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PARIS

AS IT WAS AND AS IT IS;

OR

A Sketch of the French Capital,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION,

WITH RESPECT TO

SCIENCES,
LITERATURE,
ARTS,
RELIGION,
EDUCATION,
MANNERS,
AND
AMUSEMENTS;

COMPRISING ALSO

A correct Account of the most remarkable National Establishments and Public Buildings.

In a Series of Letters,

WRITTEN BY AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER,

DURING THE YEARS 1801-2,

TO A FRIEND IN LONDON.

Ipsâ varietate tentamus efficere, ut alia aliis, quædem fortasse omnibus placeant. PLIN. Epist.

VOL. I

LONDON

1803

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the course of the following production, the Reader will meet with several references to a Plan of Paris, which it had been intended to prefix to the work; but that intention having been frustrated by the rupture between the two countries, in consequence of which the copies for the whole of the Edition have been detained at Calais, it is hoped that this apology will be accepted for the omission.

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New Organization of the National Institute

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NEW ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE.[1]

On the 3d of Pluviôse, year XI (23d of January, 1803), the French government passed the following decree on this subject.

Art. I. The National Institute, at present divided into three classes, shall henceforth consist of four; namely:

First Class—Class of physical and mathematical sciences.

Second Class—Class of the French language and literature.

Third Class—Class of history and ancient literature.

Fourth Class—Class of fine arts.

The present members of the Institute and associated foreigners shall be divided into these four classes. A commission of five members of the Institute, appointed by the First Consul, shall present to him the plan of this division, which shall be submitted to the approbation of the government.

II. The first class, shall be formed of the ten sections, which at present compose the first class of the Institute, of a new section of geography and navigation, and of eight foreign associates.

These sections shall be composed and distinguished as follows:

MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES.		
Geometry	six	members.
Mechanics	six	ditto.
Astronomy	six	ditto.
Geography and Navigation	three	ditto.
General Physics	six	ditto.
PHYSICAL SCIENCES.		
Chemistry	six	ditto.
Mineralogy	six	ditto.
Botany	six	ditto.
Rural Economy and the Veterinary Art	six	ditto.
Anatomy and Zoology	six	ditto.
Medicine and Surgery	six	ditto.

The first class shall name, with the approbation of the Chief Consul, two perpetual secretaries; the one for the mathematical sciences; the other, for the physical. The perpetual secretaries shall be members of the class, but shall make no part of any section.

The first class may elect six of its members from among the other classes of the Institute. It may name a hundred correspondents, taken from among the learned men of the nation, and those of foreign countries.

III. The second class shall be composed of forty members.

It is particularly charged with the compilation and improvement of the dictionary of the French tongue. With respect to language, it shall examine important works of literature, history, and sciences. The collection of its critical observations shall be published at least four times a year.

It shall appoint from its own members, and with the approbation of the First Consul, a perpetual secretary, who shall continue to make one of the sixty members of whom the class is composed.

It may elect twelve of its members from among those of the other classes of the Institute.

IV. The third class shall be composed of forty members and eight foreign associates.

The learned languages, antiquities and ornaments, history, and all the moral and political sciences in as far as they relate to history, shall be the objects of its researches and labours. It shall particularly endeavour to enrich French literature with the works of Greek, Latin, and Oriental authors, which have not yet been translated.

It shall employ itself in the continuation of diplomatic collections.

With the approbation of the First Consul, it shall name from its own members a perpetual secretary, who shall make one of the forty members of whom the class is composed.

It may elect nine of its members from among those of the classes of the Institute.

It may name sixty national or foreign correspondents.

V. The fourth class shall be composed of twenty-eight members and eight foreign associates. They shall be divided into sections, named and composed as follows:

Painting	ten	members.
Sculpture	six	ditto.
Architecture	six	ditto.
Engraving	three	ditto.
	three	ditto.

With the approbation of the First Consul, it shall appoint a perpetual secretary, who shall be a member of the class, but shall not make part of the sections.

It may elect six of its members from among the other classes of the Institute.

It may name thirty-six national or foreign correspondents.

VI. The associated foreign members shall have a deliberative vote only for objects relating to sciences, literature, and arts. They shall not make part of any section, and shall receive no salary.

VII. The present associates of the Institute, scattered throughout the Republic, shall make part of the one hundred and ninety-six correspondents, attached to the classes of the sciences, belles-lettres, and fine arts.

The correspondents cannot assume the title of members of the Institute. They shall drop that of correspondents, when they take up their constant residence in Paris.

VIII. The nominations to the vacancies shall be made by each of the classes in which those vacancies shall happen to occur. The persons elected shall be approved by the First Consul.

IX. The members of the four classes shall have a right to attend reciprocally the private sittings of each of them, and to read papers there when they have made the request.

They shall assemble four times a year as the body of the Institute, in order to give to each other an account of their transactions.

They shall elect in common the librarian and under-librarian, as well as all the agents who belong in common to the Institute.

Each class shall present for the approbation of the government the particular statutes and regulations of its interior police.

X. Each class shall hold every year a public sitting, at which the other three shall assist.

XI. The Institute shall receive annually, from the public treasury, 1500 francs for each of its members, not associates; 6000 francs for each of its perpetual secretaries; and, for its expenses, a sum which shall be determined on, every year, at the request of the Institute, and comprised in the budget of the Minister of the Interior.

XII. The Institute shall have an administrative commission, composed of five members, two of the first class, and one of each of the other three, appointed by their respective classes.

This commission shall cause to be regulated in the general sittings, prescribed in Art. IX, every thing relative to the administration, to the general purposes of the Institute, and to the division of the funds between the four classes.

Each class shall afterwards regulate the employment of the funds which shall have been assigned for its expenses, as well as every thing that concerns the printing and publication of its memoirs.

XIII. Every year, each class shall distribute prizes, the number and value of which shall be regulated as follows:

The first class, a prize of 3000 francs.

The second and third classes, each a prize of 1500 francs.

And the fourth class, great prizes of painting, sculpture, architecture, and musical composition. Those who shall have gained one of these four great prizes, shall be sent to Rome, and maintained at the expense of the government.

XIV. The Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of the present decree, which shall be inserted in the Bulletin of the Laws.

Footnote 1: Referred to in Letter XLV, Vol. II of this work. Return to text

INTRODUCTION.

On ushering into the world a literary production, custom has established that its parent should give some account of his offspring. Indeed, this becomes the more necessary at the present moment, as the short-lived peace, which gave birth to the following sheets, had already ceased before they were entirely printed; and the war in which England and France are now engaged, is of a nature calculated not only to rouse all the energy and ancient spirit of my countrymen, but also to revive their prejudices, and inflame their passions, in a degree proportionate to the

enemy's boastful and provoking menace.

I therefore premise that those who may be tempted to take up this publication, merely with a view of seeking aliment for their enmity, will, in more respects than one, probably find themselves disappointed. The two nations were not rivals in arms, but in the arts and sciences, at the time these letters were written, and committed to the press; consequently, they have no relation whatever to the present contest. Nevertheless, as they refer to subjects which manifest the indefatigable activity of the French in the accomplishment of any grand object, such parts may, perhaps, furnish hints that may not be altogether unimportant at this momentous crisis.

The plan most generally adhered to throughout this work, being detailed in LETTER V, a repetition of it here would be superfluous; and the principal matters to which the work itself relates, are specified in the title. I now come to the point.

A long residence in France, and particularly in the capital, having afforded me an opportunity of becoming tolerably well acquainted with its state before the revolution, my curiosity was strongly excited to ascertain the changes which that political phenomenon might have effected. I accordingly availed myself of the earliest dawn of peace to cross the water, and visit Paris. Since I had left that city in 1789-90, a powerful monarchy, established on a possession of fourteen centuries, and on that sort of national prosperity which seemed to challenge the approbation of future ages, had been destroyed by the force of opinion which, like, a subterraneous fire, consumed its very foundations, and plunged the nation into a sea of troubles, in which it was, for several years, tossed about, amid the wreck of its greatness.

This is a phenomenon of which antiquity affords no parallel; and it has produced a rapid succession of events so extraordinary as almost to exceed belief.

It is not the crimes to which it has given birth that will be thought improbable: the history of revolutions, as well ancient as modern, furnishes but too many examples of them; and few have been committed, the traces of which are not to be found in the countries where the imagination of the multitude has been exalted by strong and new ideas, respecting Liberty and Equality. But what posterity will find difficult to believe, is the agitation of men's minds, and the effervescence of the passions, carried to such a pitch, as to stamp the French revolution with a character bordering on the marvellous—Yes; posterity will have reason to be astonished at the facility with which the human mind can be modified and made to pass from one extreme to another; at the suddenness, in short, with which the ideas and manners of the French were changed; so powerful, on the one hand, is the ascendency of certain imaginations; and, on the other, so great is the weakness of the vulgar!

It is in the recollection of most persons, that the agitation of the public mind in France was such, for a while, that, after having overthrown the monarchy and its supports; rendered private property insecure; and destroyed individual freedom; it threatened to invade foreign countries, at the same time pushing before it Liberty, that first blessing of man, when it is founded on laws, and the most dangerous of chimeras, when it is without rule or restraint.

The greater part of the causes which excited this general commotion, existed before the assembly of the States-General in 1789. It is therefore important to take a mental view of the moral and political situation of France at that period, and to follow, in imagination at least, the chain of ideas, passions, and errors, which, having dissolved the ties of society, and worn out the springs of government, led the nation by gigantic strides into the most complete anarchy.

Without enumerating the different authorities which successively ruled in France after the fall of the throne, it appears no less essential to remind the reader that, in this general disorganization, the inhabitants themselves, though breathing the same air, scarcely knew that they belonged to the same nation. The altars overthrown; all the ancient institutions annihilated; new festivals and ceremonies introduced; factious demagogues honoured with an apotheosis; their busts exposed to public veneration; men and cities changing names; a portion of the people infected with atheism, and disguised in the livery of guilt and folly; all this, and more, exercised the reflection of the well-disposed in a manner the most painful. In a word, though France was peopled with the same individuals, it seemed inhabited by a new nation, entirely different from the old one in its government, its creed, its principles, its manners, and even its customs.

War itself assumed a new face. Every thing relating to it became extraordinary: the number of the combatants, the manner of recruiting the armies, and the means of providing supplies for them; the manufacture of powder, cannon, and muskets; the ardour, impetuosity, and forced marches of the troops; their extortions, their successes, and their reverses; the choice of the generals, and the superior talents of some of them, together with the springs, by which these enormous bodies of armed men were moved and directed, were equally new and astonishing.

History tells us that in poor countries, where nothing inflames cupidity and ambition, the love alone of the public good causes changes to be tried in the government; and that those changes derange not the ordinary course of society; whereas, among rich nations, corrupted by luxury, revolutions are always effected through secret motives of jealousy and interest; because there are great places to be usurped, and great fortunes to be invaded. In France, the revolution covered the country with ruins, tears, and blood, because means were not to be found to moderate in the people that *revolutionary spirit* which parches, in the bud, the promised fruits of

liberty, when its violence is not repressed.

Few persons were capable of keeping pace with the rapid progress of the revolution. Those who remained behind were considered as guilty of desertion. The authors of the first constitution were accused of being *royalists*; the old partisans of republicanism were punished as *moderates*; the land-owners, as *aristocrates*; the monied men, as *corrupters*; the bankers and financiers, as *blood-suckers*; the shop-keepers, as *promoters of famine*; and the newsmongers, as *alarmists*. The factious themselves, in short, were alternately proscribed, as soon as they ceased to belong to the ruling faction.

In this state of things, society became a prey to the most baneful passions. Mistrust entered every heart; friendship had no attraction; relationship, no tie; and men's minds, hardened by the habit of misfortune, or overwhelmed by fear, no longer opened to pity.

Terror compressed every imagination; and the revolutionary government, exercising it to its fullest extent, struck off a prodigious number of heads, filled the prisons with victims, and continued to corrupt the morals of the nation by staining it with crimes.

But all things have an end. The tyrants fell; the dungeons were thrown open; numberless victims emerged from them; and France seemed to recover new life; but still bewildered by the *revolutionary spirit*, wasted by the concealed poison of anarchy, exhausted by her innumerable sacrifices, and almost paralyzed by her own convulsions, she made but impotent efforts for the enjoyment of liberty and justice. Taxes became more burdensome; commerce was annihilated; industry, without aliment; paper-money, without value; and specie, without circulation. However, while the French nation was degraded at home by this series of evils, it was respected abroad through the rare merit of some of its generals, the splendour of its victories, and the bravery of its soldiers.

During these transactions, there was formed in the public mind that moral resistance which destroys not governments by violence, but undermines them. The intestine commotions were increasing; the conquests of the French were invaded; their enemies were already on their frontiers; and the division which had broken out between the Directory and the Legislative Body, again threatened France with a total dissolution, when a man of extraordinary character and talents had the boldness to seize the reins of authority, and stop the further progress of the revolution.[1] Taking at the full the tide which leads on to fortune, he at once changed the face of affairs, not only within the limits of the Republic, but throughout Europe. Yet, after all their triumphs, the French have the mortification to have failed in gaining that for which they first took up arms, and for which they have maintained so long and so obstinate a struggle.

When a strong mound has been broken down, the waters whose amassed volume it opposed, rush forward, and, in their impetuous course, spread afar terror and devastation. On visiting the scene where this has occurred, we naturally cast our eyes in every direction, to discover the mischief which they have occasioned by their irruption; so, then, on reaching the grand theatre of the French revolution, did I look about for the traces of the havock it had left behind; but, like a river which had regained its level, and flowed again in its natural bed, this political torrent had subsided, and its ravages were repaired in a manner the most surprising.

However, at the particular request of an estimable friend, I have endeavoured to draw the contrast which, in 1789-90 and 1801-2, Paris presented to the eye of an impartial observer. In this arduous attempt I have not the vanity to flatter myself that I have been successful, though I have not hesitated to lay under contribution every authority likely to promote my object. The state of the French capital, before the revolution, I have delineated from the notes I had myself collected on the spot, and for which purpose I was, at that time, under the necessity of consulting almost as many books as Don Quixote read on knight-errantry; but the authors from whom I have chiefly borrowed, are St. FOIX, MERCIER, DULAURE, PUJOULX, and BIOT.

My invariable aim has been to relate, *sine ira nec studio*, such facts and circumstances as have come to my knowledge, and to render to every one that justice which I should claim for myself. After a revolution which has trenched on so many opposite interests, the reader cannot be surprised, if information, derived from such a variety of sources, should sometimes seem to bear the character of party-spirit. Should this appear *on the face of the record*, I can only say that I have avoided entering into politics, in order that no bias of that sort might lead me to discolour or distort the truths I have had occasion to state; and I have totally rejected those communications which, from their tone of bitterness, personality, and virulence, might be incompatible with the general tenour of an impartial production.

Till the joint approbation of some competent judges, who visited the French capital after having perused, in manuscript, several of these letters, had stamped on them a comparative degree of value, no one could think more lightly of them than the author. Urged repeatedly to produce them to the public, I have yielded with reluctance, and in the fullest confidence that, notwithstanding the recent change of circumstances, a liberal construction will be put on my sentiments and motives. I have taken care that my account of the national establishments in France should be perfectly correct; and, in fact, I have been favoured with the principal information it contains by their respective directors. In regard to the other topics on which I have touched, I have not failed to consult the best authorities, even in matters, which, however trifling in themselves, acquire a relative importance, from being illustrative of some of the many-

coloured effects of a revolution, which has humbled the pride of many, deranged the calculations of all, disappointed the hopes of not a few, and deceived those even by whom it had been engendered and conducted.

Yet, whatever pains I have taken to be strictly impartial, it cannot be denied that, in publishing a work of this description at a time when the self-love of most men is mortified, and their resentment awakened, I run no small risk of displeasing all parties, because I attach myself to none, but find them all more or less deserving of censure. Without descending either to flattery or calumny, I speak both well and ill of the French, because I copy nature, and neither draw an imaginary portrait, nor write a systematic narrative. If I have occasionally given vent to my indignation in glancing at the excesses of the revolution, I have not withheld my tribute of applause from those institutions, which, being calculated to benefit mankind by the gratuitous diffusion of knowledge, would reflect honour on any nation. In other respects, I have not been unmindful of that excellent precept of TACITUS, in which he observes that "The principal duty of the historian is to rescue from oblivion virtuous actions, and to make bad men dread infamy and posterity for what they have said and done."[2]

In stating facts, it is frequently necessary to support them by a relation of particular circumstances, which may corroborate them in an unquestionable manner. Feeling this truth, I have some times introduced myself on my canvass, merely to shew that I am not an ideal traveller. I mean one of those pleasant fellows who travel post in their elbow-chair, sail round the world on a map suspended to one side of their room, cross the seas with a pocket-compass lying on their table, experience a shipwreck by their fireside, make their escape when it scorches their shins, and land on a desert island in their *robe de chambre* and slippers.

I have, therefore, here and there mentioned names, time, and place, to prove that, *bonâ fide*, I went to Paris immediately after the ratification of the preliminary treaty. To banish uniformity in my description of that metropolis, I have, as much as possible, varied my subjects. Fashions, sciences, absurdities, anecdotes, education, fêtes, useful arts, places of amusement, music, learned and scientific institutions, inventions, public buildings, industry, agriculture, &c. &c. &c. being all jumbled together in my brain, I have thence drawn them, like tickets from a lottery; and it will not, I trust, be deemed presumptuous in me to indulge a hope that, in proportion to the blanks, there will be found no inadequate number of prizes.

I have pointed out the immense advantages which France is likely to derive from her Schools for Public Services, and other establishments of striking utility, such as the *Dépôt de la Guerre* and the *Dépôt de la Marine*, in order that the British government may be prompted to form institutions, which, if not exactly similar, may at least answer the same purpose. Instead of copying the French in objects of fickleness and frivolity, why not borrow from them what is really deserving of imitation?

It remains for me to observe, by way of stimulating the ambition of British genius, that, in France, the arts and sciences are now making a rapid and simultaneous progress; first, because the revolution has made them popular in that country; and, secondly, because they are daily connected by new ties, which, in a great measure, render them inseparable. Facts are there recurred to, less with a view to draw from them immediate applications than to develop the truths resulting from them. The first step is from these facts to their most simple consequences, which are little more than bare assertions. From these the *savans* proceed to others more minute, till, at length, by imperceptible degrees, they arrive at the most abstracted generalities. With them, method is an induction incessantly verified by experiment. Whence, it gives to human intelligence, not wings which lead it astray, but reins which guide it. United by this common philosophy, the sciences and arts in France advance together; and the progress made by one of them serves to promote that of the rest. There, the men who profess them, considering that their knowledge belongs not to themselves alone, not to their country only, but to all mankind, are continually striving to increase the mass of public knowledge. This they regard as a real duty, which they are proud to discharge; thus treading in the steps of the most memorable men of past ages.

Then, while the more unlearned and unskilled among us are emulating the patriotic enthusiasm of the French in volunteering, as they did, to resist invasion, let our men of science and genius exert themselves not to be surpassed by the industrious *savans* and artists of that nation; but let them act on the principle inculcated by the following sublime idea of our illustrious countryman, the founder of modern philosophy. "It may not be amiss," says BACON, "to point out three different kinds, and, as it were, degrees of ambition. The first, that of those who desire to enhance, in their own country, the power they arrogate to themselves: this kind of ambition is both vulgar and degenerate. The second, that of those who endeavour to extend the power and domination of their country, over the whole of the human race: in this kind there is certainly a greater dignity, though; at the same time, no less a share of cupidity. But should any one strive to restore and extend the power and domination of mankind over the universality of things, unquestionably such an ambition, (if it can be so denominated) would be more reasonable and dignified than the others. Now, the empire of man, over things, has its foundation exclusively in the arts and sciences; for it is only by an obedience to her laws, that Nature can be commanded." [3]

LONDON, June 10, 1803.

Footnote 1: Of two things, we are left to believe one. BONAPARTE either was or was not invited to put himself at the head of the government of France. It is not probable that the Directory should send for him from Egypt, in order to say to him: "we are fools and drivelers, unfit to conduct the affairs of the nation; so turn us out of office, and seat yourself in our place." Nevertheless, they might have hoped to preserve their tottering authority through his support. Be this as it may, there it something so singular in the good fortune which has attended BONAPARTE from the period of his quitting Alexandria, that, were it not known for truth, it might well be taken for fiction. Sailing from the road of Aboukir on the 24th of August, 1799, he eludes the vigilance of the English cruisers, and lands at Frejus in France on the 14th of October following, the forty-seventh day after his departure from Egypt. On his arrival in Paris, so far from giving an account of his conduct to the Directory, he turns his back on them; accepts the proposition made to him, from another quarter, to effect a change in the government; on the 9th of November, carries it into execution; and, profiting by the *popularis aura*, fixes himself at the head of the State, at the same time kicking down the ladder by which he climbed to power. To achieve all this with such promptitude and energy, most assuredly required a mind of no common texture; nor can any one deny that ambition would have done but little towards its accomplishment, had it not been seconded by extraordinary firmness. Return to text

Footnote 2: *"Præcipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur, utque praxis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamiâ metus sit."* Return to text

Footnote 3: "*Præterca non abs refuerit, tria hominum ambitionis genera et quasi gradus distinguere. Primum eorum qui propriam potentiam in patria sua amplificare cupiunt; quod genus vulgare est et degener. Secundum eorum, qui patriæ potentiam et imperium inter humanum genus amplificare nituntur; illud plus certe habet dignitatis, cupiditatis haud minus. Quod si quis humani generis ipsius potentiam et imperium in rerum univertitatem instaurare et amplificare conetur ea procul dubio ambitio (si modo ita cocanda sit) reliquls et sanior est et augustior. Hominis autem imperium in res, in solis artibus et scientiis ponitur: naturæ enim non imperatur, nisi parendo.*" Nov. org. scientiarum. Aphor. CXXIX. (Vol. VIII. page 72, new edition of BACON'S works. London, printed 1803.) Return to text

A SKETCH OF PARIS, &c. &c.

LETTER I.

Calais, October 16, 1801.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Had you not made it a particular request that I would give you the earliest account of my debarkation in France, I should, probably, not have been tempted to write to you till I reached Paris. I well know the great stress which you lay on first impressions; but what little I have now to communicate will poorly gratify your expectation.

From the date of this letter, you will perceive that, since we parted yesterday, I have not been dilatory in my motions. No sooner had a messenger from the Alien-Office brought me the promised passport, or rather his Majesty's licence, permitting me to embark for France, than I proceeded on my journey.

In nine hours I reached Dover, and, being authorized by a proper introduction, immediately applied to Mr. Mantell, the agent for prisoners of war, cartels, &c. for a passage across the water. An English flag of truce was then in the harbour, waiting only for government dispatches; and I found that, if I could get my baggage visited in time, I might avail myself of the opportunity of crossing the sea in this vessel. On having recourse to the collector of the customs, I succeeded in my wish: the dispatches arriving shortly after, mid my baggage being already shipped, I stepped off the quay into the Nancy, on board of which I was the only passenger. A propitious breeze sprang up at the moment, and, in less than three hours, wafted me to Calais pier.

By the person who carried the dispatches to Citizen Mengaud, the commissary for this department (*Pas de Calais*), I sent a card with my name and rank, requesting permission to land and deliver to him a letter from M. Otto. This step was indispensable: the vessel which brought me was, I find, the first British flag of truce that has been suffered to enter the harbour, with the exception of the Prince of Wales packet, now waiting here for the return of a king's messenger from Paris; and her captain even has not yet been permitted to go on shore. It therefore appears that I shall be the first Englishman, not in an official character, who has set foot on French ground since the ratification of the preliminary treaty.

The pier was presently crowded with people gazing at our vessel, as if she presented a spectacle perfectly novel: but, except the tri-coloured cockade in the hats of the military, I could not observe the smallest difference in their general appearance. Instead of crops and round wigs, which I expected to see in universal vogue, here were full as many powdered heads and long queues as before the revolution. Frenchmen, in general, will, I am persuaded, ever be Frenchmen in their dress, which, in my opinion, can never be *revolutionized*, either by precept or example. The *citoyens*, as far as I am yet able to judge, most certainly have not fattened by warfare more than JOHN BULL: their visages are as sallow and as thin as formerly, though their persons are not quite so meagre as they are pourtrayed by Hogarth.

The prospect of peace, however, seemed to have produced an exhilarating effect on all ranks; satisfaction appeared on every countenance. According to custom, a host of inkeepers' domestics boarded the vessel, each vaunting the superiority of his master's accommodations. My old landlord Ducrocq presenting himself to congratulate me on my arrival, soon freed me from their importunities, and I, of course, decided in favour of the *Lion d'Argent*.

Part of the *Boulogne* flotilla was lying in the harbour. Independently of the decks of the gunboats being full of soldiers, with very few sailors intermixed, playing at different games of chance, not a plank, not a log, or piece of timber, was there on the quay but was also covered with similar parties. This then accounts for that rage for gambling, which has carried to such desperate lengths those among them whom the fate of war has lodged in our prisons.

My attention was soon diverted from this scene, by a polite answer from the commissary, inviting me to his house. I instantly disembarked to wait on him; my letter containing nothing more than an introduction, accompanied by a request that I might be furnished with a passport to enable me to proceed to Paris without delay, Citizen Mengaud dispatched a proper person to attend me to the town-hall, where the passports are made out, and signed by the mayor; though they are not delivered till they have also received the commissary's signature. However, to lose no time, while one of the clerks was drawing my picture, or, in other words, taking down a minute description of my person, I sent my keys to the custom-house, in order that my baggage might be examined.

By what conveyance I was to proceed to Paris was the next point to be settled; and this has brought me to the *Lion d'Argent*.

Among other vehicles, Ducrocq has, in his *remise*, an apparently-good *cabriolet de voyage*, belonging to one of his Paris correspondents; but, on account of the wretched state of the roads, he begs me to allow him time to send for his coachmaker, to examine it scrupulously, that I may not be detained by the way, from any accident happening to the carriage.

I was just on the point of concluding my letter, when a French naval officer, who was on the pier when I landed, introduced himself to me, to know whether I would do him the favour to accommodate him with a place in the cabriolet under examination. I liked my new friend's appearance and manner too well not to accede to his proposal.

The carriage is reported to be in good condition. I shall therefore send my servant on before as a courier, instead of taking him with me as an inside passenger. As we shall travel night and day, and the post-horses will be in readiness at every stage, we may, I am told, expect to reach Paris in about forty-two hours. Adieu; my next will be from the *great* city.

LETTER II.

Paris, October 19, 1801.

Here I am safe arrived; that is, without any broken bones; though my arms, knees, and head are finely pummelled by the jolting of the carriage. Well might Ducrocq say that the roads were bad! In several places, they are not passable without danger—Indeed, the government is so fully aware of this, that an inspector has been dispatched to direct immediate repairs to be made against the arrival of the English ambassador; and, in some *communes*, the people are at work by torch-light. With this exception, my journey was exceedingly pleasant. At ten o'clock the first night, we reached *Montreuil*, where we supped; the next day we breakfasted at *Abbeville*, dined at *Amiens*, and supped that evening at *Clermont*.

The road between *Calais* and *Paris* is too well known to interest by description. Most of the abbeys and monasteries, which present themselves to the eye of the traveller, have either been converted into hospitals or manufactories. Few there are, I believe, who will deny that this change is for the better. A receptacle for the relief of suffering indigence conveys a consolatory idea to the mind of the friend of human nature; while the lover of industry cannot but approve of an establishment which, while it enriches a State, affords employ to the needy and diligent. This, unquestionably, is no bad appropriation of these buildings, which, when inhabited by monks, were, for the most part, no more than an asylum of sloth, hypocrisy, pride, and ignorance.

The weather was fine, which contributed not a little to display the country to greater advantage; but the improvements recently made in agriculture are too striking to escape the notice of the most inattentive observer. The open plains and rising grounds of *ci-devant Picardy* which, from ten to fifteen years ago, I have frequently seen, in this season, mostly lying fallow, and presenting the aspect of one wide, neglected waste, are now all well cultivated, and chiefly laid down in corn; and the corn, in general, seems to have been sown with more than common attention.

My fellow-traveller, who was a *lieutenant de vaisseau*, belonging to *Latouche Tréville's* flotilla, proved a very agreeable companion, and extremely well-informed. This officer positively denied the circumstance of any of their gun-boats being moored with chains during our last attack. While he did ample justice to the bravery of our people, he censured the manner in which it had been exerted. The divisions of boats arriving separately, he said, could not afford to each other necessary support, and were thus exposed to certain discomfiture. I made the best defence I possibly could; but truth bears down all before it.

The loss on the side of the French, my fellow-traveller declared, was no more than seven men killed and forty-five wounded. Such of the latter as were in a condition to undergo the fatigue of the ceremony, were carried in triumphal procession through the streets of *Boulogne*, where, after being harangued by the mayor, they were rewarded with civic crowns from the hands of their fair fellow-citizens.

Early the second morning after our departure from *Calais*, we reached the town of *St. Denis*, which, at one time since the revolution, changed its name for that of *Françiade*. I never pass through this place without calling to mind the persecution which poor Abélard suffered from Adam, the abbot, for having dared to say, that the body of *St. Denis*, first bishop of Paris, in 240, which had been preserved in this abbey among the relics, was not that of the areopagite, who died in 95. The ridiculous stories, imposed on the credulity of the zealous catholics, respecting this wonderful saint, have been exhibited in their proper light by Voltaire, as you may see by consulting the *Questions sur l'Encyclopédie*, at the article *Denis*.

It is in every person's recollection that, in consequence of the National Convention having decreed the abolition of royalty in France, it was proposed to annihilate every vestige of it throughout the country. But, probably, you are not aware of the thorough sweep that was made among the sepultures in this abbey of *St. Denis*.

The bodies of the kings, queens, princes, princesses, and celebrated personages, who had been interred here for nearly fifteen hundred years, were taken up, and literally reduced to ashes. Not a wreck was left behind to make a relic.

The remains of TURENNE alone were respected. All the other bodies, together with the entrails or hearts, enclosed in separate urns, were thrown into large pits, lined with a coat of quick lime: they were then covered with the same substance; and the pits were afterwards filled up with earth. Most of them, as may be supposed, were in a state of complete putrescency; of some, the bones only remained, though a few were in good preservation.

The bodies of the consort of Charles I. Henrietta Maria of France, daughter of Henry IV, who died in 1669, aged 60, and of their daughter Henrietta Stuart, first wife of Monsieur, only brother to Lewis XIV, who died in 1670, aged 26, both interred in the vault of the Bourbons, were consumed in the general destruction.

The execution of this decree was begun at *St. Denis* on Saturday the 12th of October 1793, and completed on the 25th of the same month, in presence of the municipality and several other persons.

On the 12th of November following, all the treasure of *St. Denis*, (shrines, relics, &c.) was removed: the whole was put into large wooden chests, together with all the rich ornaments of the church, consisting of chalices, pyxes, cups, copes, &c. The same day these valuable articles were sent off, in great state, in waggons, decorated for the purpose, to the National Convention.

We left *St. Denis* after a hasty breakfast; and, on reaching Paris, I determined to drive to the residence of a man whom I had never seen; but from whom I had little doubt of a welcome reception. I accordingly alighted in the *Rue neuve St. Roch*, where I found B----a, who perfectly answered the character given me of him by M. S----i.

You already know that, through the interest of my friend, Captain O----y, I was so fortunate as to procure the exchange of B----a's only son, a deserving youth, who had been taken prisoner at sea, and languished two years in confinement in Portchester-Castle.

Before I could introduce myself, one of young B----a's sisters proclaimed my name, as if by inspiration; and I was instantly greeted with the cordial embraces of the whole family. This scene made me at once forget the fatigues of my journey; and, though I had not been in bed for three successive nights, the agreeable sensations excited in my mind, by the unaffected expression of gratitude, banished every inclination to sleep. If honest B----a and his family felt themselves obliged to me, I felt myself doubly and trebly obliged to Captain O----y; for, to his kind exertion, was I indebted for the secret enjoyment arising from the performance of a disinterested action.

S----i was no sooner informed of my arrival, than he hastened to obey the invitation to meet me at dinner, and, by his presence, enlivened the family party. After spending a most agreeable day, I retired to a temporary lodging, which B----a had procured me in the neighbourhood. I shall remain in it no longer than till I can suit myself with apartments in a private house, where I can be more retired, or at least subject to less noise, than in a public hotel.

Of the fifty-eight hours which I employed in performing my journey hither from London, forty-four were spent on my way between Calais and Paris; a distance that I have often travelled with ease in thirty-six, when the roads were in tolerable repair. Considerable delay too is at present occasioned by the erection of *barrières*, or turnpike-bars, which did not exist before the revolution. At this day, they are established throughout all the departments, and are an insuperable impediment to expedition; for, at night, the toll-gatherers are fast asleep, and the bars being secured, you are obliged to wait patiently till these good citizens choose to rise from their pillow.

To counterbalance this inconvenience, you are not now plagued, as formerly, by custom-house officers on the frontiers of *every* department. My baggage being once searched at *Calais*, experienced no other visit; but, at the upper town of *Boulogne*, a sight of my travelling passport was required; by mistake in the dark, I gave the *commis* a scrawl, put into my hands by Ducrocq, containing an account of the best inns on the road. Would you believe that this inadvertency detained us a considerable time, so extremely inquisitive are they, at the present moment,

respecting all papers? At *Calais*, the custom-house officers even examined every piece of paper used in the packing of my baggage. This scrutiny is not particularly adopted towards Englishmen; but must, I understand, be undergone by travellers of every country, on entering the territory of the Republic.

P. S. Lord Cornwallis is expected with impatience; and, at *St. Denis*, an escort of dragoons of the 19th demi-brigade is in waiting to attend him into Paris.

LETTER III.

Paris, October 21, 1801.

On approaching this capital, my curiosity was excited in the highest degree; and, as the carriage passed rapidly along from the *Barrière*, through the *Porte St. Denis*, to the *Rue neuve St. Roch*, my eyes wandered in all directions, anxiously seeking every shade of distinction between *monarchical* and *republican* Paris.

The first thing that attracted my attention, on entering the *faubourg*, was the vast number of inscriptions placed, during the revolution, on many of the principal houses; but more especially on public buildings of every description. They are painted in large, conspicuous letters; and the following is the most general style in which they have been originally worded:

"RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE, UNE ET INDIVISIBLE."
"LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ, OU LA MORT."

Since the exit of the French Nero, the last three words "*ou la mort*" have been obliterated, but in few places are so completely effaced as not to be still legible. In front of all the public offices and national establishments, the tri-coloured flag is triumphantly displayed; and almost every person you meet wears in his hat the national cockade.

The tumult which, ten or twelve years ago, rendered the streets of Paris so noisy, so dirty, and at the same time so dangerous, is now most sensibly diminished. Boileau's picture of them is no longer just. No longer are seen those scenes of confusion occasioned by the frequent stoppages of coaches and carts, and the contentions of the vociferating drivers. You may now pass the longest and most crowded thoroughfares, either on foot or otherwise, without obstacle or inconvenience. The contrast is striking.

Indeed, from what I have observed, I should presume that there is not, at the present day, one tenth part of the number of carriages which were in use here in 1780-90. Except on the domestics of foreign ambassadors and foreigners, I have as yet noticed nothing like a livery; and, in lieu of armorial bearings, every carriage, without distinction, has a number painted on the pannel. However, if private equipages are scarce, thence ensues more than one advantage; the public are indemnified by an increased number of good hackney coaches, chariots, and cabriolets; and, besides, as I have just hinted, pedestrians are not only far less exposed to being bespattered, but also to having their limbs fractured.

Formerly, a *seigneur de la cour* conceived himself justified in suffering his coachman to drive at a mischievous rate; and in narrow, crowded streets, where there is no foot-pavement, it was extremely difficult for persons walking to escape the wheels of a great number of carriages rattling along in this shameful manner. But he who guided the chariot of a *ministre d'état*, considered it as a necessary and distinctive mark of his master's pre-eminence to *brûler le pavé*. This is so strictly true, that, before the revolution, I have here witnessed repeated accidents of the most serious nature, resulting from the exercise of this sort of ministerial privilege: on one occasion particularly, I myself narrowly escaped unhurt, when a decent, elderly woman was thrown down, close by my feet, and had both her thighs broken through the unfeeling wantonness of the coachman of the Baron de Breteuil, at that time minister for the department of Paris.

Owing to the salutary regulations of the police, the recurrence of these accidents is now, in a great measure, prevented; and, as the empirics say in their hand-bills: "*Prevention is better than cure.*"

But for these differences, a person who had not seen Paris for some years, might, unless he were to direct his visits to particular quarters, cross it from one extremity to the other, without remarking any change to inform his mind, that here had been a revolution, or rather that, for the last ten years, this city had been almost one continual scene of revolutions.

Bossnet, once preaching before Lewis XIV, exclaimed: "Kings die, and so do kingdoms!" Could that great preacher rise from his grave into the pulpit, and behold France without a king, and that kingdom, not crumbled away, but enlarged, almost with the rapid accumulation of a snow-ball, into an enormous mass of territory, under the title of French Republic, what would he not have to say in a sermon? *Rien de nouveau sous le ciel*, though an old proverb, would not now suit as a maxim. This, in fact, seems the age of wonders. The league of monarchs has ended by producing republics; while a republic has raised a dukedom into a monarchy, and, by its vast preponderance, completely overturned the balance of power.

Not knowing when I may have an opportunity of sending this letter, I shall defer to close it for the present, as I may possibly lengthen it. But you must not expect much order in my narrations. I throw my thoughts on paper just as they happen to present themselves, without any studied arrangement.

October 21, in continuation.

When we have been for some time in the habit of corresponding with strangers, we are apt to draw such inferences from their language and style, as furnish us with the means of sketching an ideal portrait of their person. This was the case with myself.

Through the concurrence of the two governments, I had, as you know, participated, in common with others, in the indulgence of being permitted to correspond, occasionally, on subjects of literature with several of the *savans* and literati of France. Indeed, the principal motive of my journey to Paris was to improve that sort of acquaintance, by personal intercourse, so as to render it more interesting to both parties. In my imagination, I had drawn a full-length picture of most of my literary correspondents. I was now anxious to see the originals, and compare the resemblance.

Yesterday, having first paid my respects to Mr. M----y, the successor to Captain C----s, as commissary for the maintenance and exchange of British prisoners of war, and at present *Chargé d'affaires* from our court to the French Republic, I called on M. F----u, formerly minister of the naval department, and at present counsellor of state, and member of the National Institute, as well as of the board of longitude. I then visited M. O----r, and afterwards M. L------re, also members of the Institute, and both well known to our proficients in natural history, by the works which each has published in the different branches of that interesting science.

