinkling of German visitors from Mulhouse, Metz and Strasburg. True that nowhere throughout French territory was anti-German feeling stronger than in proximity to the annexed province. And modesty is no attribute of Prussians! It was difficult to credit them with shrinking from a rebuff. Be this as it may, of the tens upon thousands of visitors and tourists flocking yearly to this enchanting spot by its fairy-like lake, during our stay, not a Teuton man, woman or child was to be seen. Certainly non-appearance here bespoke "all-saving common-sense," on the part of the Germans, to quote Tennyson, if no more delicate scruple.

A third instance I will give, and then leave the reader to form his own conclusion. Burgundy also has its little spa, St. Honoré-les-Bains, in the Morvan, that romantic region recalling Ossian, to one feature of which my late friend Mr. Hamerton devoted a volume ("The Mount").

St. Honoré-les-Bains was famous in Roman times for its sulphur springs. The scenery reminded me much of Surrey and Sussex, and I recall no pleasanter do-nothing weeks than an autumn stay here.

I had joined some intimate friends from Dijon, and soon made other acquaintances, among them a very typical middle-class family, two nice little boys often accompanying me in my walks. And very entertaining boys they were, recounting for my

amusement the latest stories they had read. Not a trace of awkwardness, yet without the slightest familiarity, they always welcomed my comradeship.

Leaving health and pleasure resorts, I will pass on to the great sights of picturesque and historic France. Did my fellow-traveller and self encounter the unmistakable Teuton, man or woman, when visiting and re-visiting these? By road, rail or river, did we ever descry tourists of that ilk? Did any travel with us by diligence through the Highlands of the Jura, remote regions of Auvergne or the Cévennes? Were they met with as we sped by express from Nîmes to Perpignan on the Spanish border or from St. Pol de Léon in Brittany to the capital? Or were they met as we steamed from Lyons to Avignon and more adventurously descended the Rapids of the Tarn? Did we once hear the unmusical speech of the Fatherland in provincial museum, world-renowned cathedral, or storied château? Were we jostled by spectacled Herr Doctors, frousy Frau Doctorins, students with the obligatory scar, flaxen-haired Frauleins when marshalled through the galleries of Dijon, the aisles of Beauvais, or the palaces of Touraine?

And last, but not least, the literary shrine? As I wandered in the beautiful pleasure-ground amid which stands the marble statue of George Sand, did a German keep me company? Oh, no! From the "readingest" country in the universe, no pilgrim, at any rate during my repeated visits to George Sand's country, there kept me company neither in the gardens of Nohant, nor among the sites innumerable immortalized by her pen, nor in the noble monumental garden of La Châtre. If what Aristotle calls



MONUMENT OF GEORGE SAND.

[To face p. 216.



the first moral attribute, namely, magnanimity, could for a moment be supposed to lodge in the breast of a Prussian, we might lay such absence to delicacy. Could the follower in her footsteps of any other race, unblushingly gaze upon those queenly features? Would not indeed the thought of French provinces held in bondage stay his step?

Of cosmopolitan centres, I do not speak. The enrichment of Germany by spoliation and levies in 70-71 enabled tens of thousands to indulge in travel for health and pleasure. Alike the French Alps, the Riviera, Savoy, are crowded with Germans during the holiday season. Hotel-keepers could hardly be expected to shut their doors against tourists who, however unwelcome in other respects, like Joseph's brethren came with "money in their sacks."

There are also the ever-increasing hosts of the unwanted at home, the locust-like swarms of an over-populated country, who have fattened outside what they are pleased to call their beloved fatherland.

Just as clerks, waiters, bakers, and—Heaven save the mark!—itinerant musicians, in a sense have Germanized certain trades and localities here, so it has been over the water. The German or Austrian waiter possesses a sufficient smattering of half a dozen tongues to render him indispensable in hotels, cafés, and restaurants. Hence within such precincts they are found all the world over. And economically speaking, yet with traitorous intent, before the present war, more than one industrial centre, Roubaix, for instance, had become a German colony.

I here add by way of postscript the following statements from a wayfarer in France, hardly less

experienced than myself. Under date April 11th last, this correspondent writes : "No, I cannot remember meeting any Germans in France, either when travelling with yourself or afterwards in the Pyrenees and the Riviera. I think, however, that there were some in the hotels of Nice and Mentone."

And here is the testimony of a physician who within recent years has made cycling tours in Picardy and Normandy : "I never remember to have encountered Germans on the road," this gentleman has just stated to me.

