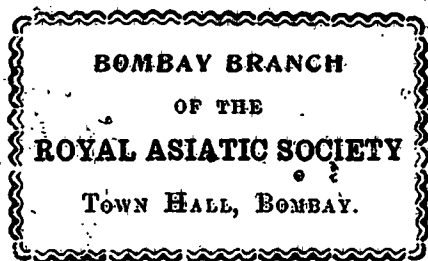




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THE LOUVRE

OR,

BIOGRAPHY OF A MUSEUM.

WITH TWO PLANS.

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BY BAYLE ST. JOHN,

AUTHOR OF

“PURPLE TINTS OF PARIS,”

“TWO YEARS’ RESIDENCE IN A LEVANTINE FAMILY,”

“VILLAGE LIFE IN EGYPT,” ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE endeavoured to write a volume on the Louvre, that should at once be agreeable and instructive—to the general reader—to the tourist who wishes to visit that edifice, with ample previous knowledge of the nature and value of its contents—and even, if possible, to those who are engaged in discussion on questions connected with Art-Establishments in Great Britain, and who may like to see “how they manage these matters in France.” I have therefore mingled narrative with description, and anecdote with criticism, but without attempting to supply the place of a guide-book or a catalogue. This work was suggested to me only a few months ago, and it has been written with as much rapidity as seemed consistent with due respect for an indulgent public. Fortunately, the greater por-

tion of the research had already been made. It was necessary only to control and complete.

As the manuscript accumulated, however, it began to assume a character different from what had been at first intended. Instead of speaking of the Louvre at a distance, as it were, and arranging the materials that presented themselves in a purely chronological order, I found that I was led by the comparative copiousness of my knowledge of one particular period—and the real relative importance of that period—to introduce, as it were, an *under-plot*, the hero of which was not a personified institution, but a real personage of flesh and blood,—my esteemed friend M. Jeanron.

I was fortunate enough to make his acquaintance when he was Director of the Louvre, on my first return from the East. He was then arranging the Egyptian Museum, under circumstances to which allusion is made more than once in the following pages. The activity displayed struck me so much that I at once thought that this was a subject for the pen, and asked for and obtained communication of a huge pile of lithographed and manuscript reports, correspondence, &c. I had an opportunity also of frequently visiting the Louvre in all its extremest corners, in company with

M. Jeanron himself. In those days the machinery of administration worked as under a glass-case, and everything not essentially private was allowed to be known. Had I written at the time, therefore, the materials that then became accessible would have taken the form of a personal narrative or a journal. My mind, however, was filled with other themes; and this one, though continuing to interest me, was abandoned. Much new information has since been added to and mingled with what was then rapidly obtained; and different, perhaps soberer, impressions have succeeded. However, there are times when it is good to look back, and describe what we saw of old as we saw it of old. This mighty Kaleidoscope—at which we all peep as best we may—has marvellously been shaken since 1848. Our eyes have been dazzled and blinded with varying tints, and no one can tell whether duller or brighter bits of glass will next turn up.

I have mingled, then, personal reminiscences and anecdotes of living personages—delicate work, which I hope I have delicately performed—with this Biography of a Museum. As will be observed, whenever I have made use of printed books I have carefully expressed my obligations—especially to M. Viardot, in many of

whose opinions I concur, though on many occasions we diverge. The greater part of this volume, however, is based, as I have intimated, on materials that have not in any other shape been made public, and on information which my notes, my memory, and the conversations of various artists, have afforded me. When I come to speak of Painting I express myself very positively, which the affirmative nature of the work will excuse. Neophytes, also, are more dogmatic than saints who have celebrated their jubilee. I cannot quit this subject without again acknowledging my obligations to M. Jeanron, whose conversations on Art—as I have said in another work—always so deeply interested me; and from whom, if I can venture to say so without self-praise, I have learned so much. Perhaps I ought to apologise to him, also, for having made so free a use of his name; but I have never introduced it without respect, and the public I address does not belong to him.

In truth—if I may be allowed to say a word on my way of composition—I have a great objection to the vague generalities under which more classical writers conceal and shroud persons and things. Words, like the atmosphere, sometimes adorn whilst they dim; but light shining though a mist seems to come from all sides,

and not from a particular source. At any rate, without being too great a worshipper of Fact, I may be permitted, even for the sake of gratitude, in this case to connect actions with a name; and not, like some, to attribute in general phrase to general causes what I know to have been done by a particular man. I shall not be suspected, however, of wishing to deprive the Republican Government of any of its due. It is only such a master that finds such a servant. Other régimes have their advantages: one gives glory, another security, another subsistence. Freedom is always perilous. A traveller runs a greater chance of stumbling than a bed-ridden old lady. But this is certain: that for all manifestations of human genius and energy we must look—not, it is true, to mere turbulent times, for Asiatic and Negro empires are convulsed daily without producing a new poem or a new-shaped fetish,—but to times when our race, weary of routine-oppression, weary of stereotyped faith, weary of fettered industry, suddenly sights an idea of high perfection, and sets the prow of its vessel towards it. Art and Literature flourished amidst the furious struggles of the Italian republics, and perished when those struggles ended in slavery: Art and Literature flourished in France, in England, in

Germany, in Flanders, whilst the fight for civil or religious liberty was carried on. It is customary to talk of various Eras, nam'd from particular monarchs, which are supposed to owe their intellectual glory to the said monarchs. But the truth is, that all those periods were contemporary with or immediately succeeded the most terrible civil commotions; and owe their splendour entirely to the shock of ideas that necessarily accompanies the shock of arms—where the prize is not a bauble, but the dearest interests of the human race.

NOTE ON THE PLANS.

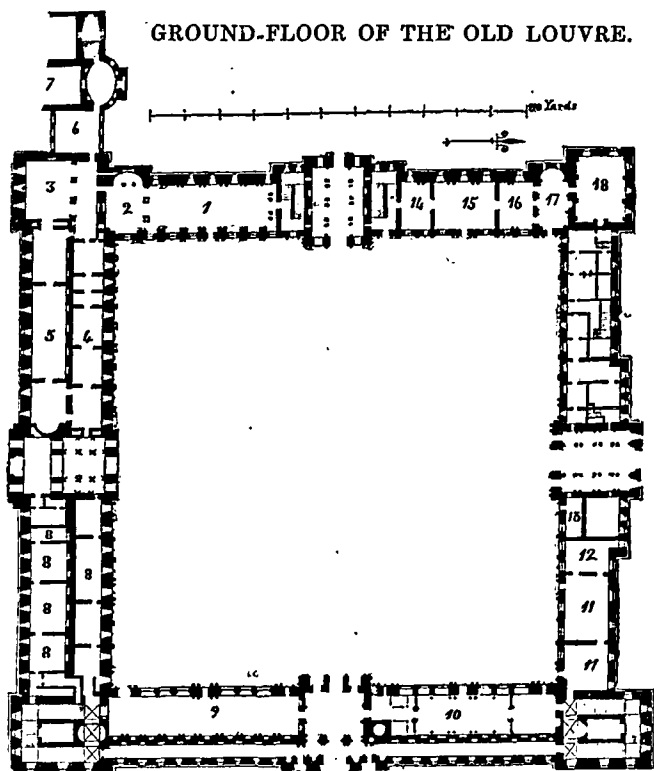
I HAVE caused to be constructed, expressly for this volume, two plans, one of the ground-floor of the old Louvre, and the other of the first-floor. The materials of the first already existed; but for the second I was obliged to have the rooms measured and the windows counted, since it appears that even the Administration of the Louvre itself has never thought of making such a plan. It is essential, however, to enable a stranger to find his way through the building, which to most persons, even those most accustomed to visit it, appears a perfect labyrinth. I shall give no advice as to the point at which the Museum should be entered, for this depends, of course, on individual taste; and all the doors are, it is announced, to be thrown open every day of the week. As it was impossible, however, without too greatly reducing the size of the cut, to represent the building that contains the Galerie d'Apollon, I will mention that, if the stranger enters the Hall of the Caryatides from the Great Quadrangle, and follows on the ground-floor the Halls marked 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, he will come to a Hall not represented, containing the statue of Augustus, and extending underneath a portion of the Long

Gallery. No. 7 is the ground-floor of the Galerie d'Apollon, and is described in p. 241 of the present volume.

Again, if the visitor wishes to reach the Great Saloon described in the last chapter, and the Long Gallery containing the principal works of the Italian, Flemish, and French Schools, up to the time of Lesueur, &c., he must enter from the court at A, turn to the left, ascend the staircase marked B, traverse the rooms marked 1, 2, 3, c, D, and E. The last is the Galerie d'Apollon, splendidly decorated, and overlooking the Gardens of the Louvre towards the river, and commanding a fine view of the Quays and the Cité. At the end of this gallery, on the right hand, is the door that leads into the Great Saloon.

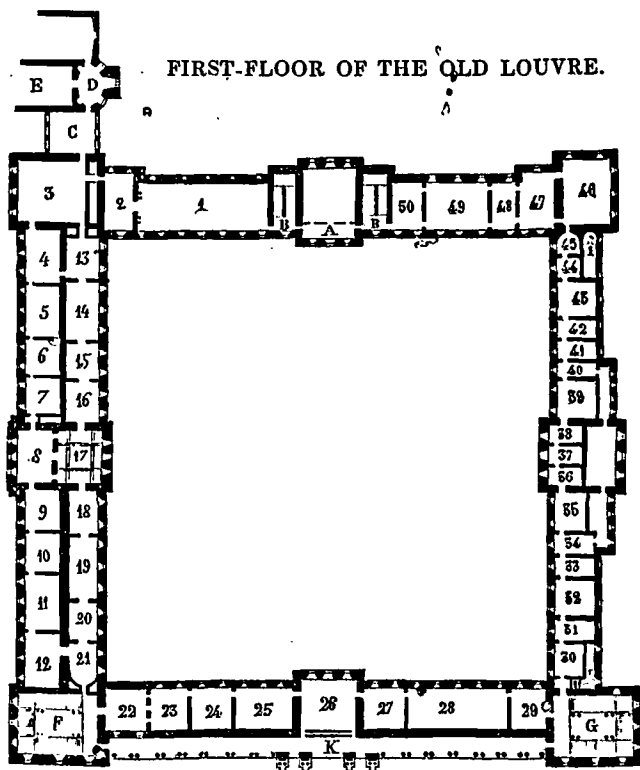
The Colonnade marked κ looks towards Saint Germain l'Auxerrois; the façade from 3 to F, about 550 feet long, towards the river; that from G to 46 towards the new Rue de Rivoli; and that from 46 to 3 towards the Tuileries, between the splendid wings recently constructed. I may add, that the portion of the internal façade corresponding with the rooms marked 1, 2, 13, 14, 15, and 16, is due to Pierre Lescot. The atelier of David, mentioned in p. 36, occupied the space marked G, where is now a vast staircase. The rooms not numbered in the plan of the ground-floor are devoted to offices, or are not yet opened to the public. I have not had the arrangement of the gardens and pavements in the Great Quadrangle marked, because they are being constantly changed. In the centre, where was formerly the statue of the Duke of Orleans, mentioned in p. 102, is about to be erected a statue of François I. The fact that each façade of this court is about four hundred feet in length gives some idea of the vastness of the building.

GROUND-FLOOR OF THE OLD LOUVRE.



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|--|---|
| 1—7. MUSEUM OF ANCIENT SCULPTURE. | 11. Assyrian Museum (p. 214). |
| 1, 2. Hall of the Caryatides (p. 246). | 12. Primitive Greek Sculpture (p. 223). |
| 3. Hall of the Tiber (p. 237). | 13. American Collection (p. 214). |
| 4. Hall of the Sarcophagus (p. 231). | 14—18. MUSEUM OF MODERN SCULPTURE. |
| 5. Hall of the Gladiator (p. 236). | 14. Hall of Coyzevox (p. 259). |
| 6. Hall of Diana (p. 240). | 15. Hall of Puget (p. 260). |
| 7. Hall of Ground-floor of the Galerie d'Apollon (p. 241). | 16. Hall of Coustou (p. 249). |
| 8. Musée de la Renaissance (p. 256). | 17. Hall of Bouchardon (260). |
| 9. Egyptian Museum (p. 216). | 18. Hall of Houdon (p. 249). |
| 10. Museum of Casts (p. 152). | |

FIRST-FLOOR OF THE OLD LOUVRE.



- A. Pavillon de l'Horloge.
- B. Staircases.
- C, D. Approaches to Galerie d'Apollon.
- E. Galerie d'Apollon.
- F. Staircase leading down to the Egyptian Museum.
- G. Staircase leading down to the Casts, Assyrian Museum, &c.
- H. Small Staircase leading up to the Marine Museum.
- I. Staircase leading to the Chinese Museum.

- K. The Great Colonnade.
- 1. Pictures by Lebrun, &c.
- 2. Tapestries, Enamels, &c.
- 3. Hall of the Seven Chimneys.
- 4—12. Paintings of the French School.
- 13—21. Small Egyptian Antiques, &c.
- 22—26. Museum of Sovereigns.
- 27—29. Miscellaneous Paintings.
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THE LOUVRE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

AMIDST the green groves of the Champs Elysées—where not long ago the elastic ball used to leap and the whirligig go round—a vast building, or rather cluster of buildings, destined to include the choice productions of Industry and Art from all parts of the world, has recently risen ; and despite conflicting rumours of war or peace, curiosity, if not desire of knowledge, will probably this year accelerate and multiply movement on the whole web of roads and railways of which Paris forms the centre.

Whatever may be the comparisons instituted the sight will be worth seeing. Days, even weeks, will scarcely suffice to satisfy the real students of the time present ; and the most judicious, when they direct their attention to the department of Art—some tint of which pervades all the productions of the nation which exercises hospitality this year—will no doubt be glad to

turn sometimes, in order to revive and more clearly define the canon of criticism that float in their minds, to a vast establishment, an enduring monument, not far off, in the centre of Paris, on the limits of the ornamental and business quarters, where some of the choicest productions of ancient and modern genius are collected. I take this opportunity, therefore, to bring together the result of my studies of the Louvre, in order that visitors who have not had time to make similar research may be able to bring away with them something more than a vague impression of grandeur and confusion, of disorderly beauty and artistic wealth.

In Paris, the arts are probably more nobly lodged than anywhere else in the world. They have taken possession of the handsomest palaces left by the monarchy, and are considered to be sufficiently important to form a department in the Government. The Director of the Museums—especially in these latter times—is quite an eminent personage, and the history of his movements is sometimes intimately connected with that of the greatest events of the day. In the present volume I propose, however, only to describe the fortunes of the Louvre, the origin of the collections which adorn it, its foundation as a museum, its periods of glory, vicissitude, and danger, and to give some idea of the nature and value of its contents;—to write, in fact, its biography, in such a way as to render it, if possible, interesting even to readers who have never seen it and do not hope to do so—a small category, however.

My attention happened to be much directed to the state and history of the Louvre at one of the most critical and splendid periods of its existence—that which immediately succeeded the Revolution of February. As a former Art-aspirant—familiar with the British Museum on private days—I had naturally retained a predilection for the studies of those beautiful professions, on the threshold of which I had hesitated, finally to turn away into other paths. Circumstances combined with taste. I was thrown a good deal among art-students; and, moreover, enjoyed the advantage of personal communication with the Director of the Museums named by the Government of 1848, and was able to learn from him day by day what progress was being made in the work of re-organisation, and to be an eye-witness whenever I pleased of many of his labours.

It would be very unjust to grudge to the principal men of the late Republic in France the acknowledgment of their very elevated taste in the Fine Arts; and, above all, of their firm determination to ameliorate the condition and increase the value and completeness of the public collections. I know that accusations of Vandalism were made at the time. Weak persons, indeed, believed, whilst interested persons affected to believe—and it is impossible to mark the bounds of wilful credulity—that there was some danger that Art and all other refinements of civilisation would disappear amidst the crash of falling governments and the toppling

down of ancient institutions. But the scene really presented was like the noisy ruin of pasteboard castles on the stage. There was great uproar, with some flashes of blue-lights—the slips seemed on fire, and a rag of drapery was burned—but all the heroes and heroines of the piece, virtuous and vicious, were found when the curtain drew up again to have lost neither life nor limb; and we had once more an opportunity of learning that the artificial arrangements on which, from long habit, Man is accustomed to make his existence depend, may be disturbed, violently or otherwise, but that he will always remain with the same base or noble qualities—the same aspirations, the same wants, the same productive power—provided he does not allow, as the Greeks had it, “the ass to get among the arms.” All is saved as soon as the panic has died away.

I remember making these reflections during my first visit to the Louvre after my arrival in Paris. The streets were scarcely yet cleared of barricades thrown up during the terrible mistake of June, and every house bore visible marks of strife; but all brows were already unknit, and all lips had again become familiar with smiles. The shops were open; the hawkers were provoking customers; the whole city had resumed its activity. It was on a Sunday in July. The brilliance of the weather reminded me of the climes I had just left. On issuing from one of the streets leading to the southern quays of the river, all the pinnacles and palaces that crowd down towards it on either side came

full in view; but none appeared more pure, more beautiful, more tranquil, and more imposing, than the Louvre. I then remembered what I had heard from some extravagant Republican—namely, that whilst the whole of Paris had been more than once changed into a battle-field—though a storm of bullets had day after day whirled to and fro along the streets,—not a chip of this magnificent edifice had been knocked off. Art, as he said, exaggerating—for people *will* exaggerate in times of civil commotion—had stood on the threshold when more than once the irregular waves of insurrection, speckled with foam (that is, faces white with courage and resolve), came driving that way; and she had but to hold out her hand to turn aside or calm them. I afterwards procured a more prosy account of that affair; but for the present this satisfied me. The Pont des Arts, which leads from the Institute to the Louvre, from the Temple of Science and Literature to the Temple of Art, was covered with a brilliant and buzzing crowd. Streams of people moved in various directions over the pavement of the Great Quadrangle, towards the open doors and broad staircases, which admitted them into the innumerable halls and galleries filled with treasures which they knew to be their own.

There were signs of activity on every side. When I had passed through Paris two years before, many halls and departments were not only shut up but evidently abandoned, reminding one of a house that has long been under the blight of Chancery. Now it was evident that

behind every closed door work was going on—new exhibitions preparing; new decorations being put up, new departments organising. Everybody seemed busy. The guardians, relieved from their absurd and expensive livery, were clearly convinced that they belonged to a living and useful establishment. I at once felt, that not only were circumstances now more favourable for the development of everything connected with Art, but that the Revolution had found a man worthily to represent its principles.

What a wonderful place, after all, that Louvre is! How few visitors really appreciate it! Among the English, who all flock there as a matter of course, numbers certainly are desirous of enjoying the treasures of art it contains; and, despite foreign satirists, I believe that our country could produce as many enlightened amateurs, wealthy or not, as the whole world put together. Many of our excellent citizens, however, go merely to stare, with neck violently thrown back, at the gaudy paintings, gildings, and carvings that adorn the ceiling, and sometimes crush the sober works ranged beneath. I saw a family the other day—preceded by the father, with his thumb between the leaves of a catalogue—enter a hall, elevate their chins immediately, and sail right through to the opposite door, with horizontal faces appearing above the crowd, never once looking at the pictures, but exclaiming aloud, for the benefit of everybody, “How fine! How magnificent!” It is clear these persons at least did not know that they were

in presence of the rarest productions of the human mind.

Another characteristic of the English visitor is his propensity for opening doors and prying into dark corridors. He will abandon the most attractive gallery—led away by some side-staircase or door left accidentally ajar—and grope up and down in the hope of making some extraordinary discovery. The officers of the Museum used to relate the story of one of their comrades, who on a certain occasion on the third story, as he was hastening along a passage, was surprised to behold a tall, gaunt man, with his hands in the skirt-pockets of his coat, and an umbrella under his arm—his hat thrown back, disclosing an immense forehead and two or three locks of sandy hair—wandering slowly along, staring over a pair of spectacles with all his might at the bare walls and unadorned ceiling, and evidently fancying himself highly amused and instructed. Being asked what he did there, he replied, in broken French, that he was seeing what was to be seen, that the Louvre was a fine place—in fact, a very fine place; and looked disappointed and humiliated at being told he must return to the public rooms. I am perfectly persuaded, however, that he remembers that voyage of discovery with lively satisfaction, and boasts among his friends that he has been where nobody else among tourists has penetrated.

I have never met any one who has come away with a satisfactory impression after a single visit to the

Louvre. The place is so vast, and contains such a multiplicity of objects, that several hours are required even to obtain a proper idea of its topography. The collections open to the public occupy nearly the whole of the ground-floor, the whole of the first floor, and a portion of the second floor of the Old Louvre, together with what is called the Great Saloon, and the Long Gallery of Henri IV. The catalogues published by the French Government may be of some utility to the visitor who has already prepared himself by previous study, but are obviously inadequate as companions for those who enter the Great Quadrangle without knowing more than this—that they are going to seek acquaintance with one of the most splendid, and perhaps most complete, of all European museums.

In the first place, these catalogues are deficient in a plan of the localities which contain the collections they describe. What is wanted is a summary description and representation of the edifice, according to its distribution as a museum. The Louvre was not originally constructed for the elevated purpose to which it is now applied. It was not, therefore, possible to hit upon any arrangement by which the collections could be made to follow one another in any consistent or systematic manner. For example, the Italian School has been necessarily cut up and divided. The Great Gallery, set apart for the principal works, is far from containing all the riches which the Museum possesses of that school. A portion of them is placed in a distinct part of the

building. The French collection, from its origin to the brilliant period of Poussin, Lesueur, and Claude Lorraine, is exhibited in the Long Gallery, at the end of which it suddenly breaks off, to be resumed in a very distant portion of the edifice, beginning in the splendid Hall of the Seven Chimneys and continuing in the galleries of the Old Louvre along the water's edge. Greek Art, of which the Museum contains so many fine specimens, is separated into two portions, the works of the early period being isolated in a small hall, neighbouring the Assyrian Museum. A commencement of an American Museum is placed in a room on the left hand as you enter from the Rue de Rivoli, whilst the Ethnographical, Chinese, Japanese, and Marine Museums, are to be sought for on the upper stories. The Galgraphie, a very curious establishment, is so placed that for a long time yet the public will remain ignorant of its existence; and the Museum of Modern Sculpture can no longer extend, as it ought naturally to do, in a regular manner. I mention these circumstances, at once to stimulate the curiosity of the visitor, and to suggest to the present Direction the advisability of taking more practical measures to facilitate a journey through this vast and intricate establishment. But it would be unjust not to repeat that, all things considered, an edifice originally built as a royal dwelling-place has been very cleverly adapted to its present use.

Some interesting considerations are naturally suggested by the contemplation of the Louvre as a whole,

under its present character. Instead of being an abode of kings, the scene whereon the great tragi-comedy of Power is enacted, the focus of intrigues, and manœuvres, and jealousies, and dark suspicions, and darker actions, the home of royal pride or misery, the gay resort of courtiers and maids of honour, the tomb of virtue, the cynosure of the vulgar, the great manufactory where sickly caprice; or grasping ambition, or gloomy fanaticism, plans war against foreign states, or massâcres against heretical or insubordinate subjects,—it has become the tranquil but gorgeous refuge of a prodigious crowd of objects; principally of Art, sometimes of curiosity, that attest the inexhaustible fertility, and the almost divine creative power of the human mind, during many thousands of years, over almost the whole surface of this earth. We see there some fragments, at least, of the wrecks of all civilisations, some evidences of the genius of the most favoured families of men. It is scarcely necessary to go beyond the walls of the Louvre in search of the conviction, that in all times and all places one of the keenest and most insatiable desires of our species has been to give to the rough material which the forest, or the quarry, or the field may afford for its use, something,—a quality of form or colour,—which is not absolutely necessary for the prosy purposes of life, and which brings it to a certain extent within the boundaries of that realm which has never yet been explored from side to side—the realm of Imagination and Fancy.

In the course of the following chapters, although I cannot pretend to enumerate even the principal objects the Museum of the Louvre contains, I shall endeavour to give some idea of their infinite variety. At present I wish to suggest to certain visitors, who seem to me to belong to a very large class, the advisability of laying aside, for a time at least, some prejudices, some favourite doctrines, some affections that are no doubt natural and proper on ordinary occasions, but which, I think, tend to diminish the interest and circumscribe the possible utility of an attentive examination of the contents of the Louvre and of all similar establishments.

It is obvious that particular studies, in proportion to the earnestness with which they are pursued, represent or engender tastes that have a constant tendency to become exclusive. The classical student, filled with most excusable admiration for the *beau idéal*, who has penetrated into the true spirit of antique Art, and derives from the contemplation of its remains, by the assistance of his extraneous knowledge and high cultivation, a pleasure and a profit denied to less instructed persons, is perhaps the most disqualified of any from truly appreciating the entire mass of the multiplied productions of human genius here laid out in lavish profusion before him. It requires no very keen observation to perceive that men who can spend whole hours sitting in that hall on the ground-floor, where the Venus of Milo reigns alone in unapproach-

able beauty, go up with a very poor relish to seek for the presence of Art in the picture-gallery, where they will find represented often not any ideal loveliness, where they will observe no constant search after perfection of form, no sacrifice of what may be called the vital evidences, which according to their theory distract the attention from the pure type; but a perpetual endeavour, more vast in its range, and perhaps even more successful, certainly more copious in its results, than in the Shakesperian drama (since thousands of minds have laboured in the same field), to represent human life under all its aspects, grave and gay, high and low, heroic and humble, — aspiring, struggling, conquering, loving, labouring, or resting—virtuous, vicious, or indifferent,—alone or in groups or masses,—in palaces, in cottages, in pot-houses, in streets, in public squares, in the senate-house and the market-place,—by the riverside,—in the sombre forest or the vast plain,—near the interminable ocean shore, on the dream-like southern seas, or the tempest-lashed waves of the north. Nay, the painter's art aims still higher, and descends, if you will, still lower, striving to depict the ecstasies of saints, the mystic scenes that have passed between heaven and earth, the ineffable mysteries of after-life, the joys of the blessed, the tortures of the damned; whilst, in its calmer moods, more domestic, and simpler, and humbler themes attract it, and it dwells with fondness on the minutest phases of animal or vegetable life, and with proud indifference to names and vulgar opinion, thinks

it by no means unworthy to take as a model the flower-basket, the kitchen-dresser, or the larger.

It seems to me quite clear that it is a mistake to come into the presence of this vast mass of productions, either with the idea of deliberately setting aside whole classes as belonging to what I suppose must be called Low; in opposition to High Art; or of seeking through the whole range of pictorial works, simply for reminiscences more or less exact, and consequently, according to this view, more or less admirable, of that perfection of form which constituted the remarkable, or I should rather say, one of the remarkable characteristics of ancient sculpture. For the Greeks it must be observed, although theory sometimes forgets this fact, often represented the natural, the grotesque, and the hideous, even in marble; whilst their paintings, according to the most vulgar traditions, not to speak of preserved specimens, aimed constantly, and with success, at imitating ordinary natural objects, in such a way as to deceive the beholder—man or bird. At any rate, even if the ancients, complying with their particular and noble tastes, as well as with the exigencies of their religion, sought chiefly in their sculpture which we best know to marmorise the forms of beauty with which their minds, under the brooding of poetical tradition, teemed, we should not therefore be obliged to limit our affections and condemn everything that has come into life under a different climate by a different process of generation.

Those who seek only, in the two or three thousand paintings of the Louvre, for noble or charming countenances, chaste or voluptuous forms, magnificent buildings or poetical landscapes, will assuredly find much to satisfy them; but as assuredly they will miss the greater portion of the pleasure which laborious and conscientious men, who have loved their art in all the vicissitudes of life, whether it led them to wealth or to misery, more faithfully than Dante loved his Beatrice, have spent all the strength of their mind in preparing for them. Under the old Republic in France there existed a school, not yet quite extinct, which in its narrow, pedantic, and by no means very critical partiality for the antique, laid itself open to the charge, not only of despising wholesale the productions of Flemish Art, but of wilfully exposing them to destruction. This question was even debated with violence in the Council of Five Hundred, and I have often read in books and heard, both in France and England, the arguments used on that occasion repeated and amplified. Virtue cannot put up with cakes and ale. The devotees of Italian suavity speak with angry contempt of Dutch grossness. But, in truth, the object of Art seems to me to have much the same scope as that of literature: It should only be confined by the exhaustion of its means, and by the same proprieties that restrain more and more, as refinement progresses, the wielders of the pen. Words, it is true, have dared to describe what should not be thought of; and have succeeded in

expressing things which the eye never saw. But why should we forbid the pencil to represent objects, and scenes, and phases, and attitudes of human nature, which the master of sentences claims the privilege of recording? A fable is as legitimate a production of the human fancy as an epic poem, an epigram as a tragedy, a comic story as a pathetic romance. The Johnsonian period and the French Alexandrine may exclude all reference to the common acts, usages, and utensils of life; but we cannot silence Addison, and Sterne, and Smollett, and Crabbe, and Dickens, and Jerrold, and Lafontaine, and Molière, and Montaigne, and Rabelais,—to say nothing of Shakespeare, completely to illustrate whom by the pencil we want the best geniuses of Italy and Flanders.

There is, I am sensible, a large class of enlightened persons to whom these observations may appear superfluous, because they have long ago made them for themselves. But, in truth, it is not needless to put them forward in addressing the ordinary public, which is profoundly divided on these points. Perhaps the majority, however, including many who affect classical tastes, err in a different direction from that on which I have insisted. There are those who are inclined to exclude Beauty as, at any rate, an indifferent ingredient in Art. They want only exact representations of real things, imitations that deceive the eye, or, at any rate, vivid scenes of common or mediocre life. Seraphic beauty has no charms for them. They do not under-

stand it. It has never come between their pillows and their eyes in the waking dreams of their youth. They have never been half-converted to a Religion which, in this case at least, if it appeal to the senses, appeals to the highest and most delicate, by the contemplation of those serenely beautiful faces—more serene and more beautiful after all than anything which ancient Art has conceived or executed—that droop in fondness on the canvasses of Raphael over the form of the Infant-God. They perhaps discern some danger to their sturdy belief, where the man of large sympathies only finds a moment of temporary contact with a vast mass of his fellow-creatures in their purest and tenderest mood. Let us not here talk of the Christian Art, which has been made an engine of propagandism, and the existence of which is based on testimony, and interpretation, and wringing of texts, worthy of an Eastern Court of Justice; but it is quite certain that Christianity introduced a new element into Art, not when it suggested uncouth and conventional figures, without the bone and muscle of humanity, nor even when it created types of surpassing beauty which infidels might adore, but when, discarding all narrow theories of heroic perfection, it brought man into loving and respectful communion with all nature, when it sanctified even ugliness and suffering, and made nothing indifferent, from the virgin-loveliness of Her whom our rivals in Christianity call the Mother of God, down to the meanest grass that waves in the field.

It is, however, I think, not from being imbued with

any portion of this sentiment that a certain school directs its admiration towards works of Art, for which I have endeavoured to obtain a fair construction in another quarter. A sturdy peasant-girl, beaming with life, but with all the marks of labour and domestic vicissitude about her; a wrinkled and spectacled old woman, leaning over a book or a stocking; a pimply-faced smoker, a pipe, a wreath of smoke, a quart-pot, an ugly dog, a cat, a turbot, a cauldron, shining in a patch of sunlight that breaks through a dingy window—all legitimate objects of Art—are to them, however, the only things worth representing. Assuredly these persons may be advised to go to the Halls of Sculpture, or to station themselves some time in earnest thought before the marvellous creations of Raphael, Da Vinci, and Fra Angelico.

There are others whose chief and almost sole delight is in the Spanish painters. These scarcely need come to the Louvre. They sneer at Claude, and are cold towards Poussin—the Italian masters do not charm, and the Flemings are an abomination unto them. Of course there is no struggling in extreme cases against these exclusive predilections. But it is certainly worth while to point out that when Art has chosen the spectacle, whether vast or limited, whether noble or vulgar, which it wishes to represent, it demands our admiration, not only for the choice of its subject—though even here Criticism has, of course, a right to interfere—but for something which it adds from its own stores, something

derived from the innermost recesses of the mind, and depending for its true expression on the skill of the hand and on the result of a vast amount of special training and anxious study. Art may, indeed, be said to be present in its complete state, as well by the side of him who painted a cow resting in meditative stillness in the midst of a vast meadow as by the side of him who depicted the last terrible scene in the drama of human nature. Finally, it may be maintained, that if Art were to be confined to any one of the manifestations which excite the admiration of particular schools, it would lose the greater number of its disciples—not one of whom, perhaps, could have distinguished himself out of the walk to which his taste led him; and at length, becoming more and more special and removed from general sympathy, would rapidly decline, both from want of internal vitality and external encouragement: so that, when there no longer existed an artist who could or would paint a carrot or a cauldron, there would be no one capable of painting a Nymph or a Madonna.

CHAPTER II.

THE LOUVRE AS A BUILDING.

THE history of the Louvre as a building is sometimes distinct, but is sometimes identical with its history as a Museum. I shall endeavour to escape as much as possible from the allurements of research, and to arrange the capital facts connected with the origin and various transformations of a palace that forms the pride of Paris in a readable order, without going to recondite sources or seeking exclusive information. There is, indeed, scarcely anything to add to what is commonly known. A crowd of persons more or less fanatical—artists, amateurs, architects, and monomaniacs—have made the Louvre their especial study;—some dwelling on its contents, others on its external aspect; some groping amidst its sombre archives, others absorbing as it were the lessons that detach themselves from the walls of its interminable galleries, and furnishing their minds profusely with all manner of rich forms and ideas. When a subject has been so laboured, facts that seem new because met in obscure corners

are soon found to be in general circulation ; so that in this chapter, until we come to contemporary matters, it is safe only to affect the character of an epitomist.

Many buildings of far ancients date still remain erect in various parts of the world, about the origin of which we have much more definite information than about that of the Louvre. It stands there, in the centre of a capital which is rapidly assuming a more modern appearance even than St. Petersburg ; and yet no one knows precisely when it was first founded, and etymologists differ as to the real meaning of its name. At a remote period in the future, if the history of French dynasties be faithfully recorded, there is no doubt that *Louvre* will be taken to mean a *Den of Wolves*. Tradition tells us, that in the time of the famous King Dagobert, who had such peculiar theories on the art of dress, there existed in the midst of the forest near the river, where now the palace stands, a little hunting-seat, from which his majesty used to cross over every evening in a ferry-boat to his residence in Paris ; and it even ventures sometimes to go back a hundred years more, and assign the foundation of the Louvre to Childebert the First, in the beginning of the sixth century. But, in truth, we know more about the early days of the Pyramids and the Parthenon than about the origin of an edifice which is not yet completed whilst I write, which every tourist has visited a hundred times, and along whose galleries the silken flounces of every Mrs. Till have rustled.

According to the author of the "History of the University of Paris," Charlemagne first began a system of which we shall have occasion to speak more than once, and gave a lodging in the Louvre to Alcuin and other learned men, by whom it is said the great schools of France were founded: but all this is very mythological. What is known with certainty is, that the Louvre came by degrees to be the home of the monarchy in its feudal character—the head of all the fiefs, says Pasquier, that immediately depended upon the French crown. At a later period it used to be remarked that the king of France always had three residences in Paris: the Palais, where he was indeed King; the Louvre, where he was a Gentilhomme; and the Tournelles, where he was a Bourgeois.

The Essay of M. Vitet—who is dissatisfied with everything as an architect and satisfied with everything as a courtier—neatly states some of the principal points of the architectural history of this palace; but more complete details are found in the elaborate work of M. Clarac. By their aid we see the Louvre gradually expanding from a mere shed to a respectable house; then starting up into the proportions of a feudal fortress; gradually disappearing once more, but lending its deep foundations to support a more elegant edifice, which by degrees thrust out wings on every side; and now, at length, occupies, in the centre of a vast metropolis, a space with which of old many cities would have been content. I can only notice some of

the incidents of this wonderful growth, and shall not attempt to represent by words the various changes in the aspect of the palace or the general effect now produced. A great tower that long frowned threatening over Paris, and served for the purposes of grand receptions and ceremonies, and was naturally accompanied by a dungeon, a treasury, and a dépôt of archives, was built in 1204 by Philippe-Auguste; and the Louvre, exactly as it is described in the "Romance of the Rose," remained almost exclusively a feudal fortress for above three hundred years. Under Charles V. a few alterations were made to fit it for a habitation. Ornaments were added; gardens were mingled with the towers, walls and moats; and here and there were scattered menageries and aviaries. There was also a tower specially reserved for the king's library; and there still remain a few manuscript volumes in the Rue de Richelieu, on which are written these words in letters of the fourteenth century—"To be placed on such a shelf towards the river at the Louvre." It appears certain that this library was freely opened to learned men—a tradition not long preserved by the monarchy. All these additions, combined with the huge conical roofs of the towers and turrets, covered with lead or with varnished tiles, and surmounted by glittering points or huge weathercocks, gave a strange and almost fantastical aspect to this palace-fortress, which is well represented in an old picture formerly found in the Abbey of St. Germain des Prés and now

preserved at St. Denis. Those who wish to trace the variations of the external aspect of the Louvre from this time forward may consult at the National Library the immense collection of plans, elevations, and views, referring to the topography of Paris. They will see among others a copy of the celebrated plan executed in the early part of the sixteenth century in tapestry, the original of which, after many vicissitudes, was used as a carpet at a ball given by the Hôtel de Ville in 1786, and ultimately disappeared.

The Louvre was quitted by Charles VI. for the Tournelles, where also lived when at Paris Charles VII., Louis XI., Charles VIII., Louis XII., François I., and Henri II. The widow of the last-mentioned king, after his supposed accidental death, exhibited her grief by ordering the Tournelles to be rased to the ground; but instead of building an expiatory chapel, according to more artful modern custom, sold the ground for building purposes, and so made a good profit by the transaction. Catherine had the thrift, as well as the craft, of an Italian of those days.

During five reigns the Louvre was utterly neglected. But at length François I., struck by the beauty of the site, ordered the great tower of Philippe-Auguste to be destroyed,—a task performed with some difficulty and at considerable expense—2500 livres of those days—in 1527. Twelve years afterwards, when Charles Quint was expected, the hero of Marignan—always accustomed to squander the greatest means to produce the

smallest results—determined to resuscitate the Louvre for the occasion. Thousands of workmen were collected: artists and artisans were employed to decorate the walls with paintings and tapestry; the windows were enlarged, and supplied with new panes; the arms of France were sculptured in profusion; the weather-cocks were re-gilded, and various ugly old walls were thrown down: but the result of all this industry was evidently not satisfactory, and when that time of breathless suspense had passed—during which the fear of public opinion, perhaps, alone gave the victory to public faith—François I., still in astonishment at his own chivalry, determined to distinguish himself by architectural achievements.

The time was a favourable one for undertakings of that kind. The Renaissance—an event which successive writers are endeavouring to characterise in a series of conflicting epigrams—had already far advanced. In architecture especially, the influence of new ideas was manifest. M. Vitet well describes the gradual victory of the modern style, which was, in fact, the revivification of the antique. At length the so-called Gothic style was proscribed; and just as architectural Art in Italy had reached its culminating point, its principles began to be known in France, though, as I shall presently mention, they were, luckily, not servilely applied.

I have found in a rhetorical writer of the end of the sixteenth century, Estienne Pasquier, a curious

allusion to the discussions which accompanied this reform. He says that there still existed some people of the old school who admired all the edifices built "since the coming of the kings," as Notre Dame, the Holy Chapel, and the Palais, which common observers, adopting the fashionable term of praise, esteemed to be all constructed in the antique style. "Yet, in the judgment of brave architects," he continues, "there is nothing antique about them; they are built after the modern fashion, and have none of those rare traits which the ancient Greeks and Romans used in their architecture; but it may truly be said that a Louvre was constructed by the late M. de Claigny, in the antique style, although it is new; and he has expressed in it everything that was fine and worthy of old." On the other hand, as the same writer tells us elsewhere, according to a great architect, Maistre Jacques Androuet, dit Du Cerceau, the Sainte Chapelle was the finest modern building known; and he spoke slightly of the *parades* which M. de Claigny, or Clagny—that is to say, Pierre Lescot, to whom François I. gave the Abbaye of that name—had borrowed from the antique. We have here the record of a conflict of opinion, which does not seem to have left any other documentary trace; but it is difficult to reconcile the admiration of Du Cerceau for the masterpiece of the time of St. Louis, with the accusation directed against him by M. Vitet, that he introduced the colossal order from Italy.

To return, however, to the Louvre in the time of François I. Some of the disciples of the school of Fontainebleau endeavoured to introduce the pure Italian style; and had they prevailed, not a single visible roof would have remained. A building capped by a kind of pyramid of slate, seemed to them a mere barbarism. They thought only of the effect produced on their eyes; or, rather, they remembered the elegant horizontal balustrades of their own country, sharply marked against a blue sky. They forgot the snow, the rain, the winds, the fogs of the north—as all these circumstances are forgotten by our modern architects, for whose incapacity and subjection to routine we are compelled to pay annual penalties, in the shape of quarrels with landlords and visits from tilers and plumbers. François I. first applied to Serlio of Fontainebleau; but the plans of this foreigner were probably too expensive. Instead of modifying them, he ironically recommended the selection of a French artist; and his advice was unexpectedly taken.

There existed several French architects at that time who had studied the ancients, but were sufficiently sensible, in the application of their acquired principles, to take into account the latitude in which they had to work, the seasons they had to contend with, and the atmosphere through which their productions must necessarily be contemplated. Among these was Jean Bullant, who, in building the château of Ecouen for the surly Connétable of Montmorency, had produced

a masterpiece. Contemporary with him, but somewhat older, were Pierre Lescot and Philibert Delorme. The former had never been in Italy, though he was imbued with the new ideas of the times; but the latter had travelled and studied much. Pierre Lescot was applied to by François I., and was assisted by Delorme. He set to work with enthusiasm, and his plans are universally admitted to have been perfect in their kind. They were at a subsequent period purposely destroyed—it is supposed, by some one who feared comparisons with the building really erected. For Lescot constructed but a mere fragment, all of which has not been suffered to remain intact. Even so late as the first Empire a portion was mercilessly destroyed.

Under the reign of François I. comparatively little progress was made with the Louvre. It was under Henri II. that Pierre Lescot carried on the greater part of his work. After his death, Catherine, impatient to inhabit the Louvre, caused a portion to be hurriedly finished—namely, the two wings which correspond to about one half of the southern side and one half of the western side; for according to the original design, the Louvre was not to exceed in size the old fortress of Philippe-Auguste, the site of which was equivalent to one quarter of the Great Quadrangle. In Catherine's time the building presented a strange aspect. The old eastern and northern wings, with their towers, turrets, portcullises, ogival

windows, pinnacles, and weathercocks, remained erect, face to face with the exquisitely symmetrical wings built by Pierre Lescot. When new constructions were undertaken, they were entirely for increased convenience, as in the case of the ground-floor of the present Galerie d'Apollon; so that I am afraid the excellent Montaigne flatters somewhat when he says, that "our Queen Catherine would testify to succeeding years her natural and munificent liberality in building, if her means corresponded with her taste." It is certain, however, that she had artistic tendencies; and Sauval, writing in the seventeenth century, mentions that she had intended at one time to establish her museum, her hall of antiques, in one part of the Louvre. A singular destiny, often crossed, seems therefore to have, almost from the beginning, selected this building for the purpose to which it is now definitively assigned.

Under Charles IX. and Henri III. some works went on at the Louvre; and it is said that Jean Goujon was employed on some decorative parts when he met his death at the Saint Barthélemy—that great esoteric festival of the Catholic Church. Henri IV. determined to build the Long Gallery, ostensibly to adorn the quays, but in reality to have a ready means of escape out of the city, in case his good people should be guilty of another freak such as that of the Ligue. By this time all the great architects—Bullant, Lescot, and Delorme, were dead, and one successor, says M. Vitet, named Androuet Du Cerceau, alone existed. Partly

under his superintendence was constructed that huge Pavillon de Flore at the corner of the Tuileries, and the portion of the Long Gallery which extends to the Pavillon de Lesdiguiers. This gallery seems to have been terminated in 1608.

The Louvre was again abandoned under the Regency that succeeded Henri IV., but when Richelieu came to power he caused the works to be resumed. But the plans of Lescot were now considered to be far too confined. It was laid down as a principle that the King of France must have the finest palace in Europe. Vincent Carloix had already said, that there was "no monarch on the earth who was lodged in such great majesty as the King of France," and that architects from all countries came to visit and study the "ten or twelve castles and houses of superb structure," which he attributed to François I. But other nations by this time had also progressed in magnificence, and it was determined to surpass them immeasurably. The first stone of the completion of the Louvre, according to the designs of Lemercier, says M. Vitet—a ceremony so often since repeated—was laid with great pomp on June 28, 1624, under Louis XIII. However, the works did not progress rapidly. Under Louis XIV. Leveau obtained at once a command to proceed. He exhibited the greatest activity, and succeeded in persuading the government to purchase for demolition the Hôtel de Longueville and the other houses which had sprung up between the Louvre and the Tuileries, on the

spot selected by Lescot for the site of gardens. But he also was at length checked. Colbert came into power, and brought with him a little clique of able but prejudiced men, who decided in accordance with the ideas of Serlio, that "apparent roofs are opposed to architectural propriety." Levau was ordered to suspend his work in 1664.

Now followed the reign of the celebrated Charles and Claude Perrault. The completion of the Louvre became an affair of state. Colbert's coterie exhibited wonderful mastery in intrigue. At first the mighty reputation of Il Cavaliere Bernini, the Autocrat of Roman Art, interfered with their designs. Some of his admirers suggested that he should be sent for by the king; but it was not easy to prevail upon him at an advanced age to undertake so long a journey. At length an autograph letter from his majesty, Louis XIV., and a state visit of the French Ambassador, produced their effect. The Cavaliere's progress through Italy and France was quite royal in its magnificence. All municipalities hastened to prostrate themselves at the feet of a man who was going to build a palace for the Great King. He was well received at St. Germain; and royal condescension even withstood the somewhat independent manners which he affected, and which much greater painters have not always preserved. Bernini, the prince of mediocrity, must have felt himself a match for the king, who was already surrounded by unmerited honours, and who was destined to prove

during his long life that the capacity which would scarcely enable a common man to shine in a village, is quite sufficient to overawe the world, when concealed behind a flowing wig, a solemn face, a gorgeous robe, a crowded court, and a splendid palace.

The manœuvres by which this great reception was made to lead to gilded disgrace, are detailed at length by Perrault himself; but the narrative would lose by abridgment. Bernini was a proud and pompous man, full of sentences, parables, stories, and bon-mots of an erudite kind, but especially full of his own merits. Wherever he moved he struck against some opposition, which, being quite a stranger, he could not understand or grapple with. He was compelled, as it were, to play at blind-man's buff at the court. However, work was begun. The foundations constructed the previous year by Levau were destroyed, and others were substituted. The first stone was laid solemnly in 1665. But Bernini's plan, though it contained many sensible features, was violently criticised; and not long afterwards his absence was bought with a present and a pension.

The brothers Perrault—one of whom was a mere wit, whilst the other was a medical man—now set to work in earnest. They destroyed what had been completed of the foundations of Bernini, and applied their own plans. Among other things the celebrated Colonnade, which criticism, however, was never unanimous in admiring, was designed and executed by them. For

a time they were allowed to think that their names would be connected by posterity with the completion of the Louvre. But after they had made great progress the wind shifted again. In truth, there was no national reason why the work should be continued. Royalty had resolved definitively to keep out of the reach of popular indignation beyond the walls, and retire to distant and rural situations. Versailles had begun entirely to occupy the mind of Louis. The Perraults were ejected from their architectural throne and retired into private life, to spend their time in making fanciful sketches of what they would have done; and Mansart reigned in their stead. For seventy-five years the Louvre was almost utterly abandoned, and externally became covered with moss; and grass, and plants, and wall-flowers, like an old village church. There exists an old plan of Paris on a large scale, drawn up in 1739, from which some hints may be obtained of the state of this palace at that time. It reminds one of an Egyptian temple miserably buried amidst mud villages and heaps of rubbish. A whole quarter stretched between it and the Tuileries, with the Hôtel de Longueville still in the centre. Houses climbed up the walls in various parts; and in the middle of the quadrangle was a block of common cottages, with gardens and courts. Two-thirds of the building were completely without roof.

Some of the apartments of the Louvre had long been occupied in various ways. It had come to resemble our Hampton Court on a large scale. Under

Louis XIV. lodgings had been granted to certain officers of the crown and certain pensioned aristocrats. Ateliers were granted to various artists. All the Academies also had housed themselves there,—the French Academy, the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, the Academy of Painting and Sculpture, the Academy of Architecture. The Louvre became the great hôtel, the lodging-house of the whole rabble of court-followers, court-artists, and court-savans. In order to increase the number of habitable rooms, most of the great halls were divided horizontally and perpendicularly by temporary floorings and partitions; staircases and chimneys were cut through the walls; on all sides projected iron tubes of the most hideous shape, that perpetually vomited smoke and soot. By degrees some of the inhabitants, who could afford to keep horses, turned the lower halls into stables; the government post-house was built against the colonnade, along which were ranged lines of mangers; wooden sheds gradually accumulated on every side.

In 1750 the owners of the houses in the quadrangle, thinking they had at length obtained a prescriptive right, began to rebuild them in solid stone. This at length irritated the Parisian public, which had always, more or less, felt interest in the fate of the Louvre. Even in 1664—when the great project of completion was under consideration—there had been a perfect rush of pamphlets, memoirs, projects, and counter-projects. In the middle of the eighteenth century, literature had

become more accustomed to deal authoritatively with the topics of the day. The gazettes were beginning to show their power. Articles, essays, epigrams, followed in rapid succession; and at length M. de Marigny, whose department was concerned, determined not only to clear out the Augean stable, but to resume the work of building. By his order the quadrangle was freed from houses; the postal establishment and the queen's stables were removed; and many of the ateliers and apartments were evacuated. Some of the noble pensioners—a race which in all countries resembles the Eastern beggar, who based a proprietary claim on continued charity—were successful, however, in their resistance; and even Vanloo, the painter, could never be removed from the Galerie d'Apollon, where he had not only established his studio but his dwelling-place. However, the new works were inaugurated in October 1755, under the direction of the architect Gabriel. But royalty, as usual, was fickle. It can never put up with continued work. Caprice is its great privilege. The Louvre was now abandoned once more to the rapacity of favourites and the insults of the weather; and so it remained, the dismallest ruin of a dismal quarter, until the quicksilver of revolution ran through the veins of France.

Since that time the Louvre has occupied a greater space than ever in the history of Paris. All parties have proposed to continue and embellish it; and all who have made the slightest contribution claim the

entire honour, and try to reproach their adversaries with neglect and Vandalism. M. Vitet pretends that it was not until the establishment of the Consulate that "the old palace of the kings" was remembered; and allows it to be supposed that the Museum was created under that régime. Napoleon "with a single gesture restored order to France and the Louvre." But it is now the fashion, both for courtiers and the opposition, to falsify history. In truth—not only was the collection of paintings and antiques formed, as we shall presently see, in that year of gloom and blood and wild commotion, when the nation was occupied in struggling with the ferocious instinct of self-preservation against the children that were tearing its bowels—but one of the first acts of the Republic was to remember "the old palace of the kings." Immediately after its establishment it cleared out all pensioners and panders, and respected only the ateliers of the artists. A printed sheet in my possession, dated June 12, 1793, (second year of the Republic,) purports to be an "Address to the National Convention, by the Society of the United Arts of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Engraving, sitting at the Louvre, Hall of the Arts." It states that on the fifth of May a decree had been published, in which architects and others were requested to send in plans for the disposal of the national property in the Carrousel; and it suggests "the completion and entire reunion of the Louvre with the palace of the Tuileries," where the Convention sat. If

something were not speedily done, "the Louvre would soon be nothing but a vast ruin in the centre of Paris."