In one only of my ideal portraits had I been very wide of the likeness. However, without pretending to be a Lavater, I may affirm that I should not have risked falling into a mistake like that committed, on a somewhat similar occasion, by Voltaire.

This colossus of French literature, having been for a long time in correspondence with the great Frederic, became particularly anxious to see that monarch. On his arrival in a village where the head-quarters of the Prussian army were then established, Voltaire inquired for the king's lodging: thither he paced with redoubled speed; and, being directed to the upper part of the house, he hastily crossed a large garret; he then found himself in a second, and was just on the point of entering the third, when, on turning round, he perceived in one of the comers of the room, a soldier, not overclean in appearance, lying on a sorry bedstead. He went up and said to him with eagerness: "Where's the king?"—"I am Frederic," replied the soldier; and, sure enough, it was the monarch himself.

I am now settled in my new apartments, which are situated in the most centrical part of Paris. When you visit this capital, I would by all means, recommend to you, should you intend to remain here a few weeks, to get into private lodgings.

I know of no article here so much augmented in price, within the last ten years, as the apartments in all the hotels. After looking at several of them in the *Rue de la Loi*, accompanied by a French friend, who was so obliging as to take on himself all the trouble of inquiry, while I remained a silent bystander, I had the curiosity to go to the *Hôtel d'Angleterre*, in the *Rue des Filles St. Thomas*, hot far from the *ci-devant Palais Royal*. The same apartments on the first floor of this hotel which I occupied in 1789, happened to be vacant. At that time I paid for them twelve louis d'or a month; the furniture was then new; it is now much the worse for nearly eleven years' wear; and the present landlord asked twenty-five louis a month, and even refused twenty-two, if taken for three months certain. The fact is, that all the landlords of ready-furnished hotels in Paris seem to be buoyed up with an idea that, on the peace, the English and foreigners of other nations will flock hither in such numbers as to enable them to reap a certain and plentiful harvest. Not but all lodgings are considerably increased in price, which is ascribed to the increase of taxes.

To find private lodgings, you have only to cast your eye on the daily advertiser of Paris, called *Les Petites Affiches*. There I read a description of my present quarters, which are newly fitted up in every particular, and, I assure you, with no small degree of tasteful fancy. My landlady, who is a milliner, and, for aught I know, a very fashionable one, left not the smallest convenience to my conjecture, but explained the particular use of every hole and corner in the most significant manner, not even excepting the *boudoir*.

This would be a most excellent situation for any one whose principal object was to practise speaking French; for, on the right hand of the *porte-cochère* or gateway, (which, by the bye, is here reckoned an indispensable appendage to a proper lodging), is the *magazin des modes*, where my landlady presides over twenty damsels, many of whom, though assiduously occupied in making caps and bonnets, would, I am persuaded, find repartee for the most witty gallant.

LETTER IV.

Paris, October 23, 1801.

Since my arrival, I have been so much engaged in paying and receiving visits, that I really have not yet been able to take even a hasty view of any of the grand sights introduced here since the revolution,

On Wednesday I dined with M. S----i, whose new 8vo edition of Buffon proceeds, I find, with becoming spirit. It is quite a journey to his residence; for he lives in one of the most retired quarters of Paris, However, I had no reason to repine at the distance, as the party was exceedingly cheerful. Naturalists and literati were not wanting.

Egypt was a subject that engrossed much of the conversation: it was mentioned as a matter of regret that, during the dominion of the French in that country, curiosity had not prompted the Institute, established at Cairo, to open one of the pyramids, with a view of ascertaining the object of the erection of those vast masses. At the desert, we had luscious grapes as large as damsons, in bunches of from three to five pounds in weight. They were of the species of the famous *chasselas de Fontainebleau*, which are said to have sprung from a stock of vine-plants, imported by Francis I. from the island of Cyprus. These did not come from that town, but grew against the naked wall in S----i's garden. From this you may form a judgment of the climate of Paris.

The persons with whom I have had any correspondence, respecting literature, vie with each other in shewing me every mark of cordial hospitality; and those to whom I have been introduced, are by no means backward in friendly attention. All the lovers of science here seem to rejoice that the communication, which has been so long interrupted between the two countries, promises to be shortly re-opened.

After dining yesterday with Mr. M----y, the British minister, in company with Mr. D----n, the member for Ilchester, we all three went to an exhibition almost facing Mr. M----y's residence in the *Rue St. Dominique*. This was the third time of its being open to the public. As it is of a novel kind, some account of it may not be uninteresting. In French, it is denominated

THERMOLAMPES,
or stoves which afford heat and light on an economical plan.

The author of this invention, for which a patent has been obtained, is M. LEBON, an engineer of bridges and highways. The place of exhibition was the ground floor of one of the large hotels in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, on which was a suite of rooms, extremely favourable for displaying the effect of this new method of lighting and warming apartments.

In lieu of fire or candle, on the chimney stood a large crystal globe, in which appeared a bright and clear flame diffusing a very agreeable heat; and on different pieces of furniture were placed candlesticks with metal candles, from the top of each of which issued a steady light, like that of a lamp burning with spirits of wine. These different receptacles were supplied with inflammable gas by means of tubes communicating with an apparatus underneath. By this contrivance, in short, all the apartments were warmed very comfortably, and illuminated in a brilliant manner.

On consulting M. LEBON, he communicated to me the following observations: "You may have remarked," said he, "in sitting before a fire, that wood sometimes burns without flame, but with much smoke, and then you experience little heat, sometimes with flame, but with little smoke, and then you find much warmth. You may have remarked too, that ill-made charcoal emits smoke; it is, on that account, susceptible of flaming again; and the characteristic difference between wood and charcoal is, that the latter has lost, together with its smoke, the principle and aliment of flame, without which you obtain but little heat. Experience next informs us, that this portion of smoke, the aliment of flame, is not an oily vapour condensable by cooling, but a gas, a permanent air, which may be washed, purified, conducted, distributed, and afterwards turned into flame at any distance from the hearth.

"It is almost needless," continued he, "to point out the formation of verdigrise, white lead, and a quantity of other operations, in which acetous acid is employed. I shall only remark that it is this pyroligneous acid which penetrates smoked meat and fish, that it has an effect on leather which it hardens, and that *thermolampes* are likely to render tanning-mills unnecessary, by furnishing the tan without further trouble. But to return to the aëriform principle.

"This aliment of flame is deprived of those humid vapours, so perceptible and so disagreeable to the organs of sight and smell. Purified to a perfect transparency, it floats in the state of cold air, and suffers itself to be directed by the smallest and most fragil pipes. Chimnies of an inch square, made in the thickness of the plaster of ceilings or walls, tubes even of gummed silk would answer this purpose. The end alone of the tube, which, by bringing the inflammable gas into contact with the atmospheric air, allows it to catch fire, and on which the flame reposes, ought to be of metal.

"By a distribution so easy to be established, a single stove may supply the place of all the chimnies of a house. Every where inflammable air is ready to diffuse immediately heat and light of the most glowing or most mild nature, simultaneously or separately, according to your wishes. In the twinkling of an eye, you may conduct the flame from one room to another; an advantage equally convenient and economical, and which can never be obtained with our common stoves and chimnies. No sparks, no charcoal, no soot, to trouble you; no ashes, no wood, to soil your apartments. By night, as well as by day, you can have a fire in your room, without a servant being obliged to look after it. Nothing in the *thermolampes*, not even the smallest portion of

inflammable air, can escape combustion; while in our chimnies, torrents evaporate, and even carry off with them the greater part of the heat produced.

"The advantage of being able to purify and proportion, in some measure, the principles of the gas which feeds the flame is," said M. LEBON, "set forth in the clearest manner. But this flame is so subjected to our caprice, that even to tranquilize the imagination, it suffers itself to be confined in a crystal globe, which is never tarnished, and thus presents a filter pervious to light and heat. A part of the tube that conducts the inflammable air, carries off, out of doors, the produce of this combustion, which, nevertheless, according to the experiments of modern chymists, can scarcely be any thing more than an aqueous vapour.

"Who cannot but be fond of having recourse to a flame so subservient? It will dress your victuals, which, as well as your cooks, will not be exposed to the vapour of charcoal; it will warm again those dishes on your table; dry your linen; heat your oven, and the water for your baths or your washing, with every economical advantage that can be wished. No moist or black vapours; no ashes, no breaze, to make a dirt, or oppose the communication of heat; no useless loss of caloric; you may, by shutting an opening, which is no longer necessary for placing the wood in your oven, compress and coerce the torrents of heat that were escaping from it.

"It may easily be conceived, that an inflammable principle so docile and so active may be made to yield the most magnificent illuminations. Streams of fire finely drawn out, the duration, colour, and form of which may be varied at pleasure, the motion of suns and turning-columns, must produce an effect no less agreeable than brilliant." Indeed, this effect was exhibited on the garden façade of M. LEBON'S residence.

"Wood," concluded he, "yields in condensable vapours two thirds of its weight; those vapours may therefore be employed to produce the effects of our steam-engines, and it is needless to borrow this succour from foreign water."

P. S.. On the 1st of last Vendémiaire, (23rd of September), the government presented to the Chief Consul a sword, whose hilt was adorned with fourteen diamonds, the largest of which, called the *Regent*, from its having been purchased by the Duke of Orleans, when Regent, weighs 184 carats. This is the celebrated *Pitt* diamond, of which we have heard so much: but its weight is exceeded by that of the diamond purchased by the late empress of Russia, which weighs 194 carats; not to speak of the more famous diamond, in possession of the Great Mogul, which is said to weigh 280 carats.

LETTER V.

Paris, October 24, 1801.

Last night I received yours of the 20th ult. and as Mr. M----y purposes to send off a dispatch this morning, and will do me the favour to forward this, with my former letters, I hasten to write you a few lines.

I scarcely need assure you, my dear friend, that I will, with pleasure, communicate to you my remarks on this great city and its inhabitants, and describe to you, as far as I am able, the principal curiosities which it contains, particularizing, as you desire, those recently placed here by the chance of war; and giving you a succinct, historical account of the most remarkable national establishments and public buildings. But to pass in review the present state of the *arts, sciences, literature, manners, &c. &c.* in this capital, and contrast it with that which existed before the revolution, is a task indeed; and far more, I fear, than it will be in my power to accomplish.

However, if you will be content to gather my observations as they occur; to listen to my reflections, while the impression of the different scenes which produced them, is still warm in my mind; in short, to take a faithful sketch, in lieu of a finished picture, I will do the best I can for your satisfaction.

Relying on your indulgence, you shall know the life I lead: I will, as it were, take you by the arm, and, wherever I go, you shall be my companion. Perhaps, by pursuing this plan, you will not, at the expiration of three or four months, think your time unprofitably spent. Aided by the experience acquired by having occasionally resided here, for several months together, before the revolution, it will be my endeavour to make you as well acquainted with Paris, as I shall then hope to be myself. For this purpose, I will lay under contribution every authority, both written and oral, worthy of being consulted.

LETTER VI

Paris, October 26, 1801.

From particular passages in your letter, I clearly perceive your anxiety to be introduced among those valuable antiques which now adorn the banks of the Seine. On that account, I determined to postpone all other matters, and pay my first visit to the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, established in the

But, before, we enter the interior of this building, it may not be amiss to give you some account of its construction, and describe to you its exterior beauties.

The origin of this palace, as well as the etymology of its name, is lost in the darkness of time. It is certain, however, that it existed, under the appellation of *Louvre*, in the reign of Philip Augustus, who surrounded it with ditches and towers, and made it a fortress. The great tower of the *Louvre*, celebrated in history, was insulated, and built in the middle of the court. All the great feudatories of the crown derived their tenure from this tower, and came hither to swear allegiance and pay homage. "It was," says St. Foix, "a prison previously prepared for them, if they violated their oaths."[1] Three Counts of Flanders were confined in it at different periods.

The *Louvre*, far from being cheerful from its construction, received also from this enormous tower a melancholy and terrifying aspect which rendered it unworthy of being a royal residence. Charles V. endeavoured to enliven and embellish this gloomy abode, and made it tolerably commodious for those times. Several foreign monarchs successively lodged in it; such as Manuel, emperor of Constantinople; Sigismund, emperor of Germany; and the emperor Charles the Fifth.

This large tower of the *Louvre*, which had, at different periods, served as a palace to the kings of France, as a prison to the great lords, and as a treasury to the state, was at length taken down in 1528.

The *Tower of the Library* was famous, among several others, because it contained that of Charles V. the most considerable one of the time, and in which the number of volumes amounted to nine hundred.

OLD LOUVRE

The part of this palace which, at the present day, is called the *Old Louvre*, was begun under Francis I. from the plan of PIERRE LESCOT, abbot of Clugny; and the sculpture was executed by JEAN GOUGEON, whose minute correctness is particularly remarkable in the festoons of the frieze of the second order, and in the devices emblematic of the amours of Henry II. This edifice, though finished, was not inhabited during the reign of that king, but it was by his son Charles IX.

Under him, the *Louvre* became the bloody theatre of treacheries and massacres which time will never efface from the memory of mankind, and which, till the merciless reign of Robespierre, were unexampled in the history of this country. I mean the horrors of St. Bartholemew's day.

While the alarmed citizens were swimming across the river to escape from death, Charles IX. from a window of this palace, was firing at them with his arquebuse. During that period of the revolution, when all means were employed to excite and strengthen the enmity of the people against their kings, this act of atrocity was called to their mind by an inscription placed under the very window, which looks on the *Quai du Louvre*.

Indeed, this instance of Charles's barbarity is fully corroborated by historians. "When it was day-light," says Brantome, "the king peeped out of his chamber-window, and seeing some people in the *Faubourg St. Germain* moving about and running away, he took a large arquebuse which he had ready at hand, and, calling out incessantly: *Kill, kill!* fired a great many shots at them, but in vain; for the piece did not carry so far."—This prince, according to Masson, piqued himself on his dexterity in cutting off at a single blow the head of the asses and pigs which he met with on his way. Lansac, one of his favourites, having found him one day with his sword drawn and ready to strike his mule, asked him seriously: "What quarrel has then happened between His Most Christian Majesty and my mule?" Murad Bey far surpassed this blood-thirsty monarch in address and strength. The former, we are told by travellers in Egypt, has been known, when riding past an ox, to cut off its head with one stroke of his scimitar.

The capital was dyed with the blood of Charles's murdered subjects. Into this very *Louvre*, into the chamber of Marguerite de Valois, the king's sister, and even to her bed, in which she was then lying, did the fanatics pursue the officers belonging to the court itself, as is circumstantially related by that princess in her Memoirs.

Let us draw the curtain on these scenes of horror, and pass rapidly from this period of fanaticism and cruelty, when the *Louvre* was stained by so many crimes to times more happy, when this palace became the quiet cradle of the arts and sciences, the school for talents, the *arena* for genius, and the asylum of artists and literati.

The centre pavilion over the principal gate of the *Old Louvre*, was erected under the reign of Lewis XIII. from the designs of LE MERCIER, as well as the angle of the left part of the building, parallel to that built by Henry II. The eight gigantic cariatides which are there seen, were sculptured by SARRASIN.

The façade towards the *Jardin de l'Infante*, (as it is called), that towards the *Place du Louvre*, and that over the little gate, towards the river, which were constructed under the reigns of Charles IX. and Henry III. in the midst of the civil wars of the League, partake of the taste of the time, in regard to the multiplicity of the ornaments; but the interior announces, by the majesty of its decorations, the refined taste of Lewis XIV.

The part of the *Louvre*, which, with the two sides of the old building, forms the perfect square, three hundred and seventy-eight feet[2] in extent, called the *New Louvre*, consists in two double façades, which are still unfinished. LE VEAU, and after him D'ORBAY, were the architects under whose direction this augmentation was made by order of Lewis XIV.

That king at first resolved to continue the *Louvre* on the plan begun by Francis I.: for some time he caused it to be pursued, but having conceived a more grand and magnificent design, he ordered the foundation of the superb edifice now standing, to be laid on the 17th of October 1665, under the administration of COLBERT.

Through a natural prejudice, Lewis XIV. thought that he could find no where but in Italy an artist sufficiently skilful to execute his projects of magnificence. He sent for the Cavaliere BERNINI from Rome. This artist, whose reputation was established, was received in France with all the pomp due to princes of the blood. The king ordered that, in the towns through which he might pass, he should be complimented and receive presents from the corporations, &c.

BERNINI was loaded with wealth and honours: notwithstanding the prepossession of the court in favour of this Italian architect, notwithstanding his talents, he did not succeed in his enterprise. After having forwarded the foundation of this edifice, he made a pretext of the impossibility of spending the winter in a climate colder than that of Italy. "He was promised," says St. Foix, "three thousand louis a year if he would stay; but," he said, "he would positively go and die in his *own* country." On the eve of his departure, the king sent him three thousand louis, with the grant of a pension of five hundred. He received the whole with great coolness.

Several celebrated architects now entered the lists to complete this grand undertaking.—MANSARD presented his plans, with which COLBERT was extremely pleased: the king also approved of them, and absolutely insisted on their being executed without any alteration. MANSARD replied that he would rather renounce the glory of building this edifice than the liberty of correcting himself, and changing his design when he thought he could improve it. Among the competitors was CLAUDE PERRAULT, that physician so defamed by Boileau, the poet. His plans were preferred, and merited the preference. Many pleasantries were circulated at the expense of the new medical architect; and PERRAULT replied to those sarcasms by producing the beautiful colonnade of the *Louvre*, the master-piece of French architecture, and the admiration of all Europe.

The façade of this colonnade, which is of the Corinthian order; is five hundred and twenty-five feet in length: it is divided into two peristyles and three avant-corps. The principal gate is in the centre avant-corps, which is decorated with eight double columns, crowned by a pediment, whose raking cornices are composed of two stones only, each fifty-four feet in length by eight in breadth, though no more than eighteen inches in thickness. They were taken from the quarries of Meudon, and formed but one single block, which was sawed into two. The other two avant-corps are ornamented by six pilasters, and two columns of the same order, and disposed in the same manner. On the top, in lieu of a ridged roof, is a terrace, bordered by a stone balustrade, the pedestals of which are intended to bear trophies intermixed with vases.

PERRAULT'S enemies disputed with him the invention of this master-piece. They maintained that it belonged to LE VEAU, the architect; but, since the discovery of the original manuscript and drawings of PERRAULT, there no longer remains a doubt respecting the real author of this beautiful production.

In front of this magnificent colonnade, a multitude of salesmen erect their stalls, and there display quantities of old clothes, rags, &c. This contrast, as Mercier justly remarks, still speaks to the eye of the attentive observer. It is the image of all the rest, grandeur and beggary, side by side.

However, it is not on the *outside* of these walls only, that beggary has been so nearly allied to grandeur. At least we have a solitary instance of this truth of a very sinking nature.

Cardinal de Retz tells us, that going one morning to the *Louvre* to see the Queen of England, he found her in the chamber of her daughter, aftenwards Dutchess of Orleans, and that she said to him: "You see, I come to keep Henriette company: the poor girl could not leave her bed to-day, for want of fuel."—It is true, he adds, that, for six months past Cardinal Mazarin had not paid her pension; the tradesmen, would no longer give her credit, and she had not a piece of wood to warm her.

Like St. Paul's in London, the façade of the *Louvre* cannot be seen to the best advantage, on account of the proximity of the surrounding buildings; and, like many other great undertakings too, will, probably, never be completed, but remain a monument of the fickleness of the nation.

Lewis XIV, after having for a long time made the *Louvre* his residence; abandoned it for *Versailles*: "Sire," said Dufreny once to that prince, "I never look at the *New Louvre*, without exclaiming, superb monument of the magnificence of our greatest kings, you would have been finished, had you been given to one of the begging orders of friars!" From that period, the *Louvre* was wholly consecrated to the sittings of different academies, and to the accommodation of

several men of science and artists, to whom free apartments were allotted.

I much regret having, for this year at least, lost a sight here, which I should have viewed with no inconsiderable degree of attention. This is the

PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE PRODUCTIONS OF FRENCH INDUSTRY.

Under the directorial government, this exhibition was opened in the *Champ de Mars*; but it now takes place, annually, in the square of the *Louvre*, during the five complementary days of the republican calendar; namely, from the 18th to the 22d of September, both inclusive.

The exhibition not only includes manufactures of every sort, but also every new discovery, invention, and improvement. For the purpose of displaying these objects to advantage, temporary buildings are erected along the four interior walls of this square, each of which are subdivided into twenty-five porticoes; so that the whole square of the *Louvre*, during that period, represents a fair with a hundred booths. The resemblance, I am told, is rendered still more perfect by the prodigious crowd; persons of all ranks being indiscriminately admitted to view these productions. Precautions, however, are taken to prevent the indiscreet part of the public from rushing into the porticoes, and sentinels are posted at certain intervals to preserve order.

This, undoubtedly, is a very laudable institution, and extremely well calculated to excite emulation in the national manufactures, specimens of which being sent from all the principal manufacturing towns, the hundred porticoes may be said to comprise an epitome of the present state of all the flourishing manufactures of France. Indeed, none but new inventions and articles of finished workmanship, the fabrication of which is known, are suffered to make part of the exhibition. Even these are not admitted till after a previous examination, and on the certificate of a private jury of five members, appointed for that purpose by the prefect of each department. A new jury, composed of fifteen members, nominated by the Minister of the Interior, again examine the different articles admitted; and agreeably to their decision, the government award premiums and medals to those persons who have made the greatest improvement in any particular fabric or branch of industry, or produced any new discovery or invention. The successful candidates are presented to the Chief Consul by the Minister of the Interior, and have the honour of dining with him at his public monthly dinner.

From all that I can learn concerning this interesting exhibition, it appears, that, though the useful arts, in general, cannot at present be put in competition here with those of a similar description among us, the object of the French government is to keep up a spirit of rivalship, and encourage, by every possible means, the improvement of those manufactures in which England is acknowledged to surpass other countries.

I am reminded that it is time to prepare for going out to dinner. I must therefore not leave this letter, like the *Louvre*, unfinished. Fortunately, my good friend, the prevailing fashion here is to dine very late, which leaves me a long morning; but for this, I know not when I should have an opportunity of writing long letters. Restrain then your impatience, and I promise that you shall very shortly be ushered into the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES,

> "Where the smooth chisel all its force has shewn,
> And soften'd into flesh the rugged stone."

Footnote 1: *Essais historiques sur Paris*. Return to text

Footnote 2: It may be necessary to observe that, throughout these letters, we always speak of French feet. The English foot is to the French as 12 to 12.789, or as 4 to 4.263. Return to text

LETTER VII.

Paris, October 28, 1801.

Having, in my last letter, described to you the outside of the *Louvre*, (with the exception of the Great Gallery, of which I shall speak more at length in another place), I shall now proceed to give you an account of some of the principal national establishments contained within its walls.

Before the revolution, the *Louvre* was, as I have said, the seat of different academies, such as the *French Academy*, the *Academy of Sciences*, the *Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres*, the *Academy of Painting and Sculpture*, and the *Academy of Architecture*. All these are replaced by the *National Institute of Arts and Sciences*, of which, however, I shall postpone further mention till I conduct you to one of its public sittings.

At the period to which I revert, there existed in the *Louvre* a hall, called the *Salle des Antiques*, where, besides, some original statues by French artists, were assembled models in plaster of the most celebrated master-pieces of sculpture in Italy, together with a small number of antiques. In another apartment, forming part of those assigned to the Academy of Painting, and called the *Galérie d'Apollon*, were seen several pictures, chiefly of the French school; and it was intended that the Great Gallery should be formed into a Museum, containing a collection of the finest pictures and statues at the disposal of the crown.

This plan, which had partly been carried into execution under the old *régime*, is now completed,

but in a manner infinitely more magnificent than could possibly have been effected without the advantages of conquest. The *Great Gallery* and *Saloon* of the *Louvre* are solely appropriated to the exhibition of pictures of the old masters of the Italian, Flemish, and French schools; and the *Gallery of Apollo* to that of their drawings; while a suite of lofty apartments has been purposely fitted up in this palace for the reception of original antiques, in lieu of those copies of them before-mentioned. In other rooms, adjoining to the Great Gallery, are exhibited, as formerly, that is during one month every year, the productions of living painters, sculptors, architects, and draughtsmen.

These different exhibitions are placed under the superintendance of a board of management, or an administration, (as the French term it), composed of a number of antiquaries, artists, and men of science, inferior to none in Europe in skill, judgment, taste, or erudition. The whole of this grand establishment bears the general title of

CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS.

The treasures of painting and sculpture which the French nation have acquired by the success of their arms, or by express conditions in treaties of alliance or neutrality, are so immense as to enable them, not only to render this CENTRAL MUSEUM the grandest collection of master-pieces in the world, but also to establish fifteen departmental Museums in fifteen of the principal towns of France. This measure, evidently intended to favour the progress of the fine arts, will case Paris of a great number of the pictures, statues, &c. amassed here from different parts of France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Piedmont, Savoy, and the States of. Venice.

If you cast your eye on the annexed *Plan of Paris*, and suppose yourself near the exterior south-west angle of the *Louvre*, or, as it is more emphatically styled, the NATIONAL PALACE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, you will be in the right-hand corner of the *Place du Vieux Louvre*, in which quarter is the present entrance to the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS. Here, after passing through a court, you enter a vestibule, on the left of which is the Hall of the Administration of the Museum. On the ground-floor, facing the door of this vestibule, is the entrance to the

GALLERY OF ANTIQUES.

In this gallery, which was, for the first time, opened to the public on the 18th of Brumaire, year ix. of the French republic, (9th of November 1800), are now distributed no less than one hundred and forty-six statues, busts, and bas-reliefs. It consists of several handsome apartments, bearing appropriate denominations, according to the principal subjects which each contains. Six only are at present completely arranged for public inspection: but many others are in a state of preparation.

The greater part of the statues here exhibited, are the fruit of the conquests of the army of Italy. Conformably to the treaty of Tolentino, they were selected at Rome, from the Capitol and the Vatican, by BARTHÉLEMY, BERTHOLET, MOITTE, MONGE, THOUIN, and TINET, who were appointed, by the French government, commissioners for the research of objects appertaining to the Arts and Sciences.

In the vestibule, for the moderate price of fifteen *sous*, is sold a catalogue, which is not merely a barren index, but a perspicuous and satisfactory explanation of the different objects that strike the eye of the admiring spectator as he traverses the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES. It is by no means my intention to transcribe this catalogue, or to mention every statue; but, assisted by the valuable observations with which I was favoured by the learned antiquary, VISCONTI, long distinguished for his profound knowledge of the fine arts, I shall describe the most remarkable only, and such as would fix the attention of the connoisseur.

On entering the gallery, you might, perhaps, be tempted to stop in the first hall; but we will visit them all in regular succession, and proceed to that which is now the furthest on the left hand. The ceiling of this apartment, painted by ROMANELLI, represents the four seasons; whence it is called the

HALL OF THE SEASONS.

In consequence, among other antiques, here are placed the statues of the rustic divinities, and those relating to the Seasons. Of the whole, I shall distinguish the following:

N° 210. DIANA.

Diana, habited as a huntress, in a short tunic without sleeves, is holding her bow in one hand; while, with the other, she is drawing an arrow from her quiver, which is suspended at her shoulder. Her legs are bare, and her feet are adorned with rich sandals. The goddess, with a look expressive of indignation, appears to be defending the fabulous hind from the pursuit of Hercules, who, in obedience to the oracle of Apollo, was pursuing it, in order to carry it alive to Eurystheus; a task imposed on him by the latter as one of his twelve labours.

To say that, in the opinion of the first-rate connoisseurs, this statue might serve as a companion to the *Apollo of Belvedere*, is sufficient to convey an idea of its perfection; and, in fact, it is reckoned the finest representation of Diana in existence. It is of Parian marble, and, according to

historians, has been in France ever since the reign of Henry IV. It was the most perfect of the antiques which adorned the Gallery of Versailles. The parts wanting have been recently restored with such skill as to claim particular admiration.

214. ROME.

In this bust, the city of Rome is personified as an Amazon. The helmet of the female warrior is adorned with a representation of the she-wolf, suckling the children of Mars.

This antique, of Parian marble, is of a perfect Greek style, and in admirable preservation. It formerly belonged to the Gallery of Richelieu-Castle.

51. ADOLESCENS SPINAM AVELLENS.

This bronze figure represents a young man seated, who seems employed in extracting a thorn from his left foot.

It is a production of the flourishing period of the art, but, according to appearance, anterior to the reign of Alexander the Great. It partakes a little of the meagre style of the old Greek school; but, at the same time, is finished with astonishing truth, and exhibits a graceful simplicity of expression. In what place it was originally discovered is not known. It was taken from the Capitol, where it was seen in the *Palazzo dei Conservatori*.

50. A FAUN, *in a resting posture*.

This young faun, with no other covering than a deer's skin thrown over his shoulders, is standing with his legs crossed, and leaning on the trunk of a tree, as if resting himself.

The grace and finished execution that reign throughout this figure, as well as the immense number of copies still existing of it, and all antiques, occasion it to be considered as the copy of the Faun in bronze, (or Satyr as it is termed by the Greeks), of Praxiteles. That statue was so celebrated, that the epithet of *περιζοητος*, or the famous, became its distinctive appellation throughout Greece.

This Faun is of Pentelic marble: it was found in 1701, near *Civita Lavinia*, and placed in the Capitol by Benedict XIV.

59. ARIADNE, *known by the name of* CLEOPATRA.

In this beautiful figure, Ariadne is represented asleep on a rock in the Isle of Naxos, abandoned by the faithless Theseus, and at the moment when Bacchus became enamoured of her, as described by several ancient poets.

It is astonishing how the expression of sleep could be mistaken for that of death, and cause this figure to be called *Cleopatra*. The serpent on the upper part of the left arm is evidently a bracelet, of that figure which the Greek women called *οφιδιον*, or the little serpent.

For three successive centuries, this statue of Parian marble constituted one of the principal ornaments of the Belvedere of the Vatican, where it was placed by Julius II.

190. AUGUSTUS.

This head of Augustus, adorned with the civic crown of oak leaves, is one of the fine portraits of that emperor. It is executed in Parian marble, and comes from Verona, where it was admired in the *Bevilacqua* cabinet.

On quitting the HALL OF THE SEASONS, we return to that through which we first passed to reach it. This apartment, from being ornamented with the statues of ZENO, TRAJAN, DEMOSTHENES, and PHOCION, is denominated the

HALL OF ILLUSTRIOUS MEN.

It is decorated with eight antique granite pillars brought from *Aix-la-Chapelle*, where they stood in the nave of the church, which contained the tomb of Charlemagne.

Among the antiques placed in it, I shall particularize

N° 75. MENANDER.

This figure represents the poet, honoured by the Greeks with the title of *Prince of the New Comedy*, sitting on a hemi-cycle, or semicircular seat, and resting after his literary labours. He is clad in the Grecian tunic and *pallium*.

76. POSIDIPPUS.

The dress of Posidippus, who was reckoned among the Greeks one of the best authors of what was called the *New Comedy*, is nearly that of Menander, the poet. Like him, he is represented sitting on a hemi-cycle.

These two statues, which are companions, are admirable for the noble simplicity of their execution. They are both of Pentelic marble, and were found in the XVIth century at Rome, in the gardens of the convent of *San Lorenzo*, on Mount Viminal. After making part of the baths of Olympius, they were placed by Sixtus V. at *Negroni*, whence they were removed to the Vatican by Pius VI.

Continuing our examination, after leaving the HALL OF ILLUSTRIOUS MEN, we next come to the

HALL OF THE ROMANS.

The ceiling of this hall is ornamented with subjects taken from the Roman history, painted by ROMANELLI; and in it are chiefly assembled such works of sculpture as have a relation to that people.

Among several busts and statues, representing ADRIAN, PUBLIUS CORNELIUS SCIPIO, MARCUS JUNIUS BRUTUS, LUCIUS JUNIUS BRUTUS, CICERO, &c. I shall point out to your notice,

209. *The* TORSO *of* BELVEDERE.

This admirable remnant of a figure seated, though the head, arms, and legs are wanting, represents the apotheosis of Hercules. The lion's skin spread on the rock, and the enormous size of the limbs, leave no doubt as to the subject of the statue. Notwithstanding the muscles are strongly marked, the veins in the body of the hero are suppressed, whence antiquaries have inferred, that the intention of the author was to indicate the very moment of his deification. According to this idea, our countryman FLAXMAN has immortalized himself by restoring a copy of the *Torso*, and placing Hebe on the left of Hercules, in the act of presenting to him the cup of immortality.

On the rock, where the figure is seated, is the following Greek inscription:

ΑΠΟΛΛωΝΙΟΣ
ΝΕΣΤΟΡΟΣ
ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ
ΕΠΟΙΕΙ.

By which we are informed, that it is the production of APOLLONIUS, *the Athenian, the son of Nestor*, who, probably, flourished in the time of Pompey the Great.

This valuable antique is of Pentelic marble, and sculptured in a most masterly style. It was found at Rome, near Pompey's theatre, now *Campo di Fiore*. Julius II. placed it in the garden of the Vatican, where it was long the object of the studies of MICHAEL ANGELO, RAPHAEL, &c. those illustrious geniuses, to whom we are indebted for the improvement of the fine arts. Among artists, it has always been distinguished by the appellation of the *Torso of Belvedere*.

94. *A wounded warrior, commonly called the* GLADIATOR MORIENS.

This figure, represents a barbarian soldier, dying on the field of battle, without surrendering. It is remarkable for truth of imitation, of a choice nature, though not sublime, (because the subject would not admit of it,) and for nobleness of expression, which is evident without affectation.

This statue formerly belonged to the *Villa-Ludovisi*, whence it was removed to the Museum of the Capitol by Clement XII. It is from the chisel of AGASIAS, a sculptor of Ephesus, who lived 450 years before the Christian era.

82. CERES.

This charming figure is rather that of a Muse than of the goddess of agriculture. It is admirable for the *ideal* beauty of the drapery. She is clad in a tunic; over this is thrown a mantle, the execution of which is so perfect, that, through it, are perceived the knots of the strings which fasten the tunic below the bosom.

It formerly belonged to the *Villa-Mattei*, on Mount Esquiline; but was taken from the Museum of the Vatican, where it had been placed by Clement XIV.

80. *A Roman orator, called* GERMANICUS.

Hitherto this admirable figure of a Roman orator, with the attributes of Mercury, the god of eloquence, has passed for that of Germanicus, though it is manifestly too old for him. Here we

have another model of beautiful elegance of form, though not of an *ideal* sublimity.

On the shell of a tortoise, at tide foot of the statue, is inscribed in beautiful Greek characters:

ΚΛΕΟΜΕΝΗΣ
ΚΛΕΟΜΕΝΟΥΣ
ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣΕ
ΠΟΙΗΣΕΝ.

Whence we learn that it is the production of CLEOMENES, an Athenian artist, mentioned by Pliny, and who flourished towards the end of the Roman republic, about 500 years before Christ. This statue was taken from the Gallery of Versailles, where it had been placed in the reign of Lewis XIV. It formerly belonged to the garden of Sixtus V. at *Villa-Montalto*, in Rome.

97. ANTINOÜS, *called the* ANTINOÜS OF THE CAPITOL.

In this monument, Adrian's favourite is represented as having scarcely attained the age of puberty. He is naked, and his attitude has some affinity to that of Mercury. However, his countenance seems to be impressed with that cast of melancholy, by which all his portraits are distinguished: Hence has been applied to him that verse of Virgil on Marcellus;

"Sed frons læta parum, et dejecto lumina vultu"

This beautiful figure, of Carrara marble, is sculptured in a masterly manner. It comes from the Museum of the Capitol, and previously belonged to the collection of Cardinal Alessandro Albani. The fore-arm and left leg are modern.

200. ANTINOÜS.

In this colossal bust of the Bithynian youth, are some peculiarities which call to mind the images of the Egyptian god *Harpocrates*. It is finely executed in hard Greek marble, and comes from the Museum of the Vatican. As recently as the year 1790, it was dug from the ruins of the *Villa-Fede* at Tivoli.

But enough for to-day—to-morrow I will resume my pen, and we will complete our survey of the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES.

LETTER VIII.

Paris, October 29, 1801.

If the culture of the arts, by promoting industry and increasing commerce, improves civilization, and refines manners, what modern people can boast of such advantages as are now enjoyed by the French nation? While the sciences keep pace with the arts, good taste bids fair to spread, in time, from the capital throughout the country, and to become universal among them. In antiquity, Athens attests the truth of this proposition, by rising, through the same means, above all the cities of Greece; and, in modern times, have we not seen in Florence, become opulent, the darkness of ignorance vanish, like a fog, before the bright rays of knowledge, diffused by the flourishing progress of the arts and sciences?

When I closed my letter yesterday, we had just terminated our examination of the HALL OF THE ROMANS. On the same line with it, the next apartment we reach, taking its name from the celebrated group here placed, is styled the

HALL OF THE LAOCOON.

Here are to be admired four pillars of *verde antico*, a species of green marble, obtained by the ancients, from the environs of Thessalonica. They were taken from the church of *Montmorency*, where they decorated the tomb of Anne, the constable of that name. The first three apartments are floored with inlaid oak; but this is paved with beautiful marble.

Of the *chefs d'œuvre* exhibited in this hall, every person of taste cannot but feel particular gratification in examining the undermentioned;

N° 108. LAOCOON.

The pathetic story which forms the subject of this admirable group is known to every classic reader. It is considered as one of the most perfect works that ever came from the chisel; being at once a master-piece of composition, design, and feeling. Any sort of commentary could but weaken the impression which it makes on the beholder.

It was found in 1506, under the pontificate of Julius II, at Rome, on Mount Esquiline, in the ruins of the palace of Titus. The three Rhodian artists, AGESANDER, POLYDORUS, and ATHENOPORUS, mentioned by Pliny, as the sculptors of this *chef d'œuvre* flourished during the time of the Emperors, in the first century of the Christian era.

The group is composed of five blocks, but joined in so skilful a manner, that Pliny thought them of one single piece. The right arm of the father and two arms of the children are wanting.

111. AMAZON.

This uncommonly beautiful figure of Parian marble represents a woman, whose feminine features and form seem to have contracted the impression of the masculine habits of warfare. Clad in a very fine tunic, which, leaving the left breast exposed, is tucked up on the hips, she is in the act of bending a large bow. No attitude could be better calculated for exhibiting to advantage the finely-modelled person of this heroine.

For two centuries, this statue was at the *Villa-Mattei*, on Mount Cœlius at Rome, whence it was removed to the Museum of the Vatican by Clement XIV.

