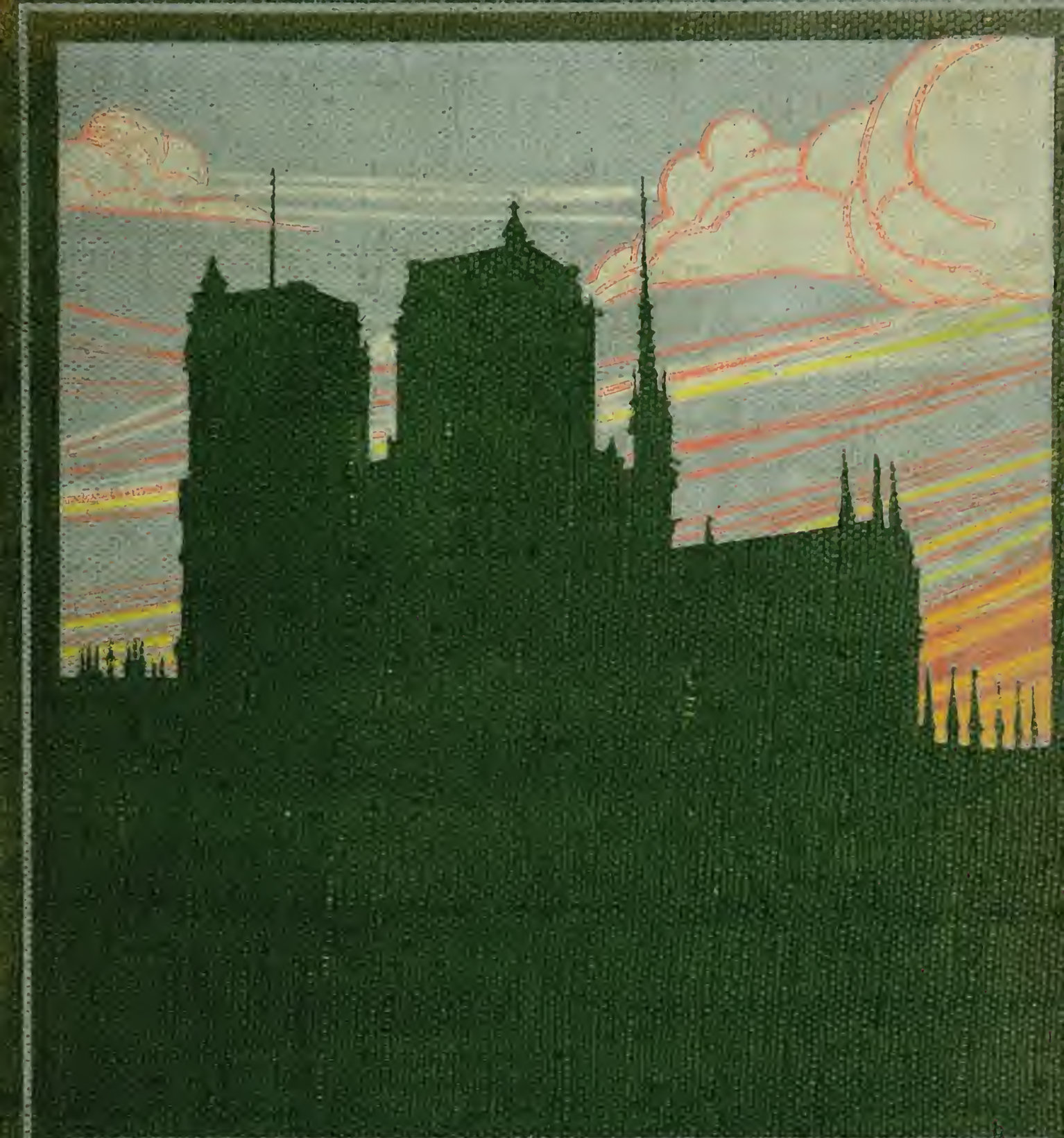
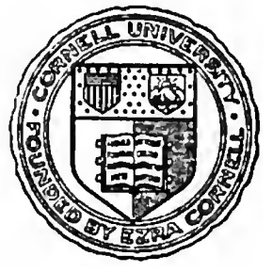


PARIS OF THE PARISIANS

JOE MACDONALD



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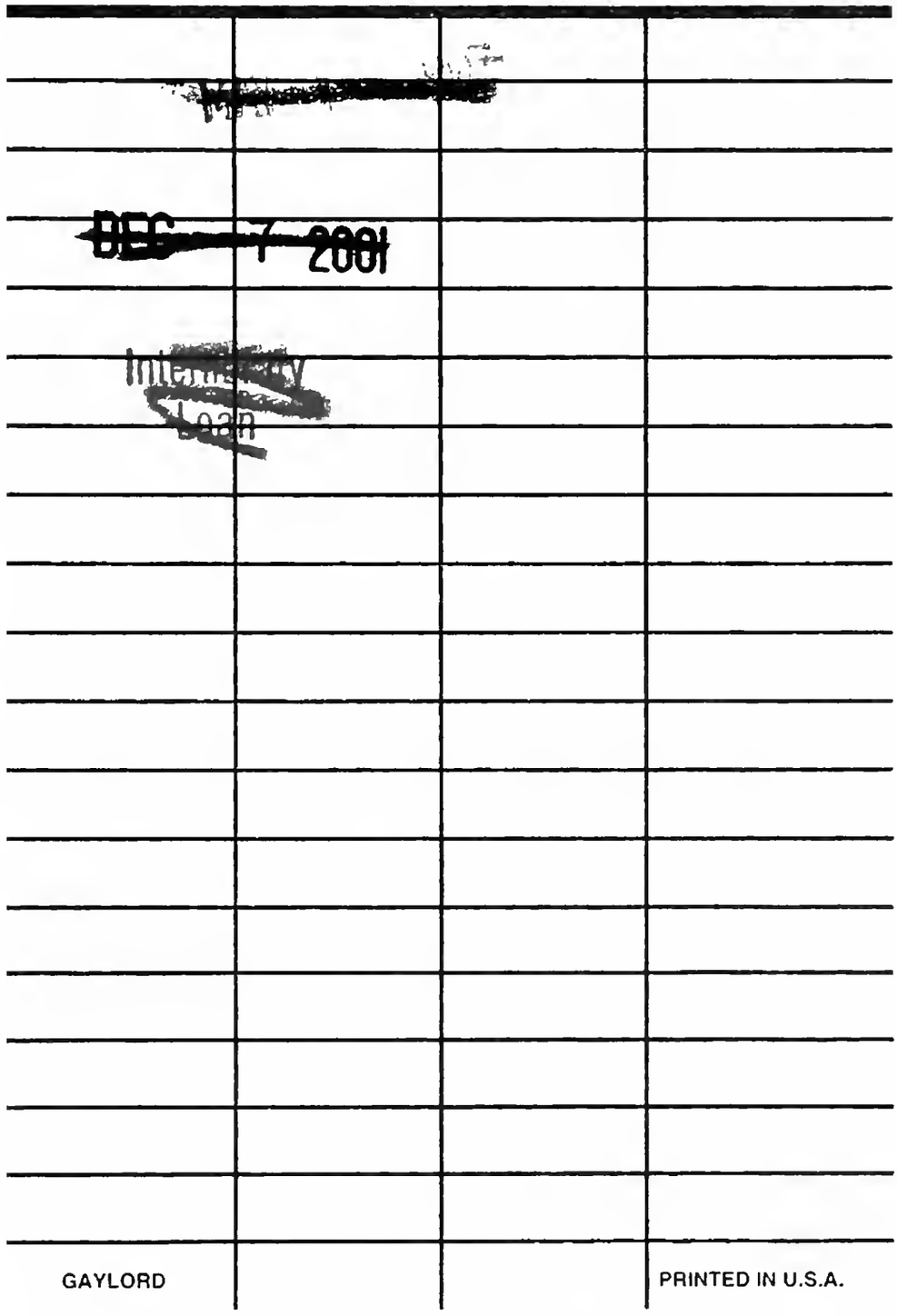

PARIS

OF

THE PARISIANS

BY

JOHN F. MACDONALD

'Les maisons font la ville, mais les citoyens font la cité'

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

London

GRANT RICHARDS

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GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

TO

HAROLD HODGE, Esq.

EDITOR OF

'THE SATURDAY REVIEW'

NOTE

SEVERAL of these sketches appeared originally in *The Saturday Review* and are reproduced by kind permission of the Editor; while the chapters on "The Garden of the Luxembourg," "Spring in Montparnasse," and "Jean Sévère" are by Miss Katie Winifred Macdonald.

PREFACE

THE purpose of these sketches is not political nor yet didactic. No charge is laid upon me to teach the French nation its duties, to reprove it for its follies. Nor yet is it my design to hold up Paris of the Parisians as an example of naughtiness, nor even of virtue, to English readers. A student of human life still in my humanities, my purpose is purely interpretative. I would endeavour to translate into English some Paris scenes, in such a way as to give a true impression of the movement, personages, sounds, colours, and atmosphere pervaded with joy of living which belongs to them. These impressions which I have myself received, and now desire to communicate, are not the result of a general survey of Paris taken from some lofty summit. I have not looked down upon the capital of France from the top of the Eiffel Tower ; nor yet from the terrace of the Sacré Cœur ; nor yet from the balcony among the chimères of Notre

Dame; nor yet from Napoleon's column on the Place Vendôme; nor yet from the Revolution's monument that celebrates the taking of the Bastille. No doubt from these exalted places the town affords an amazing spectacle. Domes rise in the distance, and steeples. Chimneys smoke; clouds hurry. Up there the spectator has not only a fine bird's-eye view of beautiful Paris: he has a good throne for historical recollections, for philosophical reveries, for the development of political and scientific theories also. But for the student of to-day's life, whose interest turns less to monuments than to men, there is this drawback—seen from this point of view the inhabitants of Paris look pigmies. Far below him they pass and repass: the bourgeois, the bohemian, the boulevardier, all small, all restless, all active, all so remote that one is not to be distinguished from the other. Coming down from his tower, the philosopher may explore Paris from the tombs at St. Denis to the crypts of the Panthéon, from the galleries of the Louvre to the shops in the Rue de Rivoli, from the Opera and Odéon to the Moulin Rouge and sham horrors of the cabarets of Montmartre,—leaving Paris from the Gare du Nord, he may look back at the white city under the blue sky with mingled regret and satisfaction — regret

for the instructive days he has spent with her, satisfaction in that he knows her every stone; and yet, when some hours later in mid-channel the coasts of France grow dim, he may leave behind him an undiscovered Paris—not monumental Paris, not political Paris, not Baedeker's Paris, not profligate Paris, not fashionable cosmopolitan Paris of the Right Bank, not Bohemian Anglo-American Paris of the Left Bank, but Paris as she knows herself—Paris of the Parisians.

Not only conscientious foreign explorers ignore this Paris; cosmopolitan residents are often unacquainted with her true characteristics. Both are given to keeping to themselves; and Parisians must be approached and not waited for; and soothed at first, and even flattered a little. And then all overtures must be made in French—for Parisians abhor foreign tongues. And all reflections on London Sundays, London fogs, London smoke, however exaggerated, must be accepted mildly—for Parisians cannot bear to be contradicted. And all reference to Mdlle. Larive's famous song, "Voilà les Englisch," must be welcomed with a smile, —for Parisians hate the over-sensitive. Finally, it would be fatal to resent the compassion bestowed upon you because you happen not to have been born in Paris. Humour them so far, and they

will bid you not be cast down. Thank them for their compassion, and they, in their turn, will boast that after awhile they will make a perfect Parisian of you, and inspire you with so profound a love for them and their surroundings that you will weep as you take your homeward ticket at the Gare du Nord ; and tremble in the train ; and sigh not only on account of sickness in the Channel ; and groan in the Strand ; and recall the past by your fireside ; and go to bed melancholy with memories ; and dream fondly until dawn of Paris, Paris, Paris. All this they prophesy amiably ; then taking you at once in hand, introduce you to their friends. These also receive you pleasantly, and soon you are surprised at the number of genial Parisians with whom you have shaken hands and to whom you have said, "Charmé, monsieur, de faire votre connaissance." Time, moreover, does not dispel the impression made upon you by their amiability and kindness. You are "mon cher" soon, then "mon vieux." You share their secrets before long. You must take their arm. You are as good as naturalised. You are "one of them." You are "chez vous," "chez eux."

Virtues of which the spectator has no notion are to be found in Paris of the Parisians. And the Parisian does not conceal them through

mauvaise honte. Love of Nature, love of children, both absorb him: how regularly does he hurry into the country to sprawl on the grass, lunch by a lake, stare at the sunset, the stars, and the moon; how frequently he admires the view from his window, the Jardin du Luxembourg, and the Seine; how invariably he spoils his gosse or another's gosse, anybody's gosse, infant, boy, or girl! He will go to the Luxembourg merely to watch them. He likes to see them dig, and make queer patterns in the dust. He loves to hear them laugh at guignol, and is officiously careful to see that they are securely strapped on to the wooden horses. He does not mind their hoops, and does not care a jot if their balls knock his best hat off. He walks proudly behind Jeanne and Edouard, on the day of their first Communion, all over Paris; laughing as Jeanne lifts her snow-white skirt and when Edouard, ætat. 10, salutes a friend; and he worships Jeanne, and thinks that there is no better son in the world than Edouard, and he will tell you so candidly and with earnestness over and over again. "Ma fille Jeanne," "Mon fils Edouard," "Mes deux gosses," is his favourite way of introducing the joy of his heart and the light of his home. And then he knows how to live amiably, and how to amuse himself

pleasantly, and how to put poorer people at their ease, as on fête days. He will go to a State theatre on 14th July (when the performance is free), and joke with the crowd that waits patiently before its doors, and never push, and never complain, and never think of elbowing his way forward at the critical moment to get in. He will admire the fireworks and illuminations after ; and dance at street corners without ever uttering a word that is rude or making a gesture that is rough. He will trifle with confetti on Mardi Gras, and throw coloured rolls of paper on to the boulevard trees. And he will laugh all the time and joke all the time, and make Jeanne happy and Edouard happy, and be happy himself, until it is time to abandon the boulevards and go home. "La joie de vivre!" Verily, the Parisian studies, knows, and appreciates it.

There is something else he appreciates also, and reveres. And here especially we find that his paternal affection for all children, his courtesy and good-fellowship with all classes, his sense of proprietorship and delight and pride in public gardens do not indicate only a happy and amiable disposition, but spring from a deeper sentiment. He is sauntering on the boulevards, it may be, with Edouard. The time is summer—there is sunshine everywhere ; the trees are in bloom, the streets are

full of movement and noise, fiacres rattle, tram-horns sound, camelots cry, gamins whistle. Suddenly there is a temporary lull. A slow procession passes, a hearse buried in flowers; mourners on foot follow, the near relatives, bare-headed, walking two by two; after them come, it may be, a long line of carriages; it may be, one forlorn fiacre. It does not matter. For the Parisian, a rich funeral or a poor one is never an indifferent spectacle; never simply an unavoidable, disagreeable interruption of traffic, to be got out of sight, and out of the way of the busy world as quickly as possible. Here is one of those ordinary circumstances when the Parisian's attention to the courtesies of social life is the outward and visible sign of his self-respecting humanity and fraternal sympathy. His hat is off, and held off—so is Edouard's cap, so are the caps of even younger children, for from the age of four upwards each gosse knows what is due from him on such an occasion. Cochers are bare-headed, boulevard loafers also; the bourgeois stops stirring his absinthe to salute; many a woman crosses herself and mutters a prayer. "Farewell!" "God bless thee!" The kind and pious leave-taking of the Parisian enjoying to-day's sunshine to the Parisian of yesterday whose place to-morrow will know

him no more, accompanies the procession step by step on its way to the cemetery of Père Lachaise or Montparnasse.

. . . . . .

A kind critic of some of these sketches here reproduced from *The Saturday Review* has said of them that their tendency is to "counteract the wrong-headed reports of French and English antipathies by which two sympathetic neighbour-peoples are being estranged and exasperated." If this be true—and to some extent I hope it may be—the result is surely all the more gratifying because it does not proceed from any deliberate effort on my part to serve that end, but, as I have said, from my endeavour to convey to others the impressions I have received. The immortal Chadband may be said to have established the proposition that if a householder having upon his rambles seen an eel, were to return home and say to the wife of his bosom, "Rejoice with me, I have seen an elephant," it would not be truth. It would not be truth were I to say of the Jeunesse of the Latin Quarter that it is callous and corrupt, or to deny that beneath the madcap frolicsome temper of the hour can be felt the justness of mind and openness to great ideas that will put a curb on extravagance and give safe guidance by and by.

And again of Paul and Pierre's little lady friends, Mimi and Musette, mirth-loving, dance-loving daughters of Murger — it would not be truth were I to report them in any sense wicked girls, or to deny that taking them where they stand their ways of feeling are straight though, no doubt, their way of life may go a little zig-zag. And of Montmartre and her cabarets and chansonniers — it would not be truth were I to say that only madness and perversion reign in her cabarets, or to deny that true poets and genuine artists may be found amidst the false and hectic glitter of the "Butte." And of the man in the street who is neither poet nor student, the average Parisian of simply every-day life — it would not be truth were I to repeat the hackneyed phrase that he would overthrow the Republican Government to reinstate a Monarchy, being a Royalist at heart. True, storms rage about him; scandals break out beside him; ministries fall; presidents pass — did these storms and scandals represent Republican principles it might be said with truth that he paid them little heed. What is true, however, is that the qualities and principles he takes his stand by do not change or fall with ministries or pass with presidents: cultivating still the art of living amiably, rejoicing still over the

beauties of his town, and not merely rejoicing over them, but respecting and protecting them, believing still, and with reason, in the greatness of his country, he succeeds where his rulers often fail not merely in professing but in practising the doctrine of liberty, equality, fraternity. And in connection with the prevailing sympathy in Paris of the man in the street for "les Boères," and his belief that he knows England's interests and proper behaviour better than she herself—it would not be truth were I to affirm that these opinions in their assumption of competency to manage other people's business for them are any more exasperating than authoritative views expressed by the London man in the street during the progress of the Dreyfus affair. Finally, with regard to the alleged Anglophobia of the average Parisian—it would not be truth were I to say that it represented a deep-rooted, incorrigible animosity towards the English nation founded on anything more than temporary irritation and misunderstanding.

JOHN F. MACDONALD.

PARIS, *April* 1900.

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LA RIVE GAUCHE

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Boxes of books line either side of the Seine, and stooping figures hover about them; but the Rive Droite and the Rive Gauche have little in common. The first is blasé, or it is bourgeois. It does nothing, or it bawls at the Bourse. It is prematurely old, or it totters on a stick. It is pale, and must use rouge. It has tasted every joy; strained every nerve; exhausted every sense. Youth possesses the other side. Blithe figures caper about. Upon this Jeunesse, Notre Dame casts her shadow; the dome of the Panthéon rises proudly above it. Faces are fresh, voices gay; no one mumbles about his liver, or is conscious of having one. Dissipations, too, are different. Theatres stop glittering before you have crossed the bridge; the Noctambules and Soleil d'Or, artistic cabarets, begin. No one draws on white gloves; no one sits in a stall before a ballet. Toasts and blessings are delivered in the Café

Harcourt, mad measures performed at Bullier's: Paul and Pierre, wild lights of the Latin Quarter, rejoice. Both love to clothe themselves in corduroys, and wear capes and ties that fly. Both are given to dancing down the street, arm-in-arm, linked to Gaston and Georges, an amazing row. Both prefer song to study, bocks to books, pipes to pens, and night to day.

Some trials, nevertheless, torment the Latin Quarter: four of them, quarterly events, when landlords come out. They arrive at mid-day; and find Paul in bed. He is polite. He is pale. He is sorry, and—forth comes his plea, harrowing but simple, full of promise, of infinite hope. It is cursed and refuted; it grows in melancholy. It soothes; it moves; a final vow: it wins! Touched by this mercy, Paul immediately starts a hoard. He lays a foundation sou. He is proud of his thrift. He tells his friends. For days he nurses his store: but no sooner is it one franc old than he covets and falls. He confesses his crime to Gaston, and Gaston grins, and shows him nine sous, and says he has had them as many months: and secretes them again before Paul can see that they are Argentine and English, worthless and worn. Or, Paul buys an account book. He carries it with him. He forgets its existence. He is surprised to find it a week later, and fills it in a night with card scores and character sketches. Next quarter, Paul's circumstances require a change of

landlords: he is seen "moving." A seedy man with a seedier truck takes his goods: pathetic rubbish, wanting in varnish and legs. It is escorted through the streets by Paul and friends. Passing students salute the cortège. Sad song is chanted over it. In a side street, at a poor little wine-shop, it stops, and Paul and friends toast and christen and cheer it. A modest room, near the Seine, is its new home, conveniently close to Père Pognon's, whose meals, popular in the Quarter, cost, with a bottle of wine, one franc. Wonderful stews and the queerest curries appear twice a week; both are pronounced épatant. Paul and Pierre have a slate that records their week's eatings. Every Saturday they give the sleeveless garçon half a franc. A rival establishment stands next door, emblazoned Crémerie, hung with portraits and sketches left by needy artists in exchange for a steak. Other treasures are held in pawn: poems, the first act of a tremendous tragedy intended for the Odéon, a pair of bursting boxing-gloves, a meerschaum pipe. On a grander scale is the "Diner des Princes," equipped with thinner glasses, a table-cloth, and napkins. This feast costs one franc fifty; and includes a variety of dishes, far from plain, steeped in sauces, magnificently named. Each has its surprises. None are natural. Even your beef has been tampered with. You meet amazing trifles wherever you stab.

Other feasts occur from time to time, royally

conducted in a café or private abode. Feasts in honour of an inheritance, or of a triumph, or—grandest event of all—in honour of a departure. Gaston was the last to give one: Gaston aetat. twenty-five, summoned home to Rouen to commence his professional career. He calls meetings. He concocts menus. He consults wine lists. The Quarter starts hoards that do not dissolve prematurely, and makes Gaston gifts. He accepts them with emotion. He feels very sad. He issues invitations to a supper, at which every guest's arm must be bound with crape. Of all ceremonies this is the saddest. By it you bury your youth, your past, and your follies. You are old when it is over. It is the last mad moment of your career. Memories haunt the room in which you sup. It has heard you sing; it has felt you dance. What grim change has come over it! How transformed it is! Festoons of flowers have given place to cords of crape. The mirror is draped with it; the chandelier shrouded in it. Knots and bows are about, all black. Gaston enters, thick in crape. The mourners follow, armed with crape. And waiters appear, with bows of crape. Every mustard-pot wears mourning, every menu a black rosette. There are sombre threads round every spoon and fork. Soup is served from a vessel grimly adorned. Bottles arrive; alas, their slender necks bear further symbols of Gaston's fleeting youth. No one has much to say. Laughs

are faint; jokes rare. Each new dish is clothed in crape. As the bottles circulate, Paul revives. He wins the first laugh; he begins to smile. He calls Gaston "mon vieux," meaningly; and Gaston sighs. Bold voices refer to Rouen as a place in which no one capers. Its cafés are dim; its people glum. More bottles appear; behold, their once golden stems have gone black: they are labelled Carte Noir. Coffee comes, then chartreuse. Every one whispers, watches, waits; and Paul, drawing on a pair of black gloves, rises, calls for silence, proposes the first toast. A tribute to old age is his topic, coupled with the name of the venerable form who sits at the top of the table.