This is sufficient to show, that as soon as the reign of court favourites was over, all parties, and especially the national party, began to think of completing the Louvre. Its state had certainly, by this time, become lamentable, and for a few years grew, in many respects, more critical than ever. A ruined palace almost utterly abandoned was naturally a tempting place of rendezvous for the people. Its partial occupation by the Arts alone saved it, at first; and the decree of the National Convention, which I shall presently mention, at length gave it a kind of sacred character. There was no time or money, however, for restoration. Artists took up their abode in the building as they found it, by the side of others who had never decamped. One of its most distinguished occupants at that time was the painter David, and it will be worth while to abridge an account given by one of his pupils, when a child, of his first visit to the *Atelier des Horaces*.

M. E. I. Delécluze, an able Critic on Art, still living, informs us, writing in the third person, that Etienne [himself] was placed in 1796 under the tuition of Charles Moreau, to whom David had lent the atelier in which were hung the pictures known as *Les Horaces* and *Brutus*. The place was too celebrated to be passed over with a slight mention. Those who now wander through the four great galleries of the Old Louvre, and admire their spacious halls and magnificent adorn-

ings, can scarcely conceive the filth, dust, and confusion, which still remained in many parts, even in 1796. The two piles of building where are now the Museum of Sovereigns and the Museum of Calcographie were inhabited by artists, who had been allowed to build inside the palace against the great windows a series of sheds, which left all the rest of the gallery in darkness. Two wretched staircases, since destroyed, had been constructed for the use of the artists. The portion granted to David for his use was an empty space, in which a great staircase was subsequently built in the time of Napoleon, at the corner of the colonnade and the northern face of the Louvre. Hideous latrinæ yawned along the walls, and made the air pestiferous. Yet such was the force of custom, that artists, their wives and daughters, and wealthy amateurs, lived or visited there without feeling or expressing disgust.

It was in October, 1796, that Etienne, then between fifteen and sixteen, first entered this dismal place. With his portfolio and pencil-box under his arm he picked his way, with some difficulty, towards the little door which led to the Atelier des Horaces, ascended a steep and narrow staircase, and found himself in a vast sombre space, formed in part by the massive bare walls of the Louvre, in part by a vast hoarding. Here and there were scattered frames, and canvasses, and laymen, which in the dim light at first terrified him. A small door, however, soon admitted him into the atelier. The first thing he saw was an individual

employed in splitting a great log of wood to feed the stove. He was about twenty-five years old, and seemed to be an ugly likeness of Socrates—heavy with the fat of laziness, not of health, with light, dirty-coloured hair, a projecting forehead, and a glance that denoted rather suspicion than penetration. “This was Alexandre, the son of Madame G., the wife of the painter of battles.”—an equivocal description! Alexandre, who spoke as much as possible in monosyllables, pointed out what place Etienne was to take and what drawings he was to copy; told him that new-comers were bound to take charge of the fire; gave him the hatchet; and went away to draw lots for his place down-stairs; where, in the school of David, a model was about to be set.

Etienne had now leisure to examine the atelier. It was about forty-five feet long by thirty in breadth; its walls, carefully plastered, were painted of an olive-grey colour; light came from a single opening raised nine feet from the floor, and turned towards the esplanade of the Louvre under the great colonnade. On one side was hung the “Horaces,” on the other the “Brutus;” and there was, moreover, a charming sketch of a naked child dying, and pressing the tri-coloured cockade to its breast: this was the young Viala. The furniture of the atelier strikingly contrasted with the furniture still in common use, being entirely imitated from the antique,—a style that gradually spread, however, from this atelier, and was adopted by every one under the Empire. The influence of David on external manners

was indeed immense. Even barbers were often found in their back-shops profoundly meditating before a block on the best means of imitating the head-dress of the sisters of the Horatii, or of the wife and daughters of Brutus. It may easily be imagined, therefore, that Étienne was strongly impressed by what he saw; and that his memory now dwells fondly on that remarkable time.

Under the Consulate, all or most of the painters who had ateliers in the Louvre were removed to the Sorbonne; and the palace, in conformity with the decree of the National Convention, was entirely devoted to the Arts. There was again talk of the completion of the building; and some progress was made under the Empire, though not so much as is generally thought. With the disregard to antiquity, however, which distinguished Napoleon's era, no respect was paid to the portion already finished. Much of the labours of Lemercier, Levau, and even of Lescot, were destroyed. The Emperor designed to leave the great space between the Tuileries and the Louvre entirely free: according to him, nothing was beautiful that was not big. His fall put off the decision of this question to another period, when it was decided according to different views and principles.

The Monarchy of July, which concluded several other works left incomplete by its predecessors, entirely neglected the Louvre. All it did was to clear away some of the hôtels and houses which covered the

Carrousel. That vast place, until a very recent period, was not even paved; so that in rainy weather it formed an oasis of mud in the centre of Paris. Numerous sheds, let out by the thrifty monarch to small traders, were ranged in long lines; and a stranger on emerging from one of the numerous archways leading from the quays, or the present Rue de Rivoli, might easily be excused for imagining that he had strayed into Rag Fair. Some of these defects, upon which public opinion and the press strongly commented, were gradually and unwillingly corrected; but in 1848 there still existed a vast mass of houses devoted to uses, the most respectable of which was the sale of rabbits, birds, old furniture, marine stores, pictures, engravings, and curiosities,—besides a huge wooden edifice built against the gallery of Henri IV.; the treasures in which, therefore, were in constant danger of being destroyed by fire.

One of the first steps of the Republic was to remove this unsightly and dangerous excrescence, and the new Administration of the Louvre began at once, despite the difficulties of the times, to plan the completion of the Louvre. As a commencement, the sum of two million francs was obtained from the Assembly, to be spent in various decorations and improvements. M. Jeanron, Director of the Museums, displayed great energy in achieving this result. He insisted on the bad condition of certain localities, particularly the Galerie d'Apollon, which threatened ruin both in its foundations and in its roof, and on many steps necessary for the better.

exhibition of the works of art in other parts of the edifice; as the improvement of the light in the Hall of the Seven Chimneys and the Great Saloon. The success obtained by this able director in the classification of the paintings, and especially in the composition of the Great Saloon, spoke so well in his favour, that the Assembly, though wisely anxious for economy, could not refuse this vote, which began the great work of the completion of the Louvre.

M. Vivien, who brought forward the project in the Assembly and defended it with success, had requested Messrs. Jeanron, Duban, and Merimée, to consult together, and to draw up a statement of the reasons best fitted to overcome the opposition anticipated. M. Merimée, after several studious interviews with his two colleagues, wrote a report, which was excellently well received. Less zeal and less talent than were displayed on that occasion, which at this distance of time, in our forgetfulness of the influences then at work, may appear unimportant, would certainly have led to defeat. The opposition was formidable, and success doubtful. It will be worth stating what in those singular times were the plausible motives of uncertainty. The Assembly was composed of parties profoundly divided, and disinclined to yield to one another even on the most neutral questions. Many provincials, newly elected, who had not formed part of the previous Parliaments, and were attached by no ties to the capital, were actuated by a great repulsion for every embellish-

ment of Paris, which, according to them, was immeasurably favoured, to the detriment of other parts of France. Moreover, it was not possible to bring out the pressing wants of the Louvre without attacking the previous administration; and a great number of representatives were tacitly resolved to withhold from the new government all facilities for doing better than the old one. Fortunately, the indefatigable Director was able, as I have said, by his exertions, and by his speeches and his writings, which all evinced admirable intelligence of the wants of Art, to conciliate the most considerable men of the most opposite parties. In the Commission of the Assembly before which he was called, to explain the necessities of the Louvre—a task which he performed with all the animation and lucidity of profound conviction—he was energetically supported by a number of eminent persons, who had the courage, laying aside all political prejudices, to accept the views of what was called “a new man.” I may mention among others, Messrs. de Luynes, Ferdinand de Lasteyrie, Garnier Pagès, Duclerc, and above all, M. Thiers, who displayed on the occasion his accustomed skill and ability.

It was in this Commission of the Assembly that were first discussed, in a complete and practical manner, the chief questions connected with the plans for the termination of the Louvre. M. Jeanron as an artist, and M. Duban as an architect, expressed their various views with great precision; and it would be unjust to

deny to that period the honour of having given the first impulse to the activity which, becoming intensified under the present Government, has so rapidly led to a result which must be admitted on all hands to be very brilliant.

CHAPTER III.

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE ROYAL COLLECTIONS.

FOR an account of the original formation and progress of the collections which now so profusely adorn the completed portion of the Louvre, and which will probably at some future day overflow into the new wings, the materials are more scattered than for the history of the building. I do not know any lively narrative on this theme; or, indeed, any published narrative of any kind, save the brief summary prefixed to M. Viardot's useful work on the Museums of Paris. A prodigious number of anecdotes might, however, be brought together; but they would become a history of the Revival of the Arts in France, and of the influences to which they have been subjected to the present day. Reserving this large topic, therefore, I shall pass very rapidly on towards the period when the fortunes of the Louvre and the fortunes of the treasured productions of Art became indissolubly united.

The first collections delivered over to public curiosity, and opened for the purposes of study in France, were

collections belonging to private individuals—noble and wealthy amateurs, who travelled or sent to Italy or Flanders in order to enrich their galleries, and sometimes employed native artists whom they admired. There were many men of that class, to whom posterity has not been sufficiently grateful, who encouraged and consoled struggling or rising genius when official taste was on its knees before mediocrity. I cannot resist the temptation to give here an extract from a manuscript letter in the Library of the Rue de Richeliéu, illustrative of the way in which great lords, of a race not common in any country, used sometimes in the course of the last century to speak and interest themselves about remarkable artists. M. de Sironcourt, French Envoy to Egypt, writes to M. de Rouillé, Minister of Marine, who was probably about to undertake a visit to Rome:—"I have now to talk to you of another friend; yes, a friend, and a dear friend. 'Tis the Sieur Subleyras, a French painter, long established in Rome, where, doubtless, to the shame of France, he will die. I have known and loved him for fifteen years. He is merely the honestest fellow in the world. As for wit, he has, I think, about as much as it is possible for a human creature to have. For taste, he is a prodigy; and if you wish, as no doubt you will wish, to go through a course of Painting and the Fine Arts, you could not choose a better guide. What you see in his company you will see doubly, nay, a hundred fold. Never did any one go deeper into Art, or was better

acquainted with all its parts and appurtenances. He has applied to painting that philosophical spirit which appreciates everything, and puts everything in its right place. I left him at work on a great picture, which is to be executed in mosaic, at St. Peter's. This is no slight honour for a French painter. He paints in the taste of Poussin,—for thinkers, for men of mind. He speaks to the heart; but his works are nothing in comparison with himself. His views upon painting, and all the arts that appertain to it, are far superior to his pictures. His fortune is narrow and confined, but still less than his ambition. He has the misfortune to be married, and has a large family with little health. He is worthy in every respect of your protection; and your Excellence will easily find opportunities of making him feel its effects."

It is impossible to read this letter without having a higher opinion of *Sableyras* than even his works afford, and a very high opinion of the amateur who could write so elegantly—for my translation scarcely does justice to the original—so feelingly, and with such firm appreciation. Artists were indeed happy in the society of men who could regard them as superior to their works; for they only could truly understand them.

In all times, however, the Royal Collections in France were the most numerous and the most important. They were incessantly enriched by inheritance, by conquest, by purchase, and by orders. The nucleus of the present Gallery of Painting and Sculpture was brought together

by François I. Though not remarkable for taste or elegant appreciation, that dashing king—to whom some of the productions of the artistic Peninsula were already known—in his Italian wars admired the splendour given to the palaces of his enemies and his allies by the profuse manifestations of genius in that age, so fertile in great things. He obtained a good many works of high value by purchase or as presents, and invited several artists of the first order to accompany or follow him to France. Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, Benvenuto Cellini, Niccolo del Abbate, Il Primaticcio, Il Rosso, came, and worked principally at Fontainebleau. Among the presents above alluded to as having been sent to the French king, were some horse-trappings, adorned with paintings of divers animals, executed by Vincenzio da Gimignano and Girolamo da Giuga of Urbino, pupils and countrymen of Raphael. They were ruined in 1527 at the sack of Rome. Vincenzio painted some of the admirable Sybils in the church of La Pace, after the drawings of his master. The works of such men could not have been without influence in France. I find mention also of several other Italian artists, not included in the usual lists, who came at that time to the court of François I. Benedetto, pupil of Sogliani, executed in France numerous and beautiful paintings. He arrived there in company with Antonio Mini, pupil of Michael Angelo, who brought with him the famous “Leda,” given him by his master. Andrea Sguazella, a pupil of Andrea del Sarto, accompanied the latter to

France, and "decorated a palace near Paris;" and a fellow-student of the same, named Mannoccio, was a great favourite with the Cardinal of Tournion. It was G. B. Puccini, of Florence, who ordered of Andrea del Sarto a "Dead Christ surrounded by Angels," which he sent to France, and which, by the way, has since disappeared. It excited great admiration, and led to the journey of the artist in 1515, just as François I. ascended the throne. He remained at the court, painting works of various kinds, for some time. But the desire of François I. was to become rapidly wealthy in masterpieces, and he despatched Andrea del Sarto to Italy with a general order to purchase. The painter, however, corrupted by the influence of beauty and feminine cunning, squandered the large sums confided to his care, and never returned. More honest agents were employed, and the collection gradually increased.

It is interesting, discarding quite the fatalist doctrine, which changes history into an arithmetical sum, to speculate sometimes on the possible fruits of events that have burst forth green and promising in the field of action and withered without attaining full growth. It is natural to regret that Andrea del Sarto thus deserted the career opened for him in France; not that we particularly pity François I. for the loss of his money. There was nothing that gave him less pain, and the country could furnish him with more at pleasure. Nor should we dwell with most regret on the dishonour of a great artist, and the remorse with which he was neces-

sarily racked: Let us pity him as he lies dying miserably of the plague, deserted by her whom he had loved, and for whom he had 'filed his mind. But how great was the loss of France; and, through France, of the countries that receive their impulse from her! If that young Andrea del Sarto—he was only twenty-seven when he came to France—had justified the confidence of the liberal king, and had returned under his splendid patronage and taken advantage of encouragements which were missing even at Florence, how far on might he not have carried the French school! I do not forget that Leonardo da Vinci was summoned to supply his place, and that that artist not only yields to him in no respect in the sympathies and veneration of the world, but was above him by a head. But Leonardo was old, worn out, wearied, expiring; and, certes, could not impart to the French school the vigour which Andrea del Sarto, in the prime of life and the zenith of his talent, could have communicated. The influence of Leonardo was not null, but was certainly not very powerful. Death intervened too soon; and what, after all, was Il Primaticcio, that eclectic practician, taking a hint here and a hint there, with some admirable qualities of his own, it is true, in comparison with the great Art-athletes for whom he was substituted?

Nearly all the works of art procured by François I. were collected pell-mell at Fontainebleau, where they were considered rather as handsome furniture than in their true character. The artists I have named, how-

ever, required assistance; and the lessons they gave to form persons capable of working under their directions, imparted a peculiar stimulus to the French mind. We must not, however, repeat the usual exaggeration, and say that Art was then first introduced into France. Already some admirable works of Sculpture had been produced; the successors of Jehan Fouquet, "the painter and illuminator of the King Louis XI.," were at work, exhibiting wonderful skill and knowledge. A very slight progress—perhaps a little encouragement—would have founded a school strong enough to resist foreign influence. Il Primaticcio, of all Italian painters, left the deepest traces in France, and really created what was called the School of Fontainebleau. Perhaps they are right who regret the extent of his influence. The vogue he obtained in some measure stifled the development of the strong original talent that existed—a talent that had some relation to that of Flanders, loving to represent natural or fabricated objects, as armoury, jewellery, costly stuffs, furniture, birds, and all animated objects, trees, mountains—in fact, all the elements of scenery, the human figure alone being to a certain extent unsuccessfully treated.* The school of Fontainebleau reflected light from Florence, and shone some time contemporary with it, like the pale moon before sunset; but the more brilliant orb

* See *Origines et Progrès de l'Art; Etudes et Recherches*, by P. A. Jeanron.

disappeared never to rise again, and the new school was kindled with fire of its own. .

That strange, sombre, and irregular character, Il Rosso, or Maître Roux, as the French called him, was, however, perhaps the man who most beneficially influenced Art in France under François I. Mediatly or immediately, he may be said to have formed or stimulated Jean Cousin, Jean Goujon, Freminet, Germain Pilon, Pierre Lescot, Bernard de Palissy, Leonard de Limoges, Jean Bullant, Anguier, Dubreuil, Sarrazin. The works, however, which he executed in France have been nearly all destroyed; and many indeed were destroyed, almost immediately after his death, by Primaticcio. Subsequently, also, Anne of Austria, in a fit of devotion, caused several of his paintings to be burned, along with some by the inimitable Leonardo da Vinci. A similar fate, from a great variety of causes, has overtaken a vast number of works executed or collected during the reign of François I.; and Fontainebleau and the Louvre now only possess fragments of that king's treasures.

Although Art progressed amidst the excitement and dangers of the civil and religious wars, little was done during the remainder of the sixteenth century to increase the royal collections. They remained under accumulating dust at Fontainebleau, or were gradually and partially transferred to Paris. Henri IV. was more occupied with la belle Gabrielle than with Art,

and left its patronage in the hands of his Medicean wife Marie, who called in the luxurious pencil of Rubens to illustrate her history. That great series of Allegories, however, was executed for the Luxembourg; and it was only at a very recent period that it became part of the treasures of the Louvre.

However, under Henri IV. there was considerable activity in the Arts, as in other branches of human enterprise. One of the regrets of posterity is, that Montaigne, who loved Paris so well, did not live to see it in those times, according to his wish. A friend of his, a jurisconsult, quaintly practical in his views, says:—“Verily no king ever loved Paris as does ours who at present reigns—which fact has brought us such admirable greatness in augmentation of people and of buildings, that matters seem to have come to their last perfection, especially as respects the sale of offices, the marriage of daughters, and the letting of houses; which leads me doubt Fortune for the future. Musicians tell us, that when we have reached the top of thẽ gamut we must come to minor inflections.” The French School of Art continued, indeed, to expand, though without much encouragement from the court. To this the same writer alludes, among other things, when he says:—“We send our children to Italy, that they may learn behaviour, and many noble exercises found there, according to the diversity of cities; but I wish it to be known—for such is the truth—that our Paris is the

miniature of all Italy; for there is no employment of body or mind followed beyond the mountains which is not practised in our city."

In those days painters used to travel about from country to country, visiting the courts of all kings and princes, following them in their progresses, and seeking to be employed to paint the portraits of their mistresses and their courtiers. As I have said, in France, under HENRI IV., though the Queen did her part, the King was careless and neglectful of Art. The nobles, however, had among them many real amateurs, and employment was also obtained among the higher bourgeoisie and the magistracy. No painter was ever better advertised than Jean Dovy, the Fleming, who, in his wanderings in search of work, came to Troyes in 1583, whilst the Grands Jours were being held. The worthy M. Estienne Pasquier, from whom I have already quoted, seized the opportunity to have his countenance immortalised, and sat in presence of a numerous and learned company. His mind was much occupied with the appearance he should make. He particularly wished that the world should know that he was a man of reading, not one of your empty-headed *élégants*. "Paint me with a book in my hand," exclaimed he at length, "and without gloves." The painter answered, that the first sketch was made, and that there was no place for the hands at all. Pasquier was a man of readiness, if not of wit, and he instantly threw together a distich in his mind, and repeated it for the benefit of the company:—

“ Nulla hîc Paschasio manus est, lex Cincia quippe
Caussidicos nullas sanxit habere manus.”

When the picture was finished everybody declared the likeness excellent, and advised M. Jean Dovy to exhibit it at his shop—“*boutique*”—that he might obtain more orders; which, being “desirous both of gain and honour,” he did, with the above words inscribed on a scroll in the corner. All the world came to see it. There was a procession of twenty-four hours. “Some were pleased with the portrait—others with the distich;” by which latter, Master Pasquier, we will not judge of the former. Maistre Antoine Mornac gave the first example. Out came an epigram. Pasquier replied. The example was set. Everybody, judges, advocates, and strangers, determined to exhibit their wit, and succeeded in showing their ingenuity. The competitors in this odd contest were Legion, but some of the names are remembered on other accounts by posterity—Seguier, Turnebus, Amadis Jasmin, the page of Ronsard, Scevole de Sainte-Marthe, &c. Even Mademoiselle de Bragelonne, Marie de Villecoq, must have her say more than once. Nearly two hundred and fifty odes and epigrams, in Greek, Latin, Italian, and French, in which comparisons to Parrhasius and Apelles were of course not spared, were produced by this learned company; and there is good reason to suppose, therefore, that among that class of persons the reputation of M. Jean Dovy was widely circulated.

To this brilliant period succeeded other troublous

times — times of war, conspiracy, intrigue — during which, if Art progressed, it was despite neglect. Nothing was done for the collections, so that when Louis XIV. ascended the throne there were not in all the royal residences so many as two hundred pictures.

The Italian Mazarin, who preserved the taste of his countrymen, made a collection for himself, and by so doing ultimately more than tripled that of the kings of France. After the death of Charles I. of England, that king's gallery, originally belonging to the Duke of Mantua, and bought from him for the sum of eighty thousand pounds, but much increased afterwards, was sold, by order of the Long Parliament, by public auction; though the fierce spirit which made the Iconoclasts had led, I have seen it stated, to the destruction of all pictures representing the Virgin, or the Second Person of the Trinity. A large portion of the gallery, through the medium of the amateur-banker Jabach, passed into the collection of Mazarin, and after his death the whole was bought by Colbert for Louis XIV.

Colbert, who seems to have had *carte-blanche* in this respect, continued to collect and give orders to artists in all countries and of all schools. In his hands the royal collection increased to nearly two thousand pictures. "By one word," says M. Viardot, "Louis XIV. might have completed the laborious and persevering labour of his minister; but by one word, by a caprice of egotism, he destroyed it. The memory has been preserved of a fatal visit which he made in December, 1681, to his

Cabinet de Tableaux, which, by the care of Charles Lebrun, had been nearly centralised in the Old Louvre, where it occupied the apartments neighbouring the Galerie d'Apollon. Thus collected for the first time in the centre of the capital, and arranged in a certain order by the all-powerful King's Painter, all that was wanted 'to make it a true museum, like that of Florence, was, that it should be opened sometimes to young artists and the public. But Louis, unfortunately, was delighted with the splendid collection which his Minister and Painter had formed for him with public money; so delighted, that he issued the order that everything—pictures, statues, bronzes, and jewels—should at once be carried to his apartments at Versailles. What might have been the National Museum, remained therefore exclusively the King's Cabinet."

As I have said, whatever influence was at first produced on French taste by the contemplation of the works of the masters of Italy and Flanders, the two artistic countries of Europe, proceeded solely from private collections, thrown open to certain persons by the liberality of their owners. The French kings were commonly little accessible. In the latter half of the fifteenth century they lived, except when compelled by business, far away from Paris: Louis XI. at Plessis les Tours, Charles VIII. at Amboise, Louis XII. at Blois; each approaching the capital, however, says the learned Pasquier, by half-a-day's journey. It was considered bold in François I. to leave Touraine and lodge at Fon-

tainebleau and St. Germain, in the neighbourhood of Paris, or at the Tournelles, within the walls. Henri II. came inside for his pleasure; Charles IX. for his safety. Henri III. was driven away; Henri IV. was kept away, until he loved Paris as we love a coy mistress. After that the kings began again systematically to leave the capital, and hold themselves aloof from the populace. They were always surrounded by a jealous and exclusive caste, which kept the people—among whom almost alone are found the disciples of an art which has so much to do with manual processes—away from this great centre of instruction. It would have much astonished Louis XIV. to be told that he was bound to allow the first thin and sharp-eyed Parisian who felt genius stirring within him to come and wander along his sumptuous galleries in search of inspiration. All the kings of that race regarded the accumulated productions of the human mind which they possessed, simply as the flattering proof of their riches and their power. Caprice and disorder, infatuation and disgust, avarice and prodigality, compromised every day the safety of the inappreciable deposit which unlimited wealth placed in their hands. There was no fixed rule or system of governance. Pictures and statues were dispersed one day, gathered together the next, removed from one royal residence to another, exposed to all chances of destruction, as humour and varying taste prompted. This disorder went on gradually increasing during the last century, and no doubt innumerable losses occurred. Of

course there was no public opinion to avert these disasters. Very few persons knew, and fewer cared about the existence of the collection. It was considered an act of great boldness in 1746, when M. Lafont de Saint-Yenne modestly insinuated that it might be worthy of a great king to collect in some proper place the models of infinite price he possessed, in order to know them better, to class and preserve them, and allow the public gratefully to enjoy them. This was the first time, in reality, that the Louvre was suggested as a proper place for the Palace of Art. A work of art itself, it could not receive a better destination. It would necessarily have been preserved by preserving.

CHAPTER IV.

FOUNDATION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

ART has always in France had a tendency to become an institution. Even before the Revolution of 1789, around the Academies patronised by official taste or partiality, there existed a numerous class, all embraced within the wide denomination of Artists, who, instead of pursuing their studies and labours separately, were yearning for organisation,—yearning to become, as it were, an estate in the realm. More than once they had acted in almost a collective capacity; for it was the artists, associated by feeling, if not nominally, who, in the salons and through the press, had given a check to the destruction of the Louvre in 1755, as they had influenced the decisions of Colbert a century previously. As the monarchy drew towards its close they became excited, and eager for reform. They began to be ashamed of the Art of the Parc aux Cerfs, to be disgusted with old methods and theories. There was a great uprising of new men and new ideas. Already, in 1785, David's celebrated picture, "Le Serment des Trois

Horaces," had been exhibited at the Louvre, in the salon of the Academy, and had excited a general chorus of criticism, partly adverse, but in general favourable. It had been ordered by the government, which, in its foolish tranquillity, admired it as much as the party which was already unconsciously the party of revolution.

For the salon of 1789 David prepared, also by order, his "Brutus receiving the Bodies of his decapitated Sons;" but by the time it was completed the eyes of the court were partially opened. They saw which way the great current of public opinion was setting, and tried to stop it with little dykes of sand. Not understanding the popularity of Art or of Artists, M. d'Angivilliers caused it to be announced in the papers that David was forbidden to exhibit his "Brutus." But public opinion manifested itself in a remarkable manner, and "the Elephant," as they called the Director of Public Monuments, was obliged to give way — to the great joy of those who knew and hated him for the roughness of his demeanour, the violence of his character, and the malicious wit of his wife. Few, however, understood the real meaning of this incident: it signified that for the future, in all the vicissitudes of French politics, Art, which had become an important feature in the production of the country, was resolved to leave its impress on public events. Since that time at all critical periods, in the van of all parties, in all assemblies, behind all barricades as

around all powers, the pencil and the chisel have always had their representatives; and the circumstance is quite as natural as the presence of iron-masters and railway-contractors in the English Parliament. If Art is a luxury amongst us, it is an interest in France.

The Salon opened. It was full of representations of subjects taken from contemporary history, and connected with the triumph of the people; and of classical scenes made popular by the prevalence of republican ideas, and comprehensible by the recently published travels of the younger Anacharsis. But the great crowd flowed towards the picture commemorating the ferocious justice of the elder Brutus. Its success was prodigious; and then, no doubt, it was that many young heads became filled with that exaggerated respect for the external characteristics of antiquity which led to so many deplorable and so many ridiculous results. Not to leave the domain of Art — if we have had Pre-Raphaelites in England of late, the Reign of Terror had its Pre-Phidians, a sect that sprung out of the most exalted section of the Davidian school. But the whole public was more or less influenced. David was proclaimed as the precursor of liberty. His patriotism, it was said, directed the ideas of the Revolution before the Revolution. This was the first great blow struck at the old Academy. A tremendous agitation soon began; and David, destined himself to found a new Academy on as narrow if loftier principles, placed himself at the head of some seceders and led the attack,

followed by the whole body of young artists, against an institution which had deservedly fallen into contempt.

An elaborate account of this struggle would be out of place here. It will be sufficient to say that the Academy, with the usual blindness of such corporations, not only refused to submit to any reform, but affected to treat its enemies with contempt. The agitation went on through the year 1790. The artists shared in the general suffering. A lottery was established for their relief. The Academy opposed it; but it succeeded in spite of them. In this year there was no public exhibition of painting; but by that time a private exhibition had been organised. Under the old régime, artists who were not academicians were only allowed to exhibit their paintings on a single day, or rather for two hours on the morning of the octave of the Fête Dieu, in the open air, on the Place Dauphine. It was under such conditions, during the reign of that most enlightend patron of the Arts, Louis XIV., that the interesting Lesueur introduced his most beautiful works to the public. But in the year of which I speak, a M. Lebrun opened an exhibition that lasted eight days. The Academy now felt that their influence was gone for ever, and that their destruction was only a question of time. Still, at the Exposition of 1791, they attempted to resist, and endeavoured to reject the works of non-privileged artists. But, in spite of them, these artists forced their way into the salon; and a portrait of M. de Robespierre was hung up, with a complimentary copy of verses attached. David was

the great leader in this movement, and when his old colleagues, at length feeling their danger, tried to wheedle him over, he answered: "I formerly belonged to the Academy. — David, member of the Convention." The final attack, however, took place in August 1793, when the great artist of the Revolution formally proposed in the Convention the abolition of all Academies. His speech was vigorous and effective. One of its principal points was the story of young Sénéchal the sculptor, who, on his return from Rome, was to receive the hand of a young person whom he loved if the Academy accepted him as an *agrégé*, or associate. "Love," said the orator, "guided his hand. He produced a masterpiece. His master, Falconnet, was one of the commissaries named by the Academy to examine his work. It was this same Falconnet who wrote six big volumes to prove that the horse of Marcus Aurelius at Rome, one of the received masterpieces of antiquity, was not worth the one which he had executed in Russia." "Young man," said this Academician to his pupil, "your work sins against every rule of common sense." The young girl, the expectant bride, was present, and felt sadness come over her. Sénéchal disappeared. She sought for him, and at length found him — drowned in the well of her father's house."

What was called the Commune of the Arts was substituted for the suppressed Academies; but even this institution soon began to acquire an aristocratic character. Then was founded, in opposition, the Po-

pular and Republican Society of the Arts. It held its sittings in the Louvre, in the Hall of the Laocoon, and published a journal to disseminate its opinions. Amongst the services it rendered was the first vigorous attack made on the system of restoring, that is of spoiling, the works of the great masters. David declared "that the 'Antiope' of Correggio, by being thus treated, had lost much of its beauty. Guido's 'Virgin,' commonly called 'La Couseuse,' had not been cleaned but worn down. The 'Moses trampling on the Crown of Pharaoh,' by Poussin, had become, in the hands of the Restorers, a daub of red and black. The 'Port of Messina,' that masterpiece of harmony, in which the sun of Claude Lorrain dazzled the beholder, was nothing but a brick-coloured surface. Even Vernet had been thought old enough to be destroyed. All his Ports had been put upon new canvass, burned and covered by a dirty varnish, which concealed their merits."

David's uncompromising condemnation of the treatment with which these works of art had met, must be allowed to be an important testimony in the great cause of Restorers *versus* Masters. David was assuredly able to appreciate the previous state of the "Antiope;" and it could only have been on very good grounds that he thus boldly staked his reputation as the first authority and practitioner in Art at that time in Europe. He was a masterly draughtsman, but, especially at that stage of his career, he had no antipathy for the beauties of Colour; and he was sufficiently initiated into its

secrets—as many of his works of that period testify—to appreciate the qualities and delicacies which Correggio and Claude Lorrain had just lost in the wretched tampering to which they had been subjected. In thus adducing the evidence of David it is necessary—since the Restorers and their partisans are full of wily stratagems which self-interest suggests—to prepare for an objection which will no doubt be made. The work of Correggio has been injured, but has not been destroyed. The Antiope has suffered, but has not perished under the audacious hands that have meddled with it. The great beauty, the powerful breadth, the magic harmony of such a production, are not easily obliterated; and not easily is their impression destroyed, though it may be diminished by ignorant touches and unauthorised interference. If, accordingly, the league of Restorers, who seem to be in a state of permanent conspiracy all over Europe against the great Inheritance of Art, venture to say, as a proof that David was mistaken, that the Antiope is still beautiful; it may be replied that Correggio, and his memory, and the height to which his work raises him, are greater than the Antiope itself. The works that are the witnesses of the magical and incomparable talent of that Master have been corrupted. The Antiope has lost much of that fantastical and inexpressible quality which is spread over many other of his paintings, and which even in parts of this one still remains. This became very evident when M. Jeanron caused it to be withdrawn from the

Long Gallery, where the light is dimmer, and removed to the Great Saloon. The Director, indeed, was on the point of insisting that it should be restored to its old place, being ready to sacrifice his excellent plan, by which the spectator is enabled, almost at a single glance, to range over the capital productions of the first Masters of Art, to the veneration which he felt for this powerful work. He feared to expose it to too great a light; and it was this consideration that determined him to request M. Duban to discover some combination by which the brightness of the Great Saloon might be diminished, so that the sight of the Antiope, and of many other works exhibited in its company, might not call up regrets too bitter. The Architect taxed his ingenuity, and succeeded. This is a secret which I divulge without any desire—it is almost unnecessary to say so—to depreciate the French Collections—especially as it appears that materials for a very effective retort have been diligently prepared of late years in our own Galleries. But it is good to point out these irreparable misfortunes, in order to assist in saving from destruction the works which our generation possesses, and which future generations will have a right to claim at our hands. Let us leave to Egyptologists the nefarious practice of smashing, mutilating, or defacing, what has once been copied and admired!

To return, however, to the period contemporary with David. It is difficult to give an idea in these narrow limits of the immense activity which prevailed at that

time in the artistic world. I have before me a curious flying sheet, dated the fifth day of the first month of the second year of the French Republic. It is deeply steeped in the colour of the time. It issued from the printing-press of the Citoyenne Fondrouge, Jardin de l'Égalité, and takes the form of a petition addressed to the legislature by "*Les Artistes vrais sans culottes* of the Society of the Central Point of Arts and Trades." In spite of its strange language it is full of common sense. It blames severely the ignorant disorganisers who went about saying that knowledge was no longer wanted—only iron and human arms. It speaks severely of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and declares that in London entire streets were peopled by French manufacturers, who emigrated at that period. It proposes elementary schools of the Arts, the abolition of exclusive corporations, and the nomination of temporary commissions, and lays down the principle that liberty in this department, as well as in every other, would produce the best fruits. It may be as well to mention here, that the National Convention not only showed every disposition to effect a radical reform in the institutions by which the Arts were regulated, but sometimes even went so far as to pension young artists who had exhibited symptoms of rising talent. It was in this way that Pierre and Joseph Franque, two twins of the Jura, who had manifested artistic genius like Giotto when they were tending sheep upon the moun-

tains, were enabled to pursue their studies in the atelier of David.

Such being the state of public opinion, it is not surprising that the propriety was early discussed of converting the Louvre into a Museum. At that time, it is true, the idea of a National Gallery of Art was not so familiar as it is at present. There existed only three institutions of the kind—one at Florence, one at Dresden, and one at Amsterdam. But, as I have mentioned, the idea of collecting the works of art belonging to royalty in the Louvre had already been suggested, and had long been caressed by amateurs, artists, and literary men. In 1790 it was first spoken of in the Constituent Assembly, and a decree on the subject was passed. Next year a commission of the Legislative Assembly was appointed, to preside over the gathering together of the monuments of science and arts. In October, 1792, the Minister Roland wrote elaborately to the Representative David on the plan of the new foundation. At length, in July 1793, the National Convention authoritatively decreed the foundation of the Central Museum of the Arts—a name which indicated an express will that Provincial and Dependent Museums should be created. “The Minister of the Interior,” said the decree, “is instructed to give the necessary orders for the opening of the Museum of the Republic on the 10th of August next, in the gallery which joins the Louvre to the Palais National (the Tuileries); and to cause to

be transported thither the pictures, statues, vases, and precious furniture existing in the late royal residences, châteaux and gardens, and other national monuments."

The first name chosen was "The French Museum;" but this was soon changed to "Musée Central des Arts"—words which were inscribed in a conspicuous manner over the gateway. And it must be mentioned to the credit of the French people, that, in their wildest moments, that inscription always impressed them with respect. It was at length effaced, it is true; but they remembered it, and at times, when everything that recalled royalty provoked destruction, those effaced words acted like a talisman.

Meanwhile the sculptures, the engraved stones, the medals, the paintings, the drawings, the engravings, dispersed through the royal residences, were already being gathered together in provisional dépôts; and some idea could be formed of the immense, artistic riches of the nation. But this was only one portion of the prodigious material that rapidly collected. The closing of religious monuments, the abolition of exclusive academies, the results of the missions of the inspectors sent into the provinces, and the booty of the first wars in Belgium and Italy, soon encumbered the Louvre with a vast mass of precious objects. In General Pommereul's appendix to Milizzia's "Art of Seeing in the Fine Arts" there is a complete list of all the works of painting and sculpture obtained from foreign countries up to the sixth year of the Republic.

Among these were seventy-five pictures by Rubens, removed from the Belgian provinces, which had been recognised definitively as French territory by the treaty of Campo Formio. They proceeded partly from the cabinet of the Stadtholder, partly from various cathedrals, churches, and monasteries, and were accompanied by numerous works of Vandyke, Rembrandt, Potter, Wouvermanns, and all the celebrities of the Flemish school. In exchange, it is true, many works of French painters were given; but these, probably, did not console the cities deprived of their masterpieces, of which they were proud. I may mention, by the way, that General Pommereul, who was a fierce patriot, emphatically expresses his regret that the Farnese Hercules was removed from Rome to Naples before the arrival of the French army, and mentions that the superb Galerie d'Orléans was temporarily out of the way in London. "But the conqueror of Italy," he says, "will no doubt go and fetch it thence, and restore it to the Museum of the Great Nation."

A singular ceremony took place on the ninth of Thermidor, in the sixth year of the Republic—namely, the triumphal entry into Paris of the objects of art and materials of science—books, statues, manuscripts, and pictures—conquered in Italy during the early Italian wars. These treasures were landed at Charenton; and during the ten days that preceded the ceremony, from morning until evening, prodigious crowds streamed up along the banks of the Seine to see the innumerable

cases containing them. Enormous cars, drawn by richly-caparisoned horses, were prepared, and early on the morning of the appointed day the procession began. It was divided into four sections. First came trunks filled with books and manuscripts taken from the Vatican, from Padua, Verona, and other cities, and including the "Antiquities" of Josephus on papyrus, with works in the handwriting of Galileo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Petrarch. Then followed collections of mineral products, with the celebrated fossils of Verona. For the occasion were added waggons, laden with iron cages containing lions, tigers, and panthers, over which waved enormous palm-branches and all kinds of exotic shrubs. Afterwards rolled along a file of chariots bearing pictures carefully packed, but with the names of the most important inscribed in large letters outside; as, the "Transfiguration" of Raphael, and the "Christ" of Titian. The number of paintings, principally included in this lot, brought from Italy to France was great, and the value was still greater. Fifteen important works by Raphael, seventeen by Perugino, twenty-eight by Guercino, four by Correggio, nine by Guido, five by Titian, and a vast quantity of others by the best masters, are mentioned in the lists of General Pommereul. When these trophies had passed amidst the applause of the excited crowd, a heavy rumbling announced the approach of still more weighty treasures; of massive carts, bearing statues and marble groups, the Apollo of the Belvedere, the Nine Muses,

the Antinous, the Laocoon, the Gladiator, the Melpomene of the Capitol. All these vehicles were numbered and decked out with laurel-boughs, bouquets, crowns of flowers, flags taken from the enemy, and French, Italian, and Greek inscriptions. Detachments of cavalry and infantry, colours flying, drums beating, music playing, marched at various intervals: the members of the newly-established Institute fell into the line: so did the artists and the savans; and the singers of the lyrical theatres preceded or followed, making the air ring with national hymns. This prodigious procession—probably not unlike a Roman triumph in its general outline—marched along the quays amidst the shouts of the assembled population, traversed all Paris, and reaching the Champ de Mars, defiled before the Five Members of the Directory, who were placed near the altar of the country, surrounded by their ministers, by the great civil functionaries, the generals, and the whole garrison of the capital.

M. Delécluze, who was an eye-witness of this scene, and from whose narrative I take many of these details, informs us that David alone condemned the wholesale spoliation of the Italian Galleries. He did so on artistic grounds, saying that the contemplation of the conquered masterpieces might form learned men, such as Winkelmann, but not artists. This remark, however, like many others preserved by an admiring pupil, is wanting in solidity. It was especially misplaced in the mouth of the man who had not only

taken so much pains to establish the Museum, but had thought it worth while to go and study at Rome. Surely if a collection of masterpieces be of any use at all to the student, there is every reason for making it as complete as possible.

It is worth while mentioning in a more special manner the diplomatic forms, as they were called, according to which the Italian works of art were obtained by France. For example, on the first of Prairial, year IV., an armistice was concluded between the Duke of Modena and the French General; and Article III. stated, "that the Duke of Modena should be bound to deliver up twenty pictures, to be taken from his Gallery or his States, according to the choice of citizens to be named for that purpose." Similar conventions transferred pictures from the galleries of the Duke of Parma, of the King of Sardinia, and others. Article V. of the Armistice of Bologna, 5 Thermidor, year IV., says:—"The Pope shall deliver to the French Republic a hundred pictures, busts, vases, or statues, to be chosen by commissaries to be sent to Rome, among which objects shall be comprised the bronze bust of Junius Brutus and the marble bust of Marcus Brutus, both now in the Capitol; and also five hundred manuscripts." Subsequently, when the Pope visited the Museum during his captivity, it was mentioned that certain objects might be unpleasant to him. He replied,—“These objects have always followed victory: it is quite natural they should be here.”

It is singular that this remark should be quoted by those who maintain that victory, declaring on the other side, could never justify the resumption of these works of art.

It would not, perhaps, be sufficiently interesting to the reader, were I to give a detailed account of the early administration of the Museum of the Louvre. I have before me a good many pamphlets published at the time, with reports, manuscript and other, which show that this subject occupied much of the attention both of the public and the government. It will not seem surprising that, when so many things were changing in France, the administration of an important institution like that of the Museum should not have remained stationary. The Conservatory created by Roland lasted only a few months. It was succeeded by one proposed by David in an elaborate speech. A third was organised by the Committee of Public Instruction. A fourth was established in the spring of the year V.

The last-mentioned administration, after having existed about a year, was vigorously attacked in the Council of Five Hundred by Citizen Marin, who accused it of wilfully withholding the exhibition of works of art, and of exposing many of them to destruction. The President of the Executive Directory, Barras, named therefore a large Commission to examine these questions. It was composed of Monge, Berthélemy, Berthollet, and Tineé, commissaries of the government for the collection of objects of art in Italy, and included

among many others David, Vien, Lethière, and Gerard. David, however, whose influence had declined since the fall of Robespierre, did not make his appearance. He was conscious, probably, that many of his opinions, both on art and other matters, would clash with those of the majority.

The Report of the Minister of the Interior to the Directory on this occasion is full of curious facts on the situation of the Museum. It mentions that the walls of the gallery had been painted and supplied with hooks on which to hang pictures, under the Conservatory named by the Committee of Public Instruction; that at that time the public were admitted on certain days to one portion of the gallery, but not to the other, where the flooring was being laid down; that the pictures of the Stadtholder, and various objects of art collected in Belgium, had arrived, and were exhibited to the public; that in order to adorn the exterior of the edifice, the four Slaves of the monument on the Place des Victoires and the Chained Vices (now called Chained Nations) of the old statue of Henri IV. on the Pont Neuf, had been taken possession of. The succeeding Conservatory claimed also to have done great service to the Museum, and with justice. But the principles laid down by David had been departed from; and we learn, partly from the report I have mentioned, partly from a pamphlet published by a M. Joseph Lavallée, that some of the charges brought forward by Citizen Marin were not only admitted, but justified.

The successive administrations of the Louvre were accused, among other things, of a too exclusive attachment to the Italian school, which exhibited itself in a strange hostility to the Flemish—of wilfully exposing the production of the latter school to destruction; and they were even made accountable for the fall of a ladder which pierced a magnificent Sneyders, and the bursting open of a window during a storm, which caused injury to several pictures. M. Lavallée, in his "Observations" with reference to the last charge, gravely observes, "There is a certain impiety in this denunciation; for the Divinity had something to do with the offence." But he is an advocate, cleverer in retort than in solemn proof. One of the attacks directed against his clients was, that they had cut off a band nine inches—only three, says Lavallée—in depth from a picture by Schidone. Nothing reasonable could be urged in favour of that infamous practice, confined, I hope, to French art-galleries, of doctoring and re-doctoring the masterpieces of ancient art almost at every generation. The writer, therefore, is delighted to discover that a M. Lebrun—the picture-dealer alluded to in a previous page,—was cited by the accusers in support of their charge; and to be able to show that this said M. Lebrun, in his observations on the Lombard school, had advised the cutting into two pieces of a great picture by Guido! The Commission, whose labours I have mentioned, acquitted and applauded the Conservatory, not only for mutilating Schidone, but for cutting

off pieces that had previously been added to a Guercino in Italy; for *restoring* the Cartoon of Raphael representing the School of Athens; for cleaning and brightening up the *Cinque Santi*, by the same divine artist; and for scouring, revivifying, and modernising a variety of other important works. We see, therefore, that as soon as the time had past when, in the grand enthusiasm of the Republic—which respected no old institutions, but all old masterpieces—works of art were venerated simply for themselves, and not as objects of decoration—the atrocious practices of the Monarchy began again to be resorted to. I see that similar questions are now under discussion in England; so that in another place I shall endeavour to examine them more deeply.

The rapid increase of precious objects at the Louvre suggested the necessity of providing proper outlets. Hence the origin of the Special Museum of the French School at Versailles, which was dissolved only with the Consular Republic.* The Musée Central was encumbered with an enormous mass of productions of native artists; and, on the other hand, had to complain of many regrettable lacunes. In consequence, two hundred and forty French pictures were sent to Versailles, and seventy foreign ones were taken in exchange. By the favour of a more quiet time, the administration named

* See a curious pamphlet by Luneau de Boisjermin, entitled, *Idées et Vues sur l'Usage que le Gouvernement actuel de la France peut faire du Château de Versailles*. Paris, An VI.

by the Directory was enabled to carry out many of the ideas that had been previously suggested. Besides centralising the most valuable masterpieces in the possession of the state, it established the Calcographie, or Engraving Department, and for the first time also formed a gallery of original drawings. The first convoy of pictures from Italy had arrived under the previous administration, but it soon received another, consisting of a hundred and twelve most valuable works. I have already described the ceremonies with which they were brought into Paris.

Ultimately the works of art were judiciously divided between four principal establishments — the Musée Central at the Louvre, the Gallery of the Luxembourg, the Musée des Petits Augustins at Paris, and the above-mentioned Special Museum at Versailles. The strictest measures and the most severe penalties against all disseminations or dilapidations corresponded with the broadest regulations for communication to the public and to students. It was partly on these facts, as well as on classical reminiscences — that was, no doubt, founded an opinion or prejudice — which most persons have maintained in debating societies with generous enthusiasm — that extremely free institutions are more favourable than monarchies to the development of Art; and possibly the few exceptions that seem to prove the other way, if well examined, would serve to confirm the rule. Liberal laws cannot make genius; but perhaps genius is never wanting in the world. How to form

it and make it work is the thing. There may be fifty Giottos tending sheep within these islands, who will never know what a pencil is; whilst persevering mediocrity brought forward, obtains and deserves crowns in the absence of competitors. There seems to me to be no greater delusion than to suppose that all power must manifest itself. Nothing is so difficult as to marry an aptitude with a profession. There are always heroes in the ranks whom war devours before they get a commission.

At first, the only care of the Republic was to dispose on the walls of the Louvre and its dependencies the most admirable masterpieces of all schools; but in the year VII. many ideas suggested themselves on the creation of Museums in the departments, and on their dotation by the Central Museum. In the sitting of the sixth of Frimaire in that year, in the Council of Five Hundred, Hertaut Lammerville, in the name of the Commission of Public Instruction and of Republican Institutions, enlarged on the power of the three sister-arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture, and on their influence on virtue and genius. He proposed the establishment of National Schools of those arts, as well as of Museums, in five different and important cities, "in order to create in each of those points of the territory a great focus of light, which should spread and mingle their rays, and at last embrace the whole territory." This is the only report that, up to 1848, was addressed to any Legis-

lative Assembly on the creation and development of Departmental Museums.

The Council understood the importance of the ideas presented to it, and was anxious at once to do something to spread a taste for the Arts through the country. It was only in such an assembly that the idea of civilising by means of the contemplation of the beautiful could occur. We are beginning—I mean the public are beginning—in England to suspect there is some truth in this; but we have not yet reached the height of the Council of Five Hundred. I find that soon after the presentation of this report, before any definitive steps could be taken, some pictures were handed over to the Citoyen Paul Caire, for the use of the School of Flower-Drawing at Lyons; and that twelve paintings were placed in the hands of M. Jay, Professor of Drawing at the Central School of Grenoble. In both cases, however, they were considered merely as loans.

It was only towards the end of the Consulate that the Departmental Museums were really constituted. In the years 1803, 4, and 5, took place the despatch of the first and most considerable instalments of pictures that left the Louvre for this purpose. They were distributed among twenty-two Museums,—Nancy, Lille, Toulouse, Nantes, Rouen, Lyons, Strasbourg, Dijon, Mayence, Bordeaux, Marseilles, Geneva, Caen, Rennes, Brussels, Montpellier, Tours, Grenoble, Angers, Le Mans, Autun, and Amiens. In 1811 a decree of the Emperor ordered pictures to be sent to

six cities: Lyons, Brussels, Caen, Dijon, Toulouse, and Grenoble. In this way 950 pictures left the Museum of the Louvre—a magnificent equivalent of the Great Gallery.

In 1815, as I shall presently have to repeat, the museums and the churches of Paris were searched by the Commissaries of the invading armies, and part of the pictures brought from foreign countries were retaken. But the Departmental Museums were in general forgotten by the conquerors, as they have since been forgotten by succeeding governments. Up to 1848 they were treated with the most profound neglect. They scarcely interested either strangers or the people of the place in which they existed. On one of my visits to Bordeaux, the valet-de-place of the principal hôtel, who offered to take me everywhere, was perfectly dumb-founded when I spoke of the Museum and the Library; and no one in the house or the street could tell me the way.

These provincial Museums are, however, important in many respects—being chiefly composed of pictures derived from the pillage and the ruin of churches, convents, châteaux, and palaces of the provinces, and which had been imported from Italy and Flanders by the feudal lords and the great dignitaries of the Church, or were produced by obscure and able workmen, who have illustrated their native soil more than is generally believed—when the provincial schools, now destroyed, were flourishing. That is to say, that the

Departmental Museums contain exclusively all the evidences of the value of French provincial art at the period of its strength and its originality. The Musée Napoleon, whilst it overflowed with the most celebrated works of Italy and Flanders, had disdained the productions of national art, and, according to the prejudices of the time and the repulsions of the governing school, had deprived Paris thereof.

But among the pictures sent to the Departmental Museums were many derived from the conquests of the Republic and the Empire. The learned Commissaries of the Republic, who in all Lombardy, at Venice, at Rome, at Bologna, at Florence, at Perugia, at Sienna, at Parma, at Antwerp, at Brussels, and even at Munich, Vienna, and Berlin, had collected with so much intelligence the most remarkable and celebrated works found in these places, themselves advised the division of a portion of this rich harvest among the provincial Museums. But the Commissaries of the Holy Alliance were less carefully chosen, and more in a hurry, and were impeded as much as possible by the old servants of the Republican administration, who had remained through the Empire. They took, therefore, from the Louvre "some flowers of its crown," but forgot the Departmental Museums. The provinces, therefore, kept almost entirely the Italian and Flemish lots which fell to them, when the Musée Central munificently shared the booty of the armies.

