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IN A CHEAP CAFÉ-CONCERT, MONTMARTRE
Drawing by SUNYER

HOW PARIS AMUSES ITSELF

By F. BERKELEY SMITH
Author of "The Real Latin Quarter"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR
AND OTHER ARTISTS

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TO MY FRIEND
CHARLES W. GOULD

Contents

Introduction

It is the small boy who crawls under the circus tent who most keenly enjoys the show.

He has watched while the big double-top canvas was being raised and staked taut, transforming the familiar pasture-lot into a magic realm, more alluring and seductive than the best fishing-hole in the town creek.

Following the parade, a cavalcade of golden chariots, caparisoned horses and swaying elephants, the small boy has walked on air, buoyed by the thump and blare of the brass band. Weeks before he had reveled in every detail of the show as revealed in posters on the barn-doors: the lady with the fluffy skirts bounding through the paper hoops from the well-rosined back of her white horse; the merry, painted clown; the immaculate ringmaster in glistening boots; and, last of all, the showman! —generous, genial and big of heart, whose plain black cravat, fitted neatly under his collar as in the lithographs, and whose beaming blue eye seemed an open guaranty of all he promised at the single price of admission.

Should the small boy grow up to be a connoisseur in much that glitters in life besides golden chariots, and yet manage to keep young enough to preserve a kindly feeling toward the lady of perennial youth upon the white horse, should boyish love of the picturesque still abide in him, he will find within the gates of Paris a city after his own heart, a place where gaiety never ceases, where the finesse of amusement has been brought almost to a state of perfection.

To this great pleasure-ground the whole world flocks for amusement. It is upon this exquisitely fashioned spider-web of Europe that many rare butterflies have beaten their pretty wings to tatters, and in it that many an old wasp has entangled itself and died.

Paris! the polished magnet which attracts the spare change of countless thousands in payment for the wares of folly and fashion, of the dressmaker and the cook!

When the sun shines, the city is *en fête*.

Rows of geraniums flame in the well ordered gardens of the Tuileries. Masses of flowers, gay in color as the ribbons streaming from the bonnets of the nurses, lie in brilliant patches along gravel walks or within the cool shadow of massive architecture. Brown-legged children, in white socks and white dresses fresh from the *blanchisseuse*, run screaming after runaway hooples, or watch in silent ecstasy the life and exploits of Mr. Punch at the Théâtre Guignol.

Under a vault of turquoise sky the Alexander Bridge, emblazoned with its golden horses, spans the Seine, crowded with traffic sweeping beneath the great arc. Sturdy steam-tugs with vermilion funnels tow long sausage-like lines of newly varnished canal-boats, whose sunburned captains with their sweethearts or families lounge at *déjeuner* under improvised awnings stretched from the roofs of cabins shining in fresh paint. Down the great vista of the Seine each successive bridge is choked with thousands of hurrying ant-like humanity. Swift *bateaux-mouches* dart back and forth to their floating stations. For a few sous these small steamers will take you to St. Cloud or beyond, past feathery green islands, past small rural cafés perched upon grassy banks where all day long old gentlemen wearing white socks and Panama hats wait patiently for a stray nibble.

This bright morning in Paris the boulevards are crowded with a passing throng which is gazed at for hours by those who fill the terraces of the cafés to linger over a morning *apéritif*. At one café a party of *commerçants* are transacting business.

It is the fat cognac merchant now who is gesticulating to the rest of the group, pausing at intervals to wipe the perspiration from his oily neck. Near them, four Arabs, swathed in spotless burnooses, their bare feet encased in sandals, sip in silence their steaming *petites tasses* of *café Maure*. Omnibuses lumber by. The air is vibrant with strident cries and the cracking of whips. An automobile passes, sputtering and growling through the *mêlée* of the broad boulevard, taking advantage of every chance space as it threads its way out to the green country beyond with its begoggled occupants to *déjeuner* at Poissy or perchance to dash farther on at a devilish pace to the sea and Trouville.

At another table on the terrace is a pretty blonde, her dainty feet resting in high-heeled slippers upon the little wooden footstool which the *garçon* has so thoughtfully tucked under them, and her eyes shaded by

the brim of the reddest of hats. She is engrossed in writing a note, which she finally slips in its envelope. Then this dainty Parisienne calls the *chasseur*, that invaluable messenger attached to every big café, and gives him a few cautionary parting instructions. He springs upon his bicycle and in half an hour returns with another envelope, this one plain and unaddressed and containing a hastily scribbled line in pencil. The corners of the pretty mouth curl upward in a little satisfied smile as the answer is read.

"Madame was in," explains the *chasseur* in a low voice. "It was madame's maid who wrote it for monsieur!"

An hour later, in quite a different café, in a jewel-box of a Louis XVI. room, a well-groomed monsieur gazes in adoration across the snow-white cloth of a breakfast table at a wealth of golden hair, a pair of blue eyes and what is now the sauciest of little mouths. The scarlet hat has been tenderly laid upon the Louis XVI. clock, its brim discreetly covering the dial. The aged *garçon* allotted to these indiscreet people has just served the *hors-d'oeuvre*.

There are many other just such *déjeuners particuliers* in Paris over which no one bothers oneself.

A long line of carriages is ascending the Champs-Élysées. Here and there among them you will see the glitter of smart turnouts. In the cool Bois nearby, the deer from their noon-day hiding-places hear the trot of equestrians passing in the feathery alleys. Upon some grassy corner of the wood a family party have spread themselves and laid out their bread, cheese and wine for a day's outing. Like a yellow pearl shimmering far up in the azure, a balloon sails briskly toward Vincennes.

All these things happen when the sun shines. When it rains, Paris is in mourning. Cozy corners of café interiors are sought. Here, at least, one can forget for the time the chill, rain-swept city. Somber *fiacres*, drawn by dejected steeds, splash along the glistening wood pavements, with hoods up, their occupants stowed under huge waterproof aprons, the *cocher* muffled in his coat to the edge of his yellow, glazed hat.

Susanne, she of the madonna-like eyes, and the painter—their small stove, with its pipe traversing the ceiling, having failed dismally to warm even the cat beneath it—have come from their apartment across the Seine to the café, and are snug in a corner over a game of dominoes. The café is a refuge in raw, dreary weather. Only the wretchedly poor must needs pass by its welcome door. Now and then one does pass: an outcast, pale and hopeless, wrapping her soaking skirts about her shrunken hips with something of her old-time grace; or a man with matted hair, hungry and bitterly cold. Last night, after running a mile behind a closed cab with a trunk strapped on top, he had had the good luck to stagger beneath its weight up five flights of stairs, for which service he had received a franc. He had rushed with it down the winding stairs to the street. Ah, he remembered how happy he was!—how drunk and warm he had been for ten hours! And so among the cheerlessness of leaden roofs and deserted streets the smile of the city has gone.

Suddenly there is a break in the dull gray overhead and the downpour ceases.

"*Ah! Sapristi!* It is going to clear!" predicts the *garçon de café*, as he glances up at the scudding clouds, and nods his assurance to those within. Instantly the café becomes animated with good humor. A tall man and a brunette in new high-heeled shoes are the first to venture out. They laugh over the incident of the rain very much as those who have luckily escaped an accident.

In half an hour the boulevards are steaming in warm sunshine. Again the crowd pours by. All Paris is smiling.

If you are an epicure with a fortune, you will find restaurants whose interiors are marvels of refinement and good taste, whose cellars hold priceless wines, and whose cuisines would grace the table of a king; or, if you are a bohemian, there is good-fellowship and a cheering dish awaiting you at a price within the means of even poets and dreamers. But it is after one dines that Paris throws open the doors of her varied attractions. There are the ever-moving *fêtes foraines*—mushroom growths of tawdry side-shows springing up in the different Quartiers in a night—with their carrousels and menageries, and the smarter circuses, like the Cirque Médrano, the Nouveau Cirque and the Cirque d'Hiver. There are the cheap shows of the small Bouis-Bouis, and the big open-air café concerts of the Champs-Élysées, the Concert des Ambassadeurs and the Alcazar d'Été, and that exquisite music-hall, the Folies Marigny, the Jardin de Paris, the Folies Bergère, the Casino de Paris and the Olympia,

and, in contrast to these, the Opéra, the Opéra Comique and the Bouffes Parisiennes. There are serious concerts and little serious concerts like the Concert Rouge. There are the shows and cabarets of Montmartre and those of the *rive gauche*, the Noctambules, and the Grillon. There are the cheap dramas of the bourgeois theaters in remote quarters of the city, and the risqué plays of the Palais Royal; the daring, independent Théâtre Libre, and the Châtelet, famous for its scenic wonders; the lighter plays of the day at the Vaudeville, interpreted by Réjane; the splendid new theater of the divine Sarah; and the historic Français, with its finished acting in perfect French. The list is endless.

Where shall it be? To roar with the rest at the latest song of Polin or listen to a sadder tale at the Odéon, or, perchance, enjoy your second cigar in the front row under the sparkling eyes and pert nose of that most charming *chanteuse*, Odette Dulac, at the Boîte à Fursy!

If you have finished your liqueur and have retained the enthusiasm of the small boy who squirmed his way into the circus tent, raise your finger at a passing *cocher*. He will take you anywhere.

F. B. S.

Paris, 1903.

Chapter One

THE SHOWS OF THE CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES

If you wish to buy your tickets in advance for the evening performance at the Alcazar d'Été, the open-air café concert of the Champs-Élysées, you go there some afternoon, and are ushered by a waiter through a narrow corridor of the adjoining restaurant, past little rooms, shining in copper pots and pans, and pungent with steaming sauces, through a pair of swinging doors well worn by hurrying waiters, and into a square room piled high with snow-white linen, pyramids of lump sugar, and rows of glittering silver. Half hidden in a corner among this spotless collection you discover a desk presided over by madame, who greets you pleasantly and produces for your inspection from beneath a litter of dinner checks and bills the seating diagram of the Alcazar.

"Does Monsieur wish seats for the evening, and in what location?" madame asks.

You suggest two in the third row.

"*Bon*," replies madame, approvingly. She dips a pen in violet ink and writes carefully upon a checklike document the numbers of the chosen seats, tears this check from its stub, blots it, and scratches the corresponding numbers from the diagram. "*Voilà, Monsieur*," and she hands you your ticket. Then she dives into the pocket of her petticoat for the key to a money-drawer from which to make your change. Finally, as you raise your hat to go, she adds, in parting assurance, with a little shrug of her shoulders beneath her worsted shawl: "I am sure Monsieur will find the seats excellent; I should have chosen them myself."

All this takes time, but I must confess that I like the pantry method better than having my change blown at me through the pigeon-window of a draughty box-office, with the last rear seats in the house slapped out to me, all the desirable ones being in the mercenary hands of a band of sidewalk pirates.

LAMY IN "LA CAROTTE" AT THE
PALAIS ROYAL
Drawing by BARRÈRE

Meanwhile, several newcomers are crowding about the table, among them three well-groomed men in top hats and frock coats, evidently having strolled over from their club, and a faultlessly dressed old baron, with a tea rose in his button-hole, who is now leaning over the desk, poring over the diagram through his black-rimmed monocle.

It is the first night of the new *revue*. This well-fed old baron! His beard is grizzled now and his bald pate shines beneath the rim of his stove-pipe hat. How many *revues* has he seen in his Parisian life! How many capricious *débutantes* of café concerts and the theater has he known! How many has he seen flash into brilliant stars and then grow old and fade away! Some of them are staid old *concierges* now knitting away the short remnant of their lives. Some of them died young as roses will under

gas-light. *Les petites femmes!* Ah! the good old days of the Palais Royal! The Orangerie! or the Tuileries and the Jardin Mabille! The days of brocades, of cashmeres, and pendent jewelry of malachite and old mine diamonds! What famous beauties then! and how they could wear their flounces and furbelows—the little minxes! What a reckless riot of costly gaiety! How much baccarat at the clubs! How many suppers at Bignon's and the Maison Dorée! How many years of all this! and yet on this sunny afternoon this old baron is as eager as a schoolboy over the new burlesque, and so he strolls out with his ticket up the Champs-Élysées, stopping for a full half hour to watch the Guignol and the children and the nurses. Later you will see him rolling through the Bois in his victoria, a queenly woman in black by his side, the tea-rose stuck jauntily under the turquoise collar of a sleek red spaniel in her lap. The baron is smoking. There is no conversation.

You will hear Polin at the Alcazar. He comes on at the end of a preliminary program of excellent variety before the *revue*. Fat jolly old Polin, whose song creations portray the happy-go-lucky lot of the common soldier. He reels in from the wings, convulsed with laughter over some recent adventure, the result of which has put him in the guard-house for ten days. He is fairly bursting his red-trousered uniform with merriment as he begins his first verse. He tells you every detail of his experience, painfully even, for he is now crying with laughter, his voice rising in little squeaks like the water in a pump and bubbling over as he reaches the point. He is manipulating the while a red cotton handkerchief, which is never still; now it mops his round genial face, now it is twisted nervously into a rope and jammed into his trousers' pocket, and as speedily taken out to dust his knees. His last verse is smothered in chuckling glee; little jets of cleverly chosen words manage, however, to get over the footlights to his listeners. The song ends amid a thunder of applause and Polin bows awkwardly and retreats with his back to the audience, his cavalry boots combined with his red trousers flopping as he goes.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris

POLIN

Parisians delight in caricature. It is as inborn with them as the art of pantomime. The political topic of the day, a new phase of the law or the government, the latest scandal, all come to the net of the writers of these *revues*.

Eve, the daughter of Madame Humbert, that shrewdest of modern swindlers, is presented as a Juno-like creature of lisping innocence. Shrewd, politic and extravagant Madame Humbert, the brains of that colossal robbery of millions of francs, steps on the stage. The brother, Daurignac, who posed as a painter, and the famous empty safe which played such an important role in the Humbert *ménage*, have been the theme for a dozen clever burlesques.

"Les Apaches," a notorious band of cutthroats, who have lately infested Paris, and their beautiful accomplice, known as Casque d'Or, a term befitting her wealth of golden hair, have also furnished a well-worn topic for the *revue* writers. So, too, the capture of Miss Stone has inspired a clever *revue*, containing a whole stageful of pretty and shapely brigands.

The book is by de Cottens and the music by Henri José, and it is presented in six tableaux at the Marigny with that idol of Paris, Germaine Gallois, in the principal role.

Photo by Stebbing, Paris

LISE FLEURON OF THE
ALCAZAR D'ÉTÉ

The Parisian *revue* is in structure traditionally ever the same, and the receipt for these musical puddings is never altered. There are two important characters which are never to be departed from—the *commère* and the *compère*. The first fifteen minutes are occupied with the introduction of a young man of leisure, the *compère*, who has just inherited a colossal fortune from a dying uncle. He brings with him an exaggerated outfit of clothes, all brand new, consisting of a sack suit of dove gray, lined with red satin; a voluminous red satin tie to match the suit, clasped with a heavy turquoise-studded ring; a gold-buttoned embroidered vest; a soft gray felt traveling hat; lemon kid gloves, and a rattan cane. He stalks about the stage, smiling—the stage picture of good health—and squaring his shoulders and curling the ends of his long mustache with that debonair air supposed to be consistent with good luck. His ecstasy over what fortune has bestowed upon him would put in the shade even the enthusiasm of the "found at last!" gentlemen of the Eureka advertisements.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris

GERMAINE GALLOIS OF THE
MARIGNY

Before he gets half way down the village street of the first act, the *commère*, a statuesque fairy queen in silk tights, with real gems that are the talk of Paris, who has been hunting for him all over the town, suddenly comes upon him in the village square, and, touching him with her wand, makes him her *protégé*.

The *compère* may come upon the stage as an old *roué*, weighted with years and careworn. In this case, the good fairy immediately bestows upon him joyous youth and the satin apparel. She is running over with benefactions and, causing to appear suddenly a score of comely young grisettes and hard-working peasant girls who have been loitering around the town pump, arrayed in silk hose of assorted lengths, she urges him to select from these his mate. Just at this moment a plain little seamstress, in passing, runs into this barricade of village beauties, and at once becomes the victim of their badinage. Our youthful Crœsus, seeing her distress, straightway chooses her for his bride, amid the discontented reproaches of the rest of the girls and to the inward satisfaction of the good fairy.

Photo by Cautin & Berger, Paris

A COMMÈRE

The plain little seamstress turns out to be superlatively beautiful, and as naïve and witty as she is charming, especially if it is Lise Fleuron who plays the part.

It takes only a short time, in the second act, to clothe this stray Cinderella in a Paquin or a Worth creation, while her old gray and white clothes are neatly folded and laid away in the basket with which that very morning she had started early to market to buy a *poulet* and a *salade* for her sick grandmama. After this public shopping the happy pair is ready to start upon the honeymoon. Cinderella adds to her wardrobe a blue silk parasol, stuck in a rolled up traveling rug, while her happy companion decorates himself with a field-glass and dons an English shooting hat of impossible plaids.

In the third act they are joined by the good fairy and the *revue* passes before them. This is a hodgepodge of burlesques upon the topics of the day, ballets representing flowers and perfumes and the history of fashion, and choruses representing the different journals, the arts, inventions and manufactures. The costumes are superb and the massing of color exquisite.

Before the finale, an apotheosis of gorgeous color, with a stageful of kicking, giggling, romping gaiety, I catch a glimpse of the old baron. He has bowed to someone on the stage and is applauding vigorously. So, too, is the young *vicomte* with a scar across his cheek where a ball ploughed itself one chilly morning on the outskirts of Surennes, all on account of just such a *cocotte* as the good fairy who is now glancing under her stenciled eyelids at a swarthy little Italian in the front row.

And the Comte de B—— is shouting “Bravo!” from his box. It is he who has paid so highly to see Ninette included nightly in the program. She

has been permitted by the amiable management, after the transfer of certain crisp bank-notes from the purse of the count to the pocket of the manager, to announce, in the third act, the approach of the soldiers, “as a personal favor to the Comte and because Madame is so beautiful.” To be in a *revue* and flattered by the press is as necessary to Ninette as to have a new gown for the *Grand Prix*. For, tho she is fair to look upon and has little bills springing up along the Rue de la Paix as thick as a field of bachelor’s-buttons, Ninette is not an actress. But Ninette enjoys her theatrical career. She takes the stage seriously, enjoying even the rigid discipline, because of its complete novelty. The old playgoers come to her salon, gravely kiss the tips of her fingers, and tell her how charming she has been in the *revue*. Then the journalists! Ah! how amiable they are! For the crisp bank-notes of the Comte which placed the crown of Thespis upon the blond head of Ninette did not all of them go into managerial pockets. But Ninette has begun to sing; listen! Yes, it is the line faintly announcing the soldiers. A final chorus, the curtain falls and the crowd rises and pours slowly out under the trees.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris

A BEAUTY OF THE REVUE

It is starlight. Passing and repassing like fire-flies the cabs go trundling by. Here and there in the shadow one is stopped and a fluff of lace and sheen of silk is bundled in. The baron walks home, the end of his cigar glowing cheerily. The *revue* is a success.

The Concert des Ambassadeurs with its *revue* and variety adjoins the Alcazar. One can dine leisurely on the balconies of either of the two restaurants adjoining these cafés, and watch the performance during dinner.

Near by is the Jardin de Paris enclosed by lattice and hedge, and ablaze at night with festoons of colored lights and crimson lanterns. Within, the crowd pours round the promenade thronged with *demi-mondaines*, in décolleté gowns flashing in jet, in picture hats flaming in scarlet, their white hands glittering to the knuckles in showy rings. Some of these women are pretty and gowned in chic simplicity, some of them are coarsely bedizened and heavily rouged, with small cruel eyes and strident voices.

The variety performance at the end of the garden has just ended, and a fanfare of hunting horns announces the quadrille. The passing throng crowds about the *estrade* to watch the dancing. Another fanfare from the horns, and the orchestra commences a lively can-can. The crowd presses close against the low balustrade. “Grille d’Égout” gathers up her skirts, and a second later her black stockings are silhouetted in billows of cheap *lingerie*. The band crashes on. The other dancers execute *pas seuls* with their traditionally voluminous display, which, from its very boldness, is neither suggestive nor vulgar—it is if anything rather a common exhibition from which all illusion has vanished. They are a type unto themselves, these can-can dancers; half of them might easily pass for middle-aged housemaids, but there are some who unmistakably have been gathered from the riff-raff of such places as the “Ange Gabriel” and the *cabaret* of the “Rat Mort” in Montmartre.

An old man in a long coat of rusty black and a straight-brimmed top hat now joins the quartet. He is tall, square-jawed and clean-shaven, with twinkling gray eyes. He is seventy years old and has been a professional quadrille dancer all his life. Laying the smoldering stump of his cigarette in a safe corner of the balustrade, he flings himself into the measure. His gaunt Mephistophelian frame seems tireless as if hardened by the dancing of a lifetime. He executes with a certain precision and gravity the steps of a *pas seul*. When he finishes, he recovers the butt of his cigarette, smiles sardonically at the applauding crowd, and sits down to refresh himself over a “bock.” “Grille d’Égout,” passing, good-humoredly tips his hat sideways with the toe of her slipper, and his satanic majesty rises and leads her into a maze of steps, evidently in revenge, since she begs off, exhausted at the end of a quarter of an hour. The crowd cheers.

A shooting-gallery pops and cracks away at one end of the promenade, while next to it a much-mirrored bar dispenses so-called English and American drinks, villainous all, with a bottle of warm champagne, on tap and sold by the glass, as a questionable alternative.

Below the level of the garden, almost immediately under the orchestra, is the Crypte, where there are varied attractions.

There are two ways of getting down to this Crypte; one is by the stairs, and the other by a polished board-chute. Both are free, but the chute is the more popular. Here an amused crowd stands about waiting for some Mimi or Cora or Faustine to plant her neat patent leather boots on the board and slide to the subterranean regions beneath. Here there are living pictures, two pink samples of which stand guard at the entrance of this side-show, while within, a gray-haired pianist thumps out the incidental music to the tableaux from an ancient piano with a sleighbell tone.

At intervals the sentinels without change guard with Spring and Summer, while Autumn and Winter pass the hat, and Venus rising from the Sea tarries in the dressing-room to curl her hair and gossip with the leading victims of the Deluge.

Certain tremulous cries emerge from the other side of the Crypte to the accompaniment of a desert tom-tom and the tread and sway of Oriental dancing.

Yes, the Jardin de Paris with all its noise and glare was built especially to attract most of the smoking-room list of the incoming ships. It appeals in some mysterious way to that natural prey of the Parisian landlord, the traveler who allows himself to be held as a hostage in exchange for his pocket-book at one of the large dismal hotels built solely for his capture. Here in a heavily upholstered and silent reading-room he may read the papers and watch other unfortunates of his kind prowl about him, until at seven he is ushered by an overbearing *maître d’hôtel* into an even more elaborate hall of fame to the table d’hôte, an occasion representing in gaiety a feast of refugees after a flood. If during his stay in Paris he has the good fortune to see anything Parisian he may count himself lucky.

The Théâtre Marigny is to the Jardin de Paris what a cozily lit dinner-table glowing in shaded candles is to a bar-room, aglitter with brass and glass and electric lights. This jewel-box of a theater in the Champs-Élysées was fashioned for all seasons, but in summer it is in full bloom.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris

ÉLISE DE VÉRE OF THE MARIGNY

The approach to it among the trees is much the same as to the others, only that the roadway in front is packed at night with private carriages. Here a Parisian *équipage de luxe* of an eastern prince crowds a new coupé, with a rhinestone clock and hidden cases of doeskin lined with silk, a tiny mirror, a diminutive powder-puff in a box with a golden top, a little of this and a little of that. It is the carriage of Julie la Drôlesse; with this gilt encased arsenal one feels safe to look one's best in any emergency thinks Julie—that is, if Julie ever really does any thinking. Does the little golden-puff remind her, I wonder, of the days when two sous of *poudre de riz* applied in a jiffy with a corner of her jupon sufficed to charm the *habitués* of the Rue Blanche? *Ah! mes enfants!*

Seen through the trees the Théâtre Marigny looms like some gigantic flower of light, the reflection from the edge of its circular promenade illuminating in a hazy light the surrounding foliage. And such a promenade!—aglow with fairy lamps thrust in a setting of shining leaves, and with comfortable rattan chairs encircling the mosaic floor which during the intermission is brilliant with the passing throng.

"Mar-ga-rita" sing gayly the Neapolitans to the strum of guitars. A woman with an olive skin whose lithe body seems to have been poured into a delicate mold of Valenciennes lace, glides by on the arm of a Russian. Her jewels have bankrupted a prince.

Sundry old Frenchmen, in straight-brimmed hats with ribbons in their button-holes, pass; one is a senator, another a famous sculptor. At one's elbows is a pretty blonde, her white neck encircled by a band of turquoise reaching nearly to her small pink ears, ever listening like tiny shells to the flattering murmur of the human sea about her.

Pop! goes a bottle of champagne in the bar. Crack! rips the spangled train of Thérèse Derval under the clumsy heel of her admirer. "Fifty louis for your awkwardness, idiot!" snaps the quick-tempered Thérèse.

"Mar-ga-rita" strum the guitars. But the bell is ringing for the curtain. The spectacular *revue* following the excellent variety is quite different from the *revues* of the other café concerts; at the Marigny they are poems of color—costumes which are the creation of artists. Nowhere is scenic art brought to a higher perfection than at the Marigny.

One sees a ballet in tones of violet and gray that is as delicate as an orchid. Again the stage is blazing in Spanish yellow and red as rich as a pomegranate crushed in the sun. Now the tableau changes to a scenic night bathed in pale moonlight with a ruined *château* harboring purple shadows and framed in a grove of cypresses.

From this grove may flutter a ballet of bats, or the summer night may vanish in a twinkling and in its place appear a garden of Maréchal Niel roses blooming at a signal into another ballet.

Now enters a procession representing the history of fashion. Here are the exaggerated costumes of the Middle Ages, ermine and miniver, and those impossible head-dresses, the cornettes, hennins, and escoffions of the time of "Louis the Fair." Then follow the grand apparel of the

Medicis, and the transparent sheath-like tunics of the *merveilleuses* of the Directory, slit at the side and fastened with a cameo brooch, and the toilettes of the balls of the Restoration. Even more ridiculous costumes were worn, you remember, by women of society a hundred years ago openly in this very Champs-Élysées, the days when all Paris went mad over the costumes of the Athenian maidens. What a contrast are the creations of the present age to those seen during the Reign of Terror at Frascati's! And yet I am sure that if any of the celebrated beauties of the Marigny had entered the court of Louis XVI. in a perfect gown of to-day, she would have been welcomed with wonder and delight.

The curtain falls on the *revue*, smart equipages outside are being shouted for by the *chasseur*. Julie la Drôlesse has just stepped in her boudoir-like coupé. It has begun to drizzle. I call my own conveyance, a dingy *fiacre* with a green light and a jingly bell, the *cocher* swathed about his middle with a yellow horse-blanket. He wheels his raw-boned steed to the door.

"*Chez Maxime, cocher!*"

"*Bien, Monsieur!*"

Chapter Two

PARIS DINES

The famous chef, Vatel, before a dinner given to Louis XIV., killed himself because the fish was late.

Nowadays he might simply have shrugged his shoulders in apology, a mode of reply most popular in France, and against which all argument is as useless as so much steam in the air.

Boil with rage if you will; plead with the ingenuity of a defending lawyer, or berate him in language which would inspire renewed effort in a government mule, the Frenchman's shrug will disarm you as neatly as an expert duelist sends your foil spinning out of your grip, and you will be conscious of how useless your tirade has been only when you perceive the delinquent monsieur with the elevated shoulders bowing himself politely out through the door.

A year ago the veteran chef of a celebrated Parisian restaurant resigned his position. Prices had been affixed to the menu. With this deplorable change the famous *maison* had sunk below the dignity of this august personage. To attach to so noble a creation as a "*filet d'ours à la François-Joseph*" a fixed price as one would to a pound of butter, made his further connection with the house an impossibility. "*Parbleu!*" he cried, "Had Paris become a *gargotte* for the *grand monde* that he should have lived to see this?"

There still remain a few smart restaurants where there are no prices on the menu, but even in these there is a second edition of the bill of fare with the prices thereon which the *maître d'hôtel* will apologetically hand you when he discovers you are neither a millionaire nor a fool, even tho your French may be not so good as his own. If you have the leisure, the best plan is to order your dinner for a *partie carrée* in advance and for a certain fixed sum, as most Parisians do.

AROUND THE HALLES

In no city in the world are there so many and so varied places to dine as in Paris. One can hardly look right or left from any corner of any street and not find restaurants, from little *boîtes*, where a *plat du jour* and a bottle of wine are to be had for a few sous, to those whose cuisine and rare vintages are adapted only to the well-filled purse of an epicure. There are numberless resorts frequented by the vast army of bohemians, some the rendezvous for students and *grisettes*, others for the poets, the pensive, long-haired devotees of the symbolistic school, and kindred souls in the realm of art. There are those patronized by jolly, devil-may-care young doctors, sleepless night-owls, who discuss till graying dawn their latest operations with a complacent sense of superiority over the other half of the human world, who, they are convinced, without their medical aid would be left as helpless as a mass of struggling white bait in a net. And there, too, buried away in the dingy alley of Montmartre and fringing the ill-reputed neighborhoods of La Butte and the great Halles, are the feeding places of thieves, reeking from the odor of decaying vegetables and bad cheeses, yet, they say, supplied with some of the rarest wines.

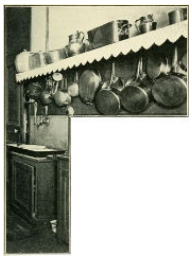
A BUSY MORNING

It was a famous French sociologist who declared, from extended personal investigations of the private life of the Parisian mendicants, that the best *champagne brut* he had yet encountered he had found on the dinner tables of professional beggars.

Along the lighted streets and boulevards are the great *brasseries* for Munich beer and German dishes, and the richly decorated taverns, some of them in black oak shining in pewter and ornate with medieval decoration and stained glass. These are swarming with eddies from the passing world until long after midnight. Many of these are the habitual rendezvous of journalists, like the Café Navarin. Others, like the Café des Variétés and the Taverne de la Capitale, are the favorite places for actors, and still others for painters and musicians. There is hardly a resort in Paris which has not its distinct clientèle, from the *buvettes* of the *cochers* to Maxime's.

And of soberer kind are the innumerable, perfectly kept establishments created by Duval and imitated by Boulant. They are big places for small purses; everything is of excellent quality, well cooked, and served by respectable women in spotless white caps and aprons.

There are hundreds of other restaurants besides, with *dîners* and *déjeuners* at a *prix fixe*, in which a secondary quality of food is turned into a clever imitation of the best, and where the wine is plain and harmless and included with a course dinner *au choix* for two francs fifty and less. On *fête* days and Sundays these well patronized *petits dîners de Paris* are crowded with bourgeois folk: clerks with their sweethearts, *commerçants* and their families, economical bachelors, and others, frugal-minded, from out of Paris who have come into the metropolis to spend a long-anticipated holiday.



And in contrast to all these dining places are the smart restaurants, filled with the correct *grand monde* and the chic *demi-monde*—the Café de Madrid, the Maison Anglaise, Paillard, Arménonville, La Rue, Joseph, Ledoyen, Voisin and the Café de Paris. There are serious old places, such as the Tour d'Argent, plain and unadorned, where all the wealth is in the *casserolles* and the cobwebbed bottles. Then, too, there is the ancient Restaurant Foyot, with its clientèle of senators, academicians and military officers, and the Restaurant La Pérouse on the quay of the Seine, where resort savants and magistrates and others less grave —an old-fashioned place with a narrow stairway leading to quaint, low-ceiled *cabinets particuliers* and excellent things simmering over the kitchen fires below stairs and certain rare old Burgundy lining the walls of the cellar.