"Gaston," he says, "your eye is dim, your frame feeble, your voice weak: you will rejoice no more. Rouen claims you; carefully clothed and combed, you will practise law, take a wife, and conduct a home. Alas, poor Gaston, we, the Jeunesse of the Latin Quarter, lament your transition to bourgeois spheres, grieve over the putting-away of your corduroys, and pray you leave them and your tie behind you as relics of your brilliant youth, now dead. Think of us, Gaston, as your fire burns and your respectable clock ticks, as you lay your head on your pillow at the worthy hour of ten: pray for us, Gaston, and we will pray for you."

Gaston replies, and with emotion. He thanks the Jeunesse, he envies the Jeunesse, of whom he is now doyen. He will scatter his raiment

among them ; each shall have his share. He mourns his youth ; spent, he admits, wildly, but free of stains and scars. Looking back on the five years he has spent in the Latin Quarter, he remembers no mean or dishonourable action committed by either his friends or himself, and he is proud of this and thankful for it, and thinks that principles and honour are more at home with the Jeunesse of the Rive Gauche than with the rakes and bourgeois of the other side. He drinks to this Jeunesse, to the Quarter, to the Sorbonne, to the Panthéon, and to Notre Dame.

Every one rises for the toast, drinks it in silence. And one by one the students pass by Gaston, wring his hand, and say something affectionate in a husky voice, then collect their hats and capes, and go out into the night, noisy again, an amazing row.

Dawn breaks over the Latin Quarter, and policemen yawn. "Ce sont les étudiants," they growl when voices ring out. Good-hearted bourgeois are disturbed : "La Jeunesse qui s'amuse," they say. And the students dance on. Down the Boul' Mich' they go, to sip hot coffee at Madame Bertrand's. She serves it herself, a motherly soul. She lectures Paul if he reels a little ; reproves Pierre for being out if he has an examination to undergo ; when they have gossiped themselves hoarse, she tells them to seek their homes. And the students dance out. Arms join

again, legs go, stopping only on the bridge. Notre Dame, great and gray, stands to the right of this Jeunesse, and it is to her that Paul and Pierre and Gaston lift their hats, to her towers, over which a cloudy sky is breaking. Hat in hand, they linger, dishevelled dreamers. Gaston sighs; every one sighs. Gaston takes a last look at the towers he loves. And the students dance home.

DAUGHTERS OF MURGER

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NINE out of ten of the little ladies who live in the Latin Quarter bear the name Mimi, the tenth is Musette, or Margot, or Miette. All have an after-name with the prefix "de" as well. Paul, for instance, will introduce you to "Mademoiselle Mimi de Montespan," but as the evening wears on, observes, "You may call her Mimi." And she, smiling, remarks, "Both Paul and I give you permission to call me Mimi." Nor are you "Monsieur" any longer. You have become "mon cher." You may offer roses. You may buy nougat. You may constitute yourself host of a luncheon party in the country. Sometimes, in thoughtful moods, Mimi will review her past—"quand j'avais quatorze ans." She was a modiste, or engaged already in a shop. She abhorred the life, but put up with it for three years. She then took to rejoicing in the Boul' Mich', and met Paul. They danced together at Bullier's often; they sipped bocks side by side at the Taverne

Lorraine; they exchanged vows; they walked off arm-in-arm, Mimi and Paul, Paul and Mimi, children of Murger.

It is usual for Paul to make an appointment with Mimi for five o'clock, when his studies are done. She warns him not to be late as he starts out; then sews or reads or decorates their home. At five she hastens to the Taverne Lorraine or some other favourite resort, and orders an apéritif if Paul is not to be seen. Musette, Margot, Miette arrive. Pierre comes up, then Gaston. All inquire after Paul; and Mimi is about to proclaim bitterly that he has abandoned her for ever, when the door opens and Paul hurries in. Mimi, however, ignores him. Paul, seating himself, protests that he has been in solemn seclusion with a wise professor for hours. Mimi says, "Tant pis." Paul replies, "Sois raisonnable." And Mimi declares that it is infamous of Paul to neglect her, and Paul proclaims life to be unendurable. And Mimi threatens to leave Paul for ever, and Paul resolves to start for Madagascar. And Mimi becomes tearful, and Paul grows husky. And Mimi smiles at last, and Paul laughs. And Mimi forgives Paul, and Paul pardons Mimi. And Mimi and Paul make for a crémerie, or for a one franc fifty restaurant, for dinner.

Should it be Thursday, Mimi and Paul go on to Bullier's. They take a table and hail friends.

They criticise the dancers, poking fun at this bourgeois or that foreigner. They accompany the band, humming or joining in the chorus of some popular air. They dance a valse together, smiling at their friends as they pass, laughing at their applause and cries. Should it be summer, Mimi and Paul adjourn to the garden and sip iced syrups in an alcove or beneath the reflections of a thousand coloured lamps. Mimi leans back, and becomes sentimental over the stars. Paul points out Venus, and counts the family of the Great Bear. Mimi sighs, and declares that she never expected in her millinery days to be so happy. Paul takes her hand, and calls her a pet name. Both laugh gaily when the band strikes up the first bars of "Parfait Amour."

Other nights are spent at the Cabaret des Noctambules, or merely in a café. Mimi's table is always surrounded by Latin Quarter celebrities—such as Karl, Bibi la Purée, Mère Casimir who danced at the opera years ago, and sells matches now because she is sixty. Pierre and Gaston bring up Musette and Miette. Problems are discussed, choruses chanted, rumours exchanged. Often, Paul and Mimi, Pierre and Musette, Gaston and Miette, plan an excursion into the country for the following Sunday.

Their train or tram goes at eleven, and they meet only ten minutes before that time. They are excited; they are flushed; they take a cab to

the Montparnasse Station, or to the steam-tram that starts before the Panthéon, and just manage to get seats. Murger's daughters wear cool blouses and straw hats ; Murger's sons affect a négligé attire which they are pleased to call "le boating." They say "au revoir" to Paris tragically, as though they were about to set forth on a perilous ten years' trip. In the train, Mimi and her friends lower the window, look for the first glimpse of green, admire a cottage, salute a peasant, laugh at a cow. Paul says, "Sois sage." Pierre observes, "Sois correcte." Gaston remarks, "Quelles gosses!" At stations Murger's daughters hail the guard, and tell him to hasten the driver and reproach the fireman, and to heap on coal. And the guard laughs, and Murger's daughters promise him a flower when they return. And the guard says he has plenty in his garden, and Murger's daughters reply, "T'es bien heureux, mon vieux." And the guard blows his whistle. And Murger's daughters cry, "Et vite." And Murger's sons observe once more, "Sois sage," "Sois correcte," "Quelles gosses." Cottages are common now, so are cows. Peasants pass often. Rural cafés with alcoves and summer-houses are left behind. Murger's daughters grow impatient ; Murger's sons would soothe them with cigarettes, but neither Mimi nor Musette nor Miette will smoke until she has lunched by a lake. The guard is hailed again ; his is the worst of trains, the oldest,

the most infamous. His coal must be German coal; the driver must have come from Berlin, the fireman from Metz. Shall Mimi get out to push the train? Shall Musette help her? Shall Miette lead the engine? "Un peu de patience," says the guard. "Un peu de charbon," reply the girls. "Un peu de vapeur," answer the boys. And so the train moves on; so Murger's daughters must keep still; so Murger's sons must soothe them; so, after a while, they reach their destination.

Trees rise at once. Shrubberies spread in the distance. Then comes the wood. Murger's children divide into pairs; Paul, leading, cries, "En avant," the others follow. It is time to lunch, but Mimi is for ever seeing a flower far to the right or to the left and making for it. Paul protests: all the tables will be taken, all the fowl gone, all the salad stale, he declares. "Gourmand," says Mimi. "Petite folle," replies Paul. "En avant," cries Pierre. On they go, but not without stopping again and again. Musette would wear a wreath instead of a hat; Miette must make a chain of flowers—it is almost two when the lake, confronted by a restaurant-garden, appears. Only one summer-house is free, and the six immediately take it. Six covers are ordered and arrive. The menu is demanded: the invariable meal of sardines, cold fowl, salad, and fruits is chosen. Wine? Graves. How many bottles? Three. Murger's daughters remove their hats.

Murger's sons pour out wine. Sardines are brought, and rolls. "Commençons," says Paul. "Mesdames," says Gaston. "Messieurs," say the girls. . . .

"Ah, Mimi," begins Paul when coffee stands on the table, "the first part of to-day's blithe programme is over. We have lunched by a lake. The fowl now is only a memory. The salad, made by your own Paul with what care, with what talent, with what infinite tenderness, has gone. Coffee confronts you; c'est la fin. Remember that salad, Mimi. Tell the Quarter of it, saying, 'Paul was incomparable!' Insist that the feast would have been infamous without it. Proclaim that you are proud of your Paul, for he is wonderful indeed at mixing vinegars and oils, at cracking eggs, at discarding garlic and other base herbs for innocent lettuce. Tell Père Pognon that Paul would draw Paillard's clientèle away were he to mix and stir salads for him. And Paul will tell the Quarter that Mimi was lovelier than the flowers she gathered, and that her eyes were bluer than the lake she lunched by, and——"

"Silence, poète," cries Gaston.

"Pay and depart," suggests Pierre.

"Eleven francs," says the waiter.

"A fortune," protests Paul.

"A gold mine," cries Gaston.

"Ten years' income," declares Pierre.

"Merci," says the waiter. "A dimanche."

Mimi and Paul go off alone; Pierre and Musette follow far behind; Gaston and Miette bring up the rear. They are arm-in-arm now, these sons and daughters of Murger, and they are exchanging vows and recalling the past and viewing the future. Paul tells Mimi that there is no girl like her in the Quarter, and that he is not worthy of her. Mimi is touched, and sure that men like Paul are rare. Then Mimi and Paul are seen to pause for a moment together. Paul picks flowers now, and soon has a bunch to offer Mimi. There are weeds among them, and vulgar ferns, so Mimi laughs and divides the bad from the good, and resolves to make the railway-guard a present of the first, and to put the second on Paul's writing-desk at home. Together they wander; together, Pierre and Musette, Gaston and Miette, wander, still far from one another. "Parfait Amour." No band is there to play to it; no lamps are there to cast their reflections on it; no mad dancers are near to smile upon it. Paul and Mimi may wander on, the others may follow, unobserved, undisturbed, free to gather flowers and to pause again, until sunset.

The train is there already, when Murger's children dash on to the platform breathless and flushed. It is about to start by the time they have found a carriage; it moves before they have chosen their seats. Darkness is fast descending upon the wood, restaurant-garden, and lake.

Lights twinkle in the cottages; cows are dozing; no peasants are about. Yet Murger's children wish they were still wandering arm-in-arm along some solitary path. All are weary. Mimi has completely forgotten the guard, and is afraid of falling asleep. All are happy. Musette proposes an excursion for the following Sunday, and suggests starting at seven or eight. All look lovingly on their flowers. Miette proclaims hers to be the choicest, and intends to call for a jug of water for them if she stops with the others to sip a last bock on the Boul' Mich'. Stations seem to be passed quickly. Mimi has no reason to protest, nor would she were the train to travel more slowly than before. She does not long to arrive in Paris, does not look forward to cabarets and cafés, and sighing, declares herself ready to live near a wood all her life. Musette agrees with her, so does Miette. Paul, Pierre, and Gaston admit that it would be divine to loiter for ever and for ever with their fair companions on the brink of a blue and beautiful lake. They would keep cows and chickens. They would grow beetroot and lettuce. Paul should make salads: Paul, "l'incomparable." Dawn would see them up; sunset would find them ready to retire. Occasionally, friends might come down from Montparnasse to envy them, to congratulate them, to journey homewards emulous of their peaceful life. Mimi would always wear cool blouses and straw hats; Paul should put on

nothing but that négligé thing, "le boating." Arm-in-arm always, they would explore the wood and visit cottages and chat with peasants and forget the cabarets and cafés of ——. Montparnasse.

"Parfait Amour." Sad is it that Paul must leave for Amiens or Rouen three years later. "Parfait Amour." Cruel is it that Mimi should lose her gaiety and freshness with time. "Parfait Amour." Bitter is it that other Mimis will take the place of this Mimi, rejoice at Bullier's, as she rejoiced, grow sentimental over the stars, lunch by a lake in the country,—while she will sit alone at a table fearing the future, regretting the past—"Parfait Amour"?

BIBI LA PURÉE

BIBI LA PURÉE

On the terrace of the Boulevard St. Michel, towards nine at night, coffee is sipped, or bock, or chartreuse. Pipes steam ; in select corners cigars glow. Alphonse, most overworked of waiters, answers incessantly, "Tout de suite, M. Paul" ; "Me voilà, M. Pierre." Friends meet, and groups form. Here, there, and everywhere dart Murger's daughters ; soon the nut man, the olive merchant, the flower woman, a negro with nougat arrive. Pausing, the first two lay a sample nut and a sample olive on every table ; then, in some sheltered corner keep watch, and promptly issue forth to measure out two sous' worth at those tables where the samples have disappeared. "Tiens," observes Mdlle. Mimi, "du nougat." "Tiens," says Mdlle. Musette, "des roses." "Mais c'est la ruine," declares Pierre—"La misère," pronounces Paul, both singling out sous. Couples go by, quartettes linked arm-in-arm, bound either for Bullier's or the Noctambules or Taverne Lorraine.

Appointments are made—" à minuit, à deux heures, hein?" Then as a long, lean, rustily dressed person comes in view, every one winks, every one laughs. He has grisly hair, green eyes, shaven and sunken cheeks. He wears three huge cabbage roses in his coat ; he leans slightly on an umbrella, silver-mounted, slim, and of veritable silk. He looks seventy. Reflectively he puffs at an inch of cigarette. Waiters point at him ; students salute him. Now he bows, now he smiles—Bibi of the Rive Gauche, Bibi the Bohemian, Bibi la Purée.

On wanders Bibi, down the Boul' Mich' towards that dim and classic retreat governed by M. Théo —the Café Procope. Memories of great men haunt the place. Relics remain : " la table de M. de Voltaire," scarred and chipped. Tourists come to inspect it ; and although M. Théo cannot point out the precise crack on which the philosopher's coffee stood, nor the corners at which Marat, Danton, and Robespierre sat, nor Gambetta's favourite seat twenty-seven years ago, he has a wondrous knowledge of the times that makes him the personal intimate of these five great ghosts of the Procope. M. Théo, too, is a Bohemian. He, also, winks as Bibi appears. Should any innocent worldling inquire, " Who is Bibi ?" M. Théo will reply, " An original, with an amazing past."

Secretary, valet, anything and everything, to Paul Verlaine was Bibi ; six years ago they met in the Procope, where Verlaine used to take his

absinthe. Soon a close friendship sprang up between the two : Bibi amused and interested the poet. When Verlaine was stupefied with absinthe, it was Bibi who led him home. When Verlaine had no money to buy absinthe, it was Bibi who sold the poet's autographs on the Boul' Mich' and his books on the quays. Sometimes Verlaine lost his temper, but Bibi never complained—he was proud of his position ; admired and adored the poet, whom he called "le Maître," and who called him "la Purée." Two years passed ; Verlaine fell ill. In spite of Bibi's tender care he grew worse, and died : leaving Bibi a legacy of three shirts. Then, for the first time, sorrow came upon Bibi. He was a mere youth of fifty, but felt a hundred, he declared ; and forsaking old haunts, wandered sadly about the quays at night, and in silent streets, and in the shade of the Jardin du Luxembourg. Soon, however, he returned to the Procope, with a parcel under his arm. M. Théo received him kindly : together they recalled old times when Verlaine was there, sipping absinthe, talking brilliantly, surrounded by the Jeunesse ; together they brought forth Verlaine relics, letters, books, and (from the parcel) the three shirts which Bibi had inherited ; together they talked for hours and hours, sighing and sipping, until Bibi made his famous declaration that he would never lend those shirts and never put on any others. Months went by ; Bibi lost his melancholy, was seen rejoic-

ing at the Procope again. No one knew where he lived, nor how; but he got constant bocks and supper sometimes; he was always obliging, always amusing. He would run long errands; he would gain grace from Paul's angry landlord. He would sell books on the quays; he knew better than any student how to deal with the officials at the Mont de Piété. But all at once a strange passion took possession of him. He had not known it in his youth; it seized him suddenly, and amounted, in short, to this lamentable vice: an irresistible craving for other people's umbrellas. His honour tottered before them; old or new, shabby or smart, they stirred in him dishonest emotion. He would use stratagem, craft: visit corners casually, linger by hat-stands lazily, disappear suddenly, until some one would say, "Tiens, où est Bibi? Et tiens, où est mon parapluie?" Next morning Bibi would enter the Procope as though nothing had happened, and if accused, reply, "What? *I* steal umbrellas? *I?* Bibi la Purée? L'ami du Maître? Jamais! Jamais!" Yet friends grew cold to Bibi; forgot the old wink of greeting when they saw him, began to grasp their umbrellas. They gave him fewer bocks now, fewer suppers; until the anniversary of Verlaine's death approached, and a pilgrimage to his tomb was planned. At that moment all hearts went out to Bibi, and all subscribed for a new suit (worthy to go over Verlaine's shirts), and presented it to him at the

Procope, after much sympathetic sipping and many a sentimental speech. At the grave Bibi wept bitterly, and the mourners, pitying him, resolved to feast him when the ceremony was done. But Bibi's soul, alas, had been stirred by a stack of umbrellas leaning against a tree. It was too much for him : drying his tears, he slipped away, and with him disappeared no less than fifteen umbrellas, all silver-mounted, all slim, all of veritable silk. . . .

To-day the Latin Quarter still laughs at the episode. It loves a "farce," and enjoying the impudence of the thing, patronises Bibi now that he has taken to lending umbrellas. He has made it his profession, and rejoices more than a cocher when it rains. He lets them out at fifty centimes apiece, and calls attention to their handles, and to their shape, and to the delicacy of their silk. Papers, moreover, have interviewed Bibi—"Bibi on Umbrellas" made a stir in the *Patrie*. Chansonniers sing of Bibi—"Les Parapluies de Bibi," at the Noctambules, had a huge success. And cafés put up the notice : "Here, umbrellas are taken charge of by Bibi la Purée." . . . Day and night he haunts the Boul' Mich', making himself useful. Peculiar trifles fill his pockets, smelling-salts, sticking-plaster, needles and thread. He is always to the fore in a fight, always useful in an emergency. Wits call him "Le docteur Bibi." Sometimes they try to make him tipsy, but Bibi,

suspecting the generous invitation to "order as much as you like," secretly swallows a mysterious preparation and is strictly sober when his hosts are led home. Often he is seen entertaining queer old ladies in wine-shops—friends of thirty years ago, dancers at the opera once, match-sellers now. Together they chant Béranger ditties, talk of the Tuileries, narrate Boulanger anecdotes, shed tears, and take snuff. No feast is complete without Bibi, no carnival cortège. At Mi-carême he goes through the streets on a throne, as Bibi simply, with umbrellas about him; or as Voltaire (whom he declares he resembles) wrapped in a cloak, smiling, "le sourire malin et tendre"; or as the chief of the Quarter, with chamberlains and a brilliant crown. On all points of etiquette—Latin Quarter etiquette—Bibi is consulted; he has a hand, too, in every practical joke. He it was who helped Karl, the student, to trick M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire; the notion of employing a "Veiled Lady" was his. When the conspiracy was at length disclosed, Bibi and Karl paid a triumphant visit to Bullier's. Bibi entered with the "Veiled Lady" on his arm, Karl with twenty or thirty friends. A procession was formed, and as the band played the Marche Lorraine, Bibi and the "Veiled Lady" led the way slowly down the ball-room. Shouts went up, cheers—Bibi bowed; Karl, striking an attitude, clasped him by the hand. "Vive Karl," cried Bullier's, "Vive Bibi."

Students came up to pay them homage ; Murger's daughters presented them with roses. Karl and Bibi had to tell their story again and again. How Bullier's screamed as Karl solemnly repeated the words that first impressed M. de Beaurepaire : "Je suis l'homme que vous attendez"! How Bullier's shook when Bibi drew a vivid picture of Karl and himself sipping bock in a café, while the "Veiled Lady," closeted with M. de Beaurepaire, was exciting that gentleman with stirring reports of what Karl was doing—in Bâle, far away ! And how Bullier's cheered when the band struck up again and the procession, still headed by Bibi and the "Veiled Lady," marched off to the Taverne Lorraine for a supper of sandwiches and bock.

Toasts were drunk ; then a guest excited some sensation by rising to put a question : "Bibi, your shirt is blue, and Verlaine's shirts were white. What, O Bibi, of the solemn vow taken in the Procope ? Where, O Bibi, do you expect to go ?"

"La parole est à Bibi," shouted the guests ; and, stammering, Bibi replied, "Judge me not harshly, O Jeunesse. I have been elated to-day, lifted skywards. Above the Latin Quarter the skies are blue ; Verlaine loved those skies ; Verlaine loved blue."

"O Bibi, Bibi," sounded round the table ; and sighs and groans. But Karl intervened : Bibi, he said, was not to be judged harshly in the matter of a shirt, nor on the question of

an umbrella. His services had blotted out such foibles—he had contributed to the joy of just men, to the idea of the "Veiled Lady." He was forgiven. But—on the morrow, the Quarter expected him to sacrifice that shirt of blue and to renew his vow of fidelity to Paul Verlaine. Husky with emotion, Bibi pledged himself to do as the Quarter ordered; and offering his arm to the "Veiled Lady" once more, led the procession round and round the café, among the tables, past the counter, through the door, down the Boul' Mich', now bowing, now smiling—Bibi of the Rive Gauche, Bibi the Bohemian, Bibi la Purée.