Under the Empire, however,—except by the pre-

sensation of pictures—little was done for the Departmental Museums. They were almost entirely neglected. Great abuses were the consequence. Indeed as we shall see, both under the Empire and under the constitutional kings, the worst examples were set. The public collections were used as private property. The Bourbons distributed freely to well-recommended churches the most precious paintings of the Louvre, in imitation of Napoleon, who scattered more than 250 masterpieces through the churches of Paris and the banlieue, where they were naturally ill taken care of, and constantly exposed to destruction. We need not be surprised, therefore, if the directors of the Museums of the departments—left absolutely to themselves, and coming to possess complete authority undisputed—played fine tricks with the deposits entrusted to them. The milder complaints made against them by those who knew the real state of the case were, that they restored and cleaned—that is, destroyed pictures; and by neglecting catalogues and inventories, exposed the collections to the dangers of loss and theft.

To return, however, to the Louvre. It was, then, founded as a Museum, not much more than sixty years ago. At first a great impulse was given to its prosperity by the Republic, which was, if anything, too pedantically attached to the Arts. The principle on which it proceeded was, of course, revolutionary. It began by declaring the Cabinet du Roi—that is, all the artistic possessions of the late king—to be the property of the

nation; and ordered, as I have said, the collection in one centre of all objects fit to be placed in a museum, subject to division in the future. The riches thus obtained were of course increased by the confiscations decreed; and it is impossible to mention this circumstance without regretting that several innocent persons suffered with the general mass of traitors and defeated tyrants. The châteaux of Écouen, of the Ile-Adam, of Richelieu, of Château Neuf, gave up their treasures. The State also resumed possession of its property distributed in various churches and public establishments, as the cathedral of Autun, the churches of Paris, of Lyons, of Villeneuve-sur-Yonne; the Museum of Tours, and the old Academy of Paintings. But a large portion of the works obtained were of a more questionable origin. The invasion of Italy placed all the galleries of that peninsula at the mercy of the conquerors, who returned loaded with spoils. The churches of Rome, of Florence, of Bologna, of Parma, of Pisa, of Perugia, of Foligno, of Naples, and hundreds of others—the Pontifical Palace of Loretto, the Pitti Palace at Florence, the Royal Gallery at Turin, the Ducal Gallery of Modena, the Museum of Brera at Milan, the Academies of Florence and Parma—all were put under contribution, as were many private collections,—those, for example, of the Braschi at Rome, of Bevilacqua at Verona, of Pestalozzi at Milan. The same system was applied in other countries, so that by degrees the wealth of the Louvre became prodigious. Many

Frenchmen even now speak of this glorious time with tears in their eyes; and it is common to hear them forget themselves so far as to speak of the reprisals of the Allies in 1815 as "spoliation." I have already remarked on this absurdity in another place. It is quite true that in 1815 there was no express mention made that the restoration of the Art-booty of the French armies would be required; but this was perfectly unnecessary, as the victors always claimed all the rights which complete victory gives. The letter of the Duke of Wellington to Lord Castlereagh, dated Sept. 23, 1815, explained the state of the question in the most lucid manner; and in spite of the commentaries which it provoked, there is now nothing to add to it. From a different point of view, however, I may say that I join the French in admiring Dénon for his courageous refusal to assist the Commissaries of the Holy Alliance in their work of *revendication*, and in rejoicing that a good many masterpieces were overlooked on that occasion, both in the Louvre, where they were hid away, and elsewhere. Works of art are certainly better made use of in France than in most other countries; and the regrets of petty sovereigns for masterpieces which they looked upon as furniture, do not much move me.

When I speak of the departments of the Museum in detail, I shall have occasion to allude to the fact that M. Dénon was not particularly remarkable for the diligence with which he administrated the Museum.

His chief title to gratitude is the care he took to preserve its treasures as far as possible. Not only did he close the gates of the Museum when the English soldiers—who acted, however, only as workmen—came to take down and pack up the pictures belonging to the King of Holland—only opening them upon repeated threats of the employment of force; but it is now known that he had long before taken what measures he could to protect the Louvre. Under the Directory and the Consulate, the livrets, or catalogues issued to the public by the Museum, enlarged with complacency on many details, and gave indications as to the localities whence the pictures, &c., came. During the first wars of the Empire, in 1806 and 1807, the livrets, though giving an account of all the objects conquered by the Grande Armée, was extremely sparing in noticing their origin. Doubtless even then the administration recognised the inutility, and perceived the danger, of keeping the European public informed on the filiation of the treasures in the Musée Napoleon. From that period forward, the presentiments of Dénon rendered him perhaps discreet. Every care is taken to efface the traces of the route by which the pictures had arrived. There exists no official notice of the pictures conquered in Bavaria and Austria in 1809; and the livret of 1810 gave no commentary, and even no description. The administration sought to envelope in forgetfulness all illegitimate filiations, and relied upon time to spread darkness at last over the genealogical mysteries of a

precious part of the French national collection. When 1815 came, the benefits of this system were partially felt.

After 1848, even, the danger of claims had not passed away. I remember finding M. Jeanron one day in great distress of mind. He had been obliged to give up to the ancient Abbaye of Fontevrault four celebrated statues, representing the princes of the Plantagenet family; but these had only been placed in the Museum of Versailles during the reign of Louis-Philippe. Every day, however, he was persecuted by the demands of the French episcopacy—strongly supported by the federalist and reactionary sections of the Assembly—claiming, right and left, monuments taken by the first Revolution from its dioceses,—as pictures, statues, jewels, and sarcophagi. If he had not resisted energetically, the Museum would have been stripped of much of its wealth. At the same time (July, 1849) he was discussing the important question of the catalogues to be printed for public use, and warned by these facts, insisted, as he energetically said, that it should be “exact as a protocol, but brief as a registration.” He was determined that, in his time, foreign powers, ancient families, and greedy corporations, should not be set on the track of possessions to which they had never possessed more than an equivocal claim, or for which they had been amply indemnified.

CHAPTER V.

THE MUSEUM UNDER THE MONARCHY, AND SCENES OF
THE REVOLUTION OF 1848.

It will not be necessary to allude further to the resumption in 1815, by the Allies, of a large portion of the objects conquered during twenty years of war. An immense void was left upon the walls of the Louvre. In part to fill it up, the series of paintings executed by Rubens for Marie de Médicis was brought to the Louvre from the Luxembourg; whence also were taken the works of the French school whose authors were dead. From that time forward the Luxembourg became the Gallery of Living Artists; and, according to a rule rarely deviated from, the works exhibited there are now draughted off to the Louvre as soon as the grave has been ten years closed over their authors. It was under the Restoration that Géricault made his appearance at the Louvre, whilst the Monarchy of July had the honour of introducing Léopold Robert.

As from 1815 to 1848 the Museum depended on the Civil List, it is not surprising that it increased but

slightly in completeness, and in many respects deteriorated. Louis-Philippe's attention was chiefly directed towards Versailles; so that, according to M. Viardot, with the exception of an ill-assorted collection of Spanish pictures, which he had bought as a private speculation, and which returned to the family domain after his death, and of the Zodiac of Dendera and the Venus of Milo, nothing of any great importance was added to the Louvre in thirty-three years. The celebrated Tablet of Abydos—over which so many brains have gone dizzy, and so many histories been dreamed into reality—remained some time for sale in Paris; but it was probably less from want of taste than from fear of increasing the chaotic state of the French mind, that Louis-Philippe allowed this precious document to pass on to London, where archæological insanity usually takes milder forms.

The internal administration of the Louvre during this period, so far as I have been able to learn in the absence of published documents, was deplorable. The riches it contained were not known to any one—not even to the officials who governed it. The garrets were filled with pictures, rolled or prepared for framing, but not mentioned in the inventories and catalogues. Many drawings of most valuable character were bound up in volumes; but they were on this very account practically inaccessible to the public, and even to artists, who are yet often more curious to study the methods by which genius expresses itself in these spontaneous productions

than in their finished works. Other drawings were packed up in parcels covered with dirty paper; others in boxes. There were more than twenty warehouses, dark and out of repair, at the Louvre, filled with uninventoryed objects,—for want of hands, it was said; whilst there were numerous ateliers granted to artists as a favour, and attended by the servants of the Museum. How remarkable it is that, even under the mildest form of monarchical government in France, there should be an irresistible tendency to convert public edifices into private lodgings or workshops!

The collections of the Louvre were reported to be the richest and most beautiful in Europe. Nevertheless, the public, artists, savans, and strangers, far from being able to appreciate their importance, were, by a vicious and incomplete organisation, deprived of all means of really studying that vast mass of masterpieces and documents of inestimable price. Even common care was not taken to preserve what might be exhibited under a better state of things. Since the Republic and the Empire, no stamp had been put upon books or pictures. The same disorder reigned in the department of vases, Egyptian antiquities, precious stones, and so forth. The weight of gold and silver objects, the exact number and value of the jewels, were in no way set down. Many of these facts had been talked of in society, alluded to in the press, and were mentioned reproachfully among studious men throughout Europe; but no one knew the real extent of the evil. The public

was aware that the Louvre possessed a vast collection of pictures, drawings, engravings, statues, archæological monuments, rich carvings, jewellery, vases, medals, and casts; but in the absence of good catalogues, what proportion was accessible and what hid away in cellars and garrets could not be ascertained. A general impression got abroad among artists, however, that a notable portion of the national wealth was concealed, and even in danger of destruction or decay.

This conviction, united to causes which it is not my province at present to describe, had begun to produce considerable fermentation in the public mind, even in 1847. What had happened fifty years before was to a certain extent repeated. A vigorous agitation, in which nearly the whole body of artists joined, was set on foot. Exactly, as at the beginning of the old Revolution, they found themselves face to face with a privileged corporation, composed, singularly enough, in a great measure of the direct successors of the school and the men who had maintained the cause of liberty in 1789. I cannot here, however, give even an outline of the great artistic movement which preceded the Revolution of 1848. It will be sufficient to say that one of the points, on which most persons agreed, was the absolute necessity of a reformed administration of the Louvre. Every preparation had been made for a damaging attack on the Civil List, when the Civil List and all appertaining thereto suddenly disappeared. One of the most important tasks of the new government—a

task which, in accordance with its principles, it cheerfully undertook—was to restore the Museum of the Louvre and all its dependencies to the life and activity which had been imparted at the outset. To carry out these views, it was fortunate enough to find a man eminently fitted by his previous studies, and by the influence of his character and his talent, for the purpose. M. Jeanron is justly regarded by French artists and the French public as having rendered greater services to the Museum than any other individual since its foundation. I approach, therefore, a pleasant part of my theme—the only difficulty being in the selection of materials; for as I was present in Paris during the greater part of that brilliant period, and had my attention specially directed to the Louvre—having been, in fact, a personal witness of much that was done, mingling daily with men engaged in the labour of reorganisation, I am rather in danger of telling too much than too little, and of exaggerating, perhaps, the importance of facts, which form part of my experience, and have not yet been narrated.

In a country like France, which has for some time been subject to constant changes of government—a country in which revolutions are so frequent, so spontaneous, so rapid, and so unforeseen—it must be regarded as rather an unfortunate circumstance, that Art and its marvels should ever have been mixed up as it were with the furniture of kings in a palace so often assaulted and overrun. The persons who in these latter

days, shortly after 1848, insisted, with perseverance, that the National Library should not be brought to the Louvre, according to a plan nearly adopted at one time, exhibited great foresight and true patriotism. That removal would have been a considerable aggravation of the evil I point out. In fact, what numerous chances of ruin have already been run by the inestimable collection which the Museum of the Louvre possesses, in consequence of its proximity to the château of the Tuileries!

The king, Louis-Philippe, in spite of the very natural dreams he sometimes indulged in, on the probable duration of his government, often reflected on the inconvenience of an arrangement which, indeed, could not but strike an attentive mind. I have heard on this subject an anecdote which is very little known. In the halls at present occupied by the pictures of the French school, after the period of Póussin and Lesueur, whose works are in the Long Gallery, Louis-Philippe caused the ceilings to be decorated by the most remarkable artists of his period,—in general, members of the Institute of Painting. One of these, M. Drolling, a man of high character and of approved classical talent, a professor in the school, with a great number of pupils, to whose affections he was dear, happened to be one of the few republicans included in the said Institute. He was entrusted with the task of representing a king of France holding the States-General. He placed him on a throne, and spangled the walls of

the edifice in which the scene was supposed to occur with a profusion of fleurs-de-lis. Louis-Philippe, going round to examine the work of the various artists engaged, was struck by the great number of these royal insignia; but, not liking to express his thoughts directly to M. Drolling, who was famous for a certain rough independence of manner, he requested the Director of his Museums to be his ambassador, and to beg the artist to remove the obnoxious symbols, saying, "How is it possible that the idea does not suggest itself to him—after all he has seen—that he is condemning his picture to almost certain destruction?"¹ The Director went to see M. Drolling upon his scaffolding, and with some circumlocution communicated the king's wishes. The artist, however, continuing to multiply the fleurs-de-lis, did not seem to understand what was meant, so that the discreet Director was obliged at length to mention the powerful reason which great experience in revolutions had suggested to Louis-Philippe. "*Morbleu!*" exclaimed Drolling, in his roughest manner; "the day on which my picture perishes in that way—if I am not dead, and I hope I shall not be—will be the happiest day of my life. I shall not alter anything!" Louis-Philippe wisely shrugged his shoulders when this answer was reported to him, and said no more of the matter, although there were not wanting courtiers to advise the expulsion of the insolent artist and the effacing of the fleurs-de-lis.

Many precious things, indeed, have perished in

public buildings during revolutionary outbreaks—human tempests, which there is no barometer to foretell,—when crowds, intoxicated by a terrible struggle and an unforeseen triumph, come into possession of the dwelling-places of their enemies, and may be excused and applauded if they fall short of the violence usually practised by a regular army that has taken a fortified town by assault. In 1830 the mischief done was immense. The Louvre, carried by storm in spite of the heroic resistance of the Garde Royale, was entered by the colonnade, and the battle continued in the halls and the galleries. In 1848, therefore, under nearly similar circumstances, the Provisional Government was much moved by the dangers to which were exposed collections that formed the pride of France. The Tuileries had been overrun. It was the forlorn hope of the people, the most incandescent portion of the army of insurrection, that had taken possession of that palace. A bloody resistance had for a time checked its progress, so that its triumphant entry was accompanied by angry destruction. All royal portraits, statues, and busts, were put to the sword, as if they had been living and detested enemies. Fire blazed for a moment, and demolition was wildly talked of. The people of the barricades thought they might finish with kingship for ever, if they destroyed its accustomed dwelling-place; just as a subsequent power believed that the best way of preventing the return of parliamentary government was to demolish the arena of its conflicts. In 1848 some unknown

moderate man, obeying a conservative impulse, wrote up outside the Tuileries, in gigantic chalk letters, the inscription, "Hospital of Civil Invalids." This promise of a popular destination contributed to save that edifice, then so much execrated. The Provisional Government, however, every moment received advices of the imminence of the danger, and of the probability that it would spread to the Louvre. By this time, among the victors of the Tuileries had begun to mix a class of men much more dangerous to the national riches than the combatants themselves. For every voluntary combat indicates a certain heroism, which not easily allies itself, even when most it goes astray, to sordid passions. The new-comers belonged to another category; and there was no knowing how soon the torch might be waved to produce a glare more favourable to plunder even than utter darkness.

It was under such bewildering circumstances that the Provisional Government, on the 24th of February, applied to a man whom they thought capable of dealing successfully with these dangers. M. Jeanron received a formal and imperative order to repair in all haste to the Louvre, "where he was expected to be answerable to the nation for the safety of all the riches it contained." This order gave him the fullest powers, even that of calling for the assistance of every armed citizen whom he might require. M. Jeanron had luckily been personally known to most of the members of the Provisional Government. He was an influential painter,

of powerful talent ; and although he had never received any encouragement or honour under the preceding reign, he had earned a very high position in the opinion of attentive men by his numerous writings on Art, and by the powerful views he had conspicuously expressed on the administration, and the direction which would best serve the interests of the French school, and maintain the dignity of the corporation of artists. M. Jeanron in his early youth, in 1830, in the tumultuous and numerous associations which were formed by his fellow-artists, had pressed upon the attention of the king's government many measures which public opinion regretted not to see adopted ; and had refused the notable favours by means of which he feared, perhaps without reason, that authority wished to temper his zeal and allay his convictions. The Provisional Government, therefore, had reason to think that they had found a man apt for operating in those critical circumstances. M. Jeanron reached the Louvre when the explosion was at its very height, and the occupation the most complete. Two students of the Polytechnic School, so well received by the people during those wild days, were supporting the old Director of the Museum, to whom they were probably well known ; but it seemed likely that their united efforts would soon be insufficient for the task they had undertaken. When M. Jeanron presented himself, the Administrator wished to give up all his powers and retire. The weather was rough, and a bolder pilot might have wished for a port. But M.

Jeanron requested him to remain, not being able as yet to understand himself in an official character, scarcely believing it possible that he could have become a functionary ! He assured the Director that he would do all in his power to protect him, and that he regarded himself merely as a buckler in the time of danger. This, no doubt, is a state of mind common to most persons who are whirled up suddenly at such tempestuous periods to eminent posts. They believe themselves to be in a dream, and expect every moment to awake and find themselves in their accustomed quiet retirement.

M. Jeanron set to work at once. His first care was to hasten, followed by a party of volunteers and friends, to the door at the end of the Long Gallery, where the greatest misfortunes might at any moment have taken place. This door opens towards the Tuileries. A staircase leads to it from the château. It was by it that the kings and their families used to visit the Louvre, which thus in some sort formed a continuation of their apartments. At this place, in the first section of the gallery, was established a tumultuous post of the insurrectional garrison of the Tuileries. Established ! I should rather say, bivouacked—for they were lighting fires, the cold being intense, and engaged in various pastimes quite proper in camp life, but grimly out of place there. Several artists, who had come to the Louvre either before or in company with M. Jeanron, were already mingled with them, and were endeavouring to moderate their excitement ; with little chance, however, of success.

An exceedingly animated scene took place, and M. Jeanron, to persuade them to retreat, displayed the written order he had received, and told them in his impressive way that he knew what sort of men they were,—that he knew that they would not stand fire from him and his companions without returning it—and that as the pictures, to which he pointed, were not ball-proof, he had hitherto refrained, but that in spite of this they must come to blows unless they would consent to dislodge. All this was said in a way eminently fitted to impress popular minds, and the result was, that the advanced post consented to establish the corps-de-garde on the landing-place of the staircase outside, and thus evacuate the portion of the gallery which they had occupied. I regret not to remember the names of a good number of the young artists who courageously supported M. Jeanron on this occasion. Two only come to my mind—those of Celestin Nanteuil, so well known by his romantic fantasies and the brilliant lithographs which have made him illustrious in the young school; and of the regretted Papety, on whom the fatigues of those rough days probably acted sufficiently to contribute to his premature death, which deprived France of a man created for very high production.

This point settled, M. Jeanron turned his attention to the court of the Louvre and the approaches of the colonnade. This court, and the yards near at hand, were occupied by five or six thousand insurgents in arms, under the command of an improvised military

governor of the Louvre, who had established his état major in the halls of the ground-floor towards the Rue du Coq, which has since been demolished. Having asserted his authority here and restored something like order, he took the most energetic means—and all his energy was required—to dislodge the insurgents, who had stationed themselves around great glaring fires under the long wooden gallery which I have already mentioned, and which had been built for the purpose of one of the family festivals of the fallen dynasty.

When these steps had been taken, and a complete system of surveillance organised, M. Jeanron began to breathe more freely, and there seemed every chance of a tolerably tranquil night. But the Revolution of 1848 had not even yet suspected its most sinister moments; and whilst a kind of security was being established by the efforts and activity of a knot of brave men, the château of Neuilly was being gutted by the bands driven out of Paris, and compelled to retreat in exasperation through the suburbs, which increased their number with the most dangerous part of their most dangerous population. Scarcely had the news of this disaster been brought to the Louvre, than the flames of the Palais Royal, near at hand, lighted up the skies. That royal residence was completely pillaged, and it was impossible to restrain the fury of its assailants. Presently, moreover, the destroying party, attracted by the proximity of the Louvre, came in huge crowds towards that palace, and flowed like a winter-swollen torrent, with its sur-

face lighted by torches and flashing weapons, through the great gateways. The night was now far advanced, and still M. Jeanron and his gallant little band of friends were occupied in allaying the excitement of the insurgents, who were encamped in the Great Quadrangle, and were eyeing with looks of sombre anger the magnificent façades which the dancing flames of their fires every now and then brilliantly lighted up. The new-comers were soon joined by the most fanatical members of the garrison, and for a moment, as far as the meaning could be understood of that confused roar which rose on every side, answering the murmur which still filled the streets of Paris from end to end, it seemed that the Louvre was doomed. Now appeared a wonderful example of the influence of a single man in such times of crisis. M. Jeanron felt that all reference to force would be unavailing. All he could do was to speak; and he spoke, we may suppose, with effect: for otherwise the mischief would have been as rapid as the force gathered to effect it was irresistible. He sought particularly to impress on these torch-bearers, who crowded their wild and flaming faces about him, that the Louvre had never belonged to the king; that it had always belonged to the nation—to them; and concluded by exclaiming, with what amount of conviction, considering the uncouth figures by which he was surrounded, that seemed to have been dug up from the very depths of society, must remain a matter of doubt, that they all of course remembered to have come

there with their wives and daughters on a Sunday! A confused murmur of applause announced that his eloquence was appreciated, and that there was no further danger of wholesale destruction.

But in the midst of the court of the Louvre rose the bronze statue of the Duke of Orleans, and the band from the Palais Royal, though they consented to refrain from sacking the Museum, expressed their deliberate intention of destroying this monument. But M. Jeanron, convinced that any concession would be impolitic if he wished that night to end well, and that the work of destruction once commenced would be hard to check, said that he would rather be torn to pieces than allow the work of a French artist to be thus demolished—assured them that they would find him a tough person to deal with, for he was a true republican, as they were, but promised that he would cause the obnoxious statue to be removed in the course of the night. Some men in the crowd warmly and loudly applauded his firmness, and told him that they would give him till daylight to perform his promise; begging him to remember, however, that they would not be far off,—that they were only going to warm themselves, as they expressed it, at the Palais Royal,—that they would only have the Rue Fromenteau to cross to come and see “whether the bronze prince had emigrated,”—that they would come back with good crow-bars, and that it would be much easier for them to knock it in pieces in a quarter of an hour than for him to take it to shelter in the

little time that remained to him, for it was then midnight.

In truth, that was a tough piece of work. The rain was falling in torrents, and the night had become dismally dark. That colossal monument was difficult to move. No tools, no workmen, were ready. M. Jeanron made an impassioned appeal to some of the people of the Museum, and to M. Debay, the sculptor attached to the Louvre. They worked all night, and by daylight the statue had indeed been carried to the Pavillon Beauvais and carefully surrounded by a hoarding. Only just in time; for immediately afterwards the folk from the Palais Royal, flushed with wine, came tumultuously to ascertain whether the engagement entered into with them had been kept. The bas-reliefs on the pedestal had not yet been unsealed, and numerous hammers were at once raised to shatter them. But a man in the crowd saved them by saying that M. Jeanron had proved himself to be a diligent workman, that he was himself of the trade, and could not understand how so much work had been got through in so little time. "The least we can do, therefore," he added, "is to make him a present of the two bas-reliefs for his trouble."

During this night of labour, of excitement, and perilous watchfulness, the predecessor of M. Jeanron, convinced that the revolution was taking a more sombre character than he had at first supposed, thanked him in a lively manner for the assistance he had received

and the protection by which he had been surrounded, and bade him farewell, saying that his retreat was required by circumstances. And no doubt, on such an occasion, a new man only could have performed the arduous duties required at every moment, and even at the risk of life.

The scenes which I have described are alluded to briefly, if I remember rightly, in the "Sunny Memories" of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. But if M. Jeanron had preserved the Louvre from these redoubtable dangers his task was very far from finished. He entered immediately on a series of difficulties less violent, but, perhaps, still more perilous, and not to be so completely avoided. In fact it is easy to be understood, that great misfortunes arising in the midst of popular movements may be entirely turned aside by a clever hand; whilst the disorders of an occupation less hostile, but more prolonged, are not so easily to be avoided. On this phase the Louvre and all the collections immediately entered. This is one of the calamitous results of the situation of that palace and its connexion with the apartments of the Tuileries. The Louvre became a military centre. Many of its halls were given up for the use of the army and the National Guard, who remained there for many months. It was a complete barracks. The residence of General Courtais, and afterwards of General Changarnier, filled the Louvre with unwelcome movements;—clubs, moreover, were held there; rooms were devoted to election purposes; national workshops for women were

installed ; and soon afterwards flying hospitals, during the terrible days of June.

Once the inviolability of this edifice infringed, even with the most legitimate objects, there was no exigence, untimely, ridiculous, and absurd, which the disorder of the times did not suggest. M. Jeanron had the greatest possible trouble to explain the simplest matters. The Louvre for a time was converted into an arsenal. Heaps of powder were placed in some of its halls ; and, if I remember rightly, it was by the interference of M. Thiers alone that M. Jeanron obtained the removal of this dangerous guest.

It must be observed, that in tumultuous assemblages of citizens formed or improvised even on the side of order, as it is called, the most monstrous mischief may be perpetrated in a country where the people is so excitable and so wild in its gaiety. The French have singular impulses on such occasions. The Hall of Antiques was occupied by the National Guard—essentially anti-insurrectional and conservative ; yet most of the statues would have been irreparably injured if M. Jeanron had not caused them all to be surrounded by wooden planks—an immense labour, that lasted many days and nights, and for which that jovial set soundly rated him. In the Hall of Casts, where this expensive precaution was not taken, as all the moulds existed, the National Guard amused themselves by writing their names and the number of their company upon the Venuses, under all their aspects, put their

shakos on their heads, and indulged in various and most indescribable fancies. The regular soldiers, though subject to severe discipline, insisted nevertheless in sleeping in the sarcophagi and the coffins of Egyptian mummies, and when in want of kitchen utensils discovered that ancient cups and vases were most convenient for the purpose.

A portion of the difficulties that arose at first were the effect of traditions of the old republic, singularly preserved. The new Director had to resist the demands of the artists of the manufactory of Sèvres, who wanted to be installed in the Louvre as they had been formerly; of the moulders in plaster, who asked for an atelier; of the gilders, who required a room in which to hold a syndical chamber; of citizen Naquet, who wanted a hall in which to open a club, authorised by the direction of the Fine Arts; of the delegates of the club of the Rue des Prouvaires, who had also cast their eyes upon the Louvre; and of the delegates of the electoral committees and of the commission of Industrial Sculpture. A request was even made for the great saloon, in which to establish I know not what manufactory of bank-notes, and carry on experiments thereunto appertaining. The personages interested in this matter were powerfully supported in that strange period, and with difficulty resisted. At a later period, and in a quieter time, it was seriously proposed to instal in the Great Pavilion, which faces the Tuileries, a legal tribunal, with all its dependencies. These ideas would

never have suggested themselves if the collection which contains so many precious things could have been included in an edifice separate from or independent of the royal residence, so that in time of revolution it might be isolated from the seat of military power. For it, must be particularly observed, that the integrity of the National Library, of the Jardin des Plantes, and other institutions of the same nature, has never been exposed to any danger, for they all appeared to the people to be sacred and exempt from all kind of vengeance.

Very shortly after his appointment M. Jeanron succeeded in removing the long and hideous wooden gallery, which constantly compromised the safety of the Louvre. It was built against the great gallery, within the Place du Carrousel. Its removal was effected with astonishing rapidity, and quite in a revolutionary manner, although the new government had been proclaimed; for the late king's architect, M. Fontaine, threw every obstacle in the way, and would never give his consent.

It is rather singular that in an edifice like the Louvre, filled with objects so precious, so fragile, and so combustible, no precaution had ever been taken against fire. During the first months of the new administration, in the middle of the night, a violent conflagration burst out in the Louvre toward the Galerie d'Apollon. The flames were for some time fierce and threatening, and in the complete absence of all special

preparations against such a danger, it seemed quite a miracle that the most frightful disasters were averted. This incident, however, gave M. Jeanron an opportunity for insisting on the most elaborate measures of precaution; and I believe that the steps which he proposed, in concurrence with an eminent officer of that admirable body of enrolled firemen called *Pompiers*, have been carried out.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXPOSITION OF 1848, AND REFORMS AT THE
LOUVRE.

IN the very thickest of the excitement I have described, M. Jeanron, observing the anxiety of the artists, and convinced that the Revolution ought to change as little as possible in the regular course of things, came to a determination that evinced the most remarkable vigour, and carried it out successfully. Instead of taking advantage of the disorder of the times, and of the occupation of the Louvre by the army of revolution, he caused a decision to be taken to the effect that the Exposition of Works of Art, which was preparing in the last days of the reign of Louis-Philippe, should not be put off for a single day. On the 29th of February the following bill was posted on all the walls of Paris: "The Citizen-Minister of the Interior instructs the Director of the National Museum of the Louvre to open the Exposition of 1848 within a fortnight of the present date. All the works, without exception, will be received this year. The whole body of Artists is

convoked at the National School of the Fine Arts on March 5, 1848, at mid-day, to name a Commission of forty members, that is to say, fifteen painters, eleven sculptors, five engravers, five architects, and four lithographers, whose duty will be, with the assistance of the Administration of the National Museum, to decide on the placing of the works to be exhibited."

Nothing was as yet prepared for the Exposition. The old jury, so detested by the artists, had not yet nearly finished its work of selection: only about three hundred pictures had been put aside in two divisions, the rejected and the accepted. The tocsin of Revolution had naturally warned the great judges of painting to remain in the tranquillity of their academic ateliers. The new Director thought that it would form a useful diversion to invite the public to visit an exposition of the arts across barricades not yet removed; but it was with some difficulty that he caused this notion to be appreciated by the Provisional Government, at that time occupied with so many other things. As we have seen, however, he succeeded. It was at his suggestion that it was resolved, for that one year, whilst new regulations were being decided on, all the works of art presented should be exhibited. By so doing he trebled his task. Above five thousand works, including 4598 paintings, 335 sculptures, 39 architectural drawings or plans, 114 engravings, and 64 lithographs, had been sent in.

An innovation that had the greatest success, al-

though it seemed at first an extravagant increase of labour and responsibility, was made by M. Jeanron in the mode of exhibiting the works of sculpture. The rather indolent Administration of the Civil List had been satisfied with placing the statuary in the Great Hall on the ground floor towards St. Germain l'Auxerrois, where are now the Egyptian antiquities of great dimension, and which at that period was very ill kept. It had been occupied for many years by the workshop of the plaster-moulders attached to the Louvre, and was cleaned out annually to receive the sculptures. These works were placed in close and parallel lines in this long hall. It was impossible to go round any piece in order to see it on all sides. The statues rose uniformly in their monotonous whiteness under the most monotonous and irregular light, one against the other, or against the monotonous white wall. In 1848 it was decided that, for the first time, the statuary should be exhibited in the sumptuous halls of the first floor, amidst the paintings, the collections of vases, and the rich antique accessories which adorn them. In this way the works appeared to far greater advantage, being set off on a better ground, and in an isolation that allowed them to be seen under all their aspects.

There were great difficulties, however, in carrying out in so short a time this bold plan, and when it became known, the workmen attached to the Museum and their chiefs looked upon it as an evidence of insanity. The statues and the groups, some of which

were colossal, had to be hauled up through the windows; and every one declared the thing was impossible. But M. Jeanron proved that it was not only practicable, but could be done without expense, since the workmen who were to be employed were paid by the year. Then the opposition fell back on the little solidity of the vaults, and the danger of the bursting through of the flooring. A rapid examination, however, showed that there ought to be no fear on this score. It is worth while mentioning these debates, as instances of the difficulties which a new man has to overcome when he appears with new ideas amidst the comfortable servants of an old establishment, long accustomed to perform their duties betwixt sleep and wake. M. Jeanron had to address all these people, and to tell them that he knew them to be well versed in their employment; yet that he was very fearful they might all be dislodged by candidates rising out of the movement, who were incessantly denouncing them as enemies of the triumphant cause; that he had great trouble to maintain them in their posts, but that he undertook to do so against all opposition, if they carried out—without a single accident, of course, and without a day's delay—the immense work he had set them. Under this pressure the thing was done; and great was the contentment of the sculptors, who had never been so well treated before. No Exposition of the kind has ever been so brilliant or so well managed in France. The experiment, however, was not repeated. In the Ex-

positions of the Tuileries and the Palais Royal which followed, was applied, it is true, some portion of this idea, and the statues most favoured by the Administration were placed amongst the paintings. But the rule was far from being generally applied; and I am informed that in the Universal Exposition, which will probably be open before these pages see the light, this useful innovation will be quite disregarded. I regret it; for sculpture exhibited under the conditions selected by M. Jeanron is alone capable of being appreciated in a proper manner. Each work, in that case, receives as it were a particular destination, and detaches itself admirably from the general mass. To be placed thus singly, and relieved against a coloured, and as it were living ground, is necessary for new works as yet unknown to the public, which require to be well seen, and which stand in need of all these circumstances to be fitly appreciated. An exposition of contemporary sculpture, fresh from the atelier, should not be made on the model of a museum of antiques, in which each piece is accompanied by its tradition and by a long series of expressed opinions, which assist the judgment, and constrain it, almost, to subscribe with pious deference to the hereditary decisions of criticism.

I have mentioned, that M. Jeanron had advised that all the works of art sent in for exhibition should be received indiscriminately; and from what I could gather, this idea was not suggested to him at the time by considerations of convenience or in deference to

the feelings of the body of artists at that particular juncture, but was the result of a settled conviction. His reasons were at least plausible. He could point, in the first instance, to the well-known fact, that juries composed of members of the profession had always, and, as it appeared, systematically excluded the works of some of the ablest men of the day, whilst they admitted productions of the most mediocre character. The rule seemed to be, indeed, that whatever was remarkably bad or remarkably good was in danger of rejection, whilst the ordinary run of paintings and sculptures, conceived and executed with a decent regard to traditional theories, could reckon on hospitality. M. Jeanron used to maintain, that if artists were allowed to choose their own works for exhibition during a series of years, though at first, about a hundred unworthy specimens might be sent, public criticism would soon check the evil; and he quoted the fact, that shortly after the opening of the Exhibition of 1848 many persons came to him, almost with tears in their eyes, to beg him to withdraw pictures which had excited general ridicule and contempt. If in a few cases this check were not found to operate; on the other hand, by attempting to remedy so slight an evil, many remarkable works offensive to academic taste, or to particular members of any reigning school, might for ever be kept out of sight of the public. The landscape-painter, Rousseau, now so popular, had his works regularly refused from 1830 to 1848; and innumerable

examples of the same kind might be mentioned. An elective jury, substituted for one chosen by authority, may, as experience has proved, rectify some special cases of injustice; but it is impossible to construct any machinery which will absolutely ensure the rejection only of works bad in themselves, and the acceptance of all that exhibit talent under whatever form, original or capricious.

The Exhibition of 1848 was the last one that took place within the walls of the Louvre, and the change was certainly an advantageous one. Previously, the old pictures, temporarily concealed, were in danger of various accidents. Relieved from this annual accession of labour, moreover, the Director was enabled to devote his whole attention to the collections committed to his care. He soon found that he had enough to do. One of his first discoveries was, that many of the ateliers and warehouses were in a deplorable state of dilapidation,—so as in some cases to be dangerous. The objects which the crowded state of the Museum rendered it necessary to deposit there ran great chance of destruction. Three places especially, the warehouses of the Calcographie, the press-room, and the hall adjoining, were nearly in ruins. The ground, which was no longer boarded, had been opened in many places in order to examine the beams; mere planks served as doors; the walls were dilapidated; there were no shelves or cases. Many ateliers were given by favour to artists who had no particular claim, just as in the ante-revolutionary period. These privileges were at

once suppressed. It would not be interesting, however, to relate all the minor reforms which were at once undertaken in the midst of the burning excitement of that period. The new Director insisted on all occasions on the necessity of recurring to the principles laid down under the old Republic,—of imitating the prudent counsels and the attentive activity which had created what he was bound to preserve and enlarge. A great many of the debates connected with his office were carried on, as it were, publicly, in the intervals of civil excitement; and it is difficult in England to conceive the immense number of persons who watched the doings at the Louvre with intense anxiety. It gave prodigious satisfaction when M. Jeanron declared energetically that the administration of the Louvre must study its own history, and take up the thread of the traditions which had been suffered to go out of sight;—“the Musée must cease to be an arena for the emulation of rival artists. It must be once more nothing but the venerated centre in which the people may find the expression of all the talents, which in all ages and countries have honoured the Fine Arts.” These general phrases, the meaning of which was perfectly understood, calmed a great deal of the agitation of the artists, who, anxious about their means of existence, more than once tumultuously assembled. Public confidence was at length so firmly established, that every one was content to wait the result of the decision to be taken by the new Administration.

We are too apt to accept without thanks, and without proper attention—which is better than thanks—the results of the spirit of reform, which in times of civil commotion, such as that of 1848, applies itself to all departments of public life; and just at the time when the common observer, frightened by noise and irregular activity, imagines that all things must be abandoned to themselves, and necessarily deteriorate, carries them forward to a point of perfection which might be, perhaps, more easily reached in a period of repose, but for the absence of impulse and genuine desire of progress. It seems almost to be a law, that comfortably-installed governments never attempt to do more than what is absolutely necessary to keep them alive; so that they stumble over the first obstacle, and have not strength to rise again. At any rate the new Republic felt, that whilst it lasted it must give some sign of excellence; and nowhere was its beneficent influence more felt than at the Louvre.

As I have mentioned, up to 1848 the National Museum depended entirely on the Civil List. The following decree, therefore, dated April 29, 1848, is worth quoting, as marking under what form the change took place:—

“The Provisional Government:

“Considering the law of August 8th, 1847, fixing the budget of the expenses of 1848,—

“Considering the *arrêté* of March 8th, according to which the service of the National Museum passes into the department of the Minister of the Interior,—

“Decreases:

“ *Article 1.* There is granted on the exercise of 1848 to the Minister of the Interior an extraordinary credit of 798,000 francs, applicable to the expense of the National Museums.

“ *Article 2.* The regularisation of this extraordinary credit shall be proposed to the National Assembly.

“ *Article 3.* The Ministers of the Interior and of Finance are charged, each in what concerns him, with the execution of the present decree, of which shall be inserted in the Bulletin des Lois.

“ Passed in the Council of Government, April 29, 1848.

“ The Members of the Provisional Government,—

“ Dupont de l'Eure, Flocon, A. Marrast, Albert, Lamartine, Ledru Rollin, Ad. Crémieux, Marie, Louis Blanc, Arago, Garnier Pagès.

“ The Secretary-general of the Provisional Government.

“ P^AGNERRE.”*

I may also repeat here, that one of the earliest decrees of the Provisional Government was for the long-talked-of continuation of the Louvre. The initiatory steps taken have been mentioned in a previous chapter. It is necessary to add, however, that the partizans of the fallen monarchy, or of everything and anything but self-government—which seems to be too great a fatigue for the ordinary French mind—silently but steadily, with some few honourable exceptions, opposed every attempt made to connect the name of the Republic with any great work. In spite of them, however, sufficient was done to make that short period memorable in the history of the Louvre; as will appear when I come to describe the nature and progress of the old departments and the various new ones created. Before reaching that theme, however, I have to touch on others more immediately connected with the early period of the Republic.

* *Bulletin des Lois*, No. 32-298.

CHAPTER VII.

ACTIVITY IN THE MUSEUM UNDER THE RÉPUBLIQUE.

BEFORE examining into the state of preservation of the objects confided to his care, the new Director had to ascertain in what they consisted, and where they were to be found. He knew, from his studies of the conduct of previous governments, that a large portion of the public collections must necessarily be dispersed in places where they had no right to be. I have already mentioned, that not only were part of the spoils of conquest distributed in various quarters as soon as obtained—and, in consequence, accidentally preserved in 1815—but that the Empire set the example of making presents or loans of pictures even to churches. The conduct of the Republic in disseminating objects was an exception to its principles, but not a deviation from them. Those principles had for their aim “to collect, to preserve, and to exhibit.” But public spirit soon declined, and the simple maxims of general interest, at first applied, came by degrees to be disregarded. Mean arrangements and the egotistical solicitations

of private interest reigned in their stead. Then was introduced the extraordinary abuse of furnishing the apartments occupied by the various powers that succeeded one another, and even the hôtels of the ministers, by means of works taken away from the newly-formed collections. The Empire began and the Restoration continued this system. From that time forward all serious surveillance, all real responsibility on the part of the Administration of the Museum, became impossible.

In order to explain this strange situation it is necessary to go into further detail. Admirable paintings, which had not been destined for such a purpose, were applied to ceilings or let into walls, exposed to the flames of tapers, to the heat of chandeliers, to the tumult of festivals, to popular invasion. Cameos of inestimable price were placed upon side-boards and cabinets, in apartments into which crowds of strangers constantly penetrated; whilst ancient statues occupied the niches of palaces, or were dispersed in gardens where the public was never admitted. All these objects soon came to be considered as simple decorations, and were scratched out on that score from the inventories where they had figured. What by right belonged to all, became in fact the private property of certain individuals, who were free to dispose of them according to their good pleasure—to bury them in the most obscure places, if they disagreed with certain internal arrangements—to mutilate them, if they did not

adapt themselves to the places for which they were selected—or even to hide them away in garrets, without further notice, when they were no longer wanted.

It was, to be more particular, in consequence of these abuses that many pictures—for example, an original and important one by Guido, which now adorns the Long Gallery—were found, several years ago, in the garret of the old hôtel of the Ministry of Finance; that many precious works of the Flemish school have been at times discovered in the rooms of the most subaltern employés; and that a picture of price, by Breemberg, of which traces exist in the inventories, has been definitively lost. In the early time of the late Republic, M. Jeanron himself was informed by the porter of the hôtel of the Ministry of the Interior that he possessed, in his own lodging, a good number of pictures, which, as a friend of the Arts, he had voluntarily removed from more dangerous quarters.

It was not surprising that the Government of the Restoration should have treated public property in this manner. Those who reign by divine right are, of course, exempt from the ordinary obligations of honesty. But it was to have been expected that, after 1830, a new system would have been adopted. Yet this was not the case. The Museums remained attached to the Civil List, and continued to be treated as dependencies of the Garde-Meuble. I do not, however, make this a matter of personal accusation against Louis-Philippe. He suffered the old abuses to continue, rather from

want of taste than from disregard of duty. His attention was chiefly directed elsewhere; and he is to be charged only with neglect. The result, however, was the same. Under his reign, a single picture was subjected to all the three kinds of injury which I have above pointed out—modification of its form, erasure from the inventories, and destruction by accident. I mean, that of Prud'hon, representing "Wisdom and Truth descending upon the Earth." Placed at first in the spécial Museum of the French School at Versailles, it was afterwards shortened, to serve as a ceiling in a saloon of the palace of St. Cloud. Consequently its name was no longer introduced into the inventories. At last the drapery of a chandelier taking fire, this picture was in part singed and put on one side; so that now-a-days the composition of Prud'hon, diminished by about a quarter, and deteriorated in many places, is rolled up in the warehouses of the Museum, without any number of registration.

The same facts, less the accident by fire, may be mentioned with reference to three magnificent pictures by Lesueur, one of the greatest masters of the French school, whose general production has most suffered by acts of barbarism, and has been most diminished by all kinds of misfortune. In order also to make a ceiling of his fine picture of the "Fall of Phaeton," the corners were cut away. Of a square, an oval was made. It is now placed in the Tuileries, at a height at which its importance and merit cannot be distinguished. Two

charming pictures, representing the Muses, were let into the wall of a cabinet without any window; and if by day they were deprived of the preserving action of air and light, on the other hand, in the evening, they were exposed to the destructive heat of the lamps. A large border of paste, moreover, hid a considerable portion of their edges. I may add, that a magnificent bronze by the celebrated sculptor Girardon, belonging to the Museum, was actually gilt—and thus totally depreciated—for ornamental purposes in the Tuileries.

If such mutilations and acts of Vandalism could have occurred in localities where the Direction of the Museum might have exercised a certain control, how many dangers must not have been incurred by objects placed in more distant establishments! Even if they were kept in the places for which they were first destined, they remained exposed to all the hazards of days of reception, to the touch of visitors, to the awkwardness of servants, to the cares of ill-understood cleanliness. It is curious that similar complaints should have been made more than a century ago by Lafont de Saint-Yenne, who tells us that the “Milo,” and the “Andromeda” of Puget, were not only being rapidly deteriorated by being exposed to frost and rain and other atmospheric influences, but were constantly scoured like caldrons with coarse sand.

Another cause of the dispersal and destruction of the property of the national collections, was the blameable ease with which objects were lent for various purposes by

one administration to another. The Royal Manufactories of Sèvres, the Gobelins, and Beauvais, were fond of reproducing the most important works of art in the Museum, and for this purpose, instead of making copies, obtained the loan of the originals, and frequently kept them for many years. I may mention as an instance, that Raphael's "Vierge au Linge" was kept for five years in the atelier of Madame Ducluzeau, who was engaged in copying it on porcelain for the manufactory of Sèvres. It was only restored to the Gallery in September, 1848, by M. Jeanron, who insisted that the public ought no longer to be deprived of its view. The "Vierge au Voile," by the same master, had also been long kept from exhibition for a similar purpose.

Many objects which ought to have belonged to the Louvre were found to be detained in various other places, especially at the Gobelins. The first Director of that establishment was the celebrated Lebrun, who long lived there with his sons-in-law and fellow-labourers, Van der Meulen, Wuissemans, and Verdier. Many of their works had been unaccountably left at the Gobelins, especially a number of large drawings in pencil, pen, or water-colours, representing battles and other subjects. Besides these there existed in the same edifice many paintings by masters of the last century, who were represented at the Louvre by works of inferior quality.

It was very early in the time of the Republic that steps were taken to reform the abuses which I have thus summarily described. On March 18, 1848,

the Minister of the Interior decreed that the new Administration of the National Museums should seek out, in whatever places they might be, the objects of art which had been disseminated, and which belonged to the State. For this purpose it was necessary to name inspectors to visit all the royal residences, situated some near Paris, some at a distance; and all public establishments, ateliers, and edifices, of whatever nature they might be, with notes furnished by the Director. It is unnecessary here to insist on the fact that, except during the first month or so of the Republic, when its benign character and almost exaggerated indulgence for old prejudices and interests were not so well known, the servants of the old monarchy took advantage of the positions in which they had been charitably left, to act rather as agents of the defeated power than of the one whose pay they condescended to receive; and, uniting with the great coalition of abject fear and greedy ambition, laboured strenuously to put stumbling-blocks in the way of even the slightest reforms attempted under the new régime. A functionary actually opposed with success the removal from the place, absurdly given to it, of Lesueur's "Phaëton," under the pretence that as it had been made a ceiling of, its absence would be disagreeably felt in the apartments of the Duc de Nemours. I suppose that if some prince could be found to make use of the cartoons of Raphael to carpet his ball-room, the same appeal to accomplished facts would be the answer to any complainant. It should be

observed, that it was principally the works of the French masters which were dispersed through the royal residences—a fact that accounts for the comparatively incomplete state of the series of national painters.

It came out, some time after the rounds made by the inspectors above mentioned, that there existed in the château of Trianon various precious objects of antiquity of the middle ages, which, as it was very properly observed, were quite out of place in that residence, and which, united to those of the same kind already in the Museum, would greatly add to the riches of the national collections. One of them in particular—an oval goblet in rock-crystal, engraved with subjects from the Old Testament—was mentioned in the inventories of the Louvre. No one could doubt, therefore, whence it came. There were other objects in the gallery of Trianon, moreover—goblets mounted in ancient cameos, bronzes, and enamels—which could not be considered exactly safe there, and the removal of which to the collection of precious stones, &c., in the Louvre, was strongly urged by various representatives of the people.

In speaking of the various departments of the Museum in detail, I shall have occasion to mention several instances of additions made to the Louvre in consequence of the measures taken at this time. Here, however, a rather curious fact naturally finds its place. During the last days of the Monarchy of July, the King had lent two celebrated pictures by Géricault, belonging to himself, to the Association of Artists, for their

exposition. In the month of March it was decided by the Minister of the Interior that these works should be sequestrated and deposited, *pro tempore*, in the Museum of the Louvre; and the President of the Association professed his readiness to comply. But the pictures had been deposited in the Bazar Bonne Nouvelle, the owner of which, on being asked to deliver them up, refused, on the plea that he kept them to answer for the rent of his rooms. A decree, signed by the Minister himself, May 2, 1848, was necessary to obtain the surrender of these pictures and their deposit in the Louvre. They were at once exhibited, but as they were not yet the property of the nation a notice was affixed to them, informing artists and the public that for the present they were allowed only to admire, but not to copy them. The Direction of the Museum, however, undertook to take the necessary steps to prevent their return into a private gallery; and having been successful in its negotiations, was enabled to assign them a definitive place in the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, on either side of the great picture, "The Wreck of the Medusa," where they are known as "Le Chasseur" and "Le Cuirassier."

As M. Jeanron wished to place in the Hall of the Seven Chimneys the *élite* of the works of the Davidian school, he caused to be removed from Versailles the celebrated picture of "The Plague of Jaffa," by Gros. It belonged to the Louvre, for which it had been bought and towards which it had progressed through the Museum of the Luxembourg, but had been taken to Versailles

by order of the ex-King, whose mind was occupied by different ideas. The municipality of that country-place, which derives all its importance from the palace, objected—very naturally, I suppose—to this transfer, as well as many others proposed or carried out for the completion of the collections of the Louvre; and it was with some difficulty that it was effected.

M. Jeanron also found that many works which had been bought with the public money had been suffered to remain, during a long period, in the ateliers of the artists. For example, the "Liberty guiding the People," in 1830, by Eugène Delacroix, was purchased after the Salon of 1831 by the Minister of the Interior for the Government. But during seventeen years, for reasons which may perhaps be easily divined, this fine picture had not been assigned to any particular place of exhibition, and remained accordingly, up to 1848, in the possession of the painter. There was now, however, no longer any motive for depriving the public of the pleasure of beholding this excellent performance; and M. Jeanron therefore proposed to the Minister to claim it for exhibition. This was done; but it was some time before arrangements could be made for introducing it into the Luxembourg.

Whilst conducting in the loose manner I have described the preservation and distribution of property already acquired, the old administration had not made any regulation as to the cases in which it would accept or refuse the gifts of objects of art made to the

Museums by private persons. Its general rule was to accept as little as possible, in order to avoid the double inconvenience of being obliged to receive presents without real value, and to submit to conditions imposed by the donor. The new Director thought that these refusals had deprived the public collections of many valuable objects, and proposed a new regulation in the following terms:—

1. All objects are to be received and registered with the name of the donator, and acknowledged with thanks.
2. There is no obligation to exhibit them.
3. A commission is to decide on what are to be exhibited.

This regulation, drawn out in detail, was, on May 16, 1848, presented to the Minister, and duly ratified. According to the terms of one of its articles, which said, that “if the object given be judged by a commission to be of great interest in an artistic point of view, or as an historical monument, a special report shall be addressed to the Minister of the Interior, to ask for authority to inscribe, in an apparent manner, on the object, its frame, or its support, the name of the donator,”—according to this article, I say, M. Jeanron had soon occasion to draw attention to the gift made by Citizen Boyard, of the picture representing the “Death of Virginius,” by Guillon Lethière, a considerable work in every respect—a companion to the picture of the “Death of the Sons of Brutus,” by the same author, which the gallery of the Louvre already pos-

sessed. This picture, of great dimensions, had been rolled in a case since 1830, and was in the warehouse of the Louvre, addressed to M. Boyard. The following are the terms in which that gentleman informed the Director of his intended liberality. I quote them, as a peculiar illustration of the feeling of the times:—

“ Citizen Director,

“ *Paris, May 25, 1848.*

“ Lethière was very fond of his *Virginius*, and always regretted that it was not in the Louvre by the side of his *Brutus*. I wish to realise his desire, and I present to the Republic this picture, the last work of the master.