118. MELEAGER.

The son of Œneus, king of Calydon, with nothing but a *chlamis* fastened on his shoulders, and winding round his left arm, is here represented resting himself, after having killed the formidable wild boar, which was ravaging his dominions; at his side is the head of the animal, and near him sits his faithful dog.

The beauty of this group is sublime, and yet it is of a different cast, from either that of the *Apollo of Belvedere*, or that of the *Mercury*, called Antinoüs, of which we shall presently have occasion to speak.

This group is of Greek marble of a cinereous colour: there are two different traditions respecting the place where it was found; but the preference is given to that of Aldroandi, who affirms that it was discovered in a vineyard bordering on the Tiber. It belonged to Fusconi, physician to Paul III, and was for a long time in the *Pighini* palace at Rome, whence Clement XIV had it conveyed to the Vatican.

103 and 104. *Two busts, called* TRAGEDY and COMEDY.

These colossal heads of Bacchantes adorned the entrance of the theatre of the *Villa-Adriana* at Tivoli. Though the execution of them is highly finished, it is no detriment to the grandeur of the style.

The one is of Pentelic marble; and the other, of Parian. Having been purchased of Count Fede by Pius VI, they were placed in the Museum of the Vatican.

105. ANTINOÜS.

This bust is particularly deserving of attention, on account of its beauty, its excellent preservation, and perfect resemblance to the medals which remain of Adrian's favourite.

It is of Parian marble of the finest quality, and had been in France long before the revolution.

112. ARIADNE, *called* (in the catalogue) BACCHUS.

Some sculptors have determined to call this beautiful head that of BACCHUS; while the celebrated VISCONTI, and other distinguished antiquaries, persist in preserving to it its ancient name of ARIADNE, by which it was known in the Museum of the Capitol.

Whichever it may be, it is of Pentelic marble, and unquestionably one of the most sublime productions of the chisel, in point of *ideal* beauty.

From the HALL OF THE LAOCOON, we pass into the apartment, which, from the famous statue, here erected, and embellished in the most splendid manner, takes the appellation of the

HALL OF THE APOLLO.

This hall is ornamented with four pillars of red oriental granite of the finest quality: those which decorate the niche of the Apollo were taken from the church that contained the tomb of Charlemagne at *Aix-la-Chapelle*. The floor is paved with different species of scarce and valuable marble, in large compartments, and, in its centre, is placed a large octagonal table of the same substance.

In proportion to the dimensions of this apartment, which is considerably larger than any of the others, a greater number of antiques are here placed, of which the following are the most pre-eminent.

N° 145. APOLLO PYTHIUS, *commonly called the* APOLLO OF BELVEDERE.

The name alone of this *chef d'œuvre* might be said to contain its eulogium. But as you may, probably, expect from me some remarks on it, I shall candidly acknowledge that I can do no better than communicate to you the able and interesting description given of it by the Administration of the Museum, of which the following is a fair abridgment.

"Apollo has just discharged the mortal arrow which has struck the serpent Python, while ravaging Delphi. In his left hand is held his formidable bow; his right has but an instant quitted it: all his members still preserve the impression given them by this action. Indignation is seated on his lips; but in his looks is the assurance of success. His hair, slightly curled, floats in long ringlets round his neck, or is gracefully turned up on the crown of his head, which is encircled by the *strophium*, or fillet, characteristic of kings and gods. His quiver is suspended by a belt to the right shoulder: his feet are adorned with rich sandals. His *chlamis* fastened on the shoulder, and tucked up only on the left arm, is thrown back, as if to display the majesty of his divine form to greater advantage.

"An eternal youth is spread over all his beautiful figure, a sublime mixture of nobleness and agility, of vigour and elegance, and which holds a happy medium between the delicate form of Bacchus, and the more manly one of Mercury."

This inimitable master-piece is of Carrara marble, and, consequently, was executed by some Greek artist who lived in the time of the Romans; but the name of its author is entirely unknown. The fore-arm and the left hand, which were wanting, were restored by GIOVANNI ANGELO DE MONTORSOLI, a sculptor, who was a pupil of Michael Angelo.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, it was discovered at *Capo d'Anzo*, twelve leagues from Rome, on the sea-shore, near the ruins of the ancient *Antium*. Julius II, when cardinal, purchased this statue, and placed it in his palace; but shortly after, having arrived at the pontificate, he had it conveyed to the Belvedere of the Vatican, where, for three centuries, it was the admiration of the world.

On the 16th of Brumaire, year IX, (7th of November, 1801) BONAPARTE, as First Consul, celebrated, in great pomp, the inauguration of the Apollo; on which occasion he placed between the plinth of the statue, and its pedestal, a brass tablet bearing a suitable inscription.

The Apollo stands facing the entrance-door of the apartment, in an elevated recess, decorated, as I have before observed, with beautiful granite pillars. The flight of steps, leading to this recess, is paved with the rarest marble, inlaid with squares of curious antique mosaic, and on them are placed two Egyptian sphynxes of red oriental granite, taken from the Museum of the Vatican.

142. VENUS OF THE CAPITOL.

This figure of Parian marble represents the goddess of beauty issuing from the bath. Her charms are not concealed by any veil or garment. She is slightly turning her head to the left, as if to smile on the Graces, who are supposed to be preparing to attire her.

In point of execution, this is allowed to be the most beautiful of all the statues of Venus which we have remaining. The *Venus of Medicis* surpasses it in sublimity of form, approaching nearer to *ideal* beauty.

Bupalus, a sculptor of the Isle of Scio, is said to have produced this master-piece. He lived 600 years before Christ, so that it has now been in existence upwards of two thousand four hundred years. It was found about the middle of the eighteenth century, near *San-Vitale*, at Rome. Benedict XIV having purchased it of the *Stati* family, placed it in the Capitol.

125. MERCURY, *commonly called the* ANTINOÜS OF BELVEDERE.

This statue, also of the finest Parian marble, is one of the most beautiful that can be imagined. More robust in form than either that of the *Apollo* or of the *Meleager*, it loses nothing by being contemplated after the former. In short, the harmony which reigns between its parts is such, that the celebrated POUSSIN, in preference to every other, always took from it the *proportions of the human figure*.

It was found at Rome, on Mount Esquiline, under the pontificate of Paul III, who placed it in the Belvedere of the Vatican, near the Apollo and the Laocoon.

151. *The Egyptian* ANTINOÜS.

In this statue, Antinoüs is represented as a divinity of Egypt. He is standing in the usual attitude of the Egyptian gods, and is naked, with the exception of his head and wrist, which are covered with a species of drapery in imitation of the sacred garments.

This beautiful figure is wrought with superior excellence. It is of white marble, which leads to a conjecture that it might have been intended to represent Orus, the god of light, it having been the custom of the Egyptians to represent all their other divinities in coloured marble. It was discovered in 1738, at Tivoli, in the *Villa-Adriana*, and taken from the Museum of the Capitol.

To judge from the great number of figures of Antinoüs, sculptured by order of Adrian to perpetuate the memory of that favourite, the emperor's gratitude for him must have been unbounded. Under the form of different divinities, or at different periods of life, there are at present in the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES no less than five portraits of him, besides three statues and two busts. Three other statues of Antinoüs, together with a bust, and an excellent bass-relief, in which he is represented, yet remain to be placed.

156. BACCHUS.

The god of wine is here represented standing, and entirely naked. He is leaning carelessly with his left arm on the trunk of an elm, round which winds a grape-vine.

This statue, of the marble called at Rome *Greco duro*, is reckoned one of the finest extant of the mirth-inspiring deity.

Having surveyed every object deserving of notice in the HALL OF THE APOLLO, we proceed, on the right hand, towards its extremity, and reach the last apartment of the gallery, which, from being consecrated to the tuneful Nine, is called the

HALL OF THE MUSES.

It is paved with curious marble, and independently of the Muses, and their leader, Apollo, here are also assembled the antique portraits of poets and philosophers who have rendered themselves famous by cultivating them. Among these we may perceive HOMER and VIRGIL; but the most remarkable specimen of the art is

N° 177. EURIPIDES.

In this hermes we have a capital representation of the features of the rival of Sophocles. The countenance is at once noble, serious, and expressive. It bears the stamp of the genius of that celebrated tragic poet, which was naturally sublime and profound, though inclined to the pathetic.

This hermes is executed in Pentelic marble, and was taken from the academy of *Mantua*.

Since the revival of the arts, the lovers of antiquity have made repeated attempts to form a collection of antique statues of the Muses; but none was ever so complete as that assembled in the Museum of the Vatican by Pius VI, and which the chance of war has now transferred to the banks of the Seine. Here the bard may offer up to them a solemn invocation, and compose his lay, as it were, under their very eyes.

The statues of CLIO, THALIA, TERPSICHORE, ERATO, POLYHYMNIA, and CALLIOPE, together with the APOLLO MUSAGETES, were discovered in 1774, at *Tivoli*, among the ruins of the villa of Cassius. To complete the number, Pius VI obtained the EUTERPE and the URANIA from the *Lancellotti* palace at *Veletri*. They are supposed to be antique copies of the statues of the Nine Muses by Philiscus, which, according to Pliny, graced the portico of Octavia.

The air of grandeur that reigns in the general arrangement of the gallery is very striking: and the tasteful and judicious distribution of this matchless assemblage of antiques does great honour to the Council of the CENTRAL MUSEUM. Among the riches which Rome possessed, the French commissioners also, by their choice selection, have manifested the depth of their knowledge, and the justness of their discrimination.

The alterations and embellishments made in the different apartments of the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES have been executed under the immediate direction of their author, M. RAYMOND, member of the National Institute, and architect to the NATIONAL PALACE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES. In winter, the apartments are kept warm by means of flues, which diffuse a genial vapour. Here, without the expense of a single *liard*, the young draughtsman may form his taste by studying the true antique models of Grecian sculpture; the more experienced artist may consult them as he finds occasion in the composition of his subjects; while the connoisseur, the amateur, or the simple observer may spend many an agreeable hour in contemplating these master-pieces which, for centuries, have inspired universal admiration.

These are the materials on which Genius ought to work, and without which the most promising talent may be greatly misapplied, if not entirely lost. It was by studying closely these correct models, that the great MICHAEL ANGELO, the, sublime RAPHAEL, and other eminent masters, acquired that idea of excellence which is the result of the accumulated experience of successive ages. Here, in one visit, the student may imbibe those principles to ascertain which many artists have consumed the best part of their days; and penetrated by their effect, he is spared the laborious investigation by which they came to be known and established. It is unnecessary to expatiate on the advantages which the fine arts may expect to derive from such a repository of antiques in a capital so centrical as Paris. The contemplation of them cannot fail to fire the genius of any artist of taste, and prompt his efforts towards the attainment of that grand style, which, disdaining the minute accidental particularities of individual objects, improves partial

representation by the general and invariable ideas of nature.

A vast collection of antiquities of every description is still expected from Italy, among which are the *Venus of Medicis* and the *Pallas of Veletri*, a finely-preserved statue, classed by artists among those of the first rank, dug up at *Veletri* in 1799, in consequence of the researches made there by order of the French commissioners. Upwards of five hundred cases were lying on the banks of the Tiber, at Rome, ready to be sent off to France, when the Neapolitans entered that city. They carried them all away: but by the last article of the treaty of peace with the king of Naples, the whole of them are to be restored to the French Republic. For the purpose of verifying their condition, and taking measures for their conveyance to Paris, two commissioners have been dispatched to Italy: one is the son of CHAPTAL, Minister of the Interior, and the other is DUFOURNY, the architect. On the arrival of these cases, even after the fifteen departmental Museums have been supplied, it is asserted that there will yet remain in the French capital, antiquities in sufficient number to form a museum almost from Paris to Versailles.

The CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS is open to the public in general on the 8th, 9th, and 10th of each decade;[1] the other days are appropriated to the study of young pupils; but a foreigner has only to produce his *permis de séjour* to gain admission *gratis* every day from the hour of ten o'clock to four. To the credit of the nation, I must observe that this exception in favour of foreigners excites no jealousy whatever.

It is no more than a justice due to the liberality of the French republican government to add, that they set a noble example which is worthy of being followed, not only in England, but in every other country, where the arts and sciences are honoured, or the general interests of mankind held in estimation. From persons visiting any national establishment, whether museum, library, cabinet, or garden, in this capital, no sort of fee or perquisite is now expected, or allowed to be taken. Although it was not a public day when I paid my first visit to the CENTRAL MUSEUM, no sooner did I shew my *permis de séjour*, than the doors were thrown open; and from M. VISCONTI, and other members of the Council, who happened to be present, I experienced the most polite and obliging attention. As an Englishman, I confess that I felt a degree of shame on reflecting to what pitiful exaction a foreigner would be subject, who might casually visit any public object of curiosity in our metropolis.

Footnote 1: By a subsequent regulation, Saturday and Sunday are the days on which the CENTRAL MUSEUM is open to public inspection. Return to text

LETTER IX.

Paris, October 31, 1801.

In answer to your question, I shall begin by informing you that I have not set eyes on the *petit caporal*, as some affect to style the Chief Consul. He spends much of his time, I am told, at *Malmaison*, his country-seat; and seldom appears in public, except in his box at the Opera, or at the French theatre; but at the grand monthly parade, I shall be certain to behold him, on the 15th of the present month of Brumaire, according to the republican calendar, which day answers to the 6th of November. I have therefore to check my impatience for a week longer.

However, if I have not yet seen BONAPARTE himself, I have at least seen a person who has seen him, and will take care that I shall have an opportunity of seeing him too: this person is no less than a general—who accompanied him in his expedition to Egypt—who was among the chosen few that returned with him from that country—who there surveyed the mouths of the Nile—who served under him in the famous campaign of Syria; and who at this day is one of the first military engineers in Europe. In a word, it is General A----y, of the artillery, at present Director of that scientific establishment, called the DÉPÔT DE LA GUERRE. He invited me the day before yesterday to breakfast, with a view of meeting some of his friends whom he had purposely assembled.

I am not fond of breakfasting from home; *mais il faut vivre à Rome comme à Rome*. Between ten and eleven o'clock I reached the *Dépôt*, which is situated in the *Rue de l'Université*, *Faubourg St, Germain*, at the *ci-devant Hôtel d'Harcourt*, formerly belonging to the duke of that name. Passing through the gate-way, I was proceeding boldly to the principal entrance of the hotel, when a sentinel stopped me short by charging his bayonet. "Citizen," said he fiercely, at the same time pointing to the lodge on the right, "you must speak to the porter." I accordingly obeyed the mandate. "What's your business, citizen?" inquired the porter gruffly.—"My business, citizen," replied I, "is only to breakfast with the general."—"Be so good, citizen," rejoined he in a milder tone, "as to take the trouble to ascend the grand stair-case, and ring the bell on the first-floor."

Being introduced into the general's apartments, I there found eight or ten persons of very intelligent aspect, seated at a round table, loaded with all sorts of good things, but, in my mind, better calculated for dinner than breakfast. Among a great variety of delicacies, were beef-steaks, or, as they are here termed, *bif-ticks à l'Anglaise*. Oysters too were not forgotten: indeed, they compose an essential part of a French breakfast; and the ladies seem particularly partial to them, I suppose, because they are esteemed strengthening to a delicate constitution.

Nothing could be more pleasant than this party. Most of the guests were distinguished literati, or military men of no ordinary stamp. One of the latter, a *chef de brigade* of engineers, near whom I

considered myself fortunate in being placed, spoke to me in the highest terms of Mr. SPENCER SMITH, Sir Sidney's brother, to whose interference at *Constantinople*, he was indebted for his release from a Turkish prison.

Notwithstanding the continual clatter of knives and forks, and the occasional gingle of glasses, the conversation, which suffered no interruption, was to me extremely interesting: I never heard any men express opinions more liberal on every subject that was started. It was particularly gratifying to my feelings, as an Englishman, to hear a set of French gentlemen, some of whom had participated in the sort of disgrace attached to the raising of the siege of *St. Jean d'Acre*, generously bestow just encomiums on my brother-officer, to whose heroism they owed their failure. Addison, I think, says, somewhere in the Spectator, that national prejudice is a laudable partiality; but, however laudable it may be to indulge such a partiality, it ought not to render us blind to the merit of individuals of a rival nation.

General A----y, being one of those whose talents have been found too useful to the State to be suffered to remain in inaction, was obliged to attend at the *Conseil des Mines* soon after twelve o'clock, when the party separated. Just as I was taking leave, he did me the favour to put into my hand a copy of his *Histoire du Canal du Midi*, of which I shall say more when I have had leisure to peruse it.

I do not know that a man in good health, who takes regular exercise, is the worse for breakfasting on a beef-steak, in the long-exploded style of Queen Bess; but I am no advocate for all the accessories of a French *déjeûner à la fourchette*. The strong Mocha coffee which I swallowed, could not check the more powerful effect of the Madeira and *crème de rose*. I therefore determined on taking a long walk, which, when saddle-horses are not to be procured, I have always found the best remedy for the kind of restlessness created by such a breakfast.

I accordingly directed my steps across the *Pont & Place de la Concorde*, traversed the street of the same name; and, following the *Boulevard* for a certain distance, struck off to the left, that is, towards the north, in order to gain the summit of

MONTMARTRE.

In ancient times, there stood on this hill a temple dedicated to Mars, whence the name *Mons Martis*, of which has been made *Montmartre*. At the foot of it, was the *Campus Martius*, or *Champ de Mars*, where the French kings of the first race caused their throne to be erected every year on the first of May. They came hither in a car, decorated with green boughs and flowers, and drawn by four oxen. Such, indeed, was the town-equipage of king DAGOBERT.

> "Quatre bœufs attelés, d'un pas tranquil et lent,
> Promenaient dans Paris le monarque indolent."

Having seated themselves on the throne, they gave a public audience to the people, at the same time giving and receiving presents, which were called *estrennes*. Hence annual presents were afterwards termed *étrennes*, and this gave rise to the custom of making them.

On this hill too fell the head of *Διονυσιος* or *St. Denis*; and in latter times, this was the spot chosen by the Marshal DE BROGLIE, who commanded the thirty-five thousand troops by which the French capital was surrounded in May 1789, for checking the spirit of the turbulent Parisians, by battering their houses' about their ears, and burying them under the ruins.

On the summit of *Montmartre*, is a circular terrace, in the centre of which stands a windmill, and not far from it, are several others. Round its brow are several *maisonettes*, or little country boxes, and also some public gardens with bowers, where lovers often regale their mistresses. Hence you command a full view of the city of Paris. You behold roof rising above roof; and the churches towering above the houses have, at this distance, somewhat the appearance of lofty chimnies. You look down on the capital as far as the Seine, by which it is intersected: beyond that river, the surface of the land rises again in the form of an amphitheatre. On all sides, the prospect is bounded by eminences of various degrees of elevation, over which, as well as over the plains, and along the banks of the river, are scattered villas, windmills, country-seats, hamlets, villages, and coppices; but, from want of enclosures, the circumjacent country has not that rich and variegated aspect which delights the eye in our English rural scenery. This was always one of my favourite walks during my residence in Paris before the revolution; and I doubt not, when you visit the French capital, that you will have the curiosity to scale the heights of *Montmartre*.

As to the theatres, concerning which you interrogate me, I shall defer entering into any particular detail of them, till I have made myself fully acquainted with the attractions of each: this mode of proceeding will not occasion any material delay, as I generally visit one of them every evening, but always endeavour to go to that house where the *best* performers are to be seen, in their *best* characters, and in the *best* pieces. I mention this, in order that you may not think me inattentive to your request, by having hitherto omitted to point out to you the difference between the theatrical amusements here under the monarchy, and those of the republic.

The *thèâtre des arts* or grand French opera, the *opera buffa* or Italian comic opera, the *théâtre Feydeau* or French comic opera, and the *théâtre Français*, chiefly engage my attention. Yesterday evening I went to the last-mentioned theatre purposely to see Mademoiselle CONTAT, who

played in both pieces. The first was *Les Femmes Savantes*, a comedy, in which Molière, wishing to aim a blow at female pedantry, has, perhaps, checked, in some French women, a desire for improvement; the second was *La fausse Agnès*, a laughable afterpiece. Notwithstanding the enormous *embonpoint* which this celebrated comic actress has acquired since I saw her last on the Parisian stage upwards of ten years ago, she acquitted herself with her accustomed excellence. I happened to sit next to a very warm admirer of her superior talents, who told me that, bulky as she was become, he had been highly gratified in seeing her perform at *Rouen* not long since, in her favourite character of *Roxalane*, in *Les Trois Sultanes*. "She was much applauded, no doubt." observed I.—"Not at all," replied he, "for the crowd was so great, that in no part of the house was it possible for a man to use his hands."

LETTER X.

Paris, November 2, 1801.

On reaching Paris, every person, whether Jew or Gentile, foreigner or not, coming from any department of the republic, except that of *La Seine*, in which the capital is situated, is now bound to make his appearance at the *Préfecture de Police*.

The new-comer, accompanied by two housekeepers, first repairs to the Police-office of the *arrondissement*, or district, in which he has taken up his residence, where he delivers his travelling passport; in lieu of which he receives a sort of certificate, and then he shews himself at the *Préfecture de Police*, or General Police-office, at present established in the *Cité*.

Here, his name and quality, together with a minute description of his person and his place of abode, are inserted in a register kept for that purpose, to which he puts his signature; and a printed paper, commonly called a *permis de séjour*, is given to him, containing a duplicate of all these matters, filled up in the blanks, which he also signs himself. It is intended that he should always carry this paper about him, in order that he may produce it when called on, or, in case of necessity, for verifying his person, on any particular occasion, such as passing by a guard-house on foot after eleven o'clock at night, or being unexpectedly involved in any affray. In a word, it answers to a stranger the same end as a *carte de sureté*, or ticket of safety, does to an inhabitant of Paris.

I accordingly went through this indispensable ceremony in due form on my arrival here; but, having neglected to read a *nota bene* in the margin of the *permis de séjour*, I had not been ten hours in my new apartments before I received a visit from an Inspector of Police of the *arrondissement*, who, very civilly reminding me of the omission, told me that I need not give myself the trouble of going to the Central Police-office, as he would report my removal. However, being determined to be strictly *en règle*, I went thither myself to cause my new residence to be inserted in the paper.

I should not have dwelt on the circumstance, were it not to shew you the precision observed in the administration of the police of this great city.

Under the old *régime*, every master of a ready-furnished hotel was obliged to keep a register, in which he inserted the name and quality of his lodgers for the inspection of the police-officers whenever they came: this regulation is not only strictly adhered to at present; but every person in Paris, who receives a stranger under his roof as an inmate, is bound, under penalty of a fine, to report him to the police, which is most vigilantly administered by Citizen FOUCHÉ.

Last night, not being in time to find good places at the *Théâtre des Arts*, or Grand French Opera, I went to the *Théâtre Louvois*, which is within a few paces of it, in hopes of being more successful. I shall not at present attempt to describe the house, as, from my arriving late, I was too ill accommodated to be able to view it to advantage.

However, I was well seated for seeing the performance. It consisted of three *petites pièces*: namely, *Une heure d'absence*, *La petite ville*, and *Le café d'une petite ville*. The first was entertaining; but the second much more so; and though the third cannot claim the merit of being well put together, I shall say a few words of it, as it is a production *in honour of peace*, and on that score alone, would, at this juncture, deserve notice.

After a few scenes somewhat languid, interspersed with common-place, and speeches of no great humour, a *dénouement*, by no means interesting, promised not to compensate the audience for their patience. But the author of the *Café d'une petite ville*, having eased himself of this burden, revealed his motive, and took them on their weak side, by making a strong appeal to French enthusiasm. This cord being adroitly struck, his warmth became communicative, and animating the actors, good humor did the rest. The accessories were infinitely more interesting than the main subject. An allemande, gracefully danced by two damsels and a hero, in the character of a French hussar, returned home from the fatigues of war and battle, was much applauded; and a Gascoon poet, who declares that, for once in his life, he is resolved to speak truth, was loudly encored in the following couplets, adapted to the well-known air of *"Gai, le cœur à la danse."*

"Celui qui nous donne la paix,
Comme il fit bien la guerre!
Sur lui déjà force conplets....

Mai il en reste à faire:
Au diable nous nous donnions,
Il revient, nous respirons....
Il fait changer la danse;
Par lui chez nous plus de discord;
Il regle la cadence,
Et nous voilà d'accord."

True it is, that BONAPARTE, as principal ballet-master, has changed the dance of the whole nation; he regulates their step to the measure of his own music, and *discord* is mute at the moment: but the question is, whether the French are bona-fide *d'accord*, (as the Gascoon affirms,) that is, perfectly reconciled to the new tune and figure? Let us, however, keep out of this maze; were we to enter it, we might remain bewildered there, perhaps, till old Father Time came to extricate us.

The morning is inviting: suppose we take a turn in the *Tuileries*, not with a view of surveying this garden, but merely to breathe the fresh air, and examine the

PALAIS DU GOUVERNEMENT.

Since the Chief Consul has made it his town-residence, this is the new denomination given to the *Palais des Tuileries*, thus called, because a tile-kiln formerly stood on the site where it is erected. At that time, this part of Paris was not comprised within its walls, nothing was to be seen here, in the vicinity of the tile-kiln, but a few coppices and scattered habitations.

Catherine de Medicis, wishing to enlarge the capital on this side, visited the spot, and liking the situation, directed PHILIBERT DE L'ORME and JEAN BULLAN, two celebrated French architects, to present her with a plan, from which the construction of this palace was begun in May 1564. At first, it consisted only of the large square pavilion in the centre of the two piles of building, which have each a terrace towards the garden, and of the two pavilions by which they are terminated.

Henry IV enlarged the original building, and, in 1600, began the grand gallery which joins it to the *Louvre*, from the plan of DU CERCEAU. Lewis XIII made some alterations in the palace; and in 1664, exactly a century from the date of its construction being begun, Lewis XIV directed LOUIS DE VEAU to finish it, by making the additions and embellishments which have brought it to its present state. These deviations from the first plan have destroyed the proportions required by the strict rules of art; but this defect would, probably, be overlooked by those who are not connoisseurs, as the architecture, though variously blended, presents, at first sight, an *ensemble* which is magnificent and striking.

The whole front of the palace of the *Tuileries* consists of five pavilions, connected by four piles of building, standing on the same line, and extending for the space of one thousand and eleven feet. The first order of the three middle piles is Ionic, with encircled columns. The two adjoining pavilions are also ornamented with Ionic pillars; but fluted, and embellished with foliage, from the third of their height to the summit. The second order of these two pavilions is Corinthian. The two piles of building, which come next, as well as the two pavilions of the wings, are of a Composite order with fluted pillars. From a tall iron spindle, placed on the pinnacle of each of the three principal pavilions is now seen floating a horizontal tri-coloured streamer. Till the improvements made by Lewis XIV, the large centre pavilion had been decorated with the Ionic and Corinthian orders only, to these was added the Composite.

On the façade towards the *Place du Carrousel*, the pillars of all these orders are of brown and red marble. Here may be observed the marks of several cannon-balls, beneath each of which is inscribed, in black, 10 AOÛT.

This tenth of August 1792, a day ever memorable in the history of France, has furnished many an able writer with the subject of an episode; but, I believe, few of them were, any more than myself, actors in that dreadful scene. While I was intently remarking the particular impression of a shot which struck the edge of one of the casements of the first floor of the palace, my *valet de place* came up to know at which door I would have the carriage remain in waiting.

On turning round, I fancied I beheld the man who "drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night." That messenger, I am sure, could not have presented a visage more pale, more spiritless than my Helvetian. Recollecting that he had served in the Swiss guards, I was the less at a loss to account for his extreme agitation. "In what part of the *château* were you, Jean," said I, "when these balls were aimed at the windows?"----"There was my post," replied he, recovering himself, and pointing to one of the centre casements.—"Is it true," continued I, "that, by way of feigning a reconciliation, you threw down cartridges by handfuls to the Marseillese below, and called out; *vive la nation?"*----"It is but too true," answered Jean; "we then availed ourselves of the moment when they advanced under the persuasion that they were to become our friends, and opened on them a tremendous fire, by which we covered the place with dead and dying. But we became victims of our own treachery: for our ammunition being, by this *ruse de guerre*, the sooner expended, we presently had no resource left but the bayonet, by which we could not prevent the mob from closing on us."—"And how did you contrive to escape," said I?—"Having thrown away my Swiss uniform," replied he, "in the general confusion, I fortunately possessed myself of the coat of a national volunteer, which he had taken off on account of the hot weather. This garment,

bespattered with blood, I instantly put on, as well as his hat with a tri-coloured cockade."—"This disguise saved your life," interrupted I.—"Yes, indeed;" rejoined he. "Having got down to the vestibule, I could not find a passage into the garden; and, to prevent suspicion, I at once mixed with the mob on the place where we are now standing."—"How did you get off at last," said I?—"I was obliged," answered he, "to shout and swear with the *poissardes*, while the heads of many of my comrades were thrown out of the windows."—"The *poissardes*," added I, "set no bounds to their cruelty?"—"No," replied he, "I expected every moment to feel its effects; my disguise alone favoured my escape: on the dead bodies of my countrymen they practised every species of mutilation." Here Jean drew a picture of a nature too horrid to be committed to paper. My pen could not trace it.----In a word, nothing could exceed the ferocity of the infuriate populace; and the sacking of the palace of the Trojan king presents but a faint image of what passed here on the day which overset the throne of the Bourbons.

According to a calculation, founded as well on the reports of the police as on the returns of the military corps, it appears that the number of men killed in the attack of the palace of the *Tuileries* on the 10th of August 1792, amounted in the whole to very near six thousand, of whom eight hundred and fifty-two were on the side of the besieged, and three thousand seven hundred and forty on the side of the besiegers.

The interior of this palace is not distinguished by any particular style of architecture, the kings who have resided here having made such frequent alterations, that the distribution throughout is very different from that which was at first intended. Here it was that Catherine de Medicis shut herself up with the Guises, the Gondis, and Birague, the chancellor, in order to plan the horrible massacre of that portion of the French nation whose religious tenets trenched on papal power, and whose spirit of independence alarmed regal jealousy.

Among the series of entertainments, given on the marriage of the king of Navarre with Marguerite de Valois, was introduced a ballet, in which the papists, commanded by Charles IX and his brothers, defended paradise against the huguenots, who, with Navarre at their head, were all repulsed and driven into hell. Although this pantomime, solely invented by Catherine, was evidently meant as a prelude to the dreadful proscription which awaited the protestants, they had no suspicion of it; and four days after, was consummated the massacre, where that monster to whom nature had given the form of a woman, feasted her eyes on the mangled corpses of thousands of bleeding victims!

No sooner was the Pope informed of the horrors of St. Bartholemew's day; by the receipt of Admiral de Coligny's head which Catherine embalmed and sent to him, than he ordered a solemn procession, by way of returning thanks to heaven for the *happy event*. The account of this procession so exasperated a gentlemen of Anjou, a protestant of the name of Bressaut de la Rouvraye, that he swore he would make eunuchs of all the monks who should fall into his hands; and he rendered himself famous by keeping his word, and wearing the trophies of his victory.

The *Louvre* and the palace of the *Tuileries* were alternately the residence of the kings of France, till Lewis XIV built that of Versailles, after which it was deserted till the minority of Lewis XV, who, when a little boy, was visited here by Peter the Great, but, in 1722, the court quitted Paris altogether for Versailles, where it continued fixed till the 5th of October 1789.

During this long interval, the palace was left under the direction of a governor, and inhabited only by himself, and persons of various ranks dependent on the bounty of the crown. When Lewis XVI and his family were brought hither at that period, the two wings alone were in proper order; the remainder consisted of spacious apartments appointed for the king's reception when he came occasionally to Paris, and ornamented with stately, old-fashioned furniture, which had not been deranged for years. The first night of their arrival, they slept in temporary beds, and on the king being solicited the next day to choose his apartments, he replied: "Let everyone shift for himself; for my part, I am very well where I am." But this fit of ill-humor being over, the king and queen visited every part of the palace, assigning particular rooms to each person of their suite, and giving directions for sundry repairs and alterations.

Versailles was unfurnished, and the vast quantity of furniture collected in that palace, during three successive reigns, was transported to the *Tuileries* for their majesties' accommodation. The king chose for himself three rooms on the ground-floor, on the side of the gallery to the right as you enter the vestibule from the garden; on the entresol, he established his geographical study; and on the first floor, his bed-chamber: the apartments of the queen and royal family were adjoining to those of the king; and the attendants were distributed over the palace to the number of between six and seven hundred persons.

The greater part of the furniture, &c. in the palace of the *Tuileries* was sold in the spring of 1793. The sale lasted six months, and, had it not been stopped, would have continued six months longer. Some of the king's dress-suits which had cost twelve hundred louis fetched no more than five. By the inventory taken immediately after the 10th of August 1792, and laid before the Legislative Assembly, it appears that the moveables of every description contained in this palace were valued at 12,540,158 livres (*circa* £522,560 sterling,) in which was included the amount of the thefts, committed on that day, estimated at 1,000,000 livres, and that of the dilapidations, at the like sum, making together about £84,000 sterling.

When Catherine de Medicis inhabited the palace of the *Tuileries*, it was connected to the *Louvre*

by a garden, in the middle of which was a large pond, always well stocked with fish for the supply of the royal table. Lewis XIV transformed this garden into a spacious square or *place*, where in the year 1662, he gave to the queen dowager and his royal consort a magnificent fête, at which, were assembled princes, lords, and knights, with their ladies, from every part of Europe. Hence the square was named

PLACE DU CARROUSEL.

Previously to the revolution, the palace of the *Tuileries*, on this side, was defended by a wall, pierced by three gates opening into as many courts, separated by little buildings, which, in part, served for lodging a few troops and their horses. All these buildings are taken down; the *Place du Carrousel* is considerably enlarged by the demolition of various circumjacent edifices; and the wall is replaced by a handsome iron railing, fixed on a parapet about four feet high. In this railing are three gates, the centre one of which is surmounted by cocks, holding in their beak a civic crown over the letters R. F. the initials of the words *République Française*. On each side of it are small lodges, built of stone; and at the entrance are constantly posted two *vedettes*, belonging to the horse-grenadiers of the consular guard.

On the piers of the other two gates are placed the four famous horses of gilt bronze, brought from St. Mark's place at Venice, whither they had been carried after the capture of Byzantium. These productions are generally ascribed to the celebrated Lysippus, who flourished in the reign of Alexander the Great, about 325 years before the christian era; though this opinion is questioned by some distguished antiquaries and artists. Whoever may be the sculptor, their destiny is of a nature to fix attention, as their removal has always been the consequence of a political revolution. After, the conquest of Greece by the Romans, they were transported from Corinth to Rome, for the purpose of adorning the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus. Hence they were removed to Byzantium, when that city became the seat of the eastern empire. From Byzantium, they were conveyed to Venice, and from Venice they have at last reached Paris.

As on the plain of Pharsalia the fate of Rome was decided by Cæsar's triumph over Pompey, so on the *Place du Carrousel* the fate of France by the triumph of the Convention over Robespierre and his satellites. Here, Henriot, one of his most devoted creatures, whom he had raised to the situation of commandant general of the Parisian guard, after having been carried prisoner before the Committee of Public Safety, then sitting in the palace of the *Tuileries*, was released by Coffinhal, the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, who suddenly made his appearance at the head of a large body of horse and foot, supported by four pieces of cannon served by gunners the most devoted to Robespierre.

It was half past seven o'clock in the evening, where Coffinhal, decorated with his municipal scarf, presented himself before the Committee: all the members thought themselves lost, and their fright communicating to the very bosom of the Convention, there spread confusion and terror. But Coffinhal's presence of mind was not equal to his courage: he availed himself only in part of his advantage. After having, without the slightest resistance, disarmed the guards attached to the Convention, he loosened the fettered hands of Henriot and his aides-de-camp, and conducted them straight to the *Maison Commune*.

It is an incontestable fact that had either Coffinhal or Henriot imitated the conduct of Cromwell in regard to the Levellers, and marched at the head of their troops into the hall of the Convention, he might have carried all before him, and Robespierre's tyranny would have been henceforth established on a basis not to be shaken.

But, when Henriot soon after appeared on the *Place du Carrousel*, with his staff and a number of followers, he in vain endeavoured by haranguing the people to stir them up to act against the Convention; his voice was drowned in tumultuous clamours, and he was deserted by his hitherto-faithful gunners. The Convention had had time to recover from their panic, and to enlighten the Sections. Henriot was outlawed by that assembly, and, totally disconcerted by this news, he fled for refuge to the *Maison Commune*, where Robespierre and all his accomplices were soon surrounded, and fell into the hands of those whom but an instant before, they had proscribed as conspirators deserving of the most exemplary punishment.

Henriot, confused and terrified, sought his safety in flight, and was stealing along one of the galleries of the *Maison Commune* when he met Coffinhal, who was also flying. At the sight of Henriot, who on coming from the Committee, had pledged his life on the success of his measures, Coffinhal was unable to check his rage. "Coward!" said he to him, "to this then has led your certain means of defence! Scoundrel! you shall not escape the death you are endeavouring to avoid!" Saying these words, he seized Henriot by the middle, and threw him out of a window of the second story of the *Maison Commune*. Henriot falling on the roof of a building in a narrow street adjoining, was not killed; but he had scarcely recovered himself before he was recognized by some soldiers in quest of him: he then crawled into a sewer, close to the spot where he had fallen; when a soldier thrusting his bayonet into the sewer, put out one of his eyes, and forced him to surrender.

Thus, the destiny of France, as is seen, hung by the thread of the moment. It will be recollected that Henriot had the arsenal at his disposal; he commanded the Parisian guard, and six thousand men encamped on the *Plaine des Sablons*, close to the capital: in a word, all the springs of the public force were in his hands. Had he seized the critical minute, and attacked the Convention at

the instant of his release, the scene of the 10th of August would have been renewed, and the *Place du Carrousel* again stained with the blood of thousands.

LETTER XI.

Paris, November 5, 1801.

I rise much later to-day than usual, in consequence of not having gone to bed till near seven o'clock this morning. Happening to call yesterday on a French lady of my acquaintance, I perceived some preparations which announced that she expected company. She did not leave me long in suspense, but invited me to her party for that evening.

This good lady, who is no longer in the flower of her age, was still in bed, though it was four o'clock when I paid my visit. On expressing my fears that she was indisposed, she assured me of the contrary, at the same time adding that she seldom rose till five in the afternoon, on account of her being under the necessity of keeping late hours. I was so struck by the expression, that I did not hesitate to ask her what was the *necessity* which compelled her to make a practice of turning day into night? She very courteously gave me a complete solution of this enigma, of which the following is the substance.