"N'EN PARLONS PLUS"

"N'EN PARLONS PLUS"[1]

TREES are bare in the Luxembourg Gardens, and wind blows about them to-day. Its terrace is bleak, its band-stand empty, there are neither children in its corners nor old gentlemen on its paths. Boats do not drift across its lake; hoops no longer bowl along; nurses, gossips, grandmothers, guignol, and the wooden horses have disappeared. Only one stall remains; but no one stops to chat with the dreary old lady who owns it, no one casts even a glance at her damp display. We, like every one, hurry across without once pausing: down the steps, past the "Palais du Sommeil," up more steps, on to the Boul' Mich', where the students live more blithely than ever after their long rest by sand and sea. Bohemia is back, or rather most of it — some of its stars, alas, gave their last supper in July, and hurried away. Bohemia, however, has new Bohemians — bantlings, only just

[1] From *The Saturday Review*, three weeks after the verdict delivered by the Conseil de Guerre at Rennes.

escaped from hearth and home. But it was neither to watch them sip their first bocks, nor to see how far they had succeeded in imitating the cut of their elders' trousers, that we joined them in their cafés, it was simply to hear them discuss the Verdict, which was pronounced before their return. They might build bonfires, and dance round them hand in hand ; they might march with lanterns "comme autrefois." They might show their satisfaction, or their displeasure, in a manner too amazing to be missed. And so we mingled with this Jeunesse, shoulder to shoulder, and ordered bocks, and patronised the nut man, and smiled when Mdlle. Mimi and Mdlle. Musette hinted for roses and nougat. And we waited for Paul to speak, expecting him to open a discussion on the "Affaire" ; and wondered what he would say and how Pierre would reply. Time passed ; then every one began to narrate happy adventures in the country or by the sea. Bicycle trips were described, and journeys in yachts—every one had covered heaven knows how many miles of sea and ground. Every one had led a healthy, sober life—rising at six, retiring at ten, stopping only twice, in a tremendous trip, for bock. Every one had lived over a garden that had flowers, pigeons, and a peerless peacock. And the moons ! And the stars ! And those silent, silent walks ! So splendid all of them, so soothing, that Pierre solemnly declared he would gladly live among

cows and cabbages for ever, and put on sabots, and plough, and dig, and weed, and farm. Then it was Mdlle. Mimi's turn, and then her friend's, and both told of astonishing trips in motor-cars, and of picnics in woods, and even more enthusiastically, of the bundles of flowers they had gathered—for Murger's daughters love flowers more than nougat, and always did, and always will. Soon, however, Paul thought it time to be witty, and innocently asked, "Does the Republic last still?" "Sais pas," answered Mdlle. Mimi, "call the waiter." And when the waiter had replied, Paul remarked, "Épatant!" More bocks were brought, and more nuts and nougat were swallowed, but still no one referred to Rennes. Groups began to make for Bullier's; and we ourselves were about to depart, when one of Bohemia's bantlings observed that a distant cousin of his had been present at the court-martial. "Young man," replied Paul immediately, "that topic is forbidden — here, on the Rive Gauche, nous n'en parlons plus." Blushing, the bantling apologised; and as we made our way down the Boul' Mich' we disapproved of Paul, and felt disappointed in him, and wished that he had got upon a chair and made a generous speech, and thereby done credit to himself and to the Jeunesse. Every café was full, and we entered many, hoping always to hear the name of Captain Dreyfus. But everywhere the talk was the same—always of boats and bicycles.

So, discontentedly enough, we wandered on, and had just stopped to wait for the crazy little omnibus that goes to Montmartre, when Bibi la Purée came in view. He carried his umbrella, and he wore his rose, but his expression was sad and his step slow. Limply he shook hands; and we knew from his manner that he had a strange story to unfold. "Friends," he began, "Bibi, the brother of Verlaine, the pride of the Quarter, the accomplice of Karl, has been in prison. Bibi was fool enough to stray from the land of the students, and to cross the bridge, and to loiter on the boulevards. And Bibi had a quarrel with an infamous bourgeois, and a struggle with a police-man, and an audience with a magistrate who condemned him to sit in a cell for fifteen days." No details followed; no description of what really took place; but we understood the real nature of Bibi's offence and told him sympathetic-ally that the students had now returned and that, in future, he would have no need to look for umbrellas in so far and unfriendly a quarter as the boulevards. And Bibi's eye glistened again, and his "shake-hand" was warm as he said good-bye. "What," was our parting shot, "does Bibi think of the Verdict?" "Bibi," he answered, "has but one reply—N'en parlons plus."

It is almost an hour's drive from the Boul' Mich' to Montmartre, and through mean streets. Rows of wine-shops line either side of the way;

you only get a glimpse of the boulevards. When the hill commences, cabs and omnibuses begin to slacken, then to walk, and then to crawl. All kinds and conditions of people make the ascent—boulevardiers, students sometimes, tourists en route for the Moulin Rouge. When we had reached the middle of the hill, strains fell upon our ear. They came from a disreputable fellow, with a sheath of songs, and a scarlet sash that reminded one of those sinister idlers who haunt the sides of the Seine. No violin accompanied him, no guitar—he was even less of a vocalist than those wandering minstrels who chant sentimental airs in corners and courts. "N'en Parlons Plus" he was shouting as we came up. "Dix centimes! N'en Parlons Plus." Few sought for sous, however; and so he sang—

> Le cauchemar est fini, car la France est vengée,
> Qu'importe que l'on a gracié Dreyfus?
> La nation entière, heureuse et soulagée,
> N'a plus qu'un désir—c'est qu'on n'en parle plus.

"Quite right," observed a portly gentleman next to us. "Quite right—N'en parlons plus."

Wild sounds came from the Conservatoire de Montmartre, presided over by M. Henri Martin, wit and cabaret-proprietor. It was the "réouverture," the first night of the season, and the chief chansonnier was singing another version of "N'en Parlons Plus." Still, the Montmartrois must have their joke; and although M. Martin declared that

the first to refer to Rennes would be immediately fined, a chansonnière was introduced as the sister of the "Veiled Lady," and no other than "Blanche." Others were announced as "Speranza" and the "Demi-Dieu." At the cabaret of the Four Arts we were told that any one who mentioned the "Affaire" would be expelled; at Heaven, Hell, and Death, the same proclamation was made from a pulpit, a cauldron, and a coffin. And as we drove furiously down the hill, a noisy party passed us singing the Conservatoire version of "N'en Parlons Plus."

The Halles was our next and last destination; and it was three in the morning when we arrived. Carts and baskets of vegetables stood in the way; it was difficult to walk. At corners, queer old women sold coffee and soup. Business had not yet begun, however; and so we sought out the famous cellars of the Halles, where, until five in the morning, the market-people sip and smoke and sing and talk. There are four cellars, leading out of one another, furnished with rude chairs, tables, and a very old piano. And as we reached the last stair and passed into a smoky atmosphere, the same wretched minstrel whom we met on the hill rose and announced—"N'en Parlons Plus."

Horrified, we fled. Outside a number of porters were quarrelling over a copy of the *Aurore*. As they were on the verge of coming to blows, a policeman intervened, and with unusual

good-humour inquired what was the matter. "If Dreyfus," began one, "did not——" "Soyez raisonnable," replied the policeman. "N'en parlons plus."

Flying again, we found ourselves at last in a quiet street. No one was about; we walked without encountering a soul for quite half a mile. Then, all at once, a strange couple came along—husband and wife, the first stumbling, the second scolding. As they passed us, the wife said fiercely: "This, old scoundrel, is the fifth time you have been drunk since Sunday last." "Voyons, voyons," hiccoughed her husband. "N'en parlons plus."

"NOUVELLE AFFAIRE !"

"NOUVELLE AFFAIRE!"

WHOSOEVER first informed the Latin Quarter that its rejoicings in honour of the new century had been premature deserves, in the opinion of Paul and others, to be banished like M. Déroulède or imprisoned like Jules Guérin. Ten years, indeed, were not enough, says Mdlle. Mimi: he should be doomed to sit alone on the Île du Diable for ever or made to sift pepper in Cayenne; says Karl, it should be his unhappy fate to serve as secretary to Quesnay de Beaurepaire; says Bibi, it should be his dismal lot to live in a land where umbrellas are unknown. Before he spoke the Quarter was calm. It had feasted, and was recovering. It had resolved to rest awhile, abandoning dissipation. Now, flushed, furious, revengeful, it seeks "LUI" —"L'INFÂME." Seek him it may, but vainly. Threaten him it may, but without doing him injury. He has vanished; he has escaped, and— all that the Latin Quarter knows is that some one —"LUI"—told a waiter not to rejoice over the

arrival of the new century until the first day of 1901, that the waiter repeated the advice, that certain students accepted it, that others disagreed, that voices rose, that threats were exchanged, that friends became foes on the spot, that the fever of last May and June and July returned, that a reign of terror known as the "Nouvelle Affaire" began.

Whereas certain students open the discussion with the resolution to be reasonable, others have become so desperate as to declare that henceforward they can accept nothing, believe nothing, and, what is more, deny nothing. Bitterly they plead that they are old-fashioned, behind the times. They cannot help themselves; they are bewildered by this age in which the impossible becomes the probable; in which paradoxes prosper; in which the wildest fable is accepted as a truth. "See Mimi, dear," says Paul wildly, "see this glass. It stands. It holds bock. See, I drink from it. See, I put it down again. Still, your poor Paul would not swear solemnly that it was a glass or that it contained golden bock. He dare not; he may not, for were he to be so rash some one would say, 'Imbecile, it is a glass no longer but a bottle; and it contains brandy and not bock; and you, O Paul, are no longer Paul but Pierre; and Pierre is Pierre no more but Paul; and it is we, we the enlightened, we the initiated, who have changed all that.'" Mdlle. Mimi is surprised; Mdlle. Mimi does not understand, and in order to make himself clear

Paul asks her her age. "Nineteen," replies Mdlle. Mimi. "So you think," replies Paul. "Know then that you are eighteen!" But Mdlle. Mimi is honest enough to protest; Mdlle. Mimi refuses to allow Paul to be deceived: Mdlle. Mimi insists that she is just nineteen. "So you think," repeats Paul. "But know that you did not count until you were one year old. Know that before the first twelvemonth had passed, you were ageless, sexless, a mystery that had to wait. Know that your birth certificate is false, that the priest who christened you could be prosecuted, that you had no more right to be called a child before you were one year old than we have a right to call this the new century." Mdlle. Mimi, however, is entirely bewildered, and even a little angry. "I was never sans sexe," she replies, "never a mystery. And the priest who christened me christened my mother, and he was a clever man, and a good man, and he often used to be surprised that I was so advanced for a child of one." "So he thought," answers Paul hysterically. "But know that he is no longer a priest, that he may have been one once, but that wise men have changed all that. They would tell him that he is an acolyte or a choir-boy, or a pew-opener, or a grave-digger, to-day." "Voyons Paul, sois raisonnable," says one of the initiated. "Écoute." And, when Paul had brushed his hair from his brow and clasped Mdlle. Mimi's hand, his tutor tells him that the year one did not begin until

the year two, and that sages have learnt this suddenly from the Bible, and that they can name the chapter and the line, and that the discovery is as important as the discovery of America, or as the invention of electricity, or as the finding of the phonograph, because it proves the almanac to be all wrong. "The world has been deceived," he concludes. "It is for us, the Jeunesse of Paris, the Future, to assist research by supporting these sages. Be one of us, Paul. Glory awaits us, fame. Thank, instead of condemning, the man whom you and others call—'L'INFÂME.' Europe, too, will thank him some day. Europe will decorate him. Europe will build him monuments. Europe will give him a place in her history, with others who are responsible for this 'Nouvelle Affaire.'"

At other tables the same discussion rages. So furious is it, so alarming, that one imagines oneself back in early 1899. Each war has been opened by the question: "What is your age?" Each answer has been greeted with the query: "How do you know?" And if the new-century man declares himself to be twenty-three, the old-century man (he who waits for 1901) proclaims him to be twenty-two; and if the new-century man asks for an explanation, the old-century man goes back to the year one which was not one and which only became one with the year two. Soon every one has told his age and been contradicted. Soon everybody wonders when he was born and when he

was really alive. Soon all but the old-century men have been asked to believe that they were ageless for the first twelvemonth, sans sexe for the first twelvemonth, dead for the first twelvemonth, and not alive until that first unfortunate twelvemonth was done. None of these are convinced, however. "Let the new century dawn one when we are dead," plead many, "but admit that we were one when we were one, and not one when we were two, and not two when we were three, and not——" "Peace," exclaims Paul. "Let us rather speak like Richepin's abbé who also taught strange things, saying all together: 'Avec AUM, avec AMU, avec UMA, avec UAM, avec MAU, avec MUA, avec AUM, salut et bénédiction en Tò, océan du Tout dont je suis la goutte Rien, océan du Rien dont je suis la goutte Tout! Amen!'" "Why?" asks Pierre. "Because," answers Paul, "it is foolish to be reasonable when it is fashionable to be insane."

Mdlle. Mimi, however, has been pondering over the matter, and, after a while, tells Mdlle. Musette that she has discovered a case that will settle the matter at once and for all. "Take," she says, "a hundred books, or, better still, a hundred bocks. Put them in a line, and look at them. Do you mean to say that there are only ninety-nine? If so, just read them, or taste them, and you will soon see that there are a hundred." And Paul, embracing Mdlle. Mimi, calls her a "great

philosopher"; and Mdlle. Musette, raising her bock, says, "A toi, Mimi"; and Mdlle. Mimi, raising hers too, replies, "Tu vois? Il n'y a que les femmes qui raisonnent!" Alphonse passes; Alphonse, the waiter, who was approached by 'L'Infâme." He is asked his age, and replies, "Sais pas." He is called upon to state the date of his birth, and does so. He is told to draw a conclusion, and cannot. Why? "Parceque," he answers, "je fus mort quand j'avais un an, parceque j'avais un an quand ma mère me donna deux, parceque je ne suis pas assez fort en mathématiques d'en faire le calcul." "Bravo," says Paul, delighted with the reply. He warns him, however, never to be mixed up in the "Nouvelle Affaire." It would ruin him; he would find himself bringing only one bock when two were ordered, or charging for three instead of four. He would lose over cigars in the same way, and be buried eventually, like a pauper, in a wretched grave. "Tiens," says Mdlle. Mimi, "here comes Bibi." "No," replies Paul, "it is Karl." "But I can see that it is Bibi," protests Mdlle. Mimi. "So you think," answers Paul. "But henceforward you must not trust even your eyes." Bibi comes up, but Paul ignores him. Bibi insists, but Paul takes no notice. Bibi raises his voice, then Paul says dreamily, "If you wish me to believe that you are really Bibi, go away, and return with Karl. You are now alone, and one does not

count. You must be two before I can admit that you are alive." Karl approaches. "Away," cries Paul, "you are Karl no longer, but Quesnay de Beaurepaire." "Alas, I know it," answers Karl. "But then you are Paul no more: you are Lieutenant-Colonel de Paty du Clam." . . . In the background, some one calls another an "imbecile." Over there, a group of three condemn a group of four as "lamentable fools." In a corner rises a despairing voice: "Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, mon Dieu!" Only Mère Casimir is converted easily by the enlightened; and she falls directly they say, "You are one year younger than you think." Voices are husky now; and many a student has forgotten his original argument. Some stop abruptly, asking "where they were?" Others must hold their brow before they even begin. "Lui" is referred to again and again as "L'Infâme." Suddenly a chorus goes up. It is sung to the air that startled Paris months ago; it comes from Paul's table, and it runs—

Conspuez l'Infâme, conspuez l'Infâme,
Conspue!
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Conspue!

IN THE GARDEN OF THE LUXEMBOURG

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In the garden of the Luxembourg the marguerites stand high and close in banks, holding a lawn and a statue where the pigeons perch in the sun. On the lawn, like puffs of smoke, the water is playing. Round the lawn is a border of flowers with bees amongst them. Butterflies zigzag across the marguerites.

Near by, a pedestal upbears an urn flowing with velvet petunia; the beds about it are tall with hollyhocks, sumptuous with dahlias and honeysuckle, with geranium and marigolds, and heliotrope, lupins, gladiolas, and purple hangings of clematis.

Along the avenues, rusty red are the domes of the chestnut trees. Overhead their ragged branches show wide bits of the unruffled blue; sycamore leaves, sun-steeped, twinkle in luminous green.

Straight to the terrace the alleys lie, latticed with shadows.

Glinting through spaces of the trees, dazzling white against grass and black trunks in her marble folds and ruffle, leans the eighteenth century lady, offering marble roses to the bust of Watteau.

All the stone is hot and dry, the gravel is gray. A gauze of flies hangs spinning under a bough.

Outside the garden rolls the traffic of the town.

Here in the afternoons come the children; here in their train the mothers, the nurses, the fathers sometimes, the grandfathers often.

Here come the nourrices with crowns of plaid ribbon, and fix the perambulator with a stone, and take two chairs, one to sit upon, one to put their feet upon, and lift out the baby, kiss it and smooth it, lay it across their knees, turn back its veil, and read their newspaper over the bundle of cachemires with the soft pink face and vague eyes. Here come the mothers, pretty or plain, gaily dressed or shabby and bare-headed, and install themselves in chairs or on camp-stools, on the benches, in groups, in couples, with their work-bags beside them; and gossip together, or watch the children. Here come the children, dark or fair, plump or thin, furbelowed or ragged, with their pails, their balls, their dolls, their skipping-ropes; with a patter of firm little feet, and a babel of pure little voices, and an air of bright seriousness. Life is cheerful, but life is a toil; and the night is coming wherein no child shall work, and all of us will be

taken home to tea. Wherefore, work while ye may, O my brothers! . . .

Observe these small boys marching to the sand-heap. Note their gravity, their silence, the resolution of their chins. See them fill their pails, fill and refill them, clamber up and down the sand-heap, dig and build, undaunted by heat or thirst.

On the other side of the sand-heap a picnic is going on in the dust: two little girls in red-checked pinafores, one little boy in a blue-checked pinafore; a baby, a doll. They have squeezed the baby into the doll's perambulator. Now they sit below, gazing up at him. The baby himself is happy with them in the sense of a great deed accomplished. They rest, they take refreshment; by the sweat of their brows have they earned it. The eldest child produces a bottle. With a pang of loving recognition you remember you once had a bottle like that yourself. Brown and neat: the miniature of a beer-bottle—but quaint! but exquisite! It is passed round: each child takes a pull at it, a very little pull, for it is such a very little bottle; but the water that gurgles into their mouths is nectar.

Observe this solitary form, too young to be walking yet, too portly for its ankles; bandy-legged it staggers along, frowning with intensity of interest, to the watering pipe. The watering pipe has one end on the lawn spraying the grass and flowers, but the other end, out on the gravel,

lies, a length of coils, like some huge prehistoric reptile, the primitive worm, for the investigations of this bud biologist.

Round the marguerites they are playing hide-and-seek. What wary outlooks! What stealthy approaches! What an agonised shout at the surprise—what frantic escape and pursuit! That shout rings straight to the heart, waking the echoes of one's past. What a genuine emotion—how spontaneous, how uncontrollable! With strained eyes we follow the flight, the small forms diminishing in the distance—squared arms, protruding heads, swift heels flinging up the dust—and palpitate for the fugitive. . . .

Tent-shaped under the trees is the roof of the wooden horses. Here they hang, three by three, from their poles. Three by three, weather-beaten and worn, with two battered blue boats in their midst.

Sober in hue are the wooden horses of the Luxembourg; grave is their bearing: reindeer, giraffe, and camel, elephant, lion, and pawing charger; no glare of tinsel, no clamour of new-born brass degrades their dignity. The gaudy trappings, the fantastic feats of their brethren of the outer world—they of the Fair at Neuilly, they of the 14th July in the Bastille Square, and they, that reckless troop, in the Square by Bullier's—the complex and satanic strains to which these whirl and toss and plunge, are unknown to our

venerable beasts. Temperate, decorous, they take their departure at the given signal, and revolve in pensive obedience to the promptings of a husky organ.

Two human beings direct their course. One, a melancholy man, long, lank, with retreating hair that leaves behind it a smooth tableland of brow above most meditative eyes; who leans in silence against the wooden beasts, pensive as they, gazing into space. Never have I seen him smile; rarely have I heard him speak. He it is who gives the beasts their impetus, provides the preliminary push, and turns the handle that plays the organ.

The other being is a woman, stout and brisk. She sits in the centre of the circle, vigilant. Her eye detects the waddling approach of a customer, and brightens in welcome. Her voice encourages the votary who lingers without the gate, loitering, longing, sucking his thumb in profound incertitude; wavering between the wooden horses and guignol, whose drum beats so hospitably yonder on the terrace. Her voice it is that tunes itself insinuatingly, her eye that winks in wily suggestion to passing couples: "Dis-donc, Mademoiselle, demande à Grand-père. . . ."

In the centre of the circle she sits—the spider in the web—watching, luring.

Under the scanty chestnuts and the vivid sycamores hang the wooden horses. A railing

encloses them; the entrance is guarded by a chain, the tricolour flag run out above it. Now and then, inviting, enticing, the organ is set playing. With a groan and a wheeze the old instrument proceeds from the middle of the arpeggio where it had been left—finishes it, completes the bar, continues; slackens again . . . splinters indefinitely; stops. Once more the wooden horses hang at a standstill, with the least little dwindling oscillation.

All around and about are the rustlings of the trees, the hissing of the water, the sweet sharpness of the birds. Shadow-lattice shifts and quivers, blonde lights dance between. On the lawn the water plays and blows, filling the grass with diamonds. Butterflies flicker above the marguerites, papilloner-papillonant. The saturated geranium leaves drip to the earth, the scent of the heliotrope, the breath of the grass mingle and fail. . . .

Clink-clank, down goes the chain, in go the children under the rippling flag. Their families accompany them—faithful creatures who sit on the bench by the railing, keeping the balls and pails, battledores, hats, and other discarded property.

The brisk woman bustles, the melancholy man lounges. "Ho-op là!" exclaims the brisk woman, and hoists a small boy by his arm-pits, and plumps him into the saddle; wearily the melancholy man

bends and adjusts the stirrup. "Entrez, Mademoiselle. . . . Allez-vous en!" she cries to approaching guests—the person with two sous clasped in the hand, or parent looming as guarantee, the waif who would slip in on private research; he strolls to the entrance and hooks up the chain at the back of the one, in the face of the other.

Adventurous babies, eluding their mothers, stagger to the circle. As the star to the moth it gleams and spins, and they come; they come, and unnoticed work their way under the chain.

"Prenez garde aux enfants!" A shout rings suddenly. A scream from the mother outside—a rush, a snatch from the woman within—the baby is extricated from amongst the beasts' legs, just as the roundabout was to have turned—is handed back over the railing, shaken and hugged. Sharp rebuke from the brisk woman; sharp reply from the flushed mother. The melancholy man drops his startled eye-brows once more, and gapes. . . .