“ I am happy, Citizen Director, that on this occasion you are my interpreter. The Arts are at last worthily represented at the Louvre in your person.

“ Salutation and fraternity.

“ C. BOYARD.”

To this letter was attached the following attestation :—

“ I acknowledge that the picture of Lethière, representing *Virginius*, is enclosed in a case addressed to M. Boyard, and that this work is at present deposited in the warehouse of the Museum.

(Signed) “ DE CAILLEUX.”
“ *Louvre, August 28, 1830.*”

M. Recurt, Minister of the Interior at the time of presentation, granted the authority necessary for affixing the name of the donor.

As may easily be imagined, by overhauling the entire property of the Museum in the manner I have described, after a certain lapse of time the Director discovered, that what with the objects called in, and

what with those the existence of which was ascertained in garrets and cellars, he had materials at his disposal not only for greatly improving the collections already existing, but for creating others entirely new. In the first place, as I shall presently have to relate, he organised an exhibition of colossal Egyptian monuments. Then he undertook the formation of a Hall of Greek Monuments, of the primitive period. Though not numerous, they enabled him to compose a very interesting little collection, and to make use of a handsome room of moderate proportions, which had until then been empty. Besides the bas-reliefs of Assos and the metopes of Olympia, there was a great tripod of the most ancient Greek style, with some fragments of the Parthenon brought to France by Choiseul Gouffier, various columns and vases, and certain inscriptions and stellæ, collected by M. Philippe Lebas during his mission in Greece.

At the same time M. Jeanron resolved to bring up from the cellars a good number of interesting pieces, either original or reproductions in plaster, and to group them in the halls neighbouring the magnificent moulding of the Chimneypiece of Bruges, which had been until that time encumbered with a pell-mell of objects and materials of all kinds. He began by placing there two great tombs of Spanish Kings, which harmonised completely, by their matter, style, and epoch, with the above-mentioned chimneypiece, and with the tombs of Charles the Bold and his daughter, which are

in the same Hall: Thither, also, he caused to be removed some valuable Christian sarcophagi, which were deteriorating by being exposed to the air in the small court of the Louvre, and which had been claimed on that account by the Municipality of Paris. These sarcophagi were intended to form the nucleus of a collection of monuments of the early Christians, consisting in bas-reliefs, lamps in bronze and clay, ivories, and inscriptions which had until then been disseminated, and most of which had not been exhibited at all.

The classification of the paintings of the various schools performed under M. Jeanron's superintendence was so well received by the public, that he determined to apply the same system to the Museum of the Monuments of the Renaissance. I shall have occasion to notice this Museum, as it at present exists, further on, and merely mention here that, up to the time of the Republic, such objects as were exhibited were arranged without any regard to their value or their chronological sequence. We can now admire the works of Michael Angelo, of Cellini, of Jean Cousin, of Jean Goujon, and many others, Italian and French, without any very great straining of the attention. At the same time I must add, the collection of monuments of the period immediately succeeding was suddenly enriched by the accession of many objects which the diligence of the new Direction pointed out and obtained. Among these was the vast marble group by Puget of the Andromeda, which until that time had been left exposed to the wea-

ther, as an ornament in the gardens of Versailles. This group is the second capital production of the master, whose works are very rare, because he laboured in various branches, and because during his lifetime he was little successful in Paris, and was compelled either to waste his energies or to work in a foreign land. The Milo of Crotona had already been transferred from Versailles, and had become celebrated among critics and students. The Andromeda was rapidly acquiring a brilliant reputation—somewhat exaggerated, perhaps, and due, probably, to the graceful female figure contained in the group,—the only one executed with success by the artist, who commonly aimed at the most formidable representations of masculine force. I have already quoted the opinion of Lafont de Saint-Yenne, who complained that the skin and the network of veins, and all the delicacies of imitation by which this work was distinguished, were already a hundred years ago disappearing, not only under the influence of the weather, but under that more fatal still—of sand and the scrubbing-brush. Since his time the work of destruction was of course carried on, by persevering cleanliness at regular intervals. These facts, carefully stated by M. Jeanron in a report to the Minister of the Interior, led to the addition of Puget's work, in its deteriorated state, to the Louvre. Ideas of completeness then began to have sway. The Gallic Hercules, by the same master, was removed from an unfrequented portion of the Luxembourg; the bas-relief of Diogenes, also pro-

ceeding from Versailles originally, but which had been placed for some time almost out of sight, in a staircase of the Louvre; a charming group of children, found in the warehouse; and an Alexander trampling barbarians under foot, bought in a shop on the Boulevards, at length worthily completed the collection of this master's works.

M. Jeanron was also solicited by eminent amateurs and able artists to concentrate other scattered works in the Louvre; for example, the only important group existing by the celebrated sculptor Lepautre—namely, the one representing Æneas and Anchises; and the Winged Horses of Coyzevox, which were being injured by successive cleanings; and a pretty mutilated antique representing Atalanta, lost in a bosquet of the garden of Trianon. These objects had not, of course, been executed for the position they occupied, and were no longer calculated to serve the purposes of open-air ornament. They were essentially moveable in their nature, and had all passed through the most various vicissitudes. The group of Lepautre, executed, according to the traditions of the French school, after a wax model by Lebrun, was finished at Rome in 1716, and was placed much later as a companion to the group of the Death of Lucretia, or, according to others, of Aries and Petus, which this able man terminated in the ateliers of Marly, whither it was brought from Rome, having been left unfinished by Théodon at his death. The Horses of Coyzevox also come from that destroyed

residence of Marly. As to the *Atalanta*, which there is some reason to believe was bought in Italy for François I. by Primaticcio, it has gone the round of nearly all the royal residences that have been built since that time.

Some of the projects entertained by the new Direction of the Louvre for giving to its collections an unexampled completeness and splendour were, from want of time, I believe, not carried out. It was proposed, among other things, to remove to the Museum of Antiques a great number of monuments from the Medal department of the National Library. Neither their nature nor their origin explained their presence in the Rue de Richelieu. For example, a number of the marbles proceeding from the collection of Choiseul Gouffier were placed in the Library, whilst others of the same character had been given to the Louvre. The same unaccountable division had been made of the objects taken from the Abbey of St. Denis. It is easy to understand why medals and engraved stones, the study and arrangement of which require a considerable quantity of books, should be annexed to the Library; but marbles, bronzes, ivories, goldsmiths' work, painted vases, terra-cotta, Egyptian, Chinese, and American monuments, should naturally be all exhibited in the Louvre. At the Library these precious monuments are considered as so secondary, that only a small number is exhibited. The objects of this kind it possesses, although much less numerous than those of the Louvre,

have nevertheless a very great scientific importance, which would be increased by the union of the two collections. At any rate it is at the Louvre only that the public looks for such objects. Very few people know, for example, that the Library contains a collection of painted vases, very valuable and very remarkable. They are quite "lost for the purposes of study, not one of them being exhibited in the *Cabinet des Médailles*.

Whilst the new Direction laboured thus to increase the riches of the Louvre, claiming all that was due to it and whatever tended to augment the sequence and the significance of its collections, I was glad to see that the motive of this activity was not that puerile desire to which the official mind so often yields, of amassing for the mere sake of amassing. There have been Conservators of such establishments whose whole aim has been indiscriminate collection, and who, instead of submitting with patience to criticism, rather expect public gratitude, as if they were the liberal donors of things which nobody cares to see. This unreasoning spirit of acquisition may often be referred to as the cause of the disorder and want of harmony of many collections. M. Jeanron acted on different principles. Whilst beating up on every side, as we have seen, for objects of real artistic interest, he pointed out many things which the Louvre ought not to keep, and which left vacancies in various other important collections. For example, he proposed to transfer to the Cabinet des Estampes many valuable engravings not useful at the

Louvre, and at the same time took steps to remove to the Ministry of War the fine Maps and Plans produced by able engineers under the influence of Vauban and of Colbert, and of which the plates were at the Louvre. He also pointed out various pieces of furniture, very curious in themselves, which would be better placed in the Museum of Cluny; where, for my part, I think the Museum of Sovereigns might also more properly be installed.

On the other hand, M. Jeanron proposed to the National Library, that whilst he gave up certain engraved proofs which the Louvre possessed he should receive in return the copperplates, of which it could make no use, having no press to work them off with. At the Louvre the new Direction had reorganised the printing department attached to the Calcographie, and was ready to supply the public and the trade with any amount of impressions. I do not know whether the proposed exchange was carried out; but if not it certainly appears that copperplates, packed up in the warehouses of a library, are about as useful as if they were in a tinker's shop.

I am aware that some of the facts brought together in this chapter may seem too detailed and special to interest a British public. Perhaps, however, after all, it is better to enter deeply into what may be called the private life of such an establishment as the Louvre, and record the plans and the projects, some of which have led to fruitful results, though others remain un-

applied, than to indulge in general remarks based on information which is not yet before the public. Many of the little incidents I have set down would probably not have been published, even in France ; and this will, I hope, be my apology for looking close at the minute aspects of reality instead of aiming at sketching a general outline and describing things in the mass. .

CHAPTER VIII.

ORGANISATION OF THE LOUVRE—NOTICE
OF THE SCULPTOR BARYE.

WHILST M. Jeanron was displaying the activity I have just described, he had to attend to a service of a different kind, for which it might have been supposed his previous artistic life had less fitted him,—I mean the reorganisation of the *personnel* of the Louvre, the exact limitation of the duties and responsibilities and relations of the various employés, from the workmen and guardians up to the eminent men chosen, on account of their scientific and other qualifications, to occupy the higher posts. I have before me a Report which was distributed to the National Assembly by M. Jeanron (August 7, 1848), to support his proposals, and which, after having described briefly the previous condition of the Museum, which I have given in more detail, continues as follows :—

“ It appears to me that after a long peace, with a numerous *personnel* and great resources, the administrative state which I have described must arise from a

radically vicious organisation, and from an insufficient distribution of responsibility.

“ The Director, in fact, by the intrusion of new initiatives, concentrated in himself the whole responsibility, the whole labour, the whole research, and the whole competence. This should not be. A man who knows one thing well must decline the obligation of knowing everything. A director must supply impulse, order, surveillance; but he must take care not to absorb and paralyse men whose more modest functions, less extended but deeper, should be connected, as it were, by a common inspiration, but never subalternised.

“ There remained in the Louvre only employés without precise and fixed functions. Each, at the order of the Director, passed from one class of labours to another—began things which they did not finish—and by a work ceaselessly interrupted and constantly re-handled augmented the primitive disorder. This it is that explains the numerous attempts at inventories and classifications, erroneous, incomplete, and contradictory, which, up to this day, render the documents and the riches of our Museum inaccessible.

“ Thus the employés of the Museum, taken away from their habitual labours, were sent to Versailles, to Trianon, and the other residences, which led to a continual mobility of views and caprices, so that nothing good or durable was done; as their works, printed at great expense, in spite of their great personal merit, sufficiently testify.

“ Thus the second clerk, completely annihilated in spite of the real usefulness of his employment, was for many years entirely occupied in placing labels on monuments and objects of all kinds, which, nevertheless, remain neither counted nor described, nor classed nor exhibited ; or else in composing medal-stands in plaster, or in making collections of engraved portraits for the Museum of Versailles.

“ The few employés who had preserved a special title, clearly defining their attributions, had no serious functions, despite appearance. They were either systematically set aside from their duty, or complacently tolerated in their negligence.

“ Thus (without speaking of the *Conservateur adjoint* of painting, whose respectable position must be considered as a superannuation) it may be said that the function, so difficult, so laborious, so necessary, of the conservation of painting, was not occupied, although there was a titular. This titular was commonly absent, and his initiative and assistance were null in all important questions.

“ The *expert* of the Museums was never consulted, and had been for many years abroad engaged in private operations.

“ There was no trace, or very feeble traces, of the labour of the other titular conservateurs. Their labours, if labours there were, were carried on outside. They had not, literally, a chair in the Museum to sit down upon.

“ Since the death of an employé, M. —, a man more laborious than learned, more attentive than judicious, who busied himself, without any precise attributions, with the archæological monuments—a room among others existed in the Louvre entirely dilapidated, scarcely closed, encumbered with the most precious vestiges of antiquity, on which it was necessary to walk if any one happened to enter.

“ Whole services requiring the most absolute devotion, and meriting to obtain it by their importance, their charm, and their utility, were completely abandoned.

“ Thus the collection of original drawings of the masters of all the ancient schools, the finest and most numerous collection in the world, in which the cabinets of the most illustrious and most competent amateurs of previous centuries had successively flowed, was abandoned to the care of an employé, having the title of *Agent comptable* ; or, rather, was confided to no one.

“ After having been deprived, for more than twenty years, of all exhibition of drawings, the public had, at last, been enabled to enjoy some few which, being found mounted and ready, were hung upon the walls without order or discernment.

“ But a great number had been unfortunately bound up in volumes.

“ A still greater number lay in the dust eaten by the worms, worn in their foldings, not protected from humidity, collected in sordid packets without any mark.

“Not many days ago, in an arrangement of material, there were found in the last-mentioned state more than 20,000, of the existence of which there was nothing to rouse a suspicion.

“In some of the departments, in which the Museum had relations of so delicate a nature with the public—not only communicating and exhibiting its riches, but selling the useful reproductions it makes in the interest of art as in the warehouse of the Calcographie and Moulage, a commerce was carried on not worthy of a national establishment.

“Thus the moulder entrusted with the care of reproducing the admirable types of ancient sculpture and the sculpture of the Renaissance, in which our Museum is so rich—a reproduction necessary to the development of our ateliers and our schools of Art in Paris and the Departments—had a fixed appointment, and nevertheless made a profit out of each object sold. Moreover, there was in the Louvre a private trade carried on. Its material, its *personnel*, were confused with those of the establishment. Besides, I know not why, he only cast off for the account of the Museum specimens of whole statues, the sale of which is so rare, but all partial casts, heads, torsos, arms, or hands, legs, or feet, the sale of which is considerable, and daily were for his profit.

“Such, Citizen-Minister, was the state in which I found the internal organisation of the Louvre. I have thought it necessary, therefore, to lay down certain

strict principles, that may serve as a basis of a new organisation more liberal, more learned, and more worthy. These principles are, to inventory—to preserve—to describe—to classify—to communicate—to exhibit.

“If the number, the value, the importance, the nature, and the variety of a particular collection, do not allow a single man to have the time and the knowledge necessary to introduce the consequences of the above principles, it is necessary to divide it into departments, each of which an assiduous and competent employé may manage under the personal surveillance of the Director.

“The reunion of all the departments will constitute the Conservatory of the Museum, all the members of which should concert together for general views under the Director.”

The Report then goes on to propose the following organisation :—

1. A conservation of painting.
2. ——— of drawings.
3. ——— of sculptures, first division of antiques.
4. ——— of sculptures, second division of antiques (Egyptian Monuments.)
5. ——— of Calcographies (direction of the working off of plates and the sale of proofs).
6. ——— of the Library and Archives.
7. ——— of the Museum of Plasters (direction of casting and sale of casts),
8. ——— of the Marine Museum.

“The conservation of painting, the two conserva-

tions of antiques, and that of the Marine Museum, pre-exist under the same titles.

“The conservation of Drawings no longer existed; and the collection of Drawings, which is in itself a museum of the greatest importance, without equal in Europe, was abandoned, as I have before stated.

“The conservation of the Calcographie, on which I have insisted in another Report, existed already, under a different title. It was an agency. The agent, who had exclusive charge of it, received 2800 francs a-year, and enjoyed certain perquisites. This conservation, of which I have advised the creation, and of which I increase the salary to 3000 francs,* does not constitute a real increase of expense, and requires to be filled by a man of another order, who shall devote himself to scientific studies and labours not to be expected from a mere clerk.

“The conservation of the Library and Archives did not exist; but what existed was the want—the constant demand—of artists and true friends of Art, for the concentration at the Louvre of all documents and books on Art, without which its history, its traditions, its origin, its signification, its processes, cannot be understood and studied.

“French artists—I must say it here, Citizen-Mini-

* Observe the extremely low salaries given to persons in public employ in France. The system is perhaps pushed too far, but it is eminently democratic. A learned man for an increased salary of 120*l.* per annum!

ster, in a Report intended to obtain benefits from you for them—French artists are generally ignorant of the history and the theory of their art. They are not in this respect up to the height of foreign schools. Setting aside some very honourable and brilliant exceptions, we count few artists who have studied the things which interest them, and of which the acquisition would augment so considerably the beauty of their works. The absence of a public *dépôt* of special books and documents, the extreme rarity and the high price of the best works written on the Arts, are the principal causes thereof. Meagre catalogues, swarming with errors, teach nothing, and *can* teach nothing to artists who are fastidious in what they read. No collection exists elsewhere at their service. Little habituated to learned researches, distracted every time that they wish to inspire and instruct themselves by the irresistible appeal of the collections at the Louvre, they cannot go elsewhere to seek in external libraries for the useful aliment which they require. Where elsewhere exists a library organised with a view to their wants? Nowhere. French artists are not (in these superior necessities of their education and their progress) served by the Administrators of the National Museums as foreign artists are in their own countries;* yet, however, they can find nowhere in Europe a centre of Art and a focus of in-

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• * To what countries does M. Jeanron allude? I suspect, not to England.

struction comparable to those which we possess and which we can place at their disposal.

“ Now-a-days, whilst the utility of special libraries is generally recognised, and all public establishments have or wish to have their own, we ought to regret that the Museum does not possess one. Already, at different epochs, the friends of art, science, and letters, have suggested the foundation of this library, which would render so much service to artists, amateurs, and writers. The means of execution were not wanting to the ancient administration; a first nucleus—composed of a sufficiently large quantity of books (important to Art), of some precious manuscripts, and a collection of catalogues of sale of the greatest rarity—exists in the Louvre, and offers all the elements necessary to form a large basis for a special library. But the formation of such a library, always slow and difficult, was until now impossible, on account of the absolute want of an intelligent Direction, and the absence of a Librarian charged to complete this collection of books. The collection which exists has been formed without order and *ensemble*, without the impulse of an initiative from above. The surveillance and the conservation of this collection were entrusted to the care of a clerk very little versed in matters of bibliography, and not knowing even the titles of the works which ought to have been collected. This is why the Library of the Museum is deficient in a learned and regular classification, and an arrangement systematic and favourable to study. The

catalogue has to be made ; for the one which exists is bad, and seems to have been drawn up by a bookseller's clerk.* I believe, then, firmly, after the studies I have made, and in accordance with the wish of all competent men I have consulted, and with the incessant demands which have been made for the last twenty years, that the creation or rather the extension of this library is necessary and indispensable ; and I think that it will obtain the approbation and aid of all persons who are interested in the Arts and the Science of Art. The domain of Leonardo da Vinci, of Albert Durer, Poussin, and so many other artist-writers, has a right to the sympathies of the enlightened and generous spirits who exist always in France, ready to aid and appreciate all useful and honourable work. I am sure that before long the Administrator of the Museum (having become proprietor of a collection containing the rarest and most important works written on the Arts from the most remote to modern times) will repay the State for this foundation of general interest by showing itself a good guardian of the *dépôt* with which it wishes to enrich itself, and by making it serve the studies of artists, works of artistic criticism, and the researches of Art-historians. By means of this collection (which would only be an incomplete service rendered to Art if access were not granted to all

* Booksellers' clerks^d would probably do that kind of work more rapidly, and perhaps in a more practically useful manner, than many officials.

artists and men of letters), a person who cultivates the Arts, in whatever department, will be able easily to glance over the whole sequence of history, and to follow, from age to age, the traces of the geniuses who have created or enlarged the domain of the Fine Arts.

“ The Archives, comprehending all the administrative correspondence, all the inventories, and all the other documents written since the formation of the National Museums, form part of the library, and are in course of classification in the interest of our schools and of our riches. They are, unfortunately, in a disorder which renders their classification long and difficult. There is also a number of boxes, which have not been opened for many years. Papers of all kinds are there heaped up nearly haphazard; and curious pieces, buried amidst a heap of insignificant papers, are often discovered. It is, besides, necessary to seek out in different public collections all the MS. documents which can interest the Museum, of which the creation ascends to the reign of François I. The National Archives—those of the Crown, of the Ministry of the Interior, and of the Ministry of Marine—the National Library, and some other public establishments, contain a great number of inventories and other MS. pieces which concern the Museum of the Louvre. The offices of the Notaries themselves abound in documents relative to the Museum. There exist there, for museographers, curious materials and subjects of study. The Librarian and Archivist will be entrusted with the mission of establishing by

degrees a series of copies of pieces, interesting for the collection of the Louvre, and of collecting all the monuments and all the public acts, which furnish precious information on the history of the Louvre. This series of copies of ancient inventories, and the important collection of livrets and catalogues of sale, which may be regarded as printed inventories, will enable those who undertake historical researches to follow and appreciate, so to say, step by step, the progress and the vicissitudes of the Museum, since the time when it was called the Cabinet du Roi until the present day, when it has become the Cabinet of the Nation. Collected in the library of the Museum thus, the series of documents, very rare and generally little known, will be consulted by artists and amateurs, who like to find in the succession of times the celebrated collections, the precious objects of which they are composed, and the filiation of the same objects after having been dispersed. By devoting each year, without augmentation of expense, for the conservation of the Library and the Archives, the sum which the Royal Museum spent in the purchase of books and genealogical images for the use of royal residences, the first requirements of artists and studious men will soon have been satisfied."

Many of the suggestions contained in the Report from which I have just quoted at length, are worthy of attention from all who may undertake to interfere with the establishment or reorganisation of Museums. I am not exactly aware of what is doing or what is pro-

posed to be done in England, and hesitate to put forward opinions on the subject. However, I confess that, if too powerful vested interests do not oppose, I should be glad to see some of the beneficial results of the old Revolution in France brought about amongst us, without any of their disagreeable accompaniments. Museums and collections of paintings are open to many objections, it is true; but if they exist at all in a great country like ours, they should certainly supply the student with materials for becoming acquainted, in as easy and complete a manner as possible, with the history of Art. Why, therefore, should we not concentrate, in some vast building specially constructed for the purpose, not only the pictures in the National Gallery, but those at Hampton Court and various other public establishments, so that some complete chronological arrangement might be attempted? It is not, indeed, to be desired, that more masterpieces should be brought within reach of those gentlemen who it appears have already done such dreadful injury to some of the finest works the world possessed, until new principles have been positively laid down. I may here mention discursively, without expressing any personal conviction, that the English Galleries are universally ridiculed on the Continent for the practice adopted in them of glazing some of the choicest masterpieces. It is maintained that no true appreciation of their excellence can be formed through this foreign medium. For what future generation, therefore, are they preserved? If, as soon

as they are exhibited under the conditions which alone will allow them to be seen, they must deteriorate, why should we not enjoy them instead of our children? At present they are mere relics admired on hearsay.

To return, however, to the suggestions contained in M. Jeanron's Report. The hostile influences of which I have already spoken were so powerful in those times, when authority was suspected wherever it might reside, that several of these suggestions could not be realised. It suffices for my object to mention that they were put forward. But I must add, that the internal regulations proposed by the Director were adopted, and are still, I believe, in force. They were drawn up on the basis laid down in this Report, in a commission named by M. Dufaure, composed of several eminent persons; as the late M. Maccarel, a celebrated professor and president of one of the sections of the Conseil d'Etat; M. Naudet, Member of the French Academy and Director of the National Library; and M. Chabrier, Conservator-General of the Archives. It is good to mention these facts, in order to show the importance given in France to all questions connected with Art. It is made quite a national concern.

A proposal of M. Jeanron's, which did not succeed—most unfortunately, I think—was the reorganisation of the Moulage or Casting Department. I have really never been able to understand what was the reason why it was opposed. The Director's plan was so simple and so well set forth, and the man he selected to direct the

department was so apt, that the Museum was certainly a great loser by this failure. The Moulage is devoted to the reproduction of objects most valuable for the studies, not only of young artists, but of consummate artists, throughout their whole career. Yet it was abandoned to all the chances of traffic, and deprived of the extension of which it was capable, many remarkable objects in the Louvre not being cast, and many of the most important works existing abroad remaining entirely unknown in France. The trade was supplied with imperfect casts from worn-out moulds. Plaster, the only material employed, is, moreover, not exactly the fittest for the reproduction of many objects of a certain order and a certain proportion. A reform was certainly necessary; and, as I have said, the name of the man proposed by M. Jeanron to apply the judicious innovations he desired to introduce, was a sufficient guarantee that something excellent would be done.

M. Barye, who was to have been entrusted with the superintendence of the Casting department and the little foundry proposed to be established for the reproduction of monuments on a small scale, must not be passed over with a slight mention. He is, assuredly, one of the greatest artists that France possesses; one of those also who have been the most roughly tried in the course of a life fertile in masterpieces of a deep and enduring character. The world has seen, and will see again, the burial of many a noisy reputation

long before the actual death of those who have acquired them. It is high time that justice should be done, before it is too late, to lives which have been generously spent in the manifestation of human genius. M. Barye, with whom a French Assembly—I am sorry to say, a Republican Assembly—haggled in an economical fit, and deprived of a moderate salary, which I am ashamed to specify, has, from the very beginning of his career, been prevented from realising on a large scale the ideas which his genius conceives. He has scarcely ever met with any public encouragement or appreciation, save at the single moment when M. Jeanron endeavoured at length to discharge what may be called a national debt. Had he, however, remained at the Museum, it is probable that his time would have been utterly absorbed, so that we should have been deprived of some of the fine works which he has since executed, and which, it is to be hoped, he will execute in the future. The public service, however, would have gained; for an artist only, long exercised and consummate in all the applications of Art, can render the services that were demanded of him. It requires a long life of labour, of inquisitive and enthusiastic researches, and a tact only to be acquired by practice, to occupy with effect such a position. M. Barye in sculpture, as M. Jeanron in painting, had laboured the field of Art from side to side. If I were to adopt a traditional method of selecting descriptive epithets, I should call him the French Cellini. He began life as a

goldsmith, and in his first essays, before he had raised himself above the position of a workman, he had exhibited great aptitude and given rich promise for the future. Quitting his trade, he became at first an engraver of medals, and in that difficult art obtained the second great prize of the school, so often given, unfortunately, to the man who deserves the first, for a reason easy to understand. At the epoch when the competition to which I allude took place, the germs of the approaching revolution in Art had already been fecundated, and the young artist could not obey all those academical tendencies which were about to be so violently attacked. The professors who sat in judgment punished the bold aspirant by refusing to give him the first and only valuable prize; but the second they found it absolutely impossible to withhold. Discouraged somewhat, but determined not to take the hint thus given, M. Barye suddenly devoted himself to sculpture; and again, under the same circumstances, and for the same reasons, carried off the second great prize. He was not, therefore, sent to Rome at the expense of the State, but remained at Paris, where he was not the least influential of the young masters who were destined to disturb the academical slumbers of the decaying school of David. More by his example than his doctrines, he was one of the great promoters of the movement. He suffered many vexations, and was, during a long period, erased from the list of the artists encouraged by the Government. He exercised his talent, accordingly, in numerous works

of small or middling proportions, for his position would not allow him to aim at greater. They were, however, of a most masterly and elevated character—so much so, that none of the costly works produced by his most arrogant rivals surpasses the smallest object that has proceeded from his hands.

The premature death of the Duke of Orleans was a great misfortune for many artists of Barye's character. It is but just to his memory to say so. That young prince, an artist of some ability himself, at any rate a very enlightened amateur, was fond of being surrounded by such men. He would probably have succeeded in disciplining the most rebellious; for he was moved by a true love of Art, not by a desire of political opposition common to most heirs-apparent. Barye received an order from him for a *surtout de table*, representing several groups of horsemen, huntsmen, and animals, which recently attracted the most eager attention at the sale of the works of art belonging to the exiled royal family.

The same prince succeeded also in procuring for Barye, from the State, an order for that fine bronze Lion trampling on the Serpent, to be seen at the commencement of the terrace towards the water in the Tuileries gardens. At a later period, if I do not mistake, the Duke of Montpensier procured for the artist an order to execute a companion for that admirable work; but whether his influence were less, or whether other causes of which I am ignorant acted, the second

lion, though it had long been finished and delivered, was kept back, and had not been exhibited when the Revolution broke out; so that M. Barye himself did not know what had become of it. M. Jeanron found it in one of the cellars of the Louvre, and brought it forth into the light; which displeased some persons, but met with general approval amongst the public.

These, then, were the only works executed by M. Barye for the State; and he was compelled, as I have said, to expend his activity on a considerable number of small, but most charming and varied works. He directed a foundry and a carving establishment, devoted entirely to his own collection of animals, of human figures, and of ornaments—all remarkable for their poetical conception and scientific execution. In this extensive gallery are found the fine groups of Charles VI., and the Woodman appearing to him in the Forest; of Angelica and Medora; of Theseus overcoming the Minotaur—his horsemen, his dogs, his bears, his lions, panthers, tigers, serpents, and crocodiles. Long study in the Jardin des Plantes has enabled M. Barye to become in some sort a profound naturalist; and this is the man whose fertility, and industry, and value, M. Jeanron in vain exhausted his eloquence to prove—a great example of the power of appreciation and the taste of the French public. But I should be led too far if I were to endeavour to discuss here the grounds and reasons of popularity in a country which claims, with

some reason it is true, to be the most artistic in Europe, but which has yet much to learn and much to forget; and so I break off, and return to questions more immediately connected with the history and fortunes of the collections in the Louvre.

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CHAPTER IX.

CONFERENCES ON PICTURE CLEANING AND
RESTORATION.

IN describing the period contemporary with the establishment of the Museum of the Louvre, I have alluded to discussions which were then rife on an important question connected with Art-collections. Then, as now, all who truly venerated the masterpieces of old times, were strongly opposed to a practice which appears to prevail more or less in all countries, but which, under the irresponsible governments which seem destined to be the chronic malady of France, has been carried to a most remarkable extent—I mean, the cleaning, or restoration, or sophistication, or destruction—all nearly synonymous words—of old pictures or statues—in order to satisfy the uncultivated tastes of power, the requirements of official neatness, and certain passions, wants, and exigencies, to which I shall presently more particularly allude. Some detailed observations on this subject will be necessary, in order to enable the reader exactly to understand the value and the history of the

wonderful, and fragile, and delicate productions of Art of which the Louvre forms the refuge; and to appreciate the importance of the measure which removed the Museum for a time from under the Administration of the Civil List, and gave it an opportunity of establishing precedents which have not all been departed from.

Under the old government, Restoration—a word of wide meaning, which I shall take the liberty of using—was completely abandoned to the arbitrary decisions of the Direction of the Royal Museums. The most incredible *laissez aller* presided over the whole department. Private people used to send their pictures to the ateliers of the Louvre to be doctored, and great numbers were found undergoing the process when the collections passed out of the hands of the Civil List into those of the nation. As the works belonging to the State were treated with the utmost negligence—the stamp, and all signs by which they could be recognised in the inventories, being often effaced—it is not surprising that the property of strangers was disrespectfully treated. I have heard a curious instance. The monks of La Trappe obtained from the Administration a promise that they would restore the portrait of the Abbé Rancé, the reformer of the order of Cîteaux. The curious history of this portrait, painted from memory by Rigaud, was related at length by Saint-Simon, who had caused all the circumstances to be written behind the canvass. It was

carried to the atelier without any special recommendation. The inscription was covered up by a new canvass: the mistake was perceived when too late; and in trying to remedy it the inscription was effaced, so as to become quite illegible. How many valuable legends of that nature may not have been irretrievably destroyed in a similar manner!

The careless, sufficient-*unto-the-day-is-the-evil*-thereof system of Louis-Philippe's government, is well exemplified in the way this apparently insignificant department of Restoration was conducted. Pictures, whether set down in the inventories or not, without anything to establish the right of property of the Museum, were handed over to the restorers, who kept no special register of what they received. No preliminary official examination was made: no documents remained to justify the necessity of undertaking the work. How much had original principles been departed from! Under the old Republic, no restoration was allowed except after severe examination, and a minute written description of the injuries existing: Under the Monarchy, not only was this not done, but the processes of the restorers were not examined. No one overlooked them. They might spend what time they pleased, and spoil what they pleased.

Nine restorers were constantly employed—at salaries varying from six to fifteen francs *per diem*—under Louis-Philippe, at the Louvre, repairing and varnishing the pictures of the gallery, or shortening or lengthening the

pictures of Versailles and the royal residences, in order to fit them into certain places. On all sides I heard complaints, that some of the best pictures of the Louvre had been spoiled or deteriorated under the Monarchy.—Raphael, Perugino, Andrea del Sarto, Frà Bartolomeo, Titian, Paul Veronese, Rembrandt, Rubens, Murillo, Ruysdael, Cuyp, Wouvermans, Claude Lorraine, Lesueur, Poussin—these names constantly occurred in the deplorable litany of artists, regretting the destruction of works of art, which they very properly regarded as in part their property. Evidently this question of “restoration” was much more important in France than in England, where people seem contented with now and them scouring and spoiling a few masterpieces.

I heard also a person, whom it is unnecessary to name, regretting that the labours of the restorers had been suspended on the “Vierge aux Anges” of Cimabue; but it was mentioned triumphantly that the “Charité” of Andrea del Sarto had been completely revived before the Revolution of February came to interfere with them. On the other hand, I found M. Jeanron quite proud of having put a stop to these practices; and he claimed to have done great service to Art by turning out the old restorers, and putting up the office—in so far as he thought it might be legitimately exercised—to public competition.

As the question of the treatment of pictures and other works of art confided by the State to the care of a certain class of officials, seemed to me to be parti-

cularly important, I thought it worth while to examine it very attentively. Many observations and facts could be collected in ordinary conversation among artists and from the columns of the press; but as I knew that M. Jeanron had paid special attention to the subject, and as he was in the best possible position to know all the details connected with it, I determined to go to the fountain-head for information, and he was obliging enough to devote some hours on several occasions to explaining to me his views. I took very ample notes, which he afterwards checked and completed: so that I here set forth his opinions, which, however, he has entirely prevailed on me to adopt. In our first interview I told him I had heard that he was quite opposed to the restoration of the pictures of the old masters, and that some people seemed to complain of the interference by which he had put a stop to the practices until then pursued. He said that I had been correctly informed, but that he had not waited for the great honour of being a public functionary to exhibit his hostility to the restoration of pictures in the Museum, and that he had long before saved some of them from the hand of the destroyer. The smile with which these words were accompanied assured me that he had a good story to tell. As he hesitated, however, I said that I was aware he had written much and spoken much with effect on artistic questions, but did not recollect having heard of his having taken any public part in preventing the restoration of pictures at the Louvre. He had not

written, he said, for that purpose, but had played the sentinel—had mounted guard in company with an Englishman. I pressed him to be more explicit, and shall endeavour to give his narrative in his own words.

“ I was very young then—twenty years of age—I was working at the Museum with enthusiasm, copying the masters in company with a young Englishman of great talent. We were copying on a small scale the great picture of Paul Veronese.—Be sure that he is one of your best painters now, if he be not dead, poor fellow. I am not certain that I remember his name, however. If I ever go to England I shall find him out. But let that pass : these old stories are sad.—I knew at the same time a painter, now old—Souchon, the learned director of the school of our city of Lille—an artistic city, though much given to commerce. Souchon had made the finest copies that can be imagined after the best masters. These copies are in the Museum of Lille. Go and see them—it is worth your while. Souchon and Sigalon used to come to the Museum and give advice to me and to my friend. Sigalon never copied there, but was accustomed to station, in sustained attention, for whole hours before a single picture. In winter, after having thus frozen himself, he would go for warmth to the room of the Econome, M. Jouselin, whom he knew. There he used to learn many interesting facts. They were spoiling right and left the finest things in the Museum. This was the eternal complaint of Sigalon and Souchon. I was too young.

I looked upon them as old fools, although I venerated them all the same. The Conservator of the Museum was M. Granet, a man of very great talent, but a sine-curist. A certain gentleman, with a black cap, used to come on a fixed day every month, and note down the pictures which were to be varnished, washed, scrubbed, and restored, and for that purpose taken up into the atelier of Restoration, situated in regions unknown to the vulgar, in that Louvre, whose dark geography so much astonished me when at length, for the first time, I had all the keys in my hands. I undertook a copy of the picture of Sebastian del Piombo—'the Virgin going to visit St. Elizabeth'—a fine thing, large, sober, and rich, where the double influence of Michael Angelo and Giorgione manifested itself in the most learned conciliation and the most imposing unity—a masterpiece, in fact. The gentleman with the black cap made his rounds: the picture disappeared and ascended to the paradise of restorers—the hell of painters. Some months afterwards, this admirable work, worn down, violated, destroyed, reappeared in its place. I was struck dumb: I understood the whole extent of the mischief—of the crime, I must call it. It was the only picture of that master we possessed besides his fine portrait of the wicked Bandinelli. I have seen it, studied it—no one will ever see it or study it again. They worked to spoil it at the rate of ten francs a-day for three months. The Englishman shared my fury. We now understood the habitual irritation of Sigalon

and Souchon, and their accumulated grievances. One day Sigalon came to join us in front of the Paul Veronese. 'Be alive, young men,' exclaimed he; 'I have been warming myself yonder. I know the intentions of the man with the black cap. He is going to pass. He is after the Flemings now. There is a small fissure in the 'Tobias and the Angel' of Rembrandt. That scamp is capable of unhooking it if he sees it. Come, Jeanron: you are the tallest. Put yourself before it, lean your back against the balustrade, hold out your palette to the left—so. You, Englishman, stand on his right hand. I will stand before you, and we won't budge, and we won't stir until he has passed. He is a scamp, of course; but he is polite, and won't hustle us. If we have nothing to say, we must pretend to talk. But come what may, the picture must be saved.'

"We remained at our post two whole hours, for Sigalon did not know when the razzia was to take place. The man with the black cap appeared in the distance. He approached, halting now and then, and taking notes, but he passed without disturbing us. Near at hand, however, he observed the magnificent and ever-to-be-regretted picture of the 'Vierge aux Anges' of Rubens—a cluster of children—of the richest and gayest tone, which was unhooked on the morrow, and which reappeared six months afterwards like a fine fruit crushed between the fingers and stained by the roughest contact. Sigalon, on leaving us, said

that, after the Flemings, it would be the turn of the French—three months' work at least. 'And who knows? God is great! our Rembrandt may be allowed to live.' When I was appointed Director of the Museum it was still living."

This animated little anecdote was sufficient to explain to me the settled determination of M. Jeanron, when he came to the Museum, to examine carefully into the question of Restoration. However, as I observed, what he had said so far was only a condemnation of careless or ignorant tampering with old pictures: Was it not possible, by choosing better workmen, to preserve certain masterpieces which were evidently threatened with destruction, and to preserve them without altering or injuring them in the deplorable manner he spoke of? The reply was that, according to vulgar opinion, to restore a picture was to preserve it; but that this was a detestable equivocation. I requested him, accordingly, to explain to me, in a manner comprehensible to a mere amateur, what were his views, as a practical man, on the essential points of this question. What he said was in substance as follows:—

"In the first place, if we can preserve exactly in the state in which we receive it—without allowing any injury to increase—a respectable monument, which time delivers over to us with its fatal impress, we may regard ourselves as pious trustees, and cannot be accused. To aim at repairing the injury and the effect of time—which is not, however, always injurious, and

which often even imparts to things a precious character — at the risk of altering the sense, the bearing, and the primitive physiognomy thereof, is to prove that we are irreverential, imprudent, unintelligent of what is respectable and beautiful. As regards painting in particular, can we comply with the first duty and avoid the second infraction? We can. It is not by retouches, by re-paintings, by removals, (*rétouches*, *répeints*, and *enlevages*, were the expressions employed), and by additions, that works are preserved. On the contrary, by being altered in their physiognomy, their forms, their colours, their moral complexion, they are notably exposed in their material conditions and their substantial conservation.

“Under this vague word of ‘restoration,’ there are two great classes, of desires and operations, concealed. We must resolutely distinguish them. A picture goes on degenerating, and threatening to perish by the slight adherence, or from the incomplete adherence, of the surface to the subjectile which primitively received it; or by the imminent destruction of that subjectile, leading to the dissolution or the rupture of the painted surface.

“The remedy in this case is the transfer and the fixture of the painting — of the work of the painter — on another support. For this there are processes known and certain, which, being practised by able workmen, restore all paintings in danger of destruction to perfect safety. I refer to the processes of ‘re-canvassing’

and 'transfer.' It is unnecessary to say more of them. Neither their employment nor their excellence is to be disputed. It is sufficient to use them with sobriety, and not to be the slaves of a mania. If the thought of a master shows well upon the wood where he has expressed it, it is not proper to put it upon a canvass—though let it be well understood that we must and ought to do so when it seems necessary. A monument *al fresco* may be changed into a moveable picture, without offence, when the cause is legitimate, and when the real preservation of the work is the motive. The number of pictures in the Louvre which have been transferred from wood to canvass, or from one canvass to another, is very great.

“But a work which time has altered in its intimate complexion, in the character or the limits which the master has assigned to it—a work which comes to us in a fragmentary state, claims a very cautious treatment. To endeavour to complete it, to recompose it, to substitute ourselves—whatever may be our admitted talent—for the dead master in his wounded work, is a crime in Art. One man is wanted in a work of this nature, not two; and this it is that condemns all these retouches and infamous sophistications.

“If this said work be such that its beauty, that the genius impressed on it, are so eminent and precious for the honour of human tradition, and for the instruction of succeeding artists, emulators, or studious disciples, that it is put aside and preserved on its own account,

without respect to decorative convenience,—where it would appear only as a detail and an accessory, a part concurring to the effect of a whole—if it be a unity, an entirety in itself and in our sympathies—is it not still more easily comprehensible that care should, above all things, be taken that its original and inimitable character and physiognomy should be preserved? You restore the picture of a master which time has fragmentised by adding something which the talent or the intelligence of an artist chosen by you thinks it proper to add, in order to produce the impression of a false integrity. In that case it is a piece of furniture that you are mending—it is an object of which you are seeking to augment the venal value or the importance in the slightly exercised eyes of the vulgar. But it is not the work of a master, the impress of his genius, the precious testimony of his superiority, that you respect; since you believe that—I will not say the first comer, but after all some one not very uncommon,—is capable of meddling therein, of presuming to re-handle, to subtract, to add; and since you think, into the bargain, that nothing of this impertinent thoughtlessness will be seen and recognised by the best eyes, the only sovereign judges in this matter, the only ones who definitively class and hierarchise these things in general esteem. It must be confessed that this is a singular kind of piety.”

When M. Jeanron had made these observations, pretty nearly in the words I have given, I requested him to enter into further detail on a particular point.

I understood very clearly what he meant by additions, for it is in that sense that the labour of the restorer usually presents itself to the mind: he adds what is wanting, that is to say, what has been destroyed. I understood also that a presumptuous man might suppress and change existing parts; but it seemed, at first sight, that in this case the fault would be that of having chosen a stupid workman instead of a conscientious and discreet one. M. Jeanron, however, it seemed to me, with great propriety, when I had heard his reasons, maintained that he who adds anything to the work of a master is quite as presumptuous as he who takes anything away. But it must not be believed, he proceeded, that to add is the duty imposed exclusively on the most conscientious and the best chosen restorer. Works of painting are subject to certain transformations brought about by time, and owing to divers circumstances and causes excessively delicate to be appreciated. Oil and varnishes alter in many ways. The subjectiles on which colours are couched have various influences; and the bad habit which has been taken of wishing to counteract them, in many cases has introduced a fatal *laissez aller* into the operations of cleaning and enlivening. Under these processes the last qualities, the extreme delicacies, and the admirable and inimitable final touches of the masters of colour, vanish completely from points where the eye still recognised them before the restorer had passed that way. To say that a picture has not been altered because nothing has

been added, because no piece has been repainted in the figures, or the objects, or any portion of the background, is not to establish that it has not been spoiled, that it has not been frightfully injured. Whoever makes such an assertion, and really believes himself to be in a good situation of innocence or respectability, simply does not know what painting is, what is a picture, what is colour, and what is effect. It would be useless, M. Jeanron said, and very long, to formulate an opinion clearly on the bearing and the complete sense of these things. But it must be borne in mind that a picture is a single glance at a given spectacle; it is a single hour of the day, a single circumstance of lines, of tints, and of tones. It is a rapid harmony, an exclusive unity. A single glance embraces and perceives the picture. A picture does not unroll itself by degrees: is not waited for like a book. Its great law is to appear to have been made in a single day, even though it may have cost ten years of trouble. Well, then, on such a field, come with your phials, your essences, your soaps, your alkalis, your alcohols, and all your drugs, mixed and diluted, and try to extirpate in your bold operations—(the final influence of which you can only empirically suppose)—come and extirpate the evil influence of time, intimately mingled with the finest and most delicate qualities of the master you pretend to respect, whilst you disfigure him as time could never have done! To add and to take away are two infamies; or, rather, they are one and the same. It is by such

means that are obtained all those disaccords of tint and tone, all those checky brilliances, all those spotty and shiny patterns, all those dull and uncertain localities, which so afflict the true friends of Art, in the vestiges which remain of so many fine things that have been so stupidly and uselessly compromised—without counting the pictures which perish completely!

This question of *enlevage* and *ravivage*, to adopt the French words, is, indeed, of the most capital importance. Although it has been warmly and ably discussed of late in England, there still remains a good deal to be said thereon, and it will be necessary to carry on the controversy until the practice be entirely done away with. The victory will not be gained without difficulty. It will be comparatively easy to persuade people, even in France, not to add to pictures, but it will be much more difficult to persuade them to give over taking away what already exists.

“There are two very respectable virtues”—to use nearly the words of M. Jeanron—“that often appear as the enemies of painting; and it will always be extremely difficult to conciliate them. They are prejudiced as old maids. Cleanliness is a fine thing, and so is Modesty. Both these respectabilities go about declaiming against things which are in reality not opposed to them. I do not speak here only of the modesty of recluses and devotees, who cover up or break or rend whatever is not the face, the mere mask. Nor do I speak of the cleanliness of the charwoman, who dusts

with her feathers the most delicate chalk drawings, and washes with her sponge water-colours and paintings in distemper. Nor do I speak of the Flemings and the Dutch, who scour their galleries as they scour their kitchens; and a cauldron painted by Kalf or Teniers, as if it were a real cauldron: they may be deceived, so powerful were those masters! But I speak of our kings, of our princes, and their counsellors, with high-sounding titles. One of them destroyed the 'Leda' of Michael Angelo—worthy, according to the best testimonies and the imperfect reproductions that remain, of ancient art. Another abolished the 'Antiope' of Titian—one of the most beautiful, the most ample, and the most touching pictures of that master—in which the figures, the animals, the landscape, the repose, the action, the relief, the depth, the solidity and the transparence, the attention and the distraction, had been governed with so much strength, science, and felicity. This picture was slightly smoked at the time of the burning of the old Louvre in 1661. 'A painter, as presumptuous as he was ignorant, wishing to clean it, removed the colour in many places, and despairing of being able to restore the picture to its pristine state, was satisfied with the injury he had inflicted, and left to the late M. Antoine Coypel, first painter of the king, the care of re-establishing it, and restoring to it its former life.' This is, word for word, quoted from M. Lepicié, another painter of the king, in 1754. Mark that. According to this competent man, a

member of the Institute—I beg pardon, but at any rate, perpetual secretary and historiographer of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, professor of the pupils protected by the king—this personage tells us, that the late Antoine Coypel restored to Titian his former life! But M. Coypel could not do this. I am rather short-sighted; and when I was reorganising the Gallery, this picture was placed too high to enable us to appreciate its state. I wished to bring it down and try to restore it to the purposes of study. But I was obliged to give up this hope. There is enough of Coypel to study in the French Gallery, and we cannot regret that the Titian is not placed near the eye in the Italian Gallery.

“Louis-Philippe was not devout, I think; but, on the other hand, he was very clean. What a vast amount of pictures were scrubbed under his reign! How many beautiful pieces of colour dirtied, during that period, the essence, alcohol, and soap-pans in those active ateliers of restoration which were favoured with such frequent visits! Crosses of honour have been gained at that work, and immense sums to boot. A Dutch picture-dealer, I think—a M. de Niëwenhuis, whose acquaintance I made whilst copying under his eyes the ‘Man with the Toque’ of Rembrandt—said to me one day: ‘If your king goes on in this style, I would give only one-fourth for his gallery in twenty years.’

“This Cleanliness, indeed, has nothing to do with

works of art. It is the sister of that other intriguing dame who styles herself 'Finish,' who perpetually insists on polish, and to whom Rembrandt used to say that painting is made to be seen, and not to be touched and smelt. A judicious man, a clever writer, a brilliant amateur of the eighteenth century—we had then such men amongst us—Lafont de Saint-Yenne (1747), said, as I do taking a Dutchman as a witness, namely, M. Hagen :—' He made me acquainted with the grief he felt when he saw at Versailles the finest statues scoured like the commonest crockery with coarse sand—at seeing our own hands at work, effacing the delicate parts of art. Le Moyne, an excellent sculptor, when he was working at Versailles, often spoke to me with tears in his eyes of the suffering which this barbarous spectacle caused him.'

"We have sometimes very sad fellows in our ateliers, the poor and impudent devils who serve as our models. They have carried many a word from the language of our class to the barriers, and other out-of-the-way places, where a hideous language is spoken for hideous confidences. To kill a man, in slang is 'to clean him.' This word came from us. To clean a picture is to kill it."

These observations seemed to me so full of truth, that I seized on the first opportunity to renew the conversation. Imagining—I suppose, very correctly—that many of the observations he had to make could only be usefully addressed to a painter, M. Jeanron thought it

at first unnecessary to go into detail on the practical part of the question. However, I requested him to give me at any rate a summary exposition of his doctrines with reference to oil-paintings.

“Oil-painting,” he replied, “is a very vague term. People paint in oil in various ways. Many masters among the greatest have had secrets and particular modes of proceeding. I know them, and I know how well this explains so many miscalculations, misfortunes, and accidents. I know certain methods of painting familiar to great masters, which would not have allowed even themselves to undertake what these *tripoteurs* of painting try to do, without having the slightest information. This is the most serious part of the business. Let us pass on; but believe me.

“I can even tell you, without wishing to insist further, that many paintings classed as oil-paintings have been produced without any oil having been used in them; and I can assure you that we have, with regard to all the old material department, but a very vague knowledge—I mean of the processes, the methods, the substances, and the mixtures which the most able men of the Renaissance, and the times which immediately followed, used. We must, above all, attribute this loss of knowledge with reference to things and habits—which ought to have been transmitted so naturally from atelier to atelier—to the profound alteration which has taken place in the manners and internal life of the modern artist. The artist in these latter times,

nearly everywhere since the commencement of this century, has ceased to be his own purvéyor, his own preparer. He has transmitted to the Dealers who have established themselves, the indications necessary for his own use. He has pointed out to them what he required for his satisfaction in the things about which, for the future, he ceased to busy himself. These indications were naturally very diverse — all artists not having the same conduct and the same process. This diversity in exigencies has deprived the Colour-Dealers, who furnish all the material of the painter, of one precious conviction—namely, that a learned painter must know better than themselves what is necessary and desirable;—and has led, moreover, to confusion in the laboratory and the warehouse. The confusion has been powerfully increased by the natural disposition of the dealer to sophisticate and amalgamate in order to gain more; also, to introduce substances, and mixtures, and preparations of his own invention, the secret of which he keeps. Hence, in a short time, came the complete perversion of the whole material of painting, which the painter, more and more separated by routine and laziness from all knowledge, and all transmission of ancient receipts, has been obliged completely, and to his great detriment, to submit to. To such a point has this been carried, that though the ignorance of the painter in this respect has been perfectly established only within the last sixty years, the fraud and routine of the dealers has been victoriously installed. There is not a single

profound artist who in the midst of his career is not tempted to recommence his material apprenticeship, and is not desirous to be initiated into what the young student—generally the preparer of a master under his own eyes—formerly knew before he was twenty years of age. And amidst all the artists of these days, there is scarcely one capable of resisting the temptation to employ immediately in his work, by way of mixture, without any calculation, anything that may be presented to him, with the assurance that it will simplify his labour and augment his resources of imitation! This is what explains the disorder, the empiricism, the numerous re-touches, the incessant re-handlings, which form the torment of the artist. This is what explains, moreover, the bad state of preservation, or rather the astonishing and deplorable destruction of modern works, which have scarcely twenty years' date. The productions of all the Davidian school (supplied immediately with all its material by the first founders, or the sons of the first founders, of the colour-dealing establishments) are menaced with entire ruin. All their paintings are blackening hideously, cracking, scaling off, and tending to disappear. This is the state of the precious canvasses of David, of Girodet, of Gérard, of Prud'hon, and so many others. There are still more striking facts. Most of our quite contemporary paintings are also threatened. Go and see in the Museums of Paris the state of material preservation in which are, for example, the works of Léopold Robert, which we

remember to have admired in comparatively recent Expositions!