Just such a place of seclusion and good cooking is the "Père La Thuille" in Montmartre. It is often a pleasure to dine in a room devoid of gilt and tinsel. The Père La Thuille is restful in this respect. The cuisine is perfect and the wine very old.

THE KITCHEN OF A CHEAP
TABLE D’HÔTE

At one of the tables in the rectangular dining-room a celebrated diva whose bodice glitters in gems is dining with monsieur, the aged director of a gas company. Several empty tables away another elderly gentleman is filling Mademoiselle Fifi’s glass of champagne. Half hidden in another corner of the long leather settee a lady with delicate features and frank, intelligent eyes pours forth her soul and the remainder of a bottle to a well-groomed man at her side. The light from the shaded candles shows more clearly his strong fine hands. Now the little finger of his companion touches his seal ring quite unconsciously, as one would give an accent by a gesture to a confession. For a moment he covers her tiny hand with his own. Poor devil! he must return to his regiment to-morrow and, what is still sadder, the lady is married.

The New York Dairy Lunch, with its mirrored and marbled bathroom decoration, its elevating Bible texts, and depressing “sinkers,” and its dyspeptic griddle-cakes cooked in the window, would never make a success with Parisians. One of the most doleful sights I have seen in Paris was a sad-looking gentleman in black sitting at a cold marble-topped table of an expensive *patisserie* lunching on a weak cup of tea and a plate of cream-puffs—*Chacun son goût!*

There exist here, however, “Express Bars” along the boulevards, where by dropping two sous in a slot you are permitted to rob the nickel-plated chicken house installed beneath of any of a dozen different articles, from a *baba au rhum* to a glass of beer. But Parisians stop at these places very much as they would to hear a phonograph, or as French children stop for their *goûter* at four o’clock in the cake shops, or as men and women of all classes drop in for the celebrated fruits in spirits dispensed at the famous solid silver bar of La Mère Moreau.

The French never hurry over dinner. The pleasure of dining must not be spoiled by haste. It is an hour which nothing postpones. If anything serious is to be decided upon, Parisians dine first and then think the matter over. Perhaps after all they are right, for are we not at our best in heart and spirit when we have dined wisely? Anger, hatred, even the green monster jealousy, fade away with the progress of a good dinner.

Drawn by Sancha

LE PLONGEUR

Into the Restaurant Weber comes an old *bon-vivant* growling. He stands for a brief moment surveying the tables, chooses one of the few unoccupied ones and plants himself savagely in front of the snow-white cloth. “The devil!” he mutters to himself. “She’ll get my letter to-morrow. *Bon Dieu!* to think I have been imbecile enough to trust her!”

“Has monsieur le comte ordered?” interrupted quietly the *maître d’hôtel* Léon.

The count glowers over the menu.

“Some *filets de hareng saurs*.”

“*Parfaitement, monsieur*,” replies Léon, and he repeats the order to a waiter.

There follows a pause, during which the count’s irate eye (the one not occupied with his monocle) wanders absently over the list.

“Perhaps monsieur would like an excellent purée of peas to follow?” Léon naïvely suggests.

“*Bon!*” gruffly accepts the comte. “And a *homard*, and a roast partridge with a good salad, and a bottle of Veuve Clicquot, ’93,” adds the count.

“*Bien, monsieur*, I will season the salad myself.” And Léon, with an authoritative gesture, claps his hands twice, stirring into increased activity the already alert waiters, gives a final touch to the appointments of the count’s table, and hurries off to attend to another dinner, a jolly party of four who need no further cheering up.

Drawing by Sancha

LE MAÎTRE D’HÔTEL

“She has the innocent eyes of a child when she lies!” mutters the count, returning to his thoughts.

But the tiny *filets de hareng*, with their tang of the sea, sharpen his appetite, and the wine quiets his nerves and refreshes his brain, and the purée warms him and the lobster steaming in its thick, spicy sauce cheers him. The hatred within him is growing less. That lump of jealousy buried so deep half an hour ago has so diminished that, when the fat little partridge arrives, garnished and sunk in its nest of fresh watercress, this gives the fatal *coup* to ill humor. Again the champagne is rattled out of its cooler. Léon, whose watchful eye is everywhere and whose intuition tells him when a patron wishes to talk, now comes to the count’s table.

The count has by this time become the soul of good humor. He compliments Léon on the dinner and Léon compliments him on his taste in selection of viands, and so they talk on until Léon goes himself for a special liqueur.

The count gazes peacefully on those about him and admires, with the critical eye of a connoisseur of beauty, the pretty woman at the corner table. Silent waiters lay the fresh cloth and bring him an extensive choice of Havanas. All these final accessories have little by little taken away the remnants of his ill feeling. He puffs reminiscently at his cigar. His very spirit of revenge seems to have been steamed, sautéed and grilled out of him. Now he takes from his waistcoat pocket a thin gold watch—the one he bought at a round sum in Geneva years ago and which has been faithfully ticking away the seconds of his turbulent life so long that he has come to regard it somewhat with awe, as one would the change from his last dollar.

The delicate hands have crept to nine o’clock and two tiny bells within strike the hour. The count writes upon his visiting card a short line, seals it in its envelope, calls the *chasseur* and, giving him the note, directs: “Stop on your way at Véton’s for the red roses.”

LE CHASSEUR

Drawn by Sancha

Ah, mesdames et messieurs, how many of your little troubles have been settled by the doctor with the *cordon bleu* and the shining saucepans!

The Taverne Pousset is famous for its beer, its *écrevisses* (crawfish boiled scarlet and served steaming), and its *soupe à l’ognon*, a bouillon redolent with onions and smothered beneath a coverlet of brown cheese.

Parisians flock to Pousset after the theater. At night its richly decorated interior is ablaze with light and crowded with those who have stopped for supper after the play.

There are dozens of just such *tavernes* and *brasseries*. These German institutions have oddly enough become most popular with the French, who

have grown in recent years critically fond of good beer. I might add, however, that it is the only thing German that has become popular. That little affair of Sedan is still in the gorge.

The Coq d'Or, on the rue Montmartre, is one of the oldest taverns in Paris. Its clientèle during dinner is composed of *commerçants* and a mixture of *bourgeoisie* and Bohemia, but after midnight, as happens in scores of other such places, the Coq d'Or is filled by a veritable avalanche of *demi-mondaines* of the surrounding quarter.

If you dine at Marguery's, order a *sole au vin blanc* and let Étienne bring it to you.

If it is summer you will find a table in the covered portico brilliant with hanging flowers, or you may choose a snug corner behind the cool green hedge that skirts the entrance of this famous rendezvous of rich *bourgeois* and *commerçants*.

The restaurant Marguery is unique. It is a magnificent establishment, perfect in its cooking, its wines, and its service. I know of no restaurant where for this perfect ensemble one pays so moderate and just a price; the proof of this is that here you will see the true Parisian; neither is there any supplementary charge for any of the *cabinets particuliers* or the private dining-rooms. It is the only *maison de premier ordre* I know of which does not tax one more or less heavily for the right of seclusion.

You will have hardly finished your sole before a distinguished old gentleman with a decoration in his lapel and a crumpled napkin in one hand, will pass your table, bowing graciously to you if you are a stranger and stopping to say a few pleasant words if you are a friend. He is slightly bent with age, massive of frame, with silvery locks combed back from a broad forehead, and his face is illumined with kindliness and intelligence.

"VOILÀ, MONSIEUR!"
Drawn by Sancha

Such a personage is Monsieur Marguery, whom the French government has decorated in recognition of his skill as a *restaurateur*, a man who still directs personally every detail of this superb establishment where one can dine for a few francs with an excellent bottle of wine, or give a dinner fit for an emperor, including, I have not the slightest doubt, the famous peacock tongues should you wish them, and with a choice of wines from a cellar whose contents are valued at three millions of francs.

In a corner a fat merchant, flushed with a heavy dinner, is ready for his chat with the *sommelier*. He tells him with some fervor that he is proud to say that when he was eighteen he dined on a sou's worth of bread on the stones of the Place de la Bastille. "Men of that time were ready to begin at the foot of the ladder," he continues, puffing at his cigar, "but nowadays our sons, who see us in comfort, want to obtain money and luxuries without going through the mill."

"*Par ici! monsieur*," says Étienne, and he leads the way up a carved stairway to the floor above, past little *cabinets particuliers* whose cozy interiors are marvels of good taste. Here is one with walls of rich brocade of the time of Louis XVI. Another is in early French, with its adaptation of Chinese ornaments. Another is paneled in ebony inlaid with mother-of-pearl; still another in pale lilac brocade and teakwood. Each of these private rooms has its serving pantry across a narrow hallway where the linen and glass and silver are kept spotless, in readiness at a moment's notice. A superb private stairway in white marble and stained glass connects this portion of the restaurant with a dignified courtyard

leading out to a gray little side street. But these are the little rooms.

There is, besides, a great banquet hall in medieval Gothic that might have been carried bodily out of some feudal castle in Touraine with a carved minstrel gallery, a superb ceiling and rare stained glass. Here wedding breakfasts and dinners are given with cotillions to follow. And there are two other salons paneled in rare carving and inlaid woods. At the bottom of another stairway Étienne directs me across the mosaic floor of a spacious hall and into a grotto-like cave. Here is another dining-room. It is resplendent in stalactites with green ferns growing from walls of moss-grown rocks and a cascade talking to itself and purling into a green pool.

Music? no, indeed. People who come here have too good a time to need to be waltzed through the soup or polkaed through the entrée.

It is four o’clock and they are laying the round table in the center of the grotto with twenty covers. It might be for a state dinner in the presence of a king, so perfectly is the table appointed and in such rare taste. A bed of violet orchids forms the center of the table.

I look up and catch sight of the venerable Monsieur Marguery on the stairway, peering interestedly into the room to watch the laying of the service. He has suddenly entered through some hidden door—a panel in the wall which Étienne afterwards shows me. “He is everywhere, as you see,” said Étienne, quietly.

LE GÉRANT
Drawn by Sancha

“Ah! it is you, monsieur,” says Monsieur Marguery, cheeringly, as he approaches. “And have you found this grotto room charming with the pale orchids and the cool water? You know in summer,” he continues, “it is quite as cool here as in the Bois”—and he might have added, quite as beautiful, for this fairy corner needed only the setting of wit and beauty to make it a paradise.

“And you see, my friend,” he continues, “you have seen only the upstairs of my restaurant. Come between seven and eight some evening and I will put you in a corner of my kitchen when it is busiest,” and he adds, with smiling good humor, “I won’t warn them you are coming.”

I was the guest of the chef in the Marguery kitchen at eight o’clock one Saturday evening. There were a dozen wedding banquets going on upstairs, and scores of hidden *dîners particuliers*, while the restaurant, screened from the kitchen by a swinging door, was filled to overflowing.

I passed through this door and met my host with the *cordon bleu*, who looked more like the director of a railroad than a cook. He placed me in a safe corner connecting the meat room and the kitchen, from which I could observe and still be out of the way of the rush, for the famous cuisine was as busy as a stage during a spectacle.

A long counter ran the length of the room, serving as a barrier against hurrying waiters. Back of this counter lay the culinary plant. Five great ranges were in full blast.

At one a cloud of steam rose from some entrée, on the second range a great copper saucepan was suddenly lifted and the fire beneath it sent up a lurid flare which went slipping up the hooded chimney.

The room was in a state of bedlam with the cries of meat cooks, vegetable cooks, soup cooks and waiters hurrying for their orders. The system beneath all this was perfect.

A waiter sprang through the swinging door shouting his order. He never was forced to repeat it, so alert were the staff of cooks that they seemed to have been awaiting him.

"*Un Chateaubriand aux pommes!*" cries a garçon.

"*Un Chateaubriand aux pommes!*" corroborates a chief cook.

Instantly a man dodges out of the meat room, a second later the steak is sizzling over the fire, the vegetable cook stands ready with his potatoes, a fourth prepares the sauce, a fifth attends to the plates, and the sixth looks after the garnishing of the dish.

THE VEGETABLE COOK
Drawn by Sancha

"I am glad you find it interesting," said my host the chef, as he joined me for a moment's rest.

I bowed my compliments.

"And is this the only kitchen for so large an establishment?" I ventured, in surprise.

"Yes, the only one; we do it all here. It is the organization which counts, not the space. With these five ranges and this force of men we are competent to handle as many dinners as come under the roof."

The chef's eye seemed everywhere. When the rush was over, his private coupé would call for him, but at present he was on guard.

I marveled at this man's memory. What a catalog of sauces, each one containing scores of ingredients, he must carry in his head! What a list of dishes, each one prepared in a dozen different ways! I imparted to him the fact that my culinary skill was limited to boiling an egg, and he laughed good-humoredly, his intelligent face, with its white mustache, glowing under his white cap in the glare of a nearby fire.

"Precisely, monsieur, but you see it is the same in every profession; one must learn the minute parts which tend to make something which in itself pleases, whether it be through the mind, the pocket, or the stomach," and, asking me to excuse him for a moment, he disappeared in the direction of a cloud of mushroom steam to overlook an entrée.

A cook near me was busy with the final sizzle of a duck *en casserole*.

The man was an artist in the way he stirred his sauce. Even in the very handling of the burnished copper *batterie* of saucepans about him.

I fully expected this culinary prestidigitator would produce the lady's ring from the duck he had just finished cooking and discover the rabbit in my overcoat pocket, but the duck was smothered so quickly in a rich brown sauce, with a dash of this and a pinch of that from the magician, and finally thrust for a final magic touch over the crackling blaze, that, before I could guess what might happen next, it was on its way to some *cabinet particulier*, where a quiet little man with gray hair was waiting to carve it.

It was he who won the grand prize for his skill in getting sixty slices from a single duck. He has quite the air of a dignified surgeon who has been called in consultation.

He carves with a plain knife sharpened upon the back of a plate. The duck seems to fall apart under his expert touch. He mashes into a paste the liver and heart, pouring over the whole the red blood gravy. *Voilà!* It is done; and, passing the first dish to one of the group of garçons at his elbow who have been watching him, he bows and leaves the room. The group of waiters about him are deeply interested in this object lesson, and it is this willingness to learn which makes in Paris so many good *garçons de café*.

The famous old Maison Dorée has closed its doors. The business of this celebrated restaurant had fallen off so seriously that its death was but a question of days. Paris had deserted it in its old age and dined elsewhere.

Many of the waiters, who had spent their lifetime beneath its roof, hoped against hope, and continued to serve the few habitués who remained faithful to the end.

Occasionally a party of strangers would open the door, and, finding the restaurant deserted, close it apologetically and go on their way to a gayer place.

THE MAGICIAN

In encouraging moments like these the veteran waiters ceremoniously took their places and the dignified *maître d'hôtel* advanced to greet the newcomers bravely, as if the ruin of the old house were not an open secret. There is something pathetic about the death of an establishment like the Maison Dorée.

How much gaiety it has seen in its lifetime!

How faithfully it has cheered those who entered its doors!

Here the *vie Parisienne* that Grévin and Cham drew so inimitably, came to dine in the old days; the courtezans of Balzac; the belles and beaux of the Empire.

Just as the Maison Dorée lived in thoroughbred dignity so did it die. Yesterday morning the shades of the windows were drawn down. The end had come. A simple card on the door bore the words:

"LE RESTAURANT
EST FERMÉ."

And one felt like laying a wreath on its threshold.

THE VERSEUR
Drawn by Sancha

On Saturdays the Café de la Cascade, in the Bois, is taken possession of by *bourgeois* wedding parties, with brides in white satin gowns and grooms and their friends in dress-suits, which they had donned early in the morning and in which they have sung and cheered, and drunk the bride's health and the groom's health, and that of *les belles soeurs* and *les petits* nephews and all the innumerable *enfants*, cousins and *cousines*, comrades and *amis* connected by blood, marriage or friendship with the happy pair.

No wonder that by midnight, after such a day of continuous festivity, the poor bride is wild-eyed, flushed, exhausted and demoralized! For this *bourgeois* wedding had started at ten A. M. with the civil ceremony at the City Hall, the civil wedding being the only one legally recognized in France. From the hall the party proceeded to the church, where most brides insist on going after the civil ceremony. Here occurs another long function, including an address by the priest or minister. Then the bridesmaids, accompanied by the men of honor, *garçons d'honneur*, of which there are three classes, make two collections among the assemblage: one for the poor and the other for the church. This procession is headed by a gorgeously dressed major-domo, "Le Suisse," who pounds the floor with his heavy baton as he strides solemnly through the aisles warning everyone to get their donations ready. The collections referred to are made either in a butterfly net, which discreetly hides the sous from view, or in purses made to match the gowns of the bridesmaids and carried ostensibly open for the expected louis.

There are several classes of weddings, just as there are several classes of funerals, their magnificence progressing in proportion to the money paid. You can be married at the little altar or the big one, enter under a spangled canopy at the front door or by an unadorned modest side one.

Now comes another ordeal for the bride; having gone to the sacristy after the ceremony, she is obliged to shake hands with everyone present and be kissed on both cheeks by cousins, friends or even acquaintances. Then the procession of carriages drives up, each being given its precedence in line. They are filled and start off for the wedding breakfast at the restaurant. This means a well-to-do wedding; many couples can afford only one huge stage which alternately serves in going to and from the races, while others go on foot, often six or seven arm-in-arm romping

through the streets, singing or stopping at some little *buvette* for a glass of wine. The poor bride walks on and on, holding her satin train. She is half exhausted, but is expected to be bright and gay. Poor victim, the day has only begun for her!

After the wedding breakfast at the restaurant, trains are taken to some nearby country place like St. Cloud, or carriages to the Café de la Cascade. Here occurs the indispensable dinner, a feast of uproarious *camaraderie*, where dishes succeed dishes, and where each one is expected to be rollicking and witty and sing his song. In accordance with an old custom, to the first man of honor is allotted the privilege of trying to steal the garter of the bride.

The dance which follows this dinner lasts until morning, and lucky are the bride and groom if they can escape by midnight.

But mild indeed are these *bourgeois* weddings of the city compared with those of the well-to-do peasants! These include festivities which last three days, most of which time is spent at table, where beef is followed by veal, veal by mutton, mutton by rabbit, rabbit by chicken, and chicken by pork, and so on through the list of viands. This continuous feast is only made possible by consuming from time to time a stiff glass of applejack.

"*Vive la mariée!*" cry a dozen overjoyous ones in front of a café at St. Cloud as my *voiture* tries to pass. My *cocher* grins and cracks his whip. The best man, a soldier, the groom and a dozen others, noisy with the sound wine of Touraine, link arms in front of my rawboned steed, yelling:

"You cannot pass, monsieur, unless you cry *Vive la mariée!*"

"*Vive la mariée!*" I cry, loudly as I can, in my ineradicable accent.

There is a welcoming shout from the wedding party. The bride throws me a kiss. The little cousins and *cousines* and the *beau-frère* and *belle-mère* wave their handkerchiefs in acknowledgment, a dozen tumblers of red wine are offered to me, and as many are thrust at the fat *cocher* who is now waving his glazed hat in the air with enthusiasm.

"*Vive la République! Vive la mariée! Vive la France!*" come from a score of throats as I am allowed to proceed. As we rattle up a crooked street, the din of the festivity grows fainter and fainter in the distance, now I hear faintly the indistinct blare of the band playing below for the dance, and now and then a cheer, stronger than the others, floats up from the far-away café: "*Vive la mariée!*"

Dining in the open air is brought to its perfection in the Bois de Boulogne.

The Chalet du Touring Club, at the entrance of the Bois, is a popular rendezvous for the bicycling Mimis and the Faustines, and their admirers. At the *apéritif* hour in the afternoon, this cosmopolitan café under the trees is crowded with a mixed assemblage. It is an excellent place in which to breakfast well and at a moderate price.

The Pavillon Chinois, with its picturesque pagoda-like roof, is frequented by a richer class.

During the season, between five and seven, all of smart Paris may be seen at the Pavillon d'Armenonville. At this hour the tables in the garden are filled with pretty women in chic toilettes, accompanied by faultlessly dressed gentlemen whose bank accounts have managed thus far to survive.

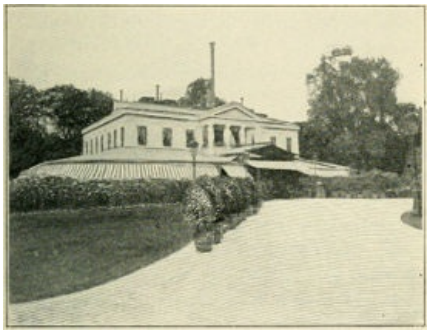
By six, the scene resembles a garden party. There is a mixture of nature and artifice, of exquisite toilettes, of gay flowers blooming in beds under the shadows of sturdy trees up in whose branches the birds flutter and sing. One's ears are filled with babble of voices and the soft laughter of those whose life for the moment is happy. The sun has sunk in an opalescent haze, its rays reflect upon the glass of the pavilion and the edge of the tiny kiosks whence come the chatter and laughter of some jolly *partie carrée* still at table over a late *déjeuner*. Above the hum drones the rhythm of the Tziganes; their violins cry in some plaintive gipsy song. Now the strings rush into the most seductive of Viennese waltzes, melting away, to begin afresh in some mad Hungarian czardas.

Smart turnouts and little private victorias with tinkling bells are constantly arriving and departing. Now there is a sound of prancing hoofs and the clink of harness at the entrance of the garden, and in rumbles a break perfectly driven by a well-groomed gentleman posed in faultless style on the box seat. By his side sits a Parisienne of Parisiennes —from the glossy undulations of her black hair to the tips of her tiny patent leather boots, both of which are now occupied in daintily descending the steps of the break. She is a famous beauty who sings at one of the *cafés concerts*, quite young, with pretty white teeth and an olive skin.

ENTRANCE OF THE CAFÉ DE MADRID

THE GARDEN OF THE CAFÉ DE MADRID

Her companion leaves his turnout to the care of his grooms, and the break with its shining red wheels rumbles away in the direction of the carriage shed. The charming brunette is radiant from the drive; they have been nearly to Poissy and back. She will now have a *gaufrette* and a *coupe de fruits au champagne*, and the gentleman who drove so cleverly a cigarette and a long brandy and soda. This dainty Parisienne insists on preparing this "*drôle de boisson anglaise*" herself, and, with a rippling laugh, puts in the ice and the brandy and then the soda, and, as a final touch, in a spirit of deviltry, adds a cherry from her own *coupe*, for which archness she is scolded by her companion, to whom she blows a kiss in return.



A RESTAURANT ON THE CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES

At eight, the Pavillon d'Armenonville will be brilliant with a throng of diners—men in spotless shirt-fronts and women in toilets of lace and jewels—and crisp notes of the Bank of France will change hands for rich food and sparkling wine. The season for these delightful retreats of the Bois being short, the rents for them are exorbitant, and so the *monde* must pay the fiddler accordingly.

At the end of the Bois is the Chalet du Cycle, another restaurant with a superb garden flaming in flowers, and dotted with cozy thatched kiosks like the huts of some jungle village and dotted with tables shaded by huge red umbrellas. Here at the *apéritif* hour the crowd comes *en bicyclette* and automobile, and at night the hurrying waiters serve parties dining cozily in the glow of shaded candles. The Chalet du Cycle is a charming place in which to breakfast some sunny morning with the Seine gliding close by under the trees.

Another segment of fairy-land, even more exquisite in its *mise en scène*, is the Café de Madrid. Here a low, rambling, half-timbered house forms a courtyard which is as brilliant at night with the *haut monde* at

dinner. Here, too, as at Armenonville, the carriages, entering under a gateway smothered in trailing vines, drive in past the tables. Everywhere about you there are flowers—banks of geraniums and fragrant roses. When you have dined, you can turn your armchair and watch the beauty about you and the victorias coming and going.

It is characteristic for Parisians to sit for hours over dinner. The Café de Madrid at night resembles closely a garden party given at the château of some private estate. It is the absence of the feeling of publicity that makes it so charming.

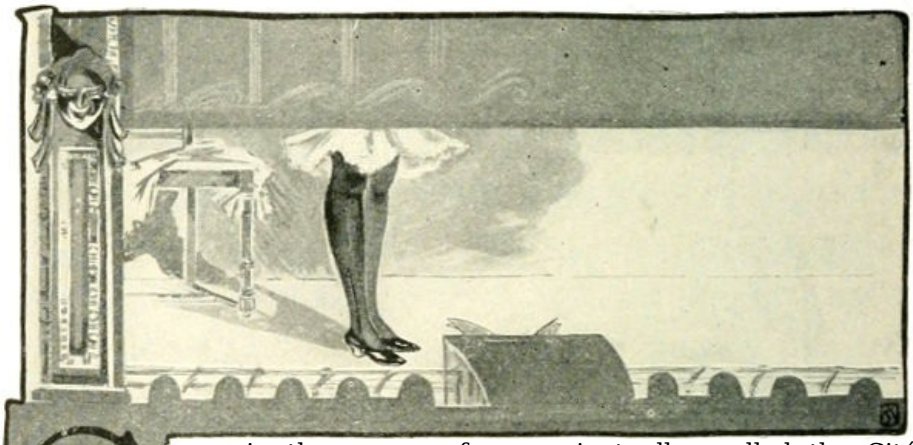
And after all this restful luxury there is the cool Bois to drive in, through forest alleys with the smell of the fresh woods all about and the sparkle of stars overhead.

Who will ever tell the history of this famous playground of rich and poor? How many of its silent trees have sheltered and kept secret the romances of the world! How much honor has been risked for the sake of cruel, triumphant women whose hearts were tender in proportion to their needs! And how many real loves have sought it as a refuge!

If all this is sad, turn back in your drive towards the sparkling lights of the city, to Paris who is now wearing all her jewels. Some of her strings of diamonds are glittering through the vista of black trees ahead—or are these only the footlights of the great stage whereon so many comedies, so many tragedies, and so many light farces, have been played?

Chapter Three

SOME “RISQUÉ” CURTAINS WITH SERIOUS LININGS



Snug in the corner of an ancient alley called the Cité d’Antin is the “Théâtre de la Robinière.” Its official address is “3 (bis) Rue La Fayette,” that is, you are requested to enter there and, following your nose around the corner, grope your way in the obscurity over the cobbles and make a second turn to the right. At last a green lantern over the doorway glimmers ahead of you. It is the Robinière now installed in what was once the Théâtre Mondain.

The Robinière once existed on the first platform of the Tour Eiffel; since then its proprietor, Monsieur François Robin, has moved it to its permanent address, all of which speaks well for its success. It is filled nightly with Parisians of the vicinity.

Much of the success of this tiny theater is due to the indefatigable effort of its director, Monsieur Robin, who literally passes his life in his playhouse, assisted in its management by his wife. These two, without help, without even a secretary, run the theater, often working from early morning until long past midnight, writing their own posters, watching the rehearsals of their excellent small company (in which Madame plays), attending to press notices, receiving authors and artists, and, in short, making a success of this old “Salle d’Antin” where all its preceding owners met with ruin.

There is nothing elaborate about this stuffy little bandbox of a theater. Its narrow auditorium is plain, dingy and old-fashioned. A piano serves for the orchestra, but the comedies are clever and the acting excellent—two things which Parisians demand first of all.

The Robinière is but one of a number of miniature theaters in Paris beginning at eight-thirty or nine o’clock, and producing each night four short realistic comedies, often with some clever *chansonnier* singing his creations during the *entr’actes*. No two of these theaters are alike, and in all of them there is good acting; even in the smallest of these so-called *bouis-bouis* you will find the actors to be men and women who have worked patiently through the National Conservatoire studying their art under the best masters.

Fortunately in France the woman who has become suddenly notorious through her divorce or the latest scandal is not snapped up by theatrical managers as a star before the ink is dry on the Sunday papers detailing her disgrace. In Paris there are music hall *revues* to receive these meteors when they fall and where they may parade their beauty and their clothes, or their lack of them, with the rest of the *demi-mondaines*.

During the intervals between the plays at the Robinière a single aged “*garçon de café*” takes the orders for the refreshments in the cold, stuffy little “*fumoir*,” while behind the bar one of the leading ladies of the comedy graciously assists him by opening the bottled beer and attending to the drinks, very much as a good-natured woman would help by cutting the cake at a children’s party.

When the bell rings for the curtain Madame hurries out of her apron and back to her part in “Les Deux Jarretières,” a farce so replete with amusing complications that the small audience is kept in a continual titter of good humor. In the comedy following, entitled “Le Sofa de Monsieur Dupré,” the story is even more simple. A respectable widow, Madame Dupré, living alone in her old age, is attended by her maid Pauline, whom she has come to regard as an indispensable companion.

Pauline makes the old lady comfortable in her favorite chair, tucks under her feet her foot-warmer, and, leaving her mistress, goes out to post a letter.

In the interval which elapses before her return a neighbor calls and kindly informs Madame Dupré that the indispensable Pauline has been the mistress of Madame Dupré's revered husband. When Pauline returns, Madame, in her indignation, turns her out of the house. The foot-warmer grows cold, the fire in the grate goes out, a thousand little comforts have not been attended to, and the old lady decides to send for Pauline and forgive her, preferring that her few remaining years should pass in peace and comfort.

Quite different is the Théâtre de la Bodinière, founded by Monsieur Bodin, the former secretary of the historic Comédie Française. The Bodinière is devoted to interpreting the work of young authors by celebrated artists. It is a theater where respectable *jeunes filles* may be taken in safety. The plays are as harmless as the Rollo books.

The playwright, Aimé Ducrocq, is the founder and manager of a cozy blue-and-gold bonbonnière of a theater called the "Rabelais," in Montmartre. Here, as the title suggests, the comedies and farces are thoroughly Rabelaisian. It might even be averred that they are more so than elsewhere, which is saying a great deal. Here farces like "La Vertu De Nini," "La Journée d'une Demi-Mondaine" and "Le Corset de Germaine" pack the small auditorium nightly. Many of these are written to a point where the curtain discreetly drops upon the situation, but none of them harbors a line or a gesture of vulgarity. It is not worth while having trouble with the police, and happily the French policeman is both broad-minded and discreet in enforcing an arbitrary rule. When you ask a policeman here why a thing is prohibited he will shrug his shoulders, stare at you in astonishment, and reply brusquely: "It is prohibited because it is prohibited!"

Which settles all further argument.

There are but two things which I find absolutely interdicted: malicious satires against the Government, and breaking the Parisian peace. The rest, which has merely to do with "l'Amour," seems to the policemen not worth bothering their heads about.

A "*'Cipal*" (municipal guard) is detailed during a performance of any kind in Paris in every theater, music-hall or *cabaret*, to jot down in a small black-covered book anything which may offend his sense of delicacy, but he is generally too hugely amused in watching the stage to do so. During moments like these his ruddy visage, with its bristly mustache, at other times so stern, is wreathed in wrinkles of delight, and his formidable short sword sleeps peacefully in its scabbard. These are the lighter hours of his existence; where he is needed you will find him brave as a bulldog and quick as a cat, and intelligent and honest as well. You cannot bribe a French policeman.

The one who generously offered me half his seat at a crowded performance the other night poured forth his opinions *sotto voce* during the second act of a risqué comedy. He was sincere and enthusiastic in his praise of our President and struck his brass-buttoned chest as he pronounced him a good man and a brave soldier; however, I regret that some of his views of La Fayette are unfit for publication, as he regarded him as a traitor to France.