Here they come from all sides, the guests, guardians and customers: in they go under the beckoning flag. Here comes a weighty bourgeoise, torrents of crape from the back of her bonnet, paths of it up the sides of her skirt, abundance of jet on her bust,—with her a dry little sprig in pink print, brown boots, and white cotton gloves, a yellow straw hat with a frill of

white muslin. She sits straight in her saddle, taking care that her frill does not brush the pole. She remains in her seat for two rounds in succession, and claims a red sugar stick from the brisk woman. Once she catches the widow's eye; the dull lips are touched with brightness amidst the pearl powder; a flicker lights for an instant her own pinched features. Here comes a beggar, stooping and thin: she fastens her child in the saddle herself, she stays by him till the last, she leaves him tremulously. It is a great event, this first ride. She tries not to show her emotion. She tries not to look each time he passes and beam to his radiant smile. Half shy, half resentful, she glances from the corners of her eyes to see if she has been observed. Here come the mother of Gaston, and Gaston. Gaston is gay from school. The brows of Gaston are bound with laurel. He is decked in a flannelette blouse, with a fresh silk neck-tie under his chin. His mother wears merino, a bonnet with a pink rose, and a prominent brooch. She removes the victorious paper band with its green, green leaves and tinsel star, and preserves it against his return. She also holds his Sunday cane with the dog's head handle, and the scarlet and gilt-bound prize. Here comes a very superb young person, leading an infatuated grandfather. He lifts her into a boat. There she sits in her glory—kid shoes, stockings au jour, frock of fluted pink silk; her hat, slipped off from her head, a

hump of bows and lace on her back; golden curls clotted about her face; a wrist with a bangle. Reluctantly he parts from her: she lets him go without a look. He sits on the bench with his stick between his knees, his hands on the knob of the stick, his chin on his hands. Just once or twice as she sails by she turns in his direction, and allows herself to dimple.

Good mothers bring their offspring for education. Here comes one with her own mother, with her son and her nourrice. She takes her son by the hand; the nourrice in crimson cloak and streamers carries the baby.

"Certainly he can go," says the mother to her mother: "why not?"

"He is too young."

"Too young! four years old! Wouldn't you like to go, Henri?"

Henri, in brown holland, turns thoughtful eyes on the beasts, but refuses to commit himself. The nourrice, appealed to, shrugs her shoulders and juts her underlip.

"Come on!" says his mother, with sudden decision.

"Mathilde!" screams the grandmother.

But Mathilde laughs back, "Tant pis!"

Henri is bound to an elephant. He silently stretches a hand to his mother, as though to say, "I trust you—my blood be upon your head." She jumps on to a horse beside him with a rosy

revelation of silk petticoat, a gleam of heels. Flurried, she adjusts her skirt, steadies the horse swinging beneath her, laughing a little nervously.

Outside the railing the grandmother waits with long upper lip, and creases of disapproval on either side of her nose. The nourrice prudently holds aloof, and rocks the baby. The organ begins, the horses turn. Round they go, hand in hand, mother and son, the horse buried beneath her flounces, her skirt sweeping the dusty ground. Henri sits firm, grips hard, stares straight; at last, as they slacken, Mathilde can fling out in triumph—

"He wants to stop on!"

Her mother replies briefly, pointedly; turns her back, and walks away. The nourrice hesitates between them. Mathilde pauses, peers close at Henri, says lightly—

"Tiens, mon ami, nous reviendrons demain."

They go out, she affectedly humming, strutting upon her high heels. And they go down the alleys —the broad, slow-moving crimson back, the trotting atom in brown, the two mothers, both with heads held high, one on either side of the nourrice —pass down the alleys to the terrace, and disappear.

Round by the marguerites come three dark forms. Two little girls in heavy hats, a young father in deep mourning between them; two little girls in new black skirts, their pigtails tied with black ribbon. Each child wheels a doll's per-

ambulator, and guides it attentively, grating and squeaking, over the gravel. One after the other they wheel in at the entrance, their father behind them. They steer to the bench : here they look back and up into his face, and state they must take their dolls with them. They unbutton the mackintosh aprons and draw out the dolls. And he will take good care of the perambulators while they are gone, and not let them slip and run ?

" Let us ride on the lions, Marcelle, veux-tu ?"

" Mais non, Jeannette," says he ; " you must go in the boat, my little one."

" But we always went on the lions ! "

" But the boat is safer—for the dolls." He opens the door and puts them into the boat, and shuts the door, and going to the bench sits opposite them, holding the perambulators in each hand. They in the meanwhile fuss and chatter, settle their skirts, settle their dolls, till the horses begin to move. Stiff at once, they sit in excitement, their hands prim in their laps. " Au revoir ! " and the boat goes by.

The toneless organ mumbles on, the wooden horses turn and turn. Still mechanically holding the toys, his face fades, he slips into reverie. . . .

" Psst ! " With a start he wakes and sees them calling. The horses have stopped. He lifts them out of the boat again, clumsily smooths their skirts, touches up their sashes. Chattering, fuss-

ing, they put the dolls back in the perambulators; and he bends with them, raising the pillows for the dear creatures, buttoning the mackintosh over their precious toes.

One after the other they wheel out at the entrance, he following, hovering; he takes his place between them, stooping to listen to their babble; and they go away together, past the white marguerites, across the red-gold avenue, to the far-off leafy paths—three black forms in the rich blue day, growing smaller and smaller; three dark dots in the distance—wavering an instant; vanished. . . .

"Il y a un loup là-dedans!"

The words are said close by. They are said to a person who stands, arrested in his course, a few paces before me. They are said by his mother. With a pleasant warmth I recognise the biologist.

For the fifth time this afternoon, by daring or strategy, he has escaped, and reached the entrance of the wooden horses. For the fifth time his harassed mother has pounced upon him. Now with a last desperate inspiration she cries, "Il y a un loup là-dedans!"

I glance at her—she at me; and she turns and appeals—

"N'est ce pas, Mademoiselle, il y a un loup?"

He fastens his eyes upon me, half disdainful, half afraid; but as I look into that limpid gaze, on the sulky red mouth, the indomitable dumpling

form, I defer my answer—hesitate—am lost. Over his head I meet his mother's eyes, and we flash in a sudden sympathy. Colouring, melting, she looks down with a frown and a smile, shrugs her shoulders, rubs up his hair.

"Ils sont insupportables, les enfants!" and catching him high in her arms, covers his face with kisses. . . .

All about with a background of dahlias, multi-coloured, matching the flowers, in their ample cloaks and their checkered crowns sit the nourrices. On the chairs, on the benches, hats flutter, skirts mingle, mothers gossip.

Under the trees, in the web of shadows and lights, the alleys are dotted with scarlet of parasols. Skipping-ropes gleam, shuttlecocks toss. To and fro moves the gray figure of the loueuse de chaises, the white figure of the pâtissier with tray of golden galettes. Down the avenue trundles the watering-cart and its spirting arrows, leaving the dust deliciously blistered behind it.

Dark and damp is the earth of the flower-beds now at the close of the day, brilliantly the wet leaves twine in the hedge of blossom. The sycamore trees hang still; the terrace lies mellow. Over-head the pigeons flap heavily by.

Round go the wooden horses to the toneless tune of the organ. Under the tent-shaped roof enwreathed with foliage, round they go, three by three, each with its load. The tune stops, the

horses stop; the children dismount, pass out at the gate, disperse, are gone: the tune starts, the horses start; new children sit there in the place of the old. Round go the wooden horses in the depths of the summer afternoon, in the warmth and scents of the evening, round and round and round to the monotonous tune of the organ.

On the lawn the water has caught the sun and plays in a rainbow. Over the marguerites, like petals lost in the air, white butterflies wander. Beyond the parapet of the terrace is a bloom of oleanders. Behind the trees, by the green of the grass, milky-cool bends the Watteau lady.

Outside the garden, encompassing, confining, rolls the traffic of the town.

K. W. M.

COLONISTS IN BOHEMIA

COLONISTS IN BOHEMIA

Not only bands and fountains play in the Luxembourg Garden ; not only senators stroll about its paths. Students take air by Murger's statue; their tribute to his "Vie de Bohème." Fairer Bohemians pass to and fro, independent little persons. "Des Mees," says a student. "Yais," replies another. Their step and style, the decision, the serge skirt, the straw hat betray them : they are English or American. Art calls them across the ocean and channel. Eight in the morning sees them in Julian's studio ; dusk in their flats, mysterious three-roomed retreats. Here, abound fans and ferns and frames and china follies. Here, the chairs, amassed by degrees, differ in complexion and shape. Here, most conspicuous, most substantial of all, stands the Sommier. . . . It is not a valuable object ; you may buy one any day for nine or ten francs. It is not popular with polite society ; the proud ignore it. It belongs to Bohemia : holds there at all seasons a proud

position. It is ruffled in the morning; smooth at noon; gorgeous at five; very white when dark. To reveal a homely secret: it is a mattress on springs, supported by four stumps, rising two feet from the floor—soft, soothing, sublime—a divan by day, and a couch by night.

The gentle Elia dwelt tenderly on "the regal solitude" of a sick-bed. He should have had a Sommier. Its graceful proportions, its subtle charms, the leading part it plays in the life of its owner and the affairs of his, or her, home, would have won his perfect sympathy. How blithely would he have accompanied the fair art-student at Julian's to the upholsterer's; to the dusty little curiosity-shop where discreet draperies are picked up: home again, to see the Sommier established in a corner, and made to lose its bedly expression beneath a layer of bright stuffs! With what joy would Elia have seen the same fair student prepare it and the flat for the reception of guests!

On these occasions she rises early. She has all to do, and knows not where, or on what, to begin. She seeks the aid of a friend. She says, "You start here, and I will stay there," but meets her at every point and turn. Both move madly. They find one another at the same boxes, coveting the same stuffs. They dispute over this bit of drapery, over that cushion. Each wants *her* corner to be the most brilliant. One hides a hoard of splendour; the other finds, and maliciously scatters it. They

disagree over the establishing of the ten-franc Venus de Milo; over the placing of frames. They raise heaps all over the floor. They stumble and trip. They must walk on their toes. They sink wearily on the Sommier. All the hidden litter that congregates in a home has thrust itself forward. Portraits squint. Pictures are topsy-turvy. The Venus leans lazily against the wall. Time presses, it is two. Both girls covet but dare not propose lunch. They seek biscuits. They scatter crumbs as they clear. They gather armfuls of rubbish, and hide it, not in the boxes from which it came, but—underneath the Sommier. An old lamp appears; it is poked—beneath the Sommier. A cup breaks; its pieces are swept—under the Sommier. Odd handles, screws, and knobs, that once made part of something, complete the congregation sheltered by this amazing Sommier. . . . At five it is of Eastern colour and softness. Bare boxes, padded and cushioned, make other lounges. The Venus is stately and straight. Nor is there a trace of unrest about the hostess. Her rooms are admired; her taste applauded. She and her guests sink luxuriously on the Sommier.

Cakes appear, old friends: monotonous trifles, you never meet in them a new flavour, or a hidden almond, or a sweet surprise; after a time you know them all. You remember the exact contents of the pink and the green; the precise moment

when you will fall on the cherry in the brown. You have handed them about in your own rooms. You have carved that deceptive pyramid again and again. Tea arrives. It is poured out pale. It is scalding and sharp. Over the making of it your hostess has burned her hands: for Latin Quarter fires hate a kettle and do their best to spill it. These fires are not made of the honest, homely, natural fuel you throw on, and forget. They need constant watching. This coal is not sold by weight, but by the dozen, or the bit. It is of many shapes and kinds. It goes by different names. It is square, or it is oval, or it is round. It is equipped with some device to make it burn. It is perforated or tarred. It must stand upright or on a slant. It must have a direct draught beneath it (produced by opening the windows and doors); or it must have no draught at all. It must be fanned; or it must not be touched. It must be shielded by the blower. It must never be seen. It must have its own way, or it sulks and subsides.

Casual callers are not welcomed in the Latin Quarter; it is discreet to warn a friend of your coming. Odd little ceremonies that necessitate disorder and undress are ever in progress: a day's notice is not too long. Sudden rings are ignored at these times. No one stirs; no one speaks. Startled criminals could not be quieter. Faces flush; throats get dry; nerves leap. Not a

muscle moves before the caller's departure. A favoured few, however—those who have flats of their own and know their mysteries—gain admittance by a secret whistle. "It is only Alice," says the hostess; and Alice is let in. Homely things are about: the spirit-lamp, the toasting-fork, uncomely cups and jugs. The fire is being fanned. The Venus is packed away in wool. The Sommier has lost its draperies; reveals its hideous hoard beneath. . . . The femme de ménage arrives. She is paid by the hour, and lingers over tasks. She asks for matches, declaring her box to be gone. She seeks it where it is not, discovering only a host of empty ones. She has nothing she wants. She must go on seven errands, when one would have done. Her child calls. He is petted or he is scolded. He is brought in to be shown. His school-life, and that of his friends, is portrayed; his battle with Pierre related. He is given a biscuit, and expects a fifty-centime piece. He, like his mother, is loth to go. Irritating, also, is the concierge. Established on the ground floor, she takes in letters for every flat above, keeps their keys, and shows callers up. Be she a widow, she has a cat. For it she will neglect her tenants, see their letters grow an afternoon old, and forget to light the gas; for it she has tender names: Minette, Bijou, or Bebette; for it she has loving arms and a capacious lap. Minette may go where she will; no one must

scold her. Minette may fight all night with Bijou and Bebette; no one must mind her. She who befriends Minette, praises Minette, is careful not to anger Minette, will get her letters sooner than she who criticises and hates Minette.

Occasionally mothers arrive; friendly cousins too. They have heard of the Sommier. They long to see it; it startles them when they do. They ask if they must sleep sideways, and what will happen if they turn: they dread the moment when they, and it, will be alone. "Mother" must explore, and admire; "Cousin" is told to be good. He must smoke his cigar on the stairs: catches cold, meets the femme de ménage, the concierge, and—Minette. He is asked to absent himself all day when the clearing for guests begins; or, he must hang a picture, buy nails, climb and clean, and miss his lunch. He must worship the Venus. He must carry canvases and cartons to Julian's, "because they are heavy." He must distort his face after tea to pose for a study called "Despair," or stoop like a chiffonnier till his eyes fill with tears and his whole frame aches. He is told to let his hair grow, "like the students," and to buy corduroy clothes and a big hat. Bewildered and dazzled, he returns to London. He may smoke where he will; he may do what he will. His life is calm and comfortable. But as he sits before a fire that burns without fanning and gazes at coals that need no special

treatment, he finds himself thinking fondly of that confusing and exciting retreat at whose robing he has so often assisted. He sees Minette, the Venus, the spirit-lamp. He forgives them their follies. He loves them all. He sees the Sommier : ruffled in the morning, smooth at noon, gorgeous at five, very white when dark—soft, soothing, sublime—a divan by day, the Bohemian's couch by night.

SPRING IN MONTPARNASSE

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I

We have a garden of cobble-stone where gravel grows. The gravel is separated from the cobble-stone by a wire network and an imperfect hedge of box. In here there are at least four laurel, three lilac, and two laurestinus bushes; besides an oval bed, surrounded by half a foot of railing presumably for protection, from devouring elements, of fragile members of the pebble tribe. There are, besides, two trees, a pump, and a concierge. We live, in fact, in the heart of the town. We live in the heart of the town, but Spring comes into our garden as she comes into the woods and fields.

The wall at the side covered with dusty ivy is brimming with sparrows; the same who all the winter have filled the big tree before our window like round, brown fruit on the gaunt branches; whose feet and beaks on the window-sill have made a pattering like soft, intermittent rain. At present they visit us more rarely. The sparrow

that darts across the garden nowadays has sharp haste in his movement. When he shoots into his ivy it is with a decision of action that shows he has business to do, and that instantly. When he joins a company under the wall he abandons himself to a general shrill agitation with reckless sympathy. The very way he flirts his tail or whets his beak on a twig has new vigour. His palpitations in the dust are sheer ecstasies.

At the edge of the cobble-stone, behind the wire network, a bush is coated with green mould. For months it has looked like a faggot of twigs, good for nothing but burning. Other bushes are sprinkled, filled with emerald crumbs; others, the lilacs, sprout little wings. Below in the pebble-bed lies a scattering of confetti.

In the afternoons, these lengthening afternoons, our concierge comes out from her shed at the end of the garden and takes her stand at the gate. There she leans, her arms upon the gate, peering into the street; or, with her head tilted back, sniffs up into the suspicious sweetness of the air. She has put her hyacinth-bulbs on the window-sill in the sun.

Moreover there is the profound unreasonableness of the weather. Day by day, hour by hour, it flatly contradicts itself. One morning, from the leaden sky the long rain pours down: pours, pours, filling the garden and the road—from our window to the windows of the opposite pavement.

The zinc roof of the concierge's shed, smooth and black in the wet, is like a sheet of mackintosh; the tree-trunks look as though they had been newly tarred; and the ivy is glossy and dripping, and all day long between the cobble-stones the drab puddles hop dismally. Next day the gold sun in a gay sky; tracks of blue between the chimney-pots, wide fields of blue beyond; behind the lattice of the trees white cloud-puffs shifting rapidly; warm air; clamorous birds; and from the pump in the corner, clanking beneath the concierge's hand, a silver flood gushing down the gutter and over the cobble-stones. . . . Then, suddenly, the air freezes. The sky darkens; blackens; the wind leaps loose with a roar . . . sharp shouts and sounds . . . clattering shutters; rolling, creaking trees; tossing ivy; a wild whistle of rain. Down comes the hail.

But to-morrow the quiet snow falls: softly whirling, softly sinking; loading the boughs of the trees and furring the ivy on the wall—covering the earth, softly lying over the garden, thickening and thickening.

To-day there is no snow. A veil of rain hanging in the garden for some moments has left the bushes greener and the pouted tips of branches glancing in emerging sunshine.

The little laundress entering at the gate with her armful of linen is tinted by the new sunshine. Her lips and cheeks are delicately flushed; the

hair on her forehead plays in glinting tendrils. She looks as though she were made of apple-blossoms.

And to-night I shall see, as I see each night, the silent workings of the trees. Whether the garden lie quiet under a sky of stars, or stifled in fog, or drowned in rain, or battered by storm, the trees are untired ; working, waiting. When the evening shadows begin to fill the garden, when the lamps bloom in the windows, when the stars kindle, when one by one the lamps go out, when there is left in the night no movement but the breathing of the stars, they stand engrossed, imperturbable. Patient watchers with boughs held outwards, and upwards like praying arms ; brooding, waiting, without haste, without rest working, I feel that they are feeling : "Nearer, nearer : the time is passing, the time is approaching, nothing can stop it. It has begun, it must proceed, it shall fulfil." . . . For Spring comes into our garden as she comes into the woods and fields.

II

From my window, on this April afternoon, I look into the branches of the varnish tree, and see a thousand budded twigs stretched upwards. Sun-warmed and sensitive, like clusters of little mouths, the pouted tips suck air and azure. Adorable gluttons !

In the sky, films of clouds roam by and dissolve. The soft wind parts the ivy on the wall, and sets it shaking and playing ; and in the gentle movement of the wind the budded branches of the varnish tree rock to and fro.

The chestnut tree is crisply frilled, laden here and there with silver knobs in bronze cups. The bushes are bright with vivid emeralds.

I lean out of my window, and feel the warmth of the sun upon my hair, and the movement of the wind amongst it. All about me are the glinting of leaves and the clamour of birds. Above, in the angelic blue, clouds pass ceaselessly.

The air is rich with a stream and scintillation of noise. Birds flash across the garden and dive in flitting flights. Between the forks of the rocking branches, in the clear air, here and there, a gray mote appears, wavers and vanishes. Upon the litten wall wave the shadows of boughs and dart the swift shadows of birds. Changing shadows, balancing boughs, hovering gnats, twinkling wings, frou-frou of wings, drowsily in the sunshine and wind I watch and listen ; and so watching, see on the warmed cobble-stones below another drowsy watcher. There he sits, the tabby cat of the concierge, large, sleek, handsomely curled on his tail, blinking with poetic abstraction, attentive to the movement of sparrows.

All the canaries of the neighbourhood with their cages and mops of chickweed have been hung

out of the windows. On the topmost panes the blue of the sky lies faintly reflected. Green plants have been placed here and there on the window-sills. And in the gray monotony of the building is one sill to which my eyes return, and return again, to feed upon the golden gladness of daffodils, laughing there in the sun.

A girl stands in a bare window, polishing the glass, rubbing up and down with her strong young arm till the pane gleams and glances. Now she sits there, sewing rings on a new rose-coloured curtain. Out of the windows on every side people are leaning, laughing, and chattering. From somewhere or other comes a running of steady scales and brisk arpeggios. Down the road they are mending the pavement, tink, tink, tink goes the hammer on the pavement. And all these sounds, the piano, the voices sweet in the distance and checkered with laughter, the gaiety of the ringing metal, the street cries, the vivacious clatter of the traffic, intermingle with the noise of birds and wind and leaves, and bewilder the air with their tumult.

The concierge waddles across the cobble-stones, a rake in one hand, a spade in the other. Inexorably she scatters the upper crust of pebbles on the bed, hacks round the edge of it, unpots an oleander. She nails a creeper to the wall, she ties a fuchsia to a stick, she packs some pansies in a bed, and fills the blanks in the box-hedge with oyster shells. Pink and panting, her hands on her hips, she

surveys her work and smiles upon it. . . . And I perceive close by her, in the wire network, a rose-spray filled with crumpled leaves; further on clumps of anemones, which may perhaps flower in the future, and are at any rate green in the present; all sorts of shoots, crisp and curled, neat and new, pierce amongst the pebbles and under the bushes; and in a corner, pulling itself up with tender fingers, a hop-vine starts to reach woodwork which, once upon a time, in the weariness of the winter, I took to be a dog's kennel, but which with the romantic insight of the season I now know to be a summer-house.

Drowsily, on the cobble-stones, sits the tabby cat: from his head to his tail, down the dark stripe on his spine, he relishes the goodly warmth —it reaches to the roots of his fur; it sinks into his inmost being. Full of meditation, full of peace, he sits and blinks.

All the garden is dancing and dimpling, the chestnut trees glint, the bare branches of the varnish tree rock, the ivy is nodding on the wall. Now and then the dark wall turns pale, and under the wind the ivy ripples whitely.

. . . . . .

I look into the deepening afternoon. Grave lights and sweeter shadows have come into the garden. The air is tranquil.

A thin haze of shadow lies now upon the opposite houses, leaving only one corner palely

gleaming, and the top row of windows where the panes are still tinted. Above the houses, above the fret of the chimneys, the last clouds are passing, like indolent flocks dawdling homewards, leaving the blue plains empty behind them.

Birds, no longer scattered voices, talk in groups, punctuating the air with sweet irrelevancies, stopping short in sudden silences.