“These facts, compared with the so perfect preservation of ancient works which have escaped special accident, cannot but make you think and dispose you to admit what I may advance hurriedly, that there is contained under that large and elastic denomination, Oil Painting, a crowd of things to consider and know before we can venture to operate upon a picture without fearing danger—not from the point of view of art, but from the material point of view.”

“In fact,” I answered, “what you tell me strikes me, and is quite conform to the impression which I have myself felt lately—not in the Museum of the Louvre—where are, in such a sad state of preservation, the pictures of Léopold Robert, of Prud’hon, of Girodet, and most of the masters of the Davidian school, now dead; but in going to the Museum of the Luxembourg, devoted to living painters, I have been astonished to see how many works of artists, still young and flourishing, are lamentably deteriorated, as the ‘Virgil and Dante’ of Eugène Delacroix, entirely spoiled; and his ‘Massacre of Scio,’ which already begins to indicate its approaching ruin. Many paintings which I have seen will certainly not live as long as the legitimate reputations of their authors.”

“Do you wish,” proceeded M. Jeanron, “for another summary proof of the ignorance into which we have fallen on the processes and substances employed by the

old schools? It is the inextricable incoherence of all the writers, who now recommend or describe as a mere question of historical interest whatever relates to the material of Art. How many stupidities and contradictions have been uttered *à propos* of the discovery of John Van Eyck! In what did it consist? What confused discussions on this point!—not communicating any real counsel; and on painting *à tempera*, employed both before John Van Eyck and since his time, what contradictory things have been accumulated! In what did it consist? How far did its domain extend? When did it lose its character and qualities, and under what appearances could it still preserve them? It might still be painting *à tempera*, and scarcely have preserved its character. It might have ceased to be so, and yet have all its appearance. Come then, now, and touch the general mass of paintings indiscriminately, by means of restoration and *lessivage*—by employing empirically all kinds of ingredients and corrosives—when you do not know properly anything at all about the substance of the body which you submit to this sacrilegious medicamentation! Let there, therefore, be no further question on this point between us. There are in this affair of Oil-Painting arcana such that it is most dangerous to operate upon the works of past times.”

This distinguished artist then related to me an illustrative anecdote. A friend of his, he said, a very clever fellow, happening to know the son of an owner of a cabinet of pictures, was requested to restore and

varnish some of them. He set to work on the picture of a Dutch master—unvarnished it successfully according to the received method; and then set about cleaning it with an alkaline substance which he had often tried before—lightly passed a fine sponge over the picture, and obtained—a mere panel!—the whole work had slid off into the basin! It appeared that it was not an oil-painting at all. The outline, however, remained. He set to work to restore it from memory, and succeeded to the satisfaction of the owner, who boasted of having had his picture “splendidly cleaned.” How many cases of this kind happen in museums provincial and metropolitan?

CHAPTER X.

CONFERENCES ON PICTURE CLEANING AND
RESTORATION (*sequel*).

As will have been seen from the imperfect statement I have made of the purport of my second conversation with M. Jeanron on the subject of the restoration of paintings by old masters, he was hostile to tampering with these precious relics in any degree whatever— basing his objections, not on the character or the want of talent of the persons usually employed, but on the absolute impossibility of attempting with success to revive a work, of the elements that entered into the composition of which we can with certainty know nothing. I was now no longer surprised either at what I had heard of his actions when he was named Director of the National Museums by the Provisional Government, or at the extraordinary violence of some of the criticisms circulated on this subject. His ideas were diametrically opposed to those that had until then held sway. I was eager, accordingly, to hear from his own mouth a narrative of what had taken place,

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and reminded him of his promise to give it me on the first occasion—such occasions were rare¹ in those active times—when he could spare an hour or so between the administrative work of the day and the supplementary work of the night. When he came, he told me, to the Museum, and when the first days of alert and watchfulness that followed the invasion of the palace of the Tuileries and the Louvre had passed, he made inquiries about the atelier of Restoration, of which he did not at all know the internal mysteries; but of which, since his youth, as he had previously related to me, he had learned to detest the patent results. This atelier was situated in the higher regions of the Louvre, and served by about fifteen artists. It was contiguous to very considerable dépôts of ancient works, without inventory, classification, or notoriety — some of them poor, others excellent. When the pictures brought to the atelier of Restoration met with misfortunes like that which happened under the hands of the young man whose adventure with the Dutch painter's work has previously been noticed, instead of returning to the gallery they took rank in this garret. From time to time also some works, long buried there, cleaned and repaired, dressed anew and reframed, redescended to the public rooms. The Restorers were administered with rigorous probity. The hour of their coming and going was registered in a book. From time to time a visit was made to ascertain their assiduity. This visit depended on the *Economat*.

The various pictures which were being restored when the new Director entered the atelier scarcely remained in his memory—so lively and profound was his emotion, he assured me, before a single one which occupied him exclusively, and made him take a bold and radical decision. The Restorers had all ranged themselves respectfully before M. Jeanron, in presence of this picture. Many of them—it is useless to mention names—were men considerable in their art, decorated for their merit, and having, in spite of their unquiet emotion, a certain dignity of attitude. They were all fully persuaded that the excellence of the capital restoration which they exposed to their new head upon an easel of honour would utterly destroy the unsympathetic intentions with which they knew him to be actuated. But on the contrary, after the most conscientious examination, he came to the opinion that the picture in question was as greatly deteriorated, as regrettably injured, as they thought it to be admirably restored and marvellously embellished. This picture was no other than one of the finest things in the Museum, one of the finest things in the world, the “Charité” of Andrea del Sarto—the most important picture the Louvre possesses of that justly admired and pure Florentine master. It was about a year since it had gone up into that redoubtable amphitheatre, and the disastrous treatment it had received had cost the State some seven thousand francs. M. Jeanron, with great emotion, at once declared to the gentlemen present—

to that learned corporation, officially constituted by the wisdom of preceding administrations—that he would never consent that any restoration should be continued under his responsibility. He entered into some explanations on the extent which he attributed to certain operations of re-canvassing, of removal of varnish, and of re-varnishing, which he would cause to be watched over with the greatest rigour, and for which, by public competition if necessary, one or more artists should be chosen. For the moment, however, he interrupted all work. But he took on himself, considering the hardness of the times and the interesting position of these men, surprised by such a change, to continue to pay them for a certain time, whilst they simulated a work which should not exist. This was, perhaps, not very regular in the eyes of the Cour des Comptes ; but the circumstances were peculiar, and M. Jeanron informed the Minister of what he proposed to do.

The Restorers during those first days, having feared harsher measures, thought the new Director a charming fellow. But soon, when the conviction of the tenaciousness of his resolve gained upon them, he found himself—as I was already aware—the butt of all kinds of malevolent insinuations in all the public papers that were little friendly to the new order of things, and made “flutes of all kinds of wood,” as the saying is, to attack the morality and the intelligence of the officers of the Republic. Then he thought proper to announce that he would exhibit apart, within reach of

attentive examination, the picture of Andrea del Sarto on which his resolve was based; and he asked of the Minister the nomination of a Commission to examine this serious question, his solution of which appeared so monstrous that a portion of the Assembly, being circumvented, reproached him bitterly for it in the Committees. He was even threatened with denunciatory declamations from the national tribune. The most distinguished artists, and some well-known amateurs, were selected to form part of this Commission. It is unnecessary to name them. But it must be stated that a distinguished artist, in presence of the picture of Andrea del Sarto, in this Commission, warmly felicitated the author of the restoration, and told M. Jeanron that it had been most ably conducted—that the restorer had exhibited the greatest intelligence,—that he could see no re-painting—that he did not believe there had been any. M. Jeanron said to this gentleman, with all the déference possible, that what the Commission had to ascertain was whether the picture had been preserved in its pristine integrity, whether it had not been profoundly altered in its general harmony, whether it had not been vitiated in its masterly indications and obscured in those incontestable delicacies of modelling and form, in which the divine Andrea del Sarto, in works of that order, showed himself so admirable. “You don’t see any re-painting, and don’t believe there has been any! But bring me, sir, a fine stump or chalk drawing, as you know so well how to execute them, and I under-

take easily to corrupt it entirely, without adding anything. For this purpose I only require a bit of breadcrumb, and by lights introduced *à boc et à bac*—right or wrong—I will completely alter your learned modelling. The modelling of this admirable painting and its harmony have disappeared under arbitrary *enlèvements*, introducing here and there apparent projections, glares of light, and unintended contrasts, which profoundly alter the form—in particular details and general effect. Look at those hands, those feet, that head. Do you recognise there the simplicity of indication,* and the science of the master—of the master whom we all know in the work which we once knew? I would rather have an engraving now than this picture called original.”

“But where do you see, sir,” coldly answered M. Jeanron’s interlocutor, “that this same Andrea del Sarto was so learned and correct in his indications? *Mon Dieu*, he drew and painted like that! The merit of these old things is much exaggerated.”

It must be said, that some artists present at this conference were more indignant even than M. Jeanron; and actively supported him. We may name them, since this is the best praise that can be given in a question so interesting to Art—Messrs. Brune and Chenavard. Thanks to their support, and the majority of this Commission, M. Jeanron’s decree was maintained; but he was more and more pursued by the rage of the displaced Restorers.

This corporation has a long arm, and enjoys an authority which many occult things establish powerfully, and which the disinterested public and high administrators, little versed in these matters, are completely ignorant of. M. Jeanron subsequently undertook to unveil the secret causes of this power; and, in so doing, placed many things before me in a new light. The Restorers derive their great credit and their authority from passions to which it is useless to apply epithets, but which animate all amateurs, save in very rare exceptions. The amateur, the rich man who collects works of art, who sacrifices much money to augment his gallery, is very glad to have a general sanction for his particular taste. He is very glad, as may easily be understood, to appear richer than he really is; to appear more liberal towards Art, more generous in the sacrifices he has made to discover and collect its monuments, than he has really been. This is perfectly human. The amateur requires, also, that a picture which belongs to him, and which, oftener than is believed—among us, at least—one day or other he will wish to sell again, should be in a perfect state of preservation. An accident, a dimming of its colour, diminishes its venal value. On this account, the restorer becomes his counsellor and his accomplice.

The amateur requires, also, that a thing which inheritance has given him, or which his good fortune has made him discover, should have an incontestable character of authenticity and originality. There, again—

in the hope that these characters may be given to his possession, by some addition, retrenchment, or modification—the restorer is made to intervene again. It is, thanks to the complicity of restorers and of the frauds got up between them and collectors, that most masters of the second order, who have often followed so near on the heels of men of the first rank, disappear completely; whilst their works go to increase the works of the masters most in renown. How many pictures, moreover, have been recently signed, the signature of which is given as an irresistible proof of authenticity!

Well, in this case the fraud is sufficiently gratuitous and coarse; but the same artifice in substance, arrives at the same results in longer and more laborious operations. When a restorer has found for the owner of a picture an engraving, reproducing that picture completely, or nearly, the amateur maintains, *mordicus*, its authenticity. But the existence of an engraving does not hinder the picture from being a copy; and the labour of the restorer, added to this old copy, cannot transmute it into an original. And it should be carefully noted, that the vain and greedy infatuation of the owner is not disarmed when it is proved that the original, in spite of the engraving and the restorer who has been employed, exists in a national collection, the legend of which is certain. Then the battery is changed. The picture is called a repetition. M. Jeanron knew, he said, a gentleman who possesses a copy by Mignard, of the “Archangel Michael tramp-

ling on the Demon," by Raphael, which he called a repetition. It was executed, he says, for Charles V. That is certain, because Vasari says that the Archangel Michael which is at the Louvre was executed for François I. ! This logical and peremptory reasoning has been supplied him by restorers ; by gentlemen who " know precisely how Raphael painted "—for these restorers in all these questions are immediately changed into *Experts*. " Now *experts* and restorers set them down, without hesitation, as the scourges of Art, the great destroyers and sophisticators of all tradition, all history, and all legitimate appreciation on the identity of artistic monuments !"

It will be unnecessary here to multiply instances of the strange attempts at deception—in some cases possibly preceded by self-deception—that constantly occur in that strange trade of picture-dealing. I know an instance of a young gentleman who has recently arrived in Paris with an *authentic* picture by Guido of Sienna—authentic, if, as he has reason to suspect, it be not rather the work of St. Luke himself ! I am disposed to think from these facts and observations, and many others of a similar nature, which have come to my knowledge, that, with rare and honourable exceptions, the morality of picture-dealers, and of amateurs who generally consort with them, is of a very uncertain nature. " Somehow or other," wittily observes Sir Bulwer Lytton, I forget where, " men who live much with horses have looser ideas of morality than the rest

of mankind." The same seems to be true with all who deal much with old pictures. I have heard the case mentioned of an amateur who possesses a gallery of his own, and will not allow a single restoration to be made therein, and who yet advises the most elaborate restorations at the Louvre. Without wishing to exaggerate on this point I may also say, that it appears certain that, even among artists, there exists a strange feeling of jealousy, no doubt based on mercantile principles, against the masterpieces which time has handed down to us. I remember many years ago being startled by hearing, in England, an Associate of the Royal Academy deliberately and energetically declare that if it were in his power he would slash with a knife into the works of all the old masters, and thus compel people who wanted paintings to come into the modern market!

M. Jeanron afterwards went into considerable detail upon a system of criminal tampering with works of art, of which I have already given some isolated instances. But I did not suspect until then the magnitude of the evil, and could, indeed, scarcely have believed the existence of such infatuation or recklessness, without the most positive proof. I allude to the practice of altering the dimensions of ancient works of art. M. Jeanron connects in his mind this abuse with that of restoration, properly so called, and with great justice includes it in his general reprobation. According to him, every time we meddle with or think to improve a monument of human genius, it is necessarily deteriorated. By so doing we

attack the unity of the work and the individuality of the creating artist—the most precious qualities it possesses. It matters little whence comes the injury, whether from pure fancy or from grave considerations of propriety—from indifference, from want of intelligence, and from contempt, or from veneration and love. Works of the nature of which we here speak should be carefully protected from all foreign contact. The injuries of time are preferable to the injuries of men.

This second species, then, of sophistication, of mutilation, of revivification, of reparation, or of restoration, consists in the change of the dimensions, the form, and the proportions of the works of the old masters. The ignorance and audacity of superficial amateurs and greedy restorers have singularly obliterated the genuine aspect and altered the impression of numerous beautiful works. A long list might be made out of pictures now in the galleries of the Louvre, which have undergone all manner of vicissitudes of this kind. At various times in France it has been the custom completely to change the paintings of the old masters, in their form and extent. Small pictures have been enlarged, large pictures have been diminished, squares have become oblong, horizontals perpendicular, round oval, or rectangular, and *vice versá*; and these insolent mutilations of the first thought, of the inspired choice, of the instinct and the art of the master, generally take place for the meanest and most absurd reasons—for the purposes of symmetrical hanging, in order to make use of a par-

ticular frame, or to fit the works to some architectural arrangement. Moreover, there are forms that are fashionable and forms that are condemned by the insufficient taste of owners or intendants. Under Louis XV. great numbers of pictures were brought into the oval shape. Grave and powerful Italian and Flemish painters now appear under this form, and seem ashamed of their disguise. Many of them have been brought back again to their supposed primitive shape; but the trace of this second restoration always revives the impression of what it is intended to obliterate. In these latter days, in France, the square form was detested, and many Flemish paintings have been cut away at top in order to give them a longitudinal shape, affected from routine by many painters of sea-pieces and landscapes, for whose use the colour-dealers of modern invention always have canvasses ready-made, under the name of *toiles de fausse mesure pour la marine*.

According to these sacrilegious amateurs, advised by interested restorers, a lofty sky, giving to the canvass a proportion square, or approaching to the square, was an insignificant superficies—a parasite of the interest of the work, quite useless for its impression; so a band was cut away, which gave to the restorer, upon a canvass or a panel in a perfectly good state of preservation, the opportunity of working a little to attenuate certain patches of brilliant light, or to modify certain forms which did not do well near the edge of the picture.

Now according to M. Jeanron, all this infatuation with regard to dimensions and proportions preconceived, is completely erroneous. "Dimension and proportion are essential and inseparable parts of the work, and a painter cannot conceive a picture without having first fixed the proportion—which is the primary basis of every intelligent composition. Proportion is not arbitrary and subsequent. It is the first inspiration. Any painter who sets himself up against this maxim is most assuredly infirm in one of the essential conditions of his art. The proportion of the *tout ensemble* is the spectacle offered by nature or by imagination to the artist in its unity and its harmony. On this subject the most profound and the most incontestable theory might be developed. It would explain in what consists, properly speaking, the art of the painter—what constitutes its differential quality, and consequently its proper character; what differences it from sculpture, its sister, and from architecture. A painter does not paint a bit, a piece, whether that piece be a figure or a group, and deliver it up independent of a chosen atmosphere, and in an unlimited space. And to protect it from all promiscuity with the extension of which he does not dispose, he frames it. The frame or the dimension makes part of the picture; and he who in wandering out through the country sees and knows how to cut out and limit a spectacle in a frame which he supposes, and which contains the unity and the variety which the eye requires for the enjoyment of the

mind—that man is a painter; and if he pushes far this art of "circumscribing ingeniously a spectacle in a supposed framework, he is a great painter, though he may never have held a brush in his hand."

M. Jeanron, extending this demonstration, said many things which struck me, *à propos* of unity and proportion, which are also little respected in these days in France in the finest productions of architecture. He pointed out many integral and pure monuments—whose complexion had been pre-established in the mind of the architect, their size fixed, and their compartments exactly divided in their variety—which have been completely destroyed, as manifestations of that first instinct of the beautiful and the proper, which the creating artist had known how to introduce. Architecture also has its framework and its proportions. Thus the admirable Hôtel de Ville of Paris, increased beyond measure, enlarged and continued, in pretended respect of the style of the primitive monument—with the same fineness—the same lightness of form and ornamentation—appears now as a colossal mass, on which are written, as it were, an imperceptible and flimsy tissue of ornaments, which were only proportioned to the old edifice. The Luxembourg has also, unfortunately, been altered in many of its parts, as have also the Tuileries and the Louvre. There are few monuments in Paris, so full of beautiful things, that testify the admirable genius of its old architects, which are not exposed to similar sophistications. M. Jeanron assimilates all these acts

to the restoration of paintings. He quoted, among others, two piquant examples under the reign of Louis-Philippe—one of a picture by Lesueur, arranged in the strangest manner to be forced into a compartment of the Tuileries ; and one of a small gallery at Fontainebleau, also by a great master, Primaticcio or Rosso, found to be too low, and which was raised by several feet, the sculptured decoration of the former walls being moulded and superposed—the proof or impression just above the original to complete the decoration !

It would be interesting, but would take me too far, to set down all the information furnished me by M. Jeanron on the little-studied question of the restoration and sophistication of monuments of Sculpture. Although I had remarked myself, and had often seen it pointed out, that such and such antique statues had been restored, I was far from believing that, in this respect, so many improprieties had been committed. M. Jeanron pointed out how hypothetical, arbitrary, and erroneous in most cases, were restorations of ancient monuments—how difficult it was to carry them out. In fact, it is mere want of reflection on the innumerable variety of the movements of the human body, that can allow any one to believe that it is sufficient to study a fragment in order to recover with certainty the play, the action, the character, and the aspect of the absent parts. Hence it follows that many fine antique fragments, admirable for their expression and character, and valuable for the purposes of study, have been lost in a factitious

ensemble, reconstituted apart from the principles now so neglected of the inimitable artists of the best times of antiquity. M. Jeanron made me perfectly understand, that the most powerful artists, in a work which they have not created, of which they have not had the first intuition, cannot make sure, if they consent to undertake this shameful work, of surpassing very much the mean workmen generally employed. Michael Angelo failed when he tried. *Ex pede Herculem* is difficult work—for the sculptor, at any rate. M. Jeanron showed me an admirable ancient statue—the Venus of Arles—to which Bouchardon has added an arm, extended and raised. He pointed out to what extent this added member, so ably drawn and modelled, constituted, nevertheless, an inadmissible disaccord; and yet Bouchardon was a very able man—one of the most able and the best instructed that these last times of Art have produced. His fine fountain of the Rue de Grenelle, where there are such charming figures of children and women, proves his talent. There is in the Museum of the Louvre, it is true, a restored figure of Polymnia, which is a striking and beautiful work. It was restored by a man who has remained obscure, and his admirable restoration embraces the whole statue—for there is scarcely any part of it really antique. M. Jeanron believes that it is the very smallness of the pre-existing portion which, giving to a really intelligent artist a more complete liberty, allowed him to work as if he had received inspiration direct from his own genius. A fine thing

has been produced, but has it been produced by the means and in the shackles imposed on the ordinary restorer? No. In this striking example the restorer has proceeded with all the enthusiasm and all the independence of the artist.

Many curious observations might be further made on what we may call the external alterations to which monuments of sculpture have been subjected. Restoration has perverted them in all their symbolical, significant, and historical parts. Details and attributes have been added almost at random, and the most inextricable confusion is thus created. There is reason to believe that the Romans first began this system, by tampering with the Greek statues.

I shall presently speak of the formation of the Museum of the colossal Monuments of Egypt; but I may here mention that I was witness in those days of the charming discussions which M. Jeanron used to have with the venerable M. Debay, an old artist of a learned school, and of great talent, attached to the Museum of the Louvre as restorer of ancient sculpture with a large body of sub-restorers, marble-workers and moulders, under him. M. Debay was actuated by great friendship for M. Jeanron, who, on his part, showed him the greatest deference, although much his superior administratively. M. Debay, "in desolation" at seeing his chief undertake such a monstrosity as the exhibition, in their actual state, of objects which it was the habit of the Museum to work up into completeness,

—constituting with heads, and noses, and arms, and legs, entire statues,—M. Debay, I say, imagined all sorts of delays to prevent the discovery and exhumation of these monuments in the secret and obscure places where they were hid away. M. Jeanron had, as it were, to excavate for them over again. Then, when they were brought into the hall, and men were at work installing them on pedestals of stone or wood, for want of money for granite and marble, he discovered an ingenious and rapid means of restoration with a paste of his own invention, which he painted of the different colours of granite, of porphyry, and of alabaster; but when, from eleven to twelve, M. Jeanron made his rounds, he swept away these restorations with his hand, and M. Debay, almost in tears, followed him about, saying,—“But, my poor young man, you are then absolutely determined to cause yourself to be removed, and to deprive us, who like you so much, of the best and the most active Director of the Museum we have ever had !”

I have thought it best to bring these details and observations together, partly from my recollections but principally from notes taken down after various interviews with M. Jeanron, whose words I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to preserve—without referring to discussions of a similar nature which have taken place in other countries, or in more recent times. It is very important that those who visit the Museum of the Louvre should be made aware of the fact, that many

pictures and statues, in consequence of having been for more than two centuries in the keeping of persons who regarded them merely as pieces of elegant furniture, not as relics of human genius and fountains of artistic inspiration, now deserve only to be admired and respected upon hearsay. However, we must not allow this to get too completely possession of us, for, after all, the greater number of the pictures are in a good state of genuine preservation ; and it is always possible, with a little attention, to abstract from the statues the additions that have been made to them, and to ascertain what really belongs to the ancient artist.

CHAPTER XI.

MINOR COLLECTIONS.

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| 1. MUSEUM OF SOVEREIGNS. | 5. AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES. |
| 2. MARINE MUSEUM. | 6. ASSYRIAN COLLECTION. |
| 3. ETHNOGRAPHICAL MUSEUM. | 7. EGYPTIAN MUSEUM. |
| 4. CHINESE MUSEUM. | 8. ALGERIAN MUSEUM. |

THE Museum of the Louvre, when first formed, was destined to contain only monuments of painting and sculpture. But to these have been gradually added collections of a great number of works, of which the arts of painting and sculpture constitute the basis, or to which they supply the means. Their applications, indeed, are so numerous and distant, that objects, which the original founders never dreamed of amassing, have been added with more or less propriety to the collections, until their number has been increased beyond measure, and a certain feeling of confusion is created, unless we visit them with deliberation and according to a system previously laid down. For example, between the collections of terra-cottas and Etruscan vases, in which the arts of the sculptor and the painter

appear closely united, and certain objects in which the intervention of Art is scarcely visible, of which instances may be found very readily in the newly-created Museum of Sovereigns, there is a wide latitude.

In noticing this said Museum of Sovereigns, I shall not criticise it very rigorously; yet it may be as well to exercise the freedom of speech which is allowable in these matters, in order to assist in preventing similar mistakes from being made in other countries. The interest which Art-collections inspire, and the impression which they produce, are things of delicate growth, and easily destroyed. Yet it is not good that this should be the case; and everything that tends to divert, weaken, or corrupt the attention of the visitor or student, should be carefully avoided. In matters of taste, as in matters of morality, we should pray not to be led into temptation. I can understand why, in the Museum of Sovereigns, the chair of King Dagobert—remarkable after all as being executed in a style not without beauty and character, and upon which the traces of the sculptor's hand are to a certain extent visible—should be thought interesting both to the artist and the public. But the artist, at any rate, can have nothing to learn, can have no useful impressions to receive, from the camp-bed of a great conqueror—an iron frame-work without ornament, and differing in no respect from what are to be had in the first cheap shop on the Boulevards. I mention these two extremes as the most striking; but how many other comparisons

could be made if there were space to go into detail! In this Museum, which has already attained a considerable development, though its foundation is very recent, and which tends, for many very natural and well-known causes, greatly to increase, how many things there are which have nothing to do in the sanctuary of Art, or even in its neighbourhood, which appeal only to prying curiosity and unhealthy imaginations! This question is more important than at first seems; for whilst objects are being accumulated at the Museum, whose presence nothing excuses, a tendency also exists to impoverish and disorganise collections which have a real utility and signification. Thus, those rich and noble specimens of armour, heightened in value by the art of the carver and graver, are now missing in the Museum of Artillery; and that carved furniture, those rich stuffs and tapestries, where we see evidence of the influence of the genius of the artists of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, are missing in the Museum of Cluny.

I know very well that a kind of argument is brought forward by the supporters of this irrationally-constructed establishment. It is said, that if the objects exhibited are not works of art they may at least be useful to artists, who may have to represent them in the historical works which may be ordered of them, or which they may spontaneously choose. But a very wide field would be opened if it were once understood that, in order to take place in a Museum, a

work need not have any artistic character, but may rest its claim to admission on the fact that it may serve as a model or a document. It is true that no absolute principle of exclusion can be applied, and that the mind admits without questioning the presence, in the accessory collections of the Museum, of objects in which Art is but slightly exhibited, but which, from their great antiquity, acquire a character and physiognomy which no observation of modern furniture could supply. I refer to certain of the contents of the Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek, Assyrian, and Mexican collections; but it must be observed, that in these cases, even objects most elementary in form and ornament, most simple and insignificant in character, there is almost always to be noticed a symptom of the origin or the decline of Art amongst those people. What, however, can we learn, I repeat, from that mass of things which is gradually accumulating, and which scarcely in any point differs from the product of modern manufacture? We may find sources of interest in a coffin, even little interesting in an artistic point of view, which has contained the bones of some unknown Egyptian dead some three or four thousand years ago, and which comes with well-authenticated antiquity from some distant necropolis; but what care we, in the order of ideas now under consideration, for the sight of some common bier, such as every day goes with some contemporary shred of humanity into *Père la Chaise*?

From these preliminary observations on what, to a

certain extent, is an excrescence of the Museum, it will appear that there is a great number of collections perfectly distinct from the two great collections of painting and sculpture. Let us begin by noticing such as are most foreign from those two arts, in which naturally the greatest interest is felt. There is, in the first place, what is called the Marine Museum, which, although curious in itself, might perhaps have been better placed in the Conservatory of Arts and Trades, where the industry and science of man have set forth their marvels, their successive essays, and their last models. This Marine Museum is also relatively of recent creation. It was undertaken and placed in the Louvre at great expense to please a mariner, who was probably not very capable of appreciating and directing it—the Duc d'Angoulême, son of King Charles X., grand-admiral of France. It is easy to see, from its rich adornings and the costly nature of its furniture, that a prince had something to do with it; but I am not quite sure that it forms in reality a very useful school for shipwrights. Nor am I quite disposed to approve unreservedly a suggestion made by M. Jeanron, when at my request he took me to visit this Museum. Being an Englishman, he thought that, of course, I must be profoundly versed in everything that related to the sea, and he confessed very frankly his own complete ignorance, rather expecting from me useful explanations than being ready to give them. The idea that occurred to him was this, that it was a pity that there existed there no models of

the picturesque barks and fishing-boats which marine painters love better to float upon their tranquil or disturbed seas, or draw up on their wide and desolate shores, than those warlike three-masters which are so hardly introduced into painting. He proposed, indeed, one day to obtain authority for making a collection of all these picturesque objects—a task of some difficulty, for the shapes of such craft vary along the whole coast, and are different in every province. The Marine Museum has at the Louvre a small atelier, where are fabricated, repaired, or arranged for exhibition, a portion of the models. Others are made in various ports, and forwarded from time to time to the Museum. Formerly the Conservator was member, I believe, of the Council of the Admiralty, and was only subordinate in some questions of order to the Direction of the Louvre. These facts are sufficient to indicate that the Collection is somewhat out of place there. I may mention that it contains an interesting series of models, on a large scale, of the principal seaport towns where the French Government has naval establishments. There is also an elaborate representation of the engineering means by which the Obelisk of Luxor was removed from its original site to the Place de la Concorde; and I am quite sure that it has never occurred to any Frenchman who looks at this curious model, that he has before him a case precisely parallel to the removal of the Elgin marbles. No element of similarity is wanting: from official “spoliators,” as the phrase is, tearing away a

monument from the place originally assigned to it to the population of the district, who had as much a right of property in the obelisk as the Greeks had in the friezes of the Parthenon, assembled indignant and weeping. I object to all these removals of ancient relics, but less to that of pure works of Art than of documents intended to assist learned men in "throwing Moses overboard." But it is very bad taste in French writers to indulge up to the present day in coarse abuse of an English ambassador—repeating the intemperateness of bitter Greeks—whilst they forget the violent origin of at least one half of their own collections.

However, as the most distant things may be found to be related in some unforeseen manner, the purely Marine Museum has a certain connexion with the Ethnographical Museum, where are brought together all kinds of objects that express the civilisation and the customs of various peoples of a certain grade of development, and are the result of maritime expeditions and voyages of discovery. This Museum is curious, although not so complete as others of the same kind. In visiting it, however, an observation very simple in itself struck me more forcibly than it had ever done before—namely, the great analogy, the remarkable conformity of the results of the first essays of human taste working on the same objects. The first elements of all commencing Art resemble one another in the most astonishing manner; and in the productions of tribes whose names one with difficulty remembers, we find indica-

tions exactly resembling those met with in the primitive arts of the Etruscans, the Romans, &c., in so far as specimens have come down to us.

After the Ethnographical Museum comes the Chinese and Japanese Museum, which forms in some sort one of its departments. However, in consequence of its very recent creation, and its undeniable merit and importance, it may be said to constitute a special collection, and deserves a separate name. Here Art exhibits itself in a far more formal, great, and universal manner. Its influence is everywhere seen, and the slightest objects intended for the commonest use are richly clothed with and powerfully impressed by it; and there is, moreover, a considerable number of specimens which entirely belong to the domain of Art.

Chinese Art would deserve a profounder study than has yet, as far as I know, been given to it. There is room for learned research and useful classification. It has certainly a very deep and individual character. The expression, "Chinese Art," is quite as allowable as those of Egyptian Art, Etruscan Art, and even Greek Art. We are in eclectic times—times that possess the accumulated result of human activity, which the last comer is entitled to use—and it is therefore to be regretted that we do not know more of the principles, the conduct, the evolutions, and the differential qualities or of the various schools of this art. It cannot be denied that it is a strong manifestation of human genius; nor that study has led successive generations in it with

certain principles, producing necessary consequences. We cannot fail to observe that it has had its times of progress, of flourishing, and of decay. To discover in what they consisted would be a useful result of historical research and theoretical study. Art in general would doubtless gain thereby.

There are in Chinese Art certain marked predilections and strong repulsions, which give to its works a particular character, and the secret of which cannot be divined by a mere glance. The eye receives the impression, but the lesson to be learned does not result from this impression. We see in this art the evidence of the deepest acquaintance with the mysteries of colour, and of all the prestige of coloured oppositions and contrasts, which have not perhaps been revealed to the same extent to some of our schools which have the greatest pretensions in this respect. Even in drawing there are observations and rules laid down, by which our most able draughtsmen might profit.

It is very easy to accuse of ignorance and forgetfulness people who have not sought what we seek, and who have aimed at results which do not occupy us. Even the absence of perspective, so often made a ground of reproach, is not long felt in the presence of the finest productions of Chinese Art, when we consider with what aim they were executed. It may be said, indeed, to be quite counterbalanced by certain systematic advantages which it procures to the artist. At least M. Jeanron, by whom my attention was particu-

larly directed to these points, and whose opinions in matters of Art are remarkably wide and catholic, insisted strongly on the fact, that in some truly charming objects contained in this collection the absence of perspective was almost equivalent in effect to the bird's-eye view sometimes chosen by very able Flemish painters. According to him, in both cases, the artist obtained, by an equivalent calculation, a development of the picturesque which the modern schools have quite deprived themselves of, having been gradually influenced by literary criticism in a manner which must to a certain extent be regretted. In more cases than is generally believed, Ostade, Jean Stein, the Breughels, and Rembrandt, owed the life, the depth, and the complexity of their populous and animated works to this judicious choice. By placing the point of view very high, and by thus augmenting the capacity of the ground upon which figures and objects appear, to the detriment of the sky, as many Italians and Flemings have done, the scene spreads out in a more legible manner, and is peopled more easily, objects and figures not masking one the other; and it is evident that the Chinese, more familiar with perspective than is commonly acknowledged, were aware of this great advantage, which the moderns perhaps have too generally abandoned.

The Chinese do not seem to recognise more than two essential parts in their theoretical division of painting, namely, drawing and colour. Clair-obscur, considered so important by European schools, is nearly

unknown to them. I remember seeing somewhere this constant and systematic exclusion of the search after effect, this absolute absence of brilliant flashes of light, of middling tints and intensities of shade, quoted for a peculiar purpose by M. Delécluze, a well-known French critic, whose recently-published reminiscences of David have been of great use to me in the present volume. This writer, put quite out of humour by the excesses into which the young school often falls, from its love of violent contrasts of light and shade, invokes Chinese sobriety as an example, and prefers that complete absence of shade,—which may, he admits, diminish relief, but which presents to the eye a more pleasing and richer spectacle—to the sombre veil, implying all manner of confusion and sacrifices, which, according to him, these fanatical continuators of Caravaggio, Salvator Rosa, Guercino, and, above all, of the deep-shadowed Rembrandt, throw over their works. In these speculations M. Delécluze no doubt somewhat exaggerates; but the opinion of a man who has so often been judicious in criticism, is worth noting and examining when we speak of the productions of Chinese Art. The excessive sobriety, the deliberate elimination of shade observable in that art, brings it much nearer than may seem at first sight, on account of the great difference in character and forms, to the suavity and the luminous and golden breadth of Greek painting, in as far as we are able to appreciate it. However, I must not join in any attack against the delightful Rembrandt; for it would be a

real sin not to appreciate his genius, and not to recognise the service which he rendered to the painter's art by his intense search after all the magical effects of light, which, by its ineffable play, imparts to every spectacle and every object so much prestige and interest. M. Delécluze, a faithful disciple of David, lays far less stress than I am disposed to do on the theory of Rembrandt. His ears are still full of the echoes of the accusations cast in that peculiar school against this master, whose whole talent and aim, according to them, consisted in knowing how "to fire off a pistol in a cellar." The art of Rembrandt seems to me somewhat more difficult and complicated than this.

In their coloured sculpture the Chinese artists often exhibit great depth, as regards observation of character, gesture, and expression. Colour thus applied, which to the superficial and prejudiced spectator appears a puerility and an indication of barbarism, is not, considering the general character of this art, so difficult to explain as the fact, now apparently well proved, that the greater part of the monuments of ancient sculpture were also coloured.

M. Jeanron at that time also told me that he had recently been taken by M. Thiers to the house of M. Calleri, who had in his possession some Chinese productions of great antiquity. The power of drawing exhibited in them, and their grand physiognomy, recalled in a striking manner the interesting state of the Florentine school amongst the almost immediate pre-

deceutors of Michael Angelo and Frà Bartolomeo. This painting represented upon a long roll a series of kings in the strictest attitudes, the most imposing draperies, and the gravest mode. A school which should have progressed in the slightest degree on this footing would necessarily have reached the greatest manifestations. Do we sufficiently know the ground to affirm that nowhere has the Chinese artist entered upon the last period of Art? At any rate, what we know perfectly is, that if the highest culminating point has not been attained, the lowest depths have been reached. M. Jeanron completed the Chinese Museum, which, by the way, was entirely a creation of his own, by withdrawing from the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce certain objects that remained there, and had been brought to France by the mission sent in the time of Louis-Philippe. Many of these productions of Chinese contemporary art are nothing but servile imitations, in which the influence of the worst examples of the French and English schools is observable.

There is also in the Louvre the commencement of an American collection. It is the result of a recent acquisition, and can only be said to be just indicated; but we may hope to see it increased before long.

The Assyrian collection of the Louvre, although it may be inferior in interest to the one in the British Museum, is well worthy of an attentive visit. It is due almost entirely to the exertions of M. Botta, who was appointed French Consul at Mossul in 1842.

It was that gentleman, I believe, who, going out to Mesopotamia at the learned suggestion of M. Mohl, member of the French Institute, was the first successful excavator for Assyrian remains. His discoveries, however, do not by any means equal in importance those of Mr. Layard. The catalogue published by the Museum of the Louvre gives a narrative of his researches. It appears that his first design was to excavate in the ruins of Nineveh, situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite Mossul; but, meeting with some difficulties, he removed the scene of his exertions to Khorsabad, situated about ten miles to the north-east. Here he discovered the ruins of a palace, which he entirely laid bare, and from which he obtained the specimens now exhibited. As we possess much more extensive and interesting narratives of labours of this kind—written by a rising Statesman, from whom England has now a right to expect so much—it will not be necessary to say more than that, when M. Botta forwarded an account of his discoveries to M. Mohl, who communicated it to the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, the French Government was induced to supply him with money, and to give him efficacious support, until the antiquities he had collected were safely deposited in the Museum of the Louvre, in 1847. I shall only add that, during M. Jeanron's direction, the Assyrian exhibition was increased by certain glass cases, containing fragments and some small monuments in clay, bronze, &c., which had not

until then been communicated to the public. These objects, however, are unfortunately few in number; but it is to be expected that, following our example, they will soon be increased.

During many years the Museum had afforded for the study of Egyptian antiquity nothing but a tolerably considerable number of small objects, exhibited in a costly and elegant manner in some of the halls of the first floor. But the administration possessed, in one of its dilapidated rooms on the upper story, in a confused mass, and in a most deplorable state of preservation, quantity of antiquities of another class, and of precious papyri. This prolonged disorder was the result, I was told, when I visited the place in company with M. Jeanron, of the death of a person to whom had been deputed the task of classifying these objects, and of putting the papyri in a state fit to exhibit.

There were buried, moreover, in the depths of the cellars of the Louvre, and in the ateliers depending on the collection of sculptures, a large number of monuments, of great size and scientific value, the importance of which no one in France suspected. M. Jeanron, as I have already mentioned, was surprised at this negligence, which was already of ancient date, and could not at first explain it. But here came in that famous question of restoration—let us always add, disfigurement, corruption, destruction—of the monuments of antiquity. There was an objection, he was told, to exhibit these objects in the fragmentary

state in which most of them were; and the administration had until then shrank from the great expense necessary to put a new face on them. M. Jeanron determined, although he did not affect to be able to appreciate the value of a series of monuments quite foreign to his studies—and which I am afraid are arranged in most countries theoretically rather than critically—the new Director, I say, determined that the public should be enabled to see what after all belonged to it; and accordingly, with the same simplicity of views which he everywhere applied in the museums, he brought out these historical relics into light just as they were. Without repeating here what I have already observed on the absurdity of giving fictitious completeness to monuments whose whole value consists in their naked authenticity, I may mention that it was lucky that the system adopted could be carried out without expense; for it could not have been possible at that period to obtain the slightest subsidy for the purpose. The pedestals of the greater part of the monuments were hastily fabricated with fragments of scaffolding, and covered over with painted canvass for lack of granite and marble. Yet no exhibition of the kind was ever better received. It rose as if by magic; and although I knew the system adopted, I was quite surprised to see the rapidity with which the most weighty monuments fell into their places, and seemed to return for ever to the tranquillity for which

they were destined by the artist. The same impression was produced upon the public.

Whilst M. Jeanron carried out his views thus resolutely in the merely material question, he was occupied also in endeavouring skilfully to place the new Museum in the best possible relation to the collections already existing. He established it in the hall on the ground-floor, towards St. Germain l'Auxerrois, opened special entrances, and connected it by the great staircase,—in which it was resolved to let in various bas-reliefs and inscriptions, likewise of Egyptian origin,—with the previously existing Egyptian collection I have mentioned on the first floor. He was, moreover, fortunate enough to discover a very intelligent man versed in Egyptian antiquity, and succeeded with some trouble in giving him a position, humble at first, but which gradually increased in importance. I refer to the case of M. Mariette, whom I afterwards found at work at Sakkarah in Egypt, where his interesting discoveries are well known. At the same time the Director publicly claimed the services of M. Rougé, a learned Egyptologist, requesting him to supply the inscriptions to be placed upon the monuments—a circumstance which led to the appointment of that gentleman as Conservator.

The creation of an Egyptian Museum naturally led to the withdrawal, from the gallery of Antiques, of several isolated pièces that had previously been placed

there. M. Jeanron also withdrew from the small court of the Louvre, which at that time led to the offices, the colossal Sphinx, the surface of which was scaling away. It is really worth putting upon record, the difficulty with which even the slightest improvements were carried out in those days of violent and uncalculating—I should, perhaps, rather say, well-calculated opposition. I remember that the Director, whose whole thoughts were absorbed in bringing the Museum of the Louvre into the greatest possible state of efficiency, was only able to obtain permission to move this Sphinx by bringing several Representatives to the foot of the monument, and making them actually touch it with their hands. Until that practical proof was given, no one would admit that Egyptian granite was incapable of resisting the influence of this northern climate.

I believe that another innovation, made at the same time, was in accordance with our common and sensible practice. But in France M. Jeanron was criticised with great heat for placing this Sphinx and other analogous monuments upon very low pedestals. Until public opinion had sanctioned this change, it was thought far more judicious to make use of these old works as ornaments, by placing them on pedestals, in the construction of which the architect affected to show his art, and which thus became the principal object of attention, whilst the relic of antiquity it was intended to support could scarcely be discerned.

I may add here that there exists in the Museum of the Louvre a collection of antique monuments,—statues, busts, and inscriptions,—derived from Algeria. This curious collection is not very extensive, but several busts of the greatest merit may be pointed out.

CHAPTER XII.

COLLECTIONS OF ANCIENT SCULPTURE.

THE Collection of Sculptures in the Museum of the Louvre is of the greatest importance. The specimens are considerable in number; and the beauty of many of them is remarkable. This collection is naturally divided into two great families, namely, Ancient Sculpture, and the Sculpture of the Middle Ages, of the Renaissance, and of Modern Times—a division simple in itself, and by no means arbitrary. For, without affirming that at any period the European world was totally foreign to the practice of the Sculptor's Art in a feeble and elementary state, it is quite certain that in its last stage of decline, at the time of the dissolution of the Roman Empire, and when the first symptoms were apparent of the knitting together of modern nations, ancient Art had put on so null, so insignificant, so senile a character, that it may be said to have entirely abdicated and gone away. If, accordingly, the art of the sculptor during the Revival, and during Modern Times, succeeded in manifesting

itself, it was rather by an impassioned return towards the masterpieces of an already distant antiquity than by any immediate continuation of the state to which it had at length descended in the course of ages.

The division I have pointed out, and which seems at first sight to have been adopted in the Museum, is perfectly proper and acceptable, and it is important that it should be kept so. In that case no error, no perplexity, is possible; whilst, if more particular divisions were attempted, the consequences might be unsatisfactory. Any classification, for example, in the special domain of Antique Art, would be far from absolute, far from certain, liable to lead even the most practised persons—since few are sufficiently practised in all the considerations out of which certainty in matters of Art springs—into the grossest mistakes. In truth, if we desired to draw up the delicate inventories to which I allude, to localise the origin of works of ancient sculpture and classify their periods, where should we seek, where should we find the man we want,—an eminent artist endowed with sure and penetrating tact, and armed at the same time with all the resources of erudition? Such learning and such skill are not often found united. Michael Angelo, in the difficult distinctions which become necessary on the frontiers of the divers styles and classes of antique sculpture, might have given valuable aid, and the testimony of his practised eye would have forced respect. But instinct cannot supply the place of

archæological science, in which he was totally deficient; and a document might overthrow his most positive decisions. Winkelmann and his compeers and continuators, despite their great learning, lacking that sentiment of Art which is developed by the efficient struggle of the Workman with Nature, would likewise most certainly have failed. Numerous errors must therefore necessarily occur in any attempt at elaborate subdivision.

However, I think we may, with a certain amount of reserve, admit the separation made under the administration of M. Jeanron, when a hall was set apart for Greek Primitive Sculpture,—small in size, it is true, on account of the restricted number of monuments of that order possessed by the Museum. This hall, which, chronologically speaking, opens the series of Ancient Statuary, is unfortunately placed at some distance from the general collection of sculpture to which it forms the introduction:—it neighbours the Assyrian Halls. But, as I have already said, the internal architectural arrangements of the Louvre, the number of things it contains, and the gradual manner in which they have been introduced, explain and excuse this solution of continuity.

This little hall devoted to Primitive Greek Sculpture is well worthy of a visit, for it contains many specimens of extreme beauty and interest. Among others is a valuable fragment found at Delos, and, unfortunately, both limited in extent and much injured on the surface. Enough, however, remains to enable us to say that it is

of the greatest beauty, and belongs to the highest order of Art. It is an admirable portion of a young and heroic figure. The inscription on its stand calls it the river Inopus; and this bold adaptation of a name to an object so imperfectly preserved is well fitted to make us, at the very outset of our rapid review of the contents of the Museum, extremely sceptical as to the value of the information thus afforded. How, indeed, can the contemplation of a mask scarcely complete, and a fragment of a neck, the whole conform to the general idea of beauty without any particular character, or any accompanying sign, enable us to attribute it to one mythological or historical personage rather than another? For my part I distrust all these attempts at identification; yet, if I were called upon to say what this remarkable fragment really represents, I should be more disposed to mention Alexander the Great than Inopus or any river-god whatever.

In the same Hall are two admirable torsos, one of a draped woman of the most noble outline, broad, graceful, and simple; the other of a young man, executed in the same style. These two pieces had been long hid away in some obscure place, and were only brought forward at the period of unwonted activity to which I have so frequently occasion to refer. Though exhibited, however, ever since 1848, they have not even now been sufficiently dwelt on, and are comparatively little known.

Let into the wall of the same room are all that remain of three metopes of the temple of Jupiter, in

the city of Olympia, in Elis. Various fragments, quite defaced, are arranged along the plinth, but the central metope represents a subject sufficiently preserved to enable us to appreciate its character and its value. It represents one of the combats of Hercules, and the inimitable character of the Art of the time of Phidias is strongly impressed upon it. A compartment has been added, in prolongation of the series of the three divisions of these metopes. Here we see a figure, in very salient relief, belonging to a primitive period of Art, and reminding us in a vivid manner of the productions of ancient Etruria. The figure is of a woman in a correct attitude, sitting, and leaning on her hand. In this work is implied all the progress that can be made in Art; and monuments of such an order cannot be too much appreciated.

Other admirable bas-reliefs now attract our attention;—a fragment of the frieze of the Parthenon, representing the Panathenæa, and a second expressing the reconciliation of Amphion and Zethus. The latter is in a fine state of preservation, and is really a charming thing of the most noble and most touching character—an harmonious and symmetrical group of three figures, two fine youths and a woman, who acts as the connecting link and the witness in the scene represented. In this instance Sculpture has very nearly equalled in life, in animation, and in variety of expression, the finest productions of Painting. I may add, that on the upper part of the wall are to be seen some bas-reliefs in gray

granite from the architrave of the temple of Assos, in Mysia. Their existence amidst the ruins which crown the almost inaccessible promontory of Koloni, near the frontiers of the old Trojan territory, was discovered about the beginning of this century, by an English traveller; but he was not allowed to take them away. It was only in 1838 that the French Government succeeded in obtaining them as a present from Sultan Mahmoud.

On leaving this small and isolated Hall during my recent visits to the Louvre I had to cross the court, and commence my examination of the great collection of ancient sculpture by the Hall of the Caryatides. As, however, constant alterations are being made, for many reasons which seem likely to exist for some time, in this respect no advice can at present be given. The Hall of the Caryatides is one of the handsomest of those devoted to the exhibition of sculpture. It derives its name from the architectural ornamentation, of which the two magnificent Caryatides of Jean Goujon form the principal motive. Amongst the interesting things it contains, we may especially remark the beautiful statue of the Fawn and Child. This figure is of the finest possible character, pure and firm in outline, correct and living in movement. It is full of moral expression. The interest, the pleasure, the tenderness expressed by that man of nervous and savage aspect, as he contemplates the tiny thing which he bears in his arms, may be brought forward to disprove the vulgar and inattentive theories which accuse ancient Art of having been

destitute of sentiment, and of having always sacrificed everything else save mere physical beauty. The Christian painters have scarcely surpassed this touching representation in the scene which they sometimes portray when they place the Child in the arms of Joseph. Unfortunately the hands of the Fawn are modern, and roughly adapted to the ancient figure. A similar observation applies to that charming statue, full of gaiety and lively grace—The Child and the Goose. In this instance it is the head that is modern; and certainly it is very coarse and inert as a completion of that beautiful body so full of life.

In the same Hall we see the admirable figure of Cincinnatus, executed in the most heroic style, and well worthy to neighbour the Fawn and Child. But this received appellation of Cincinnatus appears to me singularly erroneous. The statue belongs to one of the finest periods of Grecian Art, if not to the finest; and we cannot be too much on our guard as to the names we give to such works. Lightly-chosen denominations interfere more than appears at first sight with our comprehension of the productions of Art. Nothing is well understood but what is judiciously classified; and the selection of an improper name is quite sufficient to disturb the flow of a student's reflections. I should rather say, though I will not venture to be affirmative, knowing how dangerous is the ground, that this supposed Cincinnatus may after all be a Mercury. The well-marked and admirable attitude becomes very significant

if we suppose that the figure is not tying his shoes, but his *talaria*, or winged sandals. I think that the striking meaning of a formal gesture, when ancient Statuary has produced it, should be taken into serious consideration; for it was a principle in their art to appeal at once to the eye, and not to depend on written commentaries—a kind of aid so much used and abused at present, and for which the *livrets* of the Museum are daily opening a wider field. The movement, the attitude of the statue we are considering, are as proper to a Mercury as another would be to Mars, and another to Jupiter; and I do not believe that a sculptor wishing to represent Cincinnatus would have chosen it, so that scepticism would be authorised, even if the style and epoch of the work allowed us to suppose it could be intended for a Roman patrician. Unfortunately, the arms of this figure are modern; and I say unfortunately without hesitation, so firmly convinced am I of the dangers of such restorations. These arms are attributed to Michael Angelo. But even if this received hypothesis were quite certain, it would no less remain certain that the additions injure the effect of this fine figure by their heaviness and the exaggeration of their modelling.—I had written thus far without remembering that, according to the suggestion of Winkelmann, the figure (which has evidently been knocked to pieces, set together again, and injured by additions besides those I have mentioned) is now generally admitted to represent Jason. This hypothesis may also be disputed.