One horde of invaders the French State has kept at bay. From the field of education, Germans have been rigidly shut out. Clerks, waiters, nursemaids of the abhorred nationality—often paid spies—might be employed by those who would. Since 1871 no German teacher, man or woman, has been admitted into public or private schools. Naturally, linguistic attainments have suffered. The language, and that a very hard one, to Latin races, had to be taught at second-hand, and by those but imperfectly acquainted with it. I knew well one of these French professors of German in a great Paris Lycée, who has since retired on a pension.

He thus explained how difficulties up to a certain point were overcome.

"During the summer vacation," he said, "with my wife I generally cross the frontier in order to refresh my colloquial German. We board in a *pension* or family, speaking and hearing as much of the language as possible and thus recovering lost ground."

He added that they were everywhere most affably received, and no wonder! Were they not denizens of a humiliated land? Is not a bully of the play-



ground condescending, even affectionate to a well-beaten underling ?

Perhaps in order to lessen the stigma in peace times, all tutors of other nationalities were equally excluded. Thus the two sons of our distinguished countryman, P. G. Hamerton, oddly enough as it seemed, were brought up to the scholastic profession. Now their father, although married to a French wife and settled in France, had never become a naturalized subject of the Republic. This fact would have disqualified them for professorship in a Lycée, but under the circumstances exception was made in their favour and both attained posts in provincial Lycées. Even here the disadvantages were great. The brothers, both of whom early followed their father to the grave, were Frenchmen in all but name. From infancy France had been their home. Neither of the two spoke the paternal language in its fullness and purity.

Mr. Hamerton himself lamented to me that the only English he heard as a rule was that of his wife. "As a fact," he said, "I get into the habit of thinking in French." No wonder that in speech he lost native idiom, and that his style often lacked raciness and point. In fact when putting thoughts on paper he was enacting the part of translator. His scholarly impeccable English was not the pithy speech of nineteenth-century Exchange, Market-place, Club and other "busy haunts of men."

Whimsical as it may seem to-day, French school-boys and school-girls have hitherto learned our own tongue also from French lips. Have I not heard the lady professor of a Lycée for girls in Paris discourse upon Whittington and his cat to fifty and odd little demoiselles, after the reading of the story, cross

questioning them upon various points, historic, grammatical, and eliciting responses in English? In first-rate fashion the lesson was given, the only drawback being that myself or a countrywoman did not occupy the professorial chair!

My good friend, the late M. Edmond Demolins, author of that famous book "À quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons," put into practice his theories of internationalism in education.

Elsewhere I have described my visit to his *École Nouvelle*. One feature of his system was the foreign stage. Each boy passed six months either across the Channel or on the other side of the Rhine, the object being first, linguistic, and secondly, moral. His pupils were to make friends with their foreign school-fellows and thus enlarge their sympathies, in fact to get rid of what we call parochialism. "Only conceive it, Mademoiselle," he said as we sat at the large family board, "my second boy now in Germany writes that he loves sour kraut!"

The notion of International Colleges has been attributed to Cobden and the eminent French economist Michel Chevalier. Be this as it may early in the sixties, schools on M. Demolins' system were founded respectively at Isleworth in the Finchley Road.

Alas! the promising scheme has received its death-blow, and well for the great-hearted originator that he died before it fell.

Yet one or two more facts in proof of my thesis. In order to measure the profound antipathy existing between the two nations we must read certain German novels, especially "Lieb Vaterland," by Rudolph Stratz. This novel by a most voluminous writer shows, as do many others of the last fifteen years,

what was coming. In these and pages of other writers, *der Tag* is plainly enough foreshadowed by those who have eyes to see. The inrooted hatred born of fiercest jealousy of France and England is read between the lines. And none of Mudie's thousand and odd readers seem to have noted the fact.

Turn to the savants and critics, for instance, to Dr. Karl Elze's "Essays on Shakespeare" (Macmillans' English version, 1874). This work not only shows an utter misunderstanding, rather pig-headed ignorance of French culture, but ingrained hatred and the arrogance and self-conceit only possible to a German.

On the other side take these facts. When the French Navy met with so cruel a disaster at Toulon some years ago, William II. wished to show what he called his sympathy by a contribution to the sufferers of the explosion.

Politely but firmly his offer was declined, the French Government could unaided provide for its widows and orphans. "Accept anything from the hated holder of Alsace-Lorraine? No, thank you." My friend the General's summing up of Franco-German relations in an earlier page of this book is the Alpha and Omega on that subject. Twenty thousand volumes could not say more!

THE END

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