In the garden, the ivy wall is tipped with new leaves. Here and there the leaves stir, set quivering round the entrance of a bird. All the garden is greenly thickened since the morning. The hop-vine is two inches higher.

The concierge comes out of her shed and fills a pail at the pump, and crosses the cobble-stones and goes in at a little gate in the wire network and goes round by the box-hedge, flinging strong sheets of water on the beds. Stunned, drenched, all but drowned, the plants yet recover ; straighten themselves, beaming, the sturdier for the shock. Round each green thing behind her there is a dark patch on the gray ground.

The varnish tree stands gilded, costly, and strange. Under the blue of the sky it stands, red-gold, tipped with lumps of jewel, under the blue like a great candelabrum loaded with rubies.

From the wall in the garden the light is withdrawing. It creeps gradually across, slowly, then suddenly goes out. Some top twigs of the varnish tree are still redly crested ; deep in the tree it is

dark. The cobble-stones lie cold. One by one the windows close.

And to-night there will be clouds upon clouds ranging across the sky, and stars amongst them like diamonds lost in snow, and a moon like a pearl afloat in a gray pool fringed with an opal wreath. On the wall the ivy will lie dark and still, sheltering the warm sleeping birds. The chestnut tree will be at rest, its frills spread wide, a hundred new frills along its boughs. And by my window the varnish tree will stand, naked and alone, pointing to the stars, awake, and full of dreams.

K. W. M.

PIERROT PASSES

PIERROT PASSES[1]

On the covers of these scattered song-books Pierrots loiter. Ghostly scaffolding stands about. M. Georges Millandy himself is represented, his eye wistful, his expression sad. He is driven onward by the wind. Listless, indifferent, and resigned, he lets himself be blown. Too true to his philosophy is he to protest against his progress by turning back. What does it matter? Why not go with the wind? Who knows but that it will lead him to what he longs for most—perpetual happiness, a perpetual morn, and perpetual peace? So on moves M. Millandy: his coat-collar up, his hand on his hat, decidedly frail. Thus is it with him in his songs. Memories haunt him. Certain sounds call up certain events. He lives lamenting the past. Now it is an organ, grinding forth a familiar tune. Years have elapsed: he had almost forgotten. He shivers; he starts. Each note is a word, or a sigh, or a tear; the whole a scene. Or, some stranger's voice throws

[1] *Les Frêles Chansons*, by Georges Millandy.

him into emotion, and sets him thinking of another's voice, now still. Simply does M. Millandy express these sorrows, with soul and with grace. Passions have wrecked his life. He has had a score. She was brune, or she was blonde, or she was rousse. She was the fairest maid about ; but, alas, her love was frail. Most men would have turned sour and cross from so much falseness ; or gloomy ; or reckless and disreputable. But M. Millandy accepts his fate in his usual philosophical manner. It merely leaves him sad and delicate and frail.

Other poets possess these charms, always popular in Paris. There are fifty or more such poets ; each affected with the same mysterious melancholy. Forlorn themes attract them : the amours of the Pierrot, no happier, no more lasting, than their own. They love his pallor, his invariable wistfulness. They have a fellow-feeling for this suffering suitor, always refused, always disappointed. Musicians most of them, they attach suitable airs to their lines. Not merry music you may be sure, but sad and slow and monotonous. At the Bodinière and Pompadour, frail theatres, fashionable at five, they sing. No noisy orchestra accompanies them. They step listlessly on to a frail stage, lean languidly against the piano, and wait for a frail camarade with frail fingers to begin.

Ils étaient trois petits enfants,
Qui s'en allaient glaner aux champs,

murmurs M. Millandy with his accustomed melancholy. The first child looks for lilies, and finds only thorns. The second seeks fairies. The third learns "tristement, qu'on rêve désespérément." And emotion overtakes the salle. Sympathetic sighs are heard. The Pompadour is touched. Sadder grows M. Millandy, softer his voice. Each child droops. Each child dies; dies

d'avoir vainement
Cherché . . . du bonheur, simplement.

And M. Millandy passes away, in a mist so far as the ladies of the Pompadour are concerned. His camarades follow: Théodore Botrel, Xavier Privas, and Montoya. Each sings his song, leaning listlessly against the piano. Each passes away, leaving the audience moved by his sorrow. Artificial sentiment this may be. Children do not die of despair on finding thorns instead of lilies; and although they are equally unlikely to fade away from sheer want of a fairy, it pleases the Parisian for the moment to believe the anomaly. Stern realities bore him. He cares nothing for age, or time, or date. He loves incongruities. He will mix up the seasons: make October May by decking the trees on the Champs Elysées with artificial blossoms and buds. Mysteries enchant him. He pursues them to the Pompadour, where he hears, and learns, "Pourquoi sont pâles les Pierrots" from the trembling lips of M. Millandy. And he

goes home the better for it, because these chansons, however artificial, are delicate and pure. And they haunt him for days after, and so fascinate him with their mysterious melancholy that he returns to the Pompadour again and again. Months pass. M. Millandy introduces new Pierrots, with new passions, but always wistful, and always pale. Nor does he himself grow vigorous with time. Memories still haunt him. Organs still call up old scenes. The brune, the blonde, and the rousse still wrong him. But M. Millandy remains true to his philosophy in spite of all. He neither protests nor complains. He accepts his fate : almost a genius, however frail.

JEAN SÉVÈRE

JEAN SÉVÈRE

JEAN SÉVÈRE. I see him as he stood in his characteristic attitude, one hand on the table beside him, slightly leaning on the hand, slightly stooping forward : tall and narrow, a certain graceful awkwardness about him.

So he used to stand, serious, silent, in his worn, tight-buttoned frock-coat with the black silk bow at the top, now and then nervously moving his hand to his lips, waiting while people settled themselves in their seats in the lecture-room at the Procope. So he used to stand, serious, smiling, hair swept back from his forehead, brown eyes luminous, as one by one the rédacteurs of the review he had founded came in at the door to weekly meeting.

I see his face in detail, the fine hair, scanty on the brows, not long at the back, the clear forehead, the wide eyes, gentle and steady, the high cheek-bones, the lips smooth and red in the soft beard. When, quivering, eloquent, he poured out

ideals, despairs, beliefs, the cheek-bones flushed transparent rose under the brilliant eyes. I hear his voice, a pleasant voice, intense, but without resonance, and soon fatigued.

"Avant tout le poète est un homme. Dans les conditions de vie qui sont les nôtres, il ne lui est plus permis de déserter le monde. Comme tout penseur il a une mission à accomplir. . . .

"Nous sommes avec tout ce qui souffre et pleure ici bas: avec les animaux, ces frères inférieurs de l'homme, contre le maître qui les brutalise et maltraite, avec les hommes que la fatalité semble retenir dans la nuit et dans l'ignorance, avec tous ceux qui veulent s'arracher au joug du servage, avec tous les opprimés, avec tous les peuples vaincus. . . .

"Nous n'avons de haine contre personne. Si nous attaquons les hommes, ce n'est qu'une apparence. C'est qu'alors ils personnifient à nos yeux certaines idées: idées de bassesse, de violence ou de servitude. . . ."

The lecture-room of the Procope is on the first floor. A staircase leads to it from the room of Voltaire. On the way up there are sketches of various kinds—caricatures of Théo and of Verlaine, impressionist landscapes, ballet girls pulling on their stockings, affiches. It is a long room with tables and chairs, a platform hung with a background of scarlet calico, and an upright piano in the corner.

Here the Soirées-Procope were held. Here when the room was packed and noisy, smoke was curling, bocks were frothing, students were tilting in their chairs, their hats at the back of their heads: here came the chansonniers, drooping against the piano, cheeks wan and eyes vacant, warbling with languidly parted lips the languor of life and love: here came the poets of Pierrot, of half-moons and mists, dead leaves and lost illusions: here came the buffoon of the Quarter, Montmartre's Madman, Pet of all cabarets from the Place Pigalle to the towers of Notre Dame, his sheaf of songs under his arm; gray-faced, one-eyed, withered; crowned with laurels, fatuously smirking; croaking his ambiguities: here came the girls of the Quarter, draped ears and bright brows, soft throats and round cheeks; ignorant, joyful, reckless, innocent; blushing and glancing and pouting; piping audacious indecencies. Here when the room was almost empty, the gas low, the air cold, came Sévère.

Half-a-dozen knots of people patched the bare room, murmuring together. From time to time other persons straggled in. A student from the café below would lounge for a moment in the doorway, holding his pipe aside, looking into the room and slowly round it: and pick himself up, put back the pipe, and turn down the stairs to the café again. A little woman sat in the front row. She had black hair puffed wide, liquid black

eyes, and a pouted damask-red mouth in a pale oval face; big gold rings in her small ears; two curls clotted above her ears, two more clotted on the nape of her neck; the colouring of a gipsy and the tilted nose of a Parisian. She sat there in her Sunday skirt, with a new veil, scent on her bodice, a "ridicule" hanging on her wrist; her eyes fixed full on the platform, polite, attentive, extremely anxious to be interested; her child beside her, four years old, dangling his heels; gravely observing his father arrange his papers on the table and mix the eau sucré.

As time went on the room would become brighter, a waiter would have been sent for to examine the gas, Théo appealed to; the air would become warmer, bocks and liqueurs and black coffees would stand on the tables, the suppressed voices would take courage and converse in a freer tone, new arrivals, new voices, would support them, and they would gather full force; a genial current would begin to diffuse itself, the blanks between the patches would begin to fill: less seldom, less straggling, the people arrived; students in the café, hearing the sound of feet, the scraping of chairs above, would finish their drinks, and come upstairs and settle themselves in groups at the back of the salle; certain faithful associates, always present on these occasions, would enter briskly, nodding to the front row and the platform; and on the platform, nervously plucking his

lips, flushing, kindling, Sévère would wait the last moments; whilst in the front row, next to his mother, the child sat rhythmically clapping his heels, till her tap on his knee, a horrified "Mais veux-tu te taire?" made him pause—"Vilain méchant!"—look up into her face, at the extravagant frown, the incredible wrath, the red mouth rounded for its whispered roar; look, and melt into the peculiar smile, contemplative, adoring, which the child kept for her alone. . . .

"Nous rêvons d'un avenir meilleur. Nous savons les progrès déjà accomplis, le chemin parcouru depuis notre grande Révolution: le passé nous est un sur garant de l'avenir. Nous sommes persuadés que les hommes du prochain siècle verront se réaliser cette noble utopie: les Etats-Unis d'Europe. Nous prévoyons même des époques plus lointaines où les trônes écroulés, les frontières effacées, la guerre morte, le servage aboli, les hommes s'entr'aideront dans la grande République universelle!"

Sometimes there would be a lecture on the horrors of capital punishment, the apparition of the scaffold in the public square, "dans le crépuscule du matin, au milieu d'une tragique mise-en-scène, au milieu des soldats et d'une foule avinée, ce sinistre appareil qu'est la guillotine!" Or else upon the iniquities of militarism and clericalism, the miseries of the Caserne: "dans chaque cité de notre belle France, dominant les plus beaux

sites, déparant les plus beaux paysages, ces bâtiments horribles et nus, ces constructions brutales, noires, lourdes et froides que sont les caserne." Or upon the atrocities of war, the diabolical ingenuity of modern weapons — these he denounced in a loathing of bloodshed, a revolt against death, a hatred of pain, sickened in his sensitive nature, racked in his own weak body at the imagination of them, incapable of other views than those revealed from this one point of insight. Or it might be that Guillaume II., là-bas, was making outrageous proclamations to Army and Parliament, and replies must be launched "au César allemand. Celui en qui s'incarne le règne de la Force. Celui qui, à l'heure où nous sommes, peut d'un seul mot, d'un seul geste de colère déchaîner sur l'Europe, sur la France, sur nos foyers peut-être, l'incendie, le pillage, l'invasion"; with a string of accompanying memories: "le Duc d'Albe et ses 30,000 victimes; Torquemada et ses 200,000 suppliciés; Napoléon! faiseur d'orphelins et de veuves! Bismarck! bandit, boucher, tueur d'hommes!" and from execration and memory to exultant prophecy—

Dans un désir de paix et de fraternité
Nos vœux et nos souhaits s'en vont avec fierté!
A Celle devant qui les rois vont disparaître,
A Celle qui s'annonce au vieux monde agitée,
A Celle qui bientôt va naître!

A Celle qui, là-bas, à l'horizon serein,
Sur les bords du Danube et sur les bords du Rhin,
Se lèvera soudain, majestueuse et grande !
A Celle qui sera dans le siècle prochain,
A la République allemande !

Or it would be war in Crete, and massacre of Greeks by Turks and Sultan, and the nations summoned to the rescue ; or war in Cuba, with an heroic handful of Cubans, and magnanimous Americans against "la vieille Espagne, — pays de l'Inquisition !" to be acclaimed, and enregistered there and then in glory ; or it would be anticipation of war after Fashoda, and passionate protest : "De toutes les guerres qui peuvent se déchaîner sur l'Europe, celle qui éclaterait entre la France et l'Angleterre, pour Fachoda, pour l'Egypte ou pour tout autre motif, serait la plus injustifiable et la plus monstrueuse des guerres. La France et l'Angleterre sont, en effet, des pays libres, maîtres par conséquent de leurs destinées. Les deux peuples n'ont point l'un pour l'autre de haine préconçue. Les Anglais aiment la France. Les intellectuels d'Outre-Manche sont des admirateurs de l'esprit français. Que penser d'ailleurs, de ceux qui ne veulent voir dans les Anglais que des trafiquants égoïstes, quand on se ressouvient que l'Angleterre a résisté à toutes les réactions européennes, et qu'aux plus sombres jours de l'Histoire contemporaine elle est restée le dernier asile, l'asile inviolable de la

liberté." And yet again it would be a lament upon the oppression and slavery of Ireland—amazed reproach, and denouncement grieved and fiery against the oppressing nation; and dreadful tales about solitary confinement, and political prisoners going mad; and spies and detectives, and pretty lady-patriots perpetually "shadowed," and having their correspondence tampered with, and their lives made a burden to them; and peasants fed upon seaweed.—Or else it would be a condemnation of the Decadent School of Poetry, of "Esthètes, Chansonniers, Symbolistes! . . . Nulle œuvre grande, nulle poésie qui élève et qui empoigne. Foi, conviction, enthousiasme, idéal, tout ce qui nous éloigne de la bête humaine, tout ce qui fait la noblesse et la grandeur du poète, tout cela est vieilli, tout cela est, pour eux, l'ancien système; morphine, éther, haschich, eau de Cologne, voilà la source de l'inspiration de cette belle jeunesse qui, comme la femme, d'après Schopenhauer, a les cheveux longs et les idées courtes!"—Or it would be on the anniversary or a Birthday—with flowers here and there, a fern on the piano, on the platform table a Portrait with a laurel wreath and a purple inscription: "Au Maître!" with a young man wearing a button-hole and white kid gloves, blonde, clean-shaven, tight, straight mouth and rigid jaw: "Notre ami M. —— de l'Odéon," to recite from the *Légende;* with a young lady wearing a train,

and rings to her manicured finger-nails, svelte, supple, smooth with paste and powder, dusky eyes, down-drooping hair, and mouth a scarlet thread in the enamel: "Notre amie Mdlle. —— du Théâtre Antoine," to recite from *Hernani;* with three mandolinists, amiable souls, greasy and corpulent, from the Midi, kept in a corner, to be brought forward if occasion required, and the audience showed signs of fatigue under a too heavy tax on their higher consciousness; and Sévère in the midst marshalling, organising—it would be, on the 26th of February, a celebration in honour of Victor Hugo. "Tous les ans à pareille date, c'est un devoir pour nous d'évoquer la mémoire du grande poète, et de retracer son œuvre sublime. . . ."

At the top of a house in a street not far from the Bastille, Sévère had his home. You climbed up flights of steep stairs, and there, au sixième, came to a door with a red lamp above it showing the white paper nailed below, and the name on it written in clear, upright, stately handwriting. You pulled a string that rang a tinny bell inside, and a moment afterwards the door was opened by the little lady with the black eyes and the pouted mouth—"Bon soir, M'Sieurs, 'Dames!" You paused on the threshold while she drew back against the wall, the door in her hand, to give you space, you crossed the strip of entry carefully, sideways, and laughing apology, and entered the

low-roofed room where the green-shaded lamp was alight on the table, and the chairs were ready about it, and tall and stooping, gracefully gauche, serious, smiling, Sévère stood to welcome.

The table was piled with papers, back numbers of the review; proofs of the new number, come that day from the printer's; manuscripts received during the past week: all arranged neatly like everything else in the fresh, orderly room. There were planks along the wall for books, one or two illustrations out of the review pinned above them, and the portrait of Hugo. There was a large window reaching to the floor, opening on to leads where Madame Sévère kept flower-pots and little René a tortoise; and where you could see right over the roofs opposite for a long distance, and where there was any amount of sky above you; and where, as Sévère said, the air came free and pure; and where, as René said, you could hear the band in the summer on Sundays from some public garden or Arsenal Square three or four streets away (you could see the tops of the trees here and there between the chimney-pots), and where, as Madame Sévère said, it was as good as a garden, and also there was no fear of René tumbling over, for she had measured him standing on the watering-can, and even then the parapet came above his head; and besides they were going to put up a wire network presently.

Round the table sat the Rédaction. There was an

impressive ink-pot in the middle, several pens were there, a rich variety of nibs. There was also a new, very large, crisp, and cream-coloured waste-paper basket, placed on the right hand of the founder and director; into which, when the Rédaction had given forth condemnation, rejected manuscripts were dropped, not callously, not wantonly,—for it was the very essence of the Rédaction to be humane,—yet firmly, deliberately, for the justice of the Rédaction was inflexible. Round the table sat the Rédaction; and Madame Sévère brought bocks, and the rédacteurs lighted cigarettes; and for the solitary rédactrice present, who didn't drink bocks, and who didn't smoke, a plate of petits beurres was produced; and the noble majority, puffing and quaffing, smiled indulgence on feminine weakness. And there was black coffee on a stool spread with an embroidered napkin, for Madame Sévère and the rédactrice; and René—who always appeared on these occasions in a dazzling collar, and repeated at regular intervals with the most positive emphasis, and staringly open eyes, that he was not in the least sleepy —René would try to steal a sip from his mother's saucer when she had her cup to her lips; and Madame Sévère, after having flicked her son's cheek with a chastising hand, and bent an appalling glare upon him—Madame Sévère would glance at the table, glance round upon the rédacteurs, pout her red lips, round her

black eyes, twitch her small head, and whisper to the rédactrice—

"Dites-donc, ma petite, vous ne vous ennuyez pas trop avec ces messieurs?" . . .

The young men who met together once a week in Sévère's room wrote, illustrated, and paid for the publication of the review that Sévère had founded. The staff was composed of about sixteen or eighteen members, most of them French, several of them English and American, two of them German, two Italian. Each member subscribed a few francs every month, and the united sum paid the printer. Each member was a shareholder, and had equal rights, no more and no less, with every other member in the management of the review; in the profits, when these came to be made; in the space of the review each month, for a piece of writing—written in the language of his own nation; and in free opinion and expression of opinion.

Besides these regular members or rédacteurs there were collaborateurs who, though without contributing to costs, sent in occasional papers that were inserted if there happened to be room for them; poems and articles of various kinds also arrived from the unknown and the world at large. These were the manuscripts over which the Rédaction, calm, incorruptible, sat in counsel and decreed: preserving, publishing if might be, but consigning to the abyss if need were.

"*Internationale*" the review was described on the cover :—

"*Artistique, Littéraire, Scientifique : Publiée en Français, English, Deutsch, Español, Italiano, Portuguez, etc.*"

It advertised itself as "a Review by young writers, open to young writers : with room for all schools, for every philosophy."

"De jeunes écrivains de différentes nations et d'idées communes, se sont réunis dans le but de fonder, avec leurs seules ressources, un journal qui soit l'expression de leurs sentiments et de leurs convictions.

"En dehors de toute préoccupation financière ils veulent affirmer pleinement leur pensée, avec l'espoir de grouper autour d'eux une élite de penseurs et de croyants. A quelque nationalité, à quelque race qu'ils appartiennent, la Revue est ouverte à tous les jeunes talents."

Ages ago when Scheurer-Kestner first told his doubts, the review, not yet Dreyfusard, protested against the treatment of the Senator :—

" Les gens de cette trempe sont rares ; même en se trompant ils demeurent grands de s'être trompés si noblement. Sans doute il ne faut point hésiter à les convaincre de leur erreur : mais il faut tout au moins reconnaître qu'elle fût généreuse."

A month afterwards it poured forth verse in honour of Zola, and had a column about Voltaire and Calas, and another column of prophecy :—

" Justice sera rendue en plein jour.
Il le faut ; nul ne l'empêchera.
Le procès Dreyfus sera révisé.
Vive la France !
Vive la Justice ! "

Later it was weeping at the condemnation of Zola : later, thundering to Antisemitism. It threw a malediction on Bismarck, in the tomb at Friedrichsruhe, and consigned him to oblivion ; it hailed and immortalised Gla*n*dstone. It waged war against " le Dum-Dum " ; it hurled itself into Peace Conferences : and always and above all it dreamed of the Future, and sang its creed, " La Science, la Vérité, le Progrès ! " and thrilled at the thought of the New Century. . . .

" L'Avenir se dégage, plein de promesses." I take my last look of Sévère, and see him as he stood that summer night in his room by the open window. A breathless summer night, crowded with stars. On the opposite side of the road the houses were dark and quiet ; here and there only, a yellow light still remained : away across the shadowy roofs, beyond in the distance, the sounds of the traffic were fading.

The meeting was over, the rédacteurs had gone, the chairs were disordered, the glasses stood empty on the table ; and in a corner with heavy eyelids the little wife sat drooping, the child asleep on her bosom.

One young man still stayed, rapidly talking

to Sévère: very young, very eager; blonde down on his upper lip, a downy dimple in his chin: a pulsing recruit, a novice newly arrived; in the first fever of enthusiasm; panting for persecution. Half-a-dozen times during the evening he had told the same story; now he was recounting it again, his adventure in the provincial town, when the innkeeper, coming into his room to gossip, took up a copy of the review, glanced at it, interested, opened it just where the novice's article happened to come; ran his eye over it, and there and then threw friendliness to the winds—called him revolutionist, accused him of anarchy, and turned him out of the inn! The boy's blue eyes burned as he told it: it was one of the choice moments of his life—of exquisite flavour; sound; vital: he drained it to the dregs.

Absorbed and speculative Sévère stood beside him, watching the stars, serene, pursuing his own thoughts. . . . "L'Avenir," he murmured to himself, lingering on the beloved word; "L'Ere Nouvelle, *le Vingtième Siècle!*" . . .