"*Oui, monsieur*," he said, savagely; "a man who gave his strength and knowledge and power to another country when that man belonged to our army was a traitor." He said other things, too, about the gentleman, but they will not bear a graceful translation.

Below the Rabelais, past an iron grill and at the end of a cobbled court in the Rue Chaptal, is the "Grand Guignol." Its oak interior in carved Gothic was once the studio of the celebrated painter, Rochegrosse, and resembles at first glance, except for the boxes running beneath the low choir gallery, the lecture room of a modern Episcopal church. The prevailing tone of the room, gray corduroy and oak, is thoroughly restful. From the spandrelled ceiling hang iron chandeliers of ecclesiastical design. A paneled frieze of allegorical paintings, representing the human passions—envy, hate and jealousy—enrich the cove. Carved angels support the corbels of the ceiling beams, and a square of rare Gobelins tapestry enriches the wall back of the gallery. A simple proscenium, in keeping with the rest of this exquisite interior, fills the end of the room.

Drawing by F. Berkeley Smith

PAULINE

There is a small foyer, too, with a Gothic stairway, which contains a unique collection of steel engravings of players of bygone days. Snug in an alcove beside this interesting *promenoir* there is a tiny bar. At nine the boxes beneath the Sunday-school gallery are brilliant with women's toilets, framed by the white shirt-fronts and sombre black of their well-groomed escorts. Such is this charming after-dinner theater, which has been so appropriately named "The Big Punch and Judy," where very cleverly constructed short plays are presented, such as "Scrupules," "Une Affaire de Mœurs," "La Coopérative" and "La Fétiche."

They are plays of dramatic incident rather than of plots. Some of them are as risqué as the most daring at the Rabelais. Some are full of pathos, others screamingly funny, and still others revolting in their realism.

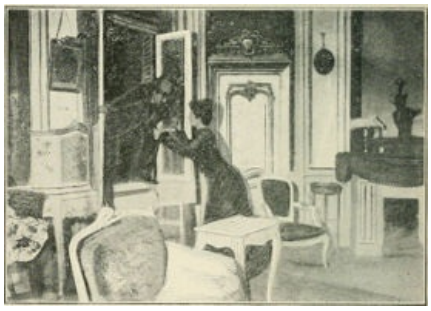


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

LA FÉTICHE AT THE GRAND GUIGNOL

Enter the Murderer

Of the last class is "Une Affaire de Mœurs." In this the identity of a famous judge of the high court is discovered by two *demi-mondaines* who are dining with him in a *cabinet particulier*. The judge has at one time sentenced the lover of one of the women and she threatens to expose him in revenge. He offers money, and finally half his fortune to quiet her, but the woman is determined to avenge her lover. Then his terror at the thought of scandal and disgrace brings on a stroke of apoplexy. The two women, now thoroughly frightened, send the old waiter out for a doctor. He hurries back with a young physician whom he finds carousing with his friends in the café below. The young man stands aghast as he recognizes the form in the chair; it is his father. He listens at the heart, then buries his head in his hands. The judge is dead. The women huddle in a corner terrified. The room is in disorder, reeking with the odor of cigarettes and spilled wine.

"Come, monsieur," gently urges the aged garçon. "Pull yourself together, we must get the body into a cab unnoticed."

The realization of the disgrace and publicity of the *affaire* when it will be known in the café below, braces the son to act quickly. He suggests to the garçon that the body be removed by the back stairs.

"There is no back stairs, monsieur," confesses the garçon. "The only way out is by the main stairway and through the café. We will walk

monsieur out and support him between us. I have helped to do it once before that way; no one will suspect—they will think monsieur is drunk."

Together they put on the Inverness and, adjusting the opera hat of the deceased and supporting the body beneath the arms, walk slowly with it to the door leading to the stairs, the two women preceding them, singing hysterically the *marche des pompiers*!

As the curtain fell the audience seemed in a stupor. A woman beside me sat staring at the floor, crying. Men coughed and remained silent. Not until the pianist in the foyer struck up a lively polka did they leave their seats for a little cognac and a breath of air.

Just such realism is typical of the Grand Guignol.

Even smaller than the Grand Guignol is the cozy "Théâtre des Mathurins," with a pretty foyer twice the size of its small auditorium, which scarcely holds two hundred.

Here short plays like "Monsieur Camille," "Le Quadrille" and "Les Deux Courtisanes" are played with rare finish by De Marcy, Cora Lapercerie, and other famous beauties of the Parisian stage.

During the *entr'actes* a shutter over an archway of the foyer opens and the head of a celebrated singing satirist is thrust out from the dark closet like the punctual cuckoo in the clock. During the intermission he sings his original songs to the listening throng, a mixture of the *grand-* and the *demi-monde* promenading below.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris

CARMEN DEVILLERS

"Gil Blas," First Prize Beauty

Most diminutive of them all is the "Théâtre des Capucines," whose auditorium is no larger than a private salon. This *intime* playhouse is frequented by the most exclusive audience to be found in Paris. Before the curtain rises it resembles a drawing-room filled with a society gathering for amateur theatricals. The walls of yellow brocade, with a delicate decoration of nasturtiums, gives it even more the air of a private drawing-room, and the tiny stage seems to have been erected for the occasion. Only when the curtain rises is the illusion dispelled, for at the Capucines the short comedies are rendered by many of the most celebrated players of the French stage.

Here the great Gémier plays "Daisy," in which his portrayal of a race-track thief, jealous over his sweetheart Léa (Mademoiselle Carlier), is a masterpiece of character acting.

Other little comedies, like "Au Temps des Croisées," by Guy de Maupassant, with Gallo in the principal rôle, and Viviane Lavergne and Max Dearly in "Chonchette," with charming Thérèse Berka, leave little to wonder that the tiny Théâtre des Capucines is crowded nightly with the most intelligent of Parisian society.

I found my old friend the Baron after the play at Pousset's beginning his midnight supper of "*écrevisses*" and beer, alone and in a grumbling mood.

"*Ah! Ah! tant mieux!* It is you, *mon ami*," he cried. "Good, we shall have supper together. It is fortunate that I find you. Do you know," he continued, motioning me to a seat beside him, "I have this evening been to such a bad play, *Diable!* It is a relief to get here. To rinse the eyes, as we say, from such a gloomy *histoire*! One goes to the theater to laugh, is it not, eh? Not to have what you call him—zee, zee blues.

"For three hours, my friend," he continued, frowning at the memory of it, "for three hours, *imaginez-vous*, I have been following a lot of unhappy people into the horrors of Siberia. Those who survived until the last act were finally put to death or separated brutally from those dear to them. Many of them were blind. The heroine was forced to betray her lover, who was finally led to execution before her eyes. *Sapristi!*" and the Baron pounded his great fist on the table. Then, choking with laughter over the humorous side of it so that he dropped his monocle, he continued:

"It is to this I go to be amused, *mon Dieu*! I would rathzair be at a funeral!"

Here the garçon interrupted us with the cognac.

"Tell me, Baron," I said, as we lighted our cigars, "what, in your opinion, has made the *bouis-bouis* become so popular with you Parisians? I have just come from the Capucines. It was not gloomy there, I assure you; the little house was as gay as a tulip patch and bubbling over with merriment."

"Listen," replied the Baron, putting his forefinger to his forehead impressively. "The success of the little theaters with short plays comes from the fact that nowadays a crisis has been reached in theatrical affairs. The public, as it is after all for them that plays are given, have put the author at his wits' end to invent something new. The old actors who are too sure of themselves have become careless, and the young ones, in trying to create a personal *genre*, end in attaining a *pose* which, through its affectation, is always lacking in art.

"Then there are the critics, who are always watching for 'the little beast,' as we say, and who seem to discover only elephantine faults, and finally there are the directors of the theaters, who are constantly torn between their desire to please the public, satisfy the actor, protect art, and fill their purses."

"It is different with us," I replied; "we have syndicates in charge of our amusements. The personal desires of the players are not considered, and the managerial head of the enterprise rarely knows or cares about art.

"It is purely a business with him, like the running of a series of big dry-goods stores, and so he hustles out on the road his companies number one, two and three, and sits twirling his thumbs in his office computing how much cash they will bring him back.

"And what were the conditions which brought this crisis you speak of?" I asked, returning to the main subject.

"Ah, then you have not heard," he replied, "of the investigation made by Messieurs Allard and Vauxelles, who addressed themselves to the directors of the principal theaters: Messieurs Porel, Claretie, Antoine, *et al.*, and to authors like Brieux and Hervieu. They explained clearly where the trouble lies. In the first place, it is a fact that the growing popularity of outdoor sports in France constitutes a real danger for the theater. The love of physical exercise, of bicycling, automobiling, of field sports and ballooning, increases daily with us.

"It is excellent for the muscles, but when one has steered one's "tuff-tuff" all day or been driven through the clouds in a balloon, the tired sportsman is in no condition nor frame of mind to enjoy in the evening a serious play. Is it not so? It is imbecile to expect it of him.

"Notice," he went on, "that I am speaking of the Frenchman upon whom physical exercise has more effect than on the Anglo-Saxon who has been accustomed to it from his youth. With our impetuosity we overdo things. Besides, the athlete is not a good spectator, for what is won for the biceps is lost for the brain.

"What our good man of the world returning from a hard day's sport must have, is either his bed, or a light, gay *revue* with perfect brain rest during it. So he dines late and goes to the circus, or to the performance of a *revue*, or to one of the small theaters, or to the *bouis-bouis*, where the lightest of farce comedies sends him home in a good humor. These latter miniature theaters have become so popular with us that nearly every *quartier* now has its *bouis-bouis*. They have sprung up like weeds and steal an important part of the audience of the serious theaters.

Photo by Stebbing, Paris

A POPULAR STAR OF A REVUE

"Then, too, the modern comforts we find in our restaurants and other public places are lacking in our playhouses, whose interiors have remained unchanged for more than half a century, and where one is badly seated or stifled in a stuffy box. Again, the theater proper, once the most moderate-priced of amusements, has become with us so expensive that most bourgeois families or the average Parisian cannot afford to go.

"Besides, in the serious theaters the *entr'actes* have become interminably long, the acts ridiculously short. We begin to have enough, too, of what we term *pornographie*; of plays full of salacious intrigue and of moral degeneracy, which most of our young authors seem to revel in, and which they call 'a slice of life (*une tranche de vie*).'" He added earnestly:

"The Parisian wants gay plays, clever vaudeville, or little comedies full of sparkling wit and humorous situations. The Parisian wants it all the more because the stage lately has been too much under the influence of foreigners like Ibsen, Sudermann, Hauptmann, Tolstoy and the rest." And the Baron added, with a wink:

THE SETTING OF A SOCIETY PLAY

"It is, after all, an eternal exchange. They have taken from us what we have taken from them. The Romantic school has nourished them, Georges Sand has deeply influenced Russian literature. The type of the Ibsenian woman is Georges Sand's 'Lélia'; even the last play of Dumas, that 'Route de Thèbes,' shows the influence of Ibsen. Dumas imitated Ibsen, but remained himself. These foreign writers are the sons of our French *romantiques*, who themselves were the sons of Schiller and Goethe, just as they in turn were the sons of the eighteenth century and were descended from Diderot and the Encyclopedists.

"But the public revolts against all this modern pessimism," continued my friend—"against Monsieur Hervieu, for example, because he tries to prove in his plays that the stage of to-day is less pessimistic than of old. But he can say all he wishes," affirmed the Baron, warmly, "and the dramatic world may insist that it used to be even sadder, that the old playwrights made people die, that Camille was dead! that the 'Femme de

Claude' was dead! that the theaters in bygone days were sumptuous slaughter-houses, becoming veritable battle-fields by the fifth act, as in 'L'Étrangère,' 'La Princesse George,' and so many others. But what do you want?" the Baron went on. "The public like it better, for when the people in the play are killed off once and for all, the good spectator has no more to worry over." And the Baron pushed aside his *écrevisses*.

"Everything is settled! nothing to think about," he continued. "What fault then do the public find in the modern plays? It is not that they finish badly, but that they do not finish at all!

"The 'dénouement'! Ah! There is a word," cried the Baron, "that has the gift of exasperating all our young authors. They cannot resign themselves like Augier, Dumas and Sardou, to see on the stroke of midnight the hero marry the heroine and virtue get its reward.

"All this is to them old-fashioned. The dénouement of Denise makes them smile, and Francillon, whose heroine hasn't really deceived her husband, seems to them a farce. So, to finish in a newer way, they do not finish at all. *Voilà!* It is simpler, *Hein!* but confess that it isn't any more difficult!

"It is this which depresses the bourgeois, who has come to the theater to amuse himself. He comes out at the end of the play with one more worry on his conscience. He leaves pensive and saddened and oppressed by the gloominess of it all.

"In 'L'Envers d'une Sainte,' François de Curel sends his heroine back to her convent, and Henry Becque ends 'Les Corbeaux' by a marriage which makes you foresee a loveless life of misery and oppression. And the proof of the growing distaste for these sad plays is, that when they played 'Ties' at the Français lately, they felt obliged to give at the end a little play in one act full of gaiety, so as to dry the eyelids and expand the chest of all those who were going to bed."

The hour had grown late, the café was deserted, and the Baron's *écrevisses* had become cold. Outside two nighthawk cabs stood waiting for a chance trip. Fog rose from the slime of the boulevard.

"Come and dine with me to-morrow night at the Café Anglais," said the Baron, as he tucked up the collar of his coat and entered his cab, "and we will go up to the Rabelais and see 'Le Corset de Germaine.'"

You must not judge the Théâtre du Châtelet by the melodramas which accompany the gorgeous spectacles given there; where the ballets are superb and the arts of scenic painting and stage mechanism are seen in their perfection.

AFTER THE THEATER

The melodrama I saw at the Châtelet concurrent with the spectacle in twelve acts and twenty tableaux, was written especially for the chief actor. The hero finds himself, as the curtain rises, in the interior of India, where he soon falls in love with a beautiful princess, Zuléma by name, the only daughter of a rich sheik.

It is love at first sight with Zuléma and the hero, and, before the orchestra had played through a dozen bars, the lovers make hasty plans for an elopement, taking with them Zuléma's faithful maid.

The flight of the happy pair is fraught from that time on with an

exciting series of hairbreadth escapes, but these little incidents do not seem to trouble the hero, he being constantly occupied with his personal appearance.

In the second act the hero led the princess, still in the jeweled tea-gown she wore when they met, up to the last barricade of an elaborately carved oriental city, which is besieged by the English.

Here the hero bids the princess and her maid sit down while he rolls a cigarette, and incidentally picks off with his gun, rested on the sill of a convenient window, the leaders of the advancing army.

FINALE AT THE THÉÂTRE
PORTE ST. MARTIN

During all this fighting his gray leather leggings remain as spotless as the flowing silk scarf heaving over his manly chest, sunburned by adventure. All of which win for him not only the heart of the beautiful Zuléma, but of every other fellow's sweetheart throughout the depth and breadth of the broad gallery.

At last the trio reach a ravine. As yet none of the princess's jewels have been stolen; she still wears the décolleté tea-gown and keeps her manicured nails well polished. In the ravine, behind a papier-maché rock, Zuléma discovers her irate father, who, having been hot-footed up hill and down dale by the bloodthirsty *Anglais*, is glad enough to come out of his hiding place to give his blessing to the eloping pair, and bestow upon the powdered neck of his only child a talisman—whereupon our hero pounds his chest and swears to revenge their pursuers.

An old friend of mine who knows Fourteenth street better than I do tells me that most of the spirit mediums who rent a residence along it during the season when Coney Island is frozen over, never call upon a lesser personage for a spirit answer than Napoléon Bonaparte! For who would pay two dollars to hear Uncle John's opinion of his only living relative? It is surprising that the great Napoléon should make a beeline for Fourteenth street before even going to wash up at the club. But he does. "Ting-a-ling-a-ling," goes the bell, and the head of the First Empire tells from behind a turkey-red curtain all he knows as precisely as a museum dwarf does his age. And so it is with our hero when he stumbles across a witch in the ravine, who happens to be occupied at the time in boiling a purée of certain poisonous herbs. She gives him a morsel of her stew, which he straightway puts in his upper pocket, and becomes as invulnerable against the bullets of the popping enemy as a Sandy Hook target in front of a popgun. They fairly rattle off him. The princess thinks it nothing short of Providence, and says so. She and her serving-maid occupy themselves with their fancy work at the bottom of the secret fastness while our hero with the magnetic eye peers over an adjoining rock, and the father of the fair Zuléma up stage keeps sharp watch of the enemy from beneath the folds of his voluminous cloak.

And so the day passes and night comes on apace and the stars glitter in pairs in the canvas heavens. No sound breaks the stillness of the night save the creepy titter of violins in the orchestra.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris

MLLE. YAHNE OF THE
THÉÂTRE ATHÉNÉE

Now the ravine goes black as a solio print in the sun, and then pales to violet. The ballet has begun. In swinging rhythm a hundred shapely *coryphées* glide and pirouette towards the footlights, withdrawing among the pillars of a golden temple to give place to a hundred others advancing.

These ballet girls are French and can dance.

Calcium lights sizzle and hiss from the gallery and from the upper boxes. Simultaneously, their violet screens change with a click to azure, now to gold. Carmanillo, the *première danseuse*, is whirling in a circle as Amardi taught her to do so well years ago in Milan. When Carmanillo dances she scarcely seems to touch the stage, but when she walks on the flat of her feet, as all ballet women do, she has the awkward gait of an acrobat.

A veil midway down the vast stage lifts, disclosing an oriental city. A cortège of slaves advances, followed by another line of *coryphées*. Behind this barrier of grace and color, come the retinue of a barbaric court, gorgeously costumed, and headed by white Arabian horses, caparisoned in turquoise and gold. The favorite of the Sultan is borne past, reclining on a crimson velvet litter.

A second veil lifts, disclosing in the hazy distance the limits of the city; spires, domes and minarets are bathed in a glow of golden light. The depth of the great stage has been reached, and in reality it is nearly the length of a Parisian block. Upon the topmost pinnacle of this apotheosis of color stands a woman, nude, her hair glittering in jewels.

In the royal box before which the cortège has passed rests the hero for whom the fête has been given. He is still in his spotless leggings. He accepts the homage of the conquered city condescendingly. With him it is a nightly matter of fact. The fair Zuléma is by his side. Her maid has had time to don a Paris hat, but Zuléma clings to her tea-gown and gazes in adoration at the hero. A delicious waltz swells up from the orchestra. The stage is swarming now with whirling, kicking *coryphées*; more horses clatter in over planking, followed by more swaying palanquins; the scene resembles a kaleidoscope of ever changing color, costume and light.

Trumpets blaze from the ramparts of the city, a red fire burns in the wings, and down comes the curtain.

Such is the Châtelet.

As a spectacle it is as perfect as the best choreographic brains can make it.

Half an hour later, in a nearby café, I came across the hero and Zuléma slaking a tropical thirst with two tall steins of beer. The beautiful princess carried her stage shoes with her, wrapped in a newspaper. Presently I caught sight of the faithful maid hurrying to a *cabinet particulier* upstairs with a gentleman in a silk hat and a fur-lined overcoat. I afterwards learned that the maid and Zuléma did not speak.

Alas, all is not gold that glitters!

Chapter Four

BARS AND BOULEVARDS

There was a certain coziness about the “Bar du Grillon.” It was well named, this “Bar of the Cricket,” for, tho a public resort, it was thoroughly homelike.

The walls of the tiny room were of polished cherry, and masses of Jacqueminot roses adorned the bar.

Every day its charming proprietress, Madame Lucille de Bréville, stepped from her brougham, passed through the screen doorway, deposited the contents of the money-drawer in her golden purse, made a memorandum of it with a little turquoise-topped pencil which hung from her châtelaine, gave an extra touch to her wavy hair in a tiny mirror, and straightway became the most gracious of hostesses to a dozen old friends who dropped in during the afternoon and dined at eight.

A pretty woman is difficult to describe, but Lucille de Bréville was more than pretty; she was beautiful, exasperatingly so. It might have been the curve of her white throat, or the merriness in the depths of her violet eyes, or the grace of her matured and exquisite figure which gave her charm, for Lucille possessed all these. Better still, she had a heart of gold and a clever brain, both of which won for her many comrades who were too fond of her to make love to her. Lucille had had many love affairs. That was one reason why she became at thirty quite a serious proprietress of the Bar du Grillon. The pin money which it brought her gave her an interest in life, for most French women seem to inherit a little of the bourgeois blood of the *commerçants*. With her pin money she could do as she pleased; with her annuity it was different. There was always an accounting accompanying that. At thirty, Lucille had sold most of her jewels and with the proceeds founded a private charity, and had settled upon a frail old aunt who adored her a yearly amount sufficient to keep her in modest comfort to the end of her days.

Individually the habitués of the Bar du Grillon were interesting.

There was an aged Countess who came regularly, an amiable old lady, shriveled like a faded rose, the memoirs of whose sixty years would have filled a volume.

There was, too, a robust and jolly editor of a leading journal, a most polished gentleman of France, with a well-trimmed beard framing a countenance beaming with good humor.

Thirdly, there was the Count de X——, who spent most of his time before and after dinner in the only rocking-chair in the place, with Lucille’s two sleek-coated dachshunds curled contentedly in his lap.

Sometimes, on sunny days, the Count went to the races and with absent mind watched the horses win or lose for him. Upon days like these he would return to the bar late to find the rocking-chair occupied, and this is why he did not go to the track oftener. But whether he lost or won, whichever way the wheel of fortune spun for him, his outward manner preserved its even tenor. He was ever polished and agreeable. To him life had no new sensations, and he took it philosophically and with good grace. Perhaps the sole interest which he cherished was his deep affection for Lucille, but since many others among her old friends harbored the same feeling, to which she responded with the most exasperating of platonic friendships, the Count accepted the situation logically and retired to the rocking-chair to talk to the dachshunds.

The young Spaniard who sat at Lucille’s left at dinner accepted the situation less wisely. Often he burst forth beneath his breath with *Caramba!* and other safety-valves of speech. Periodically he became desperate, and, since he could not lay his castles in Spain at her feet, he brooded over the thought of suicide, and would absent himself from the company for days, drinking heavily. Then he would return to the Grillon with the excuse that he had been at death’s door in his apartment. Tho he looked it, Lucille knew better and lectured him for his recklessness and especially for his intemperate habits, which she abhorred.

Another habitué was Mademoiselle Marcelle Dauval, who fell in love with an aeronaut and spent most of her time in balloons. When Marcelle was late for dinner the company wore an anxious air, took out their watches, poked their heads out of the door and surveyed the heavens through the slit of the narrow street. Often, as the dinner hour approached, the sky was black and full of scudding clouds, and the dinner would begin without her in silence born of anxiety. Then what joy when Marcelle arrived, her cheeks glowing from a rarer atmosphere

than any of these sordid worldlings knew! "*Pâté de foie gras*, cold pheasant and *champagne brut* at a height of two thousand meters! Eh, Hop!" and Marcelle gave a little scream at the memory of it. Often she navigated the big balloon herself, throwing out the sand and sprinkling the "Germans," as she used to say, as they glided on long trips over a patch of the Fatherland. Or she would curl herself up in the creaky basket while her companion Jacques busied himself with his aerial observations.

The company would listen entranced to these recitals of the trim Marcelle's daily experiences, and marvel at her fearlessness.

There was another genial comrade, Jeannette Brébant, whose forty odd years had left her frank, mannish and homely. There was no feminine pettishness to be found in Jeannette. She called a spade a spade, and dealt you whole shovelfuls of badinage, shook hands like a man and had a kind word for every one, even her old lovers. A well-groomed woman was Jeannette, with her Titian hair as neatly dressed at four o'clock as the smartest coiffeur in Paris could make it.

At eight, the faithful Louis, whose position as barkeeper and waiter made him indispensable, placed a Japanese screen in front of the door as a hint to warn intruders, pushed the three small tables together and laid the fresh cloth for dinner, bringing the vases of roses which had adorned the bar to the table. Lucille loved flowers, and a basketful of long-stemmed Jacqueminots came daily from the hot-house of her pretty place at Étretat, where Lucille rested during the hottest of the summer months when every Parisian who was able fled from the city.

Then Lucille closed the bar for its annual renovation and the faithful Louis was sent on a vacation to his family on the German frontier, where he rested from his cocktail-mixing and studied English, which he rarely had occasion to use and which was quite as bad as his French. The only thing American about this "American Bar" was the sign over the door, beneath which appeared a long list of American drinks with weird names, translated to him from a bartender's guide published on the Bowery in the early sixties, not one concoction of which he had ever been able to mix.

During the summer period workmen invaded the Grillon and a general varnishing took place. The small tables were repolished and the chimney leading from the tiny kitchen cleaned. The piano was tuned and the cozy interior made spick and span for the grand opening in the fall. Then all of the old crowd would return; it was like the reunion of a family: Jeannette and Marcelle and the editor and the Count, from his villa by the sea, and the Spaniard, who never left Paris. Then such a dinner! So much had happened in the meantime, and there was so much to talk about. The Countess had been a month at Trouville.

"*Ah! mes chers enfants*," she would begin in her gentle voice, "It was not like the old days there any more. Such a common lot about the *petits chevaux*; none of the great toilettes I used to see, nor as many louis won and lost, either," she added, nodding her head.

"I played my small purse cautiously on the '*bande*' one day. I won a thousand francs, and the next morning I took my little bonne Thérèse south; she is not very strong and she was so happy to see her mother."

The editor rose and bowed.

"You have a good heart, old friend," he said, as he bent and kissed the tips of her fingers.

"We stayed there a week on their farm," continued the Countess, "and I spent all day in the sun watching the pigs and the chickens. You have no idea what an appetite I had and what a rest in my old clothes."

"Come, come, all of you, my children," cried Lucille, "my soup is getting cold;" and she buried the silver ladle in the *purée*.

For some moments after the company were served they remained silent. The *purée* deserved a prayer of thanks, while Marie, Lucille's bonne, beamed at their satisfaction from the doorway of her kitchen.

"It is good, is it not?" laughed Lucille, delighted as a child over the new soup.

"*Voilà!* That is a soup," roared the editor.

"My dear child," put in the Count, bowing to Lucille, "I have known intimately for years the best *purées* of the Maison Dorée; those were soups. This is a masterpiece! a dream!! a soup to comfort the soul!!!"

"Ah! you dear old boy," cried Lucille, patting him on the cheek, "you are always so appreciative;" and she added, in a whisper, to the rest: "Marie is enchanted."

IN A BOULEVARD CAFÉ

Over the coffee and liqueur they often discussed in open debate such serious topics as whether or not marriage was a failure; the finer points of fidelity; were women more faithful in their love than men? had luxury become a necessity? what really constitutes happiness in life; were it not better to enjoy the present, since one could not help the past or control the future? etc., etc.

Such discussions as these would last until the hour grew late and the hands of the clock ticking over the bar crawled to another day.

Then the shutters were put up, the company dispersed, and Lucille's waiting brougham would drive her home.

But it was the Count who saw her safely within her carriage, stowed the sleepy dachshunds in their warm corner under the seat, and raised his hat as Lucille drove away.

Some years have passed since the old days when "The Bar of the Cricket" held such comrades as these.

It was winter when I turned down the narrow street again one afternoon and entered the door.

The room was silent. The cozy interior had remained much the same as it had been in the past; the walls of polished cherry, the tables, the piano, were in their places as of old, but the roses on the bar were artificial, and a self-feeding stove roared in one corner.

The faithful Louis came to greet me. He looked haggard and grayer; the only other occupant of the room, a man with a hard jaw and a diamond ring, lounged in the rocking-chair, muttering to himself over a cocktail.

A glance at Louis told me all.

"And so they have all gone?" I said.

"Yes, monsieur;" he paused, and his eyes filled.

"Ah! it is not no more now like old days, is it?" he continued, forcing a smile, and his hand trembled, clutching his napkin. "Madame de Bréville, you know, she sold the bar? Yes, she has gone avay. I hafn't seen her once," and he looked up sadly.

"And Mademoiselle Marcelle, she is no longer in Paris; she vent avay now three years to St. Petersburg," he continued.

"Once I seen de Countess. She come back to see me. Poor Countess, she is sick—sick like one dead—so pale, so white, yust like dot napkin. And now she lives mit Madame Brébant. Ah! Himmel! How I laf sometimes at dot Madame Brébant, she vas alvays making some fun. And de Spanish gentleman, Monsieur Gonsalez! He got married. Ya, he vas married to a fine lady with plenty money."

"And the editor?" I asked.

"I don't see him no more; he vas a goot man;" and he added, softly, lowering his voice, "I tink he vas in love mit Madame de Bréville! Ya, I tink so."

"Have you heard from the Count?" I asked.

"Ah! you don't hear about him, no? He was suicided. He vent and shooted hisself. It vas in all de papers. He vas a fine gentleman, too, de Count. And so, monsieur, it is only Louis who stays; may be I be better off if I do, vhat you tink? May be it vill be a goot place again some day?"

In the Bois one sunny morning a little girl in a velvet dress came running to me as fast as her chubby legs could carry her and screaming: "Monsieur, monsieur, my mamma wishes to speak to you; she is just over there in the carriage," and she pointed with a majestic sweep of her little hand to a landau waiting under the shade of the acacias.

It was Lucille, happily married to one none of us had ever seen.

There are many bars in Paris with barmaids who speak perfect English

and a clientèle of *demi-mondaines* who do not.

Many of these places have grown to be miniature Maximes and quite a few of them keep a *chasseur* in gilt buttons. They are frequented by the idling *jeunesse* with more “louis” than brains, who occupy late in the afternoon the high stools and pay accordingly for the flattering *bons mots* of certain powdered and bediamonded ladies who in years are old enough to be their grandmothers. The fortunes of the callow youths tumble eventually either into the hands of these well-seasoned adventuresses or into the pocket of the card-sharps who patronize many of these bars. Beside these there are many eminently respectable looking old gentlemen who, with unhappy homes and no clubs to go to, prefer passing a restful hour steeped in an atmosphere of mixed drinks, perfume and expensive toilettes. Here Mimi la Duchesse strolls in at five o’clock with her French bulldog, “Mignon,” wearing all the diamonds around his neck that the fair Mimi has not room for on her fingers. Later in the winter, when creditors are pressing and Mimi’s debts have run into several hundred thousands of francs, there will be a very *chic* catalog issued announcing an absolute auction of her effects, together with her private hotel.

It will contain several full-page photogravures upon hand-made deckle-edged paper of her residence, with a frontispiece showing the interior of the “Great Hall” paneled in Spanish leather, its fireplace taken from a famous château of the time of François I., and hanging over the carved shelf a celebrated Madonna, under whose sad eyes have been played nightly so many heavy games of baccarat. Turning another page you will discover the view looking south through the conservatory filled with rare exotic plants and orchids. Another page shows the *salon*, rich in carved ivory and *cloisonne* and *art nouveau*, none of which Mimi knew anything about except that they were expensive and that many of them accompanied the bonbons. Then the dainty boudoir is depicted, paneled in teakwood and lapis-lazuli. Finally her superb jewels are illustrated: priceless strings of pearls; rings of weighty emeralds and pigeon-blood rubies; a gold toilet-set studded with sapphires; and something to adorn Mimi’s neck, composed mostly of diamonds, with a miniature automobile in rubies, pendent from a display of jeweled fruits upheld by two caryatids in diamonds and emeralds. Besides all these, are three ruby collars that Mignon as yet had never worn.

Drawing by Perinet

MIMI QUESTIONS THE BARON

With the publication of this *catalogue de luxe*, rumors reach the ears of the public of the lady’s dire distress, and the pathetic side of this forced sale will be dwelt upon. At the private view her residence is crowded with the curious of the *grand monde*. These women of the most exclusive society cross her threshold and block her stairway and pry into every open corner of her domicile—women who would have been shocked to find themselves in front of her doorstep at any other time. So much for the moral hypocrisy of the virtuous.