"During the reign of terror," said she, "several of us *ci-devant noblesse* lost our nearest relatives, and with them our property, which was either confiscated, or put under sequestration, so that we were absolutely threatened by famine. When the prisoners were massacred in September 1792, I left nothing unattempted to save the life of my uncle and grandfather, who were both in confinement in the *Abbaye*. All my efforts were unavailing. My interference served only to exasperate their murderers and contributed, I fear, to accelerate their death, which it was my misfortune to witness. Their inhuman butchers, from whom I had patiently borne every species of insult, went so far as to present to me, on the end of a pike, a human heart, which had the appearance of having been broiled on the embers, assuring me that, as it was the heart of my uncle, I might eat it with safety."—Here an ejaculation, involuntarily escaping me, interrupted her for a moment.

"For my part," continued she, "I was so overwhelmed by a conflict of rage, despair, and grief, that I scarcely retained the use of my senses. The excess of my horror deprived me of utterance.—What little I was able to save from the wreck of my fortune, not affording me sufficient means of subsistence, I was, however reluctantly, at length compelled to adopt a plan of life, by which I saw other women, in my forlorn situation, support a decent appearance. I therefore hired suitable apartments, and twice in each decade, I receive company. On one of these two nights I give a ball and supper, and on the other, under the name of *société*, I have cards only.

"Having a numerous circle of female acquaintance," concluded she, "my balls are generally well attended: those who are not fond of dancing, play at the *bouillotte*; and the card-money defrays the expenses of the entertainment, leaving me a handsome profit. In short, these six parties, during the month, enable me to pay my rent, and produce me a tolerable pittance."

This meloncholy recital affected me so much, that, on its being terminated, I was unable to speak; but I have reason to think that a favourable construction was put on my silence. A volume, of the size of a family bible, would not be sufficient to display half the contrasts engendered by the revolution. Many a *Marquise* has been obliged to turn sempstress, in order to gain a livelihood; but my friend the *Comtesse* had much ready wit, though no talents of that description. Having soothed her mind by venting a few imprecations against the murderers of her departed relatives, she informed me that her company began to assemble between the hours of eleven and twelve, and begged that I would not fail to come to her

PRIVATE BALL.

About twelve o'clock, I accordingly went thither, as I had promised, when I found the rooms perfectly crowded. Among a number of very agreeable ladies, several were to be distinguished for the elegance of their figure, though there were no more than three remarkable for beauty. These terrestrial divinities would not only have embarrassed the Grand Signior for a preference, but even have distracted the choice of the Idalian shepherd himself. The dancing was already begun to an excellent band of music, led by Citizen JULIEN, a mulatto, esteemed the first player of country-dances in Paris. Of the dancers, some of the women really astonished me by the ease and gracefulness of their movements: steps, which are known to be the most difficult, seemed to cost them not the smallest exertion. Famous as they have ever been for dancing, they seem now, in Cibber's words, "to outdo their usual outdoings."

In former times, an extraordinary degree of curiosity was excited by any female who excelled in this pleasing accomplishment. I remember to have read that Don Juan of Austria, governor of the Low Countries, set out post from Brussels, and came to Paris *incog.* on purpose to see Marguerite de Valois dance at a dress-ball, this princess being reckoned, at that time, the best dancer in Europe. What then would be the admiration of such an *amateur*, could he now behold the perfection attained here by some of the beauties of the present day?

The men, doubtless, determined to vie with the women, seemed to pride themselves more on agility than grace, and, by attempting whatever required extraordinary effort, reminded me of

figurans on the stage, so much have the Parisian youth adopted a truly theatrical style of dancing.

The French country-dances (or cotilions, as we term them in England) and waltzes, which are as much in vogue here as in Germany, were regularly interchanged. However, the Parisians, in my opinion, cannot come up to the Germans in this, their native dance. I should have wished to have had Lavater by my side, and heard his opinion of the characters of the different female waltzers. It is a very curious and interesting spectacle to see one woman assume a languishing air, another a vacant smile, a third an aspect of stoical indifference; while a fourth seems lost in a voluptuous trance, a fifth captivates by an amiable modesty, a sixth affects the cold insensibility of a statue, and so on in ever-varying succession, though all turning to the animating changes of the same lively waltz. In short I observed that, in this species of dance, the eyes and feet of almost every woman appeared to be constantly at variance.

Without assuming the part of a moralist, I cannot help thinking that Werter was not altogether in the wrong when he swore, that, were it to cost him his life, no woman on whom he had set his affections, should ever waltz with any one but himself. I am not singular in this opinion; for I recollect to have met with the same ideas in a book written by M. JACOBI, I think, a German author.

Speaking of the waltz, "We either ought," says he, "not to boast so much of the propriety of our manners, or else not suffer that our wives and daughters, in a complete delirium, softly pressed in the arms of men, bosom to bosom, should thus be hurried away by the sound of intoxicating music. In this *whirligig* dance, every one seems to forget the rules of decorum; and though an innocent, young creature, exposed in this manner, were to remain pure and spotless, can she, without horror, reflect that she becomes, the sport of the imagination of the licentious youths to whom she so abandons herself? It were to be wished," adds he, "that our damsels (I mean those who preserve any vestige of bashfulness), might, concealed in a private corner, hear sometimes the conversation of those very men to whom they yield themselves with so little reserve and caution."

To the best of my recollection, these are the sentiments of M. JACOBI, expressed twelve or fourteen years ago; yet I do not find that the waltz is discontinued, or even less practised, in Germany, than it was at the time when his work first appeared. This dance, like every other French fashion, has now found its way into England, and is introduced between the acts, by way of interlude I presume, at some of our grand private balls and assemblies. But, however I may be amused by the waltzing of the Parisian belles, I feel too much regard for my fair country-women to wish to see them adopt a dance, which, by throwing them off their guard, lays them completely open to the shafts of ridicule and malice.

Leaving this point to be settled by the worthy part of our British matrons, let us return to the Parisian ball, from which I have been led into a little digression.

The dancing continued in this manner, that is, French country-dances and waltzes alternately, till four o'clock, when soup was brought round to all the company. This was dispatched *sans façon*, as fast as it could be procured. It was a prelude to the cold supper, which was presently served in another spacious apartment. No sooner were the folding-doors of an adjoining room thrown open, than I observed that, large as it was, it could not possibly afford accommodation to more than half of the number present. I therefore remained in the back-ground, naturally supposing that places would first be provided for all the women. Not so, my friend; several men seated themselves, and, in the twinkling of an eye, deranged the economy of the whole table; while the female bystanders were necessitated to seek seats at some temporary tables placed in the ballroom. Here too were they in luck if they obtained a few fragments from the grand board; for, such determined voracity was there exhibited, that so many vultures or cormorants could not have been more expeditious in clearing the dishes.

For instance, an enormous salmon, which would have done honour to the Tweed or the Severn, graced the middle of the principal table. In less than five minutes after the company were seated, I turned round, and missing the fish, inquired whether it had proved tainted. No: but it is all devoured, was the reply of a young man, who, pointing to the bone, offered me a pear and a piece of bread, which he shrewdly observed was all that I might probably get to recruit my strength at this entertainment. I took the hint, and, with the addition of a glass of common wine, at once made my supper.

In half an hour, the tables being removed, the ball was resumed, and apparently with renewed spirit. The card-room had never been deserted. *Mind the main chance* is a wholesome maxim, which the good lady of the house seemed not to have forgotten. Assisted by a sort of *croupier*, she did the honours of the *bouillotte* with that admirable sang-froid which you and I have often witnessed in some of our hostesses of fashion; and, had she not communicated to me the secret, I should have been the last to suspect, while she appeared so indifferent, that she, like those ladies, had so great an interest in the card-party being continued till morning.

As an old acquaintance, she took an opportunity of saying to, me, with joy in her eyes: "*Le jeu va bien*;" but, at the same time, expressed her regret that the supper was such a scramble. While we were in conversation, I inquired the name and character of the most striking women in the room, and found that, though a few of them might be reckoned substantial in fortune, as well as in

reputation, the female part of the company was chiefly composed of ladies who, like herself, had suffered by the revolution; several were divorced from their husbands, but as incompatibility of temper was the general plea for such a disunion, that alone could not operate as a blemish.

To judge of the political predilection of these belles from their exterior, a stranger would, nine times out of ten, be led into a palpable error. He might naturally conclude them to be attached to a republican system, since they have, in general, adopted the Athenian form of attire as their model; though they have not, in the smallest degree, adopted the simple manners of that people. Their arms are bare almost to the very shoulder; their bosom is, in a great measure, uncovered; their ankles are encircled by narrow ribbands in imitation of the fastenings of sandals; and their hair, turned up close behind, is confined on the crown of the head in a large knot, as we see it in the antique busts of Grecian beauties.

The rest of their dress is more calculated to display, than to veil the contours of their person. It was thus explained to me by my friend, the *ci-devant Comtesse*, who at the same time assured me that young French women, clad in this airy manner, brave all the rigour of winter. "A simple piece of linen, slightly laced before," said she, "while it leaves the waist uncompressed, answers the purpose of a corset. If they put on a robe, which is not open in front, they dispense with petticoats altogether; their cambric *chemise* having the semblance of one, from its skirt being trimmed with lace. When attired for a ball, those who dance, as you may observe, commonly put on a tunic, and then a petticoat becomes a matter of necessity, rather than of choice. Pockets being deemed an incumbrance, they wear none: what money they carry, is contained in a little morocco leather purse; this is concealed in the centre of the bosom, whose form, in our well-shaped women, being that of the Medicean Venus, the receptacle occasionally serves for a little gold watch, or some other trinket, which is suspended to the neck by a collar of hair, decorated with various ornaments. When they dance, the fan is introduced within the zone or girdle; and the handkerchief is kept in the pocket of some sedulous swain, to whom the fair one has recourse when she has occasion for it. Some of the elderly ladies, like myself," added she, "carry these appendages in a sort of work-bag, denominated a *ridicule*. Not long since, this was the universal fashion first adopted as a substitute for pockets; but, at present, it is totally laid aside by the younger classes."

The men at this ball, were, for the most part, of the military class, thinly interspersed with returned emigrants. Some of the generals and colonels were in their hussar dress-uniform, which is not only exceedingly becoming to a well-formed man, but also extremely splendid and costly. All the seams of the jacket and pantaloons of the generals are covered with rich and tasteful embroidery, as well as their sabre-tash, and those of the colonels with gold or silver lace: a few even wore boots of red morocco leather.

Most of the Gallic youths, having served in the armies, either a few years ago under the requisition, or more recently under the conscription, have acquired a martial air, which is very discernible, in spite of their *habit bourgeois*. The brown coat cannot disguise the soldier. I have met with several young merchants of the first respectability in Paris, who had served, some two, others four years in the ranks, and constantly refused every sort of advancement. Not wishing to remain in the army, and relinquish the mercantile profession in which they had been educated, they cheerfully passed through their military servitude as privates, and, in that station, like true soldiers, gallantly fought their country's battles.

The hour of six being arrived, I was assailed, on all sides, by applications to set down this or that lady, as the morning was very rainy, and, independently of the long rank of hackney-coaches, which had been drawn up at the door, every vehicle that could be procured, had long been in requisition. The mistress of the house had informed two of her particular female friends that I had a carriage in waiting; and as I could accommodate only a certain number at a time, after having consented to take those ladies home first; I conceived myself at liberty, on my return, to select the rest of my convoy. To relieve beauty in distress was one of the first laws of ancient chivalry; and no knight ever accomplished that vow with greater ardour than I did on this occasion.

LETTER XII.

Paris, November 7, 1801.

My impatience is at length gratified. I have seen BONAPARTE. Yesterday, the 6th, as I mentioned in a former letter, was the day of the grand parade, which now takes place on the fifteenth only of every month of the Republican Calendar. The spot where this military spectacle is exhibited, is the court-yard of the palace of the *Tuileries*, which, as I have before observed, is enclosed by a low parapet wall, surmounted by a handsome iron railing.

From the kind attention of friend, I had the option of being admitted into the palace, or introduced into the hotel of Cn. MARET, the Secretary of State, which adjoins to the palace, and standing at right angles with it, commands a full view of the court where the troops are assembled. In the former place, I was told, I should not, on account of the crowd, have an opportunity to see the parade, unless I took my station at a window two or three hours before it began; while from the latter, I should enjoy the sight without any annoyance or interruption.

Considering that an interval of a month, by producing a material change in the weather, might render the parade far less brilliant and attractive, and also that such an offer might not occur a second time, I made no hesitation in preferring Cn. MARET'S hotel.

Accompanied by my introducer, I repaired thither about half past eleven o'clock, and certainly I had every reason to congratulate myself on my election. I was ushered into a handsome room on the first-floor, where I found the windows partly occupied by some lovely women. Having paid my devoirs to the ladies, I entered into conversation with an officer of rank of my acquaintance, who had introduced me to them; and from him I gathered the following particulars respecting the

GRAND MONTHLY PARADE.

On the fifteenth of every month, the First Consul in person reviews all the troops of the consular guard, as well as those quartered in Paris, as a garrison, or those which may happen to be passing through this city.

The consular guard is composed of two battalions of foot-grenadiers, two battalions of light infantry, a regiment of horse-grenadiers, a regiment of mounted chasseurs or guides, and two companies of flying artillery. All this force may comprise between six and seven thousand men; but it is in contemplation to increase it by a squadron of Mamalûks, intermixed with Greeks and Syrians, mounted on Arabian horses.

This guard exclusively does duty at the palace of the *Tuileries*, and at *Malmaison*, BONAPARTE's country-seat: it also forms the military escort of the Consuls. At present it is commanded by General LASNES; but, according to rumour, another arrangement is on the point of being made. The consular guard is soon to have no other chief than the First Consul, and under him are to command, alternately, four generals; namely, one of infantry, one of cavalry, one of artillery, and one of engineers; the selection is said to have fallen on the following officers, BESSIÈRES, DAVOUST, SOULT, and SONGIS.

The garrison (as it is termed) of Paris is not constantly of the same strength. At this moment it consists of three demi-brigades of the line, a demi-brigade of light infantry, a regiment of dragoons, two demi-brigades of veterans, the horse *gendarmerie*, and a new corps of choice *gendarmerie*, comprising both horse and foot, and commanded by the *Chef de brigade* SAVABY, aide-de-camp to the First Consul. This garrison may amount to about 15,000 effective men.

The consular guard and all these different corps, equipped in their best manner, repair to the parade, and, deducting the troops on duty, the number of men assembled there may, in general be from twelve to fifteen thousand.

By a late regulation, no one, during the time of the parade, can remain within the railing of the court, either on foot or horseback, except the field and staff officers on duty; but persons enter the apartments of the *Tuileries*, by means of tickets, which are distributed to a certain number by the governor of the palace.

While my obliging friend was communicating to me the above information, the troops continued marching into the court below, till it was so crowded that, at first sight, it appeared impracticable for them to move, much less to manœuvre. The morning was extremely fine; the sun shone in full splendour, and the gold and silver lace and embroidery on the uniforms of the officers and on the trappings of their chargers, together with their naked sabres, glittered with uncommon lustre. The concourse of people without the iron railing was immense: in short, every spot or building, even to the walls and rafters of houses under demolition, whence a transient view of the parade could be obtained, was thronged with spectators.

By twelve o'clock, all the troops were drawn up in excellent order, and, as you may suppose, presented a grand *coup d'œil.* I never beheld a finer set of men than the grenadiers of the consular guard; but owing, perhaps, to my being accustomed to see our troops with short skirts, I thought that the extreme length of their coats detracted from their military air. The horses mostly of Norman breed, could not be compared to our English steeds, either for make or figure; but, sorry and rough as is their general appearance, they are, I am informed, capable of bearing much fatigue, and resisting such privations as would soon render our more sleek cavalry unfit for service. That they are active, and surefooted, I can vouch; for, in all their sudden wheelings and evolutions in this confined space, not one of them stumbled. They formed, indeed, a striking contrast to the beautiful white charger that was led about in waiting for the Chief Consul.

The band of the consular guard, which is both numerous and select, continued playing martial airs, till the colours having been brought down from the palace, under the escort of an officer and a small detachment, the drums beat *aux champs*, and the troops presented arms, when they were carried to their respective stations. Shortly after, the impatient steed, just mentioned, was conducted to the foot of the steps of the grand vestibule of the palace. I kept my eye stedfastly fixed on that spot; and such was the agility displayed by BONAPARTE in mounting his horse, that, to borrow the words of Shakspeare, he seemed to

> "Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury,
> And vaulted with such ease into his seat,
> As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds

To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus,
And witch the world with noble horsemanship."

Off he went at a hand canter, preceded by his aides-de-camp, and attended, on his right, by General LASNES and followed by other superior officers, particularly the general commanding the garrison of Paris, and him at the head of the district.

BONAPARTE was habited in the consular dress, scarlet velvet embroidered with gold, and wore a plain cocked hat with the national cockade. As I purpose to obtain a nearer view of him, by placing myself in the apartments of the palace on the next parade day, I shall say nothing of his person till that opportunity offers, but confine myself to the military show in question.

Having rid rapidly along the several lines of infantry and cavalry, and saluted the colours as he passed, BONAPARTE (attended by all his retinue, including a favourite Mamalûk whom he brought from Egypt), took a central position, when the different corps successively filed off before him with most extraordinary briskness; the corps composing the consular guard preceded those of the garrison and all the others: on inquiry, however, I find, that this order is not always observed.

It is no less extraordinary than true, that the news of the establishment of this grand parade produced on the mind of the late emperor of Russia the first impression in favour of the Chief Consul. No sooner did Paul I. hear of the circumstance, than he exclaimed: "BONAPARTE is, however, a great man."

Although the day was so favourable, the parade was soon over, as there was no distribution of arms of honour, such as muskets, pistols, swords, battle-axes, &c. which the First Consul presents with his own hand to those officers and soldiers who have distinguished themselves by deeds of valour or other meritorious service.

The whole ceremony did not occupy more than half an hour, when BONAPARTE alighted at the place where he had taken horse, and returned to his audience-room in the palace, for the purpose of holding his levee. I shall embrace a future opportunity to speak of the interior etiquette observed on this occasion in the apartments, and close this letter with an assurance that you shall have an early account of the approaching *fête*.

LETTER XIII.

Paris, November 8, 1801.

Great preparations for the *fête* of to-morrow have, for several days, employed considerable numbers of people: it therefore becomes necessary that I should no longer delay to give you an idea of the principal scene of action. For that purpose, we must direct our steps to the

JARDIN DES TUILERIES.

This garden, which is the most magnificent in Paris, was laid out by the celebrated LE NOTRE in the reign of Lewis XIV. It covers a space of three hundred and sixty toises[1] long by one hundred and sixty-eight broad. To the north and south, it is bordered, throughout its length, by two terraces, one on each side, which, with admirable art, conceal the irregularity of the ground, and join at the farther end in the form of a horse-shoe. To the east, it is limited by the palace of the *Tuileries*; and to the west, by the *Place de la Concorde*.

From the vestibule of the palace, the perspective produces a most striking effect: the eye first wanders for a moment over the extensive parterre, which is divided into compartments, planted with shrubs and flowers, and decorated with basins, *jets-d'eau*, vases, and statues in marble and bronze; it then penetrates through a venerable grove which forms a beautiful vista; and, following the same line, it afterwards discovers a fine road, bordered with trees, leading by a gentle ascent to *Pont de Neuilly*, through the *Barrière de Chaillot*, where the prospect closes.

The portico of the palace has been recently decorated with several statues. On each side of the principal door is a lion in marble.

The following is the order in which the copies of antique statues, lately placed in this garden, are at present disposed.

On the terrace towards the river, are: 1. Venus *Anadyomene*. 2. An Apollo of Belvedere. 3. The group of Laocoon. 4. Diana, called by antiquaries, *Succincta*. 5. Hercules carrying Ajax.

In front of the palace: 1. A dying gladiator. 2. A fighting gladiator. 3. The flayer of Marsyas. 4. VENUS, styled *à la coquille*, crouched and issuing from the bath. N. B. All these figures are in bronze.

In the alley in front of the parterre, in coming from the terrace next the river: 1. Flora Farnese. 2. Castor and Pollux. 3. Bacchus instructing young Hercules. 4. Diana.

On the grass-plot, towards the *manège* or riding-house, Hippomenes and Atalanta. At the further

end is an Apollo, in front of the horse-shoe walk, decorated with a sphynx at each extremity.

In the corresponding gras-plot towards the river, Apollo and Daphne; and at the further end, a Venus *Callypyga*, or (according to the French term) *aux belles fesses*.

In the compartment by the horse-chesnut trees, towards the riding-house, the Centaur. On the opposite side, the Wrestlers. Farther on, though on the same side, an Antinoüs.

In the niche, under the steps in the middle of the terrace towards the river, a Cleopatra.

In the alley of orange-trees, near the *Place de la Concorde*, Meleager; and on the terrace, next to the riding-house, Hercules Farnese.

In the niche to the right, in front of the octagonal basin, a Faun carrying a kid. In the one to the left, Mercury Farnese.

Independently of these copies after the antique, the garden is decorated with several other modern statues, by COYZEVOX, REGNAUDIN, COSTOU, LE GROS, LE PAUTRE, &c. which attest the degree of perfection that had been attained, in the course of the last century, by French sculptors. For a historical account of them, I refer you to a work, which I shall send you by the first opportunity, written by the learned MILLIN.

Here, in summer, the wide-spreading foliage of the lofty horse-chesnut trees afford a most agreeable shade; the air is cooled by the continual play of the *jets-d'eau*; while upwards of two hundred orange-trees, which are then set out, impregnate it with a delightful perfume. The garden is now kept in much better order than it was under the monarchy. The flower-beds are carefully cultivated; the walks are well gravelled, rolled, and occasionally watered; in a word, proper attention is paid to the convenience of the public.

But, notwithstanding these attractions, as long as it was necessary for every person entering this garden to exhibit to the sentinels the national cockade, several fair royalists chose to relinquish its charming walks, shaded by trees of a hundred years' growth, rather than comply with the republican mandate. Those anti-revolutionary *élégantes* resorted to other promenades; but, since the accession of the consular government, the wearing of this doubtful emblem of patriotism has been dispensed with, and the garden of the *Tuileries* is said to be now as much frequented in the fine season as at any period of the old *régime*.

The most constant visiters are the *quidnuncs*, who, according to the difference of the seasons, occupy alternately three walks; the *Terrasse des Feuillans* in winter; that which is immediately underneath in spring; and the centre or grand alley during the summer or autumn.

Before the revolution, this garden was not open to the populace, except on the festival of St. Lewis, and the eve preceding, when there was always a public concert, given under a temporary amphitheatre erected against the west façade of the palace: at present no person whatever is refused admittance.

There are six entrances, at each of which sentinels are regularly mounted from the grenadiers of the consular guard; and, independently of the grand guard-room over the vestibule of the palace, there is one at the end of the garden which opens on the *Place de la Concorde*, and another on the *Terrasse des Feuillans*.

But what is infinitely more interesting, on this terrace, is a new and elegant building, somewhat resembling a *casino*, which at once unites every accommodation that can be wished for in a coffee-house, a tavern, or a confectioner's. Here you may breakfast *à l'Anglaise* or *à la fourchette*, that is in the most substantial manner, in the French fashion, read the papers, dine, or sup sumptuously in any style you choose, or drink coffee and liqueurs, or merely eat ices. While thus engaged, you enjoy a full view of the company passing and repassing, and what adds beyond measure to the beauty of the scene, is the presence of the ladies, who not unfrequently come hither with their admirers to indulge in a *téte-à-téte*, or make larger parties to dine or sup at these fashionable rendezvous of good cheer.

According to the scandalous chronicle, Véry, the master of the house, is indebted to the charms of his wife for the occupation of this tasteful edifice, which had been erected by the government on a spot of ground that was national property, and, of course, at its disposal. Several candidates were desirous to be tenants of a building at once so elegant and so centrical. Véry himself had been unsuccessful, though he had offered a *pot de vin* (that is the Parisian term for *good-will*) of five hundred louis, and six thousand francs a year rent. His handsome wife even began to apprehend that her mission would be attended with no better fortune. She presented herself, however, to the then Minister of the Interior, who, unrelenting as he had hitherto been to all the competitors, did not happen to be a Scipio. On the contrary, he is said to have been so struck by the person of the fair supplicant, that he at once declared his readiness to accede to her request, on condition that she would favour him with her company to supper, and not forget to put her night-cap in her pocket. *Relata refero*.

Be this as it may, I assure you that Madame Véry, without being a perfect beauty, is what the French call a *beau corps de femme*, or, in plain English, a very desirable woman, and such as few ministers of L'n. B--------te's years would choose to dismiss unsatisfied. This is not the age of

continence, and I am persuaded that any man who sees and converses with the amiable Madame Véry, if he do not envy the Minister the nocturnal sacrifice, will, on contemplating the elegance of her arrangements, at least allow that this spot of ground has not been disposed of to disadvantage.

Every step we take, in this quarter of Paris, calls to mind some remarkable circumstance of the history of the revolution. As the classic reader, in visiting *Troas*, would endeavour to trace the site of those interesting scenes described in the sublime numbers of the prince of poets; so the calm observer, in perambulating this garden, cannot but reflect on the great political events of which it has been the theatre. In front of the west façade of the palace, the unfortunate Lewis XVI, reviewed the Swiss, and some of the national guards, very early in the morning of the 10th of August 1792. On the right, close to the *Terrasse des Feuillans*, still stands the *manège* or riding-house, where the National Assembly at that time held their sittings, and whither the king, with his family, was conducted by ROEDERER, the deputy. That building, after having since served for various purposes, is at present shut up, and will, probably, be taken down, in consequence of projected improvements in this quarter.

In the centre of the west end of the garden, was the famous *Pont tournant*, by which, on the 11th of July 1789, the Prince de Lambesc entered it at the head of his regiment of cavalry, and, by maltreating some peaceable saunterers, gave the Parisians a specimen of what they were to expect from the disposition of the court. This inconsiderate *galopade*, as the French term it, was the first signal of the general insurrection.

The *Pont tournant* is destroyed, and the ditch filled up. Leaving the garden of the *Tuileries* by this issue, we enter the

PLACE DE LA CONCORDE.

This is the new name given to the *Place de Louis XV*. After the abolition of royalty in France, it was called the *Place de la Révolution*. When the reign of terror ceased, by the fall of Robespierre, it obtained its present appellation, which forms a strong contrast to the number of victims that have here been sacrificed to the demon of faction.

This square, which is seven hundred and eighty feet in length by six hundred and thirty in breadth, was planned after the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and finished in 1763. It forms a parallelogram with its angles cut off, which are surrounded by ditches, guarded by balustrades, breast high. To repair from the *Tuileries* to the *Champs Elysées*, you cross it in a straight line from east to west, and from north to south, to proceed from the *Rue de la Concorde (ci-devant Rue Royale)* to the *Pont de la Concorde (ci-devant Pont de Louis XVI.)*

Near the intersection of these roads stood the equestrian statue in bronze of Lewis XV, which caught the eye in a direct line with the centre of the grand alley of the garden of the *Tuileries*. It has since been replaced by a statue of Liberty. This colossal figure was removed a few days ago, and, by all accounts, will not be re-erected.

The north part of this square, the only one that is occupied by buildings, presents, on each side of the *Rue de la Concorde*, two edifices, each two hundred and forty-eight feet in front, decorated with insulated columns of the Corinthian order, to the number of twelve, and terminated by two pavilions, with six columns, crowned by a pediment. On the ground-floor of these edifices, one of which, that next the *Tuileries*, was formerly the *Garde-Meuble de la Couronne*, are arcades that form a gallery, in like manner as the colonnade above, the cornice of which is surmounted by a balustrade. I have been thus particular in describing this façade, in order to enable you to judge of the charming effect which it must produce, when illuminated with thousands of lamps on the occasion of the grand *fête* in honour of peace, which takes place to-morrow.

It was in the right hand corner of this square, as you come out of the garden of the *Tuileries* by the centre issue, that the terrible guillotine was erected. From the window of a friend's room, where I am now writing, I behold the very spot which has so often been drenched with the mixed blood of princes, poets, legislators, philosophers, and plebeians. On that spot too fell the head of one of the most powerful monarchs in Europe.

I have heard much regret expressed respecting this execution; I have witnessed much lamentation excited by it both in England and France; but I question whether any of those loyal subjects, who deserted their king when they saw him in danger, will ever manifest the sincere affection, the poignant sensibility of DOMINIQUE SARRÈDE.

To follow Henry IV to the battle of Ivry in 1533, SARRÈDE had his wounded leg cut off, in order that he might be enabled to sit on horseback. This was not all. His attachment to his royal master was so great, that, in passing through the *Rue de la Ferronnerie* two days after the assassination of that prince, and surveying the fatal place where it had been committed, he was so overcome by grief, that he fell almost dead on the spot, and actually expired the next morning. I question, I say, whether any one of those emigrants, who made so officious a display of their zeal, when they knew it to be unavailing, will ever moisten with a single tear the small space of earth stained with the blood of their unfortunate monarch.

Since I have been in Paris, I have met with a person of great respectability, totally unconnected

with politics, who was present at several of those executions: at first he attended them from curiosity, which soon degenerated into habit, and at last became an occupation. He successively beheld the death of Charlotte Corday, Madame Roland, Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Madame Elizabeth, Philippe Egalité, Madame du Barry, Danton, Robespierre, Couthon, St. Just, Henriot, Fouquier-Tinville, *cum mullis aliis*, too numerous to mention.

Among other particulars, this person informed me that Lewis XVI struggled much, by which the fatal instrument cut through the back of his head, and severed his jaw: the queen was more resigned; on the scaffold, she even apologized to Samson, the executioner in chief, for treading accidentally on his toe. Madame Roland met her fate with the calm heroism of a Roman matron. Charlotte Corday died with a serene and dignified countenance; one of the executioners having seized her head when it fell, and given it several slaps, this base act of cowardice raised a general murmur among the people.

As to Robespierre, no sooner had he ascended the scaffold, amid the vociferous acclamations of the joyful multitude, than the executioner tore off the dirty bandage in which his wounded head was enveloped and which partlv concealed his pale and ferocious visage. This made the wretch roar like a wild beast. His under jaw then falling from the upper, and streams of blood gushing from the wound, gave him the most ghastly appearance that can be imagined. When the national razor, as the guillotine was called by his partisans, severed Robespierre's head from his body; and the executioner, taking it by the hair, held it up to the view of the spectators, the plaudits lasted for twenty minutes. Couthon, St. Just, and Henriot, his heralds of murder, who were placed in the same cart with himself, next paid the debt of their crimes. They were much disfigured, and the last had lost an eye. Twenty-two persons were guillotined at the same time with Robespierre, all of them his satellites. The next day, seventy members of the commune, and the day following twelve others, shared the fate of their atrocious leader, who, not many hours before, was styled the virtuous and incorruptible patriot.

You may, probably, imagine that, whatever dispatch might be employed, the execution of seventy persons, would demand a rather considerable portion of time, an hour and a half, or two hours, for instance. But, how wide of the mark! Samson, the executioner of Paris, worked the guillotine with such astonishing quickness, that, including the preparatives of the punishment, he has been known to cut off no less than forty-five heads, the one after the other, in the short space of fifteen minutes; consequently, at this expeditious rate of three heads in one minute it required no more than twenty-three minutes and twenty seconds to decapitate seventy persons.

Guillotin, the physician, who invented or rather improved this machine, which is called after his name with a feminine termination, is said to have been a man of humanity; and, on that principle alone, he recommended the use of it, from the idea of saving from painful sensations criminals condemned to die. Seeing the abuse made of it, from the facility which it afforded of dispatching several persons in a few minutes, he took the circumstance so much to heart that grief speedily shortened his existence.

According to Robespierre, however, the axe of the guillotine did not do sufficient execution. One of his satellites announced to him the invention of an instrument which struck off nine heads at once: the discovery pleased him, and he caused several trials of this new machine to be made at *Bicêtre*. It did not answer; but human nature gained nothing by its failure. Instead of half a dozen victims a day, Robespierre wished to have daily fifty or sixty, or more; and he was but too well obeyed. Not only had he his own private lists of proscription; but all his creatures, from the president of the revolutionary tribunal down to the under-jailers, had similar lists; and the *almanac royal*, or French court calendar, was converted into one by himself.

The inhabitants of the streets through which the unfortunate sufferers were carried, wearied at length by the daily sight of so melancholy a spectacle, ventured to utter complaints. Robespierre, no less suspicious than cruel, was alarmed, and, dreading an insurrection, removed the scene of slaughter. The scaffold was erected on the *Place de la Bastille*: but the inhabitants of this quarter also murmured, and the guillotine was transferred to the *Barrière St. Antoine*.

Had not this modern Nero been cut off in the midst of his cruelties, it is impossible to say where he would have stopped. Being one day asked the question, he coolly answered: "The generation which has witnessed the old *règime*, will always regret it. Every individual who was more than fifteen in 1789, must be put to death: this is the only way to consolidate the revolution."

It was the same in the departments as in Paris. Every where blood ran in streams. In all the principal towns the guillotine was rendered permanent, in order, as Robespierre expressed himself, to *regenerate the nation*. If this sanguinary monster did not intend to "wade through slaughter to a throne," it is certain at least that he "shut the gates of mercy on mankind."

But what cannot fail to excite your astonishment and that of every thinking person, is, that, in the midst of these executions, in the midst of these convulsions of the state, in the midst of these struggles for power, in the midst of these outcries against the despots of the day, in the midst of famine even, not artificial, but real; in short, in the midst of an accumulation of horrors almost unexampled, the fiddle and tambourin never ceased. Galas, concerts, and balls were given daily in incredible numbers; and no less than from fifteen to twenty theatres, besides several, other places of public entertainment, were constantly open, and almost as constantly filled.

P. S. I am this moment informed of the arrival of Lord Cornwallis.

Footnote 1: The ratio between the English fathom and the French toise, as determined between the first astronomers of both countries, is as 72 to 76.734. Return to text

LETTER XIV.

Paris, November 10, 1801.

On the evening of the 8th, there was a representation *gratis* at all the theatres, it being the eve of the great day, of the occurrences of which I shall now, agreeably to my promise, endeavour to give you a narrative. I mean the

NATIONAL FÉTE,
IN HONOUR OF PEACE,
Celebrated on the 18th of Brumaire, year X,
the anniversary of BONAPARTE'S
accession to the consulate.

Notwithstanding the prayers which the Parisians had addressed to the sun for the preceding twenty-four hours,

"----*Nocte pluit totà, redeunt spectacula mane*,"

it rained all night, and was still raining yesterday morning, when the day was ushered in by discharges of artillery from the saluting battery at the *Hôtel des Invalides*. This did not disturb me; I slept soundly till, about eight o'clock, a tintamarre of trumpets, kettle-drums, &c. almost directly under my window, roused me from my peaceful slumber. For fear of losing the sight, I immediately presented myself at the casement, just as I rose, in my shirt and night-cap. The officers of the police, headed by the Prefect, and escorted by a party of dragoons, came to the *Place des Victoires*, as the third station, to give publicity, by word of mouth, to the Proclamation of the Consuls, of which I inclose you a printed copy. The civil officers were habited in their dresses of parade, and decorated with tricoloured sashes; the heads of their steeds, which, by the bye, were not of a fiery, mettlesome race, being adorned in like manner.

This ceremony being over, I returned not to bed, but sat down to a substantial breakfast, which I considered necessary for preparing my strength for the great fatigues of so busy a day. Presently the streets were crowded with people moving towards the river-side, though small, but heavy rain continued falling all the forenoon. I therefore remained at home, knowing that there was nothing yet to be seen for which it was worth while to expose myself to a good wetting.

At two o'clock the sun appeared, as if to satisfy the eager desire of the Parisians; the mist ceased, and the weather assumed a promising aspect. In a moment the crowd in the streets was augmented by a number of persons who had till now kept within doors, in readiness to go out, like the Jews keeping Easter, *cincti renibus & comedentes festinantur*. I also sallied forth, but alone, having previously refused every invitation from my friends and acquaintance to place myself at any window, or join any party, conceiving that the best mode to follow the bent of my humour was to go unaccompanied, and, not confining myself to any particular spot or person, stroll about wherever the most interesting objects presented themselves.

With this view, I directed my steps towards the *Tuileries*, which, in spite of the immense crowd, I reached without the smallest inconvenience. The appearance of carriages of every kind had been strictly prohibited, with the exception of those belonging to the British ambassador; a compliment well intended, no doubt, and very gratifying when the streets were so extremely dirty.

For some time I amused myself with surveying the different countenances of the groups within immediate reach of my observation, and which to me was by no means the least diverting part of the scene; but on few of them could I discover any other impression than that of curiosity: I then took my station in the garden of the *Tuileries*, on the terrace next the river. Hence was a view of the *Temple of Commerce* rising above the water, on that part of the Seine comprised between the *Pont National* and the *Pont Neuf*. The quays on each side were full of people; and the windows, as well as the roofs of all the neighbouring houses, were crowded beyond conception. In the newspapers, the sum of 500 francs, or £20 sterling, was asked for the hire of a single window of a house in that quarter.

Previously to my arrival, a flotilla of boats, decked with streamers and flags of different colours, had ascended the river from *Chaillot* to this temple, and were executing divers evolutions around it, for the entertainment of the Parisians, who quite drowned the music by their more noisy acclamations.

About half after three, the First Consul appeared at one of the windows of the apartments of the Third Consul, LEBRUN, which, being situated in the *Pavillon de Flore*, as it is called, at the south end of the palace of the *Tuileries*, command a complete view of the river. He and LEBRUN were both dressed in their consular uniform.

In a few minutes, a balloon, previously prepared at this floating *Temple of Commerce*, and adorned with the flags of different nations, ascended thence with majestic slowness, and presently took an almost horizontal direction to the south-west. In the car attached to it were Garnerin, the celebrated aëronaut, his wife, and two other persons, who kept waving their tricoloured flags, but were soon under the necessity of putting them away for a moment, and getting rid of some of their ballast, in order to clear the steeples and other lofty objects which appeared to lie in their route. The balloon, thus lightened, rose above the grosser part of the atmosphere, but with such little velocity as to afford the most gratifying spectacle to an immense number of spectators.

While following it with my eyes, I began to draw comparisons in my mind, and reflect on the rapid improvement made in these machines, since I had seen Blanchard and his friend, Dr. Jefferies, leave Dover Cliff in January 1785. They landed safely within a short distance of Calais, as every one knows: yet few persons then conceived it possible, or at least probable, that balloons could ever be applied to any useful purpose, still less to the art of war. We find, however, that at the battle of Fleurus, where the Austrians were defeated, Jourdan, the French General, was not a little indebted for his victory to the intelligence given him of the enemy's dispositions by his aëronautic reconnoitring-party.