The Twentieth Century, the New Era: from the height of his own faith he saw them clearly. But against him also the decree had gone forth: "I have caused thee to see the land of promise with thine eyes; but thou shalt not go over thither."

K. W. M.

STREET BALLS

STREET BALLS

On the morning of 13th July carpenters take possession of street corners and begin to build a band-stand. In modest neighbourhoods this is not a formidable task—only boards are needed and tools. Soon, hammers sound. Children come up to watch ; small tradespeople cross the street ; the patron at the café a few yards away superintends the preparations. He, a genial fellow, urges the carpenters to hurry, and brings them bock occasionally and absinthe later on. They, like all Parisian workmen, would rest often and peruse the *Patrie*, and roll a cigarette, and hail a friend, and even doze on a board out of the way of the sun. "Dépêchons-nous," says the patron of the café briskly. "Bien, bien," reply the carpenters. And the hammering goes on. Sometimes a student, troubled by the noise, pops his head out of a sixth-floor window ; but realising no doubt that he is too far off to protest, and also that no one would heed him if he did, retreats. Servants look down on the scene ;

waiters also. Milliners gossip over their work near by; the girls at the blanchisserie opposite chatter merrily; the withered old woman who sells newspapers, stationery, rusty needles, and cotton, remembers seeing just such a band-stand erected thirty-five years ago. All look forward to to-morrow, the glorious Fourteenth. All have finery ready. All say a dozen times, "Demain, ma chère, on dansera."

"Dépêchons-nous, mes amis," says the patron of the café again next morning. "Bien, bien," reply the carpenters. And the hammering recommences. Boards are nailed together, and made to stand. Often they tremble dangerously. A floor is laid down. Steps are constructed. And lo! a shelter for local musicians, small but trim, simple but undeniably frail, springs up. The carpenters, lost in admiration over it, call the patron of the café and point to their work proudly, and proclaim it to be a triumph, and declare themselves to be very weak and utterly exhausted and terribly thirsty. He, at once hospitable, invites the men to refresh themselves on the spot. They, almost prostrated, are established soon before great glasses of beer. He, excited, would hurry off to make *his* preparations. They, inclined to hold forth again over the beauties of their band-stand, urge him to join them. But Madame la patronne cries: "Charles! Charles! voici les lanternes." And so Charles, the patron, rushes off; and so the

carpenters finish their beer. And so the patron makes *his* preparations: equipping the band-stand with stools, music-stands, and lanterns, covering it with bunting, mounting a ladder to hang more paper globes among the branches of the adjacent trees. And so Madame la patronne bustles; and so the waiters bustle. And so by nine that night when the local musicians arrive, when the trades-people turn out, when the milliners and girls from the blanchisserie appear, everything is ready.

Lanterns glow—lanterns of all colours: blue, red, white, yellow, but principally orange. Gas flares in the café, and casts its light on the tables and chairs arranged outside. Opposite, on a window-sill, a row of fairy lamps burns dimly. There is no ceremony about the affair. The neighbourhood is a modest one. The patron of the café says: "On s'amusera genti'ment. On se connaît. On sera tout-à-fait en famille." No one wears silks; no one draws on white gloves, few have even put on hats. And why should they? They know one another; they work side by side; they were children together; verily, they are en famille. The lanterns are admired: Charles, the patron, declares that he was engaged with them for hours. The band-stand is applauded; the carpenters, in their Sunday clothes, tell how the sun poured down upon them, and how they laboured all the same, and how they almost succumbed, and how they are still weak and

weary. The local musicians are inspected: four of them, with a fiddle, a trombone, a cornet, and a flute; the patron of the café claps his hands; the man with the fiddle raises his bow; the flute wails too soon; the carpenters cry "attention"; the chef d'orchestre taps his stand once, twice, thrice, and the local musicians open the programme with a valse.

Dust rises; but no one sees it. Round and round they hop gaily, some thirty couples. Bareheaded, the girls from the blanchisserie mate with the boys from the épicerie; bareheaded also, go the little milliners with the sons and assistants of the baker, and their mothers smile upon them and their fathers applaud them, and the withered old woman who sells newspapers and cotton describes how the spectacle was just the same thirty-five years ago. A circle forms round the dancers, and grows. Many a new couple passes through it to dance also. Forty couples are moving now, and yet the music is not inspiring. The flute, for instance, wails too soon again or too late; the trombone is for ever introducing variations; the time is not at all exact; and the air is old. No one minds, however. No one notices the thing perhaps. The patron, indeed, proclaims the music to be épatant; the carpenters agree, but declare that it is because the musicians feel so happy and comfortable in their band-stand. Suddenly the players stop, and the dancers go off arm-in-arm—

comme dans le monde—and lean against a tree or sip grenadine before the café. Bock is brought to the band-stand, and the players quaff it thirstily. They, like the carpenters, declare theirs to be weary and exhausting work. The patron rushes about feverishly, stopping only when some one wishes to congratulate him on his lanterns. The carpenters, established in the café, describe how they laboured and laboured and laboured; but protest that since the musicians are comfortable, and since the dancers are happy, and since all the neighbourhood is lost in admiration at their band-stand they, too, feel satisfied. . . . The same valse! but no one grumbles. In modest neighbourhoods an air is always played twice, for the répertoire of the musicians is limited. Fifty or sixty couples are dancing now; all their families and relations are assembled. A film of dust has risen, but no one coughs. Black coats are gray at the shoulders. Boots are white. Only the carpenters bring out their handkerchiefs. And as all this Jeunesse enjoys itself innocently and amiably les vieilles and les vieux exchange reflections and reminiscences; and admire Marie, and joke with Jeanne, and applaud both, and smile all the time, and laugh often, and wish that they themselves were young enough to dance. "Nous sommes en famille," cries the patron of the café, and without further ado whisks off the withered old woman who used to caper at this corner thirty-

five years ago. Other old ladies pair off with other old gentlemen. The carpenters take partners no less old, no less willing. The circle thins: spectators have become dancers now. And so the Jeunesse of the Quarter and les vieilles and les vieux valse all together. And so the Jeunesse laughs as it rubs shoulders with les vieilles and les vieux. And so les vieilles and les vieux laugh back at the Jeunesse and make jokes and feel young, and declare that it is good to enjoy oneself genti'ment, convenablement, en famille. . . . More grenadine! More lounging by the trees! More bock for the band-stand! And then a polka. It, also, is danced by all; so is the second edition of it that follows; so is the mazurka played by the orchestra with many a gasp and jerk. Occasionally, the flute forgets itself and stops altogether. Dust fills the air now. Two or three lanterns catch fire and are put out. The milliners and girls from the blanchisserie are flushed. Now and then an old couple pauses for a moment and retreats; and the carpenters surround them and insist on taking them up to the band-stand and on describing the use of each board, and on explaining the mysteries of the foundation and floor, and on proclaiming how the sun beat down upon them as they toiled and toiled and toiled. How comfortable these musicians must be! How proud they must feel of their shelter! How well they play! Yet, how uncomfortable, how unhappy, how in-

efficient they would be in any other band-stand. "Il n'y a que les Parisiens qui travaillent comme çà," the toilers say. A valse: the same valse, weaker, more out of time, than before. But the Jeunesse dances to it all the same; many a vieux starts off with a vieille, and yet it has struck eleven. We leave them dancing, for they will still be there when the musicians play their last selection at two.

Further on: another ball of the same character. Lanterns glow again. Four musicians sit on a band-stand. Yes! there is no doubt about it—they are playing the very same valse. A hundred yards away: another ball, choicer, bigger. Lamps shine in the band-stand, and at least a dozen instruments constitute the orchestra. Quite a hundred couples dance. Further still: a fourth ball; and then a fifth; and so on, in squares and at the corner of almost every street. Some are handsome affairs at which the ladies wear their hats; others are so humble as to boast only two musicians, but lanterns glow here as they glow elsewhere, and every one is gay and happy and amiable. Often you hear the same valse, the same polka, the same mazurka. Grenadine is taken freely; bocks are brought frequently to the band-stands; couples pass and repass arm-in-arm, comme dans le monde. No one is rough; no one is drunk; no one swears. Lights blaze opposite the opera, where a gigantic ball is being held. Hundreds dance. A

loud and large orchestra plays. Brighter still is the Place de la Concorde, more crowded, equipped with an even larger orchestra and band-stand. And here the music is popular and gay. And here the dancers often break out into a chorus. And here, like everywhere else, the Parisian will caper innocently and amiably until two.

Many a lantern has caught fire and been put out by patron Charles; his orchestra plays faintly and wretchedly now, but still the Jeunesse of the Quarter and les vieilles and les vieux dance to the same old polka, the same old mazurka, the same old valse. Tempers have not turned; the old ones do not talk of going home, the milliners have no thought of to-morrow's work. Work! Were you to ask the carpenters, they would tell you that sewing and ironing is not work but pleasure. Work! Allez, donc. Venez, donc. Approach the band-stand with them. Peer at it. Go down on your knees with them. Feel that board. Look at that screw. Observe these steps. Work! Allez, donc. Only they know what work is. Ask patron Charles. Ask the Quarter. Ask them.—Know that they toiled and toiled and toiled, for hours and hours and hours, fighting against faintness, almost falling from fatigue, bravely and uninterruptedly, beneath a fearful sun.

BY THE SIDE OF THE SEINE

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VERY old are the books on the quays ; very old are the bookworms who examine them. Treasures, it is said, have been discovered in these boxes ; many a superannuated sage is supposed to have carried off volumes that boasted infinite age, and bore some precious dedication. Yet you may dig in a box for hours without encountering anything more remarkable than a grammar or a book of psalms or a series of sermons. Newspapers and magazines take up space. English novels are not wanting. Tracts, pamphlets, imperfect histories, greasy maps constitute the rest of the bookseller's highly miscellaneous collection. Dust settles upon it, in spite of the fact that a cloth or brush is used regularly every morning. Dust accumulates during the day and settles. When it rains, water-proof coverings are thrown over the boxes ; but somehow or other their delicate contents feel the damp. Opposite, on a bench, sit the booksellers reading their paper, smoking their pipes, staring

at the omnibuses that rattle across the bridges of the Seine.

No one is pestered to buy a book; you may turn over an entire box and then pass on to the next. No one regards you with suspicion; you may finger a volume and pore over it as long as you please. Should you covet something you must take it over to the bench opposite and demand the price. Perhaps you are overwhelmed by the bookseller's extravagant reply, and say as much; but he, unless conscious of his fault, bids you to either buy the book or put it back. No one irritates him: not even the impudent young painter who scoffs at his stock of prints, not even the dim-eyed old gentleman who has paid exhaustive attention to a stout volume every morning for months. No doubt he pities him, and so lets him read. The old gentleman is shabby, and not rich enough to buy the book. He can only read it there, and is allowed to—line by line, page after page, chapter upon chapter. Another sage: older, shabbier, this one. He, too, is a regular visitor. He also has his book. It *was* his own once; it had rested on his shelves; it had been beneath his lamp. To own it, the sage had saved, deprived himself of necessaries. Then one morning he brought his hoard down to the bookseller and exchanged it for the book, and put the prize under his arm, and hugged it as he tottered off. A week later he returned to the quays thinner,

shabbier than ever, and sold the book, and asked where it would be placed, and reappeared next morning to continue it, and every morning afterwards. A third sage; somewhat confused, haunted by the delusion that all old volumes are treasures. He buys frequently, not expensive books, but those at sixty centimes or one franc; he is not difficult to please so long as the pages are yellow. Sometimes he chats with the bookseller. "Monsieur," says he, "I have shown that last volume of Voltaire to my friends, and all proclaim it to be extremely rare." "How much did I charge you for it?" inquires the bookseller. "Ninety centimes," replies the sage. Sceptical, amused, acquainted with the old gentleman's delusion, the bookseller, feigning to be disgusted, mutters, "Tant pis."

Below, on the banks of the Seine, poodles are shaved. A man and his wife receive them. The poodles are accompanied by their mistress, and start immediately at the sight of the shears. They know them. They have seen them, felt them, over and over again. They hate them. They would fly from them. They would run right into the Seine. "Sois sage, mon bijou," says the mistress. "Viens, mon ange," says the man. "Viens, mon chou," says the woman. But the poodle mistrusts them; and so his mistress brings out a biscuit and holds it just over the arm of the man, and lures the dog nearer

and nearer and cries, "Soyez bien tendre," when the man manages to seize her pet. The poodle struggles; his mistress says again, "Sois sage, Babette." Babette casts up his eyes. Babette weeps. Babette kicks. But the woman has hold of him by the waist, and the man now has taken up his shears; and Babette must be trimmed here, and shaved altogether there, and turned sideways, and even laid on his back. Babette's wool falls, then flies away, and Babette's mistress rescues a lock. Babette rolls his eyes still, weeps still, kicks still. And Babette's mistress says again, "Sois sage, mon bijou," and to the man, "Soyez bien tendre." And Babette rejoices, his mistress rejoices, when the man throws down his shears and declares his task to be done. Still Babette harbours revenge and refuses to say good-bye. He snaps. He growls. He gazes ruefully at his fallen locks, then dashes off.

On the very brink of the river sits the angler. Nothing diverts his attention; he is the most imperturbable, the only patient person in Paris. Boats pass him, and their passengers often call out at him or laugh or jeer. Rude boys hail him from the bridges. Poodles sometimes jostle him in their attempt to escape. He, however, never moves a muscle. Melancholy has settled upon him; he might well be burdened with some awful, irreparable grief. Punctually every morning he

arrives with his rod. Hours go by, unsuccessfully; but still he hopes, watches, waits. Fine fish will never come his way. Trout has never taken to the Seine, nor salmon. And he knows this. Should his rod jerk, he flushes and a triumphant light comes into his eye. He has caught something. He has been rewarded. He has not sat there in vain. He has hooked a low, vulgar, dangerous little fish; an infamous fish, the very worst fish that ever swam in river, stream, or sea.

"INCENDIE!"

"INCENDIE!"

NOTHING worse than contempt is the feeling that the Parisian bears the camelot. He does not clamour for his banishment. He would not lock him up for his lies. He never shakes his fist in his face when robbed of a sou. Perhaps he pities him—for the camelot's is a hard and trying trade: so hard that it brings about a weary, weather-beaten expression; so trying that it attacks the voice, turns it hoarse, and silences it, sometimes, altogether. Editors are more to blame than the camelot. Were there no rédacteurs-en-chef to prepare false news, no seedy fellows would be able to circulate it. They would seek another métier or disappear. So, with invariable good-humour, argues the Parisian; and so he argued when camelots came out early on the morning of 8th March with the news that the Comédie Française was ablaze. "Incendie!" they shouted. "Incendie du Théâtre Français." "Coquelin's wigs have been burnt," said the Parisian, passing on.

"Incendie!" cried the camelots. "Mounet-Sully's beards have been singed," murmured the Parisian lightly. "Incendie!" yelled the camelots. "Claretie's cupboard has caught fire," observed the Parisian with a smile. Still, the camelots kept up their cry and carried it all over Paris, and grew hoarse over it and faint, and staggered soon and broke from a gallop into a trot, and had to refresh themselves often in a wine-shop in order to shout on. Time passed; then later editions appeared. Anxiety set in; then fear. Could the news be true? Was it possible that the Comédie—Molière's house, the Joy of the city—had been destroyed like the Opéra Comique years ago? Troubled, the Parisian bought a paper and hastened off to see; troubled, everybody bought papers and followed; and so—from the Champs Elysées, from Montmartre, from the exterior boulevards, from the Rive Gauche—Parisians of all ages, Parisiennes of all classes, strangers of all nationalities, made for the Avenue de l'Opéra and the Rue de Rivoli.

Helmets gleamed in the distance. Plumes waved. Mounted policemen and rows of the Garde Républicaine were visible. Above them smoke mounted, not heavily, not hurriedly, but in puffs. And again the Parisian was sceptical. It must be a chimney, he declared, or several chimneys—no one could inform him, however, for a dense crowd had assembled at the front, and no

one might approach. Neighbours in the throng exchanged reflections; but they were not to be taken seriously. Nothing was known. Nothing was certain. Nothing could be seen except the helmets, plumes, uniforms, and smoke that mounted occasionally. And it was vain to seek a better view by approaching smaller streets, for those also were guarded. And it was unwise to make long rounds, only to come out near the boulevards or the Bourse. And it was irritating then to meet more camelots, shouting "Incendie! Incendie! Incendie!" Fear spread. Neither Coquelin's wigs nor Sully's beards nor Claretie's cupboard could possibly take so long in burning. A chimney, any number of chimneys, could and would have been put out by then. Rumours from the front reached those stationed far behind: sad rumours, sinister rumours, that smothered all scepticism and spoilt all hope. The Comédie *was* burning—the Comédie herself, Molière's house, the Joy of the city. Smoke still mounted from the pile. Smoke, in spite of the pompiers, would continue to mount. Helmets would gleam; plumes would wave; mounted policemen and rows of the Garde Républicaine would bar the way for hours yet. The camelots had spoken the truth for once; and the Parisian had been wrong. They spoke it still, moreover, as they staggered past, flaunting their sheets, crying hoarsely, "Incendie! Incendie! Incendie!" No one

doubted them now. No one shrugged his shoulders. Scepticism had vanished, so had anxiety, so had alarm. And a great gloom settled upon Paris as the afternoon wore on.

Absinthes were stirred slowly and moodily in the boulevards that afternoon. They stood on the tables of the terraces as usual towards six o'clock, but untasted. Faces were grave. No one came up with a joke. No one gesticulated. No one continued yesterday's debate on the chances of the Exhibition. Only one topic was discussed: the fate of the Comédie Française. It would have been better for the Opéra to be destroyed, or the Sacré Cœur. Both were but bantlings compared with the Comédie, without memories. It would have been better for the Opéra Comique to disappear again, in its infancy. The Metropolitan, the new Gare d'Orleans, the overhead tramway, all three might better be dispensed with than the Comédie. Relics were there; pictures, statues. In his youth the Parisian had been told to observe and admire and remember them, and he had done so while still at school, and had looked forward for weeks to these outings, and had laughed there at a play for the first time and cried for the first time and —— he was almost crying now. . . . "Incendie!" shouted the camelots with later editions. "Incendie!" . . . Years after, when he was a man, he had taken an abonnement so as to know the entire répertoire of the National Theatre; then he and

his wife visited the old place frequently and discussed the play over a light supper, or merely a liqueur, on the boulevards afterwards. Later again, Edouard, his son, Jeanne, his daughter, "les deux gosses," were taken to a matinée. It was the *Médecin Malgré Lui*, their first play, and Jeanne and Edouard had laughed heartily; then it was *Frou-Frou*, and Jeanne and Edouard had cried just as he had cried—"enfin, comme autrefois." And he had shown Jeanne and Edouard the pictures and the statues and told them all about Molière, just as he had been shown them, just as he had been told—"enfin, mon vieux, comme autrefois." "Incendie!" cried the camelots. "Incendie!" . . . Poor Coquelin! Poor Sully! Poor Claretie! All three had been holding a Molière supper a little while ago. Molière's chair had been there. Claretie had toasted the memory of the Maître. Coquelin had made a brilliant speech. All the company had passed before Molière's bust two by two, paused a moment, bowed, decorated it with a wreath of laurels. Next night Coquelin had played in the *Médecin Malgré Lui* more amazingly than ever. There had been a victim, too—a young actress, Mdlle. Henriot, almost a novice, proud of her position, endowed with talent. Gone, now—in spite of the heroic efforts of an actor who had sought to save her three times and who, brave fellow, "could never forgive himself." . . . "Incendie!" howled

the camelots. "Incendie!" . . . It would open again, of course. So soon as the cinders were cool, workmen would take possession of the place. And as Claretie loved the Comédie more devotedly than any one, he would watch the workmen continually and stay their hand often, and scream if unnecessary alterations were attempted, and run off for the President if luxurious corners were made. It must not be luxurious, the new Comédie, but simple as of old and full of faults—for even her dust and her draughts were dear and her narrow stalls holy, and her strapontins (half-seats) sacred on account of their age. All these would have to be preserved, or replaced comme autrefois. Still the first visit would be a blow. Old Parisians would recall the past. Old Parisians would seek in vain for their usual seat. Old Parisians would be unable to point proudly to where Edouard and Jeanne, "les deux gosses," first sat. It would be bitter, "mon vieux." It was inevitable, "mon cher." It would be good to hear that the damage was only slight, "mon vieux." It would be better were the disaster but a dream, "mon cher." It was impossible to realise the thing, "mon vieux." It was difficult to believe it, "mon cher." "Incendie du Theâtre Français!" wailed the camelots. "Incendie! . . . Incendie! . . . Incendie! . . ."

THE BUN ABROAD

THE BUN ABROAD

(SCENE: A chaste confectioner's in the Rue Cambon, furnished with fragile tables and chairs. Fashionable ladies sit sipping tea. They wear rich furs and glittering rings; they are French, English, American. Sugared cakes are displayed on the shining counter, and a quantity of buns—homely, vulgar halfpenny buns. It is the sacred hour of the "fiv'-o'clock.")

FIRST FRENCH LADY (*to attendant*): "Un bun, s'il vous plait." (She pronounces it "bonne." She regards it with uneasiness.)

HER FRIEND (*gazing blankly at the homely morsel she, too, has ordered*): "Comment faut-il le manger?"

(Both call for fourchettes, and are handed tiny silver forks. With them they pierce the buns. Being of low and unpretentious baking—to be eaten by hand—the buns object to the spike of silver, and slide about the plate. Both ladies

stab them more deeply, maliciously. When they attempt to withdraw their forks, the buns wilfully refuse to give them up. A struggle in stratagem ensues; it is the deep policy of the buns to resist all attacks, and to retreat, if possible, into the carpeted valley below.)

THIRD FRENCH LADY (*to attendant*): "Un bun, s'il vous plait."

FOURTH FRENCH LADY (*to attendant*): "Un bun, s'il vous plait."

(Steady, silent fighting for some seconds: the buns begin to lose their bloom. On the entrance of an English lady peace is declared; it is hoped that she will solve and settle the bitter problem of how to eat the "bonne." She orders a cake. The four French ladies take up their forks; the battle recommences.)

FIFTH FRENCH LADY (*to attendant*): "Un muffin, s'il vous plait." (It arrives on a plate no bigger than itself, accompanied by a silver fork. Lady takes off her gloves, frowns, raises her fork. Muffin declares war on the spot.)

CHATTY LITTLE FRENCHMAN (*to fair American*): "Ven I am in London, I eat ze bun and ze muffin all days."

FAIR AMERICAN (*who understands him to have said "all day"*): "Well, I guess you've got a good digestion."

CHATTY LITTLE FRENCHMAN: "Ven I am in Paris I nevaire eat ze bun and ze muffin; I eat ze

cake." (Laughs, thinking he has made a joke; fair American smiles indulgently.) "I am here all days for ze 'fiv'-o'clock.'"