We can only be certain that we have a very fine statue in a very dramatic attitude before us.*

In a corner of the Hall of the Caryatides there is a very beautiful figure of an Hermaphrodite, in an attitude of repose. It is called the Borghese Hermaphrodite; and, from certain circumstances, I may exceptionally accuse the Administrations of the Museum, which have, during so long a period, and so freely, sophisticated, mutilated and restored, antique specimens, of having in this case been totally deficient in courage. The statue came into their possession arranged by some sculptor of the Italian Decline, some disciple of Algardo or Bernini; upon a modern mattress of the most prosaic and vulgar character; and since so many chisel-strokes have been distributed right and left in the Museum, it is certainly to be regretted that one more has not fallen here, so that, instead of a most embarrassing and equivocal work, we might be free to contemplate the pure and exquisite forms of a sleeping-girl. Archæologists may probably be able to find excellent apologies for these representations of mixed natures; but taste is certainly offended by them, however delicately they may in other cases be executed. The speculations suggested by the Borghese Hermaphrodite take us, in an advantageous manner, into the very centre of the question which has recently been mooted by English divines; but I shall not much linger there. Long habit and almost general consent will be found more effectual antagonists to any proscription of the rude than even

taste. It cannot seriously be desired that we should try to forget and ignore what we are when "unsophisticated," as Lear has it. It is impossible to abolish the body; nor can the folds of any drapery conceal it. Silk and broadcloth never hide what public galleries are accused of revealing. It is not good to bring up youth in the idea that they must pretend absolute ignorance of the forms and functions of the body; and if they were actually ignorant, society would be impossible. True modesty admits knowledge by silence and a blush: ignorance or stupidity reveals itself by an inquisitive stare and impertinent questioning. These are difficult speculations, because, on the one hand, the quality of modesty is worth preserving at any price—even by the sacrifice of Art; and on the other, this quality must not be suffered to remain in company with any morbid aversions, any puerile timidities, any dangerous hypocrisies. Form is part of the great domain of the unknown, and the mind is never satisfied with exploring its secrets. In the case of youth, it is better to show them the human body purified by Art, than allow them to learn by any Actæon-like peeping or Narcissus-like self-contemplation. I doubt, also, whether there is not a certain impiety—which recalls one of the first impieties of which our species is accused—in being thus "ashamed" of ourselves, even after Art, with its marvellous tact, its almost infallible sense of propriety, has discarded all individualising and special circumstances, and seized only on the pure lines of beauty.

Let us now pass on into what is called the Hall of the Sarcophagus. This Hall, or rather Gallery, was formerly known as the Egyptian Gallery, because many Egyptian monuments were mixed up pell-mell with the Greek and Roman, before the changes I have previously described. The new name is derived from the presence of a tomb found at Salonica, in Macedonia, and given to the Museum in 1843 by the French consul, M. Gillet. It is of Roman work of some beauty, although belonging to a period of decline. One of its curious features is, that the Roman couple represented rise from an entablature of much more ancient date. It may also be remarked that the group was never finished, so that it affords testimony as to the practice of those times.

A more appropriate name for this Gallery might perhaps be derived from the presence of a work of art, which at once strikes the eye from the opposite extremity, and draws the true lover of the beautiful with beating heart towards it. The Venus of Milo has indeed been recently placed in the conspicuous position it deserves, in the centre of the furthestmost compartment of this gallery; and, without doubt, it is one of the finest things in the world, one of the finest things that ancient sculpture, so powerful and lofty in its creations at its culminating point, has left us. I do not mean that what we possess from the hand of Phidias, the admirable, not to say adorable, fragments of the Parthenon, do not evidence the superiority of that man

whom the universal acclamation of antiquity has invested with the sovereignty of Art. The author of the Venus of Milo is not known; but his work is a grand work, and was manifestly undertaken on its own account. It is a living unity, and in the fragments which remain to us of Phidias this great advantage is not found. Those invaluable records of his power were not produced under conditions so favourable. They were decorative works connected one with the other, and with many that have now disappeared. If we possessed the image which all Greece adored, which he intended as a fitting representation of the god of that people, whose taste was even more developed than their piety, it may well be supposed that the Venus of Milo might have modestly shrunk from a comparison. But she appears before us under different circumstances, in the midst of vestiges, of fragments, of ruins, of unforeseen discoveries, over the collection of which chance, not choice, has presided; and she stands apart and aloft, and calmly forbids us to give her another place.

It will be needless to linger long in presence of this work, and to add the expression of one more admiration to the whole list that has gone before. Emphasis would be here out of place; repetition useless. The beauty of this Venus is of the happiest kind;—it is not special; any eye may comprehend it without, as is the case whilst examining so many other admirable things, requiring to be guided and practised. I shall therefore only say, that much has been written *à propos* of this statue,

yet that even now, neither its proper name nor its attitude (which its fragmentary state does not express in a certain manner) has been decided on. M. Viardot gives a succinct summary of the controversies carried on on these points. Some, he says, make out the statue to be a sea-nymph, a Nereïd protectress of her island; others, a Sappho; others, a Nemesis; and others have passed in review the two hundred and forty-three surnames of the ancient Venus to find the one which best adapts itself to its pose and attitude. M. Quatremère de Quincy believed it formed part of a group with Mars; and M. Millingen, a Dutch antiquary, pretended that it was only an incomplete copy of the Venus of Capua which is in the Museum at Naples. But a statuette in bronze, recently discovered at Pompeii, and which can be no other than a reduced copy of the Venus of Milo, seems to decide the question, by showing us the mutilated statue such as it was formerly in its entirety. "The Goddess maintains," says M.^o H. Lavoix, "by a movement of the thigh and hip, slightly raised, the drapery by which she is half-veiled; from the origin of the shoulder the right arm curves outward; and the hand, by a graceful movement, is raised to the hair, to which it gives the last arrangement: the left arm descends, slightly pressing the bosom; but its fore-part rises and holds a mirror: the body is bent slightly backward; the head is raised; and the eyes are fixed on the object that attracts them. It is Venus contemplating the splendour of her own

divine charms, and smiling in pride at her unrivalled beauty !” Having quoted this passage, M. Viardot adds : “ This explanation is ingenious, assuredly ; it bears even all the marks of probability, almost of certainty ; and yet I have some difficulty in believing that our Majestic Venus of Milo is, after all, nothing but a Venus-Coquette ! ”

For my part, not knowing the statuette in question—which may be an adaptation to suit common tastes of a celebrated masterpiece—I regret that a copy at least, if the original cannot be had, is not exhibited in the Hall near the Venus of Milo. I have no opinion on the complete attitude that should be attributed to the statue ; but I may set down a fact that I remember, and which is not alluded to by M. Viardot, namely, that the Museum possesses a small fragment of the Venus of Milo which is not exhibited. During one of my early visits M. Jeanron took the trouble to request M. Debay, the Restorer of Sculpture attached to the Louvre, to show me a piece of one of the absent arms of this figure. There could be no doubt of its authenticity, as it was dug out of the same excavation, at the same time, and given also to the Museum by M. de Rivière. It could not, however, be adapted to the figure without an intermediary sophistication ; which taste, of course, repudiated : and taste, in this case, for once gained the victory. In endeavouring, however, to reconstitute mentally the complete attitude of the Venus, the hints given by this fragment would of course be

valuable. I need scarcely add that I agree with M. Viardot, who says that the plaster-foot added ought to disappear absolutely; but it is worth while noticing that the bronze inscription attached to the pedestal, and intended to record public gratitude to the donor, is far from being sufficiently conspicuous—at any rate, far from effecting its purpose. Of course, the pedestal ought to bear nothing likely to distract attention; but it would be well if a brilliant inscription were let into the wall of the gallery, recording in a very marked manner that it was a private person who, perfectly knowing what he was about, made this munificent present, this present of inestimable price, to a public collection. In such a case the name of the Giver ought never to be liable to be forgotten or passed over by him who admires the Gift.

In the Gallery, at the end of which the Venus of Milo occupies an isolated position, there are, moreover, several admirable statues—several Venuses in particular, as the *Marine Venus* and the *Conquering Venus*. We see also an *Hermaphrodite*, scarcely less beautiful than that in the Hall of the *Caryatides*, and much better adjusted on its support, which is in part antique; but the chisel might also advantageously pass that way. Not far off is a figure of the most unexpected character and the most lively expression—the *Diana styled Zingarella*, with head, hands, and feet in bronze, and drapery in marble. The *Fawn and Rabbit* is a fine bas-relief ill placed.

Parallel with the Gallery of the Sarcophagus extends a vast hall, which may be divided into three distinct portions. In the first, to which you pass still breathless with admiration of the Venus of Milo, is the colossal Melpomene. But for the stiffness and meanness of its folds, the dryness and meagreness of its execution, contrasting with its vast proportions, I confess to have little sympathy. Near at hand, in the shade thrown by the wall, and increased by the proximity of the window, is a beautiful young man. In the next division is that strange work, the Pallas of Velletri; and then the Urania, whom Bouchardon has decked out with stars, without any particular motive or explanation.

In the midst of the second division of this Hall is the celebrated statue of the Gladiator—an appellation, by the way, which, though generally adopted, seems to me of the same family as that of Cincinnatus, and to be overthrown by similar reasons. This statue, now indeed called a Hero by the inscription, is one of the finest left by the ancients, and is in a violent mode, of which they have left few examples. It is also one of the few that bear the name of the sculptor—Agasias of Ephesus, son of Dositheos. I need not dilate on its excellencies, which are patent to everybody; nor on the period of Art to which it belongs; nor on its character, about which there is no uncertainty. Only I must object to the pedestal with which the bad taste of Bernini has supplied it. This pedestal, of an equivocal and insipid colour, not at all in agreement

with the accentuated conception of the statue, must injure its effect, especially considering the state of spottiness in which time and weather have left it. The bas-reliefs in alabaster, which are so very new and so very irreproachable, as far as whiteness goes at least, and for which we are obliged to the Cavaliere, increase the evil. I do not say that the pedestal ought to be destroyed, however. Let it be installed, if it seem good as an evidence of the mighty genius of its author, in some modern collection. At any rate, let the Gladiator be delivered from such society.

Not far from this statue, in a corner, we see the Venus of Arles; the arm of which Bouchardon has restored, cleverly it is true, but without complete success. This also is a precious work; worthy to be studied. I regret, however, that in the place it occupies it is impossible to see it on all sides. From its attitude and arrangement—both so remarkable—it is easy to see that the artist never intended it to be placed in a niche or against a wall. If we go over to the other side and endeavour to establish as it were a beginning of space between this Venus and the wall, we shall guess how much we lose of so noble, decent, and feminine a figure.

The Hall of the Tiber is so called on account of the fine and broadly-executed figure of the river-god, which forms one of its principal ornaments, and which attracts the eye immediately by its gigantic size. The figure holds the cornucopia and leans upon the urn;

whilst near him is the she-wolf, sacred to Mars, giving suck to the two founders of Rome. It is interesting to notice this work, not only because it takes rank among the fine productions of antiquity, but because it was one of the first works which Rome possessed when it began to dig up and collect some of the fragments of its antique splendour. It was, therefore, one of the first figures which in the fifteenth century inspired and influenced the statuary of the Italian artists. The head is, unfortunately, modern, and so are the hands; and it cannot be denied that, in an artistic point of view, the impression it produces would be much more keen if we beheld it in the fragmentary state in which appears to us, for example, the sublime *Ilissus* of Phidias in the British Museum, of which the Louvre only possesses a cast. The restorations I have mentioned, which complete the spectacle for the ignorant or superficial visitor, greatly interfere with the simplicity of the impression of the artist and the student. They dry up, as it were, one of the sources of inspiration. The very attempt of the observer to complete and round off a fragment of this kind produces most useful consequences: it stimulates attention, and excites the imagination.

A similar remark is suggested by the contemplation of a noble female figure, also reclining, of the finest style and period, full of grace, broadly and learnedly drawn, and, like the *Venus of Milo*, modelled with such breadth, and receiving the play of light so ad-

mirably, that if we remain in contemplation before it for a considerable time, it seems almost to assume the colours of life. This admirable figure has not yet received a name—at least, I believe so; for there is no catalogue of the sculptures issued, and many inscriptions are wanting. It has only been exhibited comparatively recently. M. Jeanron brought it forward from a dark corridor of the Louvre, where it was used as an ornament in a niche, and it is very probable that he would have suppressed the frightful disfigurements which interfere with its impression, if the question of restoration had been as much discussed and as far advanced in those days as in these. However, it was something that he prevented any new manœuvres of that kind; and perhaps after all, in these cases, it is difficult, and even dangerous, to repair errors that have once been committed. Restoration, as has been already observed, is not content with adding: it also takes away. In order to connect the parts intended to be adapted to a broken statue, it saws off the shattered extremities, and so produces an ugly even surface; it bores deep holes also, in order to introduce iron hold-fasts: so that when the additions made are taken away, the effect is most deplorable.

In the same Hall is found the Diana of Gabies, which ancient státuary has repeated many times, though the finest specimen is, I believe, this one in the Louvre. It is an admirable figure, full of youth, of chastity, and severe grace; and I regret that—continuing to speak

in a tone of complaint—I am obliged to refer again to that absurd mania which has led to the placing of this fine work, for ornamental purposes, in a niche, so that it is absolutely impossible properly to discern all its beauties. The same remark is applicable to the excellent statue of a young Roman girl, in the opposite corner. With its back against the wall is the beautiful Antinous, known to all students, and considered by Poussin, as by every learned artist who has cared to dwell on human proportion, as one of the most valuable types that exist.

We now come to the Hall containing the celebrated Diane Chasseresse, or beautiful-limbed Diana, as M. Viardot calls her. It is excellently placed in an excellent light. At the Davidian period, in the theories of Raphael Mengs, Milizzia, Winkelmann, and their echoes, this statue was held, in company with its brother, the Pythian Apollo, to be the finest thing left by ancient Art,—its culminating point, its highest expression, the *ne plus ultra* of statuary. According to this appreciation, Paris possessed a full equivalent for the marvel of Rome; but it was certainly much exaggerated. These two celebrated types, the Diana and the Apollo, do not contain all the grandeur, the amplitude, the life, the simple and supple beauty, of ancient Art; and I say this without wishing by any means to join in the extreme reaction of the present day. In more ancient Greek Art there are productions more profound, more striking, exhibiting more science, and,

above all, more naïve. Without leaving the Louvre, we may see an example in the Venus of Milo. Nevertheless it may, perhaps, be observed with truth, that the Diana and the Doe—before which we are now standing—surpasses in excellence the Apollo of the Belvidère.

Contrasting with this sublime figure, so virginal, so noble, and so free in its movements, we have close at hand the rude, wild, and chained figure of the old Marsyas, valuable for its well-indicated and exact anatomical distribution. In a type and a mode of interpretation less distant from the Diana, there is, on the opposite side of the room, the admirable figure of Pollux—with arms added by some modern sculptor.

We now enter a long hall divided into many compartments, the ceilings of which are adorned with paintings and sculpture of the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV. They are in the decorative style of Romanelli and Pietro di Cortona, and are not wanting in interest. Here we find many beautiful things, in which the influence of Greek Art on Roman Art is manifest; but Roman Art, with its drier and prosier mien, is dominant. Barbarian kings, prisoners, of a harsh and sad character, Roman busts, statues wrapped in the toga, matrons, consular personages, emperors, naked or draped, here appear. We must remark, in the first place, two figures, admirable for their delicacy, their proportions, and their attitude—the Apollo and Lizard, and the Funereal Genius. Afterwards come a

Pallas, a Lycian Apollo, many very fine statues of Bacchus, and several other Apollos. There is also a remarkable sitting figure of the old Stoic Posidonius, full of character, an energetic portrait-statue. In the place of honour, relieved against a red curtain, under the same conditions as the Venus of Milo, is an immense naked figure, not by any means so charming, though not without merit. It bears a respectable name—that of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius; and it is when such men are presented to us that a principle often followed by ancient Art, and often imitated by the moderns, is most liable to reproach. To represent naked, like an athlete, such a personage, is an abuse which no reasoning can justify; and I cannot here help referring to that blot upon one of our public parks, which habit makes us overlook, but which perpetually excites the jeers of foreigners. To return to the Louvre: I prefer the appearance of the Marcus Aurelius armed, but cannot wish it to have been placed in the post of honour, for its only superiority over the colossal figure is its decency.

On various sides we see statues of Tranquilina in the character of Ceres, of Julia Mammea, of young Commodus, of Julia Domna, of Pertinax, of Cælius Verus, and of Julian; with the busts of the two Philips, of Gallius, of Claudius Albinus, of Plautilla, of Julia Mammea, of Lucius Verus, of Alexander Severus, of Septimius Severus, of Caracalla, and of Honorius, among which some are very fine, especially

those of Caracalla and of Lucius Verus. Roman elegance and effeminacy are strikingly expressed in the mask, and in the arrangement of the hair and beard of the last-mentioned personage; whom we should not be at all surprised to meet strolling of an afternoon among what the French call "The Golden Youth," along the Boulevards; and the brutality and cruelty of those times are equally well brought out in the head of Caracalla, which, luckily, we do not very often meet in the fashionable resort I have mentioned.

By the statue of Julian and the bust of Honorius we are led to the period of the extreme decay of Roman Art; and Byzantine poverty already begins to suggest itself. The bust of Honorius is a hideous thing to behold, and the requirements of historical study can alone excuse its presence in the Museum of Antiques. The statue of Julian, however, must not be compared to it. In that period of decline, the artist who executed it was a superior man. It is a fine portrait, in which the individuality of the man is deeply marked. As may easily be supposed, I have no sympathy with the character of Julian. However, I may suggest that a copy of this statue ought to be set up in some conspicuous situation in Paris; for he was certainly one of the benefactors of that city, which he loved exceedingly. If this idea be thought too bold, at any rate I may say that some such monument ought to rise under the protection of the majestic vaults which still remain of his construction in Paris, and are known as the Thermæ

of Cluny. Meanwhile I may mention, that the original statue has gradually of late years risen in the world. M. Jeanron took it from an out-of-the-way place, in which it was quite unknown to the public, and exhibited it apart in one of the halls of the first story, from which it has since been removed, to take its place definitively in the Museum of Antiques.

Passing on we come to the Hall of Augustus, so named on account of the imperial statue which has been placed on the entablature of mosaic, where was formerly the Diane Chasseresse. As this entablature has not been modified in any respect, we have here a striking proof how much these architectural and ornamental arrangements, in which the indiscretion of architects displays itself without reference to the character and requirements of the figures exhibited, are arbitrary. Near this statue of Augustus are those of Livia, of Tiberius, of Germanicus, of Caligula, of Claudius, of Nero (very fine), of Adrian, of Trajan (mediocre); and some busts, among which those of Galba, of Vitellius, and above all of Agrippa, are of the highest order of merit.

Before leaving this Hall—the last devoted to ancient sculpture—I must express a true impression, which brings me, however, into contact with an order of studies and a class of enumerations upon which my limits do not allow me to enter. I speak of the bas-reliefs, very few of which I have been able to notice. In this Hall of Augustus, where, with the exception of

some fine busts, there is nothing to excite much artistic sympathy, the diligent visitor will find placed in the most deplorable manner, and of course architecturally and decoratively, certain bas-reliefs of great value and importance. They are made use of to adorn the pedestals of figures of doubtful merit, and can be with difficulty examined, for they scarcely rise above the knee of the spectator. It is to be regretted that they are not placed in the same manner as the metopes of Assos and the bas-relief of Zethus and Amphion, in the little Hall of Primitive Sculpture, on a coloured ground. If we were thus enabled to appreciate them, they would greatly embellish a collection which is already very admirable. I can here only direct attention to them, and say that on the pedestals that support the figures of Augustus, Livia, and others, the combat of Apollo and Hercules, the beautiful Choragic Victory, the Bearded Bacchus, &c., should not be overlooked.

I was disposed with M. Viardot, when I saw over one of the gateways that open upon the great court of the Louvre an inscription in golden letters, "MODERN SCULPTURE," to subscribe at once to this simple general division of monuments of that order. On one side the productions of Antique Art, on the other the productions of Modern Art. How much better was this title than the puerile one of "*Musée Charles X.*" formerly put up! On entering these halls, however, without any guide—for the administration of the Museum still leaves us in this state of deprivation—I was greatly disap-

pointed. Under its old form the collection was very incomplete, it is true, but tolerably well ordered for its extent, containing some notable works belonging to the various periods from the revival of Art up to the present day. There was no great display of riches, but pains had been taken to give an impression of the sequence and progress of Art. But in this new so-called Museum of Modern Sculpture the most ancient specimens I saw dated no further back than the age of Puget. This makes Modern Art, as opposed to Ancient Art, commence very late. I could not admit such a division; but remembered at length the Museums of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance, which I had formerly seen in course of arrangement.

All these classifications, however, with their numerous and arbitrary divisions, are much to be distrusted. These divisions express no positive distinction, and tend to disturb the simple ideas of the artist and the amateur, who are not necessarily erudite archæologists. The requirements of the deepest science as well as the most superficial knowledge may be better served after all by taking less trouble, and without assuming any responsibility. We have nothing to do but to leave things in their traditional state. There is a moment which all minds agree to perceive—a period at which Ancient Art without doubt goes off the stage, ceases from all activity and production, and makes way for the slow birth of Modern Art. Here we have a natural division, and it is not good to attempt to do more.

Time has classified broadly and sufficiently. Your positive inscriptions lead us astray.

When we have once admitted this simple idea, that everything that belongs to reviving Art, in whose history the dates are generally certain, should be arranged in its chronological sequence, order is at once obtained. Instruction becomes easy. No great sacrifice of attention or research is necessary. By "Museum of Modern Sculpture," what, after all, is meant? In what does Modern Art differ from the Art of the Renaissance, which it continues by an uninterrupted sequence of practices and of schools? If you will make a distinction, when, may it be asked, does Modern Art begin to assume a special character? Can we take Rembrandt to be a modern painter, and Rubens, and Poussin, and Claude, and Valentin, and Lesueur? If Rubens be a modern painter, what is the reason that Otto Venius, his master, is not one also? If Lesueur be a modern painter, why is Simon Vouet, whose manner he perfectly preserved, adding only his own genius, an ancient painter? But it is not as modern painters that the works of these men are exhibited in the same halls; for example, in the Great Saloon, in company with the works of Frà Angelico, of Leonardo da Vinci, of Holbein, and of Raphael: yet Puget was the contemporary of nearly all of them. Murillo, who is not described in the existing catalogue as a modern painter, was born only four years before Puget, who is taken as the first term of the division of Modern Art as exhibited

in Sculpture. Did Sculpture assume that modern character which escapes me, but which the inscription-writers of the Museum seem to perceive so clearly, before Painting? If we compare these two talents of Murillo and of Puget, for example, it will be equally difficult to understand the division made, as when we juxtapose the dates of their birth. Both these artists, indeed, may, without any straining, be compared to a certain extent, in the way they exercised their arts, so different in themselves. Both refused to remain wedded to a conventional style, a pre-existing ideal, and applied themselves energetically to the immediate translation of nature without reference to ancient authorities. Both restricted themselves to interpreting their own lively impressions of what they met with and saw every day, in order to express, each according to his own particular genius, the themes which their imaginations selected or which circumstances pointed out. If Murillo had to paint a Virgin or a Saint, he infused into his figure, doubtless, the expression of his own mind; but having lighted upon a model in his wanderings through the streets of Seville, he had nothing more to do than to keep up to the level of his first idea and to struggle, as a true naturalist, to represent powerfully what he saw before his eyes. His admirable "Boy catching Lice" cannot be said to be painted in a mode different from his habitual mode: it is simply a copy of nature as a powerful artist understands and sees it. In what other way did Puget work? When he sculptured his Milo

and his Gallic Hercules, eagerly straining to translate his model into marble without being too much encumbered by any reminiscence of the antique or of the conventionalisms of his art, obeying his natural impetuosity, he *painted* like Murillo. This is a slip of the pen, but it is not necessary to correct it. Puget aimed far too much at painting in his works of sculpture. His bas-relief of Diogenes, which may be seen on the walls of the Hall that bears his name, belongs almost to the domain of Painting, so much are the ordinary rules of the sculptor's art set aside to make way for picturesque reality. Looking at the whole period at which the writer of the inscription, "Modern Sculpture," takes his stand, we at once see that within the space of fifty years at most a list of names might be drawn up which would in itself show the difficulty, or rather the absolute impossibility, of making any but an arbitrary division. Murillo was born in 1618; Puget in 1622; Poussin in 1594; Domenichino in 1581; Guercino in 1590; Vandyke in 1599; Valentin in 1600, and Claude Lorraine in the same year; Rembrandt in 1606, together with Ribeira; Ostade in 1610; Lesueur in 1617.

But let us leave this discussion and insist, *en passant*, on a different point, on which it is true M. Viardot has already commented. On entering the so-called Museum of Modern Sculpture the visitor will find it to be divided into five Halls, bearing the names of Puget, Coyzevox, Coustou, Bouchardon, and Houdon, and all containing nothing but French works, with the

exception of a single piece, not remarkable in any respect, by Canova, who, strictly speaking, by his conformity with the Davidian style, might be claimed by the French. Is it meant to be implied that modern sculpture, which, if you please, you may commence with Puget, is entirely resumed in the French school, and that beyond its limits the art has nowhere existed? This observation is not an indifferent one. Such monumental inscriptions as the one to which I allude lead irresistibly to certain injurious consequences. Without insisting on the fact that they tend still further to narrow the range of the French mind, already disposed to move in so narrow a circle, I may say that they interfere with the prosperity of the collection itself. They lead, necessarily, to certain sacrifices, to certain perquisitions, and to certain repulsions. If you really desire to make a Museum of French Sculpture, you are not complete; and you will, therefore, seek to bring to the Louvre many monuments of anterior epochs, in order better to express the vicissitudes and the progress of the art; and at the same time you will check your sympathy for many things which may be presented to you, but which cannot be brought within the limited framework chosen. If, on the contrary, your title implies only an involuntary equivocation, it must be acknowledged that French sculpture abounds far too much already. If you wish to represent it by its chosen specimens, and make it hold a proper rank by the side of other schools, you must take elsewhere many

of those insignificant works which you have collected in such profusion.

Without reference to the classification of the Museum I shall glance rapidly, in as far as my limits will allow me, over the entire collection of modern sculpture, from the earliest period at which it is represented in the Louvre. I have already noticed the movement which took place towards the end of the last century, in the time of the Republic—a movement during which the artistic furniture of France was overhauled to so great an extent—and have related the chief circumstances, and mentioned the principal promoters of the Artistic Renovation which led to the creation, for the use of all Europe, of a concentration of works so rich and so varied, and so easily accessible for purposes of curiosity or study. I have reserved, however, for this place what I have to say of a man, Alexandre Lenoir, who was most influential in preserving, collecting, and classifying the works of sculpture. He was a painter, the pupil of Doyen, one of the last powerful professors of those decaying schools which David was about so extensively to renew. David, as well as Lenoir, was also his pupil; and if the French, in their gratitude, generally believe that to Vien alone is due the honour of having first guided and understood the genius of that young man, they too often forget that, had it not been for the old Doyen, one of the artists of whom they are most proud in these latter years would have never lived to distinguish himself. The ardent and ambitious student

had repeatedly aimed at the first prize of painting, but failed time after time, until at last, disgusted with what he considered to be the injustice of the Academy, he shut himself up in his room, and determined to die of hunger. He had already passed three days with frightful firmness in this situation, when Doyen, accidentally learning what was taking place, went and succeeded in persuading him to come forth and revenge himself in a different manner. The next year (1775) he carried off the prize triumphantly; but it is probable that the thoughts he indulged in during that half-acquaintance with Death bore their fruit afterwards, in that implacable hatred against the academical system, which he was enabled to satisfy when the great Revolution broke out; and, no doubt, in the impassioned accents in which he related at the National Tribune the tragic end of young Séneschal, an attentive listener might have recognised the echoes of the groans and complainings which so many years before had warned his friends of the suffering he was undergoing in his wilful struggle with death.

Alexandre Lenoir was charged by the Commissions, of which I have previously spoken, to seek out and collect from all churches, convents, treasuries, and *sacristies*, especially at St. Denis and other royal abbeys neighbouring the capital, all the works of art they might contain. The tombs of great men raised in the abbatial churches, so numerous in Paris and the provinces that surround it, were gathered together by his

care, and brought to the convent of the Petits Augustins, which was subsequently devoted to the Ecole des Beaux Arts. The painted windows of Suger at St. Denis, those of the Célestins, of Ecoeu, of St. Paul, of the chapel of Vincennes, &c. &c., were collected together. All these works, to the number of five hundred and sixty-seven, formed the Museum of French Monuments. They were classed according to the chronological method, and afforded thus a complete history of art in France from the Gallo-Roman period down to modern times. This collection, so valuable and significant, has now completely disappeared, thanks to the erroneous classifications indulged in, according to which each arbitrary division made has claimed some portion of these treasures.

It was on Vendemiaire 29, year IV. (1796), that this collection was formed regularly into a Museum by the National Convention. The objects gathered together by Lenoir, and not belonging by their origin to the French school, were taken to the Louvre. Among these were fine statues of Bacchus and Meleager, the busts of Brutus and Lucius Verus, and numbers of Etruscan vases, beside these two admirable pieces which we stand before in the Musée de la Renaissance—the two Slaves of Michael Angelo. These statues, the only really fine works of Michael Angelo which France possesses, were originally placed in the château of Ecoeu; but when, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, Henri de Montmorenci was decapitated by order of the

Cardinal de Richelieu, that great minister suffered the public to doubt whether he was most moved by love of justice or cupidity, for he shared the spoils of the victims with Schomberg, and amongst other things transferred these invaluable statues to his own château.

This is not the place to discuss the great question of confiscation—which, in political warfare, is nothing but depriving a deadly enemy of a deadly weapon ; and I cannot apologise for the act of a government, the privilege of criticising whom I give up in this volume. But I shall take another opportunity of showing that the outcry raised during the old Revolution, far more fiercely, as was natural in a noble order, on the pecuniary question than on the question of principle, was dishonest in this respect—that a great, if not the greater, portion of the land confiscated by the nation had been confiscated within that or the previous century by the King, and bestowed as presents on his favourites. Ill-gotten property went as it came. I believe it would not be difficult to prove that every inch of land in France had been confiscated over and over again ; yet nobody charges the monarchy, in this respect at least, with a deliberate disregard of honesty. At any rate no one can conscientiously accuse the Republic for having taken from the Richelieu family by force what the Richelieu family had taken, under such horrible circumstances, from a rival house extinguished in blood !

Numerous drawings were also brought by Lenoir to

the collection of the Louvre. They were in number a thousand; and I have heard it said that the catalogue of them exists in the family, which ought certainly to publish them. From these drawings, and from a certain number of pictures brought in with them, a choice was made to increase the collection of the French school—namely, the series of paintings by Lesueur illustrating the life of Saint Bruno; those attributed to his youth; an ex-voto; Jesus as the Gardener; Saint Paul burning the books at Ephesus; and, moreover, the whole series of the paintings of Philippe de Champagne; the great works of Jouvenet, with numerous others by Lebrun, Lahire, Simon Vouet, Joseph Vernet, Parocel, Blanchard, Bourdon; together with the “Last Judgment,” by Jean Cousin, taken from the convent of the Minimes of Vincennes, and which is so important for the appreciation of the state of the French school, of which this artist, in painting as well as in sculpture, was one of the first masters. In the Museum of the Renaissance we see by him the admirable mausoleum of Philippe de Chabot, admiral of France. In this monument, Jean Cousin proves himself worthy to stand by the side of the ablest men in his art. I may add, that this painting and this statue receive an additional value from the fact, that, from having devoted himself chiefly to painting on glass, and to laborious and learned researches in that art, Jean Cousin has left few capital works.

The Louvre, which was so much indebted at the

outset to the activity of Alexandre Lenoir, profited still more thereby when his useful and admirable institution was destroyed on the 16th of December, 1816, partly for the purpose of supplying the void left by the restitutions required in the previous year. The unhappy Lenoir was but partially consoled for the loss of his position by a pitiful appointment as Conservator of the Monuments of St. Denis, definitively suppressed under the Monarchy of July from motives of economy. This benefactor of French collections spent, therefore, the latter years of his life in discomfort, whilst the Louvre, Cluny, and Versailles profited by his labours.

Michel Colombe gives his name to the first Hall of the Museum of the Renaissance. His "Fight of St. George and the Dragon" is an illustration of what I have previously said, to the effect that if the Italians brought to France by François I. strongly influenced the French school, it is yet a mistake to say that before that period no French artist had exhibited real talent, or had entered on the path of progress. The St. George in complete armour, the monster he is slaying, and the kneeling Saint, are not unworthy to be compared to the fine works executed in Italy about the same period. The tombs of Philippe de Comines and Helene des Chambres, of Louis Poncher, and of Roberte Legendre, are also interesting, and exhibit talent. They come from the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois.

In the Hall of Jean de Boulogne we meet only with Italian monuments, and though I may admire

the talent of that able sculptor I cannot understand why his name should have been used when the two most remarkable works in the room are from the hand of Michael Angelo, his master. I allude to the two statues of Slaves, already mentioned. They were intended to form part of the tomb of Pope Julius II., which was never completed, and are themselves in an unfinished state. As we see them, however, the science and the genius of the great sculptor are so strongly marked in them—their forms are so sublime—that they cannot be reckoned inferior to any of his works. The Museum of the Louvre does not possess many productions by the same hand—it contains no painting at all by this master, certainly one of the most imposing apparitions in Art since the times of antiquity. It would have been well, therefore, to place this Hall under the patronage of his name; for as it is, his works seem to be subordinate to those of Giam-Bologna, his pupil. I think I can guess at the weak motive which prevented this course from being adopted. Giam-Bologna was born at Douay in 1524, and on this account is probably claimed as a French artist. But it is doubtful whether an artist born in that northern province at that period ought not rather to be taken for a pure Fleming than for a Frenchman. However this may be, is it not improper to withdraw in this manner from the tradition of the Italian school a man who practised under its masters from his very earliest years, who lived always in Italy, exercising his activity exclu-

sively there, and exhibiting nothing whatever to distinguish him in style from its productions? The Arrangers of this Museum feel the truth of these observations, for they have filled the Hall I speak of with Italian works.

In the Hall of Jean Goujon our attention is called back to the series of productions of the French school commenced in the Hall of Michel Colombe. There appear the fine productions of Jean Goujon and Germain Pilon:—The colossal figure of Diana, the Descent from the Cross, the Four Evangelists, the Nymphs of the Seine, the Mausoleum of Chabot, the Mausolea of René de Birague and of Valentine Balbiani his wife, and the group of the Three Graces, or Theological Virtues.

Apropos of the Hall of Jean Goujon it may be interesting to notice, that a project was brought forward in the early days of the Republic by M. Jeanron for removing to the court of the Louvre the magnificent Fountain by Jean Goujon, now placed in the midst of the Halles; in a very inconvenient position, if we speak in an artistic point of view, and where, at any rate, it is always in considerable danger of injury. The Director insisted in the commissions of the Assembly on the advisability of this transfer, and had long conferences on the subject with Messrs. Duban, Visconti, and Trelat, when the plans for the completion of the Louvre were under discussion. The principal objection made was to the size of the Fountain, but this was by no means conclusive. The

monument in itself, by its style and its proportion, is admirably suited for the court, which is already partly adorned by the labours of the same great artist. The basement alone, and the basin, might be criticised with propriety; but these are modern "improvements." It must be remembered, that if the idea had been carried out, this would not have been the first displacement of the Fountain; for it originally formed the corner of the Rue St. Denis and the Rue aux Fers. It was in 1788 that this removal took place; and on that occasion it was raised, and a new face added to it.

The French school continues to be illustrated in successive Halls by works of Jacques Sarasin, of Simon Guillain, of the Anguiers, of Barthélemy Prieur, and of Francheville; and then in another part of the Louvre, as I have said, we find, under the title of Modern Sculpture, in the first place, the Hall of Coyzevox, containing the tomb of Mazarin, and the busts of Fénelon, of Lebrun, of Mignard, and of Richelieu. It is not going too far to say, that by their mediocre execution, as well as by the imperfection of the likenesses—an imperfection easily proved by a comparison with the portraits remaining of those celebrated persons by the ablest masters—these works are not worthy of the place they occupy; and should be removed to make way for others. The same may be said, with even greater certainty, of the two Heads of Medusa, attributed to Bernini, which, whether his or not, have nothing to do in such a collection.

In the Hall of Puget there is the remarkable bas-relief by that master, already mentioned, of Alexander and Diogenes, together with his Milo, his Gallic Hercules, his Andromeda, and casts of the vigorous Caryatides, which he executed for the Hôtel de Ville of Toulon. The strength and the character of the works of Puget may be understood at a glance; but his style and the influence of his sculpture, though to consider them might be useful and interesting, I must not now attempt to discuss. This influence may be particularly seen in the great number of figures and groups of small proportion which follow in the other Halls, and were undertaken by French sculptors as their reception-pieces in the old Academy. All these little monuments had lain long, completely lost sight of, in the cellars of Versailles, amidst the material of the restorers of the ornamental sculpture, external and internal, of that edifice—buried beneath heaps of detritus—until they were discovered under the recent Republic. They were then brought to Paris; but I believe the Director had not intended to select them as fitting expressions of French sculpture, thinking that their place was more properly marked out in the Ecole des Beaux Arts, which inherited much of the material of the old Academy, and many analogous objects in painting and sculpture.

In the Hall of Bouchardon there are some productions of that master, which testify to his facile and charming talent. His figure of Cupid occupies the first

rank. Instead of criticising it myself, I shall introduce here the notice written of it, when it was first exhibited in 1746, by M. Lafont de Saint-Yenne, a French amateur, whom I have already several times quoted. The passage is an amusing example of the style and spirit of Art-criticism in those days. Having concluded his notice of the paintings in the salon of that year, he passes on to the sculpture. "I begin," he says, "with the Sieur Bouchardon, whose chisel has so often enchanted us by its correctness, whose drawing is comparable to the antique of the first order, which he has always taken for model, and who has increased his reputation by the simple and learned composition of a fountain in the Rue de Grenelle, which would have deserved a place more favourable to its effect. What a handsome sight this fine monument would then have made! But such is the fate of Paris, that capital of the most splendid kingdom in the universe, which ought to excel all others by the beauty of its edifices, the breadth and regularity of its streets, the number of its places, the abundance and magnificence of its fountains, and its public monuments. Nothing is the nation more sensitive to than to the imperfections of the palace of the Louvre, which would have been the most superb edifice ever erected if it had been finished. The peristyle of the façade towards St. Germain l'Auxerrois had already placed that palace above all that Greece or Italy have ever created; if not most sumptuously, at any rate most correctly, either in architecture or

sculpture. What loftiness of taste! What sublimity in the fine ordering and admirable proportions of that superb Colonnade! What learned perfection in the sculpture of the capitals, and in the execution of all the ornaments of the friezes and the ceilings! What a wise economy in their distribution! All these marvels, which would form the honour and the glory of France, are now-a-days abandoned and masked by buildings of all kinds which surround them, and deprive both strangers and citizens of the pleasure and satisfaction of admiring them.

“To return to the *Sieur Bouchardon*. He has exhibited a model in plaster, representing the god of Love attempting, it is said, to make a bow of the club of *Hercules*. The correctness and the fine proportions of this small figure have obtained a general approval from the public, and many praises from artists. Amateurs of a delicate taste, who only admire the beauties of Art in as far as they serve for the expression of a subject happily chosen and interesting, have been more moderate in their praises. Whatever *finesse* may be concealed under the mysterious veil of this rather frigid allegory in favour of the power of Love over the greatest hero, the extreme difficulty of a happy execution, arising from the impossibility of seizing in this action and in the mechanical labour of the god to effect this metamorphosis a moment of nobility, of interest, or likelihood, has proved a sufficient reason to connoisseurs for making the choice of the subject account for the

coldness of the execution. If this choice is so important for painters, how much more so is it for sculptors, who are deprived of the help of colour to give life and truth to objects! Add to this defect the want of episodes to assist in the comprehension and interest of a subject, which are commonly rare. Sculpture has no means of expression, save the voice of action in its figures. This eloquence alone it is that gives it movement and life, and can clearly announce its subject to the spectator, and make it interesting under the supposition that the author has chosen a subject susceptible of interest, which the *Sieur Bouchardon* has not done. All his knowledge and genius are insufficient to supply the want. The effect of the god leaning on a piece of wood, with a design which cannot be foreseen, and without any instrument in his hand to execute it, will probably render this work an enigma to posterity."

Having thus rapidly run through the Collections of Sculpture as they exist at the time I write, I return to notice a point which might have been talked of in the Hall of Primitive Greek Sculpture, but which better takes place here. In that Hall the sculptures appear under the happiest possible conditions, thanks to the charming experiment which the Director, to whose services I cannot too often allude, tried when he caused the walls to be coloured in a tint borrowed from the antique pallet. It is greatly to be regretted that the example has not since been followed.

Apropos of this experiment, however, it may be

well to notice briefly the requirements with which should comply all localities destined to contain precious monuments of the class of which I speak ; and to consider the first impression of the visitor in all the halls devoted to sculpture, and the departments connected therewith, in the palace of the Louvre. There were considerable discussions during the first years of the Republic on this point, and several reforms were contemplated. But M. Jeanron, of course, during his too short administration, could not operate with the same rapidity upon the monuments of statuary as in departments containing objects of a more manageable nature. The hardness of the times, the encumberment of the Louvre, the weight of the specimens, the special disposition of the pedestals, and the active employment of a *personnel* much more restricted than now, necessarily postponed many useful innovations. M. Jeanron discussed very seriously with M. Duban, the architect I have more than once named, what was the colour proper to be given to the halls of the ground-floor. As I knew that these two gentlemen were on the best possible terms, the differences of opinion that manifested themselves both surprised and interested me. The fact, however, is, that an architect, however judicious he may be, has always a certain propensity to embellish and decorate a hall on its own account ; and to exhibit in its distribution and ornaments the superiority of his own art. But the Director of the Museums, in a certain measure, and without attempting to subalternise the architect,

naturally could not consider the halls only on their own account; and was more intent on the best means of putting in a good light the monuments they contained—monuments which, from their own beauty, the veneration in which they are held by the public, and the advantage derived from their study, should never be considered as furniture or ornaments.

It must seem strange to an English reader to say that these simple views were diametrically opposed to the practice up to that time in France. The late king's architect, M. Fontaine, especially, had exaggerated in a really deplorable manner the opposite tendency. Objects of the greatest merit, without any equivalent in the whole gallery, were so raised by him out of reach of the eye as to render their attentive examination impossible; or were let into the walls in obscure places, in order to obtain an unnecessary symmetry and to satisfy a puerile desire of ornamentation. For example, if I remember rightly, M. Jeanron found a bas-relief representing a "Malatesta setting out for the Wars," one of the admirable sculptures of the Renaissance, pressed into service as a decoration above a great doorway—so high up that it was impossible to discern its beauties. This excellent work, which might have been replaced by the most mediocre performance, was very properly taken down and restored to its proper rank in the collection. The exquisitely delicate female figures that curve their graceful forms upon the marble where Jean Goujon has executed them, in a relief so attenu-

ated that they belong almost as much to drawing as to sculpture, in order to satisfy the taste of the decorator, who thought only of the general effect of his own work, were placed at such a height that it was quite useless to attempt to examine them.

One of the facts which M. Jeanron himself particularly pointed out to me was what might well be called the "deplorable sequestration" of one of the finest things in the possession of the Museum; to wit, the Diane Chasseresse, placed in a niche, richly ornamented, raised on a flooring adorned with mosaics, surrounded by a brilliant railing, which kept the spectator at a distance and rendered it quite impossible to contemplate, under all the aspects of its beauty, a work so celebrated. The Director used to say, that when better times came—alluding to the difficulties thrown in his way by the reactionary portion of the Assembly,—he would venture to place the Diana in the very centre of the hall, and to break through and definitively set aside that absurd practice, according to which the most valuable productions of ancient art were treated as mere pieces of furniture. But M. Fontaine had exercised under the previous reign an influence so great, and still retained so much power, that the best friends of the new Director prudently advised him to put off this reformation. For my part, the existing arrangements appeared to me so monstrous that I could scarcely believe that the old architect, who passed for a clever man, and who probably had proved himself such

on many occasions, was really responsible for them. He seemed to behave rather like a worthy Paris bourgeois intent on decking out his drawing-room, than as an artist. One day I expressed this opinion to a person whom I met in society, and was told that M. Fontaine was not by any means a bourgeois, but an artist of the firmest and most absolute character. The grounds of this judgment, however, as they were gravely stated to me, were somewhat extraordinary. M. Fontaine was the dearly-beloved architect of the king Louis-Philippe, and used to come to the Louvre, to Versailles, or to any other place in the vast domain of buildings over which his authority extended, full of the sagest and best-defined projects possible. There he used generally to find the king, who had hatched plans of quite a different nature, and was waiting to set them forth with true royal eloquence. The well-beloved architect used to reject them at once with the greatest fierceness. The king held to his point. M. Fontaine's anger rose. He spoke out. His frankness was terrific. If he was interfered with in the slightest degree he would resign—positively. He had an independent fortune. He had worked long enough. He would not dishonour the close of his career by acts worthy of a *donkey*. He was ready to bury himself in the most philosophical retirement. The indignation of the fine old architect was magnificent to behold. It reminded one of Michael Angelo shying planks at the shins of the Pope. The king knew the value of such tempestuous

honesty. He gave way with a mysterious smile. On the morrow, M. Fontaine would come back—would linger near the door of the room like a fine-spirited schoolboy about to ask forgiveness voluntarily for a sin he has committed. It was no use concealing the fact; self-love must give way to the plain truth. He had slept on it; or, rather, the royal suggestion had made him pass the night in a conflict with his pillow. His mind had been suddenly illuminated. He had understood how far superior the king's plan was to his own, and he had come with the same straightforwardness that distinguished all his actions candidly to confess thus much, and to add the expression of his wonder that a man who was not an architect, who had not gone through the long and painful studies that formed the introduction to that profession, could surpass him so prodigiously in perspicacity! I looked at the narrator's face for an ironical smile. It was immovable. I was left accordingly to draw my own conclusions, and to believe that this terrific independence of M. Fontaine was equivalent to the most civilised servility.

To return, however. M. Jeanron discussed with M. Duban, as I have said, the desirability of colouring all the Halls of Sculpture, and laid great stress on this point. According to him, the one thing necessary was to set off in a proper manner the works exhibited; and the choice of the tint against which they are relieved he considered very important. His experiment was well received by the public; but wearied out, as was

natural, with the constant opposition he had to encounter, he put off carrying out his plan completely. I did not wonder at it. For at the same time there was going on a most violent debate about the coloured hangings of the Great Saloon and the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, intended to contain the choicest works of painting. It was necessary to submit this question to the Assembly, in order to obtain the necessary money; and many eminent representatives took opposite sides, with great warmth. Artists of the highest rank had been consulted, and had given conflicting advice. M. Delacroix, as a colourist, thought himself bound to plead the cause of the Masters of Colour, and recommended a white ground; upon which, as upon the margin of a Water Colour, every tint has its value, is brought out, and assists in producing a general harmony. M. Ingres, a great draughtsman, on the other hand, took under his patronage all learned delineations, commonly black or pale, and recommended a coloured ground—a bright or damask red. It was terrible work for MM. Merimée, Duban, and Jeanron, to calm down the excitement got up in these fierce debates.

In addition to the various collections of Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Roman, Italian, and French sculpture which I have rapidly described, there exists in the Louvre a curious series of specimens of different kinds and in different substances, connected more or less closely

with them. I allude to the small figures, vases, ornaments, &c., in wood, ivory, enamel, precious stones, gold, silver, &c., exhibited in different parts of the building. An account of them, to be interesting, would require more detail than I can afford ; and I can, therefore, merely mention their existence, and observe, that in some cases objects of slight value are exhibited in a too sumptuous and imposing manner. However, the collections on the whole are valuable.

CHAPTER XIII.

DRAWINGS AND ENGRAVINGS.

As I have said in a previous page, the Louvre possesses a considerable number of Drawings by masters of different schools, and a large collection of Engraved Plates. The exhibition of these two series of objects is difficult in a building not originally constructed for the purpose. They require great room, and, with few exceptions, are more in want even than works of painting of being brought near the eye, both on account of the smallness of their proportions and of the comparative faintness of their execution. In fact, drawings, which are in general merely slight indications in which the first idea, and often the vague attempt of the master is only just discerned,—as well as engravings, of which the well-calculated strokes disappear at a certain distance, melting away, as it were, to concur in the general effect—neither the merit of drawings nor engravings, I say, can be properly appreciated unless they can be closely examined. The difficulty of setting apart in the Louvre a surface sufficiently extended, long

deprived the public of the sight of the riches of this kind it possessed. The exposition of Drawings is relatively of recent date, and that of Engravings is still more recent, dating only a few years back.

The Musée des Dessins, as is called the series of rooms extending on the first floor from the Pavilion facing the Tuileries, round to that which looks upon the Rue de Rivoli, nearly opposite the Oratoire, is far from being complete. I have insisted upon the chief cause, namely, want of space; but it is certain that the present administration of the Louvre has not done all it might to remedy this state of things. After many vicissitudes, after long and frequent shuttings up, there had at length been exhibited, for the use of students and the pleasure of the public, a certain number of drawings in the aforesaid halls, to which some insignificant additions have been made. This was before 1848. In that year the vigorous direction by which the Louvre was pushed on so far towards its present magnificent state put forward many projects, which were favourably received by some and violently opposed by others. For the first time the riches of the Museum, as I have already said, became known. Up till then the greatest disorder had existed; and most curious details might be brought forward from M. Jeanron's reports, and from the decrees which were based on them, to illustrate the previous condition of this department of the Museum. I must be content, however, to bring the substance of this vast mass of materials into a very small space.