The sagacious Franklin seems to have had a presentiment of the future utility of this invention. On the first experiments being made of it, some one asked him: "Of what use are balloons?"—"Of what use is a new-born child!" was the philosopher's answer.

Garnerin and his fellow-travellers being now at such a distance as not to interest an observer unprovided with a telespope, I thought it most prudent to gratify that ever-returning desire, which, according to Dr. Johnson, excites once a day a serious idea in the mind even of the most thoughtless. I accordingly retired to my own apartments, where I had taken care that dinner should be provided for myself and a friend, who, assenting to the propriety of allowing every man the indulgence of his own caprice, had, like me, been taking a stroll alone among the innumerable multitude of Paris.

After dinner, my friend and I sat chatting over our dessert, in order that we might not arrive too soon at the scene of action. At six, however, we rose from table, and separated. I immediately proceeded to the *Tuileries*, which I entered by the centre gate of the *Place du Carrousel*. The whole facade of the palace, from the base of the lowest pillars up to the very turrets of the pavilions, comprising the entablatures, &c. was decorated with thousands of *lampions*, whence issued a steady, glaring light. By way of parenthesis, I must inform you that these *lampions* are nothing more than little circular earthen pans, somewhat resembling those which are used in England as receptacles for small flower-pots. They are not filled with oil, but with a substance prepared from the offals of oxen and in which a thick wick is previously placed. Although the body of light proceeding from *lampions* of this description braves the weather, yet the smoke which they produce, is no inconsiderable drawback on the effect of their splendour.

Nothing could exceed the brilliancy of the *coup d'œil* from the vestibule of the palace of the *Tuileries*. The grand alley, as well as the end of the parterre on each side and the edges of the basins, was illuminated in a style equally tasteful and splendid. The frame-work on which the lamps were disposed by millions, represented lofty arcades of elegant proportion, with their several pillars, cornices, and other suitable ornaments. The eye, astonished, though not dazzled, penetrated through the garden, and, directed by this avenue of light, embraced a view of the temporary obelisk erected on the ridge of the gradual ascent, where stands the *Barrière de Chaillot*; the road on each side of the *Champs Elysées* presenting an illuminated perspective, whose vanishing point was the obelisk before-mentioned.

After loitering a short time to contemplate the west façade of the palace, which, excelling that of the east in the richness of its architecture, also excelled it in the splendour of its illuminations, I advanced along the centre or grand alley to the *Place de la Concorde*. Here, rose three *Temples* of correct design and beautiful symmetry, the most spacious of which, placed in the centre, was dedicated to *Peace*, that on the right hand to the *Arts*, and that on the left to *Industry*.

In front of these temples, was erected an extensive platform, about five feet above the level of the ground, on which was exhibited a pantomime, representing, as I was informed, the horrors of war succeeded by the blessings of peace. Though I arrived in time to have seen at least a part of it, I saw nothing, except the back of the spectators immediately before me, and others, mounted on chairs and benches, some of whom seemed to consider themselves fortunate if they recovered their legs, when they came now and then to the ground, by losing their equilibrium. These little accidents diverted me for the moment; but a misadventure of a truly-comic nature afforded me more entertainment than any pantomime I ever beheld, and amply consoled me for being thus confined to the back-ground.

A lusty young Frenchman, who, from his head-dress *à la Titus*, I shall distinguish by that name, escorting a lady whom, on account of her beautiful hair, I shall style *Berenice*, stood on one of the hindmost benches. The belle, habited in a tunic *à la Grecque*, with a species of sandals which displayed the elegant form of her leg, was unfortunately not of a stature sufficiently commanding to see over the heads of the other spectators. It was to no purpose that the gentleman called out "*à bas les chapeaux!*" When the hats were off, the lady still saw no better. What will not gallantry suggest to a man of fashionable education? Our considerate youth perceived, at no great

distance, some persons standing on a plank supported by a couple of casks. Confiding the fair *Berenice* to my care, he vanished: but, almost in an, instant, he reappeared, followed by two men, bearing an empty hogshead, which, it seems, he procured from the tavern at the west entrance of the *Tuileries*. To place the cask near the feet of the lady, pay for it, and fix her on it, was the business of a moment. Here then she was, like a statue on its pedestal, enjoying the double gratification of seeing and being seen. But, for enjoyment to be complete, we must share it with those we love. On examining the space where she stood, the lady saw there was room for two, and accordingly invited the gentleman to place himself beside her. In vain he resisted her entreaties; in vain he feared to incommode her. She commanded; he could do no less than obey. Stepping up on the bench, he thence nimbly sprang to the cask; but, O! fatal catastrophe! while, by the light of the neighbouring clusters of lamps, every one around was admiring the mutual attention of this sympathizing pair, in went the head of the hogshead.

Our till-then-envied couple fell suddenly up to the middle of the leg in the wine-lees left in the cask, by which they were bespattered up to their very eyes. Nor was this all: being too eager to extricate themselves, they overset the cask, and came to the ground, rolling in it and its offensive contents. It would be no easy matter to picture the ludicrous situation of Citizen *Titus* and Madame *Berenice*. This being the only mischief resulting from their fall, a universal burst of laughter seized the surrounding spectators, in which I took so considerable a share, that I could not immediately afford my assistance.

LETTER XV.

Paris, November 11, 1801.

What fortunate people are the Parisians! Yesterday evening so thick a fog came on, all at once, that it was almost impossible to discern the lamps in the streets, even when they were directly over-head. Had the fog occurred twenty-four hours earlier, the effect of the illuminations would have been entirely lost; and the blind would have had the advantage over the clear-sighted. This assertion experience has proved: for, some years ago, when there was, for several successive days, a duration of such fogs in Paris, it was found necessary, by persons who had business to transact out of doors, to hire the blind men belonging to the hospital of the *Quinze-Vingts*, to lead them about the streets. These guides, who were well acquainted with the topography of the capital, were paid by the hour, and sometimes, in the course of the day, each of them cleared five louis.

Last night, persons in carriages, were compelled to alight, and grope their way home as they could: in this manner, after first carefully ascertaining where I was, and keeping quite close to the wall, I reached my lodgings in safety, in spite of numberless interrogations put to me by people who had, or pretended to have, lost themselves.

When I was interrupted in my account of the *fète*, we were, if I mistake not, on the *Place de la Concorde*.

Notwithstanding the many loads of small gravel scattered here, with a view of keeping the place clean, the quantity of mud collected in the space of a few hours was really astonishing. *N'importe* was the word. No fine lady, by whatever motive she was attracted hither, regretted at the moment being up to her ankles in dirt, or having the skirt of her dress bemired. All was busy curiosity, governed by peaceable order.

For my part, I never experienced the smallest uncomfortable squeeze, except, indeed, at the conclusion of the pantomime, when the impatient crowd rushed forward, and, regardless of the fixed bayonets of the guards in possession of the platform, carried it by storm. Impelled by the torrent, I fortunately happened to be nearly in front of the steps, and, in a few seconds, I found, myself safely landed on the platform.

The guard now receiving a seasonable reinforcement, order was presently restored without bloodshed; and, though several persons were under the necessity of making a retrograde movement, on my declaring that I was an Englishman, I was suffered to retain my elevated position, till the musicians composing the orchestras, appropriated to each of the three temples, had taken their stations. Admittance then became general, and the temples were presently so crowded that the dancers had much difficulty to find room to perform the figures.

Good-humour and decorum, however, prevailed to such a degree that, during the number, of hours I mixed in the crowd, I witnessed not the smallest disturbance.

Between nine and ten o'clock, I went to the *Pont de la Concorde* to view the fireworks played off from the *Temple of Commerce* on the river; but these were, as I understand, of a description far inferior to those exhibited at the last National Fête of the 14th of July, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille.

This inferiority is attributed to the precaution dictated, by the higher authorities, to the authors of the fireworks to limit their ingenuity; as, on the former occasion, some accidents occurred of a rather serious nature. The spectators, in general, appeared to me to be disappointed by the mediocrity of the present exhibition.

I was compensated for the disappointment by the effect of the illumination of the quays, which, being faced with stone, form a lofty rampart on each embankment of the river. These were decorated with several tiers of lamps from the top of the parapet to the water's edge; the parapets and cornices of the bridges, together with the circumference of the arches, were likewise illuminated, as well as the gallery of the *Louvre*, and the stately buildings adjoining the quays.

The palace of the Legislative Body, which faces the south end of the *Pont de la Concorde*, formed a striking object, being adorned, in a magnificent style, with variegated lamps and transparencies. No less splendid, and in some respects more so, from the extent that it presented, was the façade of the *ci-devant Garde-Meuble*, and the corresponding buildings, which form the north side of the *Place de la Concorde*, whither I now returned.

The effect of the latter was beautiful, as you may judge from the description which I have already given you of this façade, in one of my preceding letters. Let it suffice then to say, that, from the base of the lower pillars to the upper cornice, it was covered with lamps so arranged as to exhibit, in the most brilliant manner, the style and richness of its architecture.

The crowd, having now been attracted in various directions, became more penetrable; and, in regaining the platform on the *Place de la Concorde*, I had a full view of the turrets, battlements, &c. erected behind the three temples, in which the skilful machinist had so combined his plan, by introducing into it a sight of the famous horses brought from *Marly*, and now occupying the entrance of the *Champs Elysées*, that these beautiful marble representations of that noble animal seemed placed here on purpose to embellish his scenery.

Finding myself chilled by standing so many hours exposed to the dampness of a November night, I returned to the warmer atmosphere of the temples, in order to take a farewell view of the dancers. The scene was truly picturesque, the male part of the groups being chiefly composed of journeymen of various trades, and the females consisting of a ludicrous medley of all classes; but it required no extraordinary penetration to perceive, that, with the exception of a few particular attachments, the military bore the bell, and, all things considered, this was no more than justice. Independently of being the best dancers, after gaining the laurels of victory in the hard-fought field, who can deny that they deserved the prize of beauty?

The dancing was kept up with the never-flagging vivacity peculiar to this nation, and, as I conclude, so continued till a very late hour in the morning. At half past eleven I withdrew, with a friend whom I chanced to meet, to Véry's, the famous *restaurateur's* in the *Tuileries*, where we supped. On comparing notes, I found that I had been more fortunate than he, in beholding to advantage all the sights of the day: though it was meant to be a day of jubilee, yet it was far from being productive of that mirth or gaiety which I expected. The excessive dearness of a few articles of the first necessity may, probably, be one cause of this gloom among the people. Bread, the staff of life, (as it may be justly termed in France, where a much greater proportion is, in general, consumed than in any other country,) is now at the enormous price of eighteen *sous* (nine-pence sterling) for the loaf of four pounds. Besides, the Parisians have gone through so much during the revolution, that I apprehend they are, to a certain degree, become callous to the spontaneous sensations of joy and pleasure. Be the cause what it may, I am positively assured that the people expressed not so much hilarity at this fête as at the last, I mean that of the 14th of July.

In my way home, I remarked that few houses were illuminated, except those of the rich in the streets which are great thorough-fares. People here, in general, I suppose, consider themselves dispensed from lighting up their private residence from the consideration that they collectively contribute to the public illumination, the expenses of which are defrayed by the government out of the national coffers.

Several songs have been composed and published in commemoration of this joyful event. Among those that have fallen under my notice, I have selected the following, of which our friend M---s, with his usual facility and taste, will, I dare say, furnish you an imitation.

CHANT D'ALLÉGRESSE,

Pour la paix.

Air: *de la Marche Triomphante*.

"Reviens pour consoler la terre,
Aimable Paix, descends des cieux,
Depuis assez long-tems la guerre
Afflige un peuple généreux,
Ah! quell' aurore pure & calme
S'offre à nos regards satisfaits!
Nous obtenons la double paline
De la victoire & de la paix. bis.

"Disparaissez tristes images,
D'un tems malheureux qui n'est plus,

Nous réparerons nos dommages
Par la sagesse & les vertus.
Que la paix enfin nous rallie!
Plus d'ingrats ni de mécontens,
O triomphe de la patrie!
Plus de Français indifférens. bis.

"Revenez phalanges guerrières,
Héros vengeurs de mon pays,
Au sein d'une épouse, d'un père,
De vos parens, de vos amis,
Revenez dans votre patrie
Après tant d'effrayans hazards,
Trouver ce qui charme la vie,
L'amitié, l'amour, et les arts. bis.

"Oh! vous qui, sous des catacombes,
Etes couchés au champ d'honneur,
Nos yeux sont fixés sur vos tombes,
En chantant l'hymne du vainqueur,
Nous transmettrons votre mémoire
Jusqu' aux siécles à venir,
Avec le burin de l'histoire,
Et les larmes du souvenir." bis.

SONG OF JOY,

In honor of peace.
Imitated from the French.

To the same tune: *de la Marche Triomphante.*

Come, lovely Peace, from heav'n descending,
Thy presence earth at length shall grace;
Those terrible afflictions ending,
That long have griev'd a gen'rous race:
We see Aurora rise refulgent;
Serene she comes to bless our sight;
While Fortune to our hopes indulgent,
Bids victory and peace unite.

Be gone, ye dark imaginations,
Remembrances of horrors past:
Virtue's and Wisdom's reparations
Shall soon be made, and ever last.
Now peace to happiness invites us;
The bliss of peace is understood:
With love fraternal peace delights us,
Our private ease, and country's good.

Re-enter, sons of war, your houses;
Heroic deeds for peace resign:
Embrace your parents and your spouses,
And all to whom your hearts incline:
Behold your countrymen invite you,
With open, arms, with open hearts;
Here find whatever can delight you;
Here friendship, love, and lib'ral arts.

Departed heroes, crown'd with glory,
While you are laid in Honour's bed,
Sad o'er your tombs we'll sing the story,
How Gallia's warriors fought and bled:
And, proud to shew to future ages
The claims to patriot valour due,
We'll vaunt, in our historic pages,
The debt immense we owe to you.

LETTER XVI.

Paris, November 13, 1801.

Enriched, as this capital now is, with the spoils of Greece and Italy, it may literally be termed the repository of the greatest curiosities existing. In the CENTRAL MUSEUM are collected all the

prodigies of the fine arts, and, day after day, you may enjoy the sight of these wonders.

I know not whether you are satisfied with the abridged account I gave you of the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES; but, on the presumption that you did not expect from me a description of every work of sculpture contained in it, I called your attention to the most pre-eminent only; and I shall now pursue the same plan, respecting the master-pieces of painting exhibited in the great

GALLERY OF THE LOUVRE

This gallery, which is thirteen hundred and sixty-five feet in length by thirty in breadth, runs north and south all along the quays of the river Seine, and joins the *Louvre* to the palace of the *Tuileries*. It was begun by Charles IX, carried as far as the first wicket by Henry IV, to the second by Lewis XIII, and terminated by Lewis XIV. One half, beginning from a narrow strip of ground, called the *Jardin de l'Infante*, is decorated externally with large pilasters of the Composite order, which run from top to bottom, and with pediments alternately triangular and elliptical, the tympanums of which, both on the side of the *Louvre*, and towards the river, are charged with emblems of the Arts and Sciences. The other part is ornamented with coupled pilasters, charged with vermiculated rustics, and other embellishments of highly-finished workmanship.

In the inside of this gallery are disposed the *chefs d'œuvre* of all the great masters of the Italian, Flemish, and French schools. The pictures, particularly the historical ones, are hung according to the chronological order of the painters' birth, in different compartments, the number of which, at the present period, amounts to fifty-seven; and the productions of each school and of each master are as much as possible assembled; a method which affords the advantage of easily comparing one school to another, one master to another, and a master to himself. If the chronology of past ages be considered as a book from which instruction is to be imbibed, the propriety of such a classification requires no eulogium. From the pictures being arranged chronologically, the GALLERY OF THE LOUVRE becomes a sort of dictionary, in which may be traced every degree of improvement or decline that the art of painting has successively experienced.

The entrance to the great GALLERY OF PAINTINGS is precisely the same as that to the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES. After ascending a noble stone stair-case, and turning to the left, you reach the

SALOON OF THE LOUVRE.

This apartment, which serves as a sort of antichamber to the great Gallery, is, at the present moment, appropriated to the annual monthly exhibition of the productions of living painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, and draughtsmen. Of these modern works, I shall, perhaps, speak on a future occasion. But, in the course of a few days, they will give place to several master-pieces of the Italian School, some of which were under indispensable repair, when the others were arranged in the great Gallery.

It would be no easy task to express the various sentiments which take possession of the mind of the lover of the arts, when, for the first time, he enters this splendid repository. By frequent visits, however, the imagination becomes somewhat less distracted, and the judgment, by degrees, begins to collect itself. Although I am not, like you, conversant in the Fine Arts, would you tax me with arrogance, were I to presume to pass an opinion on some of the pictures comprised in this matchless collection?

Painting being a representation of nature, every spectator, according to the justness of his ideas, may form an opinion how far the representation is happily pourtrayed, and in beholding it, experience a proportionate degree of pleasure: but how different the sensations of him who, combining all the requisites of a connoisseur, contemplates the composition of a masterly genius! In tracing the merits of such a production, his admiration gradually becomes inflamed, as his eye strays from beauty to beauty.

In painting or sculpture, beauty, as you well know, is either natural, or generally admitted: the latter depends on the perfection of the performance, on certain rules established, and principles settled. This is what is termed *ideal* beauty, which is frequently not within the reach of the vulgar; and the merit of which may be lost on him who has not learned to know and appreciate it. Thus, one of the finest pictures, ever conceived and executed by man, might not, perhaps, make an impression on many spectators. Natural beauty, on the contrary, is a true imitation of nature: its effect is striking and general, so that it stands not in need of being pointed out, but is felt and admired by all.

Notwithstanding this truth, be assured that I should never, of my own accord, have ventured to pronounce on the various degrees of merit of so many *chefs d'œuvre*, which all at once solicit attention. This would require a depth of knowledge, a superiority of judgment, a nicety of discrimination, a fund of taste, a maturity of experience, to none of which have I any pretension. The greatest masters, who have excelled in a particular branch, have sometimes given to the world indifferent productions; while artists of moderate abilities have sometimes produced master-pieces far above their general standard. In a picture, which may, on the whole, merit the appellation of a *chef d'œuvre*, are sometimes to be found beauties which render it superior, negligences which border on the indifferent, and defects which constitute the bad. Genius has its flights and deviations; talent, its successes, attempts, and faults; and mediocrity even, its flashes

and chances.

Whatever some persons may affect, a true knowledge of the art of painting is by no means an easy acquirement; it is not a natural gift, but demands much reading and study. Many there are, no doubt, who may be able to descant speciously enough, perhaps, on the perfections and defects of a picture; but, on that account alone, they are not to be regarded as real judges of its intrinsic merit.

Know then, that, in selecting the most remarkable productions among the vast number exhibited in the CENTRAL MUSEUM, I have had the good fortune to be directed by the same first-rate connoisseur who was so obliging as to fix my choice in the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES. I mean M. VISCONTI.

Not confining myself either to alphabetical or chronological order, I shall proceed to point out to you such pictures of each school as claim particular notice.

ITALIAN SCHOOL.

N. B. *Those pictures to which no number is prefixed, are not yet publicly exhibited*.

RAFFAELLO.

N° 55. (Saloon.) *The Virgin and Child, &c.* commonly known by the name of the *Madonna di Foligno*.

This is one of the master-pieces of RAPHAEL for vigour of colouring, and for the beauty of the heads and of the child. It is in his second manner; although his third is more perfect, seldom are the pictures of this last period entirely executed by himself. This picture was originally painted on pannel, and was in such a lamentable state of decay, that doubts arose whether it could safely be conveyed from Italy. It has been recently transferred to canvass, and now appears as fresh and as vivid, as if, instead of a lapse of three centuries, three years only had passed since it was painted. Never was an operation of the like nature performed in so masterly a manner. The process was attended by a Committee of the National Institute, appointed at the particular request of the Administration of the Museum. The *Madonna di Foligno* is to be engraved from a drawing taken by that able draughtsman DU TERTRE.

N° ( ) *The Holy Family*.

This valuable picture of RAPHAEL'S third manner is one of the most perfect that ever came from his pencil. It belonged to the old collection of the crown, and is engraved by EDELINCK. Although superior to the *Madonna di Foligno* as to style and composition, it is inferior in the representation of the child, and in vigour of colouring.

N° ( ) *The Transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor.*

This is the last production of RAPHAEL, and his most admirable *chef d'œuvre* as to composition and grace of the contours in all its figures. It is not yet exhibited, but will be shortly. This picture is in perfect preservation, and requires only to be cleaned from a coat of dust and smoke which has been accumulating on it for three centuries, during which it graced the great altar of St. Peter's church at Rome.

Among the portraits by RAPHAEL, the most surprising are:

N° 58. (Saloon.) *Baltazzare Castiglione*, a celebrated writer in Italian and Latin.

N° ( ) *Leo X.*

Every thing that RAPHAEL'S pencil has produced is in the first order. That master has something greatly superior in his manner: he really appears as a god among painters. Addison seems to have been impressed with the truth of this sentiment, when he thus expresses himself:

"Fain would I RAPHAEL'S godlike art rehearse,
And shew th' immortal labours in my verse,
When from the mingled strength of shade and light,
A new creation rises, to my sight:
Such heav'nly figures from his pencil flow,
So warm with life his blended colours glow,
From theme to theme with secret pleasure lost,
Amidst the soft variety I'm lost."

LEONARDO DA VINCI.

There are several pictures by this master in the present exhibition; but you may look here in vain for the portrait of *La Gioconda*, which he employed four years in painting, and in which he has imitated nature so closely, that, as a well-known author has observed, "the eyes have all the

lustre of life, the hairs of the eye brows and lids seem real, and even the pores of the skin are perceptible."

This celebrated picture is now removed to the palace of the *Tuileries*; but the following one, which remains, is an admirable performance.

N° ( ) *Portrait of Charles VIII.*

FRA BARTOLOMEO.

N° 28. (Saloon.) *St. Mark the Evangelist*.
N° 29. (Saloon.) *The Saviour of the world*.

These two pictures, which were in the *Pitti* palace at Florence, give the idea of the most noble simplicity, and of no common taste in the distribution of the lights and shades.

GIULIO ROMANO.

N° 35. (Saloon.) *The Circumcision*.

This picture belonged to the old collection of the crown. The figures in it are about a foot and a half in height. It is a real *chef d'œuvre*, and has all the grace of the antique bas-reliefs.

TIZIANO.

N° 69. (Saloon.) *The Martyrdom of St. Peter*.

This large picture, which presents a grand composition in colossal figures, with a country of extraordinary beauty in the back-ground, is considered as the *chef d'œuvre* of TITIAN. It was painted on pannel; but, having undergone the same operation as the *Madonna di Foligno*, is now placed on canvass, and is in such a state as to claim the admiration of succeeding ages.

N° 74. (Saloon.) *The Portraits of Titian and his mistress.*
70. (Saloon.) *Portrait of the Marquis del Guasto with some ladies*.

Both these pictures belonged to the old collection of the crown, and are to be admired for grace and beauty.

N° 940. (Gallery.) *Christ crowned with thorns*.
941. (Gallery.) *Christ carried to the grave*.

There is a wonderful vigour of colouring in these two capital pictures.

The preceding are the most admirable of the productions which are at present exhibited of this inimitable master, the first of painters for truth of colouring.

CORREGGIO.

N° 753. (Gallery.) *The Virgin, the infant Jesus, Mary Magdalen, and St. Jerome.*

This picture, commonly distinguished by the appellation of the *St. Jerome* of CORREGGIO, is undoubtedly his *chef d'œuvre*. In the year 1749, the king of Portugal is said to have offered for it a sum equal in value to £18,000 sterling.

N° 756. (Gallery.) *The Marriage of St. Catherine*.
757. (Gallery.) *Christ taken down from the cross*.

This last-mentioned picture has just been engraved in an excellent manner by an Italian artist, M. ROSA-SPINA.

The grace of his pencil and his *chiaro oscuro* place CORREGGIO in the first class of painters, where he ranks the third after RAPHAEL and TITIAN. He is inferior to them in design and composition; however the scarceness of his pictures frequently gives them a superior value. Poor CORREGGIO! It grieves one to recollect that he lost his life, in consequence of the fatigue of staggering home under a load of *copper* coin, which avaricious monks had given him for pictures now become so valuable that they are not to be purchased for their weight, even in *gold*.

No collection is so rich in pictures of CORREGGIO as that of the CENTRAL MUSEUM.

PAOLO VERONESE.

N° 44. (Saloon.) *The Wedding at Cana*.

45. (Saloon.) *The Repast at the house of Levi*.
51. (Saloon.) *The Pilgrims of Emmaüs*.

These are astonishing compositions for their vast extent, the number and beauty of the figures and portraits, and the variety and truth of the colouring. Nothing in painting can be richer.

ANDREA DEL SARTO.

N° 4. (Saloon.) *Christ taken down from the cross*.

ANDREA SQUAZZELLI (his pupil.)

N° ( ) *Christ laid in the tomb*.

This capital picture is not in the catalogue.

GIORGIONE DEL CASTEL-FRANCO.

N° 32. (Saloon.) *A Concert containing three portraits*.

This master-piece is worthy of TITIAN.

GUERCINO.

N° 33. (Saloon.) *St. Petronilla*.

This large picture was executed for St. Peter's church in the Vatican, where it was replaced by a copy in Mosaic, on being removed to the pontificate palace of Monte Cavallo, at Rome.

In the great Gallery are exhibited no less than twenty-three pictures by GUERCINO: but to speak the truth, though, in looking at some of his productions, he appears an extremely agreeable painter, as soon as you see a number of them, you can no longer bear him. This is what happens to *mannerists*. The dark shades at first astonish you, afterwards they disgust you.

ANDREA SACCHI.

N° 65. (Saloon.) *St. Remuald*.

This picture was always one of the most esteemed of those in the churches at Rome. It was the altar-piece of the church of St. Remuald in that city.

ALBANO.

N° 676. (Gallery.) *Fire.*
677. *Air.*
678. *Water.*
679. *Earth.*

In the Gallery are twenty-nine pictures of this master, and all of them graceful; but the preceding four, representing the elements, which were taken from the royal Cabinet of Turin, are the most remarkable.

BAROCCIO.

N° 686. (Gallery.) *The Virgin, St Anthony, and St. Lucia.*
688. *St. Michaelina.*

These are the best pictures of BAROCCIO already exhibited. His colouring is enchanting. It is entirely transparent and seems as if impregnated with light: however, his forms, and every thing else, bespeak the *mannerist*.

ANNIBALE CARRACCI.

N° 721. (Gallery.) *Christ dead on the knees of the Virgin.*
723. *The Resurrection of Christ.*
728. *The Nativity of Christ.*
730. *Christ laid in the tomb.*

Of the CARRACCI, ANNIBALE is the most perfect. He is also remarkable for the different manners which he has displayed in his works. They appear to be by two or three different painters. Of more than twenty in the Gallery, the above are the best of his productions.

MICHAEL ANGELO DA CARAVAGGIO.

N° 744. (Gallery.) *Christ laid in the tomb.*

This wonderful picture, which was brought from Rome, is, for vigour of execution and truth of colouring, superior to all the others by the same master. Every one of his works bears the stamp of a great genius.

DOMENICHINO.

N° 763. (Gallery.) *The Communion of St. Jerome.*

This picture, the master-piece of DOMENICHICO, comes from the great altar of the church of *San Geronimo della Carità*, at Rome. It will appear incredible that for a work of such importance, which cost him so much time, study, and labour, he received no more than the sum of about £10 sterling.

N° 769. (Gallery.) *St. Cecilia*.

This capital performance is now removed to the drawing-room of the First Consul, in the palace of the *Tuileries*.

After RAPHAEL, DOMENICHINO is one of the most perfect masters; and his *St. Jerome*, together with RAPHAEL'S Transfiguration, are reckoned among the most famous *chefs d'œuvre* of the art of painting.

GUIDO.

N° 797. (Gallery.) *The Crucifixion of St. Peter*.
800. *Fortune*.

These are the finest of the twenty pictures by that master, now exhibited in the CENTRAL MUSEUM. They both came from Rome; the former, from the Vatican; the latter, from the Capitol.

GUIDO is a noble and graceful painter; but, in general, he betrays a certain negligence in the execution of several parts.

LUINI.

N° 860. (Gallery.) *The Holy Family*.

In this picture, LUINI has fallen little short of his master, LEONARDO DA VINCI.

ANDREA SOLARIO.

N° 896. (Gallery.) *The Daughter of Herodias receiving the head of St. John*.

SOLARIO is another worthy pupil of LEONARDO. This very capital picture belonged to the collection of the crown, and was purchased by Lewis XIV.

PIERUNO DEL VAGA.

N° 928. (Gallery.) *The Muses challenged by the Piërides*.

An excellent picture from Versailles.

BALTASSARE PERUZZI.

N° 929. (Gallery.) *The Virgin discovering the infant Jesus asleep*.

A remarkably fine production.

SEBASTIANO DEL PIOMBO.

N° ( ) *Portrait of the young sculptor, Baccio Bomdinelli*.

This picture is worthy of the pencil of RAPHAEL. It is not yet exhibited.

PIETRO DA CORTONA.

N° 52. (Saloon.) *The Birth of the Virgin*.
53. *Remus and Romulus*.

These are the finest pictures in the collection by this master.

We have now noticed the best productions of the Italian School: in our next visit to the CENTRAL

MUSEUM, I shall point out the most distinguished pictures of the French and Flemish Schools.

P. S. Lord Cornwallis is sumptuously entertained here, all the ministers giving him a grand dinner, each in rotation. After having viewed the curiosities of Paris, he will, in about a fortnight, proceed to the congress at Amiens. On his Lordship's arrival, I thought it my duty to leave my name at his hotel, and was most agreeably surprised to meet with a very old acquaintance in his military Secretary, Lieut. Col. L--------s. For any of the ambassador's further proceedings, I refer you to the English newspapers, which seem to anticipate all his movements.

LETTER XVII.

Paris, November 15, 1801.

The more frequently I visit the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, the more am I inclined to think that such a vast number of pictures, suspended together, lessen each other's effect. This is the first idea which now presents itself to me, whenever I enter the

GALLERY OF THE LOUVRE.

Were this collection rendered apparently less numerous by being subdivided into different apartments, the eye would certainly be less dazzled than it is, at present, by an assemblage of so many various objects, which, though arranged as judiciously as possible, somehow convey to the mind an image of confusion. The consequence is that attention flags, and no single picture is seen to advantage, because so many are seen together.

In proportion as the lover of the arts becomes more familiarized with the choicest productions of the pencil, he perceives that there are few pictures, if any, really faultless. In some, he finds beauties, which are general, or forming, as it were, a whole, and producing a general effect; in others, he meets with particular or detached beauties, whose effect is partial: assembled, they constitute the beautiful: insulated, they have a merit which the amateur appreciates, and the artist ought to study. General or congregated beauties always arise from genius and talent: particular or detached beauties belong to study, to labour, that is, to the *nulla die sine lineâ* and sometimes solely to chance, as is exemplified in the old story of Protogenes, the celebrated Rhodian painter.

To discover some of these beauties, requires no extraordinary discernment; a person of common observation might decide whether the froth at the mouth of an animal, panting for breath, was naturally represented: but a spectator, possessing a cultivated and refined taste, minutely surveys every part of a picture, examines the grandeur of the composition, the elevation of the ideas, the nobleness of the expression, the truth and correctness of the design, the grace scattered over the different objects, the imitation of nature in the colouring, and the masterly strokes of the pencil.

Our last visit to the CENTRAL MUSEUM terminated with the Italian School; let us now continue our examination, beginning with the

FRENCH SCHOOL.

LE BRUN.

N° 17. (Gallery) *The Defeat of Porus.*
18. *The Family of Darius at the feet of Alexander.*
19. *The Entrance of Alexander into Babylon. The Passage of the Granicus.*
14. *Jesus asleep, or Silence.*
16. *The Crucifix surrounded by angels.*

The compositions of LE BRUN are grand and rich; his costume well-chosen, and tolerably scientific; the tone of his pictures well-suited to the subject. But, in this master, we must not look for purity and correctness of drawing, in an eminent degree. He much resembles PIETRO DA CORTONA. LE BRUN, however, has a taste more in the style of RAPHAEL and the antique, though it is a distant imitation. The colouring of PIETRO DA CORTONA is far more agreeable and more captivating.

Among the small pictures by LE BRUN, N°s. 14 and 16 deserve to be distinguished; but his *chefs d'œuvre* are the achievements of Alexander. When the plates from these historical paintings, engraved by AUDRAN, reached Rome, it is related that the Italians, astonished, exclaimed: "*Povero Raffaello! non sei più il primo*." But, when they afterwards saw the originals, they restored, to RAPHAEL his former pre-eminence.

CLAUDE LORRAIN.

N° 43. (Gallery.) *View of a sea-port at sun-set*.
45. *A Sea-piece on a fine morning*.

46. *A Landscape enlivened by the setting sun*.

The superior merit of CLAUDE in landscape-painting is too well known to need any eulogium, The three preceding are the finest of his pictures in this collection. However, at Rome, and in England, there are some more perfect than those in the CENTRAL MUSEUM. One of his *chefs d'œuvre*, formerly at Rome, is now at Naples, in the Gallery of Prince Colonna.

JOUVENET.

N° 54. (Gallery.) *Christ taken down from the cross.*

The above is the most remarkable picture here by this master.

MIGNARD.

N° 57. (Gallery.) *The Virgin*, called *La Vièrge à la grappe*, because she is taking from a basket of fruit a bunch of grapes to present to her son.

NICOLAS POUSSIN.

N° 70. (Gallery.) *The Fall of the manna in the desert.*
75. *Rebecca and Eleazar.*
77. *The Judgment of Solomon.*
78. *The blind Men of Jericho.*
82. *Winter or the Deluge.*

In this collection, the above are the finest historical paintings of POUSSIN; and of his landscapes, the following deserve to be admired.

N° 76. (Gallery.) *Diogenes throwing away his porringer.*
83. *The Death of Eurydice.*

POUSSIN is the greatest painter of the French school. His compositions bear much resemblance to those of RAPHAEL, and to the antique: though they have not the same *naïveté* and truth. His back-grounds are incomparable; his landscapes, in point of composition, superior even to those of CLAUDE. His large altar-pieces are the least beautiful of his productions. His feeble colouring cannot support proportions of the natural size: in these pictures, the charms of the background are also wanting.

LE SUEUR.

N° 98. (Gallery.) *St. Paul preaching at Ephesus.*

This is the *chef d'œuvre* of LE SUEUR, who is to be admired for the simplicity of his pencil, as well as for the beauty of his compositions.

VALENTINO.

N° 111. (Gallery.) *The Martyrdom of St. Processa and St. Martinian.*
112. *Cæsar's Tribute.*

These are the finest productions of this master, who was a worthy rival of CARAVAGGIO.

VERNET.

N° 121. (Gallery.) *A Sea-port at sun-set*.

This painter's style is generally correct and agreeable. In the above picture he rivals CLAUDE.

We now come to the school which, of all others, is best known in England. This exempts me from making any observations on the comparative merits of the masters who compose it. I shall therefore confine myself to a bare mention of the best of their performances, at present exhibited in the CENTRAL MUSEUM.

FLEMISH SCHOOL.

RUBENS.

N° 485. (Gallery.) *St. Francis, dying, receives the sacrament.*
503. *Christ taken down from the cross*, a celebrated picture from the cathedral of Antwerp.

507. *Nicholas Rochox, a burgomaster of the city of Antwerp, and a friend of* RUBENS.
509. *The Crucifixion of St. Peter*.
513. *St. Roch interceding for the people attacked by the plague.*
526. *The Village-Festival*.

In this repository, the above are the most remarkable productions of RUBENS.

VANDYCK.

N° 255. (Gallery.) *The Mother of pity.*
264. *The portraits of Charles I, elector palatine, and his brother, prince Robert.*
265. *A full-length portrait of a man holding his daughter by the hand.*
266. *A full-length portrait of a lady with her son.*

These are superior to the other pictures by VANDYCK in this collection.

CHAMPAGNE.

N° 216. (Gallery.) *The Nuns.*

The history of this piece is interesting. The eldest daughter of CHAMPAGNE was a nun in the convent of *Port-Royal* at Paris. Being reduced to extremity by a fever of fourteen months' duration, and given over by her physicians, she falls to prayers with another nun, and recovers her health.

CRAYER.

N° 227. (Gallery.) *The Triumph of St. Catherine.*

GERHARD DOUW.

N° 234. (Gallery.) *The dropsical Woman.*

HANS HOLBEIN.

N° 319. (Gallery.) *A young woman, dressed in a yellow veil, and with her hands crossed on her knees.*

JORDAENS.

N° 351. (Gallery.) *Twelfth-Day*.
352. *The Family-Concert*.

ADRIAN VAN OSTADE.

N° 428. (Gallery.) *The family of Ostade, painted by himself.*
430. *A smoking Club*.
431. *The Schoolmaster, with the ferula in his hand, surrounded by his scholars*.

PAUL POTTER.

N° 446. (Gallery.) *An extensive pasture, with cattle.*

This most remarkable picture represents, on the fore-ground, near an oak, a bull, a ewe with its lamb, and a herdsman, all as large as life.

REMBRANDT.

N° 457. (Gallery.) *The head of a woman with ear-rings, and dressed in a fur-cloak.*
458. *The good Samaritan*.
465. *The Cabinet-maker's family.*
466. *Tobias and his family kneeling before the angel Raphael, who disappears from his sight, after having made himself known.*
469. *The Presentation of Jesus in the temple.*

The pictures, exhibited in the *Saloon* of the *Louvre*, have infinitely the advantage of those in the *Great Gallery*; the former apartment being lighted from the top; while in the latter, the light is admitted through large windows, placed on both sides, those on the one side facing the compartments between those on the other; so that, in this respect, the master-pieces in the *Gallery* are viewed under very unfavourable circumstances.

The *Gallery* of the *Louvre* is still capable of containing more pictures, one eighth part of it (that next to the *Tuileries*), being under repair for the purpose.[1] It has long been a question with the French republican government, whether the palace of the *Tuileries* should not be connected to the *Louvre*, by a gallery parallel to that which borders the Seine. Six years ago, I understand, the subject was agitated, and dropped again, on consideration of the state of the country in general, and particularly the finances. It is now revived; and I was told the other day, that a plan of construction had absolutely been adopted. This, no doubt, is more easy than to find the sums of money necessary for carrying on so expensive an undertaking.