FAIR AMERICAN (*still under the same delusion*): "What? all day?"

CHATTY LITTLE FRENCHMAN (*pettishly*): "I said all days—tout les jours—alvays. How could ze 'fiv'-o'clock' last all day?"

(Fair American might have replied that there was no apparent reason why it should not last for ever, for the muffin and the buns of the five French ladies, although severely wounded, are still intact. Both trifles present a terribly scarred and scratched appearance; but that they are even more starred and striped, fair American might have compared them to her country's flag.)

FIRST FRENCH LADY: "Qu'ils sont agaçants, ces buns."

HER FRIEND (*wearily, and with a spiteful stab*): "On dit que le muffin est encore plus pervers. Je n'en mangerai jamais."

(No doubt the fifth very fashionable French lady has made the same resolution. Her muffin, after slipping greasily about the plate, has just leapt out of it deftly on to the table. Nor is it yet in pieces. In fact, her "fiv'-o'clock" has been one long tragedy. She has burned herself with the tea-pot, and lost her spoon.)

YOUNG ENGLISHMAN (*to his pretty and stylish companion*): "Nasty tea, isn't it? They don't

understand how to make it in France ; they are frightened of it. I was stopping in a tiny village near Rouen last summer, and had to buy my tea at the chemist's ; fact ! He kept it in a big jar among his drugs and poisons, and sold it like tobacco, by the ounce, screwing it up in a wisp of paper. He said, 'Take it three times a day.' The peasants used to buy his tea for colds and fevers, and asked for it with the same emotion that a would-be suicide asks for laudanum. When they get home they put it on the highest shelf they have, so that their children can't get at it. Yes, really ! No, I'm not exaggerating a bit."

First French Lady : "Enfin !"

(Her cry of triumph is followed by another from her friend ; before them, in a garden of currants and crumbs, lie broken bits of bun. Not considerable morsels ; only ragged atoms, threads. These they pick up daintily with their forks ; the atoms tremble, waver, fall. Neighbouring buns, discouraged by their brothers' defeat, hold out no longer ; and the muffin lying still, lets itself be torn.)

Shrill Voice : "Mamma, may I have a bun ?"

Mamma : "Yes, Harry dear, but it's your fourth."

Pretty and stylish English Girl : "A bun, please."

Young Englishman : "I'll chance a muffin."

CHATTY LITTLE FRENCHMAN: "Zat will be two buns, mees. (*To fair American*) I, also, will eat ze bun."

(Bun-eating follows, briskly and smoothly; without silver forks. All four trifles surrender easily and amiably; so does the muffin of the young Englishman. Nor are there crumbs and currants left on their plates and tables, or on the floor—convincing evidence that "the bun" should be handled and not forked.)

SOME NIGHT FACES

SOME NIGHT FACES

No sooner have you taken your ticket at the theatre than you perceive a pair of hard eyes watching you through a glass door. Confidently, by way of a passage or a staircase, you approach. The eyes glisten as you come. The eyes light up when you have arrived. The eyes belong to the person who opens the door, the ouvreuse. She is stout, or she is extremely thin. She has a black dress, and black hair. She wears a cap, or she sports a blue ribbon. She ogles you. She smiles upon you. She would have you leave your hat and coat and stick with her. "Merci," you reply. She, however, insists. It is hot within. It is stuffy. The stalls are small; you are stout. Your hat and coat would suffer were you to take them with you; your stick would not fail to trip your neighbours up; you would do well to leave all three with her. "Merci," you protest. But her hand goes forth greedily; she would rob you of your things. "Merci," you complain. Then, feverishly,

she turns upon your companion and begs for her cloak, declaring that it will get crumpled, even torn, possibly spoilt for ever within. "Merci," says your companion. "Rien à faire," mutters the ouvreuse to a friend; then shrugging her shoulders, leads you to your seat. There, she thrusts a programme into your hand. You pay her. Hurriedly she disappears. The orchestra strikes up; but the ouvreuse returns, bearing what she calls a banc, a footstool. A gift, you think; a tender attention prompted by remorse, a politeness to be accepted and not paid for. "Merci," you say quite cordially as she installs the stool. And the play begins.

Upstairs, behind the glass door, the ouvreuse still waits. She approaches everybody; she ogles everybody; she would take charge of every coat and cloak. Few give in to her, however; and those who do, capitulate only through sheer fright. Some scorn her altogether; and she remembers these. Should they lose themselves in a corridor later on, she will send them wrong. Should she pass them in the stalls, she will poke her programmes into their eye and tread mercilessly on their feet. In a bag strapped round her waist she carries change. And it is wise to inspect her fifty centime bits and francs—for she is never without Argentine money and Swiss coins on which the figure does not stand but sits: abandoned money, worthless money, the most infamous in

France. . . . The first entr'acte arrives; and again you see the ouvreuse near your seat. She is in quest of some one; and that some one seems to be you. Her eye is upon you. She is undoubtedly coming your way; she has passed everybody else. Inquiringly, you look up, and see her hand outstretched. "Pourquoi?" you ask. "Pour le banc de Madame," she replies. Overwhelmed, you demand "Combien?" She, however, prefers to leave it to you. And so you fumble in your pockets, and find only a five-franc piece. And so the ouvreuse offers to change it, and gives you Argentine money or Swiss coins on which the figure sits. And so you protest, and the ouvreuse counts out silver pieces and coppers laboriously, one by one. And so the people behind murmur because the curtain has gone up, and you, confused, give the ouvreuse more than you think. And so the footstool was not a tender attention, not a politeness, not a gift.

. . . . .

Midnight. Tables are still occupied on the boulevard terraces, gay people take liqueurs before going home. In the café itself a band plays; yet it can be heard out there distinctly. Pedlars pass: first of all, the olive merchant. He has his name on his hat. He has his address on his tub. He is well known on the boulevards; and he is respected. Unlike his brothers on the Boul' Mich',

he does not pester you with his wares. Pausing before the tables he looks at you, raises his eyebrows, waits. For two sous he gives ten olives, spreading them out neatly on a sheet of paper. And he collects many sous, for Parisians are fond of impromptu refreshment. Often he makes the waiters a present of two or even three olives, and, from all accounts, can well afford to. "He has a country house," declares a garçon, as the olive merchant passes on. . . . Not so dignified is the nut man. No one credits him with a country house; but the waiters relate that he has travelled in many a land, and that he can speak almost every tongue. Still, he cannot distinguish an American from an Englishman, and is given to protesting that he saw you every morning for six consecutive years in New York. All Americans love nuts. All Americans are generous. For the sake of old times, in memory of the dear old city, you are urged to buy two sous' worth. Business, he declares, is bad, because Parisians prefer olives to nuts, and their children nougat. Still, several consommateurs make nuts do service for the second course of their midnight meal. . . . "Nougat," cries the next pedlar, a negro. He wears a gaudy turban and brilliant robes. And his teeth shine. He smiles to show them. He is never serious. He must grin. Like a juggler, he balances a tray in his hand, tosses it, catches it, holds it on his head, lowers it

again, then hands it round. His wares are white and pink and green, studded with almonds. Thin paper envelops each stick. "Nougat," he cries. And few consommateurs lose this opportunity to finish their repast elegantly, with dessert. . . . Opposite, on a bench, sits a row of ragged fellows staring sullenly at the café. No one notices them; no one seems to be conscious of their presence. Some are mere boys; others are weather-beaten old fellows, all are "mouchers," veritable gueux, forlorn and solitary, thirsty too, and hungry. No one knows how they live, and no one cares. Certain is it that they cannot make a livelihood out of cigar stumps, cigarette ends, and charred tobacco. Sullenly, silently, they watch: watch the pedlars pass, watch the consommateurs eat and drink, watch the waiters bring new liqueurs, watch the consommateurs pay and go, watch the garçons clear away the chairs and tables, watch them carry the shutters out and put them up. Other cafés close, and it is dark. Now and then a stooping figure rises from the bench and slouches off. It moves a hundred yards, and stops. It sinks on another bench where there is more room. It shivers. It lays itself out. It turns as though tormented by some memory or some grief. It shivers again. It turns once more. Then lies still at last.

LÀ-HAUT

LÀ-HAUT

Close contact with the clouds, say mountaineers, is intoxicating. You are not yourself amidst so much air. Serious thought evaporates. You speak strangely. A dangerous exhilaration, mischievous to the mind, sets in. Not only Alpine climbers know these emotions. They besiege the Montmartrois, poor soul! perched on a summit of a hill, the loftiest position in Lutetia. He presides over Paris, as it were. He must stoop to see her. He is as much in the air as the flag that flies on the top of the Eiffel Tower, and just as fantastic. He has not, like others, his mad moments: they are all mad. Even the arms of his Moulin whirl slower than his brain. He has chronic fever. He is all pulse. He is the victim of too much oxygen; and calm depresses him. Grave people, grave housings—museums and the rest—he abhors. He has no liking for books, architecture, armour, and relics of the old world. Nor for their collectors—superannuated sages; nor, indeed, for anything

dusty or dull. To live madly is his philosophy. And lo! for the indulgence of it dens and caverns reveal themselves in which grown men arrayed as angels, devils, or undertakers, caper and chant. Heaven, Hell, Death: Montmartre boasts all three, almost side by side. Montmartre pays them midnight calls. From clouds to coals, to coffins, it passes; from blue to red, to black. Gold gleams, too, in each; the gold of bock, served by waiters with wings, or tails, or black glazed hats; Montmartre's pet puppets, fond of hinting for cigarettes, passionate in their pursuit of pour-boires. Merchants later on, they tempt you with tapers, medals, and other mementos — "deux sous la pièce." Accept these trifles, though they be the last things in the world you covet. Fumble for sous. Earn their blessing, or expect their withering wit.

Festive explorers, however — those blown to France by the breeze of either ocean or channel— have assisted at much of Montmartre's madness. They know the Moulin as well as the Louvre, and have heard many a chansonnier at the Quat'z' Arts, Conservatoire, and Tréteau de Tabarin. Of these, therefore, it is needless to speak. Opposite the Tréteau, however, there stands a cabaret into which few foreigners venture, and it is called the "Cabaret Bruyant"—not Bruant, and owned by Bruant's rival, Alexandre. He proclaims himself to be a "realist"; and so he sings about prisons, prostitutes, thieves, and is accompanied chiefly by

a drum. His waiters wear queer caps, and his singers are girt with ragged fringes—they also are "realists," and describe the ruffians who beat them and also live on them, and who hide behind trees on the exterior boulevards when it is dark. Here the ceiling is low, and the tables and benches are uncouth. Here there are doors, keys, and other ugly trophies from the prison of Mazas. Here stuffed and sinister birds watch Alexandre as he struts about. Ordinary clothes would not suit so profound a realist: and Alexandre's consist of a velvet coat, velvet trousers, a red shirt, a huge belt, and Wellington boots. A stage would be too simple a spot for so terrible a singer; and so Alexandre mounts a bench. Loudly he sings, brutally, and in argot. Crimes are planned, murders committed, executions conducted, before you. Now and then the drum booms, and Alexandre's voice rises: "A Mazas. A Mazas." In the background, at a counter, sits Madame Alexandre. She is handsome and she is stout. She believes her husband to be a genius, but shivers over his songs. She is glad to take him away from their sinister cabaret at two in the morning, and start, there and then, in their carriage, for their "country home." There she has a garden, flowers, fowls, ducks, and, of course, a lake. There she potters about the place all day in a dressing-gown. There she and her husband lead a regular and rural life. "You must

visit us," she says. "You must come to déjeûner. You must see our flowers. You shall have fresh eggs, fresh butter, fresh milk. You shall rest in a lawn beneath a blue sky, surrounded by green, and . . ." The drum booms again, and Alexandre's voice rises once more: "À Mazas. À Mazas."

Almost opposite are the restaurants of the "Abbaye" and "Dead Rat." No one approaches them much before two; then they are packed. Both have tzigane bands and both provide supper —Montmartre ladies dart to and fro. But the gaiety of the "Abbaye" is not the gaiety of the Taverne Lorraine, for its clientèle is neither young nor frank nor fresh. There is noise enough; and when the tziganists play spirited airs, when a table is cleared away for a lady to dance, when a glass is smashed, when a chair is overturned, when a voice rises, when a quarrel ensues, when the manager comes up, there is excitement enough too. The flower woman enters, and her basket is the freshest thing in the place. It empties quickly, and she is glad to go. Restless young fellows, prematurely old, wander about with a scowl for their friends and an affectionate smile for all those whom they have never met and do not know. A monstrous waiter beams on them, however, and is sometimes persuaded to dance with them and to tell of how he was christened in champagne one night "le gros glouglou." Often Armand plays with Edouard's hat, and Edouard with Armand's

—both laugh insanely if one falls off and stooping to raise it, fall too. Then "Glouglou" comes to the rescue, and Armand clasps his neck while Edouard pulls his legs, and "Glouglou" totters, and a circle forms to see whether "Glouglou" can resist, and how Armand and Edouard will find their feet. Occasionally, a Montmartre lady quarrels with her friend. The chasseur is called, and seizes her. She struggles as she is carried out.

Not every one is mad in Montmartre, however; nor every one so sinister as Alexandre, nor every one so insane as the Armands and Edouards of the "Abbaye" and "Dead Rat." Higher on the hill, in dim mean streets, are other cabarets, closely curtained, approached by the well-informed and very daring only. But the low chanting that issues occasionally from these sinister-looking nooks is not the chanting of thieves, nor the subsequent applause their dishonest glee over the division of particularly splendid booty. You may safely enter. At rude tables sit worthy men and women, smoking, knitting, drinking sour wine, drinking in too the songs of a quaintly-clad quartette with pale faces, long hair, velvet coats and scarlet waistbands, who make a picturesque tableau in the background. One has a violin, another a guitar gay with ribbons. They strike a chord, and a third rises.

Sadly he announces his song—"the music by my friend." It is only a trifle: a tribute to his Muse. She inspires him, you think, with a strange

melancholy. Other ditties, all sad, all simple, follow. Sous, not five-franc pieces, alas, are dropped into the collector's bag. And the minstrels rise to go. Down the street they hasten, gaunt figures; their ribbons and scarlet sashes flying. They sing and collect sous again in a second wine-shop; by midnight their sad faces and sad ditties have touched the humble audience of a third. Up the hill they hurry, a tall row; into dimmest Montmartre, into bare attics—their homes. Books and easels are more plentiful than beds and blankets. Studious singers, you think: say rather singing-students, student-chansonniers, for so they are. Paints are bought and fees paid out of that bag of sous; educations finished, scholars and artists made. Precious bag: thrice precious sous! what help your plentiful coming in bestows; what hope! To what high purpose are you employed! Alas, you and your givers have been scarce of late in these rude cabarets. Your passing to other hands (to Bruant's, to Alexandre's, to gayer, madder dens) has reduced the number of picturesque quartettes with velvet coats and vivid waistbands. They, albeit poets, lack wild wit and the power to caper. They, unlike most chansonniers, are talented and pure. They, in spite of their efforts, cannot charm the Montmartrois; and so they are rare on the hill to-day.

THE TRAGEDIES OF MONTMARTRE

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It sometimes happens that a popular chansonnier does not fulfil his evening engagement at Montmartre. "Our distinguished poet and friend is unable to appear," announces the director; "another will take his place." No one minds much; no one wonders; the entertainment goes on. When the audience has dispersed, and only habitués sit sipping in the cabaret, some one may ask what is wrong with the "distinguished poet and friend." "Énervé," replies the director. No one is surprised; no one is alarmed; the waiter goes round. Many a performance is conducted without the popular chansonnier, and without further announcement from the director. He tells the habitués, however, that their "distinguished poet and friend" is gravely ill. No one is jealous of him, no one speaks harshly of him, when the lights go out. "Pauvre Marcel," says the director a week later. "Pauvre Marcel," repeat the habitués. "Pauvre Marcel," echoes Montmartre when it learns that

the popular chansonnier is dead or that he has become insane. Directors themselves have passed away suddenly; they no more than their chansonniers have been able to withstand the false and feverish atmosphere of the "Butte." It killed Rodolphe Salis, founder of the "Chat Noir." It killed his brother Gabriel, first proprietor of the "Âne Rouge." It helped to kill Andhré Joyeux, second host of the same cabaret. "Pauvre Rodolphe," "Pauvre Gabriel," "Pauvre Andhré," said Montmartre.

Four years ago, towards eight at night, Rodolphe Salis dined. His chansonniers sat at the same table. Journalists often joined them. Waiters in black silk stockings served. Old lamps burned dimly; not so dimly but that the "Black Cat" might be seen watching her master from every corner, not so dimly but that row upon row of mocking masks and grotesque puppets caught one's eye, not so dimly but that Salis himself might be observed. He was short, and he was slight. He had red hair and a red beard. His eyes were green, his forehead was wrinkled, his hands were almost transparent and never still. He looked forty, and moved so restlessly, spoke so nervously, that his friends often said, "Maître, you will go mad." He, raising his glass, would laugh then. At dessert Salis would ask the journalists what had taken place during the day, and they, drawing out notes, announced that the

Government had fallen, or that a Russian grand-duke had been seen driving with a professional beauty, or that misfortune had befallen a notorious demi-mondaine. Other news was reviewed: literary news, theatrical news, scandalous news, news of the "Butte," and Salis listened attentively. Then, over coffee and cigars, the chansonniers read Salis their latest verses, and he would applaud or find fault, and add a line here or strike out two there, and call them "veritable poets," or condemn them as "lazy and lamentable fools." Bocks followed the liqueurs, and Salis would swallow two or three; often, feeling depressed, he took as many absinthes. By nine he was more restless, more nervous than ever; and when the lights were turned up, and spectators came in, his eyes were wild and his hand shook, but he saluted his guests amiably, and sipped bocks with them, and told them stories feverishly, and addressed foreigners as "monseigneur," and bade them view his "black cats" until the entertainment began upstairs. On the ceiling, along the walls, over the old fireplace, above the door, black cats of all sizes and all ages crept and crouched, watched and reflected, smiled and sneered. All had yellow eyes and spiky whiskers. All had curly tails. All were the sons or the daughters, the grandchildren, or the great-grandchildren, of the great "Black Cat" who, beneath a dull red lamp, had been sitting proudly on a poster outside the cabaret

for years. "Le chat noir, ses enfants—les petits chat noirs," Salis would say; then, leading his guests upstairs, pointed out more black cats on the staircase, and more in the little theatre itself, all creeping or crouching, all watching or reflecting, all smiling or sneering, all with yellow eyes, spiky whiskers, and curly tails. "Mes princes, mes princesses," said Salis, "you are in the sweet and sacred abode of the world-renowned Black Cat. Her chansonniers will amuse you. I myself will amuse you. You shall depart amused." And the chansonniers sang, blithely or sadly; and shadow-plays were produced, showing politicians and Pierrots; and, finally, Salis took possession of the gangway, and, strolling up and down, criticised the fall of the Government, or poked fun at the grand-duke who had been seen driving with a professional beauty, or deplored the misfortunes of the notorious demi-mondaine. As he spoke his eyes flashed and his hands twitched; as he went on he hurried up and down the gangway gesticulating wildly; before he was done he had reviewed the latest literary news, theatrical news, scandalous news, and news of the "Butte." At twelve the audience dispersed, and Salis was exhausted. By half-past twelve he had taken more bocks or more absinthes. At one he was supping with his chansonniers, journalists, friends, drinking deeply, talking wildly, amazing them all with his mad spirits, nervous movements, caustic wit.

They often would say again, "Maître, you will go mad." He, raising his glass, would laugh more than ever then. They, as time went on, warned him. He, almost insane, tried to smother their fears. They at last saw the end coming. He before long realised that he was doomed. And so — Salis went to bed because he was énervé. And so — the cabaret of the "Black Cat" was conducted by another until her master "should get well." And so—Salis disappeared, so the "Black Cat" vanished, suddenly and sadly, for ever and for ever from the "Butte."

When the poster of the "Black Cat" was taken down, Gabriel Salis, in the "Âne Rouge" near by, was perhaps the only man in Montmartre who did not sigh. He and his brother had been bitter enemies from first to last. But Gabriel drank too, and got nervous also. Gabriel, from haranguing his audience in the same manner as his brother, was soon exhausted. Gabriel, fearing to die like Rodolphe, sold his cabaret to Andhré Joyeux, and, according to Joyeux's startling poster, trotted away on a red ass laden with bags of gold. He trotted into the country, and bought a château; but the change came too suddenly also, and too late. Soon Gabriel Salis died.

At once proud of his cabaret, Joyeux had it hung with sketches, caricatures, mocking masks, grotesque puppets, and, of course, vivid effigies of

the "Red Ass." At once popular in the "Butte," Joyeux was well patronised. Odd characters came to his house: pale poets, disreputable old fellows soiled with smoke and spoilt by absinthe, mysterious ladies who were anxious to read you their plays, books, and poems on the spot. Here it was customary to call for rounds of applause. Here it was usual to join in the choruses. Here it was the invariable practice to make fun of a wizened little madman with gold spectacles and one hard eye. He, believing in the applause, expressed his thanks with emotion; and Joyeux, mounting a chair, would reply that Montmartre needed no thanks, that it was for Montmartre to do the thanking, and that Montmartre wished to show its appreciation of his genius by crowning him with a wreath of pure white roses. He, bowing his head, received the wreath; and Joyeux, the pale poets, the disreputable old fellows, the mysterious ladies, would shake with merriment. Mad nights! Salvation Army girls came in and sang — Joyeux would sell their papers, Joyeux would give them sous. Foreigners came in, and were embarrassed—Joyeux would show them the treasures of the "Red Ass," Joyeux would soon set them at their ease. And he, like Salis, walked to and fro. And he, also, harangued his audience. And he, too, was an unusual wit.

Life on the "Butte" was the theme most employed by Joyeux in his songs. He, like all

Montmartrois, believed that humour in Paris was to be enjoyed only in the Rue des Martyrs and about the Place Pigalle. The Montmartrois, he declared, possessed genius. The Montmartrois was a true Bohemian. The Montmartrois was free. "Aussi fiers que les rois, sont les Montmartrois," was the last line of his favourite and most popular song.

But—one night Joyeux was not there to recite that line. He was resting upstairs, said the waiters. He might only take milk. He needed absolute rest, perfect repose: he was énervé. As he lay upstairs, however, the chansonniers sang, the wizened little madman was crowned, the audience applauded—Joyeux, with only a ceiling between him and the salle, heard all that went on. Days passed: Joyeux slept. Nights passed: Joyeux, still resting, still énervé, was disturbed by the music, the applause, the cries. When friends went up to see him, he pressed their hands and embraced them, and said he would soon be able to sing them their favourite song again. It was only dyspepsia, he declared; they, however, remarked that he looked gravely ill, and that he seemed to be in pain. A week later some fête-day came round, and the "Âne Rouge" was more crowded than ever. It was noisier too, wilder, madder. The waiters were so busy, the chansonniers so often recalled, that neither had time to leave the salle and visit Joyeux. He was

sleeping, they hoped, or rejoicing that his cabaret was crowded. He had only to ring his bell if he needed anything.