And while the stairways at this private view are thronged with the fashionable world, Mimi and her most intimate friends are laughing over champagne and biscuits in the kitchen, the only room that has not been

turned over to the public.

But when a few days after the sale you learn that Mimi has stayed the cruel hand of the law by the sale of half her jewels, and sent out invitations to her nearest friends for a housewarming and a costume ball *chez elle* Sunday night, you begin to see the advertising feature of the scheme, and realize something of the *naïveté* of Mimi.

The opening of the first small bar in Paris managed by women happened only a score of years ago and met with a furor of popularity, the receipts reaching often three thousand francs a day. Since then the number of bars has grown yearly until now many of them are constantly on a point of failure owing to the increase of competition.

Most of them have become the idling resorts of habitués of the new and old *jeunesse* with small fortunes, who spend hours therein chatting with the Mimis and Claras who chance to drop in daily.

The best class of our bars would never become popular with the average Parisian, for the reason that there are no Mimis or Claras in them to talk to. The Parisian demands that at least a certain part of his day should be spent in the society of women, and it has been the habit of his life to have them about him as much as possible. The hours he is forced to spend at his *bureau* or in the Bourse he considers only as a necessary means to the pleasures of his leisure.

In these bars it has become a general custom to serve a table d'hôte dinner at eight to the habitués and to any stranger who may feel himself sufficiently at home to stay.

These small public dinner parties are amusing. As a rule the menu is plain and excellent and the guests agreeable.

Just such a place is the new bar in the rue Duphot, a somewhat pretentious little room smartly appointed and crowded nightly. Another is in a corner opposite the Madeleine, its narrow interior dazzling at night in a profusion of yellow brocade and electricity. Such bars as these are of the newer class, but there are others far more attractive in their simplicity, such as the one in the rue du Helder and in the rue Taitbout and the old London bar in the rue Lysly, and others in the rue St. Honoré and in the rue Louis-le-Grand, yet in none of these has the character remained unchanged, for some of them have had a dozen new proprietors in the last five years.

A most excellent establishment is Henry's bar in the rue Volnay, the most American in its type existing in Paris. It is patronized by old and young from the incoming steamers. If you wish to shut out Paris from your mind, drop in at Henry's any afternoon at five; it is precisely as tho you had been magically transported back to the Hoffman House.

You will hear Southern colonels there still harping on the war, and shrewd politicians from up York State telling personal anecdotes of Mr. Platt, you will find well-groomed men dropping in for a friendly cocktail before dinner, and you will learn all about the fall business in ladies' "plain velours," the button trust, the latest details of the corner on babies' caps, and how Max Dindlehoofer held up Poughkeepsie with a new brand of *champagne brut*—but all this is not Parisian and we may dismiss it.

The annual invasion of foreigners supports the big hotels and the shops of the rue de la Paix and the adjacent neighborhood, but the foreigner makes little impression upon the average Parisian, who regards the coming of the "*étranger*" as a small incident in the life of his beloved city. He passes him unconsciously as one passes the corner of his street.

A QUIET HOUR

"They come and go and we are not conscious of them," said a Parisian to me. "Besides," he added, "there are tens of thousands of Parisians whose daily life is confined to the *quartiers* in which they live—big sections of the city where the foreigner seldom finds himself."

If you wish to see every type of Parisian go by in an endless stream of

swarming humanity, seat yourself upon any of the *terrasses* of the grand cafés that line the sides of the grand Boulevards stretching from the Madeleine to the Théâtre du Gymnase. It is of all Paris the most frequented—the broad highway of this vast city into which pour the inhabitants of thousands of connecting byways.

Its stones are worn by the tramp and scuffle of countless thousands pausing to gaze at the crowded *terrasses* or to stop for an *apéritif*. The system with which these popular *terrasses* are managed by the generals and their lieutenants in charge of an army of hurrying waiters is perfect. These head-waiters in command of the sidewalk portion of these establishments will note your arrival and departure with the quickness with which a telephone operator detects the dropping of one of a thousand numbers on a central switchboard. During the rush you can spend hours over a six sous *bock*, but when you leave, your table will be filled before you have mingled with the passing stream of humanity in front.

READY FOR AN OUTING

The types composing this multitude are as varied as the ever-changing pattern in a kaleidoscope. Every step you take brings you past a dozen individuals each one different from the other. Turn quickly, and count them if you can. The last moment has brought you by a motley score of merchants, a *cocotte*, an Arab sheik, a ragpicker, a lady, a Japanese, a *boulevardier*, a simple soldier, an *officier*, two gamins, and a pretty girl with a bundle. As you turn, a *camelot*, running in a pair of dirty canvas slippers, screams the latest edition of “La Patrie” in your ears, and a man in a top hat begs your pardon for having jostled you in the ribs. There is no time for formalities—he disappears in the stream and you are borne on with the tide to the corner. Taking advantage of a second’s halt of the passing cabs, you dodge over to the opposite curb and into another section of the multitude. The crossing which you have just left behind is noisy with the snapping of whips and swearing *cochers*. In many of these carriages one catches a glimpse of fair women. In a passing cab a *blanchisseuse* and her sweetheart are enjoying a chance drive, with madame’s tardy wash deposited in a huge basket beside the good-natured *cocher*. Old women pushing small carts cry their wares: “*Les belles pêches, voilà les belles pêches, dix sous la livre!*”

Three long-haired students go whistling by. In the midst of the throng you hear bits of conversation:

“Listen!” says a pretty woman radiant over some news to her companion—but they are gone.

Two more go by furious. “It was he then who lied!” cries one to the other—but the crowd swallows them up.

Sentences from strange languages reach your ears in the throng, scraps of Turkish, the guttural of some passing savage, now the cold drawl of an Englishman, again the soft lisp from a Spanish signorita.

“Say, Bill, you’d orter seen Charley, they didn’t do a thing to him, I told Lil, says I ...” and two fellow-citizens stride on.

At the corner, jostled by the human tide, two *chic demoiselles* fresh from a rehearsal at a nearby theater pass, laughing over some recent adventure. The next instant they are climbing to the top of an omnibus and are rattling away toward La Villette.

At night this great highway is ablaze with lights and the swarm still passes, augmented by the masses who have poured from the shops. By eight the restaurants and theaters are full to overflowing, but there is no diminution in the stream of passers-by along the boulevards. The only hours when the life there seems slack is when the masses are at work or in bed. There are no people who enjoy their city more than do Parisians, or who use its thoroughfares so much as a place of pleasure.

The cafés along the boulevards are frequented by a vast *clientèle* of men and women of every clime and occupation. These cafés are favorite

places for rendezvous. In one of them a man glances from time to time to his watch over his paper as he awaits his friend. At the next table a blonde with steel-gray eyes awaits someone, she does not know whom. But there is no hurry in either case.

Parisians never rush. They do not say, “Meet me at three thirty-five,” as we do. “Good, it is understood, my friend,” the Parisian will say as he bids you good-bye; “I shall look for you then for the *apéritif* at Pousset’s.” You must not remind him of his tardiness if he does not arrive until half past six, or be surprised if you see him patiently waiting for you at three. They do things that way in France.

Drawing by F. Berkeley Smith

IN THE BAR DU HELDER

From Christmas to New Year’s the boulevards become still more picturesque. Hundreds of booths are erected along the entire route. At night gasoline lamps flare from the stands of fakirs and venders of toys and cheap novelties who cry their wares. For ten sous you can buy “The Last Sigh of Madame Humbert.”

There are endless mechanical toys for children, and the latest inventions for the household, the inevitable lamp-burner so economical that it actually puts a dividend in your bank if used long enough.

There are to be had for a few sous marvelous potato-peelers which turn with one twist of the wrist the most modest *cuisinière* into a *cordon bleu*. And lightning eradicators for bachelors’ grease-spots, altho many of the benedicts who came to buy needed a stronger mixture than was contained in the neat package with instructions, to render themselves immaculate.

“*Allons! allons! mesdames et messieurs*,” shouts a man in a wig and a silk hat. “With my wonderful invention the misery of old age vanishes. It is a veritable fountain of youth! With it the old become young and youth stays off advancing years! I not only sell it but I give you free the receipt, and all for the price of ten sous.” And the fakir runs his fingers through his wig and throws back the lapels of his shining frock-coat stained green by years of inclement weather.

And there is still another, the gentleman fakir, robust and faultlessly dressed, who is an expert in drawing a crowd, accenting words of promises that stay the feet of those hurrying in front of his flaring lamps. He shows the glittering contents of the box he offers complete for a franc. Pandora would have thrown her own away in the ash heap had she seen half its tempting contents. “*Mesdames et messieurs*, I would have to lie if I told you that ever before was such an offer made to the public, and, as you may be justly inquisitive as to how it is possible to give all this for the small sum of one franc, let me tell you that it is for an advertisement only that I make this stupendous offer—for the night only, and nowhere else and at no other time will you get such an opportunity. Now, *mesdames et messieurs*, follow me closely; for one franc I give this watch, a superb present by itself; with the watch, this chain and cross, bound to please any young lady; with the chain and cross, this silver bracelet that will fit any arm; with the bracelet, this

exquisite pocket-book, also in silver, lined with silk; with the purse, a handsome set of studs for a gentleman. Who would not be proud to own such as these?" And he placed his fat hand over his heart. "And, finally, with all this," he bellowed on, "a miniature brooch. Now, *mesdames et messieurs*, see for yourselves. Step up, step up!" And the fakir pushed back his silk hat on the back of his head, wiped his perspiring forehead, dived in a little red trunk studded with brass nails, and took out a dozen boxes to satisfy the outstretched hands. He had the crowd going and he knew it.

A VETERAN MARCHANDE DE JOURNAUX

At a distance of ten feet, under the glare of the light and handled cleverly, the display of gorgeous trinkets might have come from the Rue de la Paix. His audience became enthusiastic. The hypnotist in the shining tile rattled on, and, while his hands were making change and producing from the two small brass coffers the packages of treasures, his eyes searched for those about to weaken. The francs poured in, and I recalled the words of Mr. Barnum: "The public the world over likes to be fooled."

On fête days and holidays the Boulevard Sébastopol is swarming with an ever-moving mass of humanity. It is one continuous bargain counter from the Place du Châtelet to the Grand Boulevard. Here the bazaars and dry-goods and provision stores do most of their trade on the sidewalk. The fronts of some are festooned with whole cartloads of pheasants, rabbits and hares, and with dozens of deer and wild boar strung up at a bargain. There are other façades ornamented with cheap clothes of the "nobby suits for gents' order," and hardware bazaars and cut-rate sales on roasted coffee, boots, shoes and cheap silk petticoats.

The cafés along the boulevard are for the most part dingy and unpretentious, but they suffice as resting-places to many from the passing stream of humanity. Women without hats, with their market baskets; the pretty daughters of *concierges* out for a day's bargaining; hundreds of the wretchedly poor; families of country *bourgeois*; the tough with his middle swathed in a red scarf and his black hair reversed in greasy wisps slicked over his ears, his mate a girl in a red jacket, with a bit of ribbon serving as a collar, her black hair twisted on the top of her head and shining in pomade. This pair hurry along together, he with the easy gait of a thief, she with her red hands in her pockets, her feet in low-heeled slippers buttoned with a strap, treads on by his side, her eyes scanning the pavement. He has promised to give her a new pair of slippers with high red heels. To-night she will be a queen at the ball of the "Boule Rouge," coveted by other thieves. Farther along a crowd is struggling to take advantage of a cut-price in chickens, and a fat *commerçant* with a red face squeezes his way out holding a pair of bargain broilers. It is a boulevard of the people, a rendezvous for the thrifty and the hard-working, the thoroughfare of the outcast and the unfortunate. It is sordid, but it is intensely human. It is this distinct character of Parisian thoroughfares, each one differing from its neighbor, which makes the highways and byways of the city so interesting to those who delight in walking abroad with their eyes open.

There is not a street one turns down but which is unique in itself. In the shops along the "Rue de la Paix" the art of satisfying the demands of vanity and the whims of the luxurious has been brought to perfection. The Rue de la Paix is looking its prettiest at noon, the hour when all the little *ouvrières* and *modèles* from the smart dressmaking and millinery establishments pour out for their luncheon, happy as school-girls during recess.

If it happens to be a sunny noon with the blue sky as a setting to the gilded balconies brilliant in roses, geraniums and trailing ivy, you will see the street below alive with these merry little women, each one vying with the other in the neatness of her coiffure and the *chic* of her simple black frock and *fourreau*. They promenade chatting, joking and gossiping, without their hats, for no little *ouvrière* ever thinks of wearing one until her day's work is over.

With the exception of the working classes, the average Parisienne is not beautiful. It is her chicness, her vivacity, and her innate knowledge of the artificial which makes her attractive, for not all the actresses in Paris are in the theaters.

In stormy weather you may go to the arcades. These covered *passages*, which have existed through so many Parisian epochs, are honeycombed with shops full of novelties. Such are the Passage de l'Opéra, the Passage

des Panoramas and the Passage Choiseul. How many hearts of French children have palpitated as they were dragged through the Passage Jouffroy, containing the very workshop of Santa Claus himself! It is a paradise of things that squeak and wind up; rattling railroad trains which swing around tin curves and under painted tunnels with a rapidity sufficient to suffocate the helpless toy passengers within; toys for poor little good children and rich little spoiled ones, dolls whose deportment is faultless and whose vocabulary is limited to “papa” and “maman” and those who can not say a word, but whose clothes, from the tiny hat to their walking-boots, with an accompanying trousseau containing a summer and winter automobile coat, goggles and all, might have been fashioned by a Worth. Not even in the public squares are the soldiers of France more immortalized than in the Passage Jouffroy. There are whole forts full of Germans ready to be blown to smithereens by the gallant advancing force of *Les Français*, and formidable cannons mounted on sanded ramparts with pill boxes containing enough ammunition for the most glorious of victories, to say nothing of the gorgeous *pièce de résistance*, the satin pantalooned *balanceur* with violet eyes that close like an owl’s, who accomplishes the most difficult gymnastics by little fits and starts to the accompaniment in liquid tones of a music-box tearing through the overture of William Tell in waltz time.

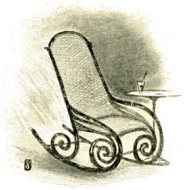
There are also tens of thousands of people who come to gaze at the shops and the passing throng, to whom it is a treat to pass an evening among the throng and lights, and to whom from childhood the mere fact of a promenade has been accepted as a pleasure. You can see them with their wives and children, for Paris counts an endless number of these *petits ménages* where money is scant, work ill paid, and where the habit of the most rigid economy is practised from one year’s end to the other. There is next to no allowance in the budget for pleasure, and the glamour of the street, the ever changing interest of the shop windows, and the warmth and comfort of the cafés, are the only recreations within their means.

Christmas eve is celebrated in every café and *brasserie* by a “*réveillon*,” and for days tables are taken in advance for this gay celebration. Supper is served at midnight and the champagne flows on until broad daylight, and by 2:00 A.M. the cafés are in an uproar of jollity. Their interiors present a brilliant sight, and the informality and good nature of a *bal masqué* reign supreme until the light of dawn creeps through the windows. So great is the crowd at many of the *réveillons* that the entrance doors are forced to be closed at midnight. At the Taverne Royale, at Pousset’s, at the Café de Paris and dozens of other places equally celebrated, there is no gayer sight to be seen throughout a Parisian year.

On New Year’s Eve all Paris is merry.

New Year’s is of more importance to the French than Christmas and is made much of. It is the custom to send bonbons and flowers to one’s friends, and to acquaintances cards *ad libitum*.

In the booths the “ready-while-you-wait” printers do a thriving trade, and the stores for bonbons are open until long past midnight. The stroke of twelve announcing the new year is a signal for all of Paris to embrace. In the cafés along the thronged boulevards and in the public balls you will see the general custom carried out with considerable zest.



High up in Montmartre at the ball of the Moulin de la Galette on the last night of the year, at the approach of midnight the roll of a drum announced the hour, and Father Time with his scythe appeared in the orchestra gallery and melodramatically waved good-by to the old year. Twelve! pealed out the bells, and a great cheer rose from the dancers. Father Time became a youth bearing a placard 1903, and a thousand dancing couples stopped to embrace and wish each other “*une bonne année*.” Simultaneously the orchestra crashed into a lively *galop*, glasses were drained, fresh corks popped from fizzing bottles amid cheers and screams. Everyone was happy, and perhaps a few turned over a new leaf.

Chapter Five

MONTMARTRE

Mesdames et Messieurs,” announced the genial major-domo of the cabaret. “I have the honor to present to you our sympathetic comrade Mademoiselle Marcelle Tournon in her répertoire.” He bowed low to a pretty dark-haired woman advancing through the crowded aisle, and, extending his hand, led her ceremoniously to the platform in front of the piano.

“Come, friends,” cried the director, his ruddy face beaming with enthusiasm, “a *double-ban* of applause for our distinguish artiste.”

Simultaneously there rose a cheer from the roomful of bohemians followed by a double round of handclapping in appreciative greeting. Then, settling themselves beneath the rifts of pipe and cigarette smoke, they remained quiet to listen to the singer. Marcelle smiled graciously in recognition. The owl-like accompanist ran a light *arpeggio* over the keys, and the singer, raising her music, poured forth her mellow voice in “Pierrot.” “Poor Pierrot, you could not give a necklace to Columbine,” sang Marcelle, “and so she left you. Columbine, grown vain and selfish, leaves you to shiver and think in your garret. The strings of your lute are broken, the tunes will not come any more, and your poor heart is aching from a cruel little crack clear across it that never, never, can be mended.

“Columbine fluttered like a butterfly out to the glitter of the world. Thorns scratched her in the garden as she hurried on, and beyond the wall of their paradise she found the world, but it was not at all like the world of her dreams. The rain faded her pretty dress, and hunger shriveled her delicate body; meanwhile the multitude rushed by her unheeding.

“Poor Pierrot! How she craved the sound of his voice now, his trustful eyes, the cool touch of his white cheeks! How merry were the tunes he strummed for her!

“She crawled back as best she could to what was once their paradise; she found herself at last at the gate, and, swallowing her pride, pulled the latch and entered the garden.

“The place was silent. The flowers drooped their heads; not even her old friends the roses nodded to her as she flew on up the path to the house. Here she paused to listen again. A bat squeaked in the eaves over her head, and in terror she pushed open the door and climbed the rickety stairs.

“‘Pierrot! Pierrot!’ she cried, and in the garret she found her Pierrot huddled upon a bed of straw, his poor white face turned towards the wall. Columbine called to him, feebly first, then in a frenzy, but he did not speak. A string of the lute snapped in the silence and Columbine sank down in a little heap, and cried, and cried, and cried. And they say that days afterwards the birds found them and covered them with leaves.”

The song was ended and Marcelle, amid a thunderous applause, joined a group of singers awaiting their turn.

As nightly my pipe added to the hazy atmosphere of the cabaret, I came to know Marcelle better. She was a woman of thirty, beautiful when she sang, fascinating when she smiled, but in repose her clean-cut features were saddened with the hardships of a bohemian life which had been not only a wearing struggle for recognition, but even one for existence. She often spoke of her present country home, of her garden, and how busy she was with it all in the hours in which she was free from the cafés-concerts and the cabarets. I thought I could discover upon a closer glance a tinge of sunburn in her complexion, and her hands looked like those of a woman who spent much of her life digging in her garden.

“You must come and see my garden,” she said one night, “it is on the summit of Montmartre, on the very top of the Butte. Ah! you should see the view from there! All Paris lies below. It is not like a city up there at all as you shall see; it is quite like a little country village. Come! I will show you how to find it,” and, taking a scrap of paper from her music roll, she drew me a plan, a zig-zag route up the Butte which, she assured me if I carefully followed it, would lead me in due time to her tiny villa.

GEORGES WAGUE,
A CELEBRATED
PIERROT

“I call it the Villa Polichinelle,” she said. “That is a good name, is it not! It is only a little joke of a house any way. It is the last one as you turn down the lane and go through the orchard. The others are all occupied, so you see I have neighbors. Madame Franelli, a danseuse at the Opéra and her two daughters, live in the first house. Thérèse, the youngest, took a prize at the Conservatoire. She is very beautiful; you may remember her at the Châtelet, a slight blonde, exquisitely made. It is in her blood to dance well; her mother was once a great dancer but is almost an invalid now and rarely goes on.

“In the second lives a poet of Montmartre; the third is occupied by a famous old clown; a painter has the fourth; and Duflos, the comedian, the fifth. You see we are quite a colony of *artists* together. We call it ‘our village,’ and have elected Duflos as Mayor and Monsieur Dallet, the clown, as chief of police. Dear old Monsieur Dallet, he would not hurt a fly, his heart is so big!

“Come Sunday morning. I will show you my tulips and we can breakfast in the garden.”

And Marcelle rolled up her music and hurried away to sing at another cabaret.

I folded the all important plan with its scraggly route carefully in my portfolio.

Sunday dawned clear and sparkling in sunshine, so to the garden I started. Leaving my cab at the place Blanche, I began my ascent of the Butte by way of the steep rue Lepic, pausing for breath under the ancient windmill of the Moulin de la Galette.

Up! up! up! out of Paris, for the city now lay shimmering in a haze of sunshine below. The spires of Notre-Dame and the massive roof of the Opéra jutted from a sea of streets and buildings. And so I kept on up the Butte, past a cobbler who kept a cow. I was crawling now like a fly over the bald cranium beneath which, as all good *Montmartrois* will tell you, lie the brains of Paris.

I turned up quaint streets, many of them lined with two-story houses of ancient pattern, which leaned for support upon their sturdier neighbors, who in turn rely upon great beams shored against their crumbling backs. I sat down by the roadside to re-study my plan. “To the left,” it said, and I kept on. A flock of geese waddled indignantly ahead of me and, crossing the road, disappeared under a fence. Nearby some chickens scratched and pecked away in front of a doorway whose threshold was worn and polished by the passing feet of a hundred years. I peeped through high fences behind which lay orchards and wild gardens grown picturesque from neglect, and farther on I passed an ancient burial-ground.

Here the narrow streets were unpaved and at night gloomily lighted by an occasional oil lantern, friendly safeguards to the wayfarer obliged to turn these corners after dark.

I confess I was grateful for the sunlight, as I imagined how this strange quarter would look at night, and recalled to mind that the notorious Cabaret of the Assassins lay upon an isolated ledge of the Butte but a stone’s throw away.

Finally, at the end of a lane I came to a gate, and, entering, found my way through a tangled orchard leading to a small settlement of frame houses fronting on a winding path. I looked about for the inevitable *concierge*, to whom to disclose my identity and ask permission to enter this bohemian community, when, with a growl, an ugly-looking dog rushed to the end of his chain and, with his scrubby neck bristling, stood eyeing me viciously. Over his kennel was printed in blue letters “*Concierge*,” evidently the work of Marcelle’s neighbor, the “clown,” I

thought. Measuring the length of the brute's chain and the circle it would describe, if swung in my direction, I shied by him and kept on my way. At the narrowest part of the path I found another sign: "Room for three automobiles only." Over the door of the smallest house I read: "Château of the Duke and Duchess of Montmartre." I passed the poet's house, a little box of a place, half smothered in a tangled garden. He had decorated his modest façade with the verses of Villon and Verlaine; a satyr in stone rose from a labyrinth of flowers, and nearby a marble nymph, bathing in a miniature pool, peered laughingly from her hiding-place at the immovable satyr. Art was far more cheaply to be had there than three meals a day.

The pathway now ran through a short thicket. Beyond it lay the crest of the lane, an expanse of blue sky, and, nestling in the prettiest of tiny gardens, the "Villa Polichinelle."

Marcelle, who had been watching me find my way, now called to me from an upper window, and came down to greet me in a sunbonnet and a calico wrapper.

"I am so glad you have come," she said, cheerily. "And did the plan work well?" she added, with a laugh.

"Perfectly," I replied. "Only you did not put in the dog."

"Ah! Cerbère—yes, I know. He growled at you because you were a stranger. He is not a bad old fellow, tho, when you know him; you see he seems to feel responsible for us."

I could not help shivering at the thought that Marcelle came home long after midnight, often alone, through rain, snow and slush, passing, to get to this mountain retreat, through one of the worst quarters of Paris, inhabited for the most part by gentlemen and their consorts whose records are as black as the ace of spades.

"Now," said my hostess, "you must see all of my modest kingdom. First my garden, then my family, and then my house."

"Good," said I, "the garden shall come first."

"Ah! I am glad you love flowers," cried Marcelle, growing enthusiastic as I complimented her upon the beauty of her roses. She threw aside her sunbonnet and led me triumphantly to a bed of red and yellow tulips, which was edged by a row of box skirting the neatly-raked gravel path, so characteristic of French gardens.

"I planted them all myself," said Marcelle, "except this last row, which the poet helped me to do. You see they are jumbled—as I told him, like some of his verses. He is a symbolist, you know. Nothing the poet writes can one ever understand. But he says we all will do so some day—that the cheap realism of the present will soon sink into oblivion and be forgotten."

There were beds of *giroflees*, masses of pinks, odd corners of velvety pansies, and bower-like arbors covered with Jacqueminot roses. We descended some stepping-stones to a smaller lower garden and entered a thatched kiosk lined with turkey red, upon which were hung bas-reliefs and pen-and-ink drawings, souvenirs from those who loved the good-fellowship of this Arcadian nook.

And now Juliette, Marcelle's bonne, her sleeves rolled over the elbows of her plump arms, came to the kiosk with vermouth and cigarettes. Following her, a green parrot pigeontoed his way down the gravel walk, muttering to himself a jumble of phrases.

"Come, my good Jacquot!" called Marcelle to the parrot. "Jacquot is one of my family; you shall see the others: my cat, my big Frou-Frou, and her pretty kittens, and the pigeons, and all the rest of the ménagerie after *déjeuner*."

Jacquot climbed to the table and bent his beak to his breast. While Marcelle rubbed the pinfeathers of his green neck, he clucked and sang to himself in delight. Then he shook himself, dilated the pupils of his yellow eyes as he took a careful look at me, and, having satisfied himself as to my character, pigeontoed his way slowly to my shoulder. He sang quite clearly a song that Marcelle had taught him:

"*J'ai du bon tabac dans ma tabatière,*
J'ai du bon tabac, tu n'en auras pas."

Half an hour later Juliette laid the table in the kiosk for breakfast, with two extra places set for the clown and the poet, who both came late, with endless apologies to Marcelle for their tardiness.

"There had been an extra rehearsal at the Nouveau Cirque," explained the merry old fun-maker, and he mopped his brow, perspiring from his quick walk up the Butte. Marcelle straightway forgave him, and further

cheered him with an affectionate pat on the top of his shining bald pate as he slid into his chair. As he unfolded his napkin there tumbled into his lap a *boutonnière* of mignonette, which our hostess had thoughtfully hidden for her old comrade. He had been her counselor and friend, often sharing with her the little he had during her days of penury, for Marcelle's life, as I have said, had been from babyhood a struggle for existence. She was a flower that had fought its way to the sunshine from between the stones of Paris.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

CHRISTIANE MENDELYES AS ROSALIE

"And you, my big rabbit!" cried Marcelle, addressing the poet with the air of a judge; "what have you to say for yourself in apology for being late?" The poet sighed, ran his fingers through his long hair, hung his black hat upon a convenient peg, and, drawing up his chair, replied, wearily: "Would that I might join Sylvia and her nymphs and drink and be merry by the moon and not by the hour!"

"*Flûte!*" replied Marcelle. "Don't you suppose they had the best of regular appetites in those days and quarreled if the soup was late? *Allons, mangez, mes enfants*, and be grateful that the sun shines and we have enough for to-day."

After *déjeuner* the clown and the poet played shuttlecock and quoits in the garden. The poet met ignominious defeat, for the aged gentleman, whose life had been spent on the sawdust, was a dead shot with a quoit and as agile as a weasel. Later we all went into the villa for a song, the clown playing Marcelle's accompaniments upon a melodeon. Some of its keys emitted cries of distress, and this furnished the clown with an impromptu pantomime that sent Marcelle into screams of laughter. So the afternoon passed with songs, Madeira and cigarettes.

If the garden was interesting, the interior of the little villa was none the less so, for it was a miniature museum of souvenirs.

The walls of the small salon were covered with pastels. There were original drawings and bas-reliefs by celebrated men. Pen-and-ink sketches, caricatures, charcoals and oils, each one bearing a little message of regard and friendship to Marcelle, lined the walls of the narrow stairs leading to the dainty boudoir.

Even the kitchen, shining in its well-polished battery of copper saucepans, held its art treasures.

It was nearly dusk when the poet and I took our leave of our charming hostess and the "Villa Polichinelle."

The clown had been obliged to hurry away earlier to attend some affairs preliminary to the night's performance.

As the poet and I descended the Butte together, all Paris lay spread out in the evening glow below us.

It lay like a vast gray sea sparkling and phosphorescent with tens of thousands of lights. Far below, away in the twilight, jutted the spires of Notre-Dame; to the right rose the Opéra, square and massive like a tomb.

I thought of Marcelle's paradise perched in the pure air above the reek and filth that hung like a miasma about the base of the Butte, and what it meant to her as a refuge from the smoke and stifling air of cabarets and cafés-concert.

We kept on through the alleys of streets, zig-zagging our way down the Butte, and turned the corner of the Cabaret des Assassins. A kerosene

lamp burned in the greasy kitchen, from the door of which a hag of a woman appeared and screeched at us as we passed:

"*Bonsoir!*"

It was in midwinter one misty morning in January when I revisited the primitive village upon the summit of Montmartre. This time I chose for my trail a back street which led me up to the ancient Cabaret of the Assassins, now known under the name of the Lapin Agil. The cabaret, a squat, sordid two-story structure, stands upon a solitary corner of the Butte, forming an angle with the rue Saint Vincent and the rue des Saules. Overlooking Paris below, a back window glared in the light of the chill morning from beneath an overhanging eave, like the eye of a murderer in hiding. The place as I entered was silent and deserted except for the individuals who kept it.

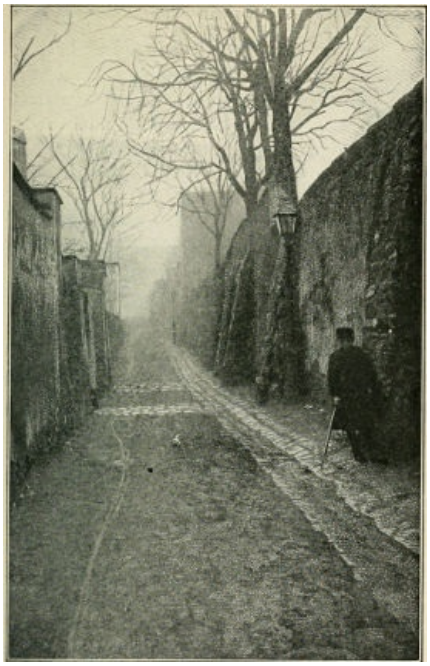


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A MISTY MORNING IN THE RUE DES SAULES

A girl of fifteen addressed me in a timid voice as I entered the low-ceiled *buvette* adjoining the cabaret. She wore a massive marriage ring. She seemed somewhat frightened and suspicious, as tho I were a government detective armed with a warrant.

We spoke of the weather.

She directed me to a bench in the deserted cabaret, stale with the odor of the night before, and brought me a short glass with a thick bottom. Into this she poured a draft of syrupy vermouth and apologized for the absence of her mother, the *patronne*, who had not yet returned from market.