The collection of Drawings was found to be immense. Nobody had the slightest idea of its extent. M. Jeanron, in the midst of the heaps of packages which accumulated around him, concocted the most extensive plans. He proposed to extend this collection into the halls immediately following those which it at present occupies, and which were then filled by the collection left to Louis-Philippe by an Englishman, and named after him the "Standish Gallery." It consisted of paintings of different schools, of drawings, of engravings, and of books; and was, no doubt, valuable, though it had no particular character, and contained no very remarkable object. The taste of its founder seems, moreover, not to have been very enlightened; and the works of Art were attributed to the various masters rather at random. The new Director thought it was in the way and wished to get rid of it, as well as of that confused mass of inferior Spanish paintings, hastily scraped together by the ex-king after he had failed in his negotiations for the purchase of the choice specimens contained in the Spanish collection of Marshal Soult. As is well known, the chief works in this collection went to England; but subsequently the remainder was sold in Paris, and the French authorities, with more enthusiasm than taste, sacrificed a very large sum of money to obtain a picture by Murillo, now exhibited in the Great Saloon. It appeared, however, that to turn out the Standish Gallery and the collection of Spanish paintings,—the two additions to the Louvre, of

which the Monarchy of July was proud,—would be thought to evidence an officious zeal not connected with Art. The Director, therefore, refrained. But when the “Standish Gallery” was restored to the royal family with their Spanish pictures, a vast increase of the exhibition of drawings became possible. An unfortunate idea suggested itself, and spoiled all. It was thought advisable to exhibit, with commercial views, the proofs of the Plates belonging to the Calcographie—an establishment which I shall presently notice. It will here be sufficient to say, that if the long series of well-lighted halls occupied by the engravings had been devoted to a completer exhibition of drawings, that exhibition would indeed have been far from complete, but would have contained a vast number of interesting pieces, of which it is probable the public will be some time deprived. It is true that, as I have hinted in another place, there is some probability that in the prodigious increase of size of the Louvre within the last year or two some new space may be found for the collections, without interfering with other arrangements. The Minister by whose energy so vast a pile has been called into existence amidst the most difficult circumstances is not foreign to artistic pursuits, as the stress he lays on architectural embellishments is sufficient to prove. It cannot be denied, indeed, that the impulse he has given to public works, which may be, no doubt, condemned on economical grounds, has been intelligent and enlightened. It would be needlessly ungracious

not to admit it. On all sides in Paris we see evidences of activity controlled by good taste, and I am informed that M. Fould does more than overlook and give orders. We may expect, therefore, that by his care the present administration of the Museum, with whose movements I am less acquainted than of those of the preceding one, will be empowered to increase the exhibition of Drawings, certainly one of the most interesting in the Museum.

M. Jeanron, impeded, as I have hinted, in his first plans, thought of clearing out, if possible, a portion of the Louvre which is very little known to the public. It consists of a long series of small and low halls, excellently well lighted, extending beneath the Long Gallery, between it and the ground-floor. By the side of this story runs a long corridor, also well lighted and tolerably broad, in which it was proposed to hang the most important proofs of the Calcographie. The halls themselves have a cloistral aspect, not unfit for the purposes of study. Tables were to have been placed there, on which students might have worked with pen and pencil. The walls were to have been hung with the immense collection of drawings of the second order, the sumptuous halls of the first-floor of the Old Louvre being reserved for choice specimens. In this way, by the side of the splendid Museum, harmonising with the other principal collections of the Louvre, and addressed chiefly to the admiring visitor, would have been found a veritable library, where the student, the practician,

and the historian, might have found a series of documents most valuable and useful to them. In order to exhibit a greater number of works, the drawings were to have been mounted on both sides of a series of tablets, fastened by hinges to the walls. Very little expense—a notable consideration in those days—was to be incurred for furniture.

Unfortunately for the success of this project, the halls in question were filled with a confused mass of objects, in part insignificant in value, and consisting, indeed, of the lumber of many administrations brought pell-mell there from all sides and at all periods—the accumulated detritus of a government with ponderous machinery. If I do not mistake there was even a collection of arms,—pistols, and poignards,—seized during the conspiracies of the Republic and the Consulate. There was also the chair in which Robespierre sat when he began his last signature, with the table of the Hôtel de Ville on which he leaned his mangled head after his attempt at suicide, and much other old furniture with historical associations. Several succeeding halls were filled in a more orderly and proper manner with the archives of the Conseil d'Etat, and documents belonging to the Ministry of Justice. Beyond was the curious library so little known to strangers, called the Library of the Louvre, the entrance of which opens on the quay. It contains, as I may mention in passing, a very valuable collection of books and manuscripts referring to the history of recent periods; and most of

the political historians who have written since the beginning of this century have made considerable use of it. M. Jeanron wished accordingly to clear out all these rooms up to the Library exclusively, and in order to obtain permission, explained his plan at length to M. Dufaure. The Minister, who always particularly interested himself in such matters, impelled by taste as well as duty, took the trouble to come himself to the Louvre and examine the localities; and for once, under a regular government, administrative difficulties were rapidly got over, the halls were cleared out, and all the materials they contained were removed to the National Archives in the Marais. The necessary frames and furniture were already almost complete when the functions of M. Jeanron ceased, and the project was naturally set aside. This is greatly to be regretted. Drawings are fragile objects, and their loss cannot be repaired. In the present condition of the collection they cannot, therefore, be communicated to the public, being kept in portfolios or in volumes heaped upon tables, as at the Cabinet des Estampes.

Works of this nature upon old paper, which yields at the slightest touch, many of them having long been exposed to damp, worn in their foldings, mended in various ways, can no longer be safely exhibited, except under glass; and unless a very extensive suite of rooms be set apart they might, for all practical purposes, as well not exist. As M. Jeanron used to maintain, possession

implies enjoyment, and we cannot properly be said to possess a work of art which we can neither see nor show. Different opinions have, I know, been put forward, and were much insisted on at that time. It was seriously argued that such specimens should be preserved, in order occasionally to be shown to a few eminent and favoured persons, and that the common herd of artists and amateurs should be systematically kept aloof. "You are taking a great deal of trouble to get a place to exhibit these things in," said an Academician to the Director. "*Mon Dieu*, the public have too much to see already. Keep these precious documents for people like ourselves, who alone are capable of appreciating them." I am afraid that this principle is applied as far as possible in more countries than France, and, if I mistake not, even in our own Museum there are departments which are only shown to the inquisitive almost as a favour. The French Director—very properly, I think—replied to these insinuations, that whatever a Museum or a Library could not communicate to the public from want of space, or reasons of that nature, should not be kept. France was a large country, and it was desirable that Science and Art should be cultivated over its whole surface. There were not wanting cities that would be glad to receive what was considered as lumber at the Louvre, and without adopting federalist principles, it was certainly better to distribute objects than keep them in cellars or garrets. In the first place, however, he would try to exhibit

these objects in Paris, where the public was larger and more enlightened, and it was only when he had failed that he would recommend their dispersal.

For my part I cannot but subscribe to this opinion. Museums and Libraries have never been really conducted on large and generous principles. There is always some difficulty, some hitch, some impossibility, to obstruct one's studies—in France, especially. I have often felt inclined to criticise some small points connected with the arrangements of the Reading Room of the British Museum. But it would be most unjust not to admit that London literary men are infinitely better off than such of their comrades in France, who are unable to obtain the loan of books at their own houses. No catalogue is communicated at the Rue de Richelieu, and it is necessary for a reader who wishes to obtain a book to know—by intuition, I suppose—its exact title, its size, and the place and date of publication. Did not the courtesy of the officials sometimes render assistance, it would, therefore, be perfectly vain to attempt any research whatever. It is curious to observe that the French, whilst admitting these imperfections, believe that they are in a far better condition at any rate than ourselves; and their illusion is kept up by such passages as the following, which I extract from an account of the British Museum, by an eye-witness, M. Viardot, published in 1852:—"The library is finely situated, and contains vast saloons, very clean, and well waxed, in which the books bound with

modern elegance are ranged in mahogany glazed cases. . . . It has, no doubt, the same practical utility as our libraries, but we do not see there, as in ours, a crowd of readers sitting at tables taking notes or copies. It is probable, that in that country of privileges, the loan, or even the lecture of books, is reserved to the aristocracy of science and talent, to those who are introduced and admitted!" If we come to probabilities, it is probable that M. Viardot was taken as a stranger through the library, but that it was not considered necessary to disturb the gentlemen, who would be very much astonished at being accused of aristocracy, who pass their time from morning till night amidst heaps of books or manuscripts, liberally communicated in the Reading Room.

To return to the French libraries: many examples of inaccessibility might be given, but I shall mention one, which has some connexion with the Arts. A distinguished painter whom I know, desiring to introduce into a wild scene which he had imagined, and which, almost without intention, had assumed the aspect of an African desert, took it into his head to introduce therein a group of ostriches. In an unlucky hour, I recommended him to ascertain the exact shape of that eccentric animal. The Libyan sky shining on the Libyan desert, with a drooping palm-tree or two, were well represented—why should not the ostriches be so likewise? He turned to his portfolio and found two or three old engravings, in which the interesting bird in question

appeared. But the details of its form were not definitely given. He went to the Jardin des Plantes, but the ostrich was either dead or ill,—at any rate was not visible. Then, with some misgivings, he thought he would try the Cabinet des Estampes. He was quite certain that many drawings existed of a bird not of recent invention, and which has played a part in many scenes from the days of the ark downwards. The employé consulted, after moving many volumes brought forward a wretched woodcut, executed by some peasant with his sickle, for some provincial almanac or village poster. There it was, sumptuously displaying itself at the commencement of a huge folio, by right of alphabetical precedence. “Is that all you have?” inquired the artist, smiling.—“Yes, sir; we have nothing else.” “Well, I am richer than you are, for I have three, the worst of which is a work of art by the side of that scratch.” On coming away, somewhat disappointed, the artist accidentally met a bookseller of his acquaintance, and related what had happened. He had scarcely reached home, afterwards, when there arrived a handsome volume, containing three hundred plates, all illustrative of the life and manners of the ostrich. “You must not go, my dear sir, to the library if you want to see anything,” said the letter accompanying the volume. “They possess everything, over and over again; but do you not know of the existence of the Hole and the Great Hole?” A little while afterwards, the artist had an opportunity of asking for an explanation of this mysterious

- allusion. "The Hole" was the reply, "is the general name of those vast halls, which I know very well, but which few people have penetrated, and the contents of which will not be sifted for these forty years. As for the Great Hole, 'tis a suite of rooms, from which, for a thousand years to come, nothing will ever be extracted."

To return to my more immediate subject. The Halls which follow or precede the collection of Drawings, and which formerly contained the Standish Gallery, have—very unadvisedly, I think—been set apart for the exhibition of the proofs of the Calcographic department. The nature of these proofs is such as to augment public regret. What are they? What do they mean? They are, without any exception almost, weak proofs, mediocre in value, of plates, of which a few only have any great merit in themselves; and this merit is only appreciable in the impressions which the Calcographie no longer possesses, and which are spread about in various private collections; appearing occasionally in sales, and in the shops of dealers.

Without intending to depreciate absolutely the plates in the possession of the Calcographie, I may say that they are certainly far from representing properly the great results of the Art of Engraving. They give us no assistance when we study the character and the history of that Art. Impressions struck off from much-worn plates may still be useful to artists, and indeed, become accessible to them on account of their diminished venal value. But they ought certainly not

to be chosen for exhibition, especially in a building where other Arts superior in their nature are richly and completely represented. It is really very thoughtless to give so splendid a position, in the midst of so many fine things, to a set out of works less valuable than might be collected in a single walk by any one who should cross the Pont des Beaux Arts, and wander right and left along the quay from the Rue du Bac to the Pont St. Michel. I will mention an example. The fine engraving of Antoine Masson, representing the "Pilgrims of Emmaus," after Titian—a work commonly called "The Table-cloth of Masson," on account of the wonderful manner in which that particular feature, so difficult to represent, has been expressed by the strokes of the burin—cannot by any means be appreciated in the pale impression which the Museum possesses or can possess; for the plate is as it were wearied with much production.

Now, it is not judicious to allow many visitors to say, as they stroll through these halls, that they have cheaply bought specimens far superior to what are exhibited. Look at the impressions which the Calcographie possesses of the works of that remarkable Frenchwoman, Claudia Stella, who pushed the art of engraving so far, and who ought to be much better known than she is. Her talent was of a rare kind, her industry firm and learned, her genius lively and powerful; so that the ablest men of the age of Louis XIV., who strained the whole powers of their mind to reproduce by engraving

the masterly works of Poussin, do not equal her. For if Pesne, one of the most vigorous of them, is supposed to have well understood Poussin, he did not understand him better than she did ; and in all that properly constitutes the talent of the engraver, was far from reaching her level. Yet in this exhibition we see nothing but faint and weak impressions of her works. The same may be said of the series of the " Battles of Alexander," executed after Lebrun by Audran ; and the same also of the admirable portraits of French historical characters by such men as Poilly, Drevet, and Gerard Edelinck.

It is difficult, also, to understand what meaning is attributed to this Calcographic exhibition that occupies so important a place in the Louvre. We do not see there the Art of Engraving illustrated in its entirety, nor chosen specimens, nor any great natural division. It is not the pictures of the Louvre that are represented especially. Many of those works have been engraved, and yet are not found there : the originals of others are to be found elsewhere. Nor do we see the French School of Painting, nor the series of French engravers, exhibited. 'Tis a confused mass, gathered together chance-wise, without plan or formal intention. A good collection of engravings, arranged according to the development of Art, either in its general or particular aspect, would have been most valuable ; and not, moreover, difficult to make. The Administration of the Museum had only to get permission to rout out the Hole and the Great Hole ; and, without impoverishing the collection of the

Cabinet des Estampes of the Rue de Richelieu, it might have been rich beyond desire. In this case, supported by a decree, no doubt easily to be obtained from the intelligent minister on whom these things depend, there might have been an admirable development of the idea of the Museum of Contemporary Engravings established by M. Jeanron at the Luxembourg.

These observations bear on the propriety of setting apart halls, in which so many fine drawings might have been exhibited, in order to display engravings, for which there is a demand; and the existence of which it was only necessary to point out for the information of purchasers. The distribution of a catalogue, and freedom given to turn over the portfolios and to see the finest specimens exhibited in the rooms of the upper story, where the sale is carried on, would have been sufficient. I shall here say a few words about this establishment, which is conducted in a manner creditable to the present administration, and which is much indebted to the preceding one.

The Calcographie was founded under the old Republic, in order to encourage engraving, and to propagate the works of the great masters. Among the objects of Art of all kinds proceeding from the possessions of the Crown, the emigrants, the clergy, and certain privileged bodies, taken definitive possession of in 1792, were a great number of engraved copperplates, especially a series known under the name of Cabinet du Roi. These plates, as well as those belonging to the

Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Engraving, to the surintendance of Versailles, and various scientific and religious establishments, formed at a later period the nucleus of the National Calcographie. The first idea of this institution is due to General Pommereul, who, in the fifth year of the Republic, laid his project before the Minister of the Interior, Benezech. In so doing, he referred to a similar establishment at Rome, by which Engraving had been supported during two centuries, and which was not found to discourage, but rather to stimulate, private enterprise. The project of General Pommereul, and that of a member of the administration of the Museum, mentioned in a previous page, Citizen Lavallée, were referred by the Directory to the Council of Five Hundred, which named for their examination a commission composed of the citizens Louvet, Lakanal, and Mercier. The establishment of the Institution was at first put off to time of peace, but soon afterwards the administration of the Central Museum of the Arts received authority to join to its productions that of the engraved plates which it possessed. The Calcographie was accordingly established, and an idea of its resources and tendencies may be obtained from some extracts from a circular sent out by the Central Museum to the Professors of the Schools of the Republic, on the first of Ventose, year IX.

“The Administration,” it says, “has just published a new catalogue of the prints which the public can procure at the French Calcographie. To the interesting

objects it contains are united the valuable collection known among *virtuosi* under the title of Cabinet du Roi, and many other series, not less sought after, both prints and maps, &c. Artists and amateurs are informed that they may obtain the 'Battles of Alexander the Great,' and the 'Tent of Darius,' the picturesque translations of which have immortalised, at the same time, Lebrun, Edelinck, and Gerard Audran. There is also to be remarked in this numerous collection, containing nearly three thousand plates, 'The Holy Family' of Raphael, 'The Table-cloth' of Masson, 'The Silence' of Carracci, and the statues, antique busts, and other masterpieces proceeding from the burins of Edelinck, Audran, Picart, Leclerc, Baudet, and Mellan; with the greater part of the productions, as philosophical as they are picturesque, of Poussin; the works of Van der Meulen, which painters of landscapes and battles do not disdain to take as their model; and the work of Beaulieu, who has very faithfully represented the campaigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. Amateurs of botany may obtain the collection of plants, of which Dodart commenced the description by order of Louis XIV., and which has become so rare in the trade.* Those who are interested in history will find

* As a singular example of a one-sided view of things produced by special studies, it may be mentioned that, *à propos* of this collection, the preface of the catalogue of the Calcographie, recently published, informs us that in the beginning of the seventeenth century horticulture was pursued in order to obtain models for tapestry and other art-productions.

many portraits, and also plans and outlines of the most interesting places in France, with a large collection of ceremonies, festivals, catafalques, funereal pomps; with the great Gallery of Versailles, painted by Lebrun, and engraved after the drawings of Massée by the ablest engravers of the last century; 'The Conquests of Louis XIV.,' engraved by Leclerc; and, in fine, the collection of ancient and modern medals."

The circular then goes on to announce that new works were about to be executed, and to describe in great detail the system of administration proposed. By these means the Calcographie became an establishment of public utility, and a not unimportant source of revenue. Had the same system been continued, the Calcographie might have by this time attained great prosperity. But the ideas that presided over its formation were very imperfectly followed from its outset, and were at length utterly set aside. One example, however, might have encouraged the Administration:—The engraving of the "Belle Jardinière," by Desnoyers, after Raphael, paid five thousand francs in the year XII., in a very short time brought in fifteen thousand francs.

It is rather remarkable that Denon, appointed as Director of the Museum by Napoleon, and who, as an engraver, ought to have particularly cared for that branch of Art, neglected it entirely. Instead of exercising an influence on the Art of Engraving, by concentrating at the Calcographie the reproductions of the

masterpieces then collected in Paris, he preferred favouring private enterprises, such as those of Bouillon, Laurent, and Filhol. Thus, from 1801 to 1814, the Museum only gave orders for eight plates after the innumerable riches of the Gallery; and, even then, the motive assigned for the execution of some of these plates was rather the unhappy situation of the artists to whom they were confided, than the general interests of Art. The possessions of the Calcographie were augmented besides, at this epoch, by the plates of the Coronation of Napoleon, and of his marriage with Marie-Louise; of the bas-reliefs of the Column of the Great Army; and the illustrations of the treatise of Lebrun concerning the relations of the human physiognomy with that of animals. Under the Restoration the portrait of Louis XVIII.; after Gerard, and the unfinished work of the Coronation of Charles X., were the only labours which Engraving had to execute for the Calcographie; and in fine, under Louis-Philippe, the Administration contented itself exclusively with reproducing, chiefly by means of lithography, the portraits of the members of the royal family! This exclusive system necessarily led the Calcographie of the Louvre to the state of decay in which it was found by the Revolution of 1848. The registers of sale show a gradual falling off. In the year XI. the sale produced 8788 frs. 75 cents. In 1820, 2615 frs. 87 cents. In 1847, 924 frs. 25 cents. We shall be less astonished at this result on observing that the catalogue of engravings had never been republished since 1808; so

that the plates acquired since that period were not inscribed, and, properly speaking, not offered for sale. Besides, this incomplete catalogue received no publicity. It was only known by a few dealers, who supplied themselves at the Calcographie, and whose interest it was to conceal the existence of this establishment from artists and amateurs, in order to profit by the usual reduction; consequently the expenses much surpassed the returns, and neither art nor artists profited. Considerable sums, besides, were employed, under the reign of Louis-Philippe, out of the funds set apart for the Calcographie; but they served either to bind expensively collections destined to be offered as presents, or as subscriptions to private undertakings! The publication of the historical galleries of Versailles, under the direction of M. Gavard, in three different forms, was entirely supported by the Civil List, which subscribed for 475 copies of the great folio and the small folio editions; and which finally bought, for 150,000 frs. the drawings and plates, to the number of more than 3000.

A considerable impulse has been given since 1848 to the Calcographic department, which still remains, however, comparatively unknown. I may mention that the office, situated on the second floor of the Louvre, and approached by an entrance in the south-western angle of the great court, is open to the public from ten to four every day, except Sunday. Sales are effected for cash, with a reduction of twenty-five per cent

to the trade. The impressions are now worked off in the building itself, whereas, under the monarchy of July, they were carelessly sent out; and the lithographic stones were left in the warehouses of M. Lemercier.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PAINTINGS IN THE LOUVRE.

I HAVE lingered so long on the various divisions of the Museum of the Louvre which attract least attention from the ordinary visitor, that I find myself almost on the extreme verge of the space I intend to fill without having made more than a passing allusion to that prodigious Collection of Paintings which is spread over the walls of the finest rooms, and serves as a tapestry to that interminable Gallery which no one can forget who has once followed the admiring streams of artists, and students, and amateurs, and inquisitive strangers, that flow almost without interruption from morning till evening, and from one end of the year to the other, to its utmost extremity. The subject is so vast that I almost shrink from entering on it. Yet what more interesting theme can occupy the pen? My first intention when I returned to these studies, with the assistance and under the guidance of a man whose opinions on Art sympathised with my own, and to whom I owe so much of whatever special knowledge

I may have upon Art, was to write a sort of history of Painting as it is illustrated in the Louvre, discussing the merits of each school, each master, each work; but such a task must be adjourned to another opportunity. Let me restrict myself here to the plan I have already adopted; and after noting some of the circumstances connected with the internal life of the Louvre as a museum, pass on to a rapid mention of some of the principal works it contains.

The Administration of 1848 was no sooner installed than it determined to operate a considerable change in the manner in which the pictures had until then been set forth in the Galleries of the Louvre. Many difficulties had to be overcome. It was not easy to offer such a collection in a learned and propitious manner to the eye. Fundamental ideas and intelligent systems, not much open to discussion, were already circulated and adopted by public opinion. But public opinion often decrees many things very hard to execute, making no account of obstacles of detail and circumstances of an inferior order that are often most influential in such matters. The chronological arrangement, which enables a rapid comprehension of the sequence and the progress of the various schools, had been long recommended. Men of taste desired that the eye should pass through the museum as the mind passes through history; but the great number of the works, their varying merit, their divers dimensions, added to the insufficiency of space and the want of light in many

halls, stood terribly in the way. Was it advisable to bring into the first places, to lower to the level of the spectator, pictures either of mediocre value or injured by time and cleaning; and to remove from the place of honour, and lift up out of reach of the eye, works of the greatest value and the greatest beauty? These were considerations which the public had not sufficiently weighed. They simply insisted that perfect order should be substituted for perfect confusion. The Administration of 1848, however, could not entirely satisfy these desires. It was obliged to choose a middle term. However, when the Gallery, entirely rehandled immediately after the last exhibition of contemporary paintings that took place at the Louvre, was thrown open, public opinion believed that the desired result had been attained; and great was the applause.

But the Director, in obedience to whose vigorous impulse the change was so rapidly effected, admitted that public opinion was somewhat hasty in believing that the task of methodical arrangement had been carried out in the best possible manner. He hoped, time aiding, the rooms being better fitted up and lighted, with more space added from the dilapidated portions of the Louvre, to attain a better result. His chief exertions were, indeed, not based on the learned ideas attributed to him. He acted in this, as in other cases, more as an artist than an antiquarian; and he was especially proud of the application of a principle which it seems was harder to apply than to discover—namely,

that works of Art procured with difficulty and necessary for the progress of study should not be used to decorate the Halls that contained them. He was rather ready to sacrifice the appearance of the Halls, if that were necessary, in order to enable the pictures to be better seen and enjoyed.

The preceding Administration had, on the contrary, sacrificed everything—it is scarcely necessary to say how absurdly—in order to furnish the fine apartments of the Louvre with the works of the Masters. Nothing was cared for but symmetry. No attention was paid to the subject of a picture. It mattered not from what kind of genius it proceeded, what school it represented, what principle it illustrated, what lesson it taught, what was its rank, and what its merit. If its frame agreed in shape and size with another by its side or opposite, that was sufficient. This system, regularly applied in disregard of all real regularity, was put an end to at once; and the public, without much care perhaps for the difficulties overcome, very generously approved the reform, and praised the activity which had produced it.

Another infatuation of the previous régime, which I notice absolutely without any national feeling, was a puerile tendency to give everywhere, without any discernment, the best places to the works of the French School, especially to those by contemporary, or almost contemporary, masters. The Museum of the Louvre, though containing many remarkable lacunes, is rich

enough in pictures to enable the student to obtain a very extensive knowledge of the artistic productions of man at various times and in various countries. But the collections were deprived of their real character by this strange and narrow prejudice. The French School in its various phases possesses an excellence which need not be insisted on, and cannot be denied. But no one, even in France, whose opinion is worth having, ventures to subordinate to that school the great schools of Italy and Flanders. M. Jeanron, therefore, deserves great credit for having broken up the old arrangement, and set forth the works of Painting in the Louvre according to their real rank, without sacrificing any school; and it is to be hoped that his plan will not be departed from. A position once gained should be kept.

It will be good, however, as a kind of precaution against any return to old mistakes, to relate—and it matters not where these facts are published—what kind of difficulties stand in the way of a conscientious administration when it endeavours to struggle against interests and prejudices of a certain kind. I see here an illustration of national character. In order to bring about a change, the successful reception of which saved him, at least for a time, M. Jeanron was obliged to risk his place, to commit the most positive disobedience, and to expose himself to serious enmity. For more than a month the Gallery had been closed, as I have said, after the exposition, in order to carry out this new classification,—a really stupendous work, when we

consider the vast number of pictures. Everything was ready. To chaos had succeeded order. But rumours had gone abroad. There was discontent. Bitter complaints circulated. The audacious Director was anathematised in certain classes of artists and amateurs, not without influence. If he had laid a sacrilegious hand on some mysterious palladium, he could not have been more violently attacked. There was a rumbling as of an approaching earthquake. At length the Director of the Beaux Arts, the colleague of M. Jeanron, came with his chef-de-bureau to see what was the matter. The importance of the step taken, and the noise made about it at the Central Administration by high-placéd members of the Institute, and by influential representatives of the people, had excited them, and they had conferred with the Minister on the subject. To those who do not know that the slightest departure from routine creates, in official circles in France—not, of course, in England—almost as great a to-do as would the splitting of the firmament in the world at large, it is impossible to appreciate the flurry in which these two gentlemen sought an interview with the Director, and stalked through the reorganised galleries. What they saw alarmed them, chiefly, they said, for the sake of the Director, whose activity and devotion to his duty they knew; and they were happy to inform him that the Minister was about to name a commission of eminent artists and amateurs to examine into the nature of the revolution effected in the Mu-

seum, and to modify it if it appeared necessary before the public was called in. Then came a formal order to wait for the result of the labours of this proposed commission.

That was a critical moment. M. Jeanron felt that it was necessary to dissimulate. He was glad to be relieved from responsibility—completely entered into the views which were so graciously explained to him—his desires had been met half way—he had begun that work in order to get through preliminary difficulties, but of course knew perfectly well that in such a delicate matter it was proper to obtain advice from all sides, and appeal to the sanction of all authorities—what the Minister, therefore, had ordered, he had almost been ready to implore. The officials glided away; and the partisans of the *status quo* slept sweetly that night. Next morning all the doors of the Museum were thrown back on their hinges, and the crowd began to pour in. M. Jeanron was actually dismissed, at least in official opinion and in the conviction of the bureaus, for this act of boldness, which he considered to be an act of duty. By the hour of noon, however, the satisfaction of the public had been loudly and warmly expressed; and the rumour of this triumph reached the Ministry of the Interior just as his formal dismissal was about to be despatched.

As may easily be imagined, this was one of the great artistic facts of that time. Much discussion followed; and I was astonished to notice, coming as I

did from a country of languid atmosphere, where rumour takes weeks to circulate from the sea to the land-gate, how noisy was the clash of passions, vanities, and interests, what extraordinary fierceness was introduced into such debates, how far prejudice and anger had sway, how difficult it was to do anything when every single proposal stimulated twenty different oppositions. There were men at that time who seemed to have no other employment than to revenge the disgrace brought upon them by their own incapacity, by opposing everything brought forward by new men; but there were others beaten into shape by the old régime — cast-iron children of routine — who conscientiously thought that every change was a crime, every reform worthy of an anathema. There be such amongst ourselves; and it seems almost necessary that progress should shatter them, for they *will* place themselves in the way.

M. Jeanron, in calmer times, confided to me the motives by which he was actuated on this occasion. He said, that if a committee of artists and amateurs had appeared likely in any degree to decide on anything reasonable in those times of feverish dispute, when rival schools and conflicting tastes, always disposed to come to intellectual blows, were rendered more quarrelsome than ever, because in one camp were the insolent victors, in the other the exasperated vanquished — he would have really wished to appear as the submissive agent of such a conclave; but he knew

very well that nothing at that time could be expected from them but debate, hesitation, and obstacles. An amusing incident came to confirm these statements, and I shall relate it, because otherwise it would seem improbable that what public opinion in Europe has regarded as a simple and sensible proceeding, should have been set down by many men in France as artistic heresy. When M. Jeauron caused to be removed from the Grand Saloon the pictures of the French School, and especially of the Davidian School, from the most vast and imposing canvasses down to the "Cupid and Psyche" of M. Gerard, which engraving has rendered familiar "to all the world"—a great instance of the taste of that singular entity—a respectable old man, remarkable alike for erudition and activity, Director-General of the National Archives, Professor in the College of France, Member of the Academy, known for his skill in restoring ancient inscriptions to the satisfaction of those who admire innocent amusement and who do not reflect on its dangerous consequences,—M. L——, in fact, who was very friendly with the new Director, and thankful for the facilities afforded him at the Museum, which he visited every day, and where he met with complaisance not common under the previous régime;—this gentleman, I say, was struck dumb when he saw the canvasses of David, of Gros, of Girodet, and of Gerard, taken to the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, at that time still dark and undecorated.

"What means this profanation, young man?" cried

he at length, with great emotion; "what means this enormity? You take upon yourself to tear away these sanctified things from the sanctuary of Art, where they shone in full splendour in the finest possible light! You know how devoted I am to you. Well, in spite of my devotion to you, who contributed to save these things in the hour of danger, I abandon you, because you do not know how to appreciate them when the time of veneration and study has come. You are incapable of understanding them. You are nothing but a soldier, a Commissary of the Republic. I took you for an artist—I took you for a learned man—I took you for a theorist! You are only a *rapin*—a romantic *rapin*. Romanticism and revolution will destroy everything; and everything, indeed, will perish."

M. Jeanron endeavoured to appease the rage of this excellent and worthy person, not by a gentleness which might have appeared feigned, but by a warmth which was really so, and which gave him an opportunity of explaining away the chief cause of offence. He had withdrawn these works from the Great Saloon in order to show them to better advantage, by removing them from the society of paintings more powerful in a material point of view, and which attenuated the great moral and intellectual merit of the others. The "Deluge" of Girodet was not understood in all the depths of its expression and its dramatic delicacy by the side of the enormous "cheat-the-eye" of Paul Veronese; and so on. The Director admitted having been once young,

and having yielded to romantic allurements. But in his books, whilst the new school was most triumphant, he alone had ventured to exalt the talents of David; and he had been too roughly handled on that account to entitle M. L—— to forget his services. In fine, becoming more persuasive, he led the honourable Academician to consider the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, how vast and beautiful it was; and said that he destined it, without allowing of any intrusion, to the *élite* of the Davidian School, which should there be exhibited in all its majesty, without contact, without stain, and in the solemn isolation to which it was entitled.

“But, unhappy man,” protested M. L——, somewhat appeased, though endeavouring not to seem so; “do you not see that this Hall is dark—that it is, in truth, a catacomb?”

The diplomatic reply was, that it was precisely on that account that it had been selected; for when it became known in the Assembly that such magnificent works were placed in so bad a light, no one would refuse the money necessary for its improvement. M. L—— shook his head.

“Your Republicans are too economical,” said he, “and you won’t get that money; so that these fine things will be for ever lost.”

M. Jeanron told him, that in that improbable event everything would return to its former state. There was no resisting this. The good old man held out a reconciled hand, and said, “I have given you my confidence.

In return do something for me. Let this graceful and masterly picture of 'Love and Psyche' return to the Great Saloon—immediately—and peace is declared."

"But, sir," replied M. Jeanron, "to do so would be to sin against every idea of order and harmony."

Thereupon, almost in tears, M. L—— stepped slightly back, and said:

"But look at me! Does nothing strike you? Do you not see that that divine figure of Cupid was drawn after me—that I was the model who stood for that immortal painter, when I was studying in my youth in his atelier?"

The almost broken-hearted savant went his way. Shortly afterwards a personage, much more judicious in matters of Art, came to the Museum, which he constantly visited, warmly sympathising as he did with the views of the able Director—I mean M. Thiers, to whom the story was immediately related amidst hearty laughter; but, as may easily be imagined, the statesman amateur recommended, as the proper place for M. Gerard's frigid and awkward production, neither the Great Saloon nor the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, but something like the garrets of the Louvre.

As M. Jeanron had foreseen, it was determined to embellish the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, and to introduce an admirable light; and the original plan was indeed much extended, and money for costly decorations was voted.

CHAPTER XV.

ANALYSIS OF THE GREAT SALOON.

WHEN the Great Saloon was first set apart for the exhibition of the *élite* of the paintings of all schools, its shape and decoration were different from the present. The alteration of the continent has led naturally to an alteration of the arrangement and selection of the things contained. There were several points in the old distribution that appeared to me better than some in the actual one; but outside observers are, perhaps, disposed to make too light of material difficulties.

This Great Saloon, then,—lighted from the top—has three of its sides pierced by doors; one leading from the Galerie d'Apollon, one into the little room where articles of jewellery, &c., are exhibited, and one into the Long Gallery. On the side where there is no opening spreads out that colossal picture of "The Marriage of Cana," by Paul Veronese, flanked on the left (of the spectator) by a Tintoretto, placed over the "Charles I." of Vandyke; which again is placed over two smaller frames, containing a Pastoral Scene by

Giorgione, and "The Marriage of St. Catherine" by Correggio. On the right, and, like the Tintoretto, near the upper corner of the Paul Veronese, is a Bassano; under which comes "The Queen of the Amazons," by Rubens; under which, again, is an "Apparition," by Lesueur, side by side with "The Virgin, St. Elizabeth, and the Children," of Andrea del Sarto.

Paul Veronese's "Marriage of Cana"—perhaps the finest and most imposing work of that master—is in itself enough to entitle a museum to be styled rich. It has long ago passed through the ordeal of criticism, and is as inaccessible to blame as to praise. Like the masterpieces of literature, it can expect only the carpings of envy, and fear only the laudations of the ignorant. What more, indeed, can be said than has been said, no doubt, of a work so healthy, so pure, so complete, so beautiful? All the eminent qualities of Art are manifested in it, and it would be almost improper to direct attention to any one in particular. I know that it is traditional among critics always to couple the name of this great Venetian master with eloquent admiration of his admirable colour; but there is something almost offensive in the choice of this exclusive topic—at any rate, it is calculated to lead astray both the public and the student. Out of such conventional ecstasies of praise, all concentrated on one quality, have sprung the sham schools, which try to persuade us that a man who draws like a school-boy may be a painter if he can arrange tints in an agreeable way; or, on the other hand, that

correct perspective and contour may excuse false, insignificant, and inharmonious tints. In this wonderful picture of Paul Veronese, the Master, it is true, is not to be surpassed as a learned and inspired colourist;—there is no discord amidst so much variety, so many contrasts; no languor, no monotony, amidst so much harmony. But is this a reason for omitting to say that the painter, unlike certain of his rickety descendants, is a learned, simple, vivid, and masterly draughtsman? No one has better succeeded in drawing so great a variety of figures in costumes so different, in attitudes so opposed, on planes so contrasting both as regards depth and height, every modification of form depending on the varying point of view being carefully noticed. Who, indeed, has a more evident mastery over all the resources of drawing, or is better able to overcome its difficulties? If we marvel at the triumph of the colourist, then, we must not forget the draughtsman, otherwise we let in all manner of erroneous judgments and subversive theories. Moreover, those who consent—and this work commands consent—to admire equally the manifestation of these two qualities, must take care to reserve an equal share of their esteem for the complete display of the science of effect, of that learned distribution of light and shade which, in the fundamental division of the conditions of painting, stands as apart from form and colour, considered in themselves, as these two conditions are distinct one from the other. In this priceless work the light is shed as if it came from heaven, without any

offensive brilliance or the slightest disagreeable and arbitrary sacrifice. Everywhere we see the true, the simple, and the beautiful in effect; as the correct, the broad, and the living, in contour and variety, contrast and harmony, in colour. Therefore we are not here in presence of a colourist, or a draughtsman, or a clair-obscurist; but in presence of a painter, universal in his art and consummate in his practice, without affectation and without deficiency. Paul Veronese does not enlarge his special result by any necessary poverty or voluntary negligence of the valuable conditions of painting. He is never the victim of that treacherous calculation which so often leads into the embraces of mannerism the artists of decaying schools. On the contrary, he endeavours always to increase his general result by calling to his aid all the resources and all the riches of the whole Art. I doubt whether these expressions of praise could have occurred to any critic when the old schools were flourishing. They would have been too commonplace. It would have seemed as unnecessary to employ them as to say that a truly great writer must know how to reason as well as how to relate, how to use a metaphor and a syllogism; and whilst he was acquainted with the speculations of philosophy, must not disdain the assistance of grammar.

It is a fortunate circumstance for the French collection—and one that may be specially insisted on—that a work of this importance and character, distinguished at once by facile execution, by theoretical

knowledge, and by individual *naïveté*, should meet us on its threshold. Our attention will be presently distracted by the claims of rival schools and manners, and we shall see traces of all contradictory and conflicting theories. Our admiration will be by turns excited by the most opposite qualities, and we shall often miss, even in the most masterly productions, some of the conditions which are manifested to their fullest extent in this serene work.

Near the left upper corner of the "Marriage of Cana" is hung, as I have said, a painting by Tintoretto, representing "Susannah in the Bath." It is rather to be regretted that this work has been placed in the Saloon of Honour devoted to the finest productions of Art. Not that I protest against the mention of Tintoretto by the side of the ablest masters. On the contrary, I think that, in France at any rate, he is not placed on his true level. But I judge him rather from the position into which his name naturally drops in the list of artists than from personal experience. No one is higher than he by a head. He belongs to the small band which is never recruited and cannot be diminished. Paul Veronese is only his equal, and Titian is no more. But it is in Venice that his works are left; and those who have not visited that city must judge of him as they judge of Apelles. No one excites greater sympathy, no genius burns more brightly. He is like a fixed star whose flame never throbs. We know, too, that great was his common sense, firm

his character, and pure his conscience. His works, his words, his acts, all speak him great. And if Paul Veronese deserves the praise given him, it is because he conformed his practice to the example and the precepts of this powerful master of a powerful school. The inscription that lighted the walls of his studio for the behoof of the young tells us what he was and what he thought: "The Drawing of Michael Angelo; the Colouring of Titian." These words did not counsel servile imitation, as some seem to think. The Master has been accused of a kind of subaltern eclecticism by men who could neither appreciate his practice nor his theory. In France, where reputations spring from nothing and stumble over nothing, Tintoretto has not only been cried down because of the comparatively insignificant specimens the country possesses, but because of the tradition of his rapidity, his fertility, his audacity. The works that have bloomed on his canvass with the rapidity of spring flowers have been made to testify against him. In the time of Louis XIV. that sagacious De Piles, the Chambrays, and Félibien—mouthpieces through which the icy breath of the Academy blew—attacked this sturdy Art-athlete for the very qualities which difference him from their consumptive and emaciated ideal. The Davidians, likewise, made him their butt, setting up their cold manner against his heroic enthusiasm, and against his broad indications their meagre outlines.

The contrast of the vast and splendid picture of

Paul Veronese—which so faithfully represents the whole genius of its author—with an equivocal, retouched, and blackened work of Tintoretto, puts the latter at great disadvantage, and is liable to leave a false impression on the mind of students. The canvass is also of doubtful authenticity. Several other of his works exist in the Museum. In the first place, a “Dead Christ and two Angels,” which, according to the gossiping catalogue, was estimated under the Empire at the enormous price of 20*l.*; whilst under the indignant monarchy that succeeded, more learned and respectful judges at once raised the price to 24*l.*! There is, moreover, another scene of the same kind; and a wild sketch of Paradise, where traces of less able hands are seen, and the plans of which were not followed by the Master in his great composition in the Hall of the Palace of St. Mark at Venice. But when nothing is in hand it is puerile to attempt to appear rich. At any rate, it would have been better to bring into the Great Saloon, and exhibit at a proper height, the little portrait of himself which the Museum possesses. This masculine work, sober and solid, is well fitted to relate to youth how in those glorious times whitebearded masters still knew how to paint. It may now be seen in the Long Gallery, on the right hand, signed by Tintoretto himself.

Underneath the picture which has suggested these remarks is seen the portrait of Charles I. by Vandyke, an excellent specimen of the painter’s talent. It is

placed, however, rather too high. A full-length portrait, above all others, requires to be kept at the level for which it was originally intended; and in this particular instance the amateur has to strain somewhat, and without complete success, to perceive all the beauty of the finely-drawn and exquisitely-coloured head. If the picture were placed at a proper height, it would not be advisable for the spectator to stand at a greater distance than is absolutely necessary to enable him to embrace the whole canvass at a single glance. In fact it would be better placed on the lower line in the Gallery, in the midst of the other fine portraits by the same master. In its stead we might here have one of the portraits of men accompanied by a child, which are painted in a less soft and more energetic mode, and which equally well represent the talent of Vandyke: for example, the one in which some recognise Rubens, or his brother, or the portrait of President Richardot. Still better, considering the neighbourhood of Paul Veronese, of the dark picture of Tintoretto, and the energetic works of Giorgione and Correggio beneath, we might have had in this place Vandyke's excellent "*Vierge aux Donateurs*." A mere portrait in such a position attracts too little notice. Rubens would scarcely have been able to stand a comparison with Paul Veronese if his interests had not been better looked after.

Beneath the Charles I., as I have said, are two paintings, placed on the same line—one by Giorgione,

the other by Correggio. Giorgione in this small specimen may be recognised as the powerful and original artist who exerted an influence on the final development of the Venetian School, just as Da Vinci influenced that of the Florentine School. This young master received Venetian Art as a child—but a child of much promise—from the hands of Bellini; and in the midst of an easy life—during which he by turns yielded to the fascinations of love and the allurements of music—now in the busy city, now in the quiet fields, without seeming exertion and without disfiguring thought, he easily attained the results of the profoundest researches and the consummate ability necessary to apply them. M. Waagen does not allow this work to belong to Giorgione, but his reasons are not convincing. On the contrary, the master's presence may be felt throughout the whole picture. It contains all the qualities of his painting; it is coloured, solid, harmonious, sober, and varied; and we can recognise his taste for country life and for the rival art of Music: nor would it be very difficult to maintain that we can recognise himself in person. At any rate, I agree here perfectly with the arranger of the Great Saloon. This work is the most valuable the Gallery possesses by Giorgione. His "Ex Voto" and his "Herodias" are far inferior.

By the side of the Giorgione is the "Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine," by Correggio—an admirable painting in perfect preservation. There the master's

talent, of which I shall presently speak before a more important work, may be studied, in Paris at least, in its greatest perfection. The Grand Saloon, in fact, contains all the really valuable works of Correggio that the Louvre possesses. The few paintings in the Long Gallery which are scarcely attributed to him by the catalogue, are in many respects questionable. Several of them are said to be from "the school of Correggio," and others are only described as "after Correggio." In fine, the "Holy Family," to which his name is attached, is mentioned in a note as rather to be attributed to his son Pomponio.

The "St. Catherine" has often been reproduced. Copies were made during the lifetime of the master, and have continued to be made ever since, often by very able painters. Many galleries possess specimens, to which the enthusiastic veneration of their owners is directed. There is nothing wrong in this, if what they admire is really excellent; and a copy is not always to be despised merely because it is a copy. But the picture before which we now stand is of merit too transcendent—it is too pervaded with the author's genius to allow its authenticity to be disputed for a moment—at any rate, by disinterested persons. It has been disputed, however, as I learned from an amusing anecdote related to me by M. Jeanron, and which I give as an admirable illustration of the obstinate fanaticism of certain amateurs—a race to be carefully guarded against. M. Jeanron had been long on terms

of friendship with M. Van Gobelscroy, formerly Minister of the Interior of the King of Holland. This gentleman was a connoisseur, and possessed a fine gallery. He came one day to consult his friend the artist about a purchase he was on the point of making for his king. It was a *repetition* of the "St. Catherine" of Correggio, of great beauty. It existed, amidst many other valuable pictures, in the gallery of a very respectable old amateur. M. Van Gobelscroy had been quite won by this painting, and had long with difficulty resisted the temptation to close with the offer made. But the sum demanded was enormous. He hesitated. At length he resolved to take the advice of a disinterested artist, whom he knew to be expert in these matters, and on whose opinion he depended more than on that of any professional art-appraiser. The great question was to be decided by him negatively or affirmatively at once. They went to the house of the amateur. He received them with uneasy politeness, just as a horse-dealer receives in his yard a stranger who looks at his beasts in a knowing way. He began by pointing out various pictures, some of which only were remarkable; but "The Marriage of St. Catherine" was not, at first, forthcoming. It was mysteriously shut up in an ebony case; and when the old amateur—he was very old—feeble and white-headed—at length placed his hand on the key: he paused, and looking inquiringly from M. Van Gobelscroy's countenance to that of his companion, said in an emphatic manner:—

“Is this gentleman in reality sufficiently versed in the arts to justify me in opening this case, which contains a thing (here he cast up his eyes in a kind of ecstasy)—a thing only to be shown to the erudite and competent few?—a work, sir, (endeavouring to pierce M. Jeanron to the soul with his kindling eyes,) a work by the great Correggio, of which no museum in Europe can give any idea whatever; for the ignoble copy in the Louvre is a caricature and a libel. Yes, sir,” added, already in a tone of feverish irritation, the worthy octogenarian, seeing that the man he addressed looked frightened, and only half convinced, “yes, sir, if you are a painter, a consummate and enlightened painter, as the honourable M. Van Gobelscroy assures me, you will admit that you do not yet know Correggio’s ‘Marriage of St. Catherine:’ what the Louvre exhibits is evidently the work of—I know not what disciple—endeavouring to reproduce his inimitable master.”

“That disciple,” replied M. Jeanron, smiling, “must then have died very young, for if he had continued studies so well begun, we should have had another great master in the world; for the picture in the Louvre exhibits a talent which none of the successors of Correggio exhibit.”

“Possibly. The work of that copyist may be rather hopeful; but see how far behind his master he has remained!”

So saying, he threw back the door of the case, and

with a triumphant and theatrical gesture, not at all incompatible with profound conviction, pointed to the work, which appeared richly framed, and placed in the best possible light. M. Jeanron felt, under the circumstances, that it was necessary to appear astonished and overwhelmed. He had no motive for killing that old man on the spot, and appearing needlessly irreverent to age. He accordingly recited the most laudatory expressions he could remember; and the amateur's countenance beamed with delight. That was not the place to express his opinion frankly, and there was no harm in leaving M. Van Gobelscroy a little longer in the dark. But their host was called away for a moment, and so the artist had an opportunity of rapidly explaining that the supposed Correggio was evidently a copy executed in the time of Mignard, probably by that master himself. The amateur came back and resumed his fiery declamations, under cover of which a retreat might have been effected, had he not unfortunately said parenthetically: "A distinguished English collector in vain offered for this inimitable work six thousand *livres*." The painter, thrown off his guard for a moment, and not thinking of pounds sterling, unluckily replied, wishing to be very civil: "Indeed, sir, you have refused six thousand francs!" "What!" vociferated the amateur, "six thousand francs! What do you mean? Oh, mon Dieu! have I opened my case to show this marvel to an impudent fellow like this? M. Van Gobelscroy, on account of

our old friendship, I allow you to return here alone; but in company with this ignorant wretch, never! My door shall not open for you! As for you, sir, pack off! Go to the Louvre! Go and see Correggios there. Amateurs of your stamp deserve nothing else."

M. Jeanron, at any rate, saved the King of Holland a good sum of money.

On the right hand of the "Marriage of Cana," beginning at the top, is a picture by Bassano, an "Entombed Christ." I have complained that the work of Tintoretto, placed in a corresponding position, should be out of reach of the eye, consoling myself, however, with the reflection, that it was comparatively unimportant. This is not the case with the picture of Bassano. It is an admirable work, certainly one of the finest by that master. It is quite lost where it is, and would appear to much better advantage with its numerous companions in the Long Gallery — the "Entrance of the Animals into the Ark," the "Striking of the Rock," the "Adoration of the Shepherds," the "Marriage of Cana," "Jesus on the Road to Calvary," with the portrait of Giam-Bologna. Moreover, as it is meant in the Great Saloon to bring together only the most choice productions of the schools, it was scarcely judicious to place there the work of a man who was, no doubt, very able, but was very far from taking one of the highest positions in his school. The honour done him is in two ways injurious to his fame. Those who can see the work are led to make unfavour-

able comparisons ; but the greater number cannot discern its real merits. Unfortunately, the idea which governed at first the classification of this Saloon has been modified for the sake of symmetry—companion-pictures have been sought for, and decorative convenience has been again sacrificed to.

Beneath the Bassano is a magnificent picture by Rubens, very well placed, though, perhaps, a little high up, considering the extreme delicacy and transparency of the mode in which the master, against his usual custom, has painted it. It is a most valuable work, and Rubens never rose to a higher level. I may add that it is beautifully preserved, and of marvelous freshness.

In the space underneath we have, in the first place, a picture by Lesueur, of admirable expression, representing a Saintly Apparition. Lesueur's life was a melancholy one. He was never able to undertake the great works for which he was born, and in which, if Louis XIV. had better known how to spend his money, he would have certainly exhibited his masterly talent. He is especially remarkable, like Poussin, for works of small dimensions, but belonging to an imposing class—vivid expressions of human feeling and moral worth. The Museum possesses some admirable witnesses to the truth of this opinion. Indeed, almost the entire production of Lesueur has remained in France, which explains his relative want of reputation throughout the rest of Europe. It is only within a

comparatively short time that his value has been properly recognised. In the Great Saloon, where it would not have been advisable to place a fragment of the "Legend of St. Bruno," to be seen entire in the Long Gallery, it would have been better to exhibit a few of his small canvasses than his "St. Paul at Ephesus," which, although full of merit, does not reach their level. Had this colossal work remained in the Long Gallery, a better and more complete classification of the Saloon would have been possible. The charming picture of "St. Veronica" far surpasses, it may be boldly said, the composition of St. Paul. The deep, tender, and sad genius of the painter, is in it more completely evidenced, more originally developed, than in that great canvass, which has many weak points, and is, in some respects, stained by imitation and academical affectation. At any rate, I should have preferred the "St. Veronica" and the "Christ Exhausted" to this black monk, however sober or poetical the painting may be.

By the side of the Lesueur there is the "Virgin and St. Elizabeth, with the Two Children," by Andrea del Sarto. His "Charity," now in the Long Gallery, would probably have been promoted to this place were it not for the misfortunes it has met with, as I have elsewhere related. As it is, Andrea del Sarto is not very worthily represented in the Saloon, although this work is fine in character, and belongs to the master's best period. Andrea was certainly one of the most original and learned, and I may say, amiable of Floren-

tine painters. He lacked nothing to place him on a level with the most imposing geniuses, save a better-tempered soul and a wiser conduct. In spite of all, however, he is very great, but the study of him requires delicate analysis and profound attention, for otherwise we cannot estimate his virtual talent, which rose far above his realised works. The surname he received in the school of the fantastical Pierro di Cosimo—"Andrea Senza Errore," no doubt referred to his profound science, his penetrating intelligence, his cultivated taste. Carelessly adopted by superficial criticism, it has given authority to some—ready to reflect the opinion of a whole school—for maintaining that his works are models of correctness and conscientious labour; whereas it is easy to see traces in them of the most evident inattention: in every work we are reminded that he sometimes nodded. However, on this account we need not depreciate the value of a man whom Heaven endowed with the loftiest powers and the vastest faculties,—the normal manifestations, the distinctive character, and the complex consequences of which should be attentively studied—precisely because, whilst nothing is more worthy of admiration than such divine gifts, we have a right, not only to scrutinise them as matters of curiosity, but to insist that those who receive shall make the best possible use of them.