If the fact were true, it is of a nature to produce a great sensation in modern art, since it is affirmed that the object of this work is to give a vast display to every article appropriated to general instruction; for, according to report, it is intended that these united buildings, should, in addition to the National Library, contain the collections of statues, pictures, &c. &c. still remaining at the disposal of the government. I would not undertake to vouch for the precise nature of the object proposed; but it cannot be denied that, in this project, there is a boldness well calculated to flatter the ambition of the Chief Consul.

However, I think it more probable that nothing, in this respect, will be positively determined in the present state of affairs. The expedition to St. Domingo will cost an immense sum, not to speak of the restoration of the French navy, which must occasion great and immediate calls for money. Whence I conclude that the erection of the new Gallery, like that of the National Column, will be much talked of, but remain among other projects in embryo, and the discussion be adjourned *sine die*.

Leaving the *Great Gallery*, we return to the *Saloon* of the *Louvre*, which, being an intermediate apartment, serves as a point of communication between it and the

GALLERY OF APOLLO.

The old gallery of this name, first called *La petite galérie du Louvre*, was constructed under the reign of Henry IV, and, from its origin, ornamented with paintings. This gallery having been consumed by fire in 1661, owing to the negligence of a workman employed in preparing a theatre for a grand ballet, in which the king was to dance with all his court, Lewis XIV immediately ordered it to be rebuilt and magnificently decorated.

LE BRUN, who then directed works of this description in France, furnished the designs of all the paintings, sculpture, and ornaments, which are partly executed. He divided the vault of the roof into eleven principal compartments; in that which is in the centre, he intended to represent *Apollo* in his car, with all the attributes peculiar to the Sun, which was the king's device. The *Seasons* were to have occupied the four nearest compartments; in the others, were to have been *Evening* and *Morning*, *Night* and *Day-break*, the *Waking of the Waters*, and that of the *Earth at Sun-rise*.

Unfortunately for his fame, this vast project of LE BRUN was never completed. Lewis XIV, captivated by Versailles, soon turned all his thoughts towards the embellishment of that palace. The works of the GALLERY OF APOLLO were entirely abandoned, and, of all this grand composition, LE BRUN was enabled to execute no more than the following subjects:

1. *Evening*, represented by Morpheus, lying on a bed of poppies, and buried in a profound sleep.
2. *Night* succeeding to day, and lighted by the silvery disk of the Moon, which, under the figure of Diana, appears in a car drawn by hinds.
3. *The Waking of the Waters*. Neptune and Amphitrite on a car drawn by sea-horses, and accompanied by Tritons, Nereïds, and other divinities of the waters, seem to be paying homage to the rising sun, whose first rays dispel the Winds and Tempests, figured by a group to the left; while, to the right, Polyphemus, seated on a rock, is calling with his loud instrument to his Galatea.

The other compartments, which LE BRUN could not paint, on account of the cessation of the works, remained a long time vacant, and would have been so at this day, had not the *ci-devant* Academy of Painting, to whom the king, in 1764, granted the use of the GALLERY OF APOLLO, resolved that, in future, the historical painters who might be admitted members, should be bound to paint for their reception one of the subjects which were still wanting for the completion of the ceiling. In this manner, five of the compartments, which remained to be filled, were successively decorated, namely:

1. *Summer*, by DURAMEAU.
2. *Autumn*, by TARAVAL.
3. *Spring*, by CALLET.
4. *Winter*, by LAGRENÉE the younger,

5. *Morning*, or day-break, by RENOU.

The GALLERY OF APOLLO now making part of the CENTRAL MUSEUM, it would be worthy of the government to cause its ceiling to be completed, by having the three vacant compartments painted by skillful French artists.

Under the compartments, and immediately above the cornice, are twelve medallions, which were to represent the *twelve months of the year*, characterized by the different occupations peculiar to them: eight only are executed, and these are the months of summer, autumn, and winter.

The rich borders in gilt stucco, which serve as frames to all these paintings, the caryatides which support them, as well as the groups of Muses, Rivers, and Children, that are distributed over the great cornice, are worthy of remark. Not only were the most celebrated sculptors then in France, GASPAR and BALTHAZAR MARSY, REGNAUDIN, and GIRARDON, chosen to execute them; but their emulation was also excited by a premium of three hundred louis, which was promised to him who should excel. GIRARDON obtained it by the execution of the following pieces of sculpture:

1. The figure representing a river which is under the *Waking of the Waters*; at the south extremity of the gallery.
2. The two trophies of arms which are near that river.
3. The caryatides that support one of the octagonal compartments towards the quay, at the foot of which are seen two children; the one armed with a sickle, the other leaning on a lion.
4. The group of caryatides that supports the great compartment where *Summer* is represented, and below which is a child holding a balance.
5. The two grouped figures of Tragedy and Comedy, which rest on the great cornice.

In the GALLERY OF APOLLO will be exhibited in succession, about twelve thousand original drawings of the Italian, Flemish, and French schools, the greater part of which formerly belonged to the crown. This valuable collection had been successively enriched by the choice of those of JABAK, LANQUE, MONTARSIS, LE BRUN, CROZAT, MARIETTE, &c. yet never rendered public. Private and partial admission to it had, indeed, been granted; but artists and amateurs, in general, were precluded from so rich a source of study. By inconceivable neglect, it seemed almost to have escaped the attention of the old government, having been for a hundred years shut up in a confined place, instead of being exhibited to public view.

The variety of the forms and dimensions of these drawings having opposed the more preferable mode of arranging them by schools, and in chronological order, the most capital drawings of each master have been selected (for, in so extensive a collection, it could not be supposed that they were all equally interesting); and these even are sufficiently numerous to furnish several successive exhibitions.

The present exhibition consists of upwards of two hundred drawings by the most distinguished masters of the Italian school, about one hundred by those of the Flemish, and as many, or rather more, by those of the French. They are placed in glazed frames, so contrived as to admit of the subjects being changed at pleasure. Among the drawings by RAPHAEL, is the great cartoon of the Athenian School, a valuable fragment which served for the execution of the grand *fresco* painting in the Vatican, the largest and finest of all his productions. It was brought from the Ambrosian library at Milan, and is one of the most instructive works extant for a study.

Besides the drawings, is a frame containing a series of portraits of illustrious personages who made a figure in the reign of Lewis XIV. They are miniatures in enamel, painted chiefly by the celebrated PETITOT of Geneva.

Here are also to be seen some busts and antique vases. The most remarkable of the latter is one of Parian marble, about twenty-one inches in height by twelve in diameter. It is of an oval form; the handles, cut out of the solid stone, are ornamented with four swans' heads, and the neck with branches of ivy. On the swell is a bas-relief, sculptured in the old Greek style, and in the centre is an altar on which these words may be decyphered.

ΣΟΣΙΒΙΟΣ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ.
Sosibios of Athens fecit.

This beautiful vase[2] is placed on a table of violet African breccia, remarkable for its size, being twelve feet in length, three feet ten inches in breadth, and upwards of three inches in thickness.

It might, at first, be supposed that the indiscriminate admission of persons of all ranks to a Museum, which presents so many attractive objects, would create confusion, and occasion breaches of decorum. But this is by no means the case. *Savoyards*, *poissardes*, and the whole motley assemblage of the lower classes of both sexes in Paris, behave themselves with as much propriety as the more refined visiters; though their remarks, perhaps, may be expressed in language less polished. In conspicuous places of the various apartments, boards are affixed, on which is inscribed the following significant appeal to the uncultivated mind, "*Citoyens, ne touchez à rien; mais respectez la Propriété Nationale*." Proper persons are stationed here and there to caution such as, through thoughtlessness or ignorance, might not attend to the admonition.

On the days appropriated to the accommodation of students, great numbers are to be seen in different parts of the Museum, some mounted on little stages, others standing or sitting, all sedulously employed in copying the favourite object of their studies. Indeed, the epithet CENTRAL has been applied to this establishment, in order to designate a MUSEUM, which is to contain the choicest productions of art, and, of course, become the *centre* of study. Here, nothing has been neglected that could render such an institution useful, either in a political light, or in regard to public instruction. Its magnificence and splendour speak to every eye, and are calculated to attract the attention of foreigners from the four quarters of the globe; while, as a source of improvement, it presents to students the finest models that the arts and sciences could assemble. In a philosophical point of view, such a Museum may be compared to a torch, whose light will not only dispel the remnant of that bad taste which, for a century, has predominated in the arts dependent on design, but also serve to guide the future progress of the rising generation.

Footnote 1: In the great *Gallery* of the *Louvre* are suspended about nine hundred and fifty pictures; which, with ninety in the *Saloon*, extend the number of the present exhibition to one thousand and forty. Return to text

Footnote 2: Whatever may be the beauty of this vase, two others are to be seen in Paris, which surpass it, according to the opinion of one of the most celebrated antiquaries of the age, M. VISCONTI. They are now in the possession of M. AUBRI, doctor of Physic, residing at N°. 272, *Rue St. Thomas du Louvre*, but they formerly graced the cabinet of the *Villa-Albani* at Rome. In this apartment, Cardinal Alessandro had assembled some of the most valuable ornaments of antiquity. Here were to be seen the Apollo *Sauroctonos* in bronze, the Diana in alabaster, and the *unique* bas-relief of the apothesis of Hercules. By the side of such rare objects of art, these vases attracted no less attention. To describe them as they deserve, would lead me too far; they need only to be seen to be admired. Although their form is antique, the execution of them is modern, and ascribed to the celebrated sculptor, SILVIO DA VELETRI, who lived in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Indeed, M. VISCONTI affirms that antiquity affords not their equal; assigning as a reason that porphyry was introduced into Rome at a period when the fine arts were tending to their decline. Notwithstanding the hardness of the substance, they are executed with such taste and perfection, that the porphyry is reduced to the thinness of china. Return to text

LETTER XVIII.

Paris, November 17, 1801.

The *Louvre*, the *Tuileries*, together with the *National Fête* in honour of Peace, and a crowd of interesting objects, have so engrossed our attention, that we seem to have overlooked the *ci-devant Palais Royal*. Let us then examine that noted edifice, which now bears the name of

PALAIS DU TRIBUNAT.

In 1629, Cardinal Richelieu began the construction of this palace. When finished, in 1636, he called it the *Palais Cardinal*, a denomination which was much criticized, as being unworthy of the founder of the French Academy.

Like the politic Wolsey, who gave Hampton-Court to Henry VIII, the crafty Richelieu, in 1639, thought proper to make a present of this palace to Lewis XIII. After the death of that king, Anne of Austria, queen of France and regent of the kingdom, quitted the *Louvre* to inhabit the *Palais Cardinal*, with her sons Lewis XIV and the Duke of Anjou.

The first inscription was then removed, and this palace was called *le Palais Royal*, a name which it preserved till the revolution, when, after the new title assumed by its then owner, it was denominated *la Maison Égalité*, till, under the consular government, since the Tribunate have here established their sittings, it has obtained its present appellation of *Palais du Tribunat*.

In the sequel, Lewis XIV granted to Monsieur, his only brother, married to Henrietta Stuart, daughter of Charles I, the enjoyment of the *Palais Royal*, and afterwards vested the property of it in his grandson, the Duke of Chartres.

That prince, become Duke of Orleans, and regent of France, during the minority of Lewis XV, resided in this palace, and (to use Voltaire's expression) hence gave the signal of voluptuousness to the whole kingdom. Here too, he ruled it with principles the most daring; holding men, in general, in great contempt, and conceiving them to be all as insidious, as servile, and as covetous as those by whom he was surrounded. With the superiority of his character, he made a sport of governing this mass of individuals, as if the task was unworthy of his genius. The fact is illustrated by the following anecdote.

At the commencement of his regency, the debts of the State were immense, and the finances exhausted: such great evils required extraordinary remedies; he wished to persuade the people that paper-money was better than specie. Thousands became the dupes of their avarice, and too soon awoke from their dream only to curse the authors of a project which ended in their total ruin. It is almost needless to mention that I here allude to the Mississippi bubble.

In circumstances so critical, the Parliament of Paris thought it their duty to make remonstrances. They accordingly sent deputies to the regent, who was persuaded that they wished to stir up the Parisians against him. After having listened to their harangue with much phelgm, he gave them his answer in four words: "Go and be d----n'd." The deputy, who had addressed him, nothing disconcerted, instantly replied: "Sir, it is the custom of the Parliament to enter in their registers the answers which they receive from the throne: shall they insert this?"

The principles of the regent's administration, which succeeded those of Lewis XIV, form in history, a very striking shade. The French nation, which, plastic as wax, yields to every impression, was new-modelled in a single instant. As a rotten speck, by spreading, contaminates the finest fruit, so was the *Palais Royal* the corrupt spot, whence the contagion of debauchery was propagated, even to the remotest parts of the kingdom.

This period, infinitely curious and interesting, paved the way to the present manners. If the basis of morality be at this day overthrown in France, the regency of Philip of Orleans, by completing what the dissolute court of Lewis XIV had begun, has occasioned that rapid change, whose influence was felt long before the revolution, and will, in all probability, last for ages. At least, I think that such a conclusion is exemplified by what has occurred in England since the profligate reign of Charles II, the effects of whose example have never been done away.

Different circumstances have produced considerable alterations in this palace, so that, at the present day, its numerous buildings preserve of the first architect, LE MERCIER, no more than a small part of the second court.

The principal entrance of the *Palais du Tribunat* is from the *Rue St. Honoré*. The façade, on this side, which was constructed in 1763, consists of two pavilions, ornamented by Doric and Ionic pillars, and connected by a lofty stone-wall, perforated with arches, to three grand gates, by which you enter the first court. Here, two elegant wings present themselves, decorated with pilasters, also of the Doric and Ionic orders, which are likewise employed for the pillars of the avant-corps in the centre. This avant-corps is pierced with three arches, which serve as a passage into the second court, and correspond with the three gates before-mentioned.

Having reached the vestibule, between the two courts, where large Doric pillars rise, though partly concealed by a number of little shops and stalls, you see, on the right, the handsome elliptical stair-case, which leads to the apartments. It branches off into two divisions at the third step, and is lighted by a lofty dome. The balustrade of polished iron is beautiful, and is said to have cost thirty-two workmen two years' labour. Before the revolution, strangers repaired hither to admire the cabinet of gems and engraved stones, the cabinet of natural history, the collection of models of arts, trades, and manufactures, and the famous collection of pictures, belonging to the *last* duke of Orleans, and chiefly assembled, at a vast expense, by his grandfather, the regent.

This second court is larger than the first; but it still remains in an incomplete state. The right-hand wing only is finished, and is merely a continuation of that which we have seen in the other court. On the left hand, is the site of the new hall intended for the sittings of the Tribunate. Workmen are now employed in its construction; heaps of stones and mortar are lying about, and, the building seems to proceed with tolerable expedition. Here, in the back-ground, is a crowd of little stalls for the sale of various articles, such as prints, plays, fruit, and pastry. In front stand such carriages as remain in waiting for those who may have been set down at this end of the palace. Proceeding onward, you pass through two parallel wooden galleries, lined on each side with shops, and enter the formerly-enchanting regions of the

JARDIN DU PALAIS DU TRIBUNAT.

The old garden of the *Palais Royal*, long famous for its shady walks, and for being the most fashionable public promenade in Paris, had, from its centrical situation, gradually attracted to its vicinity a considerable number of speculators, who there opened ready-furnished hotels, coffee-houses, and shops of various descriptions. The success of these different establishments awakened the cupidity of its wealthy proprietor, then Duke, of Chartres, who, conceiving that the ground might be made to yield a capital augmentation to his income, fixed on a plan for enclosing it by a magnificent range of buildings.

Notwithstanding the clamours of the Parisian public, who, from long habit, considered that they had a sort of prescriptive right to this favourite promenade, the axe was laid to the celebrated *arbre de Cracovie* and other venerable trees, and their stately heads were soon levelled to the ground. Every one murmured as if these trees had been his own private property, and cut down against his will and pleasure. This will not appear extraordinary, when it is considered that, under their wide-spreading branches, which afforded a shelter impervious to the sun and rain, politicians by day, adjusted the balance of power, and arbiters of taste discussed the fashions of the moment; while, by night, they presented a canopy, beneath which were often arranged the clandestine bargains of opera-girls and other votaries of Venus.

After venting their spleen in vague conjectures, witty epigrams, and lampoons, the Parisians were silent. They presently found that they were, in general, not likely to be losers by this devastation. In 1782, the execution of the new plan was begun: in less than three years, the present inclosure was nearly completed, and the modern garden thrown open to the public, uniting to the advantages of the ancient one, a thousand others more refined and concentrated.

The form of this garden is a parallelogram, whose length is seven hundred and two feet by three hundred in breadth, taken at its greatest dimensions. It is bordered, on three of its sides, by new, uniform buildings, of light and elegant architecture. Rising to an elevation of forty-two feet, these buildings present two regular stories, exclusively of the *mansarde*, or attic story, decorated by festoons, bas-reliefs, and large Composite fluted pillars, bearing an entablature in whose frieze windows are pierced. Throughout its extent, the whole edifice is crowned by a balustrade, on the

pedestals of which vases are placed at equal distances.

In the middle of the garden stood a most singular building, partly subterraneous, called a *Cirque*. This circus, which was first opened in 1789, with concerts, balls, &c. was also appropriated to more useful objects, and, in 1792, a *Lyceum of Arts* was here established; but in 1797, it was consumed by fire, and its site is now occupied by a grass-plot. On the two long sides of the garden are planted three rows of horse-chesnut trees, not yet of sufficient growth to afford any shade; and what is new, is a few shrubs and flowers in inclosed compartments. The walks are of gravel, and kept in good order.

On the ground-floor, a covered gallery runs entirely round the garden. The shops, &c. on this floor, as well as the apartments of the *entresol* above them, receive light by one hundred and eighty porticoes, which are open towards the garden, and used to have each a glass lantern, with reflectors, suspended in the middle of their arch. In lieu of these, some of a less brilliant description are now distributed on a more economical plan under the piazzas; but, at the close of day, the rivalship of the shopkeepers, in displaying their various commodities, creates a blaze of light which would strike a stranger as the effect of an illumination.

The fourth side of the garden towards the *Rue St. Honoré* is still occupied by a double gallery, constructed, as I have already mentioned, of wood, which has subsisted nearly in its present state ever since I first visited Paris in 1784. It was to have been replaced by a colonnade for the inclosure of the two courts. This colonnade was to have consisted of six rows of Doric pillars, supporting a spacious picture-gallery, (intended for the whole of the Orleans collection), which was to have constituted the fourth façade to the garden, and have formed a covered walk, communicating with the galleries of the other three sides.

These galleries, whose whole circumference measures upwards of a third of a mile, afford to the public, even in bad weather, a walk equally agreeable and convenient, embellished, on the one side, by the aspect of the garden, and, on the other, by the studied display of every thing that taste and fashion can invent to captivate the attention of passengers.

No place in Paris, however, exhibits such a contrast to its former attractions as this once-fashionable rendezvous. The change of its name from *Palais Royal* to *Maison Égalité* conveys not to the imagination a dissimilitude more glaring than is observable between the present frequenters of this favourite promenade, and those who were in the habit of flocking hither before the revolution.

At that period, the scene was enlivened by the most brilliant and most captivating company in the capital, both in point of exterior and manners. At this day, the medal is exactly reversed. In lieu of well-dressed or well-behaved persons of both sexes, this garden, including its purlieus, presents, morning and evening, nothing but hordes of stock-jobbers, money-brokers, gamblers, and adventurers of every description. The females who frequent it, correspond nearly to the character of the men; they are, for the greater part, of the most debauched and abandoned class: for a Laïs of *bon ton* seldom ventures to shew herself among this medley of miscreants.

In the crowd, may be occasionally remarked a few strangers attracted by curiosity, and other individuals of respectable appearance called hither on business, as well as some inoffensive newsmongers, resorting to the coffee-houses to read the papers. But, in general, the great majority, of the company, now seen here, is of a cast so extremely low, that no decent woman, whether married or single, thinks of appearing in a place where she would run a risk of being put out of countenance in passing alone, even in the daytime. In the evening, the company is of a still worse complexion; and the concourse becomes so great under the piazzas, particularly when the inclemency of the weather drives people out of the garden, that it is sometimes difficult to cross through the motley assemblage. At the conclusion of the performances in the neighbouring theatres, there is a vast accession of the inferior order of nymphs of the Cyprian corps; and then, amorous conversation and dalliance reach the summit of licentious freedom.

The greater part of the political commotions which have, at different times, convulsed Paris, took their rise in the *ci-devant Palais Royal*, or it has, in some shape, been their theatre. In this palace too originated the dreadful reverse of fortune which the queen experienced; and, indeed, when the cart in which her majesty was carried to the scaffold, passed before the gates of this edifice, she was unable to repress a sign of indignation.

All writers who have spoken of the inveterate hatred, which existed between the queen and M. d'Orléans, have ascribed it to despised love, whose pangs, as Shakspeare tells, us, are not patiently endured. Some insist that the duke, enamoured of the charms of the queen, hazarded a declaration, which her majesty not only received with disdain, but threatened to inform the king of in case of a renewal of his addresses. Others affirm that the queen, at one time, shewed that the duke was not indifferent to her, and that, on a hint being given to him to that effect, he replied: "Every one may be ambitious to please the queen, except myself. Our interests are too opposite for Love ever to unite them." On this foundation is built the origin of the animosity which, in the end, brought both these great personages to the scaffold.

Whatever may have been the motive which gave rise to it, certain it is that they never omitted any opportunity of persecuting each other. The queen had no difficulty in pourtraying the duke as a man addicted to the most profligate excesses, and in alienating from him the mind of the king:

he, on his side, found it as easy, by means of surreptitious publications, to represent her as a woman given to illicit enjoyments; so that, long before the revolution, the character both of the queen and the duke were well known to the public; and their example tended not a little to increase the general dissoluteness of morals. The debaucheries of the one served as a model to all the young rakes of fashion; while the levity of the other, was imitated by what were termed the *amiable* women of the capital.

After his exile in 1788, the hatred of M. d'Orléans towards the queen roused that ambition which he inherited from his ancestors. In watching her private conduct, in order to expose her criminal weaknesses, he discovered a certain political project, which gave birth to the idea of his forming a plan of a widely-different nature. Hitherto he had given himself little trouble about State affairs; but, in conjunction with his confidential friends, he now began to calculate the means of profiting by the distress of his country.

The first shocks of the revolution had so electrified the greater part of the Parisians, that, in regard to the Duke of Orleans, they imperceptibly passed from profound contempt to blind infatuation. His palace became the rendezvous of all the malcontents of the court, and his garden the place of assembly of all the demagogues. His exile appeared a public calamity, and his recall was celebrated as a triumph. Had he possessed a vigour of intellect, and a daring equal to the situation of leader of a party, there is little doubt that he might have succeeded in his plan, and been declared regent. His immense income, amounting to upwards of three hundred thousand pounds sterling, was employed to gain partisans, and secure the attachment of the people.

After the taking of the Bastille, it is admitted that his party was sufficiently powerful to effect a revolution in his favour; but his pusillanimity prevailed over his ambition. The active vigilance of the queen thwarting his projects, he resolved to get rid of her; and in that intention was the irruption of the populace directed to Versailles. This fact seems proved: for, on some one complaining before him in 1792, that the revolution proceeded too slowly. "It would have been terminated long ago," replied he, "had the queen been sacrificed on the 5th of October 1789."

Two months before the fall of the throne, M. d'Orléans still reckoned to be able to attain his wishes; but he soon found himself egregiously mistaken. The factions, after mutually accusing each other of having him for their chief, ended by deserting him; and, after the death of the king, he became a stranger to repose, and, for the second time, an object of contempt. The necessity of keeping up the exaltation of the people, had exhausted his fortune, great as it was; and want of money daily detached different agents from his party. His plate, his pictures, his furniture, his books, his trinkets, his gems, all went to purchase the favour, and at length the protection, of the Maratists. Not having it in his power to satisfy their cupidity, he opened loans on all sides, and granted illusory mortgages. Having nothing more left to dispose of, he was reduced, as a last resource, to sell his body-linen. In this very bargain was he engaged, when he was apprehended and sent to Marseilles.

Although acquitted by the criminal tribunal, before which he was tried in the south of France, he was still detained there in prison. At first, he had shed tears, and given himself up to despair, but now hope once more revived his spirits, and he availed himself of the indulgence granted him, by giving way to his old habits of debauchery. On being brought to Paris after six months' confinement, he flattered himself that he should experience the same lenity in the capital. The jailer of the *Conciergerie,* not knowing whether M. d'Orléans would leave that prison to ascend the throne or the scaffold, treated him with particular respect; and he himself was impressed with the idea that he would soon resume an ascendency in public affairs. But, on his second trial, he was unanimously declared guilty of conspiring against the unity and indivisibility of the Republic, and condemned to die, though no proof whatever of his guilt was produced to the jury. One interrogatory put to him is deserving of notice. It was this: "Did you not one day say to a deputy: *What will you ask of me when I am king?* And did not the deputy reply: *I will ask you for a pistol to blow out your brains?*"

Every one who was present at the condemnation of M. d'Orléans, and saw him led to the guillotine affirms that if he never shewed courage before, he did at least on that day. On hearing the sentence, he called out: "Let it be executed directly." From the revolutionary tribunal he was conducted straight to the scaffold, where, notwithstanding the reproaches and imprecations which accompanied him all the way, he met his fate with unshaken firmness.

LETTER XIX.

Paris, November 18, 1801.

But if the *ci-devant Palais Royal* has been the mine of political explosions, so it still continues to be the epitome of all the trades in Paris. Under the arcades, on the ground-floor, here are, as formerly, shops of jewellers, haberdashers, artificial florists, milliners, perfumers, print-sellers, engravers, tailors, shoemakers, hatters, furriers, glovers, confectioners, provision-merchants, woollen-drapers, mercers, cutlers, toymen, money-changers, and booksellers, together with several coffee-houses, and lottery-offices, all in miscellaneous succession.

Among this enumeration, the jewellers' shops are the most attractive in point of splendour. The name of the proprietor is displayed in large letters of artificial diamonds, in a conspicuous

compartment facing the door. This is a sort of signature, whose brilliancy eclipses all other names, and really dazzles the eyes of the spectators. But at the same time it draws the attention both of the learned and the illiterate: I will venture to affirm that the name of one of these jewellers is more frequently spelt and pronounced than that of any great man recorded in history, either ancient or modern.

With respect to the price of the commodities exposed for sale in the *Palais du Tribunat*, it is much the same as in *Bond Street*, you pay one third at least for the idea of fashion annexed to the name of the place where you make the purchase, though the quality of the article may be nowise superior to what you might procure elsewhere. As in Bond Street too, the rents in this building are high, on which account the shopkeepers are, in some measure, obliged to charge higher than those in other parts of the town. Not but I must do them the justice to acknowledge that they make no scruple to avail themselves of every prejudice formerly entertained in favour of this grand emporium, in regard to taste, novelty, &c. by a still further increase of their prices. No small advantage to the shopkeepers established here is the chance custom, arising from such a variety of trades being collected together so conveniently, all within the same inclosure. A person resorting hither to procure one thing, is sure to be reminded of some other want, which, had not the article presented itself to his eye, would probably have escaped his recollection; and, indeed, such is the thirst of gain, that several tradesmen keep a small shop under these piazzas, independently of a large warehouse in another quarter of Paris.

Pamphlets and other ephemeral productions usually make their first appearance in the *Palais du Tribunat*; and strangers may rely on being plagued by a set of fellows who here hawk about prohibited publications, of the most immoral tendency, embellished with correspondent engravings; such as *Justine, ou les malheurs de la vertu, Les quarante manières, &c.* They seldom, I am told, carry the publication about them, for fear of being unexpectedly apprehended, but keep it at some secret repository hard by, whence they fetch it in an instant. It is curious to see with what adroitness these vagrants elude the vigilance of the police, I had scarcely set my foot in this building before a Jew-looking fellow, coming close to me, whispered in my ear: "*Monsieur veut-il la vie polissonne de Madame--------?*" Madame who do you think? You will stare when I tell you to fill up the blank with the name of her who is now become the first female personage in France? I turned round with astonishment; but the ambulating book-vender had vanished, in consequence, as I conclude, of being observed by some *mouchard.* Thus, what little virtue may remain in the mind of youth is contaminated by precept, as well as example; and the rising generation is in a fair way of being even more corrupted than that which has preceded it.

> "*Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit*
> *Nos nequiores, mox daturos*
> *Progeniem vitiosiorem.*"

Besides the shops, are some auction-rooms, where you may find any article of wearing apparel or household furniture, from a lady's wig *à la Caraculla* to a bed *à la Grecque:* here are as many puffers as in a mock auction in London; and should you be tempted to bid, by the apparent cheapness of the object put up for sale, it is fifty to one that you soon repent of your bargain. Not so with the *magazins de confiance à prix fixé*, where are displayed a variety of articles, marked at a fixed price, from which there is no abatement.

These establishments are extremely convenient, not only to ingenious mechanics, who have invented or improved a particular production of art, of which they wish to dispose, but also to purchasers. You walk in, and if any article strikes your fancy, you examine it at your ease; you consider the materials, the workmanship, and lastly the price, without being hurried by a loquacious shopkeeper into a purchase which you may shortly regret. A commission of from five to one half per cent, in graduated proportions, according to the value of the article, is charged to the seller, for warehouse-room and all other expenses.

Such is the arrangement of the ground-floor; the apartments on the first floor are at present occupied by *restaurateurs*, exhibitions of various kinds, billiard-tables, and *académies de jeu*, or public gaming-tables, where all the passions are let loose, and all the torments of hell assembled.

The second story is let out in lodgings, furnished or unfurnished, to persons of different descriptions, particularly to the priestesses of Venus. The rooms above, termed *mansardes*, in the French architectural dialect, are mostly inhabited by old batchelors, who prefer economy to show; or by artists, who subsist by the employment of their talents. These chambers are spacious, and though the ceilings are low, they receive a more uninterrupted circulation of fresh air, than the less exalted regions.

Over the *mansardes*, in the very roof, are nests of little rooms, or cock-lofts, resembling, I am told, the cells of a beehive. Journeymen shopkeepers, domestics, and distressed females are said to be the principal occupiers of these aërial abodes.

I had nearly forgot to mention a species of apartment little known in England: I mean the *entresol*, which is what we should denominate a low story, (though here not so considered), immediately above the ground-floor, and directly under the first-floor. In this building, some of the *entresols* are inhabited by the shopkeepers below; some, by women of no equivocal calling, who throw out their lures to the idle youths sauntering under the arcades; and others again are now become *maisons de pret*, where pawnbrokers exercise their usurious dealings.

In the *Palais du Tribunat*, as you may remark, not an inch of space is lost; every hole and corner being turned to account: here and there, the cellars even: are converted into scenes of gaiety and diversion, where the master of the house entertains his customers with a succession of vocal and instrumental music, while they are taking such refreshments as he furnishes.

This speculation, which has, by all accounts, proved extremely profitable, was introduced in the early part of the revolution. Since that period, other speculations, engendered by the luxury of the times, have been set on foot within the precincts of this palace. Of two of these, now in full vigour and exercise, I must say a few words, as they are of a nature somewhat curious.

The one is a *cabinet de décrotteur*, where the art of blacking shoes is carried to a pitch of perfection hitherto unknown in this country.

Not many years ago, it was common, in Paris, to see counsellors, abbés, and military officers, as well as *petits-maîtres* of every denomination, full dressed, that is, with their hat under their arm, their sword by their side, and their hair in a bag, standing in the open street, with one leg cocked up on a stool, while a rough Savoyard or Auvergnat hastily cleaned their shoes with a coarse mixture of lamp-black and rancid oil. At the present day, the *décrotteurs* or shoe-blacks still exercise their profession on the *Pont Neuf* and in other quarters; but, as a refinement of the art, there is also opened, at each of the principal entrances of the *Palais du Tribunat*, a *cabinet de décrotteur*, or small apartment, where you are invited to take a chair, and presented with the daily papers.

The artist, with due care and expedition, first removes the dirt from your shoes or boots with a sponge occasionally moistened in water, and by means of several pencils, of different sizes, not unlike those of a limner, he then covers them with a jetty varnish, rivaling even japan in lustre. This operation he performs with a gravity and consequence that can scarcely fail to excite laughter. Yet, according to the trite proverb, it is not the customer who ought to indulge in mirth, but the *artist*. Although his price is much dearer than that demanded by the other professors of this art, his cabinet is seldom empty from morning to night; and, by a simple calculation, his pencil is found to produce more than that of some good painters of the modern French school.

At the first view of the matter, it should appear that the other speculation might have been hit on by any man with a nose to his face; but, on more mature consideration, one is induced to think that its author was a person of some learning, and well read in ancient history. He, no doubt, took the hint from VESPASIAN. As that emperor blushed not to make the urine of the citizens of Rome a source of revenue, so the learned projector in question rightly judged that, in a place of such resort as the *Palais du Tribunat*, he might, without shame or reproach, levy a small tax on the Parisians, by providing for their convenience in a way somewhat analogous. His penetration is not unhandsomely rewarded; for he derives an income of 12,000 francs, or £500 sterling, from his *cabinets d'aisance*.

Since political causes first occasioned the shuting up of the old *Théâtre Français* in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, now reduced to a shell by fire, Melpomene and Thalia have taken up their abode in the south-west angle of the *Palais du Tribunat*, and in its north-west corner is another theatre, on a smaller scale, where Momus holds his court; so that be you seriously, sentimentally, or humorously disposed, you may, without quitting the shelter of the piazzas, satisfy your inclination. Tragedy, Comedy, and Farce all lie before you within the purlieus of this extraordinary edifice.

To sum up all the conveniences of the *Palais du Tribunat*, suffice it to say, that almost every want, natural or artificial, almost every appetite, gross or refined, might be gratified without passing its limits; for, while the extravagant voluptuary is indulging in all the splendour of Asiatic luxury, the parsimonious sensualist need not depart unsatisfied.

Placed in the middle of Paris, the *Palais du Tribunat* has been aptly compared to a sink of vice, whose contagious effects would threaten society with the greatest evils, were not the scandalous scenes of the capital here concentrated into one focus. It has also been mentioned, by the same writer, Mercier, as particularly worthy of remark, that, since this building is become a grand theatre, where cupidity, gluttony, and licentiousness shew themselves under every form and excess, several other quarters of Paris are, in a manner, purified by the accumulation of vices which flourish in its centre.

Whether or not this assertion be strictly correct, I will not pretend to determine: but, certain it is that the *Palais du Tribunat* is a vortex of dissipation where many a youth is ingulfed. The natural manner in which this may happen I shall endeavour briefly to explain, by way of conclusion to this letter.

A young Frenchman, a perfect stranger in Paris, arrives there from the country, and, wishing to equip himself in the fashion, hastens to the *Palais du Tribunat*, where he finds wearing apparel of every description on the *ground-floor*: prompted by a keen appetite, he dines at a *restaurateur's* on the *first-floor*: after dinner, urged by mere curiosity, perhaps, if not decoyed by some sharper on the look-out for novices, he visits a public gaming-table on the same story. Fortune not smiling on him, he retires; but, at that very moment, he meets, on the landing-place, a captivating damsel, who, like Virgil's Galatea, flies to be pursued; and the inexperienced youth, after ascending another flight of stairs, is, on the *second-floor*, ushered into a brothel. Cloyed or

disgusted there, he is again induced to try the humour of the fickle goddess, and repairs once more to the gaming-table, till, having lost all his money, he is under the necessity of descending to the *entresol* to pawn his watch, before he can even procure a lodging in a *garret* above.

What other city in Europe can boast of such an assemblage of accommodation? Here, under the same roof, a man is, in the space of a few minutes, as perfectly equipped from top to toe, as if he had all the first tradesmen in London at his command; and shortly after, without setting his foot into the street, he is as completely stripped, as if he had fallen into the hands of a gang of robbers.

To cleanse this Augæan stable, would, no doubt, be a Herculean labour. For that purpose, Merlin (of Douay), when Minister of the police, proposed to the Directory to convert the whole of the buildings of the *ci-devant Palais Royal* into barracks. This was certainly striking at the root of the evil; but, probably, so bold a project was rejected, lest its execution, in those critical times, should excite the profligate Parisians to insurrection.

LETTER XX.

Paris, November 20, 1801.

One of the private entertainments here in great vogue, and which is understood to mark a certain pre-eminence in the *savoir-vivre* of the present day, is a nocturnal repast distinguished by the insignificant denomination of a

THÉ.

A stranger might, in all probability, be led to suppose that he was invited to a tea-drinking party, when he receives a note couched in the following terms:

"Madame R------ prie Monsieur B--------- de lui faire l'honneur de venir au thé quelle doit donner le 5 de ce mois."

Considering in that light a similar invitation which I received, I was just on the point of sending an apology, when I was informed that a *thé* was nothing more or less than a sort of rout, followed by substantial refreshments, and generally commencing after the evening's performance was ended at the principal theatres.

On coming out of the opera-house then the other night, I repaired to the lady's residence in question, and arriving there about twelve o'clock, found that I had stumbled on the proper hour. As usual, there were cards, but for those only disposed to play; for, as this lady happened not to be under the necessity of recurring to the *bouillotte* as a financial resource, she gave herself little or no concern about the card-tables. Being herself a very agreeable, sprightly woman, she had invited a number of persons of both sexes of her own character, so that the conversation was kept up with infinite vivacity till past one o'clock, when tea and coffee were introduced. These were immediately followed by jellies, sandwiches, pâtés, and a variety of savoury viands, in the style of a cold supper, together with different sorts of wines and liqueurs. In the opinion of some of the Parisian sybarites, however, no *thé* can be complete without the addition of an article, which is here conceived to be a perfect imitation of fashionable English cheer. This is hot punch.

It was impossible for me to refuse the cheerful and engaging *dame du logis* to taste her *ponche*, and, in compliment to me as an Englishman, she presented me with a glass containing at least a treble allowance. Not being overfond of punch, I would willingly have relinquished the honour of drinking her health in so large a portion, apprehending that this beverage might, in quality, resemble that of the same name which I had tasted here a few evenings ago in one of the principal coffeehouses. The latter, in fact, was a composition of new rum, which reminded me of the trash of that kind distilled in New England, acidulated with rotten lemons, sweetened with capillaire, and increased by a *quantum sufficit* of warm water. My hostess's punch, on the contrary, was made of the best ingredients, agreeably to the true standard; in a word, it was proper lady's punch, that is, hot, sweet, sour, and strong. It was distributed in tea-pots, of beautiful porcelaine, which, independently of keeping it longer warm, were extremely convenient for pouring it out without spilling. Thus concluded the entertainment.