Not many came by there in the morning, she ventured, but at night it was gay, the cabaret was then crowded she informed me, and leaving me with my *apéritif* she disappeared through the door leading to the *buvette*.

Upon the walls of the cabaret hung cartoons and crude sketches left in later years by bohemian habitués who made the place their rendezvous.

In a corner stood a piano, its keys yellow with age like the teeth of a horse.

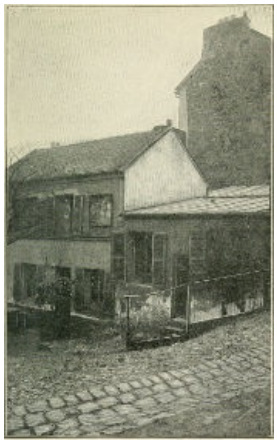


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

THE CABARET OF THE ASSASSINS

Madame the *patronne*, a slatternly looking woman in a calico wrapper, returns from marketing with two mackerel which she had bargained for from a push-cart in the street below. She led me through a box of a kitchen and showed me a small yard in the rear littered with debris. This she informed me was used as a summer garden in season. She seemed to pride herself upon its attractiveness. I passed an open door of a back room and caught a glimpse of a man leaning over a table, drunk, and unshaven for days. He looked up at me maliciously as I past; then I heard him muttering and swearing in his *argot* at the girl with the rolled-gold ring.

From the *patronne* I learned that the cabaret had gone through many changes. It was evident, however, that the general atmosphere had remained the same. It looked all that its title of the Assassins implied. The muddy streets leading to it were unpaved and lighted still by an oil lantern at the corner of the rue St. Vincent, a sinister looking lane flanked by ancient buttressed walls, which kept from sliding into the crooked roadbed old tangled gardens and scattered derelicts of houses.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

INTERIOR OF THE CABARET OF THE ASSASSINS

The rue Tholozé, snaking its way up from the rue Lepic to the ball of the Moulin de la Galette, is purely a hill street. Its gutters are flushed with clear water which flows in miniature torrents. Horses never climb the rue Tholozé, and pedestrians going up to the ball pause at the landing stages for breath. Those living along this mountain highway must needs step out of their residences with their sea legs on, for the declivity which slopes past their doorways resembles somewhat the angle of a promenade deck in a gale. The hill begins to ascend in earnest after you pass the dingy little bohemian restaurant of the Vache Enragée on the rue Lepic, an *intime* rendezvous of bohemians of the Butte.

With the renovation and reorganization of the “Moulin de la Galette” the famous ball held for so many generations in the granary under the ancient windmill took a change for the better.

Prior to this the ball bore an unsavory reputation. It was the scene of continual fights and the rendezvous for every villainous *rapin* of Montmartre and their equally vicious female companions, the *gigolettes* and *mômes* of the Butte.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

EARLY MORNING—THE
MOULIN DE LA GALETTE

To-day the spacious ballroom is remodeled and redecorated with green lattice and crystal chandeliers in the style of the ballroom of the old *fête champêtre*. The orchestra is the best of its kind in Paris. The floor is kept in perfect condition and all Montmartre goes to the "Galette" to dance and be merry. Models, *grisettes*, *cocottes*, shop-girls, students and clerks, painters and musicians, sculptors and poets, meet and mingle. While its clientèle is drawn from all Paris, the majority of it is *Montmartrois*.

Adjoining the ballroom is a quaint summer garden.

A flight of wooden steps leads from the garden to the table-like rock above, crowned by the ancient windmill bearing the date 1256.

I entered the Galette one crisp morning by way of the lane in the rear and through the door of the *buvette*. Sleepy waiters were scrubbing and polishing after the ball of the night. The tiled floor of the *buvette* was as spotless as soap and water could make it. Some coffee steamed cheerily on the stove, and the pots and pans hanging above it shone invitingly. In the ballroom a garçon was rewaxing the floor; through the skylight streamed the morning sun, shining prismatically through the crystals of the chandeliers. I went out into the garden and climbed the stairs leading to the old mill.

It stood gaunt and black against the sky, outstretching its skeleton arms. Its body was warped and weather-beaten. It seemed to have died in its shell like some mammoth scorpion.

From a Poster

THE MOULIN ROUGE

What a "*vie de Bohème*" it has seen in its lifetime!

It has been danced around by *grisettes* and students in the moonlights and daylights of ages past, and has served faithfully as a refuge and fortress during the horrors of the siege of '71. Beside it still glow the lights of this famous old ball up to which climb nightly a merry

pilgrimage of the great-grandchildren of Bohemia.

Some months ago what is probably the most noted of bohemian resorts, the Moulin Rouge, closed its doors—the famous Red Mill had come to an end, and Paris mourned its death in caricature. For months its façade was barricaded with scaffolds, and rumor was current that the old hall was to be transformed into a music-hall.

At last after many delays the opening of the new Moulin Rouge was announced. The public poured in to find one of the handsomest of modern music-halls with a most excellent restaurant. A table d'hôte dinner is served at little tables, glowing in fairy lamps, where one can dine and watch the performance.

Back of this spacious theater for ballets and *revues* there is a *promenoir* where all of the old attractions of the Moulin Rouge and many new ones can be seen during the *entr'actes*, including the quadrilles. So that after all the Moulin Rouge did not die—rather let us say that it was born again, and is now all that many of us expected to find it upon our first visit years ago and never did; for the Red Mill was then a tawdry place at best—somewhat of a snare and a delusion.

Montmartre is the kingdom of artistic Bohemia. The Butte is honeycombed with the ateliers of painters and sculptors and the modest sanctums of struggling poets and musicians. This is only one side. The other side, like the degenerate half of some visages, is all that is vicious and criminal. Back of every blaze of light in Montmartre there is a shadow, and from out of many of these dark corners flutter to the lights of the Boulevard de Clichy, like nocturnal moths, scores of gaudy women —too frequently the spiders who dare not venture in the sun and whose claws have been known to have been smeared with the blood of the helpless more than once, crawl from these squalid holes beyond the light.

A FLOAT IN THE CORTÈGE DE VENUS AT THE MOULIN ROUGE

Montmartre is ablaze after midnight, and the cafés along the Boulevard de Clichy are swarming with women to whom to-morrow is much the same as to-day—women who from one year's end to the other seldom see the sun, whose days begin at midnight and whose mind, body and soul have long ago passed to the trusty keeping of the devil.

There is always one thought uppermost in the mind of the lady from the rue Blanche: it is that somebody shall pay the waiter as much and as continuously as possible between midnight and daylight.

There is little about human nature that this daughter of Montmartre does not know. Her ears are trained to a marvelous sense of acuteness, and her intuition and perception make the shrewdest mind-reader appear as tame as a fortune-telling horse.

The lady from the rue Blanche not only knows precisely what you are thinking about, but your past, present, and your disastrous future if you continue her acquaintance. During this time she will relieve you with the skill of a magician of your small change, and, if given time, your entire fortune including your watch. She will lead you into the worst traps a fertile brain can invent. Having robbed you of everything else you possessed, including your senses, some fine day she will either hand you over to the police or open fire on you in a jealous rage if only for the satisfaction of peppering away at your useless carcass.

A FLOAT IN THE CORTÈGE DE VENUS AT THE MOULIN ROUGE

This may seem a fantasy, but it is precisely what has happened, and if you don't believe it ask the policeman.

These *petites femmes* of the Butte glide by with the quickness of an area cat. They are reckless, strong, and fearless, these *noctambules*. The eyes of Fanchette burn brilliantly in their sockets. Her lips are scarlet with a hasty dab of rouge. The rest of her visage is as pale as Pierrot's. When you look at her with your eyes half closed, you seem to see her skull.

Claudine enters the "Abbaye de Thélème" at midnight, the pleats of her white silk petticoat spread out with the pride of a fantail pigeon.

Drawing by Galaniz

UP THE RUE BLANCHE

She wears a scarlet jacket studded with polished brass buttons that catch the light as she moves. The costume is a *nouveauté* from the Montmartre bazaar which has excited the envy of every other Mimi and Cora along the Boulevard de Clichy since Wednesday, when Claudine became the duchess of Montana. This title was bestowed upon her by a broad-shouldered cow-puncher of our far West, who insisted upon the title and dressed her according to his ideas of how a duchess "oughter look." A scarlet hat with a green feather flames upon her head, and her feet are encased in new gray suede slippers whose high heels do good service in elevating the lady to her suddenly exalted position. On her thumb she wears a ruby ring, a gift from her cowboy admirer.

Lélise glides into the "Nouvelle Athénée," a café whose clientèle is made up of soberer habitués.

She is pretty, this Lélise, a nervous little blonde with the merriest of blue eyes, and the pink of neatness, her clothes being fashioned in the best of Parisian good taste.

"*Dis donc, mon vieux*," she calls, clapping her hands to the garçon.

"*Un grog bien chaud, et de quoi écrire.*"

"*Bien, madame*," replies the garçon.

"*Un Américain, un!*" he calls, as he hurries for the portfolio and pen and ink, which he lays before Lélise quite ceremoniously, while another

waiter brings to her the steaming "*grog Américain*."

Lélise draws off her gloves with an air of importance and begins a voluminous correspondence. Five letters in all, written in a rapid angular hand like the autographs across the pictures of soubrettes.

Handwriting of this sort has evidently made its impression upon Lélise. She writes with all the extravagant flourish of these souvenirs—she even adds Ys and Ts of her own creation. This often leads to a reckless use of capitals beginning words of importance. Furthermore, she underscores these with savage-looking scratches meant to emphasize the intensity of her feeling about whatever comes into her pretty head. The solemn word, "*L'Amour*," is often accented by two of these parallel lines drawn with unhesitating decision. Again the tender word, "*Toujours*," is half ripped from the paper by two formidable underlines, each of them started with a little dig that makes the pen spatter.

"*Immédiatement*," and words suggesting hate and jealousy are made to glare out from the page like danger-signals.

But you must not think me guilty of overlooking the five letters of Lélise—I can vouch only for the one I received. The aged garçon, François, who brought it over to me hidden in the folds of a fresh napkin, received it through mademoiselle's gray muff while with the other hand he helped her escort, a dashing young officer of the hussars, on with his night-coat.

The young officer's tip slid to the bottom of François's pocket, where it clinked against my own.

ALONG THE BOULEVARD
CLICHY

Lélise buttoned her gloves, adjusted her veil, picked up her skirt and followed her escort to the door, that François held open, and the two disappeared in the night.

Even in Montmartre there is some discretion.

And there is still another type of *Montmartroise*. The woman in this case is often a model of rational living and rare devotion, sharing the good and ill luck of her lover with the patience, pluck and fortitude of a *bonne fille* and a good comrade.

If her jealous mate growls in his cups during their dinner in some favorite café, it is she who averts the row, pacifies the offended gentleman at the next table, quiets her *amant* with a kiss, calls for the bill, sees that it is just, and continues by her alert brain and her intuition to please her quarrelsome lover by distracting his pugilistic mind towards a more peaceful mood.

When he wakes up he will be convinced more than ever that this Parisian demoiselle is, after all, his best friend.

If you wish to see "Mademoiselle of the Butte" in all her war-paint, go to the "Abbaye de Thélème" after midnight, where you will find her ready to eat, drink and be merry upon the slightest provocation. Follow her later to the Capitol among those who consume little suppers at big prices during the hours when the *sergents de ville*, pacing their beats outside, draw up the hoods of their night-cloaks to protect them from the chill of the early morning.

Still later you will find this nocturnal demoiselle, the idol of the generously drunk, picking up her skirts in a bacchanalian revel between the hours of three and four in the restaurant of the Rat Mort. Her eyes shine, her cheeks burn, the champagne and the lights seem to madden her, a madness of sheer ecstasy. Life for the moment is *en rose*. She feels herself a queen, defiant, seductive, dangerously beautiful. Four dancers

from the Casino de Paris arrive amid screams and applause. Claudine is dancing on a table; an instant later she is being carried on the shoulders of a howling mob around the room. The music is drowned in the cries of "*bis, bis!*" One see through the whirl and glitter and smoke, flashing gems, the shimmer of silk hose, and the glint of bare arms.

Morning begins to pale. The streets are silent and deserted except for an occasional party of roisterers issuing from some closing café. Occasionally a woman passes coughing in the choking fog of the early morning. The ragpickers begin to make their rounds.

There is still another refuge for this Mademoiselle "Sans Gène." That is the restaurant of the Tréteaux de Tabarin on the rue Pigalle. Upstairs as in all the others there is a supper room. This one is smaller than the rest and more *intime*.

The settees behind the tables are occupied with those to whom night seems ever too short. A *chansonnier* before the piano is singing the waltz song "L'Amoureuse;" many at the tables have grown pensive under the spell of the singer. A girl in a décolleté gown at one of the tables is sobbing hysterically.

"It was the Bénédictine," remonstrates her companion. "You were *imbécile* to drink so much, *ma chérie*."

From the low ceiling glow electric lamps shaded with ground glass like those in the cabin of a yacht.

Three women and an old beau are dancing an impromptu quadrille before the tables.

Wisps of tobacco smoke curl lazily up from the little tables. Some of the cigarettes smoulder between lips of décolleté women, others are held shakily between the fingers of hands blue-veined, pallid and weighted with jewels. The scent of a score of perfumes hangs in the reek of smoke. Suddenly there is a scream and a crash of glass. A gentleman in a damaged shirt-front has slipped, dragging with him a table and upsetting the contents of an adjoining one.

He falls with a jar which set the lamp globes in the ceiling to shivering. The wine sweeps over the table and puddles down on the floor, soaking through the silk petticoat and lace stocking of a pretty brunette. Two waiters hurry with napkins to soak up the wet. When this bull in a china shop has sufficiently and substantially apologized, fresh wine bubbles in the glasses for the victims of the flood.

At last the heavy curtains over the windows are flung open and a white light from without floods the room, making the eyes sting. It is broad daylight. Cabs clatter up, are filled, and rattle away.

"By Gad! Charley," says a portly American at a corner table to his friend, a short thick-set man whose mustache is curled in pomade, "We'd better git along and git some sleep if we're going to sell Jake any goods before lunch. So long, Flossy," he adds with a yawn, addressing mademoiselle who had been supping with them.

"*Bonsoir, monsieur*," replied the girl in a gentle voice looking at him steadily as he sways and relights his cigar, pushing his silk hat in a cooler position on the back of his head. It did not occur to him to raise it.

"Cute gal," says the portly man to his friend, his patent leather shoes squeaking as he walks ponderously to the door.

"One of them swell *cocottes*, eh?" replied the friend, "she seemed to take quite a shine to you, Bill."

"Hell," guffaws the portly one, importantly. "I never give 'em no encouragement." And the two stumble down the narrow stairs that lead to the rue Pigalle. In the chilly street the portly one fumbles for his cigar case.

"Smoke one of them light ones, Charley," he says, as the two roll into the cab and the fat one slams the door.

Happily there are other types of *Montmartrois* than the *noctambules* and *noceurs* who frequent the Rat Mort and Tabarin.

Thousands of domestic honest bourgeois live on the Butte whose lives are spent in stores and workshops and in caring for their wives and children. There are many conservative old families besides these whose children are well brought up and well educated, by a rigid economy on the part of parents whose daily bread has been earned by a long and patient fight.

Many of these parents are in the employ of the government; teachers in the public schools and in the bureaus of the administration where they work hard and are but poorly paid. Theirs are the houses which the stranger rarely if ever sees. They remind one of the most domestic and conservative homes of New England. They seem an anomaly in this Latin civilization.

Paris is one of the easiest places in the world in which to empty one's pocket, and one of the most difficult in which to earn an honest penny. It is the want of money among Parisians and the difficulty of earning it which in late years has deadened much of the extravagant gaiety which once existed. Parisians are content to adapt their pleasures to their purses.

There are scores of men in Montmartre who began life talented beyond the average in the arts, and who have sunk by idleness into poverty and oblivion. Talent alone is not sufficient; one must improve it and drive it, and many of these long-haired velvet-cloaked geniuses of the Butte are too lazy by nature to do this. Instead, they adopt a *genre* of their own, and despise all other schools of art, never departing from their methods in spite of the fact that their incomprehensible creations seldom bring them a sou. So they wrap themselves up self-satisfied in their cloaks, go through life without a hair-cut, tell you all other art is rot—and starve.

This afternoon I followed one of these dream painters to his studio. The way led up a crooked street, down a narrow alley, into a court full of rubbish, up a flight of dingy stairs, down into another court (this one as dark as the stairs), up another rickety flight, and so to his door.

A feeble light struggled through the cobwebbed panes of the studio skylight, and the room was in a state of dirt and disorder. Tumbled in one corner were a lot of unfinished canvases, and dumped in another was a pile of unwashed dishes. A dirty divan canopied after the fashion of the Roman emperors served as a bed of state for the great man.

That he was once a genius was unquestionable from the evidence of some of his early works. He had been a masterly draftsman and a painter of virility and great richness of color. That is, when he painted, but this he never did so long as he possessed a sou. Many of his subjects I now found difficult to understand, even when he turned them right side up for me.

Some of them seemed prehistoric. Wan wisps of maidens floated dimly through heavy fogs, guided by symbols and illuminated by sacred fires. Some of them had no eyes and trailed their feet along the ground.

This artist was only one of many who cursed the public for their financial appreciation of popular modern art, which he termed "*des petites cochonneries*!"

There is a large class of poets, painters, sculptors and musicians for whom the wheel of fortune spins capriciously. Their idle hours are spent among their comrades in the cabarets and the little *boîtes* tucked away in odd corners of Montmartre, where they breakfast and dine, accompanied by their sweethearts.

Of the latter they are a type unto themselves and wholly aloof from the life and night types of the rue Blanche.

Gaston the painter is a disciple of Botticelli, and you find the influence of dress and coiffure of that period asserting itself in the style of clothes and arrangement of hair of his sweetheart, Mariette. With her locks in *bandeaux* she looks as saintly as a church picture.

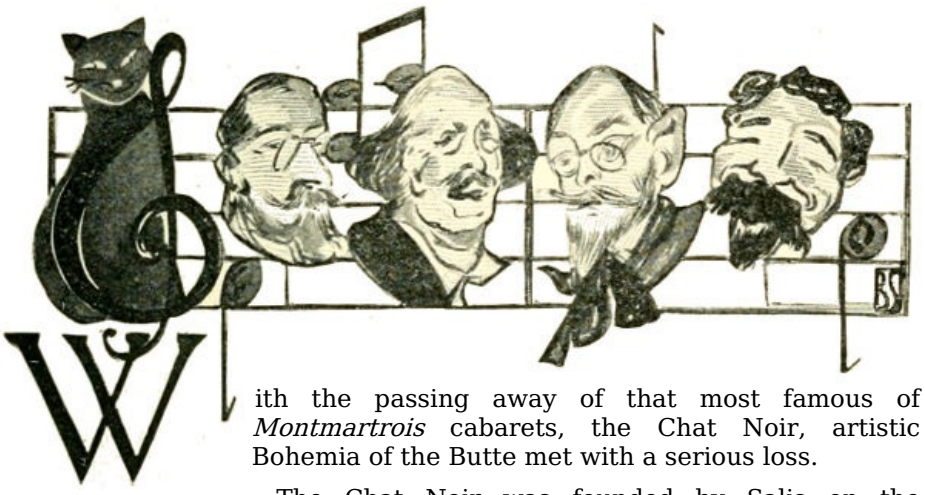
Jacques the musician, a composer of sixteenth century pavans and minuets, has dressed the fair Amélie in an old-fashioned frock, cut low about the throat; her pretty face is framed in two curls, and there is a rose in her hair.

Sing, dance and be merry, ye children of the Butte! Ye who have inherited the Paradise of Bohemia, ye who know its every nook and corner, its bright and its dark days, its poverty and its riches! The love and the wealth of *camaraderie* is yours. To you the rest of the world counts for naught.

To you, Gaston, a health to Mariette. To you, Jacques, a toast to "la Petite Amélie."

Chapter Six

IN THE CABARETS



With the passing away of that most famous of *Montmartrois* cabarets, the Chat Noir, artistic Bohemia of the Butte met with a serious loss.

The Chat Noir was founded by Salis on the boulevard Rochechouart in 1881. Its beginning was a modest one, and for some time the little place existed in obscurity. Finally a club of bohemians called the “Hydropathie” came over from the Quartier Latin and made the Chat Noir their place of meeting.

They organized weekly reunions where each member of this jolly company recited original verses or sang songs of his own composition.

These reunions soon became open to the public, and so the first singing cabaret of its kind was created.

The small room was filled with a collection of bas-reliefs, busts and drawings, contributed by its artist habitués. It offered nightly a shelter to the budding genius of Bohemia and a place of free license for patriotic and political songs, satires, and parodies upon the current topics of the day.

And so the cabaret that Salis had started became an acknowledged success.

Later Salis moved the Chat Noir to the rue Laval, where it became an organized cabaret with a regular staff of poets, singers, and satirists, who made their appearance no longer in public as amateurs but as professionals.

Many of the lives of these *chansonniers* have been varied and checkered with vicissitudes. Few, if any, began either as singers or entertainers. They have drifted into their profession through their inherent love of a life steeped in the atmosphere of Bohemia, where things original, beautiful, satirical, or pathetic, find ever the keenest appreciation and the shrewdest criticism.

The various occupations to which Fate had so cruelly destined these bohemians with the sacred fire of art burning unceasingly within their breasts, could not long be borne with patience. Many had been doomed by practical and unsympathetic parents to become bank clerks, merchants, accountants in gas companies, engineers or architects. All of these sordid careers were regarded as an unbearable present and an impossible future by inspired bards whose lyres were tuned to a higher key than the humdrum of business.

Within these singing poets the sacred fire of genius smoldered, but not for long. Like a live coal in the ashes it burst into gentle flame when breathed on by approbation. Soon the flicker became a blaze of glory; the names of those who had left their distasteful situations in the commercial world were heralded with praise by thousands.

These bards of the Butte thenceforth consecrated the remainder of their lives to the Muses. Nightly they sang to the listening throng. All of intellectual Paris came to applaud them, and their stuffy little cabaret of the Chat Noir was jammed nightly to the doors.

Salis by the advice of Emile Goudeau published a paper called the “Chat Noir,” in which appeared sketches and poems of authors like Armand Masson, Rollinat, Haraucourt, and other members of the club, illustrated by now celebrated artists, such as Steinlen, Caran d’Ache, Henri Rivière, and Willette, with drawings and cartoons in an original style hitherto unknown.

In 1885 Salis moved the Chat Noir to the rue Victor Massé. The cabaret was redecorated with rare taste and became a popular rendezvous for the *haut monde*. So great was the crush that the club was

forced to place a guardian before the door and permit only twenty persons to enter at a time.

Henry Somm organized the first theatrical performance given at the Chat Noir. Before this there had been only the performances of singers and satirists.

Somm erected a Punch and Judy where he played a burlesque of his own, entitled “Berline de l’Emigré.”

The performance was found to be much too short. To lengthen it, the painter Henri Rivière stretched a napkin over the toy proscenium and passed in defile a procession of policemen cut in cardboard and silhouetted in shadow against the napkin. As the cardboard policemen advanced in file, Jules Jouy sang his popular satire on the police entitled, “Les Sergots.”

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

SOME OF THE CHANSONNIERS
IN THE CABARET QUAT-Z’ARTS

This was the beginning of the shadow shows which made for years the Chat Noir famous. Here appeared the famous creations of Rivière and Flagerolle, the March à l’Etoile and l’Enfant Prodigue.

Later an ingenious shadow stage with intricate mechanism was installed and a series of shadow plays followed. Many of the puppets for these exist to-day in the cabaret of the Quat-Z’Arts, some of which are the work of Caran d’Ache.

Much of what once made the Chat Noir famous exists to-day in the best known of all the *Montmartrois* cabarets, the Quat-Z’Arts. Here sing the best of the *chansonniers*, and there is seldom a night when the back room of the cabaret in which this “smoker” occurs is not obliged to close its doors because there is literally no place for one more chair. The accompanist at the piano has hardly room for his elbows, and the singer just enough space to stand in. The walls of the low-ceiled room are hung with the inimitable caricatures by Léandre and with sketches by celebrated artists.

The front room by which you enter and which is used as a café is a picturesque interior filled with busts and bas-reliefs, and more of Léandre’s clever drawings.

A rustic stairway leads to a rambling gallery above.

The whole resembles the interior of some quaint, half-timbered tavern filled with artistic productions of men of genius. The interior of the Quat-Z’Arts was not made to order; it grew, and it walls are hung with souvenirs gathered from its clientèle of comrades whose work as sculptors and draftsmen is known the world over.

The singers whose songs and satires have made the Quat-Z’Arts famous are men of rare genius and fine intellect, and by no means the idle bohemians you might expect to find.

Dominique Bonnaud is such a man. As a singing satirist, a polished writer and the most subtle of humorists, he stands preeminent. Bonnaud was at one time secretary to Prince Bonaparte, and in eleven years of travel made several voyages around the world. His experiences at foreign courts and among foreign potentates have supplied him with themes for many of his satires. These deal with politics and current topics, and hit at nobility in general and some noblemen in particular.

To the *chansonnier* Jean Bataille is due an interesting revival of the old songs of France. Songs like “Monsieur le Curé” and the “French Grenadier” Bataille sings with rare charm. He is essentially an entertainer, and outside of his nightly appearance at the Quat-Z’Arts has made a success in several *revues* of his own invention. In these he has played at regular theaters, the Mathurins and the Capucines. There is nothing of the type of a bohemian singer in the personality of Monsieur Bataille. This polished man of the world passed through a brilliant career as a member of the bar and was at one time secretary to the Minister of

Interior.

Georges Tiercy is not only a singer but the most inimitable of comedians. His creations are unique. Sometimes he requires the accompaniment of the piano, and sometimes he does not, but, whichever way it is, he keeps his audience at the Quat-Z'Arts in roars of laughter.

It is Tiercy who sings his "Banquet to Monsieur Loubet," "The Humbert Family," and the "Train de Marchandises," the latter ending with an imitation of grand opera which I can assure you is quite as complete as the grand opera itself and five times as amusing. "Come and see me," said Tiercy one day as we sat chatting in the Quat-Z'Arts. He opened his wide gray eyes at me and passed his hand thoughtfully over his short-cropped forehead. Then he added in a hoarse whisper:

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

CARICATURES OF
CHANSONNIERS BY LÉANDRE

"I live in a forest! It is at Bois Colombes. Ah! my friend, you shall see a little house at the very edge of the real country. Come out and have a *petit verre* with me." Then he frowned as he took out his watch and hurriedly left me to catch his train.

A few days later I went out to Bois Colombes to see him. The place did not look very woodsy as I got out of the train. There were no dark fastnesses or wild ravines; in fact, Bois Colombes was, if anything, sadly lacking in verdure. The town itself was quite a practical little place built up with modern houses.

Finally I came to the villa of my friend, the last of a pretty group of houses enclosed by a hedge. The author of the "Train de Marchandises" came out to greet me. He seemed worried and preoccupied and explained to me he was much fatigued, having just returned from a hard journey to Brussels where he had sung the day before.

"And where is the forest?" I asked.

"Ah!" he replied, as if saving a surprise, "you shall see. Come into the house and we will have a bottle of stout."

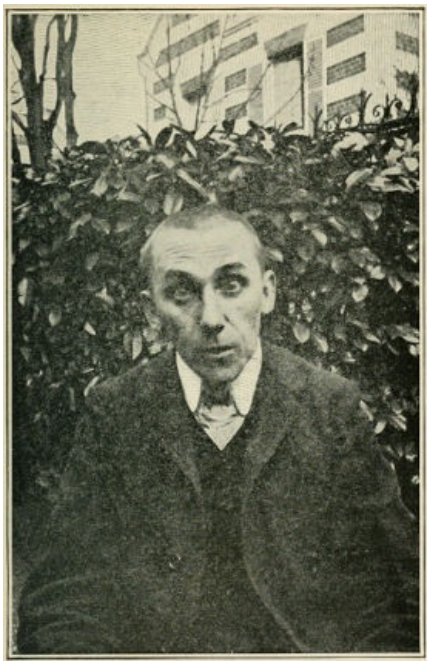


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

GEORGES TIERCY IN HIS
GARDEN AT BOIS-COLOMBES

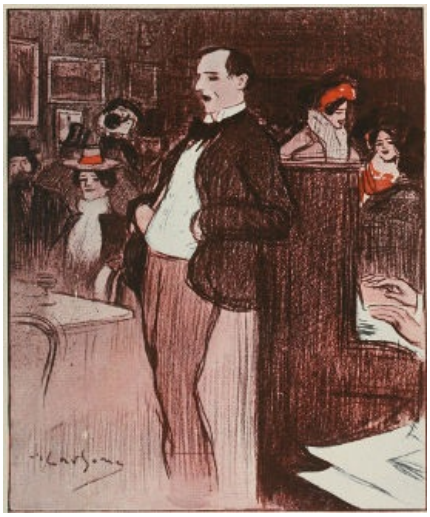
I found the home of this serious humorist filled with interesting souvenirs of his life as a comedian and a *chansonnier*, and we sat chatting until late. My friend with the mysterious air told me many interesting incidents of his career which, in its early days, was one of mingled failure and success. Having played for many years in *revues* and operettas, Tiercy founded in 1893 his cabaret, the Carillon, where, with his creations, “The Clown Badaboum” and “Opéra Maboul,” he achieved a triumph—“*a succés fou*!”

The Carillon failed after a short existence, for this man of humor, this generous son of Bohemia, was unsuited to the ways of close-fisted managers. Tiercy lost twenty thousand francs in the enterprise. He went back to his profession and sang in the Sans-Souci. Since then he has been a success as a mimic in nearly all the cabarets of Montmartre and the Latin Quarter.

“And now,” said my host seriously, “a glimpse at my woodland.” He opened the curtains of his sanctum. A spare group of trees hardly hid the next villa from view.

“My friend,” I said, “it is as you say, a veritable *pays sauvage*.”

And I hurried for my train with Tiercy’s laugh ringing in my ears.



AT THE QUAT-Z’ARTS

Drawing by CARDONA

While the back room of the Quat-Z’Arts is crowded nightly, the front room is filled with bohemian habitués; groups of painters, poets, and musicians sit chatting at the tables, some of them writing, others playing

cards or dominoes.

In one corner Bonnaud, having finished his song, is engrossed in a manuscript. At another table a poet singer is correcting the verses of a new song with a fellow bard.

Next to these a girl, quite as *Montmartroise* as Marcelle, is in earnest conversation with a "type" in a black broad-brimmed hat and a stock wound about his throat. Perhaps it is the beginning of a romance, more likely the aftermath of an ended one. The girl had been crying.

"*Toujours l'amour!*" mutters an old bohemian in a rusty velvet coat, as he glances from his corner at the pair. He trickles a little fresh water into his absinthe and bends again over his writing.

The door opens and the singer, Gabriel Montoya, enters, hastily shaking hands with those about him and rushing to the back room, where his arrival is greeted with thunderous applause.

Monsieur Montoya's poetic locks that crown his noble brow are mussed as if he had just escaped from a panic. He is invariably introduced as "Monsieur le Docteur" to his audience, his early life having been devoted to the study of medicine. He is a man of wide experience, having at one time made a tour around most of the world as a ship's surgeon.

In personality Montoya is a mixture of a Chesterfield and the generous, open gallantry of a Don Quixote. Together with these qualities he possesses a tenor voice of rare charm. Besides all this he is a *bon garçon* and one of the most popular *chansonniers* of Montmartre.