I must here observe that the form of the Great Saloon, which was originally square, has been modified—*i.e.* rendered octagonal—by the introduction, in each

corner, of a great screen. On the upper part of the screen, to the right of the "Marriage of Cana," is that important picture by Titian, the "Crowning of Our Saviour with Thorns," or "the Flagellation." I shall not in this place attempt to estimate so great an artist, confining myself exclusively to considerations suggested by this one work. It was undertaken, as the catalogue naively remarks, by Titian, at the age of seventy-six: from which it is not by any means to be inferred that it presents anything like a senile character. This great and favoured artist, who died pencil in hand at the age of ninety-nine, was at the very zenith of his powers when he began this picture—never more abundant, never in more complete possession of all his faculties. It is not remarkable that we recognise the presence of his genius here; for we are told it may be fully recognised in that vast picture the "Allegory of the Battle of Lepanto," now at Madrid, which he undertook when he had passed the age of ninety-four. The "Crowning with Thorns" was not only executed at a period of the painter's life when his powers were perfect, but is in the mode most proper for their display in the most remarkable manner. The picture is grave, full of action, marked in character—contains the most varying contrasts under the yoke of the most masterly unity. The nobility and resignation of the Divine Martyr; the brutality, the violence of his executioners; the coloured and living flesh-tints; the harsh metallic armour; the sombre and imposing

architecture ; the stone and the marble ;—all are melted, as it were, into one grand effect, by means of the most sober brilliancy and the most cautious sacrifice. The dimension and the proportion are also calculated with the same serenity, the same exactitude, the same precision. Verily, this is a fine work. Particular taste may give its affection rather to others, but no convincing reason can be brought forward for placing it on a lower level than any.

Under these circumstances, when it had been resolved to remove it to a place of honour in the Great Saloon, it would have been advisable to calculate in what way it might best be accessible to study and enjoyment. Has this been done? I think not ; and it will be interesting, and may be useful, to dwell a little—taking advantage of this text—on the important question of picture-hanging. This painting of Titian's can be completely seen from no point of the Great Saloon. In the first place, it is very high from the ground ; so that it appears at a false angle of light. And if, in order to consider it long and attentively, we sit down on the comfortable divan installed in the centre of the Saloon, at the rounded corner exactly opposite the picture—which divan, by the way, prevents amateurs with good eyes from stepping back to a sufficient distance—seated, I say, on this divan, we find that all the upper part of the picture, intended by the painter, as the introduction of the fine bust of Tiberius testifies, powerfully to concur to the general effect, is entirely disfigured. The can-

vass undulates, crumples, shines, dulls; and the effect is lost. This inconvenience might have been avoided by hanging the picture simply upon one of the walls of the Saloon—in lieu, for example, of the Murillo, which attracts the vulgar visitor because of the wonderful price paid for it.

At any rate, by being placed in such a corner, this fine work is singularly ill-treated; for I have not yet enumerated all its mishaps. The decorative mania I have so often insisted on, has led to the choice for these corner-screens of a detestable tint—a fiery red—against the glare of which, as it receives the full flood of light from above, no tint in any picture can prevail. Red is the most violent and the most conspicuous of colours. See how, out in the country, it at once masters the eye and leads it astray: no practice can save us from miscalculating the distance at which a red object appears. This is the reason why it is abominable for signals, why an approaching army seems nigh at hand when it is on the horizon, why the first volley always falls short of the enemy, and why children trample down many yards of corn to gather a poppy-flower that appears close to the way-side. What painting can stand the neighbourhood of such a colour? And if this painting happen to contain in its very centre an identical colour, introduced in order to direct the attention towards a particular spot, how can it be expected that this colour, subject to the laws of effect, modified in the light and shade, and restricted

to the measure of the object which requires its presence, can compete with that vast surface, equally well lighted, but without any shade, any interruption, spreading on all hands its formidable crudity? This is a question to be decided by mathematical calculation. The weaker and less extended surface is necessarily crushed by the more powerful and more extended. In this predicament precisely is the cloak of the Christ, which is exactly of the same tone as the field on which the picture is placed. Now it happens that on this cloak the powerful colourist has lavished his chief effort. It influences the general effect of the work; and the miscalculation, or rather the want of calculation, which has led to its being placed under such conditions, obliterates it deplorably.

It would be erroneous to say that the frame is sufficient to defend and isolate the work. For, look to the left, upon the "Queen of the Amazons," by Rubens, which I have above mentioned. There you will see, standing out from the neutral tone of the sides of the Saloon, the red garment of the man with the leather cap interrupted by the edge of the picture. Observe how that tint brightens and shines against the well-chosen ground, the yellow tint of which takes so much less possession of the eye. Observe also, on the other side of the same picture, how salient, how sparkling, how living, is the admirable drapery, nearly of the same tone as the wall, of that graceful female figure. Note, too, how intense are the blues, and how transpa-

rent. Besides, whilst I dispute generally the fact that a frame is sufficient to protect the scene it includes, I have particularly to add that in this case the frame is chosen in the worst possible taste. It is neither sober nor broad. It is full of sparkling ornaments; and its form, aiming at gracefulness, at suppleness, at coquetry in fact, contrasts disagreeably with the gravity, the sadness, and the energy, of the spectacle it embraces. These criticisms may appear at first too minute; but assuredly it is not a paradox to lay down as a rule that a framè ought to be in conformity with the mode and the character of the picture for which it is chosen. The old masters, from whom we have so much to learn, busied themselves more intelligently and less empirically about this matter. They were not content with mere monotonous gilded frames, and had often recourse to ebony and other woods.

Beneath the Titian is the picture of Leonardo da Vinci, representing "Saint Anne, the Virgin, and the Child." What a noble and beautiful thing! Yet, how painful it is to behold! Without allowing our imagination to career too wildly, we may say that it fully illustrates the touching existence of Da Vinci. Always crossed, ever and completely devoted to the most arduous struggles, crowned with merited success, and dashed by perpetual disappointment—such it was. Of this man, who never reaped all he sowed, who scattered so much to magnify the harvest of so many competitors and rivals, the works, by the most extraordinary accu-

mulation of circumstances, have for the most part disappeared and perished. But in the present case, neither war, nor the devastation of cities, nor the inclemency of climate, nor chance, nor accident, has compromised the work in which his sovereign genius still bursts forth so completely, so manifestly. When we examine this panel, it is easy to see that, absolutely without excuse, sacrilegious hands have been laid on it. In so many ways, too! First, the proportion has been stupidly altered. This picture, originally of a vertical and elegant proportion, strict and sober in its extent, has indeed been, in consequence of some idiotic calculation, or to comply with some wretched question of convenience—not in these days, I am happy to say—brought into a square form; so that the group, which was so well regulated by a man who was Rule itself, swims in the centre of an arbitrary space, which might now be increased without limit, for the precise bounds marked out by genius cannot be discovered. It was in examining this picture that I first completely understood the theory which M. Jeanron had explained to me in our conferences on restoration. In the original work of Leonardo da Vinci the landscape was only slightly indicated—just caught a glimpse of between the figures and the frame—was, in fact, a mere accessory. But now, in consequence of this wretched increase, it has become a principal feature; and by what a bestial hand has the augmentation been effected! Everywhere this painting, the delicacy of which captivates the soul and commands

our gratitude for so marvellous and patient a workman—who could chain himself down to tasks so laborious, whilst his fertile imagination, and desires, numerous and contrasting, impelled or lured him forth into the infinite field of production, where destiny allowed him to put in the sickle, after all, so seldom—this painting, I say, is punctured from side to side; and, to borrow from the indignant language of artists who look upon such works as living entities, “assassinated” by infamous stains, such as housepainters chuck against a wall when they wish to convert brick into granite. And the worst of the matter is, as I have hinted, that the most scrupulous examination of this marvellous work proves that no reason could have existed for such hideous interference.

Still more unjustifiable meddling has taken place; but its effect to the eye is less deplorable. They have actually repainted the hands and the feet—attempted to do what not the ablest disciple of Leonardo would have ventured on if the master had left any deficiency! The foot in the shade is executed in the coarsest and most ignorant manner; and the hand of the Virgin under the arm of the Child, upon which the master must have lavished all his care, is now an absolute deformity. Yet, in spite of all this, we may think ourselves happy to possess—for all lovers of Art completely possess all well-exhibited works—a production of such an order, in which the genius of the master so powerfully displayed itself, at the period when his vast studies had produced the most complete result. For

it must be observed that Leonardo, like all the great men of that Golden Age, instead of shrinking within the bounds of his native and local taste from laziness, quackery, or vanity, tended, on the contrary, to grasp and assimilate all the resources of Art, and take advantage of all its conditions. In this invaluable picture, more than elsewhere, the master approaches a healthy style of colouring. He was an impassioned disciple of the line; but see how well he stands comparison with the Titian, raised, it is true, unfairly out of reach! The "Joconde," as the French call it—the "Mona Lisa," which is in such a high state of preservation, does not, as far as colour goes, deserve the same praise. Printers' ink, which he was so fond of using, is less discernible than in any other of his works in this moving picture, the attitudes of which have been criticised, though they are, after all, so true, so natural, so living, so charming, so eloquent to the heart, though so unforeseen.

Beneath the picture of Leonardo are two pictures, of inferior merit certainly, but both valuable. The first, on the left, is the "Portrait of a Woman," by François Clouet, called Janet or Jeannet, or perhaps Genet, if it be to him that Pasquier alludes in his epigrams, where he says,—

"Pictores inter, longe o celeberrimus unus,
Cujus Apellæum dextera vincat opus."

This is a delightful painting, conscientious, naïve, expressive of the firm will of a man whose eye was faithful and commonsense exquisite—a good old Gaul.

I notice this because, as I have before hinted, it is not well proved that the influence of the artists, attracted to France by François I., which so rapidly created the preponderating School of Fontainebleau, did not stifle under a pedantic mannerism a truly native talent, which, continuing to develop itself through several generations of artists, like this same Clouet, might have produced in France a larger, a more individual, a more valuable school. Kings are always in a hurry, and work more rapidly than well. The influence derived from their patronage is a weapon unsparingly used, and artists who rebel against fashionable opinion are in great danger of being extinguished. In Art as well as in Literature, it is unfortunate when the taste of the soil quite disappears. Whilst the Italian imitators, and the copyists of an already declining school, were sumptuously, in sumptuous palaces, covering their sumptuous canvasses, there were autochthones in the provinces dying away under the blight of too hasty civilisation. But this is an interesting theme, worthy of larger development. In pursuing other researches I have lighted upon tracks which I have not followed to the end, only setting marks that I may recognise them when the time comes. Meanwhile, whence came Clouet? Did he not belong to those eastern provinces that border on Switzerland? and had he not imbibed lessons and received influence from the old Holbein? There is some reason for thinking so; and the effect of such legitimate intercourse is not to be compared to

the intrusion of a French painter into the studios of Florence and Parma.

By the side of this interesting picture by Janet is a portrait of Erasmus in the act of writing, by Hans Holbein—the “younger,” adds the inscription on the frame. This is easily said: it would be more difficult to prove. Except when the dates at which certain historical personages lived assist us, there are, I believe, no means of distinguishing the works of Hans Holbein the father, or the elder, from those of Hans Holbein the son, or the younger. The latter of these two able men, more favoured by circumstances, perhaps, or perhaps by his temperament, exhibited a more powerful genius, but both possessed exactly the same talent. Their tranquil works contain no differential marks, if history gives no assistance. This reflection, which I do not make for the first time, has a considerable bearing, but I will not enlarge it. It proves, however, what sort of thing artistic education was in those good old times, and illustrates the powerful influence of a well-managed studio, of intelligent mastership, and faithful apprenticeship. Talent, of which I speak here as an acquired quality, could be transmitted entirely without obliterating in any way or fettering true genius. Critics of romantic tendencies, the standard-bearers of the modern insurrection, as well as the advocates of old-fashioned academies, should reflect upon this. Titian painted like Giorgione, and Vandyke like Rubens. They are neither shackled nor enfranchised—they are simply

calm and ready to obey their natural impulses. At any rate this fine portrait of Erasmus, so firm in profile, so intelligent, so personal—I was going to say, so egotistical,—so true and simple in attitude, is, in every respect, admirable. Here is an instance of what I was saying in some introductory remarks. The whole Art of Painting is applied in this work. We have colour, effect, form, expression, composition, and measure. If anything is exaggerated it is the quality of precision, of affirmation, if I may so speak. But what would we have? Holbein was so certain of what he was about!

Turning from this corner-screen we look towards the side of the Saloon, on the left hand of which is the entrance to the Long Gallery. In the narrow space to the left of this door is a little picture, in two compartments, by Hans Memling. It represents a St. John the Baptist and a Magdalen; and is of recent acquisition. It proceeds from M. le Baron de Fagel, minister plenipotentiary of the King of Holland, bears the seal of that prince behind, and cost, as the catalogue obligingly informs us, eleven thousand seven hundred and twenty-eight francs. This is not a very great sum to pay for the work of so able a man, of which the Museum possessed no specimen. But does this picture deserve to be placed amongst so many important things in the Great Saloon of honour? The respect which we owe to Hemmeling or Memling is not increased—it is not even sustained—by such a sample.

Which Memling, moreover, is meant? There were two painters of that name in Flanders. And Memory, when it recalls the image of that almost angelic workman wielding his pencil in the early time of Art in the Hospital of Bruges, is scarcely willing to recognise him here. The cost of the picture and the warranting-seal do not quite suffice to destroy the impression of the eye. Hans Hemling, like Tintoretto, had better be absent than so ill represented. He was evidently one of the greatest men in his art. He appears to us near the cradle of his school, like the Saint of Fiesole, exercising a most powerful influence on the then present and the future. His genuine works have a pure and intransmissible character.

Up towards the ceiling, over the door of the Gallery, is hoisted the best picture that France possesses of one of its most important masters—the energetic Valentin. The point of view chosen by the painter in this work is in itself a formal objection to the place assigned to it;* for here Valentin has behaved as an impassioned partisan of picturesque reality—like a Fleming

* The Louvre having not been built originally as a picture-gallery, contains, it must be admitted, strong temptations to use the most valuable works of Art for decorative purposes, Architects, however, are imitative animals; and buildings erected for the express purpose of exhibiting pictures have been planned on the model of a reception or a ball-room. Strictly speaking, there ought to be only one range of large pictures, and, at most, two ranges of small pictures. Beyond this nearly every work is sacrificed and can merely be admired on hearsay. The public cannot always be borrowing ladders to climb up to a proper

of the most simple school, most eager to copy nature as it most commonly appears, quite disregarding of systems, and of all lofty theories. I have already noticed this choice of an elevated point of view, when speaking of the habits of Chinese Art. In the present case the eye of Valentin looks down on the scene he represents. He was standing when he painted those sitting figures. He did not look at them from beneath, nor from the same level; but from above. Observe the table—the objects on it do not conceal one-another, the eye can count them. Observe the figures—the knee does not foreshorten, nor mask the thigh. Such an arrangement, which is eminently picturesque, though, of course, it must not be changed into a law, in itself requires that the picture should not be placed so that all the advantages which the painter sought therefrom should be lost.

Would it not have been advisable, if want of space or abundance of works lead to the placing so high up of things so fine, the enjoyment of which is thus, in part, lost, at least to select for such an elevation those which have been voluntarily combined by the painter level. If any new building be raised in England for the purposes of Art Exhibition this ought really to be kept in mind. The painter must control the architect. The proper way would be, since a Gallery with only one range of pictures would spread over too great a surface, to have two or three stories—the upper one lighted from the top, and the others, of course, from the sides. But as cross-lights are injurious, the simplest way would be, instead of thinking of architectural beauty, to exhibit the pictures back to back on a central wall or partition.

for the purpose? The points of view chosen in pictures vary considerably, and many works would do perfectly well in situations where others do very ill. It would be a useful work, not requiring the strength of Hercules, but mere reflection and knowledge of the first principles of Art, to attain this judicious distribution of places. The apparent value of a collection would thereby be doubled. We need not go very far for an example. The picture of Fra Bartolomeo, of which I shall presently speak, with its architectural background, might have been raised a little higher without injury; for the point of view chosen by the painter is quite the reverse of that adopted by Valentin.

With reference to this admirable work of Valentin—as with reference to many others in the Great Saloon—a second objection may be made to the height at which it is placed. There are painters who lay great stress on their execution,—who attach a deeper meaning than others to the way in which they wield their pencil—who express their individuality in this way—who wish to exhibit their touch, and who introduce a careful variety in their way of laying on, or melting together, or juxtaposing their colours on the canvass. There are others who completely disguise their execution, who attempt to destroy all traces of calculation in this respect, and who suppress, as it were, the presence of the pencil, in order to attain a greater unity of impression. In literature, likewise, there are those whose chief aim is to produce rounded, or mea-

sured, or contrasting, or rapid-footed periods, and who love to call attention, as it were, to their complete mastery over all the rules of rhetoric; whilst others allow themselves and their art to go out of sight, and think only of the images which in some mysterious manner they create in the minds of their readers. Neither in Art nor in Literature is it good to exalt one of these schools at the expense of the other. I may have an instinctive preference; but be this as it may, it is certain that places for pictures should be chosen according to special rules derived from the pictures themselves: for in this way only can we do them justice, and avoid turning all the master's calculations against himself. The picture of Fra Bartolomeo I have already referred to is of so simple an execution—no trace of the pencil being apparent—that it is not necessary to look very close at it. This may be a heresy; and indeed I think it is common to say that paintings should be placed on exactly the opposite principles to the ones I here indicate—those in which the workmanship is concealed, close at hand; and those in which the workmanship is apparent, far off—that is to say, that writers whose chief merit is in style ought to be read in translations, whilst masters of thought should be read in the original. I should have liked here to say something more of Valentin, whose artistic story is so interesting, and who is one of the most remarkable of French painters. The Louvre and France possess many fine works by his hand; and if without the aid of a

telescope we could see the one of which I now speak, there is no doubt that we should not be told to go to Rome to appreciate his value.

Beneath the Valentin, and still over the doorway, is a picture which ought not to be there—the “Virgin and Child adored by two Holy Men,” by Fra Filippo Lippi. This master is yet more interesting on account of the powerful influence he exerted upon the art of his noble school than of his romantic adventures, for which he is even now piously hated and piously libelled, and the stain of which pious critics endeavour to discover in the style of his painting, which is, in fact, so pure. This work, as well as all the primitive works of that order, should have remained in the Long Gallery, surrounded by its fellows. Not because they or any others there remaining should be disdained; but it ought to have been left where it was, because the contact of the works of more advanced Art, when it had grasped all its resources and become able to display all its powers, marvellously pales these productions of a promising childhood—promising, but still timid, still modest, still inexperienced, and seeming, therefore, somewhat feeble. In the midst of works of the same order this picture would probably be a dominant one; but where it is, being neither salient, nor brilliant, nor deep, it seems absolutely to disappear. When shall we see these things, and such as these, exhibited on their own account, without being sacrificed to ideas quite foreign from those that presided over their birth? Is it an

indifferent thing that our impressions should be distorted by the way in which their sources are placed before us? The primitive painters, considered respectively in themselves, in their naïve tranquillity, in their religious silence, in their conscientious patience, almost lead us to forget the hubbub of the schools at the zenith of their development—their ambitious attempts, their vehement realisations; and by studying them undisturbed by all that confusion—the bitter fruit of progress—we may chance upon valuable hints which have not been subsequently well worked out by the disdainful Masters of more splendid times, and may discover evidences of the intimate union of these men with their Art—an union that did not always remain so perfect, for prosperity brings pride and overweening confidence. So regarded, the initiators of painting rise in stature. The lessons couched in their works become profitable. We find that the field in which they sowed has not yet been fully harvested, even by those who came in the most sunny times, and are deemed to have put in the sickle most industriously. Let the primitive painters be studied, therefore. It is from no disrespect to them that I say that this picture, and that of Andrea Mantegna, and that of Perugino, are not here in their proper place.

If I object to see in this Hall of Honour the founders of Art, because their presence there interferes with the lessons they might impart, and with the veneration which is their due, I object on the other

hand to the presence of the men of the Decline, because of the evil example which they are thus enabled to spread. What has that colossal "Descent from the Cross," by Jouvenet, to do here? Is it introduced because the author is a Frenchman, or because he is a master of the first order, either in the French School or all the schools put together? If it be as a French work that this canvass spreads out its vast surface here, taking up the space of many finer things, surely it may be said that this is a very insufficient reason. Although France is not historically dominant in European Art, it has produced men who cannot be called subordinate to any others, even of the first rank. Why, then, should an attempt be made to increase surreptitiously its list of celebrities? Jouvenet is not a man of the first order in the French School, nor in any other school. By the side of Poussin the man of thought, of Lesueur the man of expression, of Claude the man of impression, Jouvenet, despite his gigantic enterprises and his theatrical machines, cannot stand. This is his finest work, I know; but it would have been better appreciated in another place, for nothing that he has produced is fit, I will not say to be compared with, but to be placed near the great productions of Art. It would not be fair, however, to say that this painter had no merit at all. For my part, I have a great sympathy for him; and I remember to have alluded somewhere recently to the painful story of his latter days. In the decaying School of Lebrun, which Louis XIV. and his narrow-

mindèd advisers could neither influence for good nor judiciously hierarchise, Jouvenet takes a high place. But this great machine ought not to be present in a hall where Poussin plays so small a part ; where Claude only appears in microscopic jewels, which give no true idea of his wealth ; where Valentin, who is much more powerful, is sacrificed ; where Santerre, whom I prefer ; and Watteau, who is a head taller, whatever the Davidians may say, and where Chardin and many others are absent. In this choice the mistake of the great king is repeated, and the glory of the French School is sought where it is not to be found.

The Philippe de Champagne, which is underneath the Jouvenet, is admirably placed, and appears under the most fortunate circumstances. Neither is this, it is true, a work of the first order ; but its rigid unity, and the admirable adaptation of the dimension and the proportion of the picture to the mode of the subject chosen, and the impression sought to be produced, so far increase our esteem, that it maintains its place by this power, which is not a borrowed power, since Art supplies it ; but which, it must be confessed, emanates rather from a single condition than from a perfect possession of the whole Art. I suspect that it is as the work of a French painter that this canvass has been introduced into the Great Saloon. If this be the case, there is a contradiction between the classification and the catalogue, which includes—erroneously, I think—Philippe de Champagne in the Flemish School. Phi-

lippe de Champagne was purely a French painter. It matters not where he was born. An artist may, in a foreign land, despite long residence, and despite much influence received from the schools whose labours he witnesses, still belong to his own country, if he preserve its main character and tendencies. Many reasons may be given why Poussin and Claude are justly claimed by the French School, despite their Italian experiences. The genius of France is couched in their works. But is there the slightest Flemish influence visible in Philippe de Champagne? He left his country when he was nineteen years of age. His masters were French, as were his pupils. He was the constant friend, and the disciple in all his opinions and all his tendencies, from his private manners and his religious convictions, to the way in which he exercised his art, of the most influential and the most characteristic men of the French nation. Now these influences, to which Champagne yielded unreservedly and with enthusiasm, were utterly opposed to all manner of Flemish reminiscence in Art. In the time of Louis XIV., in the group of important men by whom Champagne was moulded;—who respected, who cared for the tendencies and the productions of Flanders? Not the slightest attention was paid to them. Every one was perfectly confident of the superiority of the academical system, of which Champagne in his Art was one of the pillars. Why, this man, whom you class with Rubens, and Vandyke, and Rembrandt, had probably never deigned to bestow a glance upon their

works, and may have scarcely known even their names. There is here no exaggeration. One of the most important lessons which an attentive reader of history learns is this—that the memory of the most memorable things rapidly disappears from the minds of generations ill prepared to preserve it. I remember having given elsewhere instances of the strange manner in which the story of recent times, and the names of men still living, have been rapidly forgotten in France. Turn to the work of Roger de Piles, an able painter, an Academician, and a friend of Philippe de Champagne. From him may be learnt that already in his time Rubens had been forgotten—he had struggled for thirty years to persuade a few Parisians to deign to bestow a little esteem on the magnificent series of Allegories in the Luxembourg. Then turn to Gerard de Lairesse, an able painter also, an Academician, a correspondent of Philippe de Champagne, translated at Paris under the sumptuous auspices of the Academy. He requests the benevolent reader to inform him—he was anxious for information—what had become of the reputation of a certain individual called Rembrandt, who had made some noise and found some admirers in his young time; and he points out how utterly forgotten he is, and explains this result, not by the want of taste of the public, but by the vicious and deplorable errors of that incorrect artist—mentioning him as in every respect an example to avoid!

If, on the other hand, it is not as one of the few

great masters of the French School that Philippe de Champagne has been introduced into the Saloon, can it be as one of the three or four first-rate Flemish painters that he has been chosen? In that case there would be much to say, which the reader, however, will, no doubt, say for himself. At any rate, this painter's name will be sought for in vain in the golden inscriptions on the friezes of the Hall.

Beneath the Philippe de Champagne are two charming pictures by Claude Lorrain, which ought to have given way to more important works, in which this prodigious artist would appear with greater authority. In the centre of the compartment is the "Belle Jardinière" of Raphael—a valuable and authentic work, in which the most intimate and most personal qualities of the execution of this divine painter are exhibited, as manifestly as in any other work which any other National Gallery possesses,—more assuredly than in all the others which the French Museum contains, with the exception of the admirable portrait of Balthazar de Castiglione, in which this great man reaches almost the extreme limits and perfect development of what the incredible virtuality of his youth implied. The painting of the "Belle Jardinière" is in a beautiful state of preservation, and enables us to study the sound method of this learned artist, many of whose works have so unfortunately suffered from causes foreign to their complexion.

On either side of the "Belle Jardinière," without in-

juring its effect, and without being injured—so possible is it in Art, when due care is taken, to oppose the most contrasting things; and so true is it, unless gross mistakes are made, that pictures form an excellent ground for pictures—on either side of this marvellous work, I say, are two of the most delicious paintings of two of the most charming Flemish painters, Terburg and Metzú—the silver-tinted Terburg, with an execution as polished as marble; the warmer-coloured Metzú, with his lively touch. However, decorative considerations have, in the case of Metzú, prevailed over more important ones. His best picture, that which gives the grandest idea of his inappreciable merit, better than anything that all Europe possesses, has been left in the Gallery. I allude to his “Market of Amsterdam,” which, over the charming picture here exhibited, has the material advantage of a better preservation, a more complete virginity; for it has not been injured by interference with its varnish, and is better prepared to bear the light than this somewhat wearied work.

At the top of what may be called the second compartment of this side, we can just distinguish a rather feeble work of the vigorous Jordaens, put there, as it were, to stop up a gap; but certainly, with a little more attention, if it was thought necessary to have a painting by that master, something better might have been found. Let us suppose that Jordaens, of whom the Museum possesses, nevertheless, many valuable speci-

mens, is only put there to make up for the omission of his name in the architectural inscription.

Beneath we see the admirable picture of the austere Fra Bartolomeo, one of the giant sons of that city of giants which, from Dante to Michael Angelo, produced a series of men who so marvellously manifested human genius in all its provinces. This work of the Frate expresses the whole man; and his great renown, which is not, even yet, so great as it should be, can only by it be increased, if it be attentively examined. For we must direct our whole attention to it; because there is something in it which disturbs our admiration, something rarely found in the productions of a painter so learned in all the parts of his Art, so certain in his sober and far-sighted calculations. There is in this canvass, unfortunately, I know not what disaccord in the tone, resulting from the distribution of the colours, which torments the spectator and complicates his impression. But when once this first uncertainty is overcome by attention, what a series of triumphant combinations display themselves, and lead us, as we contemplate more and more eagerly, up to the comprehension of Art under its loftiest aspect! Before such a picture, how easily, how victoriously, may elevated theories be maintained! What various and complicated delights are imparted by this composition, which is so simple at first sight, and in which the most elementary symmetry appears to be alone sought and observed! Here

we have a proof that the plainest and most fundamental principles of Art suffice to contain the most complicated intentions, and satisfy all the requirements of inspiration. This is, indeed, the "Marriage of St. Catherine:" absent here are the voluptuous and pagan velleities of Correggio; absent the piquant truth of Murillo; and the splendour and the wealth of Rubens; and the thought of Poussin; and the melancholy of Lesueur;—for here is expressed the ascendancy of the religious painter, of the priest, of the monk, who displays a spectacle to suggest adoration, to compel belief, and faith, and obedience. Florentine painting, so powerful in itself, expands here by the presence of a powerful idea, leading to vast consequences. In the centre are the Virgin and' the Child—mathematically in the centre. On them all beauty, all grace, is shed. The kneeling Saint Catherine, who no longer occupies a central and conspicuous position, is deprived of her wonted charms. Her severe costume, that shrouds the graces of her sex and youth, because in presence of ineffable beauty, sins against no rule of Art, whilst it prevents the glances of the spectator from being turned aside. Her attitude is calm. The Infant-God alone is living and active. In a corner of the picture, symmetrically placed, like a column, removed from the centre of attention, and being capable, therefore, of more marked gesture, without injury to the principal effect, appears a masculine and commanding figure, just at the point where the spectacle is interrupted by the frame. This

is Saint Peter. He does not look at what is going on. He is the Church itself. He shows the action to the people. He draws their attention to the miracle, or rather he invokes it. The other saints, more humble, look on, and are absorbed in what they see. How fine, too, and how easily expressed! how admirably subordinated to the whole is that alliance of two rival orders, expressed in so touching a manner, and so full of promise for the repose and the power of the Church—for the disciple of Savonarola remained a fervent Catholic—by the two figures of Saint Francis and Saint Dominic embracing in the background! Above, sheltering as it were the scene, and not in any way disturbing our attention—like a vague and gentle apparition from heaven—flutter little angels, that respectfully arrange the solemn draperies.

Beneath this picture of the Frate is placed the landscape of Poussin, in which appears the figure of Diogenes. Poussin was the real head of the French School in his age, and his powerful influence has been particularly felt in all succeeding ones, despite the vicissitudes which that school has undergone. It is since his time only that may be observed, in the works of the French School, a marked tendency to intellectual, philosophical, and historical expression; and that Painting in France has been understood rather as an Art of expression, uttering opinions, as it were, than as of an Art of impression, evoking thought, simply by the spectacle offered to the sight. In this sense no one has surpassed him, and the title of phi-

losophical painter—of *peintre des gens d'esprit*, which was given to him even in his own time, testifies to his superiority and influence. His contemporaries and immediate successors, Lesueur, Lebrun, Mignard, Jouvenet, Verdier, the Vauloos, and their decaying school, Subleyras, and even the whole Davidian School, conformed their productions, far more than their different tastes and particular affections would seem to indicate, to this initial datum of Poussin. Its action may be traced still further athwart the Romantic Revolution, which destroyed the Davidian School, even in Prud'hon, M. Ingres, Sigalon, Géricault, M. Scheffer, M. Delacroix, and some others, in spite of their diverse talents. French painting still affects to give utterance to doctrines, and endeavours to express with precision various ideas—pretends, in fact, to a positive and restricted signification, which the Italian School, for example, never knew. Has this influence of Poussin been in every respect fortunate? The discussion would lead me too far into the depths of the theory of Art, and I have neither time nor courage to go there at present. Certain it is, however, that one consequence of the paramount nature of this influence has been, that many able artists in France, who have not affected to be thinkers, but rather painters in the strict sense of the word—which is by no means narrow, for Painting is a world in itself—have been thereby unfortunately oppressed; and many valuable manifestations of genius have been lost from

want of encouragement. This is a point which I shall endeavour to establish at another opportunity.

Poussin, then, was, above all things, a thinker in his works, and strongly suppressed all contrary tendencies, by the exertion of a powerful will. His landscapes have a meaning, as well as his figure-compositions. The *Diogenes* is an admirable picture; but I think some other works which are in the Gallery might have been preferred here, as better illustrating the particular character of his talent, which I have pointed out. It may as well now be said, that the great picture by the same master, on the side of the Saloon to which I have not yet come, and which represents a scene in the life of St. François Xavier, is quite an unfortunate choice. We are not obliged to flatter great artists as we flatter little kings. This painting, in which the figures are as large as life, is almost mediocre, compared with the masterpieces which abound in the Gallery, and several of which, on account of their restricted dimensions, might have taken the place of this one, and would have done him more honour; and more honour, likewise, to the the French School. What, indeed, is the worth of such an unmeaning work by the side of the "Shepherds of Arcadia," the "Plague," the "Rebecca," the "Sabines," and so many others, in which the prodigious genius of this man developed itself in so explicit a way?

By the side of the *Diogenes* is a small canvass, formerly attributed to Raphael, but now only to some

one belonging to his school. Though a charming thing in itself, neither as representing the master nor his school should it have been placed here.

Upon the red ground of the corner-screen that now succeeds, and quite at the top, is a large picture by Giulio Romano—very fine in aspect and delicate in contour. But in this case the attention to symmetry, which we have seen to have been so successful in a picture of Fra Bartolomeo's, does not obtain the same results; and the Raphaelesque style of drawing, of which an example occurs immediately below, does not produce the same vivacity and the same appearance of truth. The neighbourhood of these two fine works is unfavourable to Giulio Romano, who would have produced a better effect in a different place.

Immediately beneath is the admirable "Holy Family" of Raphael. In this work we see that Raphael was already tending towards the mastery of the highest conditions of the Art of Painting. To his composition, his drawing, his expression, and his natural taste—which he was destined to carry to the extreme limits, which none other has attained—he adds here, in an evident manner, the later fruits of his deep knowledge, and of the last tentatives of his liberal sympathy for all the qualities and conditions of Art. Solid and true in colour, learned in contrast, consistent and sincere in effect, bold in sacrifice, affirmative and broad in light, this picture proves how far its mighty author could rise above the systematic exclusions and pedantic partialities

which criticism, thinking to praise, has attributed to him. Doubtless Raphael was an inimitable draughtsman; but was he not also a powerful painter? Compare with this picture—which would in itself suffice to prove what I say—the admirable portrait of Balthazar di Castiglione, which so well stands a comparison with the vivid Venetian paintings. The proportion and the dimension of the “Holy Family,” I may add, are as the author left them;—would that the Leonardo da Vinci, in the corresponding corner, had been as well treated! The frame is sober, and would have better suited “The Flagellation” of Titian.

On either side of this imposing manifestation of the genius of the Roman School are two small pictures, attributed to the same hand. I know how much learned research they have stimulated, but cannot pause to question their authenticity. Whatever may be the case, they are by no means important.

We now come to the side of the Saloon opposite the “Marriage of Cana.” At the top we see another vast scene by Paul Veronese. It is in every respect worthy of him; and it is therefore to be regretted that the height to which it is raised depreciates it greatly. Under the direction of M. Jeanron I had an opportunity of seeing this picture in the Gallery, where it was within reach of the eye. It was greedily studied, and many fine copies were made, especially one by a very able young artist for M. Thiers. It was drawn also at that period by an eminent engraver. At pre-

sent it cannot be so well studied, being removed from what was probably a provisional situation to one in which it loses much of its importance.

Beneath is the large picture of Poussin which I have already mentioned; and then the admirable portrait, the principal work of Titian of that nature, called "The Young Man with the Glove." It is also too far from the eye, and yet its small dimensions should have preserved it from this injustice. Such a painting is too valuable to be thus set aside. How many portrait-painters has it fed and taught! At present it is impossible to study it in its extreme delicacies and its execution, so full of lessons for the artist. By its side is Domenico Ghirlandajo's "Visitation of the Virgin"—an admirable painting, belonging to the period preceding the great expansion of Art. To it may be applied the considerations above set down with reference to primitive works, which should not be removed from the chronological order, in which they are best appreciated.

Then we have a painting by Vandyke, also badly placed. I am almost tired of making this objection; but here appears that exquisite sketch by Rubens, of the "Portrait of a Woman with two Children." I have said, sketch; but this is not exactly the word, for it is a painting, commenced and carried forward to a certain point, and then left in that state, from I know not what circumstances. We have therefore an opportunity of seeing a work by this painter, as it were, in

progress of execution,—just at the moment of deepest interest for any one who wishes to understand his method, his preliminary combinations, and all the well-calculated details of his execution. A picture left at such a point by such a master, is one of the rarest and most valuable things that can be possessed by an establishment devoted to the history and the study of Art, and the preservation of all the resources and secrets of the past. It is deplorable, therefore, that such a painting should not have been allowed to remain in the Gallery, in the midst of the numerous works of Rubens, and should be placed out of reach of legitimate curiosity. How many researches have not been undertaken, and will not yet be undertaken, on the methods and practices of this learned Flemish School; and of what great assistance would this valuable document prove! These are not exaggerated regrets, and do not proceed from any foregone conclusion. A very curious and useful book—not much known, it is true, by artists (for artists generally are ignorant of what most concerns them)—was once written by an ingenious and learned man. It explores and examines all ancient practices, and takes this unfinished picture of Rubens as the best example, the most copious source of information, on the method pursued by the Flemish painters: I allude to the work of M. Merimée, father of the writer who has made that name so renowned.

By the side of this Rubens is a fine picture by Sebastian del Piombo, the colourist whom Michael

Angelo, despite his affected disdain for colour, thought it prudent to associate with himself when he undertook a great work. This canvass is well placed; for at such a distance it is less easy to see the traces of the work of the restorers, who, as has already been mentioned in these pages, have done their best to injure it.

Next to the "Visitation" of Sebastian del Piombo is a very fine Portrait, which certainly deserves to be placed in the Saloon; but it is erroneous to attribute it to this master. It represents the detestable Baccio Bandanelli, and is so imperturbably attributed to the Venetian master, that artists who really know better can scarcely refrain from mentioning it as his work. It proceeds evidently from some able Florentine, perhaps Andrea del Sarto.

On a level with the spectator is the "Joconde." We can only admire this magnificent portrait, and recall to mind, in presence of a work so patient, so profound, and pushed to the very last limits and extreme delicacies of Art, that it is quoted by Vasari as an instance of the inconsistency and changeableness of Leonardo, whom he accuses of not having finished it! By its side is the valuable picture of Jean Van Eyck, which, although belonging to the primitive school, braves all comparisons, and compels attention by its brilliancy and wonderful state of preservation. This enamelled painting is a famous lesson, putting to shame our contemporary workmen, many of whose productions are scarcely finished ere they begin to fade. Then we see a vigorous

and striking portrait, quite recently attributed to Francia at the expense of Raphael. The works attributed to this great master—I mean the works in the possession of the French Museum—should certainly be diminished in number; but there was no convincing reason why this one should be taken away and given so boldly to the Bolognese artist. That artist was certainly powerful, but he never reached this level. For my part, despite the inscription, I continue to recognise the divine Raphael here. I remember that in 1848 the Director of the Museum was warmly solicited by certain eminent persons—passionate admirers of the *Catholic* artists of the primitive period—to induce him to increase their authority by attributing this picture to Francia; but they did not succeed in convincing or persuading him.

We now come to the “Dropsical Woman,” by Gerard Dow. This fine picture was given to the Museum by an illustrious soldier—a valuable present. It is the work of one of those uncommon men who have proved themselves capable of pushing patience to its very last limits, without losing any of the vivacity of the first inspiration, and without allowing the details they accumulate and express in the most minute manner to stand out from the general mass which a good picture should present when finished. Gerard Dow must not be compared to such men as Denner and Christian Seibold, who forgot the most efficacious prescriptions of Art in their ill-advised search after detail; and when a school can bring forward such a man, it must be very

certain of its powers. This example singularly recommends the education of the old Flemings.

Titian's "Mistress" follows. It is in every respect a painting of the first order, and is excellently placed. The luminous breadth, the amplitude of the colouring, the grandeur of the drawing, and the masterly grace of the execution, render this little canvass one of the great witnesses of Titian's sovereignty in his art, in which his long life and splendid fortune allowed him to leave so many various and imposing things.

The "Vierge au Linge," by Raphael, is manifestly an authentic work; and the adorable impress of the master—always so visible when he applied himself to production in tranquillity and solitude, and not as the hurried leader of a numerous school overwhelmed with business—is here most undeniably present. It is very much to be regretted that traces of restoration—that is, both of additions and cleanings—are to be discerned. The "Belle Jardinière" is in a far better state of preservation.

By the side of this eminent work is a female portrait by Rembrandt; and certainly any authentic picture by this master is welcome to the practised eye, and produces lively pleasure wherever and in whatever neighbourhood it may appear. The works of such a painter, by the side of which many fine things appear to disadvantage, are offended by no neighbours. It is easy to understand this. Strength is their principal characteristic; their effect is magical. Nevertheless, I should

rather have seen here the admirable portrait of "The Young Man with the Black Cap," which is better drawn, and to which Rembrandt's mode is more applicable—not in the opinion of consummate artists, who agree to all his tendencies, but for artists of opposite sentiments and principles—than to the portrait of a young, rich, and elegant woman. In the energetic and sombre mode, full of bold sacrifices and strong affirmations, the portrait of a young woman is more open to criticism than that of a haughty man of martial and imposing countenance. Look at the portrait I allude to in the Gallery, and do not be surprised, if you look long, if it seem to step out of the canvass and come towards you.

We now come to the Virgin suckling the Child Jesus, called the "Vierge au Coussin," by Solari; a very excellent and graceful picture, conscientiously finished under the influence of Leonardo da Vinci in his young and interesting Milanese School.

In this vast compartment, surrounded by so many magnificent works, appear in the very best places two pictures by Murillo, representing the same subject—the Conception of the Virgin—treated in different manners and different proportions. The one which has been longest in the possession of the Museum is, in my opinion, infinitely preferable to the other, whose recent acquisition made so much noise, and the price paid for which might have enabled the Gallery to obtain, even at the very same sale, a good many more

valuable works by the same master. What renders the eagerness of the bidders on that occasion more extraordinary, is the fact that this picture is not in a good state of preservation—not, in fact, completely genuine. It has been retouched in several places in the most visible manner.

Murillo is certainly a great master. The position he occupies in the Spanish School, the ascendancy of which has been increased in these modern times by the adoption of many of its principles and its affections by contemporary artists, is certainly commanding; and for my part I cannot help being one of his admirers. When, indeed, we consider the pedantic pretensions of Academies, we are naturally driven into the ranks of the partisans of this vigorous naturalist. But his school, after all, is a secondary school, subordinated to the Italian and Flemish Schools, and receiving inspiration from them. The introduction, therefore, of these two large pictures into the Great Saloon was unadvisable. Murillo would have been better represented by his energetic and complete picture representing "The Young Beggar," which is to be seen in the Gallery.

Above the door leading to the Salle des Bijoux is a large and remarkable picture by Annibal Caracci. It bears that height well, on account of the proportion of the figures, and the evident pre-calculation of the master. Beneath is an admirable "Anne Boleyn" by Hans Holbein the younger; for in this case positive history decides between the claims of the father and the son.

Upon the red corner-screen, and much illtreated by it, we see the pale work of a very interesting artist, who did much towards carrying out the last development of Art—Andrea Mantegna. Such paintings, as I have already said, would be seen to far more advantage by the side of works of the same period and character in the Gallery.

Underneath is the principal work possessed by the Louvre of Correggio—his “Jupiter in love with Antiope.” Even now it is a priceless gem: all the life, the suppleness, the breadth, the magic of Correggio’s execution, are seen therein. This admirable work would in itself suffice to overthrow all those ridiculous assertions which are heaped up in the story of this artist—his deplorable misery, his ignorance of all previous traditions, and especially of ancient Art. I cannot here discuss this question in detail, and must be content for the present with simply maintaining that this work is neither the production of a half-starved artist nor of an uncultivated man. The rare talent manifested is too evidently increased and assisted by full possession of the most learned traditions, and the results of previous labour; and it is utterly impossible that that scene could have been painted by a man unacquainted with the works of antiquity, which were at that time being brought to light throughout the whole of Italy. The productions of Correggio are so important and so vast, that he must have met with real and efficacious encouragement. The Italy of those days was famous for liberality, and

should not be insulted by these foolish stories, which can only be believed by persons either very inattentive or very ignorant of the exigencies of Art. Such errors in the appreciation of ancient Art, lead to fatal consequences for living Art. It is not fair to persuade the public that such fine things can be produced without the most liberal support; nor is it wise to allow the inexperienced and neglected artist to believe that great enterprises may be carried out without the necessary means and resources. In an art which depends on so many material exigencies and sacrifices, this is an important consideration. But I must not digress. I cannot even say all I would of this magnificent picture. As I have already said, it has passed through the hands of the restorers; and I have mentioned the vivacity with which David expressed his regret. Whatever may have been said, or may still be said, on this score, I think I may venture to maintain that he was competent to appreciate the injury done. Some powerful pieces of painting, executed by him about the time I refer to, might be adduced, if necessary, to prove his knowledge of colour. At present the tread of time has again left traces, and it is difficult to decide. All that we can see is a certain effacement, under which many admirable delicacies may have disappeared, although the work still remains very beautiful. The hand of the arm on which the child leans presents the most animated tones, under which the blood circulates with a limpidity, and is impregnated with a light, and covered with an enamel, not

observable to the same degree in some parts, which might have been coloured in an analogous manner, and which may, accordingly, have lost something of Correggio's inimitable manner of interpreting flesh-tints. Some retouches are also manifest in the broad parts—on the hips both of the female figure and of the Child. Nevertheless, on careful examination, it must be admitted that, as we do not know the anterior state of the picture, the effect of the restoration does not appear so deplorable as it does in many other instances.

On either side of the Correggio we have two splendid works of very small proportion, by two men of the first order—"The School" of Ostade, and "The Carpenter" of Rembrandt. Rembrandt is the most powerful master of the Dutch School; but Ostade is the most intelligent. Ostade has a high reputation; but his works have, perhaps, not even yet been analysed as they ought to be. His familiar and naïve style does not seem to imply an elevated and complex theory. Yet in his works, which constantly represent nature so exactly that they seem to be immediately copied from the real as it is everyday observed, we may trace the most artificial combinations and the most rigid application of rule. The whole art of the meditative composer is everywhere present, from the principal group or figure down to the smallest accessory, the smallest bit of straw, or fragment of board, or piece of leather, or broken pipe upon the ground. Ostade possessed all the science and knowledge of effect which is visible in his tremendous neigh-

bour Rembrandt; but his temperament was not so violent. His works, therefore, are injured by a contact to which they ought not to have been exposed. At any rate, neither Rembrandt nor he is sufficiently represented in the Great Saloon, which is the more remarkable, as their works are generally small.

Occupying the greater portion of the upper part of the wall towards the Galerie d'Apollon is the picture of Lesueur, of which I have already spoken. It is flanked on the left (of the spectator) by a Caravaggio, and on the right by a Leonello Spada. The latter, though an interesting master, is ill at ease in the society to which he is introduced. Such is not the case with Caravaggio. This painter, whose foregone conclusion must not be accepted without reserve—for it has led to most vicious and perverse results in some of his successors—is so powerful that he cannot be denied admiration. If his "Concert" were placed lower down it would assuredly be admitted to be his very finest painting. On the other side of the Lesueur, and beneath the Spada, is Caravaggio's admirable portrait of the Grand Master of Malta, with a page bearing his helmet. Adolphe de Vignacourt appears a sturdy warrior in his simple and tranquil attitude—as Caravaggio appears a sturdy painter in this sober and simple work.

Underneath the "Concert" is a picture by Ribera, "The Adoration of the Shepherds." This fine work, the only one the Louvre possesses by the master—for the one attributed to him in the Gallery cannot be

admitted—is placed much too high. I should have preferred seeing it hung instead of one of the two Murillos. It used often to be studied by youth, but can no longer be so. The effect may still be distinguished, and the impression subsists; but how can its particular and varied execution be studied at that distance?

Fortunately we have next a large picture by Titian, in the best possible place. It is on a level with the eye, so that we can enjoy completely this beautiful painting, so large, so supple in execution, and at the same time so attentive and so delicate. Here Titian shows himself in all his splendour, and many of his other works do not attain the expression spread over this touching scene.

Beside the Titian is a small picture by Parmegiano, representing the "Marriage of St. Catherine," which, although good, ought not to have been placed there; whilst it does not make the Master properly known, it is far from equalling many works of the Flemish School of the same size, which ought to have been in the same Saloon. A specimen of Ruysdael, of Vanderveld, of Paul Potter, of Pierre de Hooghe, of Bawer, or of Teniers, might have been there introduced.

On the other side of the Titian is a picture by his precursor, Giovanni Bellini. This most precious painting should have been exhibited low down in the Gallery. Here it suffers, and is, in fact, lost. The Luini, also, underneath, though a fine painting of the Milanese

school, is, nevertheless, favoured, too much by being placed there.

As for the Perugino, a tolerably large picture, it should likewise, for reasons already given, have been left in the Gallery. I must observe, however, that it is not on account of its paleness and want of brilliancy—characters common to many paintings of the period previous to the great bursting forth of Art—but, on the contrary, on account of its crudity and its unmeasured contrasts of tone, which nothing subordinates or harmonises, that I think it is unfairly treated by being placed here amidst so many things in which the calculations of a more advanced Art are apparent. This crudity is sometimes a characteristic of primitive painting, and in classification should have the same influence as paleness and dimness.

The “Madonna” of Pinturicchio, the little picture by Giulio Romano, and a portrait by Mieris, should give way to works of another order.

On the red corner-screen is a Guercino, very fine, and much too high up. This master was very powerful, and the Louvre possesses fine things by his hand. I should have preferred his magnificent portrait, which is not large, and might have been better placed.

Domenichino is, without doubt, a master of the first rank. He is very poorly represented by his delicious little “Group of Children,” which gives no account of the masterly character of his talent. Having determined to afford so little space to a man who has displayed

so vast a genius in works so vast, and who, it should have been remembered, so strongly influenced the French School, through the fervent admiration of Poussin, Lesueur, and even of Claude Lorrain; whose conscientious devotion to the great principles of Art endowed Italy with so many fine works; who put off its final decay for at least fifty years—if, I say, the Saint Cecilia was too large, we might, at any rate, have been given the Saint Paul, a little painting in which the lofty genius of the master is better expressed.

This long list of works, most of which are master-pieces, closes worthily with "The Archangel Michael trampling down the Demon," by him, whom it is proper to prefer before others, on account of his serene, benevolent, naïve, noble, and powerful organisation. That was a life cut short too soon. It was cut short, not when premature weakness was coming on, as has been pretended, by people whom it is not fitting to name here, and who, maintaining a thesis based on very equivocal morality, fighting under a political and religious banner, and not under the banner of Art, have dared to say that this man, who was snatched away from the world at the age of thirty-seven, when he was advancing towards the conquest of the last positions of Art, had already lived too long! The fact is, that Raphael was in virtual possession of every faculty and power. Not only his own Art, but all Arts, in his age felt his fertilising influence; and if he had been long left in this world, modern Art might have known

a period greater than that great period when Athens was in its highest glory. Indeed it is difficult to imagine what progress would have been left to be made during the whole development of our civilisation, if that progressive life had not been cut short,—if he had lived a century, like the patriarch of Venice, Raphael, starting from that rugged field so difficult to cultivate—a correct, attentive, and elegant delineation, and attaining the most powerful modelling and the simplest and most harmonious colour, as his last fine works prove, accepting all tendencies, all schools, and profiting by all without losing anything of his own—for his was a vast and hospitable nature—would have been a too final apparition for our period, condemned in all things to terrible vicissitudes, to struggles not one of which has perhaps yet come to an end. Therefore was the thread of his life broken. That this should escape, I will not say the penetration of many artists, but that this should lie beyond their common notice as they journey singly upon partial excursions in company with a little fragment of Art, I can easily understand; and so, though I have no further room nor verge to develop such considerations, which yet must some day be developed lest Art should suffer, I note this certain fact here for the behoof of those who think they are well-doing to place Art before Raphael, as if Raphael had ruined and betrayed it. This insane attempt, and as ungrateful as insane, can never lead to anything but miscarriage. But more powerful and

more authoritative pens will no doubt at length set this question at rest; and it is only in their default that I shall endeavour to grapple with it. If I were to go into any further detail here, I should have to open that door and patiently follow the walls of the Long Gallery as they unroll themselves on either side. But I have undertaken only to notice the *élite* of the works contained in the Louvre. There are many things of vast merit which I have omitted,—whole schools on which I have scarcely dwelt at all. What I have said, however, of the paintings, is in proportion with what I have said of the other contents of the Museum, and will be sufficient to prepare the reader to appreciate their importance.

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