About half past two o'clock the party broke up, and I returned home, sincerely regretting the change in the mode of life of the Parisians.

Before the revolution, the fashionable hour of dinner in Paris was three o'clock, or at latest four: public places then began early; the curtain at the grand French opera drew up at a quarter past five. At the present day, the workman dines at two; the tradesman, at three; the clerk in a public office, at four; the rich upstart, the money-broker, the stock-jobber, the contractor, at five; the banker, the legislator, the counsellor of state, at six; and the ministers, in general, at seven, nay not unfrequently at eight.

Formerly, when the performance at the opera, and the other principal theatres, was ended at nine o'clock, or a quarter past, people of fashion supped at ten or half after; and a man who went much into public, and kept good company, might retire peaceably to rest by midnight. In three-fourths of the houses in Paris, there is now no such meal as supper, except on the occasion of a

ball, when it is generally a mere scramble. This, I presume, is one reason why substantial breakfasts are so much in fashion.

"*Déjeûners froids et chauds*," is an inscription which now generally figures on the exterior of a Parisian coffeehouse, beside that of "*Thé à l'Anglaise, Café à la crême, Limonade, &c.*" Solids are here the taste of the times. Two ladies, who very gallantly invited themselves to breakfast at my apartments the other morning, were ready to turn the house out of the window, when they found that I presented to them nothing more than tea, coffee, and chocolate. I was instantly obliged to provide cold fowl, ham, oysters, white wine, &c. I marvel not at the strength and vigour of these French belles. In appetite, they would cope with an English ploughman, who had just turned up an acre of wholesome land on an empty stomach.

Now, though a *thé* may be considered as a substitute for a supper, it cannot, in point of agreeableness, be compared to a *petit souper*. If a man must sup, and I am no advocate for regular suppers, these were the suppers to my fancy. A select number of persons, well assorted, assembled at ten o'clock, after the opera was concluded, and spent a couple of hours in a rational manner. Sometimes a *petit souper* consisted of a simple *tête-à-tête*, sometimes of a *partie quarrée*, or the number was varied at pleasure. But still, in a *petit souper*, not only much gaiety commonly prevailed, but also a certain *épanchement de cœur*, which animated the conversation to such a degree as to render a party of this description the *acme* of social intercourse, "the feast of reason and the flow of soul."

Under the old *régime*, not a man was there in office, from the *ministre d'état* to the *commis*, who did not think of making himself amends for the fatigues of the morning by a *petit souper*: these *petits soupers*, however, were, in latter times, carried to an excessive pitch of luxurious extravagance. But for refinements attempted in luxury, though, I confess, of a somewhat dissolute nature, our countryman eclipsed all the French *bons vivans* in originality of conception.

Being in possession of an ample fortune, and willing to enjoy it according to his fancy, he purchased in Paris a magnificent house, but constructed on a small scale, where every thing that the most refined luxury could suggest was assembled. The following is the account given by one of his friends, who had been an eye-witness to his manner of living.

"Mr. B---- had made it a rule to gratify his five senses to the highest degree of enjoyment of which they were susceptible. An exquisite table, perfumed apartments, the charms of music and painting; in a word, every thing most enchanting that nature, assisted by art, could produce, successively flattered his sight, his taste, his smell, his hearing, and his feeling.

"In a superb saloon, whither he conducted me," says this gentleman, "were six young beauties, dressed in an extraordinary manner, whose persons, at first sight, did not appear unknown to me: it struck me that I had seen their faces more than once, and I was accordingly going to address them, when Mr. B----, smiling at my mistake, explained to me the cause of it." "I have, in my amours," said he, "a particular fancy. The choicest beauty of Circassia would have ho merit in my eyes, did she not resemble the portrait of some woman, celebrated in past ages: and while lovers set great value on a miniature which faithfully exhibits the features of their mistress, I esteem mine only in proportion to their resemblance to ancient portraits.

"Conformably to this idea," continued Mr. B----, "I have caused the intendant of my pleasures to travel all over Europe, with select portraits, or engravings, copied from the originals. He has succeeded in his researches, as you see, since you have conceived that you recognized these ladies on whom you have never before set your eyes; but whose likenesses you may, undoubtedly, have met with. Their dress must have contributed to your mistake: they all wear the attire of the personage they represent; for I wish their whole person to be picturesque. By these means, I have travelled back several centuries, and am in possession of beauties whom time had placed at a great distance."

"Supper was served up. Mr. B---- seated himself between Mary, queen of Scots, and Anne Bullein. I placed myself opposite to him," concludes the gentleman, "having beside me Ninon de l'Enclos, and Gabrielle d'Estrées. We also had the company of the fair Rosamond and Nell Gwynn; but at the head of the table was a vacant elbow-chair, surmounted by a canopy, and destined for Cleopatra, who was coming from Egypt, and of whose arrival Mr. B---- was in hourly expectation."

LETTER XXI.

Paris, November 21, 1801.

Often as we have heard of the extraordinary number of places of public entertainment in Paris, few, if any, persons in England have an idea of its being so considerable as it is, even at the present moment. But, in 1799, at the very time when we were told over and over again in Parliament, that France was unable to raise the necessary supplies for carrying on the war, and would, as a matter of course, be compelled not only to relinquish her further projects of aggrandisement, but to return to her ancient territorial limits; at that critical period, there existed in Paris, and its environs, no less than seventy

Under the old *régime*, nothing like this number was ever known. Such an almost incredible variety of amusements is really a phenomenon, in the midst of a war, unexampled in its consumption of blood and treasure, It proves that, whatever may have been the public distress, there was at least a great *show* of private opulence. Indeed I have been informed that, at the period alluded to, a spirit of indifference, prodigality, and dissipation, seemed to pervade every class of society. Whether placed at the bottom or the top of Fortune's wheel, a thirst of gain and want of economy were alike conspicuous among all ranks of people. Those who strained every nerve to obtain riches, squandered them with equal profusion.

No human beings on earth can be more fond of diversion than the Parisians. Like the Romans of old, they are content if they have but *panem et circenses*, which a Frenchman would render by *spectacles et de quoi manger*. However divided its inhabitants may be on political subjects, on the score of amusement at least the Republic is one and indivisible. In times of the greatest scarcity, many a person went dinnerless to the theatre, eating whatever scrap he could procure, and consoling himself by the idea of being amused for the evening, and at the same time saving at home the expense of fire and candle.

The following list of public places, which I have transcribed for your satisfaction, was communicated to me by a person of veracity; and, as far as it goes, its correctness has been confirmed by my own observation. Although it falls short of the number existing here two years ago, it will enable you to judge of the ardour still prevalent among the Parisians, for "running at the ring of pleasure." Few of these places are shut up, except for the winter; and new ones succeed almost daily to those which are finally closed. However, for the sake of perspicuity, I shall annex the letter S to such as are intended chiefly for summer amusement.

1. *Théâtre des Arts, Rue de la Loi*.
2. ------- *Français, Rue de la Loi.*
3. ------- *Feydeau, Rue Feydeau.*
4. ------- *Louvois, Rue de Louvois.*
5. ------- *Favart,* now *Opéra Buffa.*
6. ------- *de la Porte St. Martin.*
7. ------- *de la Société Olympique* (late *Opéra Buffa.)*
8. ------- *du Vaudeville, Rue de Chartres.*
9. ------- *Montansier, Palais du Tribunat.*
10. ------- *de l'Ambigu Comique, Boulevard du Temple.*
11. ------- *de la Gaiété, Boulevard du Temple.*
12. ------- *des Jeunes Artistes, Boulevard St. Martin.*
13. ------- *des Jeunes Elèves, Rue de Thionville.*
14. ------- *des Délassemens Comiques, Boulevard du Temple.*
15. ------- *sans Prétension, Boulevard du Temple.*
16. ------- *du Marais, Rue Culture Ste. Catherine.*
17. ------- *de la Cité, vis-à-vis le Palais de Justice.*
18. ------- *des Victoires, Rue du Bacq.*
19. ------- *de Molière, Rue St. Martin.*
20. ------- *de l'Estrapade.*
21. ------- *de Mareux, Rue St. Antoine.*
22. ------- *des Aveugles, Rue St. Denis.*
23. ------- *de la Rue St. Jean de Beauvais.*
24. *Bal masqué de l'Opéra, Rue de la Loi.*
25. ---------- *de l'Opéra Buffa, Rue de la Victoire.*
26. *Bal du Sallon des Étrangers, Rue Grange Batelière.*
27. --- *de l'Hôtel de Salm, Rue de Lille, Faubourg St. Germain.*
28. --- *de la Rue Michaudière.*
29. *Soirées amusantes de l'Hôtel Longueville, Place du Carrousel.*
30. *Veillées de la Cité, vis-à-vis le Palais de Justice.*
31. *Phantasmagorie de Robertson, Cour des Capucines.*
32. *Concert de Feydeau.*
33. *Ranelagh au bois de Boulogne.*
34. *Tivoli, Rue de Clichy*, S.
35. *Frascati, Rue de la Loi*, S.
36. *Idalie*, S.
37. *Hameau de Chantilly, aux Champs Élysées.*
38. *Paphos, Boulevard du Temple.*
39. *Vauxhall d'hiver.*
40. -------- *d'été*, S.
41. -------- *à Mousseaux*, S.
42. -------- *à St. Cloud*, S.
43. -------- *au Petit Trianon*, S.
44. *Jardin de l'hôtel Biron, Rue de Varenne*, S.
45. ------ *Thélusson, Chaussée d'Antin*, S.
46. ------ *Marbœuf, Grille de Chaillot*, S.
47. ------ *de l'hôtel d'Orsay*, S.
48. *Fêtes champêtres de Bagatelle*, S.
49. *La Muette, à l'entrée du Bois de Boulogne*, S.
50. *Colisée, au Parc des Sablons*, S.

51. *Amphithéâtre d'équitation de Franconi, aux Capucines.*
52. *Panorama, même lieu.*
53. *Exhibition de Curtius, Boulevard du Temple.*
54. *Expériences Physiques, au Palais du Tribunat.*
55. *La Chaumière, aux Nouveaux Boulevards.*
56. *Cabinet de démonstration de Physiologie et de Pathologie, au Palais du Tribunat, No. 38, au premier.*

Although, previously to the revolution, the taste for dramatic amusements had imperceptibly spread, Paris could then boast of no more than three principal theatres, exclusively of *l'Opéra Buffa* introduced in 1788. These were *l'Opéra les Français*, and *les Italiens*, which, with six inferior ones, called *petits spectacles*, brought the whole of the theatres to ten in number. The subaltern houses were incessantly checked in their career by the privileges granted to the *Comédie Française*, which company alone enjoyed the right to play first-rate productions: it also possessed that of censorship, and sometimes exercised it in the most despotic manner. Authors, ever in dispute with the comedians, who dictated the law to them, solicited, but in vain, the opening of a second French theatre. The revolution took place, and the unlimited number of theatres was presently decreed. A great many new ones were opened; but the attraction of novelty dispersing the amateurs, the number of spectators did not always equal the expectation of the managers; and the profits, divided among so many competitors, ceased to be sufficiently productive for the support of every establishment of this description. The consequence was, that several of them were soon reduced to a state of bankruptcy.

Three theatres of the first and second rank have been destroyed by fire within these two years, yet upwards of twenty are at present open, almost every night, exclusively of several associations of self-denominated *artistes-amateurs.*

Amidst this false glare of dramatic wealth, theatres of the first rank have imperceptibly declined, and at last fallen. It comes not within my province or intention to seek the causes of this in the defects of their management; but the fact is notorious. The *Théâtres Favart* and *Feydeau*, at each of which French comic operas were chiefly represented, have at length been obliged to unite the strength of their talents, and the disgrace which they have experienced, has not affected any of those inferior playhouses where subaltern performers establish their success on an assemblage of scenes more coarse, and language more unpolished.

At the present moment, the government appear to have taken this decline of the principal theatres into serious consideration. It is, I understand, alike to be apprehended, that they may concern themselves too little or too much in their welfare. Hitherto the persons charged with the difficult task of upholding the falling theatres of the first rank, have had the good sense to confine their measures to conciliation; but, of late, it has been rumoured that the stage is to be subjected to its former restrictions. The benefit resulting to the art itself and to the public, from a rivalship of theatres, is once more called in question: and some people even go so far as to assert that, with the exception of a few abuses, the direction of the *Gentils-hommes de la chambre* was extremely good: thence it should seem that the only difficulty is to find these lords of the bed-chamber, if there be any still in being, in order to restore to them their dramatic sceptre.[1]

Doubtless, the liberty introduced by the revolution has been, in many respects, abused, and in too many, perhaps, relative to places of public amusement. But must it, on that account, be entirely lost to the stage, and falling into a contrary excess, must recourse be had to arbitrary measures, which might also be abused by those to whose execution they were intrusted? The unlimited number of theatres may be a proper subject for the interference of the government: but as to the liberty of the theatres, included in the number that may be fixed on to represent pieces of every description, such only excepted as may be hurtful to morals, seems to be a salutary and incontestable principle. This it is that, by disengaging the French comic opera from the narrow sphere to which it was confined, has, in a great measure, effected a musical revolution, at which all persons of taste must rejoice, by introducing on that stage the harmonic riches of Italy. This too it is that has produced, on theatres of the second and third rank, pieces which are neither deficient in regularity, connexion, representation, nor decoration. The effect of such a principle was long wanted here before the revolution, when the independent spirit of dramatic authors was fettered by the procrastinations of a set of privileged comedians, who discouraged them by ungracious refusals, or disgusted them by unjust preferences. Hence, the old adage in France that, when an author had composed a good piece, he had performed but half his task; this was true, as the more difficult half, namely, the getting it read and represented, still remained to be accomplished.

As for the multiplicity of playhouses, it certainly belongs to the government to limit their number, not by privileges which might be granted through favour, or obtained, perhaps, for money. The taste of the public for theatrical diversions being known, the population should first be considered, as it is that which furnishes both money and spectators. It would be easy to ascertain the proportion between the population of the capital and the number of theatres which it ought to comprise. Public places should be free as to the species of amusement, but limited in their number, so as not to exceed the proportion which the population can bear. The houses would then be constantly well attended, and the proprietors, actors, authors, and all those concerned in their success, secure against the consequences of failure, and the true interest of the art be likewise promoted. In a word, neither absolute independence, nor exclusive privilege should prevail; but a middle course be adopted, in order to fix the fate of those great scenic

establishments, which, by forming so essential a part of public diversion, have a proportionate influence on the morals of the nation.

I have been led, by degrees, into these observations, not only from a review of the decline of some of the principal playhouses here, but also from a conviction that their general principle is applicable to every other capital in Europe. What, for example, can be more absurd than, in the dog-days, when room and air are particularly requisite, that the lovers of dramatic amusement in the British metropolis are to be crammed into a little theatre in the Haymarket, and stewed year after year, as in a sweating-room at a bagnio, because half a century ago an exclusive privilege was inconsiderately granted?

The playhouses here, in general, have been well attended this winter, particularly the principal ones; but, in Paris, every rank has not exactly its theatre as at a ball. From the *spectacles* on the *Boulevards* to those of the first and second rank, there is a mixture of company. Formerly, the lower classes confined themselves solely to the former; at present, they visit the latter. An increase of wages has enabled the workman to gratify his inclination for the indulgence of a species of luxury; and, by a sort of instinct, he now and then takes a peep at those scenes of which he before entertained, from hearsay, but an imperfect idea.

If you wish to see a new or favourite piece, you must not neglect to secure a seat in proper time; for, on such occasions, the house is full long before the rising of the curtain. As to taking places in the manner we do in England, there is no such arrangement to be made, except, indeed, you choose to take a whole box, which is expensive. In that case you pay for it at the time you engage it, and it is kept locked the whole evening, or till you and your party, make your appearance.[2]

At all the *spectacles* in Paris, you are literally kept on the outside of the house till you have received a ticket, in exchange for your money, through an aperture in the exterior wall. Within a few paces of the door of the principal theatres are two receiver's offices, which are no sooner open, than candidates for admission begin to form long ranks, extending from the portico into the very street, and advance to them two abreast in regular succession. A steady sentinel, posted at the aperture, repeats your wishes to the receiver, and in a mild, conciliating manner, facilitates their accomplishment. Other sentinels are stationed for the preservation of order, under the immediate eye of the officer, who sees that every one takes his turn to obtain tickets: however, it is not uncommon, for forestallers to procure a certain number of them, especially at the representation of a new or favourite piece, and offer them privately at a usurious price which many persons are glad to pay rather than fall into the rear of the ranks.

The method I always take to avoid this unpleasant necessity, I will recommend to you as a very simple one, which may, perhaps, prevent you from many a theatrical disappointment. Having previously informed myself what *spectacle* is best worth seeing, while I am at dinner I send my *valet de place*, or if I cannot conveniently spare him, I desire him to dispatch a *commissionnaire* for the number of tickets wanted, so that when I arrive at the theatre, I have only to walk in, and place myself to the best advantage.

It is very wisely imagined not to establish the receiver's offices in the inside of the house, as in our theatres. By this plan, however great may be the crowd, the entrance is always unobstructed, and those violent struggles and pressures, which among us have cost the lives of many, are effectually prevented. You will observe that no half-price is taken at any theatre in Paris; but in different parts of the house, there are offices, called *bureaux de supplément*, where, if you want to pass from one part of it to another, you exchange your counter-mark on paying the difference.

Nothing can be better regulated than the present police, both interior and exterior, of the theatres in Paris. The eye is not shocked, as was formerly the case, by the presence of black-whiskered grenadiers, occupying different parts of the house, and, by the inflexible sternness of their countenance, awing the spectators into a suppression of their feelings. No fusileer, with a fixed bayonet and piece loaded with ball, now dictates to the auditors of the pit that such a seat must hold so many persons, though several among them might, probably, be as broad-bottomed as Dutchmen. If you find yourself incommoded by heat or pressure, you are at liberty to declare it without fear of giving offence. The criticism of a man of taste is no longer silenced by the arbitrary control of a military despot, who, for an exclamation or gesture, not exactly coinciding with his own prepossessions, pointed him out to his myrmidons, and transferred him at once to prison. You may now laugh with Molèire, or weep with Racine, without having your mirth or sensibility thus unseasonably checked in its expansion.

The existence of this despotism has been denied; but facts are stubborn things, and I will relate to you an instance in which I saw it most wantonly exercised. Some years ago I was present at the *Théâtre Français*, when, in one of Corneille's pieces, Mademoiselle Raucourt, the tragic actress, was particularly negligent in the delivery of a passage, which, to do justice to the author, required the nicest discrimination. An amateur in the *parterre* reproved her, in a very gentle manner, for a wrong emphasis. Being at this time a favourite of the queen, she was, it seems, superior to admonition, and persisted in her misplaced shrieks, till it became evident that she set the audience at defiance: other persons then joined the former in expressing their disapprobation. Instantly the *major* singled out the leading critic: two grenadiers forced their way to the place where he was seated, and conveyed him to prison for having had the audacity to reprove an actress in favour at court. From such improper exercise of authority, the following verse had become a proverb:

"II est bien des sifflets, mais nous avons la garde."

Many there are, I know, who approved of this manner of bridling the fickle Parisians, on the ground that they were so used to the curb that they could no longer dispense with it. A guard on the outside of a theatre is unquestionably necessary, and proper for the preservation of order; but that the public should not be at liberty to approve or condemn such a passage, or such an actor, is at once to stifle the expression of that general opinion which alone can produce good performers. The interior police of the theatre being at present almost entirely in the hands of the public themselves, it is, on that account, more justly observed and duly respected.

Considering the natural impetuosity of their character, one is surprised at the patient tranquillity with which the French range themselves in their places. Seldom do they interrupt the performance by loud conversation, but exchange their thoughts in a whisper. When one sees them applaud with rapture a tender scene, which breathes sentiments of humanity or compassion, speaks home to every feeling heart, and inspires the most agreeable sensations, one is tempted to question whether the Parisians of the present day belong to the identical race that could, at one time, display the ferocity of tigers, and, at another, the tameness of lambs, while their nearest relations and best friends were daily bleeding on the scaffold?

By the existing regulations, many of which are worthy of being adopted in London, no theatre can be opened in Paris without the permission of the police, who depute proper persons to ascertain that the house is solidly built, the passages and outlets unincumbered and commodious, and that it is provided with reservoirs of water, and an adequate number of fire-engines.

Every public place that may be open, is to be shut up immediately, if, for one single day, the proprietors neglect to keep the reservoirs full of water, the engines in proper order, and the firemen ready.

No persons can be admitted behind the scenes, except those employed in the service of the theatre. Nor is the number of tickets distributed to exceed that of the persons the house can conveniently hold.

No coachman, under any pretext whatever, can quit the reins of his horses, while the persons he has driven, are getting out of or into their carriage. Indeed, the necessity of his doing so is obviated by porters stationed at the door of the theatres, and appointed by the police. They are distinguished by a brass plate, on which their permission and the name of the theatre are engraved.

At all the theatres in Paris, there is an exterior guard, which is at the disposal of the *civil* officer, stationed there for the preservation of order. This guard cannot enter the inside of the theatre but in case of the safety of the public being exposed, and at the express requisition of the said officer, who can never introduce the armed force into the house, till after he has, in a loud voice, apprized the audience of his intention.

Every citizen is bound to obey, *provisionally*, the officer of police. In consequence, every person invited by the officer of police, or summoned by him, to quit the house, is immediately to repair to the police-office of the theatre, in order to give such explanations as may be required of him. The said officer may either transfer him to the competent tribunal, or set him at liberty, according to circumstances.

Proper places are appointed for carriages to wait at. When the play is ended, no carriage in waiting can move till the first crowd coming out of the house has disappeared. The commanding officer of the guard on duty decides the moment when carriages may be called.

No carriage can move quicker than a foot-pace, and but on a single rank, till it has got clear of the streets in the vicinity of the theatre. Nor can it arrive thither but by the streets appointed for that purpose.

Two hours before the rising of the curtain, sentinels are placed in sufficient number to facilitate the execution of these orders, and to prevent any obstruction in the different avenues of the theatre.

Indeed, obstruction is now seldom seen; I have more than once had the curiosity to count, and cause to be counted, all the *private* carriages in waiting at the grand French opera, on a night when the boxes were filled with the most fashionable company. Neither I nor my *valet de place* could ever reckon more than from forty to fifty; whereas, formerly, it was not uncommon to see here between two and three hundred; and the noise of so many equipages rattling through the streets, from each of the principal theatres, sufficiently indicated that the performance was ended.

By the number of advertisements in the *petites affiches* or daily advertiser of Paris, offering a reward for articles lost, no doubt can exist of there being a vast number of pickpockets in this gay capital; and a stranger must naturally draw such an inference from observing where the pockets are placed in men's clothes: in the coat, it is in the inside of the facing, parallel to the breast: in the waistcoat, it is also in the inside, but lower down, so that when a Frenchman wants to take out his money, he must go through the ceremony of unbuttoning first his surtout, if he wears one in winter, then his coat, and lastly his waistcoat. In this respect, the ladies have the

advantage; for, as I have already mentioned, they wear no pockets.

Footnote 1: During the old *régime*, the theatres were under the control of the *Gentils-hommes de la chambre*, but at the establishment of the directorial government, they were placed in the power of the Minister of the Interior, in whose department they have since continued. Of late, however, it is asserted, that they are each to be under the direction of a Prefect of the Palace. Return to text

Footnote 2: Independently of the boxes reserved for the officers of the staff of the city of Paris, and those at the head of the police, who have individually free admission to all the *spectacles* on producing their ivory ticket, there is also a box at each theatre appropriated to the Minister of Public Instruction. Return to text

LETTER XXII.

Paris, November 23, 1801.

Yesterday being the day appointed for the opening of the session of the Legislative Body, I was invited by a member to accompany him thither, in order to witness their proceedings. No one can be admitted without a ticket; and by the last constitution it is decreed, that not more than two hundred strangers are to be present at the sittings. The gallery allotted for the accommodation of the public, is small, even in proportion to that number, and, in general, extremely crowded. My friend, aware of this circumstance, did me the favour to introduce me into the body of the hall, where I was seated very conveniently, both for seeing and hearing, near the *tribune*, to the left of the President.

This hall was built for the Council of Five Hundred, on the site of the grand apartments of the *Palais Bourbon*. Since the accession of the consular government, it has been appropriated to the sittings of the Legislative Body, on which account the palace has taken their name, and over the principal entrance is inscribed, in embossed characters of gilt bronze:

PALAIS DU CORPS LÉGISLATIF.

The palace stands on the south bank of the Seine, facing the *Pont de la Concorde*. It was begun, in 1722, for Louise-Françoise de Bourbon, a legitimated daughter of Lewis XIV. GIRARDINI, an Italian architect, planned the original building, the construction of which was afterwards superintended by LASSURANCE and GABRIEL. The Prince de Condé having acquired it by purchase, he caused it to be considerably augmented and embellished, at different times, under the direction of BARRAU, CARPENTIER and BÉLISARD.

Had the *Pont de la Concorde* subsisted previously to the erection of the *Palais Bourbon*, the principal entrance would, probably, have been placed towards the river; but it faces the north, and is preceded by a paltry square, now called *Place du Corps Législatif*.

In the centre of a peristyle, of the Corinthian order, is the grand gateway, crowned by a sort of triumphal arch, which is connected, by a double colonnade, to two handsome pavilions. The lateral buildings of the outer court, which is two hundred and eighty feet in length, are decorated with the same order, and a second court of two hundred and forty feet, includes part of the original palace, which is constructed in the Italian style.

The principal entrances to the right and left lead to two halls; the one dedicated to *Peace*; the other, to *Victory*. On the one side, is a communication to the apartments of the old palace; on the other, are two spacious rooms. The room to the left, inscribed to *Liberty*, is intended for petitioners, &c.; that to the right, inscribed to *Equality*, is appropriated to conferences. Between the halls of Liberty and Equality, is the hall of the sittings of the Legislative Body.

The form of this hall is semicircular; the benches, rising gradually one above the other, as in a Roman amphitheatre, are provided with backs, and well adapted both for ease and convenience. They are intersected by passages, which afford to the members the facility of reaching or quitting their places, without disturbance or confusion. Every seat is distinguished by a number, so that a deputy can never be at a loss to find his place. In the centre, is an elevated rostrum, with a seat for the President, directly under which is the *tribune*, also elevated, for the orator addressing the assembly. The tribune is decorated by a bas-relief, in white marble, representing France writing her constitution, and Fame proclaiming it. The table for the four secretaries is placed facing the tribune, beneath which the *huissiers* take their station. The desk and seat of the President, formed of solid mahogany, are ornamented with *or moulu*. The folding doors, which open into the hall, to the right and left of the President's chair, are also of solid mahogany, embellished in the same manner. Their frames are of white marble, richly sculptured. Independently of these doors, there are others, serving as a communication to the upper-seats, by means of two elegant stone stair-cases.

In six niches, three on each side of the tribune, are so many statues of Greek and Roman legislators. On the right, are Lycurgus, Solon, and Demosthenes: on the left, Brutus, Cato, and Cicero. The inside of the hall is in stucco, and the upper part is decorated by a colonnade of the Ionic order. The light proceeds from a cupola, glazed in the centre, and the remainder of which is divided into small compartments, each ornamented by an emblematical figure. The floor is paved with marble, also in compartments, embellished with allegorical attributes.

Having made you acquainted with the hall of the sittings, I think it may not be uninteresting to

give you an account of the forms observed in opening the session.

When I arrived, with my friend, at the Palace of the Legislative Body, most of the members were already assembled in the apartments of their library. At noon, they thence repaired to the hall, preceded by the *huissiers*, messengers of state, and secretaries.

The opening of the session was announced by the report of artillery.

The oldest member, in point of years, took the President's chair, provisionally.

The four youngest members of the assembly were called to the table to discharge the office of secretaries, also provisionally.

The provisional President then declared, that the members of the Legislative Body were assembled by virtue of Article XXXIII of the constitution, for the session of the year X; that, being provisionally organized, the sitting was opened; and that their names were going to be called over, for the purpose of ascertaining the number of members present, and for forming definitive arrangements, by the nomination of a president and four secretaries.

The names were then called over alphabetically, and, after they were all gone through, they were recalled.

This ceremony being terminated, four committees, each composed of four members, whose names were drawn by lot by the President, proceeded, in presence of the assembly, to scrutinize the ballot.

It thence resulted, that the number of members present was two hundred and twenty-eight;

That Citizen DUPUIS was elected President by a majority of votes;

That Citizens DUBOSC, BORD, ESTAQUE, and CLAVIER were individually elected, by a similar majority, to officiate as secretaries.

In consequence. Citizen DUPUIS was proclaimed President, and took the chair. He then moved the following resolution, which was agreed to:

"The Legislative Body declares, that it is definitely constituted, and decrees that the present declaration shall be carried to the Conservative Senate, to the Tribunate, and to the Consuls of the Republic, by a messenger of State."

The President next addressed the assembly in these words:

"Citizens Legislators,

"After twelve years of a painful and glorious struggle against all Europe, in order to insure the triumph of the liberty of man and that of nations, the moment is at length arrived when Peace is on the point of crowning the efforts of the French people, and securing the Republic on a foundation never to be shaken. For this peace, which will unite by the bonds of friendship two great nations, already connected by esteem, we are indebted to the valour and wisdom of the heroic pacificator, to the wise administration of the government, to the bravery of our invincible armies, to the good understanding subsisting between all the constituted authorities, and, above all, to that spirit of moderation which has known how to fix limits to victory itself. The name of peace, so dear to the friend of human nature, ought to impose silence on all malignant passions, cordially unite all the children of the same country, and be the signal of happiness to the present generation, as well as to our posterity.

"How gratifying is it to us, Citizens Legislators, after having passed through the storms of a long revolution, to have at length brought safely into port the sacred bark of the Republic, and to begin this session by the proclamation of peace to the world, as those who preceded us opened theirs by the proclamation of the Rights of Man and that of the Republic! To crown this great work, nothing more remains for us but to make those laws so long expected, which are to complete social organization, and regulate the interests of citizens. This code, already prepared by men of consummate prudence, will, I hope, be soon submitted to your examination and sanction; and the present session will be the most glorious epoch of our Republic: for there is nothing more glorious to man than to insure the happiness of his fellow-creatures, and scatter beforehand the first seeds of the liberty of the world."

"*L'impression! L'impression!*" was the cry that instantly proceeded from bench to bench on the close of this speech, which was delivered in a manner that did honour to the President's feelings. But, though you have it, as it were, at second-hand, and cannot be struck by Citizen DUPUIS' manner, I hope you will deem the matter sufficiently interesting to justify its insertion in this letter.

Three orators, deputed by the government, were next announced, and introduced in form. They were habited in their dress of Counsellors of State, that is, a scarlet coat, richly embroidered in shaded silks of the same colour, over which they wore a tricoloured silk sash.

One of them, having ascended the tribune, and obtained leave to speak, read an extract from the

registers of the Council of State, dated the 24th of Brumaire, purporting that the First Consul had nominated the Counsellors of State, REGNIER, BÉRENGER, and DUMAS to repair to the present sitting. Citizen REGNIER then addressed the assembly in the name of the government. He read his speech from a paper which he held in his hand. It began by announcing the signature of the preliminaries of peace with England, and informed the Legislative Body that measures had been taken by the government for regulating the various branches of the interior administration and of its intention to submit to them the civil code. It was replete with language of a conciliating nature, and concluded with a wish that the most unalterable harmony might subsist between the first authorities of the State, and strengthen in the mind of the people the confidence which they already testified.

From the tenour of this speech, I think it may be inferred that the government is apprehensive of a difference of opinion respecting the civil code; not so much in this place, for, by the constitution, the lips of the deputies are sealed, but in the Tribunate, where a warm discussion may be expected.

The President made a short and apt reply to the orators of the government, who then retired with the same ceremony with which they had entered. Both these speeches were ordered to be printed.

The Conservative Senate addressed to the Legislative Body, by a message read by the President, the different acts emanated from its authority since the last session. Ordered to be inserted in the Journals. A few letters were also read by the President from different members, excusing themselves for non-attendance on account of indisposition. Several authors having addressed a copy of their works to the Legislative Body, these presents were accepted, and ordered to be placed in their library.

The administrative commission of the Legislative Body announced that the ambassador of the Cisalpine Republic had sent a present of three hundred medals, struck on occasion of the peace and of the *forum Bonaparte*, which medals were distributed to the members.

The assembly the broke up, the next sitting being appointed for the following day at noon.

Lord Cornwallis and suite sat in the box allotted to Foreign Ministers, facing the President, as did the Marquis de Lucchesini, the Prussian ambassador, and some others. A small box is likewise appropriated to reporters, who take down the proceedings. The members were all habited in their appointed dress, which consists of a dark blue coat embroidered with gold, blue pantaloons and white waistcoat, also embroidered, a tricoloured silk sash, worn above the coat, and ornamented with a rich gold fringe. They wore a plain cocked hat, with the national cockade, and short boots. This meeting of legislators, all in the same dress, undoubtedly presents a more imposing spectacle than such a variegated assemblage as is sometimes to be seen in our House of Commons.

By the present constitution, you will see that no new law can be promulgated, unless decreed by the Legislative Body.

The votes in this assembly being taken by ballot, and the laws being enacted without any discussion, on the part of its members, on the plans debated before it by the orators of the Tribunate and of the government, it necessarily follows that the sittings present far less interest to strangers, than would result from an animated delivery of the opinion of a few leading orators.

Before I take leave of this palace, I must introduce you into the suite of rooms formerly distinguished by the appellation of *petits appartemens du Palais Bourbon*, and which, before the revolution, constituted one of the curiosities of Paris.

In the distribution of these, BÉLISARD assembled all the charms of modern elegance. The vestibule, coloured in French gray, contains, in the intervals between the doors, figures of Bacchantes, and, in the ceiling, wreaths of roses and other ornaments painted in imitation of relief. The eating-room, which comes next, is decorated so as to represent a verdant bower, the paintings are under mirrors, and tin-plate, cut out in the Chinese manner, seems to shew light through the foliage. In two niches, made in the arbour-work, in the form of porticoes, which Cupids are crowning with garlands, are placed two statues from the antique, the one representing Venus *pudica*, and the other, Venus *callypyga*, or *aux belles fesses*: mirrors, placed in the niches, reflect beauties which the eye could not discover.

The drawing room, another enchanting place, is of a circular form, surrounded with Ionic pillars. In the intercolumniations, are arches lined with mirrors, and ornamented with the most tasteful hangings. Under each arch is a sopha. The ceiling represents caryatides supporting a circular gallery, between which are different subjects, such as the Toilet of Venus, the Departure of Adonis, &c. Every thing here is gallant and rich; but mark the secret wonder. You pull a string; the ceiling rises like a cloud, and exhibits to view an extensive sky, with which it becomes confounded. The music of an invisible orchestra, placed above the ceiling, used to be heard through the opening, and produced a charming effect, when entertainments were given in these apartments.

This is not all. You pull another string; and, by means of concealed machinery, the aperture of the

three casements suddenly becomes occupied by pannels of mirrors, so that you may here instantly turn day into night. The bed-chamber, the *boudoir*, the study, &c., are all decorated in a style equally elegant and tasteful.

LETTER XXIII.

Paris, November 25, 1801.

Of all the public edifices in this capital, I know of none whose interior astonishes so much, at first sight, and so justly claims admiration, especially from those who have a knowledge of architecture or mechanics, as the

HALLE AU BLÉ.

This building is destined for the reception of corn and flour: it was begun in 1762, on the site of the ancient *Hôtel de Soissons*, which was purchased by the city of Paris. In the space of three years, the hall and the circumjacent houses were finished, under the direction of the architect, CAMUS DE MEZIÈRE

The circular form of this hall, the solidity of its construction, its insulated position, together with the noble simplicity of its decoration, perfectly accord with the intention and character of the object proposed. Twenty-five arches, all of equal size, serve each as an entrance. On the ground-floor are pillars of the Tuscan order, supporting vast granaries, the communication to which is by two stair-cases of well-executed design.

The court is covered by a cupola of one hundred and twenty feet in diameter, forming a perfect semicircle, whose centre, taken on a level with the cornice, is forty-four feet from the ground. The dome of the Pantheon at Rome, which is the largest known, exceeds that of the *Halle au Blé* by thirteen feet only. This cupola is entirely composed of deal boards, a foot in breadth, an inch in thickness, and about four feet in length. It is divided into twenty-five lateral openings, which give as many rays of light diverging from the centre-opening, whose diameter is twenty-four feet. These openings are all glazed, and the wood-work of the dome is covered with sheets of tinned copper.

PHILIBERT DE L'ORME, architect to Henry II, was the original author of this new method of covering domes, though he never carried it into execution. As a homage for the discovery, MOLINOS and LEGRAND, the architects of the cupola, have there placed a medallion with his portrait. It is said that this experiment was deemed so hazardous, that the builder could find no person bold enough to strike away the shores, and was under the necessity of performing that task in person. To him it was not a fearful one; but the workmen, unacquainted with the principles of this manner of roofing buildings, were astonished at the stability of the dome, when the shores were removed.

No place in Paris could well be more convenient for giving a banquet than the *Halle au Blé*; twelve or fourteen hundred persons might here be accommodated at table; and little expense would be required for decoration, as nothing can be more elegant than the cupola itself.

Several periodical publications give a statement, more or less exact, of the quantity of flour lodged in this spacious repository, which is filled and emptied regularly every four or five days. But these statements present not the real consumption of Paris, since several bakers draw their supply directly from the farmers of the environs; and, besides, a great quantity of loaves are brought into the capital from some villages, famous for making bread, whose inhabitants come and retail them to the Parisians.

The annual consumption of bread-corn in this capital has, on an average, been computed at twenty-four millions of bushels. But it is not the consumption only that it is useful to know: the most material point to be ascertained, is the method of providing effectually for it; so that, from a succession of unfavourable harvests, or any other cause, the regular supplies may not experience even a momentary interruption. When it is considered that Paris contains eight or nine hundred thousand of the human race, it is evident that this branch of administration requires all the vigilance of the government.

Bread is now reckoned enormously dear, nineteen *sous* for the loaf of four pounds; but, during the winter of 1794, the Parisians felt all the horrors of a real famine. Among other articles of the first necessity, bread was then so scarce, that long ranks of people were formed at the doors of the bakers' shops, each waiting in turn to receive a scanty portion of two ounces.

The consumption of flour here is considerably increased by the immense number of dogs, cats, monkies, parrots, and other birds, kept by persons of every class, and fed chiefly on bread and biscuit.