At one time during his career his health broke down and he was ordered south. Here he remained for some time away from Paris, and the report was current of his death. He was eulogized in several lengthy obituaries by leading journalists. These he had the rare opportunity of reading. During his convalescence he wrote "The Posthumous Author" and "The Verses of One who did not Die." He took his degree of medicine in Montpellier. Hardly twenty-four hours after passing his degree he came across some of his old comrades from Montmartre in the street, who were then making a concert tour in the south of France. Their joy at seeing their old friend risen, as it were, from the grave, knew no bounds, and they insisted upon his accompanying them. This he did, abandoning his career of medicine to sing again.

A CABARET OF MONTMARTRE

He made his début at the Chat Noir in 1890. It was there that an incident occurred which illustrates Montoya's remarkable memory.

"Phryné," the shadow play by Maurice Donnay, was performing when its author became involved in a duel with Catulle Mendes. Donnay was wounded, and therefore he was unable to return to the Chat Noir to recite the play. Salis in this extremity turned to Montoya for aid. The latter in one afternoon learned the twelve hundred lines of "Phryné" and recited them the same evening without a mistake.

To Paul Delmet Paris owes many of her popular songs. This veteran *chansonnier* has composed volumes of exquisite ballads, parodies and satires. His songs, such as "Stances à Manon," "Brunette aux Yeux Doux," and his amusing "L'Escalier," every Parisian knows. They are sung everywhere.

The late *chansonnier*, Aristide Bruant, was as extravagant and impractical as the great Balzac. He lived like a prince through good and bad luck in his château outside of Paris, and, dressed in black velvet, drove daily to and from his cabaret in Montmartre in a smart turnout. De Bercy, his friend, tells the following anecdote of Bruant:

He came banging at De Bercy's door early one morning. "I have just been chosen as a candidate for election at Belleville Saint Fargeau," cried Bruant excitedly, waking up the sleepy De Bercy. "Get into your

clothes in a gallop; you will have to make my speech for me and we have just time to catch the train. We will breakfast at Belleville. I have accepted an invitation for both of us. We'll breakfast first and you will have time to write your speech afterwards."

Bruant could sing all night, but speech-making was not in his line.

The two hurried to Belleville and breakfasted, and afterwards De Bercy wrote madly for three hours and finished the address. Bruant knew that if he would ingratiate himself in the hearts of the Bellevillians he must do so by expressions indicating his sympathy with the current wrongs of the community. He must touch upon the rights of the widows and orphans, the wrongs of the working man, and other kindred topics.

It happened that Bruant had in his repertoire a lot of songs upon these very topics, none of which the good people of Belleville had ever heard.

The hour arrived and before a large and enthusiastic audience De Bercy launched into his speech. Each time he finished a portion of his discourse upon the widows or orphans, Bruant would burst into a song relative to the subject. He had one ready upon every question upon which his confrère spoke. The Bellevillians cheered and Bruant was elected by an overwhelming majority amid a furor of good-fellowship and an outpouring of the red wine of Belleville Saint Fargeau!

The "Treteau de Tabarin," familiarly known as the "Boîte à Fursy," is a unique mixture of cabaret and theater in the rue Pigalle. Its owner and manager, Henri Fursy, is the author of the celebrated "Chansons Rosses." These rough and ready satires are sparkling with wit. To invent a new type of songs is the achievement of an epoch, and this is what Fursy has done. He tells me he is not a poet, that his rhymes are often very poor.

"My style is not always good," he said to me; "my songs are satires written upon the spur of the moment, and precisely in this crude state I present them to the public. If I worked over them they would lose much of their freshness."

There is nothing of the bohemian *chansonnier* in Monsieur Fursy. He is a dapper, smartly dressed, alert, courteous, clean-cut man of business. By his wits, push and energy, he has made a success of his theater.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

HENRI FURSY IN THE FOYER
OF HIS THEATER

Perhaps he has seen too much of the Parisian method of transacting a business deal. This consists in taking four weeks to think about the proposition, several more of leisurely indecision, and a corresponding length of time to settle the matter. The Frenchman is astonished if in the meantime some other fellow with a little Anglo-Saxon hustle in him has seized the opportunity and signed the contract.

The quaint, rambling, half-timbered interior of the foyer to the Boîte à Fursy is exceedingly picturesque. Rare drawings and etchings line the walls. The foyer has an ancient air about it of having been used as a hostelry during the Middle Ages. The walls are done in rough plaster and quartered beams. In one corner a primitive staircase leads to a rambling gallery, and the audience passes into the quaint auditorium through rough wooden doors running under a low rustic shed.

All of smart Paris goes to the Boîte à Fursy. It is the smallest and one of the most expensive theaters in Paris, but the performance upon the small stage is sparkling with wit from beginning to end. Here short satirical *revues* are given by Fursy and other famous *chansonniers*, with Odette Dulac in the principal rôle.

Caricature by Cappiello

ODETTE DULAC

Mademoiselle Dulac is Parisian from the butterfly in her cadmium orange hair to the points of her satin slippers. This inimitable artiste is made up of two parts deviltry and one part champagne. She handles the most risqué situations with a delicious delicacy, humor, and the tact of a finished comedienne. She is the life of the *revue* at the Boîte à Fursy. If you have heard Odette Dulac sing "Je Suis Bête," in long years to come the memory of it will serve to lift you out of the blues. You will recall the daintiness of this piquant and chic *divette*, her silk stockings, her frou-frou skirt, the glitter of her bodice, and the irresistible merriness of her eyes as she winked at you over the tip of her impudent little nose.

But all this is the art of the comedienne. At her home I found Mademoiselle Dulac a very gracious and charming woman, unspoiled by the applause that nightly rings in her little ears.

It took the genius of Capiello to caricature Odette Dulac and to give in a few clever lines all of this amusing artiste's personality. When Dulac laughs, her eyes close like tiny half-moons through which the pupils sparkle—very small windows to a big merry soul.

There are some women who never seem to grow old and to whom youth seems ever constant. To be merry yourself and to make others merry is surely one secret of keeping young.

The homes of artists of the Parisian stage differ from the domiciles of others in the artistic world. The tumbled rattle-trap of a dusty studio does not appeal to great actors or divas. The homes of many of the latter are models of luxury and cleanliness.

Much of the perfection of the Parisian actress's *ménage* is due to her faithful bonne, who is companion, cook, waitress, lady's maid, and who, in a thousand ways, protects and watches over the interests of her mistress.

Perhaps the most typical cabaret audience is that in the "Noctambules," in the rue Champollion. It is an unpretentious little place of the old type, where nightly appear some of the best singers of Montmartre: Tiercy and Montoya, Charles Fallot, Paul Delmet, Bréville, Marinier and Madame Laurence Deschamps. The last is an artiste of rare charm, who possesses a voice sweet, pure and flexible, and whose interpretation of scores of exquisite *ballades* and *berceuses* have won for her the truest of all criticism: sincere applause. But I must not forget the veteran of them all, the bard of bards, Marcel Legay.

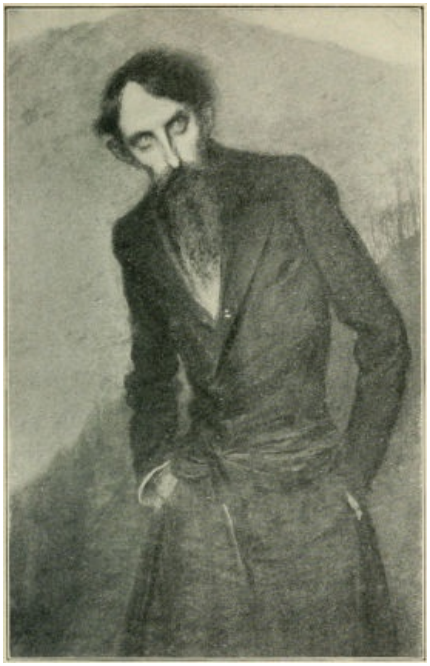
Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

MLLE. ODETTE DULAC AT HOME

When you hear Legay you will have heard an artist whose stirring songs, like his “Mon Cheval” and “Les Pieds Devant,” create a furor wherever he sings them. Legay has a faculty of making you feel the roar of battle. He sings with fire and virility, and his personality fills the room.

In many of the cabarets it is the custom to give gala matinées and gala evenings with more celebrities than usual on the program. A grand tombola or lottery takes place at the close of the performance, the receipts being given as a testimonial benefit to one of the singers. It is needless to say the prizes offered by these good bohemians were purchased for as little as possible: a two-franc bottle of champagne, their own posters tied up with a ribbon, copies of their songs, etc., etc. Yet the rollicking spirit in which these things are praised by the poet auctioneers, and the fact that the proceeds are doing good to one of their number in need, amply repay the loss to one’s pocket.

Besides these gala matinées, classic evenings are given, classic poems are read, and the ancient songs of Provence and ballads of the sixteenth century are sung by the same *chansonniers* who the night before may have amused you with the “Voyage of Madame Humbert” and other parodies.



Pastel by Léandre
Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

THE POET JEHAN RICTUS

The poet Jehan Rictus has been known for years in the cabarets of the Butte and in those of the *rive gauche*.

Pale, lean and stooping, as he rises to speak he resembles some sad, nocturnal crane. He seems like one who nursed his melancholy and lived during his waking hours in the moonlight.

As a young man he descended nightly from the heights of Montmartre, where he lived, to join a circle of bohemians at the Cabaret de la Bosse. Here he came into recognition by the recitations of his poems and soliloquies.

The verses of Rictus dwell in misanthropic bitterness upon the misery of poverty. They are filled with the soliloquies of a pessimist and a misanthrope. The bitter misery of his earlier years through which he was forced to struggle, has no doubt taken the sunlight out of his heart, and yet beneath the varnish of a crude and bourgeois vocabulary lies the timber of true genius. What if the grain is fantastically distorted by a weird imagination! It is prized all the more by the connoisseurs.

Poster by Dillon

JEHAN RICTUS

Another veteran of the cabarets is Louise France.

There is something suggestive of old Paris in this short, squat woman with her puffy haggard face and her tangled hair.

In the days of the Terror just such a one might have headed a mob gathered by her songs and her verses. It requires very little make-up to transform Louise France into her rôle of Frochard in “The Two Orphans” or into “Eva la Tomate” in “Mademoiselle Fifi.” Paris has not yet forgotten her famous characterization of the *concierge* in “La Voix du Peuple.”

Louise France has played at the Théâtre Libre, at the Porte St. Martin, and the Grand Guignol, the characters *she knew*, and she played them to the life with wonderful skill.

Later she abandoned the stage to become editor of “La Fronde.” She has written many parodies, this *gamine*, this *bonne femme*; many of her verses are in the memory to-day of thousands.

Later in life she came as a *chansonnière* and *récitateuse* to the cabarets. It was at Eugénie Buffet’s cabaret “La Purée” that I heard her recite her verses.

From an Etching
Photo by F. Berkeley Smith
LOUISE FRANCE

Many of these her brain had created years ago, before her gray hairs came. Some were new and all of them were true. Within the heart of Louise France lie tenderness and pity. Hear her recite “Les Grues,” and you will realize how human she is and how much she knows of life and forgives.

To-day she seems happy among her old comrades in Bohemia whom she has been with so many years.

Dear old soul, would that the whole world had been as human and understanding as you, and as free from meanness, pettiness, and the haggling over that which in the end counts for naught! All through your life your brain has been busy producing much that is beautiful and pure. Come, then, give us “Les Petits Soldats,” we will listen quietly to the very end. Some of us, I fear, will cry, and when your song is ended, all of us will give you a *double-ban* of applause and drink your health.

To Pierre Trimouillat is due a whole volume of clever parodies and satires. He is a modest little man with no enemies and a host of friends who know that back of his satires lies kindly good-fellowship. From year to year, ever since his success as a singing satirist was assured among the founders of the “Chat Noir,” he has sung in a quiet voice the words which his satirical wit has invented.

Caricature by Léandre
Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

THE CHANSONNIER PIERRE TRIMOUILLAT

Many of Trimouillat’s satires and parodies have been interpreted by the most talented men and women of the French stage.

In Trimouillat, Xavier Privas found a right-hand man for his new cabaret La Veine.

Xavier Privas is not at all the type of poet one would expect to find among the bards of the Butte. Tall, of powerful physique, with the voice of a Falstaff and a genial hospitable manner, he looks much more like a big, blustering, gallant cavalry officer, and this is precisely what he once was.

It is Privas who wrote the delicate fantasy full of color, of lightness, and of pathos, “Le Testament de Pierrot,” and it is he who has written others upon a hundred themes on love and war under the titles of “Chanson de Révolte” and “Chanson d’Aurore.”

His verse is musical and his song contains that which is finished and beautiful.

Some of these bards are tall and thin, wearing their hair long as did the troubadours and the minstrels of the Middle Ages; others are dapper and business-like, wear sensible modern clothes, and get their hair cut regularly.

THE CONCERT ROUGE

The *chansonnier* of to-day in Montmartre is not the velvet-coated, long-haired poet that one could have seen two score of years ago, muffled in his cloak, with his verses beneath his arm, wending his way to some cozy corner of this Bohemia to join his fellow poets and recite his couplets, returning to his garret singing at the break of dawn. Those were the poet-singers of the time of Henri Murger.

To-day the cabarets of Montmartre are regarded for the most part as purely business ventures, and it is the ambition of many of these *chansonniers* to own and direct their own cabaret, make their fortune, and retire in comfort before old age. Many of them are married men with families to support. There is every inducement for them to lead domestic lives. Singing night after night in the smoke and often vitiated air of the cabarets is fatiguing work.

Even the best *chansonniers* are paid but little for their work. Ten francs a night is the regular price, and many women sing for less.

The price charged for admission varies from one franc and a half up to three francs, which sum includes your drink. The seating capacity of these cabarets is limited, and the profits are in proportion. These low salaries are not confined to the cabarets alone.

There are women whose names appear in startling big letters on the bills of concert-halls who get nine francs a night for a turn of three songs with encores and three matinées a week, not including extra performances on fête days.

Out of this they are obliged to provide effective gowns, and these must be replaced by fresher ones before they become too familiar to the audience. Besides, the singers are obliged to pay their dresser, for few can afford a maid, and the dressing-room attendant and the hair-dresser attached to the establishment. They must even pay for the orchestration of their songs, and for their own posters. Many of these women are well supported, but there are many more to whom an honest life is a hopeless struggle for existence.

Should they accept a position in the big cafés-concerts like those of the Champs-Élysées, they will be paid more for their services, but the expenses extorted from them will be increased in proportion.

“Did you walk again to-day, Mademoiselle D.?” asked a manager of a leading open-air music-hall of one of his most attractive artistes. “You know it does not look well for you to be seen arriving on foot.”

His manner was polite, but his tone suggested to this hard-working little singer, “Forever after at least a *fiacre*!”

A few days later he continued:

“Don’t you think you had better put on a new gown, mademoiselle? The public gets tired of seeing the same dresses.”

“But, monsieur, that is the third one I have had in six weeks and I can not manage, with my salary, to have a new gown every week.”

“Well, then,” said the manager, “let me arrange matters for you. You please the public and I am ready to make as fair a proposition to you as I do to the others. I will give you an engagement for three seasons on the condition that you shall dine at least three nights a week in the restaurant upstairs.”

“Monsieur,” answered mademoiselle, indignantly, “when that becomes my *métier*, I shall manage it myself.”

Among the *bons garçons* and *braves filles* of the *vie de Bohème*, on the Butte, this good Parisienne would have been held in respect and esteem.

Drawing by Léandre

MLLE. DESCHAMPS

There are few marriages among these bohemians of the Butte, but love they hold sacred, and woman as the ideal of all creation. Among scores of these *petits ménages* exist peace, happiness and fidelity. Many are the most domestic of homes. Sometimes these *bons garçons* and *braves filles* do marry, just as they tell you Pierrot really did in the end, beneath the trembling organ and the tolling bell; but these instances are rare. When one does happen, the quarter speaks of it as of some unusual incident in

the lives of friends, such as a voyage to China.

Beneath an undulating haze of incense from a dozen gurgling pipes a song floats through the cabaret. Listen!

"*Viens! mon amour, la route est claire,*
Et tout en fleurs est le chemin;
Et lon lon laire la route est claire,
Pierrot!—Donne moi donc ta main."

Chapter Seven

CIRCUSES AND FÊTES FORAINES

Fifteen years ago all of idle Paris applauded “La Goulue,” a can-can *danseuse* whose beauty and abandon made her notorious. In every sense of the term “La Goulue” was of the kind of quadrille dancers which were to be found at the old Mabille when it was at the height of its blaze and glory.

She had jewels in those days, and lingerie of Valenciennes lace. She was the incarnation of all that was reckless and extravagant. She elevated her toes where she pleased, tipping off the silk hats of the well-fed old *roués* who chanced to crowd too near the magic circle while she danced.

She had a ready wit, too, and a vocabulary interlarded with the *argot* of the *gamine* and *gigolette* of the *barrière*. All of leisure Paris patted her approvingly upon her bare shoulders and threw her their louis. But those were the days when La Goulue was younger. Now time has flown away with youth, her fervor and her grace.

She became stout—almost portly. One blue Monday this famous *danseuse* packed up her frills and her furbelows, folded carefully what was left of her Valenciennes lace, and said good-by to her old-time *métier*. It was a little sad—for La Goulue loved to dance.

She took another step in her career, perhaps the most daring and the most dangerous of all. She became a lion tamer, bought from a stranded menagerie some green “cat stock,” to use the vernacular of the circus world, moved from her Parisian residence to a wagon on wheels, and so became sole proprietor, manager and trainer of an animal show in a *fête foraine*.

In the dull season I found La Goulue in February beyond the fortifications of Paris, where in addition to her gipsy wagon on wheels she kept in her back yard screened from the curious eyes of the town children half a dozen cages—the cramped homes of four lions, one laughing hyena, two slinking panthers and a sad-looking bear.

The roof of her salon on wheels was interesting. The ribs supporting the ceiling were decorated with narrow fringe which had evidently served at one time to trim some circus paraphernalia. A bunk spanned one end of the barrack, and several trunks containing La Goulue’s effects occupied most of the remaining floor space.

It was a sunny morning, and a black and white kitten lay on its back upon the tumbled quilts of the bunk, playing with its tail, the tip of which the sunbeams streaming through the little square window over the bunk occasionally illumined.

Some cauliflower simmered on the stove for dinner.

In another corner sat “Monsieur La Goulue,” the lion tamer. He is a man about forty, tall, well-built, blond, with a determined jaw, and cool and collected in his manner, as befits his profession. He wore a blue flannel shirt, water-proof *sabots*, and four diamond rings.

La Goulue unearthed for me from the bottom of a trunk some of her past glory: a set of photographs taken by a smart photographer during the time of her favor, and a framed certificate of a first prize for dancing bearing the date 1889, and the seal of the judges of the award.

She also brought to light a contract to dance for three thousand seven hundred and fifty francs a week. The document bore the signature of a notary and the stamp of the French government.

Meanwhile the lions in the fourth cage roared, and the sad bear, made happy with his morning ration of mush and milk, buried his nose in the pail, muzzle and all, and forgave his mistress for changing her *métier*.

Next to the panthers' cage the week's wash hung drying in the sun. Some of it was coquettish.

Ah! my friend, if you complain of the responsibility of having a family on your hands, remember it is not a patch to having a menagerie on your hands, even without the cumbersome elephant.

"To show" inside the fortifications costs dearly—six hundred francs rental for a place in any of the *fêtes foraines*. The law prohibits single exhibitions which are not a part of the regular *fêtes foraines*, and these take place only at stated intervals in the different quarters of the city. They are the Foire aux Pain-d'Epices, the Fête de Neuilly, the Fête des Invalides, the one surrounding the bronze lion of Belfort, and other smaller ones along the Boulevards Vaugirard, Pasteur, Garibaldi, Grenelle, and Rochechouart, and the Fête of La Chapelle. The still smaller fêtes outside of Paris do not pay well. Meanwhile the animals have to be fed, pay or no pay.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

BEHIND THE SCENES

"There are those who have said hard things of me even in the old days," said La Goulue, "but they lied. I am a good girl with a good heart (*je suis une bonne fille*)," she cried, looking me straight in the eye. "It was the life that was bad, not I, monsieur."

There is great risk to life and limb in training and showing these animals; the lion Bob a while ago closed his jaws upon "M. La Goulue," crunching half through the shoulder. Yet it is the injury to others that the Goulues fear the most.

One of the panthers tore the arm from a child during a performance in Rouen. It was an expensive accident for La Goulue.

At the time I saw this small menagerie wintering in a corner of the earth, La Goulue was waiting for an engagement in a coming *fête foraine*. As yet the letter had not arrived, and I believe the bear knew it.

"M. La Goulue" did not smile, and spoke but rarely. You felt his absolute domination and fearlessness. He took the hyena by the throat, then stroked its ears kindly. When he rolled Alice, the lioness, over on her back, he did so with gentleness and firmness; when she rebelled and struck at him viciously, he cuffed her ears and stood talking to her as to a disobedient child.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

LA GOULUE’S ANIMAL SHOW WINTERING

I felt that this man with the steel-gray eyes regarded the world in general in the same manner—with ease and a cool head.

The Avenue de Neuilly in June is suddenly transformed into a glittering bedlam. Shows line both sides of the broad avenue for nearly a mile.

ENTRANCE TO THE FÊTE DE NEUILLY

These exhibitions are of varied character. Many of them are counterparts of those along the “Bowery” of our own Coney Island, but many spectacles may be witnessed inside the enclosures of these claptrap barracks of canvas and board that are wholly foreign to us. Their ornamental façades are adorned with marvels of pictorial art representing all manner of wonderful things not found in this or any other clime.

A SUNDAY CROWD—FÊTE DE NEUILLY

Side-showing is a science. Some fakirs have become rich with little more than a dirty red curtain to screen from view the wonders promised within, a good “barker” to heighten the desire and imagination of the gaping crowd in front, and a tame ape tied outside to attract the little ones. That there was after all nothing worth even two sous to behold behind the mysterious portal, the spectators in front knew by the sheepish smirk of those coming out, yet they paid their sous just the same and filed in to see what had fooled the other fellows!

In the Fête de Neuilly I did not find these fake methods existing. It is a dangerous thing to fool a French crowd, and so it is the custom to parade upon an elevated platform at the entrance in plain view of the passer-by the troupe advertised to show within.

There stand the girl in tights, the clown, the juggler and the strong man, and the spectator may judge fairly for himself whether he thinks it

worth while to part with his sous to know them better. For one franc he may study their talent from a kitchen chair, alluringly termed a "*fauteuil d'orchestre*." A bench seat generally within a foot of it rents at half price, and a bleacher seat at five sous, with a reduction to children and the military.

There are certain hours and special days when the generous manager lowers even these prices—dinner hours when the passing throng thins out, and rainy days when the clown appears in a mackintosh and the girl in the pink cotton tights wraps a plush boa about her powdered neck and wears the clown's galoshes, while the monkey at the end of his chain buries his head out of the drip and falls asleep.

AN ANIMAL SHOW, FÊTE DE NEUILLY

One of the most popular shows of the *fêtes foraines* is that of the female wrestlers. Many of these combatively inclined ladies cultivate a pose that would put to the blush Hercules leaning on his club. Some of them gird their loins in imitation lion skins, others wear wristlets of heavy leather "to protect them from the brutality of their adversaries," who, the manager assures the interested crowd, are drawn from all corners. So you will see a burly looking bourgeois elbow his way through the crowd and agree openly before the spectators to wrestle Mademoiselle Blanche "La Tigresse" through three rounds, catch-as-catch-can. He tells the manager he was trained by the great Marseille himself and, giving his name and place of residence in case of accident, enters the tent with his candy-haired opponent. All the strong men in these *fêtes foraines* seem to have been trained by Marseille!

The two file into the amphitheater beyond the curtain, while the manager roars outside exhorting the crowd to follow.

In the second round Mademoiselle Blanche has thrown her bourgeois fairly, while six other lady wrestlers sit on the edge of the ring and applaud. The crowd grows enthusiastic.

In the third round the bourgeois by a neck-hold slaps his adversary down on the platform, squarely on her back. Both her shoulders touch. The crowd cheers. The bourgeois has won.

The band in the corner pumps forth a mournful waltz, and another wrestler prepares for the second bout.

When the show closes, the chance bourgeois and Mademoiselle Blanche will return to their home in one of the sea of shanties beyond the barrier, and the manager will turn up his coat collar, give a fresh rub to his silk hat, deposit the contents of his tin cash-box in his wallet, and hail a passing omnibus.

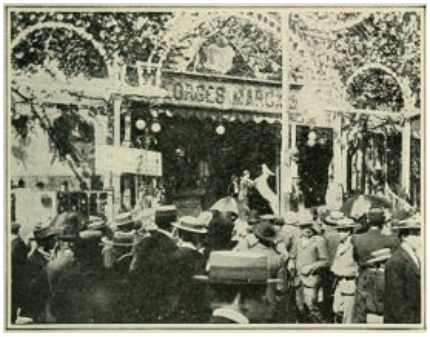
The Fête de Neuilly during the afternoon and evening is alive throughout its length and breadth with a vast throng of pleasure seekers of all classes and conditions. Along the route of attractions mammoth carrousels, gorgeous in gilt and mirrors, swing round at a giddy pace, filled with screaming, laughing women and their escorts. Another form of carrousel is the "Montagnes Russes," with undulating circular tracks over which gilded chariots rush to the accompaniment of powerful steam calliopes.

A SALON OF MYSTERIES—FÊTE DE NEUILLY

Farther on are a row of swings. In one of these sky-scraping affairs a chic little *blanchisseuse*, her blond hair flying beneath a soldier's cap jammed over her ears, is holding on tight and screaming with laughter while her escort the soldier pulls the rope with renewed effort, until they both come near bumping their heads on the upper supports.

THE MONTAGNES RUSSES—FÊTE DE NEUILLY

A few steps farther on, another merry-go-round is on the point of starting. Astride of a wooden camel sits a young negro wearing a straw hat with a pink satin band, and a suit known as "nobby." Two girls pass. They are evidently two little *couturières* out for a holiday. One of them, a little brunette, catches sight of the coal black youth with the pink satin tie. The two girls hold a hurried conversation. Suddenly the little brunette runs up to the surprised gentleman in the nobby suit, throws her arms about his neck and kisses him.



A POPULAR MENAGERIE—FÊTE DE NEUILLY

"*Voilà*," she says as she runs on to join her companion, bubbling with laughter over the joke.

"*Je pourrai dire que j'ai embrassé un nègre!*"

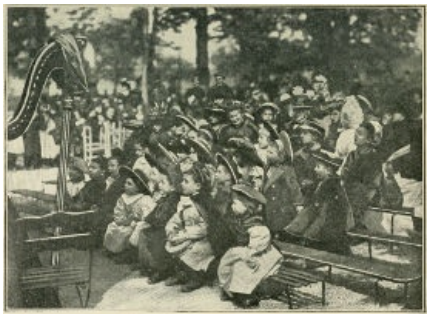
At night the Fête de Neuilly is ablaze with light. Carriages crawl slowly through the crowd, some of them are smart private turnouts which have driven to the fête after dinner at Armononville or elsewhere.

Parading side by side with these are others containing jolly parties waving great paper chrysanthemums and sunflowers carried upon long sticks. These pretty souvenirs are sold by the thousands in the fête, and nearly every party of merrymakers brings them back to the boulevard cafés.

Among other attractions are circuses and menageries where hourly

exhibitions of animals in training draw steady audiences. There is little attempt to decorate the interior of these menageries—a few kitchen chairs fronting a row of cages and standing room back of these furnish the necessary accommodation for the audience. As a rule, the animals in these small shows are well cared for and kept in unusually good condition.

The name Pezon in France is traditionally suggestive of the best animal show. Through three generations the Pezons have been animal trainers and maintained menageries throughout France. There is not one of this intrepid family who has not at some time been dragged bleeding from beneath some infuriated beast. One of the sons who still risks his life daily is minus an arm, having been mangled by a lion a few years ago.



AN OPEN AIR CHILDREN'S SHOW

I saw one veteran trainer in the Pezon show turn pale as he realized that an ugly lion he had forced into a corner had become unmanageable and blind with rage. Keepers ran to his help, and most of the audience rose in a panic and started to rush through the exit. The cage rocked as the lion sprang from side to side and the ground seemed to tremble beneath his snarling roar, but the man within the bars held his ground. He was a short, thick-set fellow with blond hair. Step by step he forced the lion back into its corner, and as firmly and slowly he conquered him until the crouching beast who could have killed him with a blow sprang panic-stricken out of his way. Then the little man turned to the audience, bowed with the air of a dancing-master and sprang through the safety door. Cheers of "Bravo!" rose from the audience who had remained as if hypnotized; but the man who had been so near death did not seem to notice them, for he shrugged his shoulders and smiled as if the episode were of little importance. Lighting a cigarette, he disappeared through a door in the rear.

A BALLOON ASCENSION

I once knew an old French trainer and owner of a menagerie, Champeaux by name, who came to grief in a different way. He was a jovial old fellow and when he was not training lions, hyenas, panthers, or bears, spent most of his time over the flowing bowl in some nearby café,

telling stories and spreading the sunshine of geniality among his old cronies. He had been in the cages so much of his life and had such a host of friends, in fact he was such a popular old fellow and so jolly and genial withal, that I believe he grew to think that the animals he trained loved him too.

At one time having installed his animal show in the *fête foraine* at the Place du Trone, he attended the wedding festivities of a friend. It happened to be a bourgeois wedding, and the bride and groom and their guests made merry with champagne and congratulations in one of those Parisian restaurants where the second floor above the café is rented to wedding parties and banquets. The festivities kept up until the hour grew late. Champeaux was the most hilariously happy of the guests. He embraced the bride and groom and toasted the happy pair in numerous bumpers, and at last proudly zigzagged his way back to the menagerie. “All his lions should hear what a good time he had had,” he said to himself. As he reeled along, he imagined that he was twenty-one and a bridegroom; then somehow he dreamed that most of his lions had grown wings and had pink fur on their paws and that all his cages had turned to solid gold.

AT A FÊTE FORAINE

And so he lurched on towards his pets, singing a song of cheer. He reached his menagerie before daylight. His keepers, snoring peacefully in their bunks, did not hear him as he stumbled in through a hole in the tent and proceeded to the row of cages. A lioness, wakened out of her sleep, recognized him, and pacing to the end of her cage, peered out at him. He must have presented a strange sight, for she roared twice, half waking the other animals. Then my friend did a foolish thing; he stumbled up the steps of the trained bear’s cage, apologized to the steps for tripping over them, slipped the spring latch and entered the den. Taking his hat off politely to the bear who, at his unexpected entrance, rose on her hind legs, Champeaux fell into her arms.

“Pepita,” he said, “I have had a good time, a good time, old girl,” and he slapped her enthusiastically on her scrubby neck.

Pepita squealed, embraced him in turn, as if in sympathy, and looked at him queerly with her small round eyes. Then Champeaux groaned—Pepita had broken his ribs.

In America the roof of the three-ring circus holds a network of trap apparatus upon which a dozen aerial performers exhibit at the same time. In the first ring there is a bareback act, in the second a juggling family upon an intermediate stage, and in the third ring a herd of trained elephants. Over the surrounding race-track twenty clowns play tag, setting small sections of the amphitheater into roars of laughter as they pass.

All this is typical with us of the “greatest show on earth.”

Parisians delight in the circus as much as we do, but they are content in seeing one thing at a time and enjoying it.