But — Joyeux needed nothing. Joyeux was dying when the Salvation Army girls entered the salle. Joyeux was dead when the wizened little madman was being crowned. Joyeux was cold when his chansonniers found him hours later stretched on the floor with a bullet through his brain.

It is not often that Montmartre discusses these tragedies. Life is short on the "Butte," and the philosophy of its inhabitants is to be mad and merry. New chansonniers will take the place of those departed; new cabarets will spring up when older ones close. Why mourn then? why worry? Were Montmartre to grieve over every passing-away it would soon become the sorriest of hills, and, instead of boasting people "proud as kings," present the appearance of a crushed and disconsolate community. Occasionally, however, the director and habitués of a cabaret exchange reminiscences when the entertainment is over and the audience has dispersed. Anecdotes are related, adventures described, in which past favourites played a prominent part. Smoke rises; absinthes turn opal again and again; the director and habitués smoke and sip far into the night. The waiter goes round, the clock goes round, and dawn comes round; the director and habitués are soiled with

smoke and giddy from absinthe when, pale, nervous, and exhausted, they totter forth. Outside, policemen yawn, workmen pass, the street is being flooded with a gigantic hose, the scaffolding of the Sacré Cœur rises. Domes appear in the distance. The great arms of the famous red windmill stand out.

"Quelle nuit, mon Dieu, quelle nuit!" exclaims the director.

"Quelle nuit!" repeat the habitués.

"I remember just such another with Salis," goes on the director.

"And I with his brother," "And I with Joyeux," reply the habitués.

"They were famous viveurs," says the director.

"Famous, indeed," agree the habitués.

"Pauvre Rodolphe, Pauvre Gabriel, Pauvre Andhré," sigh the director and the habitués, realising, perhaps, that they themselves will be énervés some day, and unable, like many a director, like many a popular chansonnier, like many a habitué now gone, to fulfil their evening engagement at Montmartre.

PRÉ CATELAN

PRÉ CATELAN

LATE hours excite, demoralise, depress. Nerves leap. Tempers turn. A feverish irritability sets in. Should doors slam, you start. Should friends call, you are "out." Should good advice be gravely bestowed upon you, you groan. You want no one. You love no one. You are interested in no one. You are not yourself, not responsible for what you feel or say. Like Elia in his convalescence you are "for ever plotting how to do some good to yourself," and "studying little stratagems and artificial alleviations," decide at length on the chemist's pick-me-up. Often, however, it lays you low. Another antidote is recommended: Hammam's where, stretched on a slab, almost a corpse, you are bruised and bullied by a brawny masseur, and finally played upon by a spiteful hose. So exhausting is this treatment that you must dream on a divan for hours after. A third remains: Pré Catelan's, employed by Parisians, the dissipated only, who find themselves

strangely on the boulevards after dawn. Cabs creep by and chiffonniers. Kiosks are about to open. Soon servants will be up. It is six and sunny. Sleep, once the business of life begun, is no longer soothing—for pianos go, organs arrive, servants sing. No one, in short, is considerate; no one walks lightly out of regard for the feverish soul who lies lamenting in his room; no one is thoughtful enough to whisper "Hush!" And so the Parisian wisely determines to seek relief where all are exhausted, where every one is pale, where no one is busy.

"Cocher," he says to the driver of the nearest open cab, "Pré Catelan."

"Bien," replies the cocher.

"Doucement," he murmurs.

"Have no fear," answers the cocher, as he starts driving gently towards the Champs Elysées.

Sunbeams chase the Parisian: he blinks, he moves, and then a game begins. To alight on the Parisian's weakest point is the cruel object of the beams; to defeat that end by seeking shade is the pathetic rôle of the man; but as the Parisian changes corners the sunbeams follow, and when he moves to the middle the beams give chase, and while he shifts and shrinks, backs and bends, dodges and darts, the beams dance gaily on his shirt which is crumpled, on his gloves which are soiled, on his boots which are dim. He, poor soul, makes a fretful gesture, as though to banish them. They,

enjoying the vanity of the thing, surround him. He, craving for air, removes his hat for a moment. They, seizing the opportunity to win, dash all together at his eye. For hours it has done its duty by remaining open ; for hours it has seen and watched ; now, assaulted, it resists no longer, and blinded, shuts.

Before the Parisian has reached the Rond-Point he is dozing. He sleeps, he dreams—he is deaf to all sounds, blind to all things. Sunbeams still shine about him, but he minds them not. Nor is he conscious of the dangerous presence of a stalwart fellow who, while chatting with a policeman, plays upon the trees with a monstrous hose. The hose-man winks as the cab approaches, and the policeman smiles. Then he raises his instrument meaningly, and the cocher grins. "Gare à l'eau," he shouts, as his hose shoots water within a yard of the vehicle, and as the Parisian starts, stares, and shivers, the hose-man, the policeman, and the cocher laugh. On goes the cab ; on passes the Parisian, murmuring, but soon in a second trance. He sleeps again, he dreams again, he is deaf to all sounds once more, blind to all things—so deaf that he does not hear the cab that approaches behind, so blind that he does not see its occupants as they pass. They—two gay ladies and two gay gentlemen—are pale as well, and also in evening dress. They, amused at the Parisian, look back ; he, however, does not

see. They, to rouse him, shout, "Quelle honte, mon Dieu, quelle honte!" He, disturbed again, wakes with another shiver and another start. "À tantôt," they cry. "Encore des noceurs," mutters the cocher, "qui vont embêter les vaches."

Under the Arc, down the Avenue du Bois, past the Chinois restaurant, into the wood, drives the cocher. It is shady now, and it is green. Great trees rise. Shrubberies spread on either side of the path. It is peaceful and it is fresh. So much calm has a soothing effect on the cocher: his eyes close, he droops, he leans to the left, he and his hat are in danger of falling off. A smart horseman canters by; a trim bicyclist whizzes past—turning, they smile. They, sober souls, can afford to be amused: have they not risen from a refreshing sleep? Are they not still glowing from their early bath? A keeper looks on; a tramp leers; another horseman and another bicyclist are as amused as the first. Neither the Parisian nor the cocher heeds them; neither so much as turns until the cab gives a lurch. Then the cocher makes a dash at his reins, and his fare seizes the opposite seat. Then the cocher swears at an inoffensive stone, and his fare murmurs, "Doucement, mon ami, doucement—pas si vite." Then the cocher answers, "Have no fear; we are about to arrive." And then Pré Catelan, the refuge of rakes, the resort of the exhausted, appears immediately on the left.

It is not a pretentious place. Surrounded by a hedge it is nothing better than a farm, with a courtyard, an arbour, and an array of tables and chairs. Gardening tools lie about, and dairy utensils. In the background a long shed rises. Attendants hurry across the yard: not sleek waiters, but farm-hands, rustics. It is at once simple and rural. Already installed at one of the tables are the two gay ladies and two gay gentlemen who cried "À tantôt." Mugs of the nursery kind are before them; in them is — milk. Other gay people sit about, with more mugs also containing milk. At last the Parisian is established: soon he has *his* mug, *his* milk. And as each noceur drinks, he smiles; and as each lady sips, she revives; and when the first mug is empty another is ordered, and then a third, and next a roll; and when the meal is over, Pré Catelan's patients are almost well. They lose their lassitude, and sit up. They begin to jest, and, pounding on the tables, call for more rolls and more milk. Others come in and seat themselves. Some know one another and share tables. "Milk," they shout. "Milk." A monotonous chorus goes up: "Du lait. Du lait. Du lait." Soon some one rises to propose the health of these noble animals, "les vaches." "Les vaches," answers every one, flourishing mugs and rolls. "Allons voir les vaches," suggests another, and a dozen exhilarated worldlings follow him to the shed.

No one stops them ; they may enter. No one challenges them as they pass through the opening of the shed. Pré Catelan invites inspection. Cows that must be hidden are old cows, exhausted cows, infamous cows, he declares, whereas his are choice cows, always well-groomed, ever ready to "receive." Here each has her stall. Here each stall is roomy. Here there are twenty-eight of them, all occupied, all trim.

"Nous vous saluons, O vaches," cries some one. Dignified creatures ! Unlike their nervous sisters who become hysterical in fields for little reason, these merely turn round. Worldlings themselves, they survey their visitors with composure. Accomplished hostesses, they stand at ease. No one embarrasses them ; not even the inquisitive lady who examines them closely, discovering odd stripes here and peculiar patches there ; not even her companion who admires their eyes and condemns their tails ; not even the "sportsman, bien connu," who sounds their backs, follows their ribs, and goes on his knees.

"Which," asks the Parisian, who has found friends and become boisterous, "is *my* cow ?" The attendant cannot guess. "I refuse," continues the Parisian, "to go home until I have sung *my* cow a song." As no one can point her out, he resolves to sing to them all, one after the other, starting with the first. "Te souviens-tu, ma chère," he says to a brown

cow, "notre séjour à la campagne?" Then to a black cow, "Te souviens-tu des fraises?" and to her neighbour, "Te souviens-tu des roses?" Neither remembers, apparently, for neither shows the slightest emotion. "Te souviens-tu, ma chère," he goes on before a fourth, "mes tendresses et tes larmes?" Then, appealing wildly to a fifth, "Te souviens-tu, ma chère, te souviens-tu?" Entirely unamazed the cows continue to regard the Parisian with infinite toleration as he continues his serenade. Soon other guests sing; then a cheerful soul executes a step dance, afterwards many valse —all the time the cows look on imperturbably. In no way snubbed the Parisian (after having sung to each cow in turn) approaches the first and calls her his "bijou," and his "bébé," and his "trésor," and declares that he, at least, remembers that sunny day in the country, and that it is his dearest memory, and that he lives to recall it, and that he always did and always will. There is no tender expression in her eyes as he speaks; she is not touched; her heart is still her own. He, however, persists in his declarations, and is about to caress her forehead, when cries go up in the yard. "Juliette," he says, "Roméo must go." And Roméo rushes off, the rest rush off, followed now by the mild compassionate gaze of Pré Catelan's twenty-eight cows.

In the yard Pré Catelan's patients are chasing Pré Catelan's ducks and hens. It is part of the

treatment; and so the Parisian joins the pursuers, the others follow also, while the attendants look on. With a certain languor the ducks get out of the way. They are not really terrified, being too accustomed to the thing. They merely avoid the open, and install themselves under a table or behind a tree. Often, surprised by a sudden attack from behind, they stand still and look up — their pursuers, disappointed at their indifference, and just a little alarmed by it perhaps, retreat. The hens, however, hurry. They jostle one another; they rise in the air sometimes; they make for the hedge. Approached, they hasten off again, awkwardly and angrily. When peace has at last been declared, Pré Catelan's patients order more milk. Mugs arrive again, and rolls. All traces of lassitude on the part of the visitors have disappeared: they are more dishevelled than ever, but no longer pale. They say it must be eight, and laugh. They rise cheerfully and pay. They seek their carriages or cabs, but, as Paris is awake, give orders to raise their hoods. Then, as the postman arrives with letters for Pré Catelan, they, his patients, drive off.

"L'EXPOSITION !"

"L'EXPOSITION!"

As early as February, Parisians began to admire the amazing novelties that workmen were producing in the streets. Great mounds of earth rose here and there. Deep and dangerous holes were visible. Tools and boards lay about. Wiring, roping, and fencing shut off corners, crossings, and sometimes an entire thoroughfare. Traffic was troubled, for cabs and omnibuses might not pass freely as before. Often everything waited; it was usual to advance by spasmodic bumps and jerks. And yet no one complained; no one protested; no one threatened to sue the State for loss of time. Indeed, the Parisian was inclined to haunt those mounds and holes, and to worry the workmen. On his way to business he would pause. At night he stopped again. It was bizarre. It was unheard of. It was phenomenal. See that heap. See that precipice. See that sinister opening. What an age! What a century! What a triumph of engineering! Nom de Dieu! What miracle could compare to this

one—*le Métropolitan?* Ponder a moment: beneath Paris, people were soon to pass, thousands of them. Trains would go to and fro *as in the open.* Stations would receive the passengers en route *as on the Nord.* Lights would burn *as in the streets.* There would be a bar at each station; and you might drink at it, drink bock beneath Paris, *au dessous.* See that precipice again. Come closer to it. Peer down it. Look! there he is—that wall—that rock—he himself: *le tunnel!* What an age! What a century! Sac-à-papier! Nom de Dieu!

In another neighbourhood the Parisian was to be encountered looking up. Far above him workmen were busy with a moving platform; to watch them, the Parisian paused on the curb-stone, stretched his neck, stood on his toes. It was épatant. It was prodigious. It was délirant. "En plein air," now. Paris was to pass over Paris. The streets would be deserted: every one would be below them or above. One was to be precipitated through the air. One was to be with the birds. One would soon give up walking altogether. One would be seen flying next, or treading the air, or floating. . . . Inspecting still, the Parisian might next have been observed staring steadily at the banks of the Seine from the Pont Alma or some other bridge. Temples rose before him and palaces; then domes and steeples; towers and turrets; pillars and kiosks, all in a

state of scaffolding, all as yet unfinished. Still—it was sublime. It was extraordinary, also. It was bewildering. Old Paris had come to life again. A foreign Paris had sprung up; there was no need to travel—for a dozen foreign capitals had their shops and corners, and would be open soon, and presided over by their respective peoples. The East was there. Wild lands like India and Africa were there. All the world was there. It was enough to terrify one. It was enough to prostrate one. It was enough to make one drink a dozen absinthes, and see blue and green and yellow. And so the Parisian trotted off, amazed and bewildered. And so he sank on the chair of a terrace, and called for refreshment. And so he sipped silently for awhile, until his excitement had subsided. Then, however, he spoke: spoke eloquently, spoke gaily, spoke with pride, with joy, and with hope. Storms, he admitted, had burst over Paris; but her atmosphere now was calm and clear. Paris had suffered; but Paris was about to rejoice again. Prosperity was to return. Riches were to pour into the city. Fortunes, small and large, would soon be made. And this was as it should be—for miracles had taken place that had cost years of labour and bags of gold; miracles that no one would have dreamt of years ago; miracles that still amazed Parisians; miracles no less prodigious, no less unheard-of, no less intoxicating than a moving platform and a

Métropolitan. Foreigners would come in thousands, to throng pensions, flats, and hotels. Emperors, princes, sultans, queer kings, chiefs of alarming tribes, would bring gorgeous and glittering suites. Paris would be en fête. Paris would be more brilliant than during the Empire. Paris would ever remember, ever be proud of, ever feel thankful for her Exposition. . . .

Surveying Paris from his hectic hill, the Montmartrois also expressed his belief in the Exhibition. The Métropolitan, the moving platform, the shops and corners on the banks of the Seine, all three were amazing, indeed, he admitted. Of course they would attract the foreigner; but—they would not be the chief attraction. They would not win the loudest applause, nor excite the greatest admiration. They would not be the most talked-about features of the fête—for the cabarets and chansonniers of Montmartre would be the clou. Montmartre stood supreme. Montmartre had no parallel. Montmartre would draw the crowd from Old Paris and Foreign Paris to its particular corner on the right-hand bank of the Seine. There the chansonniers would "receive" —"as proud as kings." There they would chant new and startling ditties. There thousands would surround, applaud, and adore them. Salis aîné, Salis jeune, Andhré Joyeux, alas, would not be present to raise the reputation of the "Butte." Others would have to do that; and would. Mont-

martre produced poets every day. Montmartre was never without genius. Montmartre was never silent, never moody, never dull. And so France, Europe, America, Africa, Asia, the World, would have the chance of appreciating the genius of the "Butte" when "Papa Emile" had once opened the Exposition. . . .

In yet another part of Paris, in yet another monde, talk turned every night upon the Exhibition. It was not the ordinary little Parisian who chattered there, however, nor was it the Montmartrois—it was Paul and Pierre, Mdlles. Mimi and Musette, Karl and Bibi. Somewhat sulky were they; for the Quarter had received no invitation to erect an amazing temple and no demand for a typical student café. And that, no doubt, was why Paul prophesied evil for the Métropolitan and moving platform. "Never," he said solemnly to Mdlle. Mimi, "never descend into that Inferno. Never look at its tunnel. Never cast your bright eyes on those mounds. Never peer into those precipices." "Why?" asked Mdlle. Mimi. "Because," replied Paul, "thousands of poor people will be buried down there soon after the railway has been opened. The tunnel will collapse. Paris will tread on Paris. Groans will go up. Paris above will walk merrily over dying Paris below. That, Mimi dear, will be the end of the Métropolitan." Mdlle. Mimi was horrified. Mdlle. Mimi shuddered a

little. Mdlle. Mimi pondered a moment, then asked why no such disaster had befallen the London Metropolitan. "Because," replied Paul, "the soil of London is composed of coal and iron. You may stamp upon it as much as you please. But the soil of Paris is soft, and trembles even if you dance. . . . Beware also, Mimi dear, of that infamous monster that will rush along above the streets. It also will collapse, and bury thousands. Paris will be dangerous. Wise folk will fly if they wish to escape a barbarous death; or keep, at least, to silent and innocent streets." Still, Mdlle. Mimi disliked to hear so much evil spoken of those two miraculous features of the Exhibition, and to change the conversation admired the shops and corners of Old and Foreign Paris. "Admire them while you can," replied Paul, "or it will be too late. All those towers and palaces will totter one day, and fall. Then more thousands will be buried, and a great service in Notre Dame will be held, and funerals will fill the streets, and every one will be wearing crape, and——" "Je suis l'homme que vous attendez," interrupted Karl, who had just entered with Bibi. And bocks were immediately ordered by "l'homme qui est allé chez Quesnay deux fois." Soon, however, the talk turned upon the Exhibition again; and it was voted scandalous that Karl and Bibi had not been invited to play a part. Karl should have had a theatre to himself. There it should have

been his duty to relate his adventures with M. de Beaurepaire. Bibi should have had a stall at which to take in umbrellas. When visitors complained, it should have been Bibi's rôle to rise and say, "*I* steal umbrellas? *I?* Bibi la Purée? l'ami du Maître? Jamais! Jamais!" And then Paul and Pierre and Gaston should have taken turns in showing how each visitor was one year younger than he (or she) thought, if he (or she) declined to accept 1900 as the new century. All this should have been included in the programme of the Exhibition; but no doubt its promoters would suddenly recognise their fault. Then they would issue an invitation; and the Quarter would refuse. Then they would urge and implore; and the Quarter would again say no. Then they would declare the Exhibition to be doomed without the assistance of the Jeunesse; and the Quarter would consent at last to bring prosperity to Paris. And so it would not be undignified to drink a toast. And so Paul was called upon once more. And so Paul rose and bowed and spoke: "Friends, all the world is soon to visit us. And even if the Quarter has not its corner in the coming fête, all the world will cross the river to see the Jeunesse of the Rive Gauche. And here the world will act intelligently and well —for Mimi is a fairer sight than the infernal Métropolitan, and Bibi a more amazing spectacle than the infamous moving platform. And we,

the Jeunesse, will rejoice at the coming of the world—for Paris has suffered in the past and come through a crisis nobly, and done her utmost to beautify herself, and is prepared to show herself an amiable and a hospitable city. And so we, the Jeunesse, will drink to the world that is coming, and drink again, comme autrefois, to the Panthéon, Sorbonne, and Notre Dame, and drink once more to the opening, close, and complete success of the Exposition. . . ."

Such was the mood of the man in the street, the madman of the "Butte," the Bohemian of the Rive Gauche, throughout February and March. As Easter approached, the Exhibition grew. On the eve of the opening, the Parisian frankly proclaimed that he expected to pass a sleepless night. But he was up early all the same next morning, and ready before even the postman had called, to start out. Never was he happier; never were his spirits higher; never was his expression so serene. And he cheered M. Loubet as the Presidential cortège filed slowly and solemnly into the Salle des Fêtes; and stood on his toes; and stretched his neck; and raised his hat; and cried "Vive Loubet" again and again. He would have followed, had not stern officials barred the way. He would have heard the band of the Garde Républicaine strike up the Marseillaise, had not that privilege been reserved for distinguished guests. He would no doubt have chanted that

magnificent air had he been allowed to join the brilliant throng within. But, as it was, he waited patiently for the President to reappear, when he cheered once more: then lunched; then loitered before the Porte Monumentale; then stirred his absinthe; then spent the rest of the day and much of the night in looking forward to the moment when the gates of the Exhibition would be thrown open to the public on the morrow. . . .

"Another month," said the Parisian on the evening of Sunday, 15th April, "and the Exhibition will be so beautiful, so wonderful, so captivating, that people will wish to build themselves a villa in the grounds." And this was his mood—at once amiable and admirable—when workmen occupied the Champs de Mars; when planks fell; when bricks followed; when heaps of refuse rose in the gardens; when wind swept clouds of dust into his face and eyes. Palaces, magnificent, indeed, from the exterior, were empty and scrubby within. In the Gallerie des Machines great pits were to be encountered. Near by, stalls and glass cases stood bare. In the distance, pails of whitewash blocked the way. Only Old Paris might be comfortably explored; and the Swiss village, and, here and there, an Eastern café. Of the many amazing inventions that were to bewilder France, none but the moving platform and the telescope that was to bring the moon within a yard were ready; and even then the telescope refused to accomplish its

duty—so that the man who made it produced microscopes through which to view pollen, insects, and water from the Seine. Waiters gaped. Would-be luminous fountains were still white. The Electrical Palace awaited its current. The great cascade was melancholy. Foreigners protested: regretting their entrance fee; condemning the stony heaps; abusing the workmen, the whitewash, and the wind. But their complaints were not echoed by the Parisian; their criticism did not disturb his peace of mind. Next day, he passed through the Exhibition gates again. Hours went by, but still he lingered: then, dusty and dishevelled, approached the Pont Alexandre and paused in the middle of it to survey the scene.

To his right, ran the street of the Nations. On the left, rose the woodwork of picturesque Old Paris. In the background, the low roofs and cool verandahs of Eastern buildings lay at the foot of the lofty pillars of the Trocadero. Far ahead, on the Porte Monumentale, stood the statue of the "Parisienne," proud and commanding. And it seemed to hypnotise its amiable spectator. And it rose afterwards to haunt him again and again. And, according to his protestations, it seemed to say: "Encore un mois. Encore quatre semaines. Encore trente jours. Sois patient; sois calme. Et tu verras comme elle sera belle, notre Exposition."

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