Here the *cirques* are as cozy as theaters and one small ring suffices. The Nouveau Cirque, whose façade on the rue St. Honoré resembles that of a music-hall, is the most comfortable of all the Parisian circuses, and,

like the Cirque d'Hiver and the Cirque Médrano, is open the year round. The patronage of the last two is more bourgeois than that of the first one, for both are situated in thickly populated quarters.

The Médrano, on the boulevard Rochechouart in Montmartre, and the Cirque d'Hiver, on the boulevard du Temple, are patronized for the most part by the people of the rue du Temple and around la Place de la Bastille.

All Paris pours to Longchamp the day of the Grand Prix. Seen from the grandstand, the track stretches away in a velvety green ribbon. Every square foot of the remainder of the vast enclosure is packed with people. Part of this human sea, that which fills the grandstands and broad promenade, is gay in the smartest of toilettes, silk parasols, and shining top hats. The rest is made up of all sorts and conditions.

Indoor displays of horsemanship, where the incentive of betting is lacking, have not been a success in Paris—at least when conducted upon a large scale. The old Hippodrome, founded for track exhibitions, has passed out of existence. It was too big to be popular, and the new Hippo-Palace, a splendid structure forming a spacious angle with the rue Calvalotti and the rue Caulincourt, after a short life proved an absolute failure. Its exterior was vast and exceedingly attractive in color. The whole was done in a scheme of gold and turquoise blue velvet, with a huge stage for ballets at the end of the three-ringed amphitheater. The performance was excellent, and for a while it looked as if the Hippo-Palace might be a success. But the same criticism caused its downfall. There were too many things to watch at once from seats too far removed from the performers.

THE CROWD AT LONGCHAMP

Parisians enjoy the intimacy of a small circus.

Between the acts the pretty stables behind the scenes are crowded with people who enjoy looking at the horses in their neatly kept stalls—indeed, many of these remain in the stables after the bell announces the continuance of the performance, in order to view at leisure the byplay of the performers before they go into the ring.

A pretty bareback rider comes tripping down the stairs from her dressing-room. Her horse is brought out for her from its stall, and, while an elderly gentleman with a ribbon in his buttonhole stands chatting with her for a moment, her groom gives a final cinch to the mare's white kid girdle and rosins its broad back.

Applause announces the end of an act, and a trained bear, held in check by his keeper, shuffles past you.

It is mademoiselle's turn now, and the old gentleman with the decoration lifts his opera hat as mademoiselle leaves him and runs into the ring.

From the circular *promenoir* behind the second tier of boxes you catch glimpses of women in *chic* toilets who nightly frequent the circuses.

Immortal are the names of the famous of French clowns—Boum-Boum, Auguste and Chocolat. For years they have made Paris roar with laughter, and the little French children kick their bare legs in glee.

Chocolat and Auguste, who appear together, are far more than ordinary clowns. They are past masters in the art of nonsense. Every effect is carefully planned and studied. Their performance is pantomime of the first order. To keep the amused attention of an audience for half an hour by a representation of Hamlet played with no costumes and no scenery, and for the most part executed wholly in pantomime, requires rare skill and subtle humor, and that rarest of qualities in comic men, the time to know when to stop.

There is something especially attractive in the coziness of these one-ring circuses of Paris. The buildings themselves are circular, like those built for permanent panoramas. From the ring, with its red velvet border,

begin rows of orchestra seats, reaching to the balcony of pretty boxes, behind which is a circular promenade.

MADEMOISELLE LA
BOUFFONNE

The stables themselves are models of well-ordered cleanliness, and each stall that contains some beauty of the ring shines in polished brass. The stall posts are bound with fresh sheaths of straw tied with gaily colored ribbons.

An attractive feature of the Nouveau Cirque is the aquatic performance which concludes the show. The big ring mattress is suspended between two giant wheels and rolled away; the floor of the ring sinks slowly, and water rushes in until a safe diving depth is attained. Calcium lights are turned upon this improvised lake, and an aquatic burlesque follows. This naturally concludes the program, for every one taking part tumbles in as often as possible and retires dripping to his dressing-room. One of these farce comedies ends in a wedding party where the bride and groom are ferried across in the little boat. The clown who acts as ferryman is invariably upset, and the wedding party have to kick out and swim for shore, on which they climb or are hauled minus most of their clothes.

The Thursday matinées are filled with happy French children. What a never-to-be-forgotten ecstasy it must be to Jacqueline, François and little Antoinette to be taken between the acts to the café of the Cirque Médrano and be served with a huge *cérise à l'eau* by the clown himself. How delightful to hear his special jokes as he pours out for them their *cérise* and nearly spills a whole trayful of cakes over their heads as he serves it!

STREET CLOWNS

I spent the afternoon yesterday with a famous old clown at the Médrano. At intervals during our chat my friend would leave me to run back into the ring and play the fool. Yet he was a grave and a sad old man. His heavily chalked face with its traditional black lines between his eyes and his painted cheeks seemed strangely incongruous as he talked seriously of his life.

Behind his mask of chalk his old eyes burned with a brave light in them still, for his life had been one of trying struggle. He spoke of the death of his only daughter, of the hardships of many touring adventures in many lands.

“I went with my family to Constantinople to start a circus there, and it took me five years to earn enough money to return, for we not only lost all we had, but were forced into debt.

“We managed to get free at last and returned to Paris. Here we worked hard, all of us, and at last we opened again a circus of our own. My son-in-law was the trapeze performer, and my boy was a clown like myself. We had with us a family of old friends, the Lorettis—you may remember them? The opening night of that show brought with it the old sensation of ruin staring us in the face. We opened the doors that evening just thirty-five thousand francs in debt. Gradually by hard work we managed to pull out of it, and,” he added, “to-day, thank God! I am free from worry and anxiety. I know that I can make but a living at the best. I get my money here; it is not much, but I get it regularly, and here I shall stay. I am sixty years old and have been a clown nearly forty years of my life.”

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A COUNTRY CIRCUS

He excused himself for a moment and ran out into the ring, turned a flipflap, and ran tripping over things in a fruitless endeavor to assist the lady in pink tulle on her cantering white horse. A pantomime followed in which a second clown, his son, having killed him in a comic duel, doubled his father up, packed him neatly in a barrel, and wheelbarrowed him out of the ring.

“You see,” continued the father seriously as he rejoined me, having divested himself of the barrel and run the wheelbarrow out of the way of an advancing herd of elephants, “it is different with your big American shows. An artist there never gets credit for his work. With so many acts going at once it is impossible for him to be fairly seen. He can play only to a small section of the house, and, if he is doing high trap work like my son-in-law, he no sooner gets a neat trick worked up than the bell rings and down the rope he has to come.

“Well, sir, I must wash up and be getting along; we have dinner at home at six and I have a little special marketing to do for we have some old friends coming.”

Chapter Eight

GREASE PAINT AND POWDER PUFFS

The stage of the Folies Bergère during a spectacular *revue* is a busy place. Sunday evening is always a crowded night at Parisian theaters and a hard one upon players, since all the theaters on that day give matinées as well.

There are few persons in an audience who realize the amount of hard work required of every one behind the scenes in the staging and playing of a spectacular *revue*.

It was nine o'clock Sunday evening and the *revue* at the Folies Bergère was about to begin, as my friend, a successful writer of many Parisian *revues*, Monsieur René Louis, led me through the crowded *promenoir* of this thoroughly Parisian music-hall and through a small iron door into another world. I say another world, for it was peopled with fairies —*coryphées* in pink tights whose eyes were stenciled and lined with blue until they appeared as almond-shaped as an odalisque's. The stage was crowded with scene-shifters in black caps and long white linen dusters, with ladies protected from stray drafts by warm woolen dressing gowns, with hair-dressers in their shirt-sleeves, with firemen in shining brass helmets, with ballet girls in white tulle and fleshings, and pink satin slippers with padded toes.

We came upon all this suddenly, for, as we entered the iron door leading to the *coulisses*, we found ourselves in a small *entresol* and in the midst of a dozen *coryphées* who were giving a final touch to their make-up before an extra mirror.

The air was heavy with the odor of scores of different cheap perfumes.

Down a narrow winding stairway leading from the dressing-rooms above, poured a stream of other *coryphées*, principals, ballet girls and *figurantes*, a moving kaleidoscopic procession of pink tights, glittering tinsel and bizarre head-dresses.

Groups of chorus girls gossiped in safe corners out of the way of hurrying scene-shifters.

"*Attention! s'il vous plait,*" shouted two of the latter as they dodged past with a section of a Venetian palace, while two others followed with half of the Bridge of Sighs and eight feet of canvas water.

Drawing by Pezilla

AT THE FOLIES-BERGÈRE

"*Dis donc, ma chérie,*" said a petite brunette costumed as a gray pigeon to another pigeon whose dresser was attaching to her shoulders a pair of white wings, "did you find the tailor whose address I gave you yesterday? A hundred francs for a dress like my little brown one, and *tu sais trés, trés chic*. Tell Amélie I am coming to see her to-morrow *à trois heures, n'est-ce pas*?" and the gray pigeon hurried away to her place in the wings.

High up above the busy stage hung the great drops suspended from a network of ropes. Hoisted by the side of an Italian lake hung the back flat of the palace of diamonds, and next to it a dark wood through which at

ten thirty-five, by the stage manager's watch, fluttered nightly a ballet of bats.

My friend led the way through a back corridor to the director's office. I found the director a serious man of affairs, who looked more like a scientist than a man of the theater. His greeting was most cordial, even hospitable, for, as he left me to attend to the performance, he added, with charming courtesy: "*Monsieur, vous êtes ici chez vous*; go where you will or, better still, let me present you to our stage manager. It is he who is really captain of the ship in the storm, for we have some rapid dark changes to make during the *revue*, when you will be safer in a corner."

From the wings behind the blaze of the footlights, the crowded house lay like a flower-garden in the dusk. Here a patch of red flamed brighter than the rest from some theater hat; there the white of a shirt-front gleamed.

The prompter sat huddled under his wooden hood with his prompt-book in readiness for the raising of the curtain.

Behind him, the leader of the orchestra wiped his eyeglasses, looked at his watch, passed a word by the second violin to the oboe concerning a late correction, and, tapping his baton, began the overture.

Bang! Bang! Bang! pounded thrice the stage manager with measured precision, and, with a final glance at the people on the stage, gave the signal to the head electrician who turned a switch. Up went the curtain.

The night's work had begun.

For the three hours that ensued during the *revue*, ballets succeeded ballets. There were burlesques upon current topics and singing choruses. All through this the stage management was perfect.

CHORUS GOSSIP

When you consider the lack of room it was all the more remarkable.

"You see," said the stage manager, during one of his free minutes, "we are terribly cramped for room here upon this old stage. Our biggest flats we set with this panorama arrangement"—and he pointed to two giant rollers, one on either side of the stage. Then, leading the way beneath the stage, he showed me the two great wheels and the dynamo that moved them.

"Look out!" said he, as we returned to the stage, "that is the finale of the *commère's* song and we are going to make a quick change. Stand there!" he said, and instinctively I jumped for the spot he indicated. At the same instant the two electricians pulled a combination of switches and everything went black.

Scene-shifters hurried through the gloom with awkward sections of scenery, all of which had to be taken back through a doorway and replaced in order where they had come from. Others hurried on the stage with properties and sections for the new set.

The stage was, fortunately, warm, otherwise many of the *petites Parisiennes* who were descending the winding stairs would have suffered from even the slightest current of air, for most of their clothes had been left in the dressing-rooms above.

I saw among this "big family," that are together during a long season,

the best of *camaraderie* and unusual deference and courtesy by every man toward the women.

During the second act I found that exceedingly *chic* and attractive *comédienne*, Mademoiselle Léa Dorville, in her loge.

Every available corner of her small room did good service. Rows of pink and Nile green silk petticoats, *frous-frous* and things hung from hooks under cretonned shelves.

Other hooks held mademoiselle's stage hats, some of them as big as circus hoops. Her duchesse table was a veritable museum of little necessaries: hare's-feet and powder puffs, mirrors, sticks of grease paint, a pot of cold cream with a silver top, a box of *poudre de riz*, rouge for her lips, for her nails, for the tips of her ears. It was all artificial, but it was nevertheless one real side of life. Serious gaiety if you will, since to survive the daily routine of the stage is hard work.

Being Sunday, that day they had already gone through a matinée. There is but little time to rest between the matinée and the evening performance, and in Paris the theaters are not out until midnight.

All this activity behind the scenes of the Folies Bergère seemed in strong contrast to the idle leisure of the audience in front, who during the *entr'actes* strolled among the *demi-mondaines* in the *promenoir* or lounged comfortably in arm-chairs pulled up to the café tables of the alcoves, and with a cooling drink listened to the band of Neapolitans.

The curtain fell upon an apotheosis representing the palace of gems; upon La Belle Otéro clothed in solitaires; upon the *commère* and the *compère* bowing to an appreciative audience; and finally upon a stageful of *figurantes* and *coryphées* who, as the final curtain fell, made a rush for their dressing-rooms. Half an hour later they all said *bonsoir* to the doorkeeper and scattered among the highways and byways of the city. Some who passed out wore sables; others, who half an hour before stood flashing in gems, went away in modest clothes of their own making. Some departed to meet their sweethearts, others to their families or their children; some to supper at the Café de Paris, to Pousset's and to the Café Riche, others to little snuggeries where the cheapest dish was the most popular, and where the *vieux monsieur* with the purse of gold never came.

Photo by Reutlinger, Paris

LA BELLE OTÉRO

I found the stage of another big music-hall, the Olympia, differing widely from the cramped and picturesque old stage of the Folies Bergère. Here there was plenty of room and sufficient stage height for scenic spectacles. Back of all this, wide corridors led to the offices of administration and comfortable dressing-rooms. Here again I found a safe corner behind the proscenium, out of the way of changing scenery and the toes of the agile mademoiselles of the ballet.

One seldom sees a more beautiful woman than the present *commère* of the Olympia *revue*, Germaine Gallois. She is tall, lithe and queenly, with clear-cut features and a wealth of golden hair. With Lucien Noël and the statuesque Graziella the *revue* is not lacking in talent. From the shadows of the wings framed by the side of the proscenium in deep shadow against the flood of orange calcium light, the glitter of the scene upon the stage seemed even more brilliant than when viewed from the house.

EMILIENNE
D’ALONÇON AS A
COMMÈRE

Three fourths of the performers in Parisian vaudeville are Americans, English or Austrians. These naturally can not be employed in the *revue* following the vaudeville, for they do not speak French.

It is the custom to print in English the billposters announcing these artists. It seems more of a novelty to Parisians if the lady on the high wire appears on the bills as “Miss Dorita Gayford, Queen of the High Wire.” In London you will see this lady who is on such good terms with the attraction of gravitation, billed as “Mademoiselle Céleste Pirrizetti, Reine du Fil de Fer.” It is more interesting, just as a “Chateaubriand aux pommes soufflées” is more attractive upon a bill of fare than plain “steak and fried potatoes.”

To us Americans who are accustomed to our modern theaters fitted with every appliance for safety and comfort, the old-fashioned playhouses of Paris, seasoned by time and tradition, seem quite primitive in construction. Many of them have remained for nearly a century materially unchanged. The narrow semi-circular corridors leading to the orchestra through little velveted doors have low ceilings.

That the most sought after seats are those in the first balcony is due to the fact that in many of the theaters the first rows in the orchestra are sunk so low below an unusually high stage that it is impossible to see more than the upper half of the performers. Then, too, the hood of the prompter’s box is invariably placed in the middle of the stage. Add to this a lady in front with a theater hat of such dimensions that it would serve much better as a sunshade, and the spectator near the front row has left to his vision a little triangular space bounded on the base by the footlights, on one side by the prompt-box, and on the other by a bobbing ostrich plume. Across this aperture, provided the ostrich feather keeps still, you may, by good luck, from time to time see the villain pursue the heroine.

The French playhouse is a slave to traditional custom. The stone stairways worn by the feet of generations of audiences have sunk badly out of plumb. There are comfortable old foyers and *fumoirs* to which the audience pour during the *entr’actes*, but the approach to these is painfully slow through narrow corridors and up winding flights of stairs.

The boxes lined along beneath the first balcony and circling the orchestra are narrow, and insufferably warm in summer. Besides the open loges there are boxes screened by grilles of gilt lattice, where madame and another madame’s monsieur may secrete themselves, discreet even in their indiscretions—but why gossip of the happiness of others?—there is enough misery in the world as it is.

Those gray-haired old ladies, the *ouvreuses*, are traditional, too; they hang the coats and wraps along the wall of the narrow corridor into which the audience goes out, with the result that at the end of the performance the corridor is jammed with people in search of their belongings.

There is no orchestra except in those theaters in which the performance as in opéra bouffes and musical comedies requires one. During the *entr’actes* Frenchmen stand in their orchestra places and carefully look over the audience who have remained in their seats, with their opera-glasses, until the stage manager pounds his staff solemnly for the rising of the curtain. It is the custom, too, to use hideous drop curtains between the acts covered with advertisements of perfumery, automobiles, and of winter and summer resorts.

But if there are many little discomforts within Parisians theaters, the interiors themselves are rich in works of art. The foyers contain superb busts and rare pictures. There are ceilings, mellowed in color by time, which were painted by the best masters. If many of these auditoriums are uncomfortable, they possess a charm and a dignity which age alone can give.

Take for example the old Palais Royal. This famous old playhouse has a cozy old-fashioned auditorium and a foyer with a quaint gallery, and a rich frieze which illustrates the history of the theater since the day when Mademoiselle de Montansier in 1789 bought the Beaujolais, a little playhouse constructed as a *théâtre des marionnettes*. From that year the old theater existed under many names, until in 1848 it adopted the title of the "Théâtre du Palais Royal," a name which it still retains. One feels within it that but for the modern costumes of the audience he might be living in the time of the First Empire. The windows of the foyer look out upon the dimly lighted courtyard of the palace of Richelieu.

Like the ruddy back of some old violin, the interior of the Théâtre du Palais Royal has become rich and polished by the hands of time. It has become a Parisian institution, beloved by men and women of culture because of its associations.

If you ask a Parisian at which theaters you can see the best plays, he will invariably answer: The Théâtre Antoine and the Théâtre Français. He adds the latter as a matter of habit, for the French have been brought up for generations to regard the immortal house of the great Molière as the best stage.

It is there he received his first impression of the theater when in his childhood as a reward of merit he was taken to the Français to see classical plays. He was told it was the best theater, and this impression has remained with him since infancy. For French children are taken as a matter of education to the Français and the Odéon.

True, the Comédie Française possesses finished actors; true, also, they are trying to keep up traditions there more than anywhere else; true, as well, the scenery and costumes are of the best. But it is also true that many of the good actors of the Français have in late years deserted the house of Molière for freer fields, that the managers have refused scores of good plays in late years which have been subsequent successes at other theaters, and that most of the present actors of the Français, wishing to create a "*genre*," or shall we call it a mannerism, of their own, do so at the expense of the true character of the rôle which they play. Many of them who have become celebrated refuse to play small parts and, what is even more to be regretted, disdain to learn the classical repertoire which is the *raison d'être* of the house of Molière.

A DRESS REHEARSAL AT THE
THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS

But if the Français does not choose to present new plays and encourage modern authorship for which purposes the government gives it yearly a large subvention, other theaters do, and the public have filled them.

But even these latter theaters are hampered by the system of stars and the desire to attract the public by the well-known name of a successful author on the bill.

Sometimes the play of the successful author, like the little girl with the curl in the middle of her forehead, is very, very good, and sometimes very, very bad, but it is always very, very expensive. On account of these stars and successful authors, the seats have to be sold at a high price. Once the expense of production of the play is covered, the play is forced to a long run, thus limiting the chance of a new one being given.

For these reasons and many others M. Antoine, a young man who was an employee of the city gas company, conceived in 1887 an idea of an entirely different theater where all old traditions would be put aside,

where a play would not be given more than two weeks, thus opening the door to a great many authors, and where a company of thirty-six actors would play impartially all rôles and each one would receive for his services the same pay.

The plays given should be upon every-day life, therefore no expensive costumes or elaborate scenery would be needed.

The actors were not to come from a dramatic school, but teach themselves by experience.

Realism was to pervade everything: acting, costumes, scenery and properties.

In March, 1887, M. Antoine organized the first representation of "Jacques Damour," which was such a success that it was taken immediately by the Odéon. The performance was given in a cheap little auditorium in Montmartre, hired at as low a figure as possible for the occasion. None of the actors were professionals. In this first representation of the "Puissance des Ténèbres," the cast was: Men —Monsieur Antoine, still employee of the gas company, an employee of the Minister of Finances, a secretary at Police headquarters, an architect, a chemist, a drummer and a *marchand de vin*. Women—a dressmaker, a bookbinder, an employee at the Post-office, etc., etc. All this cast rehearsed in the evening after long hours in office and store.

In spite of keeping expenses as low as possible, Antoine was in debt after the first representation and was obliged to wait two months before he could give another performance.

Finally the company succeeded in giving seven or eight representations in a little *salle* of the rue Blanche, and from there went to the Théâtre Montparnasse, and thence to the Menus Plaisirs, where the Théâtre Libre exists at the present day under the name of the Théâtre Antoine.

With this little company it was not always easy sailing. Had it not been at the time for the generous help of the press and the kindness of the director of the vaudeville who sub-rented his hall to the ambitious troupe for next to nothing, it would have met with financial ruin. But the plays they gave attracted attention. Nowhere had such daring realism and freedom from old traditions been attempted.

From 1887 to 1890 the Théâtre Libre produced one hundred and twenty-five new "acts," and presented the plays of thirty dramatic authors whose work had never been heard before. Besides these, they produced the plays of fourteen authors whose work had been represented in Paris only once.

They had upon their programs among others the plays of Zola, Tolstoy, Turgéneff, and Ibsen, and introduced many plays which subsequently were reproduced upon the best stages of Paris. The good that Antoine has accomplished by his indomitable energy and the efforts of those who have been with him through these experiments is sufficiently proven by the fact that while the company produced one hundred and twenty-five plays, the Français during that same period of time produced only twenty-five new plays and received seven hundred and twenty thousand francs from the government as subvention, a sum given towards the expense of mounting new plays. The Odéon during this time produced sixty-seven "acts" and received three hundred thousand francs from the government!

Monsieur Antoine does not believe in considering that a room has only three sides. That is why he maintains it is legitimate to turn one's back on an audience if by reason of stage position the situation calls for it. Neither does he believe the room in which the drama occurs can be surrounded by imaginary apartments of dingy canvas, so the doors upon his stage have real locks and open upon other rooms as realistically furnished as the one within whose walls the action takes place.

In the matter of costumes he is equally realistic, and every detail of the style is genuine.

If it is a question of a library, there are real books upon real shelves. These important attentions to detail are carried out through all his plays. He does not believe that, because an object is at the back of the stage, it should be made of papier maché or, what is worse, painted on the back flat.

When you have seen three of his late productions, "La Fille Eliza," the story of a girl condemned to death; "La Bonne Espérance," a tragedy of a Holland fishing town; and "L'Indiscret," a modern society play; you will realize the genius and capability of Monsieur Antoine and his rare company who work conscientiously together for the ensemble of a finished production rather than for individual applause.

Among the *haut monde* of Paris the finesse of the most complex social intrigue is understood to perfection. The Parisian society play deals with a series of *risqué* situations.

A STAR'S DRESSING-ROOM

The noisy, cruel, villain of the society play as we know him is not seen here. The three principal characters are the "Charming and Beautiful Wife," the "Distinguished Husband," whom she does not love, and the "Jolly Young Man," whom she does. Her attractive salon seems to be especially adapted to the furtherance of the amours of certain of her women friends whose husbands, it is to be presumed, are having tea and conversation elsewhere.

Matrimony is taken for granted as a calamity, an unfortunate episode to be remedied as soon as possible.

In the second act the Charming Wife heavily veiled sweeps into the Jolly Young Man's modest apartment.

"*Enfin!*" he cries, and the lovers embrace as if in a dream.

This is quite an exciting part, for it is not long now before you will hear the heavy foot of the deceived husband upon the stairs.

"*Ah! voilà!* here he comes!" The Charming Wife emits a little stifled scream as she recognizes his step, and the Jolly Young Man, failing to hide her in his wardrobe, puts on as bold a front as possible and awaits the opening of his door.

Enter the Husband!

Not in a frenzy, with cocked revolver as we are used to seeing him, not a bit of it. He comes in pleasantly and bows formally to madame and to the Jolly Young Man. Through all he preserves the dignity of a visiting general with a flag of truce. He even begs the pardon of the Jolly Young Man for his interruption.

"Will you have the goodness, monsieur, to leave madame and myself alone for a moment; I have something which I wish to say in private?"

"*Parfaitement, monsieur*," answers as ceremoniously the Jolly Young Man, and goes out.

When the Jolly Young Man has gone, madame attempts the usual distracted flood of explanations, then, realizing the artificiality of them all, shrugs her shoulders.

It is at this juncture that the Husband, as if speaking to some indiscreet comrade, addresses madame as "my friend."

"*Mon amie*," he begins, "you must know that I, too, love another."

"You have a mistress, of course," replies madame, accepting this foregone conclusion as a preliminary to what may follow.

"Naturally, my friend, but it is not of Mademoiselle de Tréville that I speak, it is of one of your best friends, *une femme sérieuse, exquise, ravissante*!" and he clasps his hand and looks toward heaven.

"Louise?" asks madame.

"*Parfaitement, mon amie.*"

"*Tiens!* That is funny," replies madame, with a little amused smile; "but what of her husband?"

"It will be difficult, but I think it can be arranged," replies monsieur dramatically.

Upon the reentrance of the Jolly Young Man, all three begin a breezy

conversation touching as lightly as possible upon the painful episode of the interrupted rendezvous.

"I leave for Nice to-morrow," says the Husband, picking up his silk hat and his yellow kid gloves. "*Bonsoir, mes amis*," and he bows himself out through the modest portal of the Jolly Young Man's apartment as the curtain falls.

MARDI GRAS ON THE
BOULEVARD DES ITALIENS

All Paris poured into the Grands Boulevards on Mardi Gras. From the Madeleine to the Place de la Bastille, this broad thoroughfare was a compact surging sea of human beings. Those who had space enough danced, some as clowns, some as harlequins. There were women in doublets and hose, in boys' clothes, in every conceivable get-up that could be dragged from the boxes of cheap costumers. This human sea laughed at each other in the best of good nature and threw paper confetti tit for tat all day and half the night. Paris seemed to have been visited by a vari-colored blizzard that roared whirling by, a February wind, over the heads of the sea of merry-makers. It piled itself in great kaleidoscopic drifts in the gutters and got down thousands of people's necks. The air was filled with dust, and from the balconies shot long streamers of paper ribbons, some caught in the trees below, others fell entangling themselves round the *chapeaux* of the passing crowd.

At certain points the busses crossed amid cheers, but otherwise no vehicles were allowed on the boulevards. A rabbit would have had hard work getting through in a hurry from the Madeleine to the Bastille, so compact was the crowd. In all this fun and gaiety I did not see a fight or a drunken man, and I observed the show as long as it lasted. It began on Sunday, when a procession of students started from the Sorbonne and marched across the Seine, a somewhat disappointing cavalcade in length but which, nevertheless, half of Paris turned out to see and applaud.

The carnival reached its height on Tuesday and in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

There were *bal masqués* galore, for nearly every one had dressed for them in the morning.

At the Bullier, the Gay Tivoli, and the Moulin de la Galette, carnival reigned supreme.

At the Bal Bullier one had to take more than a passing glance to tell the boys from the girls, for the Mimis and Fantines had often tucked up their hair and donned sailors' clothes or a Tuxedo. Others went in scantier attire and were more distinguishable. There were feminine Méphistos, Spanish dancers, little brunettes as bullfighters, and blondes as Oriental favorites of the harem. When the ball was over, this motley crowd romped down to supper along the "Boul Mich" in their fantastic clothes, and had *Marennes vertes* and cold champagne and beer and sandwiches in the hostelries of the Quartier Latin.

But all this was only a slice in the carnival pie, for Montmartre was a bedlam, and the boulevards were still packed and as jolly as they had been when I crossed that thoroughfare on the top of a bus and saw a surging sea of color. Such screaming and cheering I have never seen elsewhere.

Clowns were everywhere, acrobats did flip-flaps from the sand bins along the route of the Metropolitan, street bands blared away from the *terrasses* of the cafés, sidewalk venders did a thriving trade in confetti, sold in paper bags, which were warranted to hold a true kilo. Later some of these confetti hawkers began replenishing their stock from the sidewalk where it could literally be gathered by the shovelful.

All this happened a day ago; before noon Wednesday, Paris had been swept as clean as a whistle.

Alas! the famous Bal Masqué de l’Opéra is no more in its splendor.

The *bal masqué* to which once upon a time all of gay Paris went in domino and mask is now filled by the daughters of *concierges*, by barbers and jockeys and a general riff-raff, most of whom have entered by billets of favor. Besides these there are a few dominoed ladies in the boxes who may once have graced the ball in the old days, and now and then a pretty woman in black silk tights passes through the foyer, and is ogled by the remnant of the aged *roués* who stroll about comparing the present with the glitter and beauty of the Opéra ball when it was one of the sights of the world, frequented by the most celebrated and beautiful of women. All this has gone; the crowd is motley, noisy and common. The leading feature at the Opéra ball this year was the cake-walk, over which all Paris has suddenly gone mad.

It is an amusing sight to see the Parisian dance it; he forms his ideas of the cake-walk mostly from some of the exaggerated illustrations published in the London journals, and combines these with a touch of plantation grace taken from the steel engravings out of a French history of early Alabama.

I know a celebrated French ballet master who has had his hands full training Parisians in the art of cake-walking. As a *maître de ballet* there is none better to be found, but his ideas upon the innate grace of “Syncopated Sandy” are somewhat vague.

Chapter Nine

IN PARISIAN WATERS

adame Thérèse Baudière's brown eyes and the pink-and-white freshness of her skin are in charming contrast to her gray hair, which she wears in the coiffure of a certain marquise of a century ago. Sometimes on fête days, madame encircles her white throat with a black velvet ribbon. Upon these occasions, she mostly resembles the Watteau-like marquise whose portrait hangs in the inn adjoining Madame Baudière's garden. A seasoned old hostelry is the inn, famous for its vintages and its sauces, both of which go far toward cheering the stranger who comes to Poissy.

This quaint town upon the bank of the Seine would be a drowsy little hamlet indeed were it not so close to Paris that its cobbled streets are filled on Sundays and holidays with *tuff-tuffs* and formidable red racers, which rattle and roar in their endeavor to stand still long enough to deposit their dust-begrimed occupants at the door of Monsieur Dalaison's inn, the Esturgeon. For it is quite the thing for Parisians to take their Sunday *déjeuner* or *dîner* at this hostelry.

When I first saw her, Madame Baudière was stepping out of the narrow doorway of her bait shop and calling lustily to her garçon André, who had reached the shore of a feathery green island just opposite, and who upon hearing madame's voice turned his boat about and bent his broad back to his oars in haste to return.

"*Dépêchez-vous!*" cried madame, as he drew nearer. "Monsieur wishes the big boat."

"*Bien, madame, tout de suite*," answered André, plunging the clumsy blades into the glassy river which swings along past the island and glides peacefully on its way down to Normandy and the sea.

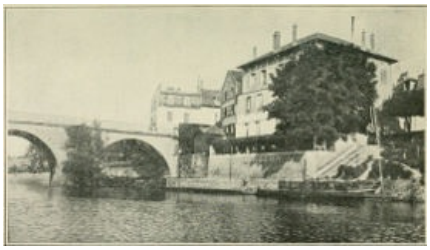


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

THE ESTURGEON

Opposite the inn, shored up against the piers of an ancient stone bridge, framed in a clump of towering poplars, stands a cardboard box of a house, its sides painted in imitation of brick. It looks like a toy from which one could lift the gabled roof and find chocolates and marrons in layers within.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

ONE OF THE FEATHERY ISLANDS

Near by this bonbonnière, in the shade of the overhanging trees, a gouty old gentleman beneath a green cotton umbrella watches intently a tiny red quill floating midway up his line, altho it has given no signal of alarm for hours.

A gentle breeze shirrs the surface of the water. The old gentleman pours a little *vin ordinaire* into a glass, rebaits his hook, and lights a fresh cigar. Masses of white clouds overhead float in the clear blue sky.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A SLEEPY VILLAGE

Just around the point of the island another boat is moored to two long poles. In it a young man sits fishing; his sweetheart, who a night ago had been dining at Maxime’s exquisitely gowned, is now by his side in a calico wrapper and a straw garden-hat, the brim of which is pulled down until all that remains visible of her face is the tip of her *retroussé* nose, her rosebud mouth and her adorable dimpled chin.

Shouts and shrieks of laughter come from other boats tied along this quiet stretch of the river.

Tiny villas, their gardens gay in geraniums, skirt the edge of the stream, where on little wharves sheltered by awnings other Parisians spend the day a fishing. On one of these an old lady in a black silk dress reclines in an armchair, her fishing-rod thrust in a convenient rest, while she occupies herself with her fancy work, talking at intervals to her husband, a dapper little man in a white waistcoat. The family butler has just brought him a fresh pailful of bait, the first supply having been exhausted in the capture of two diminutive *goujons*, a delicate little fish playing an important part in every *friture* along the Seine. It is served like whitebait, crisp and garnished with watercress and lemon. Opposite my own boat there is another villa half hidden in the tangle of a pretty garden full of roses.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

THE QUIET STRETCH

Here a flat barge is moored to the bank, and in it three people are fishing. In the bow sits a genial clean-shaven old gentleman, a celebrated actor, whose red cravat is reflected in the water by a wiggling scarlet spiral. In the middle of the barge is seated Mademoiselle Yvette, of the Bouffes Parisiennes. Her cork has just disappeared with the rush of a foolish *goujon*, and is straightway pulled up, amid screams from the excited demoiselle, with a jerk sufficient to land a whale. At her side a man of thirty-five, sunburned, well-built and immaculate in white flannels, is extricating the unfortunate *goujon* from the tangled hook and line.

"*Oh! c'est beau! n'est-ce pas, Jacques?*" cries Yvette, clapping her hands.

"*Oui, oui, ma petite*," returns Jacques, happy over her delight.

"*Et toi, chéri*," laughs Yvette, consolingly, "*tu n'as encore rien attrappé, ça ne fait rien, je te donnerai le mien*."

The old gentleman with the scarlet tie rises and bows majestically to Yvette in recognition of her skill.

A short pantomime follows, in which these two *bons garçons* present her with a wreath of honor made of leaves gathered from the bank.

"*Ah! mes enfants*," cries Yvette, "you are always so good to me!" and she kisses the old gentleman in quite a fatherly way on both cheeks and gives her beloved Jacques a little hug of delight. Then all three return seriously to their fishing.

ENTHUSIASTS

Now the shutters of an upper window of the villa open and the blond head of Suzanne is thrust out in greeting.

"*Bonjour, mes enfants!*" she calls cheerily to the three.

"*Ah! ah! Oh! oh! tiens!* it is really you at last!" cry the industrious ones.

"Oh! you lazy girl," shouts Jacques.

"*Bonjour*," adds the old gentleman in mock sarcasm. "It is a pity you are so confoundedly lazy that you can not give us the honor of your gracious company! A fine fisherwoman you, who swore last night by Psyche you would be up before the sun had crept over yonder hillock and kissed the river with its rays!"

"*Tout à l'heure, mon vieux*," returns Suzanne, with a rippling laugh. "The day is yet young; *au revoir, mes enfants*." And Suzanne, extricating one dimpled elbow from her *peignoir*, blows the three enthusiasts a kiss and closes the shutters.

"Ingrate!" cry all three.

"Eh! do you hear?" roars Jacques, "we have Chambertin for lunch—you shall not have a drop."

"*Dormeuse!*" shouts Yvette. "You shall not see Gaston when he comes, or even the tail of my beautiful *goujon*!"

"Enough," thunders the old gentleman, melodramatically, "you shall not leave your boudoir, not even tho the populace cry 'The Queen! the Queen! let us see the Queen!' Consider it henceforth as your dungeon. I have given orders to the guards without." The shutters open half way.

AN HABITUÉ

“Has anyone caught anything!” ventures shyly the owner of the shower of golden hair.

“One!” savagely reply the others.

“Who caught it?” comes excitedly from the window.

“Yvette!”

“Bravo!” applauds Suzanne. “I am coming down!” And she does, making her way through the roses. Her exquisite hair is twisted in a hurried coil. The voluminous sleeves of her *peignoir* reveal her pretty bare arms as she runs. The next instant Suzanne is in the barge fishing with the rest.

Bees drone lazily over the flowers in the tiny garden; the river flashes in the warm sun; a *carillon* of bells from a breezy belfry on the hillside strikes noon, and the four enthusiasts pull up their lines and go to *déjeuner*.

A table in the garden is laid for eight. Marie, Suzanne’s bonne, is drying the salad vigorously in its wire cage. In a cool corner the cobwebbed bottles of Chambertin sleep in their baskets.

THE OLD BRIDGE

The train has brought Gaston and his friend, a young officer. An automobile growls and sputters up the villa with the leading villain of a Parisian theater, a man full of kindly good humor, accompanied by a graceful woman with jet-black hair, a *danseuse*. It is Tuesday, there is no matinée and every one is happy.

And how gay they are! how full of spirit and rollicking camaraderie! How many toasts are drank, how many clever songs are sung during the whole of this bohemian breakfast! The officer and Jacques move the short upright piano close to the table. Suzanne, now the pink of neatness, with a little laugh mounts a chair, raises her glass through which the light glints as golden as her hair, and sings the aria from Charpentier’s “Louise.” The small company are silent in ecstasy under the spell of her mellow voice. The lines of smoke rising from the cigarettes seem like fires of incense burning in adoration of this fascinating little goddess whose golden heart has made her a rare good comrade.

And so with song and story the *déjeuner* ends. There is no more fishing. Yvette and Jacques go for a walk; the *danseuse* and the villain start in their *tuff-tuff* back to Paris; the old gentleman with the scarlet tie takes a nap; Suzanne and Gaston row down the river, and the officer returns to his barracks. Only when the moon floods the garden with its light do the lovers return. In the garden the roses pale in the glow of

candles from the windows of the villa, nodding their heads sleepily in the night breeze. A bat zigzags over the tops of the hollyhocks; two little birds high up in the tree peep their last good-night. Dinner is at eight.

A PICNIC PARTY

Past this rural paradise the silent river glides and tells no tales.

I pulled up my anchor and rowed back to the inn. The villa with its happy day had fascinated me.

There must be hundreds of others like it along the Seine, I argued. That night I made up my mind to take a trip in a rowboat down to Rouen.

I was warned, by my good landlord of the inn, that such a voyage would be fraught with untold hardships and danger.

“And in what way?” I asked.

“Ah! monsieur, there are the locks, and, when the wind blows, the river gets very rough. Monsieur should take a brave and strong *marin* with him to make such a journey.”

“Have you ever been down the Seine?”

“Only once, monsieur, on a canal-boat with my brother-in-law to Mantes, where he became cook to a famous hostelry. It was he who came yesterday and made the sauce to the sole you have just eaten.”

I bowed my compliments. If his seamanship was as good as his cooking, the brother-in-law could have commanded a man-of-war.

In the matter of finding a suitable boat I experienced some difficulty. There were many to be had, painted sky-blue or apple-green, and bearing romantic names like Juliette or Gabrielle, but their sea-going qualities were none of the best, and moreover most of them leaked badly. They might have done for half-an-hour’s *belle promenade* with Marcelle or Céleste, but I doubted their worthiness for the perilous adventure from which my friend the innkeeper had tried to dissuade me.

I was told that at Bougival I would surely find what I desired. My time was getting short and I took the train there to inquire. Visions of light, perfectly appointed canoes filled my mind as I got off at the station. I could almost see them lying by dozens snubbed to dapper wharves ready to be rented. The river flashed in the warm sun and swung under cool archways. The people whom I passed on my way through the village looked nautical enough. I stopped the likeliest looking one as I crossed the bridge, a bronzed, thick-set man wearing a sailor’s cap.

A SEINE TYPE

“Can I rent a rowboat here, monsieur?” I asked.

He looked at me in a dazed sort of way, then, shaking the ashes from his stubby pipe, became lost in thought. Had you asked him for a balloon he could not have been more puzzled.

“A rowboat,” I reiterated.

“*Ah! monsieur, un bateau à rames, ah!* that is difficult. The miller used to have one a year ago, but he sold it.”

I walked along down the river in the direction of Pont de Chatou, through waving fields of wheat gay with scarlet poppies. Suddenly in the distance I saw the lateen sail of a canoe showing above the bank. Another half mile and I had reached the bridge. Here several rowboats were drawn up to a float in front of the workshop of a *constructeur*. The builder himself came out to greet me. He was a pleasant little man and seemed much interested when I told him what I wanted. He motioned me to follow him and, unlocking the door of a barnlike structure, ushered me in. Suspended from the ceiling hung a score of racing boats and shells, the property of a Parisian boat club. Tucked away in a corner of the floor I saw my boat! A St. Lawrence canoe, clinker-built and perfect in all its

appointments.

"Where the devil did you get this?" I cried.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"It belongs to the gentleman whose château you passed on the river. He brought it from America himself."

My spirits fell.

"Will he rent it?" I asked.

"Ah! monsieur, I do not know, but you could ask him. He is the head of a famous firm in Paris," and he gave me his address.

The *concierge* who ushered me the following day into the private office of the head of the firm in question, informed me that monsieur would see me in half an hour. Could I wait? At the end of this time monsieur, an imposing looking man with a red ribbon in his buttonhole, entered the room with all the ceremonious courtesy found among Parisian men of affairs.

We both bowed low and he motioned me to a Louis XVI. chair.

"Now, monsieur, I am at your disposal."

I explained to him that I had not come to transact affairs affecting the credit of Russia or to merge anything of any kind.

"Then it is not in business that I have the honor of your visit, monsieur?"

"Monsieur," I said, "I simply want to rent your boat."

"*Tiens*, have I a boat?"

"Yes," I reminded him, "at the builder's, below your country place at Chatou."

"Ah! yes," and he laughed heartily. "Yes! yes! so I have, I had almost forgotten it; it has been so long since I have been there. It was the green one you liked?"

"No! no, the American canoe," I explained.

"*Ah! parfaitement!* But, monsieur, that is not mine; it belongs to my brother. He left town yesterday, but you could write him here explaining what you wish and I will leave it here on his desk."

He touched an electric button over an escritoire, and left me with a low bow. I began to write. I had just slipped the note in its envelope when his brother entered unexpectedly—a placid gentleman with a well-trimmed beard.

"Monsieur," I began in my rapid French, "it is for the difficulty of having to find a boat of oars that I have become desolate that has inspired me to come to you to ask you to rent me yours which I find of the type ravishing to my eyes as well as practical to the voyage."

He smiled pleasantly as I talked on, putting his hand to his ear. At last he spoke in a high-keyed, monotonous voice.

A PARISIAN SUNDAY ALONG
THE SEINE

"Monsieur, the lady whom you speak of I am not acquainted with."

"It is not a lady!" I replied in my best megaphone French. "It is a boat, your canoe, at Chatou; want to rent it?"

His face brightened at last, I thought.

"Ah! the little canoe Américain. But it is not mine, monsieur, it belongs to my brother Achille. He is out of town."

I thanked him, left the note and bowed myself out, saving my more intricate vocabulary for the open air. Three days later I received the following answer:

"Monsieur,

"I am truly desolate, I beg of you to believe me, not to be able to acquiesce to your amiable request, but it will be impossible for me to

rent my St. Lawrence skiff. I hope sincerely you can find what you wish. Might I suggest hunting at Asnières? If I am not intruding, let me advise you, monsieur, to take for that delightful little voyage so Arcadian, a strong rope of thirty meters and a gaff which will prove useful in going through the locks.

"Permit me to express to you again, sir, my very sincere regrets and the assurance of my distinguished sentiments.

"Yours, etc."

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

THE BOAT BUILDERS AT ARGENTEUIL

Finally, just outside of Paris, at Asnières, in the workshop of a *constructeur de bateaux*, Monsieur Malo Lebreton, I discovered an excellent boat, brand-new, but rather heavy and flat-bottomed. Both of these seeming defects, however, proved advantages before the end of the trip. A short portable mast carried a leg-of-mutton sail, which I hoisted one sunny afternoon, and left Asnières, with a fair wind driving me along under old bridges and past little islands in the direction of Argenteuil.

Rounding the edge of a wooded island, a weird object came floating toward me, silhouetted against the copperish red disk of the setting sun. It was a strange craft, a short squat boat sunk deep in the water, carrying a black lugger sail, and steered by an old man grizzled and bent with age. A tawny, yellowish mass was loaded across the middle of the boat. As it drew nearer, I saw the body of a lioness, her head resting on her great paws. She was dead. Her long life of captivity had ended in the menagerie of some *fête foraine* down the river. Here was a breath of the twilight air and the cool smell of the fresh woods and freedom, but for her they were too late. Father Time was steering her down the golden river to her grave. As she drifted close by, the old man neither spoke nor raised his eyes. Slowly the boat of the dead drifted by, and the bend of the river hid it from view.

The fair wind, which so far had driven me before it, suddenly changed, and for hours the boat crept against a head wind that roused itself into a stiff river gale and slapped the tops of running waves across the bow. The breeze held its position so persistently for a succeeding one hundred and fifty miles, that often it was a daily fight to keep from shore.

So tortuous is the course of the Seine, so many twists and turns does it take to reach a few kilometers nearer the sea, that the excellent chart supplied by the nautical journal, "Le Yacht," looks like the track of a snake in a box.

I managed to reach Argenteuil that night.

Near the picturesque bridge there was the comfortable inn of Le Drapeau—jolly, as I entered, with a bourgeois wedding supper. The party had arrived from Paris in high two-wheeled carts filled with chairs. These lumbering festival vehicles were stowed under the shed of the courtyard, while, as a precaution against the upsetting of a friendly glass of wine, many of the women present had hung their overskirts in a barn adjoining. It was late when the guests departed, and during the remainder of the night other high two-wheeled carts rumbled by, loaded with vegetables for the Paris *halles*, and shaking the very ground as they passed. When I awoke, two automobiles were cooling under the shed, and a *partie carrée* of smartly dressed Parisians had ordered breakfast under one of the pretty kiosks in the garden.

It was Sunday, and the waiters were hurrying about setting extra tables for the expected guests. Soon smart traps and bourgeois carts began to arrive, the horses being unharnessed and led from the shafts in front of the little tables.

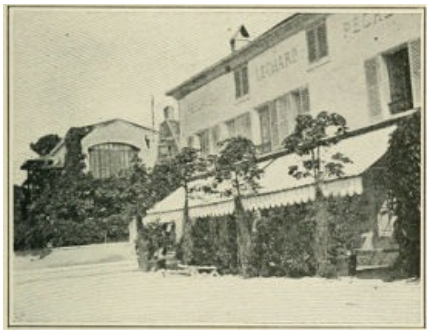


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A TYPICAL SEINE HOTEL

The landlord whose dual role of cook and proprietor kept him as busy as the innkeeper in a comic opera, bustled among his guests or flew to his kitchen, to look after his *poulets* and his sauces.

Rich fields and stretches of woodland rolled back of the inn to the river, still whipped white by the gale and dotted with scudding sharpie-like canoes which had ventured out from a neighboring boat club.

The wind having abated the next day, I pushed down the river, past barges and iron foundries and rows of steam tow-boats, of which there are many plying between Paris and Rouen, moored to the shore.

These tow-boats were iron-clad and painted red. They were propelled by an endless chain arrangement jutting from bow to stern, which rattled as it cut the water. A little below this point, the character of the river changes. Quiet backwaters sheltered flocks of ducks and wild doves. By noon I reached the “Ile Jolie,” a cozy restaurant under shady green trees. It had a ballroom whose walls had been decorated by a clever caricature of a wedding procession, the payment, no doubt, for some bohemian supper of long ago, when madame the proprietress was young and the good comrade of idle painters.

Now its clientèle has changed, and the scow used as a ferry is shouted for from the opposite bank by Parisians with a fondness for game and champagne.

“It must be lonely here in the winter?” I venture.

“No, indeed, monsieur; on the contrary, it is quite gay.” And she added with a twinkle of her eye, “They come in the winter to show their furs.”

HERE, AS EVERYWHERE,
THERE ARE PEOPLE FISHING

Below the “Ile Jolie” lie more long, quiet stretches, smooth backwaters flowing past feathery green islands full of cooing wild pigeons. As I round a point, a blue heron squawks and rises lazily, his long legs dangling. Farther on, a pair of black ducks scurry out of a hidden cove.

At sundown I glide under the bridge at Pont de Chatou. Here, as everywhere else along the Seine, there are people fishing. Often, all that is visible are the spider-webs of lines which lead from the water into the brush along the banks; but at the end of each thread buried in the tangle is some itinerant disciple of the patient Izaak.

A little below all this I carry over a narrow bit of land to avoid the lock at Bougival. Here the Seine resembles somewhat the Thames. Fine estates with formal gardens run to the edge of the river. Cedar boats gay in colored cushions and silk parasols are drawn under shady trees, the nooks of idling house parties. From the walls of one country place the butler is fishing in his spare half hour before dinner. The gateway to this estate is protected by an iron grille bearing in gilt the crest of the family. A smart coupé passes, driven by a cockaded coachman.

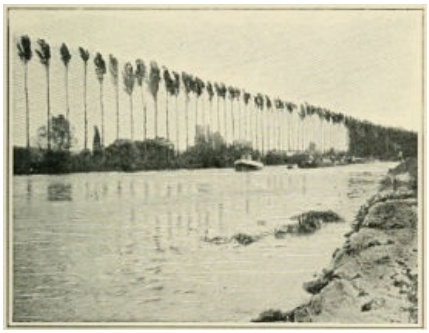


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A PRETTY SPOT ON THE SEINE

At dusk the forbidding settlement of Pecq came into view, a sordid collection of gray houses harboring a wretched combination of a hotel and tobacco-shop. Above Pecq towers the forest plateau of St. Germain, with its palace and balustrades and terraces faced with long avenues of trees strung out like the wings of an advancing army, and having an effect which smacks of the fancies of an extravagant court.

Here from the Pavilion Henri IV., where *chic* Paris drives to *dîner*, one sees the Seine glistening far below—a vein of silver running through a vast undulating ocean of trees.

I stop at Maison for *déjeuner* the next day, and find the proprietress of a river-side café washing in the public *lavoir*. However, she leaves her suds and scrubbing-board with the best of humor, and hurries to her kitchen, whence she emerges a few minutes later with a smoking omelet, a loaf of bread, and a bottle of wine.

"Monsieur will excuse my larder, but we get ready for Parisians on Sundays."

"Then you have a big crowd on that day?"

"*Ah! monsieur, quel monde!*" and she went hurrying back to her kitchen, with her honest face beaming.

The character of the people becomes more primitive. I row on past La Frette, a red-and-white town snug against a hillside checkered with vineyards. At evening I reach Herblay, and a quaint inn with a tiled kitchen shining in polished copper. The town is very small, very crooked and very old. Boat-loads of peasants, many of them in coats of sheepskins, returned at evening from their work in the fields.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A RED-AND-WHITE TOWN

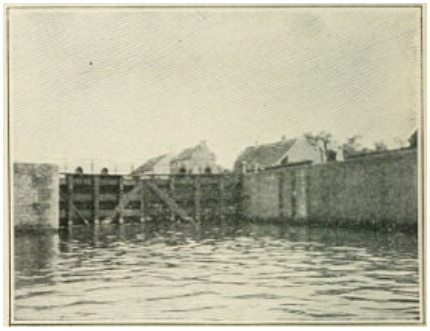


Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A SEINE LOCK

It takes a week to reach Havre from Paris by tow. At the locks tow-lines are slipped and the procession drifts into the big basins by twos. Slowly the iron gates close, and the boats sink gradually to the lower level. As

slowly the gates open at the other end; tow-lines are rehitched, and the procession goes on its way. By the side of the big lock there is a narrower one for the passing through of smaller craft. This, for a few sous, the lockman will grind open for you. But more often you arrive in time to go through at the tail end of a tow and without the slightest trouble. Evidently the dangers of the locks existed only in the mind of my landlord at Poissy, which town now lay just below.

It takes barely an hour to reach Poissy from Paris by train, but by the twisting Seine it is a long way.

It seemed good to get to the Esturgeon again. The veranda overhanging the river was already crowded with Parisians, and every automobile that thundered over the bridge brought more.

Chateaubriands smothered in mushrooms were being served by hurrying waiters. Roast ducks and patés came from the busy kitchen. Champagne frappéed itself in silver coolers, and older wines slumbered in cradles.

Beneath the veranda flowed the Seine, inky black in the night, and framed by a mass of towering trees that would have graced a Corot. Now and then a returning fishing-boat wrinkled the surface of the dark water, while the boat-lantern was reflected in ribbons of light in the depths of the stream.

The next morning I passed the tiny villa where the jolly breakfast had occurred. It was closed; roses still bloomed in the tangled garden; a sign over the porch read: "*À louer.*"

The Bouffes-Parisiennes had opened.

Twilight found me at the Mureaux at the opening of a pale blue-and-gold hotel with a pretty, formal garden running to the river's edge and a banquet grove in the rear. I was informed by the *maître d'hôtel* that "*tout Paris*" would be present the next day. There was to be a grand regatta and speeches by eminent Parisian sportsmen for whom sixty covers were to be laid in the grove. Madame ran the hotel, continued this important personage; he had nothing to do with that, he had charge of the restaurant only, but that was enough. *Parbleu!* He flew about, pale and distracted, his shining bald pate in odd contrast to his black side-whiskers, which I presumed were dyed, since he had easily passed through sixty years, most of them in watching other people's dinners. The place was in a state of demoralization. The *maître d'hôtel* swore: waiters hired for the coming event pottered around, picking up this and that and letting it drop—as useless as the clown in the circus who gets in every one's way. All the furniture in the hotel seemed to have been unloaded at once and distributed by the delivery man. There were Louis XVI. clocks in the bedrooms, ornaments placed in impossible places, gorgeously carved canopied bedsteads for which the mattresses had been forgotten. It grew dark; and there had been trouble with the gas company—and there were no candles. A small printed sign on my door read,

Touch the button:
Once for the lights;
Twice for the *femme de chambre*;
Thrice for the *garçon*.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A FAMOUS INN

I tried the top line and waited; nothing happened. Then I pushed twice for the *femme de chambre*, but no white-capped Marie came tripping

down the Brussels-carpeted hall to knock gently at my door. Then I pushed vigorously three times for the *garçon*. He had refused the job, I afterwards learned, and was at his home in Touraine. At the end of twenty minutes a boy carrying a gilt tête-à-tête chair to the room above heard my cries.

"Candles, you imbecile!" I shouted; "don't you see it is dark here?"

He stared at me stupidly for a moment and exclaimed:

"*Ah! si, si! les bougies!*" and went clattering down the stairs.

In ten minutes he returned.

"Did you find any?" I roared.

"*Oui, oui! monsieur, parfaitement!* Two, but the cook is using them."

The morning dawned chill and gray; already some of the visitors had arrived. Some were heavy, serious-looking gentlemen in Duc d'Orléans beards and yachting clothes. Others wore a judicial air more in keeping with their costume, which included top hats and frock coats. Flags and pennants fluttered from the terraces. Bunting draped from the shield of the République Française ornamented the judges' stand from which the prizes were to be given.

Orders were shouted on the river through megaphones for the laying of the course. The *maître d'hôtel* looked haggard and careworn. He gave orders which were never carried out.

ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE REGATTA

"*Imbécile*, have you prepared your butter?" he cried to one of his staff, a clean-shaven little man whose face bore the intelligence of a ground mole. "Idiot," he bawled at a third, "didn't I tell you the six-franc ducks were on the left side of the cold room back of the two-franc *pâtés de foie gras*?"

Only the two chefs hired from Paris seemed placid. They stirred their sauces, poked up their fires, and then leaned out of their kitchen window as coolly as an engineer and fireman waiting for orders to go ahead. It was noon. The crowd along the terrace was cheering. The rowers had arrived—a score of spindle-legged youths with their overcoats thrown over their shoulders to protect them from the chill wind. Bleak clouds hung heavily in the northwest. Suddenly came a blinding flash of lightning, the thunder boomed, and down came the rain.

It struck in sheets in the garden and drenched the beautiful blue-and-gold hotel and the waiting crowd, and pattered the river into a dull leaden gray.

It filled the wine-glasses and the soup-plates for the feast of sixty, formed in little pools around the *hors d'oeuvres*, and soaked the linen. It totally demoralized the head waiter, madame the proprietress, and the regatta. But the two chefs leaning out of their window again, smiled. They had been paid.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

AU GOUJON FOLICHON

I made out my bill, had it approved by the now hysterical madame, jumped into my boat and pulled away from the wreck. A mile below, a team passed me rattling along in the direction of the railroad station. On the front seat a bald-headed man with a newspaper bundle under his arm was gesticulating wildly to the driver. It was the *maître d'hôtel*.

Below the Mureaux upon an island I came across a small cabin of a restaurant in the middle of a garden patch. Seine nets were drying in the door-yard, and under the eaves of the house ran a sign reading in large letters AU GOUJON FOLICHON.

There was another excellent omelet to be had, and a *friture de Seine* of

fresh and foolish *goujons* whose greediness early that very morning had proved their ruin. Madame in charge of this fisherman's rest showed me her strawberry patch, still bearing fruit—quite a rarity for the season.

She had a brother-in-law in Brooklyn, America, did I know him? She insisted upon generously giving me all of her ripe strawberries. I must tell her brother-in-law if I met him I had seen her.

When I pushed off down the river the chimney of the Goujon Folichon was smoking with the frying of more ill-fated foolish goujons, and madame was waving *bon voyage* from the window.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A RIVERSIDE FARM

There was a fête at Limay. The only hotel in this apology for a town was shaken by the trampling feet of dancing swains when I arrived. They informed me that the ball would continue all night and the next day. Inside the ballroom the town band pumped away amid the discordant shrieking of two cheap clarinets, the drone of a mournful baritone horn, and the thump of a bass drum. The effort was anything but conducive to sleep. I crossed the bridge and entered Mantes, a splendidly built old city with a rare Gothic cathedral.

Later in the evening I returned to Limay. The fête was in full swing, so was the ball. Festoons of lanterns were strung across the main street. I followed the crowd up the cobble-stoned hill to a small square back of a church. Here shooting galleries popped away and wheels of fortune whizzed for prizes. A patient horse ground simultaneously the organ and a merry-go-round. At the sound of a ta-ra-ta-ta of trumpets in the distance, the excited crowd rushed back to the top of the cobble-stoned hill and waited breathlessly with flushed cheeks and dancing eyes. The great parade had started. Cherry branches bearing lanterns flared in advance of the column. Nearer they came. I could see the flashing of brass helmets. In a moment they had passed—eight *pompiers*, the noble volunteer fire brigade of the town—amid cheers and sighs of regret from the crowd that it was all over. Not for another year would Limay blaze in glory.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

A TYPICAL BARN

A fair wind the next day filled my sail as far as Vetheuil. The river had accommodatingly taken a favorable turn, for the wind itself never seemed to vary. It was a pleasant surprise after so much rowing. Vetheuil seems to have been built upon the stepping-stones which lead to its picturesque cathedral. At the original inn of the Cheval Blanc there was a party of good bohemians: two painters from Montmartre and their models. They returned for dinner after a day's fishing, sunburned and happy, and filled the dingy apartment that served for both billiard and dining-room with their songs.

There was something imposing in the name of the inn at Bosnières —"The Grand Hotel of the Two Hemispheres." From my room over the stable I could watch the life and bustle below in the tiny court. My modest arrival seemed to throw this hostelry with the all-embracing name into a state of confusion.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

LES ANDELYS

Marie, the ruddy-cheeked maid of all work, went clattering down the street in her *sabots* after two eggs for my supper. The boy who was milking the cow under my suite was pressed into service to secure a cutlet from the neighboring butcher, while madame herself went after a good bottle of wine at her cousin, the *marchand de vin*. At seven this collation, or rather collection, was served.

Here was an excellent system by which to avoid heavy losses through overstocking. The Grand Hotel of the Two Hemispheres controlled it to a nicety.

Sixty kilometers still lay between Bosnières and Rouen. The wind which had freshened in the night, was blowing its contrariest, and progress down the river proved slow. A steam-tow came round a bend, the white and green funnel of the tug belching a saffron smoke, which indicated full speed. I got out my thirty meters of rope and waited. I could see the fat red-faced pilot of the steam-tug shaking his head at me in the negative.

"*Voulez-vouz me remorquer?*" I cried.

"*C'est défendu*," he bawled, and warned me off with a gesture.

Photo by F. Berkeley Smith

FEUDAL FORTRESS, LES ANDELYS

But the captain of the last boat, a genial old salt with a blue eye and a scrubby beard, gave me an encouraging wink. The next instant we were abreast of each other. Swish! went the coiled line, and with a half hitch he had it fast around a stanchion. The little boat reared out of the water as the rope straightened taut and I jumped for the rudder.

We were off for Rouen.

As we danced past the town of Les Andelys the captain gathered a small bouquet of mignonette from his cabin garden, crawled to the limit of his great rudder, and with the aid of a boat-hook passed the bouquet to me.

"For madame with my compliments," he shouted; "*Vive les voyageurs!*"

ENVOI

From my window this morning the world goes by. The *vieux marcheur* and the young *cocotte*, a *patisserie* boy with a truffled duck, and the smart coupé of Elise.

Bright shines the sun, the asphalt steams, and the gutters flash in ripples. The narrow street is blocked to the doors of expensive *boutiques*, whose windows hold treasures of jewels, of lace and a million things from the frailest *peignoir* to the latest *chapeau*, at ridiculous prices that open the eyes of the *vieux monsieur*, and half close those of Cora—in a satisfied smile.

"Come, come, *mon cher*! how about my *chapeau*?"

"*Si tu veux*," he consents, and the bargain is made.

At the bend of the byway an acre of roses in white paper jackets flame in the sun, and gay *boutonnières* of fragrant posies are tucked in lapels of passing gallants.

A hearse crawls by—poor Ninette! you have gone. Can you still hear, I wonder, the crash of the band, the swinging waltz in the whirling room? It is François, dear, who has sent you the roses—the drooping roses that cover your tomb.

It is noon and the bells are ringing.

"Why do they toll, monsieur?... For Ninette?"

"A marriage, you say? Ah! thank you."

"I'll wager some Count will espouse for a dot.

"Come, Marie and Gaston, Pierre and Paulette, let us go to the wedding. Ten sous' worth of wine. To the health of the bride!

"What say you, Harlequin, you who have known this Paris of Pleasure, this Paris of Leisure, this Paris of Fun? Is it true, my surmise?"

"*Mon vieux*," cries Marie, "stop and think. Don't you know why they're ringing? Mimi La Belle is to marry the Duke!"

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Bastile
Bastille (p. 56)

arcoss
across (p. 58)

Berkely
Berkeley (p. 193)

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