No poor devil that has not in his miserable lodging a dog to keep him company: not being able to find a friend among his own species, he seeks one in the brute creation. A pauper of this description, who shared his daily bread with his faithful companion, being urged to part with an animal that cost him so much to maintain: "Part with him!" rejoined he; "who then shall I get to love me?"

Near the *Halle au Blé*, stands a large fluted pillar of the Doric order, which formerly belonged to the *Hôtel de Soissons*, and served as an observatory to Catherine de Medicis. In the inside, is a winding stair-case, leading to the top, whither that diabolical woman used frequently to ascend, accompanied by astrologers, and there perform several mysterious ceremonies, in order to discover futurity in the stars. She wore on her stomach a skin of parchment, strewn with figures, letters, and characters of different colours; which skin she was persuaded had the virtue of insuring her from any attempt against her person.

Much about that period, 1572, there were reckoned, in Paris alone, no less than thirty thousand astrologers. At the present day, the ambulating magicians frequent the *Old Boulevards*, and there tell fortunes for three or four *sous*; while those persons that value science according to the price set on it, disdaining these two-penny conjurers, repair to fortune-tellers of a superior class, who take from three to six francs, and more, when the opportunity offers. The TROPHONIUS of Paris is Citizen Martin, who lives at N° 1773 *Rue d'Anjou*: the PHEMONOË is Madame Villeneuve, *Rue de l'Antechrist*.

Formerly, none but courtesans here drew the cards; now, almost every female, without exception, has recourse to them. Many a fine lady even conceives herself to be sufficiently mistress of the art to tell her own fortune; and some think they are so skilled in reading futurity in the cards, that they dare not venture to draw them for themselves, for fear of discovering some untoward event.

This rage of astrology and fortune-telling is a disease which peculiarly affects weak intellects, ruled by ignorance, or afflicted by adversity. In the future, such persons seek a mitigation of the present; and the illusive enjoyments of the mind make them almost forget the real sufferings of the body. According to Pope,

> "Hope springs eternal in the human breast,
> Man never *is*, but always *to be* blest."

At the foot of the above pillar, the only one of the sort in Paris, is erected a handsome fountain, which furnishes water from the Seine. At two-thirds of its height is a dial of a singular kind, which marks the precise hour at every period of the day, and in all seasons. It is the invention of Father Pingré, who was a regular canon of St. Geneviève, and member of the *ci-devant* Academy of Sciences.

While we are in this quarter, let us avail ourselves of the moment; and, proceeding from the *Halle au Blé* along the *Rue Oblin*, examine the

CHURCH OF SAINT EUSTACHE.

This church, which is one of the most spacious in Paris, is situated at the north extremity of the *Rue des Prouvaires*, facing the *Rue du Jour*. It was begun in 1532, but not finished till the year 1642.

Notwithstanding the richness of its architecture, it presents not an appearance uniformly handsome, on account of the ill-combined mixture of the Greek and Gothic styles: besides, the pillars are so numerous in it, that it is necessary to be placed in the nave to view it to the best advantage.

The new portal of *St. Eustache*, which was constructed in 1754, is formed of two orders, the Doric and the Ionic, the one above the other. At each extremity of this portal, rise two insulated towers, receding from all the projection of the inferior order, and decorated by Corinthian columns with pilasters, on an attic serving as a socle. These two towers were to have been crowned by a balustrade; one alone has been finished.

Several celebrated personages have been interred in this church. Among them, I shall particularize one only; but that one will long live in the memory of every convivial British seaman. Who has not heard the lay which records the defeat of Tourville? Yes—

> He who "on the main triumphant rode
> To meet the gallant Russel in combat o'er the deep;"
> Who "led his noble troops of heroes bold
> To sink the English admiral and his fleet."

Though considered by his countrymen, as one of the most eminent seamen that France ever produced, and enjoying at the time of his death the dignity of Marshal, together with that of Vice-admiral of the kingdom, Tourville never had an epitaph. He died on the 28th of May 1701, aged 59.

Some of the monuments which existed here have been transferred to the Museum in the *Rue des Petits Augustins*, where may be seen the sarcophagus of Colbert, Minister to Lewis XIV, and the medallion of Cureau de la Chambre, physician to that king, and also his physiognomist, whom he is said to have constantly consulted in the selection of his ministers. Among the papers of that physician there still exists, in an unpublished correspondence with Lewis XIV, this curious memorandum: "Should I die before his majesty, he would run a great risk of making, in future, many a bad choice."

It is impossible to enter one of these sanctuaries without reflecting on the rapid progress of irreligion among a people who, six months before, were, on their knees, adoring the effigies which, at that period, they were eager to mutilate and destroy. Iron crows and sledge-hammers were almost in a state of requisition. In the beginning, it was a contest who should first aim a blow at the nose of the Virgin Mary, or break the leg of her son. In one day, contracts were entered into with masons for defacing images which for centuries, had been partly concealed under the dusty webs of generations of spiders.

As for the statues within reach of swords and pikes, it was a continual scene of amusement to the licentious to knock off the ear of one angel, and scratch the face of another. Not an epitaph was left to retrace the patriotic deeds of an upright statesman, or the more brilliant exploits of a heroic warrior; not a memento, to record conjugal affection, filial piety, or grateful friendship. The iconoclasts proceeded not with the impetuous fury of fanatics, but with the extravagant foolery of atheistical buffoons.

All the gold and silver ornaments disappeared: a great part of them were dissolved in the crucibles of the mint, after having been presented as a homage to the Convention, some of whose members danced the *carmagnole* with those who presented them at their bar, loaded on the back of mules and asses, bedecked with all the emblems of catholic worship; while several of the rubies, emeralds, &c. which had formerly decorated the glory, beaming round the head of a Christ, were afterwards seen glittering on the finger of the revolutionary committee-men.

Chaumette, an attorney, was the man who proclaimed atheism, and his example had many imitators. It seemed the wish of that impious being to exile God himself from nature. He it was who imagined those orgies, termed the festivals of reason. One of the most remarkable of these festivals was celebrated in this very church of *St. Eustache*.

Although Mademoiselle Maillard, the singing heroine of the French opera, figured more than once as the goddess of reason, that divinity was generally personified by some shameless female, who, if not a notorious prostitute, was frequently little better. Her throne occupied the place of the altar; her supporters were chiefly drunken soldiers, smoking their pipe; and before her, were a set of half-naked vagabonds, singing and dancing the *carmagnole*.

"In this church," says an eye-witness, "the interior of the choir represented a landscape, decorated with cottages and clumps of trees. In the distance were mysterious bowers, to which narrow paths led, through declivities formed of masses of artificial rock.

"The inside of the church presented the spectacle of a large public-house. Round the choir were arranged tables, loaded with bottles, sausages, pies, pâtés, and other viands. On the altars of the lateral chapels, sacrifices were made to luxury and gluttony; and the consecrated stones bore the disgusting marks of beastly intemperance.

"Guests crowded in at all doors: whoever came partook of this festival: children thrust their hands into the dishes, and helped themselves out of the bottles, as a sign of liberty; while the speedy consequences of this freedom became a matter of amusement to grown persons in a similar state of ebriety. What a deplorable picture of the people, who blindly obeyed the will of a few factious leaders!

"In other churches, balls were given; and, by way of shutting the door in the face of modesty, these were continued during the night, in order that, amidst the confusion of nocturnal revelry, those desires which had been kindled during the day, might be freely gratified under the veil of darkness.

"The processions which accompanied these orgies, were no less attended with every species of atheistical frenzy. After feasting their eyes with the sacrifice of human victims, the Jacobin faction, or their satellites, followed the car of their impure goddess: next came, in another car, a moving orchestra, composed of blind musicians, a too faithful image of that Reason which was the object of their adoration."

The state of France, at that period, proves that religion being detached from social order, there remained a frightful void, Which nothing could have filled up but its subsequent restoration. Without religion, men become enemies to each other, criminals by principle, and bold violators of the laws; force is the only curb that can restrain them. The inevitable consequence is, that anarchy and rapine desolate the face of the earth, and reduce it to a heap of misfortune and ruin.

LETTER XXIV.

Paris, November 27, 1801.

When we travel back in idea for the last ten years, and pass in review the internal commotions which have distracted France during that period, and the external struggle she has had to maintain for the security of her independence, we cannot refuse our admiration to the constancy which the French have manifested in forming institutions for the diffusion of knowledge, and repositories of objects tending to the advancement of the arts and sciences. In this respect, if we except the blood-thirsty reign of Robespierre, no clash of political interests, no change in the form or administration of the government, has relaxed their ardour, or slackened their

perseverance. Whatever set of men have been in power, the arts and sciences have experienced almost uninterrupted protection.

In the opinion of the French themselves, the GALLERY OF ANTIQUES, in the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, may claim pre-eminence over every other repository of sculpture; but many persons may, probably, feel a satisfaction more pure and unadulterated in viewing the

MUSEUM OF FRENCH MONUMENTS.

Here, neither do insignia of triumph call to mind the afflicting scenes of war, nor do emblems of conquest strike the eye of the travelled visiter, and damp his enjoyment by blending with it bitter recollections. Vandalism is the only enemy from whose attacks the monuments, here assembled, have been rescued.

This Museum, which has, in fact, been formed out of the wrecks of the revolutionary storm, merits particular attention. Although it was not open to the public, for the first time, till the 15th of Fructidor, year III (2nd of September 1795), its origin may be dated from 1790, when the Constituent Assembly, having decreed the possessions of the Clergy to be national property, charged the *Committee of Alienation* to exert their vigilance for the preservation of all the monuments of the arts, spread throughout the wide extent of the ecclesiastical domains.

The philanthropic LA ROCHEFOUCAULD, (the last Duke of the family), as President of that committee, fixed on a number of artists and literati to select such monuments as the committee were anxious to preserve. The municipality of Paris, being specially entrusted, by the National Assembly, with the execution of this decree, also nominated several literati and artists of acknowledged merit to co-operate with the former in their researches and labours. Of this association was formed a commission, called *Commission des Monumens*. From that epoch, proper places were sought for the reception of the treasures which it was wished to save from destruction. The *Committee of Alienation* appointed the *ci-devant* monastery of the *Petits Augustins* for the monuments of sculpture and pictures, and those of the *Capucins, Grands Jesuites,* and *Cordeliers*, for the books and manuscripts.

By these means, the monuments in the suppressed convents and churches were, by degrees, collected in this monastery, which is situated in the *Rue des Petits Augustins*, so named after that order of monks, whose church here was founded, in 1613, by Marguerite de Valois, first wife of Henry IV.

At the same period, ALEXANDRE LENOIR was appointed, by the Constituent Assembly, director of this establishment. As I shall have frequent occasion to mention the name of that estimable artist, I shall here content myself with observing, that the choice did honour to their judgment.

In the mean time, under pretext of destroying every emblem of feudality, the most celebrated master-pieces were consigned to ruin; but the commission before-mentioned opportunely published instructions respecting the means of preserving the valuable articles which they purposed to assemble.

The National Convention also gave indisputable proof of its regard for the arts, by issuing several decrees in their favour. Its *Committee of Public Instruction* created a commission, composed of distinguished literati and artists of every class, for the purpose of keeping a watchful eye over the preservation of the monuments of the arts. The considerable number of memoirs, reports, and addresses, diffused through the departments by this learned and scientific association, enlightened the people, and arrested the arm of those modern Vandals who took a pleasure in mutilating the most admired statues, tearing or defacing the most valuable pictures, and melting casts of bronze of the most exquisite beauty.

Among the numerous reports to which these acts of blind ignorance gave birth, three published by GRÉGOIRE, ex-bishop of Blois, claim particular distinction no less on account of the taste and zeal which they exhibit for the advancement of literature and the fine arts, than for the invective with which they abound against the madness of irreligious barbarism. This last stroke, aptly applied, was the means of recovering many articles of value, and of preserving the monuments still remaining in the provinces.

In these eventful times, LENOIR, the Conservator of the rising museum, collected, through his own indefatigable exertions, a considerable number of mausolea, statues, bas-reliefs, and busts of every age and description. No sooner did a moment of tranquillity appear to be reestablished in this country, than he proposed to the government to place all these monuments in historical and chronological order, by classing them, according to the age in which they had been executed, in particular halls or apartments, and giving to each of these apartments the precise character peculiar to each century. This plan which, in its aggregate, united the history of the art and that of France, by means of her monuments, met with general approbation, and was accordingly adopted by the members of the government.

Thus, throughout this Museum, the architectural decorations of the different apartments are of the age to which the monuments of Sculpture, contained in each, belongs; and the light penetrates through windows of stained glass, from the designs of RAPHAEL, PRIMATICCIO, ALBERT DURER, LE SUEUR, &c., the production of the particular century corresponding to that

of the sculpture.

Come then, let us visit this Museum, and endeavour to discriminate the objects which may be most interesting both to the artist and historian. We first enter the

ANTI-CHAMBER.

This apartment presents itself to our inquisitive looks, as a Hall of Introduction, which may not be unaptly compared to the preface of a grand work. Here we behold a crowd of monuments, arranged methodically, so as to prepare our eyes for tracing the different ages through which we have to travel.

We first remark those altars, worn by the hand of Time, on which the trading Gauls of the ancient *Lutetia*, now Paris, sacrificed to the gods in the time of Tiberius. Jupiter, Mars, Vulcan, Mercury, Venus, Pan, Castor and Pollux, and the religious ceremonies here sculptured, are sufficient to attest that the Parisians were then idolaters, and followed the religion of the Romans, to whom they were become tributary. The Inscriptions on each of these monuments, which are five in number, leave no doubt as to their authenticity, and the epoch of their erection.

These altars, five in number, are charged with bas-reliefs, and the first of them is inscribed with the following words in Latin.

TIB. CAESARE.
AVG. IOVI OPTVMO
MAXSVMO (*aram*) M.
NAVTAE. PARISIACI
PUBLICE POSIERVNT.

Tiberius Cæsar, having accepted or taken the name of Augustus, the navigators (Nautæ) belonging to the city of Paris, publicly consecrated this altar to Jupiter the most great and most good.

In 1711, these monuments were dug up from the choir of the cathedral of *Notre-Dame*, out of the foundations of the ancient church of Paris, constructed by Childebert, on the ruins of a temple, formerly dedicated to Isis, which he caused to be demolished. Near them we see the great goddess of the Germans figure under the name of Nehalennia, in honour of whom that people had erected a great number of monuments, some of which were discovered in the year 1646, when the sea retired from the island of Walcheren.

Capitals, charged with bas-reliefs, taken from a subterraneous basilic, built by Pepin, have likewise been collected, and follow those which I have just mentioned. Next comes the tomb of CLOVIS, which exhibits that prince lying at length; he is humbling himself before the Almighty, and seems to be asking him forgiveness for his crimes. We likewise see those of CHILDEBERT and of the cruel CHILPERIC. The intaglio, relieved by inlaid pieces of Mosaic, of queen FREDEGOND, has escaped the accidents of twelve centuries. Just Heaven! what powers have disappeared from the face of the earth since that period! And to what reflections does not this image, still existing of that impious woman, give birth in the mind of the philosopher! CHARLEMAGNE, who was buried at Aix-la-Chapelle, seated on a throne of gold, appears here, in a haughty attitude, with his sword in his hand, still to be giving laws to the world!

As might naturally be supposed, most of these figures have suffered much by the rude attacks of Time; but in spite of his indelible impression, the unpolished hand of the sculptor is still distinguishable, and betrays the degraded state of the arts during the darkness of the middle ages. Let us pass into the

HALL OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

Here we shall remark arches in the Gothic style, supported by thick pillars, according to the architecture.of that period. Ornaments, in the form of *culs-de-lampe*, terminate the centre of the arches, which are painted in azure-blue, and charged with stars. When temples were begun to be sheltered or covered, nations painted the inside of the roof in this manner, in order to keep in view the image of the celestial canopy to which they directed all their affections, and to preserve the memory of the ancient custom of offering up sacrifices to the divinity in the open air.

Here the statue of LEWIS IX, surnamed the Saint, is placed near that of PHILIP, one of his sons, and of CHARLES, his brother, king of Sicily, branded in history, by having, through his oppression, driven his subjects into revolt, and caused the massacre of the French in that island in 1277; a massacre well known by the name of the *Sicilian vespers*.

It seems that it was the fashion, in those days, for kings themselves to be bearers at funerals. We are told by St. Foix, that the body of LEWIS, another son of the Saint, who died in 1662, aged 26, and whose cenotaph is here, was first carried to St. Denis, and thence to the abbey of Royaumont, where it was interred. "The greatest lords of the kingdom," says he, "alternately bore the coffin on their shoulders, and Henry III; king of England, carried it himself for a considerable time, as feudatory of the crown."

PHILIP III, too, above-mentioned, having brought to Paris the remains of his father from Tunis in

Africa, carried them barefooted, on his shoulders, to St. Denis. Wherever he rested by the way, towers were erected in commemoration of this act of filial piety; but these have been destroyed since the revolution.

The casements of this hall, in the form of ogives, are ornamented with stained glass of the first epoch of the invention of that art. We now come to the

HALL OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

This hall shews us the light, yet splendid architecture of the Arabs, introduced into France in consequence of the Crusades. Here are the statues of the kings that successively appeared in this age down to king JOHN, who was taken prisoner by Edward, the black prince, at the battle of Poietiers. They are clad after the manner of their time, and lying at length on a stylobate, strewn with flower-de-luces. Twenty-two knights, each mounted on lions, armed cap-à-pié, represented of the natural size, and coloured, fill ogive niches ornamented with Mosaic designs, relieved with gold, red, and blue.

The tombs of CHARLES V, surnamed the *Wise*, and of the worthy constable, DU GUESCLIN, together with that of SANCERRE, his faithful friend, rise in the middle of this apartment; which presents to the eye all the magnificence of a Turkish mosque. After having quitted it, what a striking contrast do we not remark on entering the

HALL OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY!

Columns, arabesque ceilings charged with gilding, light pieces of sculpture applied on blue and violet grounds, imitating cameo, china, or enamel; every thing excites astonishment, and concurs in calling to mind the first epoch of the regeneration of the arts in this country.

The ideas of the amateur are enlivened in this brilliant apartment: they prepare him for the gratification which he is going to experience at the sight of the beautiful monuments produced by the age, so renowned of Francis I. There, architecture predominates over sculpture; here, sculpture over architecture.

The genius of RAPHAEL paved the way to this impulse of regeneration: he had recently produced the decorations of the Vatican; and the admirable effect of these master-pieces of art, kindled an enthusiasm in the mind of the artists, who travelled. On their return to France, they endeavoured to imitate them: in this attempt, JEAN JUSTE, a sculptor sent to Rome, at the expense of the Cardinal D'AMBOISE, was the most succcessful.

First, we behold the mausoleum of LOUIS D'ORLÉANS, victim of the faction of the Duke of Burgundy, and that of his brother CHARLES, the poet. Near them is that of VALENTINE DE MILAN, the inconsolable wife of the former, who died through grief the year after she lost her husband. As an emblem of her affliction, she took for her device a watering-pot stooped, whence drops kept trickling in the form of tears. Let it not be imagined, however, that it was on account of his constancy that this affectionate woman thus bewailed him till she fell a victim to her sorrow.

LOUIS D'ORLÉANS was a great seducer of ladies of the court, and of the highest rank too, says Brantome. Indeed, historians concur in stating that to a brilliant understanding, he joined the most captivating person. We accordingly find that the Dutchess of Burgundy and several others were by no means cruel to him; and he had been supping tête-à-tête with Queen Isabeau de Bavière, when, in returning home, he was assassinated on the twenty-third of November 1407. His amorous intrigues at last proved fatal to the English, as you will learn from the following story, related by the same author.

One morning, M. d'Orléans having in bed with him a woman of quality, whose husband came to pay him an early visit, he concealed the lady's head, while he exhibited the rest of her person to the contemplation of the unsuspecting intruder, at the same time forbidding him, as he valued his life, to remove the sheet from her face. Now, the cream of the jest was, that, on the following night, the good soul of a husband, as he lay beside his dear, boasted to her that the Duke of Orleans had shewn him the most beautiful woman that he had ever seen: but that for her face he could not tell what to say of it, as it was concealed under the sheet. "From this little intrigue," adds Brantome, "sprang that brave and valiant bastard of Orleans, Count Dunois, the pillar of France, and the scourge of the English."

Here we see the statues of CHARLES VI, and of JANE of Burgundy. The former being struck by a *coup de soleil*, became deranged in his intellects and imbecile, after having displayed great genius; he is represented with a pack of cards in his hand to denote that they were first invented for that prince's diversion. The latter was Dutchess of BEAUFORT, wife to the Duke, who commanded the English army against Charles VII, and as brother to our Henry IV, was appointed regent of France, during the minority of his nephew, Henry V.

Next come those of RÉNÉE D'ORLÉANS, grand-daughter of the intrepid Dunois; and of PHILIPPE DE COMMINES, celebrated by his memoirs of the tyrant, LEWIS XI, whose statue faces that of CHARLES VII, his father.

The image of JOAN OF ARC, whom that king had the baseness to suffer to perish, after she had

maintained him on the throne, also figures in this hall with that of ISABEAU DE BAVIÈRE. The shameful death of the Maid of Orleans, who, as every one knows, was, at the instigation of the English, condemned as a witch, and burnt alive at Rouen on the 30th of May 1430, must inspire with indignation every honest Englishman who reflects on this event, which will ever be a blot in the page of our history. Isabeau affords a striking example of the influence of a queen's morals on the affections of the people. On her first arrival in Paris, she was crowned by angels, and received from the burghers the most magnificent and costly presents. At her death, she was so detested by the nation, that in order to convey her body privately to St. Denis, it was embarked in a little skiff at *Port-Landri*, with directions to the waterman to deliver it to the abbot.

The superb tomb of LEWIS XII, placed in the middle of this apartment, displays great magnificence; and his statue, lying at length, which represents him in a state of death, recalls to mind that moment so grievous to the French people, who exclaimed, in following his funeral procession to St. Denis, "Our good king Lewis XII is dead, and we have lost our father."

The historian delights to record a noble trait of that prince's character. Lewis XII had been taken prisoner at the battle of St. Aubin by Louis de la Trimouille, who, fearing the resentment of the new king, and wishing to excuse himself for his conduct, received this magnanimous reply: "It is not for the king of France to revenge the quarrels of the duke of Orleans."

The statue of PIERRE DE NAVARRE, son of Charles the *Bad*, seems placed here to form in the mind of the spectator a contrast between his father and Lewis XII. The tragical end of Charles is of a nature to fix attention, and affords an excellent subject for a pencil like that of Fuseli.

Charles the *Bad*, having fallen into such a state of decay that he could not make use of his limbs, consulted his physician, who ordered him to be wrapped up from head to foot, in a linen cloth impregnated with brandy, so that he might be inclosed in it to the very neck as in a sack. It was night when this remedy was administered. One of the female attendants of the palace, charged to sew up the cloth that contained the patient, having come to the neck, the fixed point where she was to finish her seam, made a knot according to custom; but as there was still remaining an end of thread, instead of cutting it as usual with scissars, she had recourse to the candle, which immediately set fire to the whole cloth. Being terrified, she ran away, and abandoned the king, who was thus burnt alive in his own palace.

What a picture for the moralist is this assemblage of persons, celebrated either for their errors, crimes, talents, or virtues!

LETTER XXV.

Paris, November 28, 1801.

Conceiving how interested you (who are not only a connoisseur, but an F.A.S.) must feel in contemplating the only repository in the world, I believe, which contains such a chronological history of the art of sculpture, I lose no time in conducting you to complete our survey of the MUSEUM OF FRENCH MONUMENTS in the *Rue des Petits Augustins*.

Having examined those of the fifteenth century, during our former visit, we are at length arrived at the age of the Fine Arts in France, and now enter the

HALL OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

> "But see! each muse in LEO'S golden days,
> Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays;
> Rome's ancient Genius, o'er its ruins spread,
> Shakes off the dust, and rears his reverend head;
> Then Sculpture and her sister arts revive,
> Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live."

These beautiful lines of Pope immediately occur to the mind, on considering that, in Italy, the Great LEO, by the encouragement which he gave to men of talents, had considerably increased the number of master-pieces; when the taste for the Fine Arts, after their previous revival by the Medici, having spread throughout that country, began to dawn in France about the end of the fifteenth century. By progressive steps, the efforts made by the French artists to emulate their masters, attained, towards the middle of the sixteenth century, a perfection which has since fixed the attention of Europe.

On entering this hall, which is consecrated to that period, the amateur finds his genius inflamed. What a deep impression does not the perfection of the numerous monuments which it has produced make on his imagination! First, he admires the beautiful tomb erected to the memory of FRANCIS I, the restorer of literature and the arts; who, by inviting to his court LEONARDO DA VINCI and PRIMATICCIO, and establishing schools and manufactories, consolidated the great work of their regeneration.

"Curse the monks!" exclaimed I, on surveying this magnificent monument, constructed in 1550, from the designs of the celebrated PHILIBERT DE L'ORME. "Who cannot but regret," continued I to myself, "that so gallant a knight as Francis I. should fall a victim to that baneful disease which

strikes at the very sources of generation? Who cannot but feel indignant that so generous a prince, whose first maxim was, that *true magnanimity consisted in the forgiveness of injuries, and pusillanimity in the prosecution of revenge*, should owe his death to the diabolical machinations of a filthy friar?" Yet, so it was; the circumstances are as follows:

Francis I. was smitten by the charms of the wife of one Lunel, a dealer in iron. A Spanish chaplain, belonging to the army of the Emperor Charles V, passing through Paris in order to repair to Flayers, threw himself in this man's way, and worked on his mind till he had made him a complete fanatic: "Your king," said the friar, "protects Lutheranism in Germany, and will soon introduce it into France. Be revenged on him and your wife, by serving religion. Communicate to him that disease for which no certain remedy is yet known."—"And how am I to give it to him?" replied Lunel; "neither I nor my wife have it."—"But I have," rejoined the monk: "I hold up my hand and swear it. Introduce me only for one half-hour by night, into your place, by the side of your faithless fair, and I will answer for the rest."

The priest having prevailed on Lunel to consent to his scheme, went to a place where he was sure to catch the infection, and, by means of Lunel's wife, he communicated it to the king. Being previously in possession of a secret remedy, the monk cured himself in a short time; the poor woman died at the expiration of a month; and Francis I, after having languished for three or four years, at length, in 1547, sunk under the weight of a disorder then generally considered as incurable.

The tomb of the VALOIS, erected in honour of that family, by Catherine de Medicis, soon after the death of Henry II, is one of the masterpieces of GERMAIN PILON. In the execution of this beautiful monument, that famous artist has found means to combine the correctness of style of Michael Angelo with the grace of Primaticcio. To the countenance of HENRY and CATHERINE, who are represented in a state of death, lying as on a bed, he has imparted an expression of sensibility truly affecting.

Next comes the tomb of DIANE DE POITIERS, that celebrated beauty, who displayed equal judgment in the management of State affairs and in the delicacy of her attachments; who at the age of 40, captivated king Henry II, when only 18; and, who, though near 60 at the death of that prince, had never ceased to preserve the same empire over his heart. At the age of fourteen, she was married to Louis de Brézé, grand seneschal of Normandy, and died in April 1506, aged 66.

Brantome, who saw her not long before her death, when she had just recovered from the confinement of a broken leg, and had experienced troubles sufficient to lessen her charms, thus expresses himself: "Six months ago, when I met her, she was still so beautiful that I know not any heart of adamant which would not have been moved at the sight of her."—To give you a perfect idea of her person, take this laconic description, which is not one of fancy, but collected from the best historians.

Her jet black hair formed a striking contrast to her lily complexion. On her cheeks faintly blushed the budding rose. Her teeth vied with ivory itself in whiteness: in a word, her form was as elegant as her deportment was graceful.

By way of lesson to the belles of the present day, let them be told that DIANE DE POITIERS was never ill, nor affected indisposition. In the severity of the winter, she daily washed her face with spring-water, and never had recourse to cosmetics.----"What pity," says Brantome, "that earth should cover so beautiful a woman!"

No man, indeed, who sympathizes with the foibles of human nature, can contemplate the tomb of DIANE DE POITIERS, and reflect on her numerous virtues and attractions, without adopting the sentiments of Brantome, and feeling his breast glow with admiration.

This extraordinary woman afforded the most signal protection to literati and men of genius, and was, in fact, no less distinguished for the qualities of her heart than for the beauty of her person. "She was extremely good-humoured, charitable, and humane," continues Brantome "The people of France ought to pray to God that the female favourite of every chief magistrate of their country may resemble this amiable frail one."

As a proof of the elevation of her sentiments, I shall conclude by quoting to you the spirited reply DIANE made to Henry II, who, by dint of royal authority, wished to legitimate a daughter he had by her: "I am of a birth," said she, "to have had lawful children by you. I have been your mistress, because I loved you. I will never suffer a decree to declare me your concubine."

The beautiful group of the modest Graces, and that representing Diana, accompanied by her dogs Procion and Syrius, sculptured by Jean Gougeon, to serve as the decoration of a fountain in the park of DIANE DE POITIERS at Anet, attracts the attention of the connoisseur.

The tomb of GOUGEON, composed of his own works, and erected to the memory of that great artist, through gratitude, is, undoubtedly, a homage which he justly deserved. This French Phidias was a Calvinist, and one of the numerous victims of St. Bartholomew's day, being shot on his scaffold, as he was at work on the *Louvre*, the 24th of August 1572. Here too we behold the statues of BIRAGUE and of the GONDI, those atrocious wretches who, together with Catherine de Medicis, plotted that infamous massacre; while CHARLES IX, no less criminal, here exhibits

on his features the stings of a guilty conscience.

The man that has a taste for learning, gladly turns his eye from this horde of miscreants, to fix it on the statue of CLAUDE-CATHERINE DE CLERMONT-TONNERRE, who was so conversant in the dead languages as to bear away the palm from Birague and Chiveray, in a speech which she composed and spoke in Latin, at twenty-four hours' notice, in answer to the ambassadors who tendered the crown of Poland to Charles IX.

If the friend of the arts examine the beautiful portico erected by Philibert de l'Orme, on the banks of the Eure, for Diane de Poitiers, composed of the three orders of architecture, placed the one above the other, and forming altogether an elevation of sixty feet, he will be amazed to learn that this superb monument constructed at Anet, twenty leagues distant from Paris, was removed thence, and re-established in this Museum, by the indefatigable conservator, LENOIR.

On leaving the apartment containing the master-pieces brought to light by Francis I, the next we reach is the

HALL OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

What a crowd of celebrated men contained in the temple consecrated to virtue, courage, and talents!

There, I behold TURENNE, CONDÉ, MONTAUSIER, COLBERT, MOLIÈRE, CORNEILLE, LA FONTAINE, RACINE, FÉNÉLON, and BOILEAU. The great LEWIS XIV, placed in the middle of this hall, seems to become still greater near those immortal geniuses.

Farther on, we see the statue of the implacable RICHELIEU, represented expiring in the arms of Religion, while Science is weeping at his feet. Ye Gods! what a prostitution of talent! This is the master-piece of GIRARDON; but, in point of execution, many connoisseurs prefer the mausoleum of the crafty MAZARIN, whom COYZEVOX has pourtrayed in a supplicating posture.

LEWIS XIII, surnamed the *Just*, less great than his illustrious subject, DE THOU, casts down his eyes in the presence of his ministers.

The mausolea of LE BRUN, LULLI, and JÉROME BIGNON, the honour, the love, and the example of his age, terminate the series of monuments of that epoch, still more remarkable for its literati than its artists. We at last come to the

HALL OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Here we admire the statues of MONTESQUIEU, FONTENELLE, VOLTAIRE, ROUSSEAU, HELVÉTIUS, CRÉBILLON, PIRON, &c. &c. The tombs of the learned MAUPERTUIS and CAYLUS, and also that of Marshal D'HARCOURT, give a perfect idea of the state of degradation into which the art of design had fallen at the beginning of this century; but the new productions which decorate the extremity of this spacious hall are sufficient to prove to what degree the absolute will of a great genius can influence the progress of the arts, as well as of the sciences. VIEN and DAVID appeared, and the art was regenerated.

Here, too, we find a statue, as large as life, representing Christ leaning on a pillar, executed by MICHAEL ANGELO STODTZ. I notice this statue merely to observe, that the original, from which it is taken, is to be seen at Rome, in the *Chiesa della Minerva* where it is held in such extraordinary veneration, that the great toe-nail of the right foot having been entirely worn away by the repeated kisses of the faithful, one of silver had been substituted. At length this second nail having been likewise worn away, a third was placed, of copper, which is already somewhat worn. It was sculptured by MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTI.

We experience an emotion of regret at the aspect of the handsome monument by MICHALLON, on learning that it was erected to the memory of young DROUAIS, a skilful and amiable artist, stopped by death, in 1788, during his brilliant career, at the early age of 24. He has left behind him three historical pictures, which are so many master-pieces.

The beautiful statue of the youthful Cyparissus, by CHAUDET, the most eminent French sculptor, reminds us of the full and elegant form of the fine Greek Bacchus, which decorates the peristyle of the antichamber or Hall of Introduction.

Thus the amateur and the student will find, in this Museum, an uninterrupted chronology of monuments, both antique and modern, beginning by those of ancient Greece, whose date goes back to two thousand five hundred years before our era, to examine those of the Romans, of the Lower Empire, of the Gauls, and thence pass to the first epoch of the French monarchy, and at length follow all the gradations through which the art has passed from its cradle to its decrepitude. The whole of this grand establishment is terminated by a spacious garden, which is converted into an

ELYSIUM.

There, on a verdant lawn, amid firs, cypresses, poplars, and weeping willows, repose the ashes of the illustrious poets, MOLIÈRE, LA FONTAINE, BOILEAU, &c.; of the learned DESCARTES,

MABILLON, MONTFAUCON, &c., inclosed in sarcophagi; there, they still receive the homage which mankind owe to talents and virtue.

But hold! mark the sepulchre of the learned and tender HÉLOÏSE. Her remains, though formerly conjoined to those of her lover, were subsequently separated, and after a lapse of three hundred years, they are now reassembled.

> Here one kind grave unites their hapless name,
> And grafts her love immortal on his fame.

With a smile seated on her lips, HÉLOÏSE seems to be sighing for the object of her glowing affection: while the unfortunate ABÉLARD, coldly reclined, is still commenting on the Trinity. The *Paraclete*, having been sold and demolished, LENOIR, with all the sensibility of an admirer of genius, withdrew the bones of ABÉLARD and HÉLOÏSE from that monastery, and placed them here in a sepulchral chapel, partly constructed from the remains of their ancient habitation.

Such is the MUSEUM OF FRENCH MONUMENTS. When completed, for some valuable specimens of the arts slill remain to be added, it will be one of the most interesting establishments in Paris, and perhaps in Europe, especially if considered in regard to the improvement of modern sculpture, and, I may add, architecture. No building can be better adapted than a monastery for an establishment of this nature. The solemn gloom of cloisters suits the temper of the mind, when we reflect on the mortality incident to a succession of ages, and the melancholy which it inspires, is in perfect unison with our feelings, when we contemplate the sepulchral monuments that recall to our memory the actions of the illustrious departed.

This Museum is very extensive, the three courts and large garden, which at present compose the whole of its premises, occupying a space of three thousand seven hundred and sixty-two toises. LENOIR, however, has recently presented to the First Consul a plan for enlarging it, without any additional expense of building, by adding to it the neighbouring *Hôtel de Bouillon*. He proposes that there should be a new entrance by the quay, exhibiting a spacious court, decorated with statues, erected in regular order; and that the apartments on the ground-floor should be appropriated as follows:

1. To a collection of portraits of all the celebrated men of France.
2. To a chronological series of armour of all ages.
3. To a complete collection of French medals.
4. To a library, solely formed of the books necessary for obtaining a knowledge of the monuments contained in this Museum.

When I consider the mutilated state in which most of these monuments were found at the first formation of this interesting establishment, and view the perfection in which they now appear; when I remark the taste and judgment displayed in the distribution and interior arrangement of the different apartments of this rich museum; when I learn, from the printed documents on the subject, the strict economy which has been observed in the acquisition or restoration of a great number of monuments, the more valuable as they illustrate the history of the arts; I confess that I find myself at a loss which most to admire in the Conservator, his courage, zeal, perseverance, or discrimination. Indeed, nothing but an assemblage of those qualities could have overcome the difficulties and obstacles which he has surmounted.

I shall add that LENOIR'S obliging disposition and amenity of manners equally entitle him to the gratitude and esteem of the connoisseur, the student, or the inquisitive stranger.

LETTER XXVI.

Paris, December 1, 1801.

I was highly gratified the other day on finding myself in company with some of those men whom (to borrow Lord Thurlow's expression, in speaking of Warren Hastings,) I have known only as I know Alexander, by the greatness of their exploits; men whose names will be transmitted to posterity, and shine with distinguished lustre in the military annals of France.

General A----y had already invited me to dine with him, in order to meet General B----r; but, on the day fixed, the latter, as minister for the war department, being under the necessity of entertaining Lord Cornwallis, the party was postponed till the 8th of Frimaire, (20th of November), when, in addition to General B----r, General A----y had assembled at his table several men of note. Among others, were General M----rd, who commanded the right wing of the army of Naples under Macdonald, in which he distinguished himself as a brave soldier; and D----ttes, physician in chief to the army of the East. This officer of health, as medical men are here denominated, is lately returned from Egypt, where his skill and attention to his professional duties gained him universal admiration.

In society so agreeable, time passed away rapidly till General B----r arrived. It was late, that is about seven o'clock, though the invitation expressed five precisely, as the hour of dinner. But, in Paris, a minister is always supposed to be detained on official business of a nature paramount to every other consideraton. On my being introduced to General B----r, he immediately entered into conversation with me concerning Lord Cornwallis, whom he had known in the American war,

having served in the staff of Rochambeau at the siege of Yorktown. As far back as that period B----r signalized himself by his skill in military science. It was impossible to contemplate these distinguished officers without calling to mind how greatly their country was indebted to the exertion of their talents on various important occasions. These recollections led me to admire that wisdom which had placed them in stations for which they had proved themselves so eminently qualified. In England, places are generally sought for men; in France, men are sought for places.

At seven, dinner was announced, and an excellent one it was, both in quality and quantity. *Presto* was the word, and all the guests seemed habituated to expedition. The difference between the duration of such a repast at this day, and what it was before the revolution, shews how constantly men become the slaves of fashion. Had BONAPARTE resembled Lucullus in being addicted to the pleasures of the festive board, I make no doubt that it would have been the height of *ton* to sit quietly two or three hours after dinner. But the Chief Consul is said to be temperate, almost to abstemiousness; he rises from table in less than half an hour; and that mode is now almost universal in Paris, especially among the great men in office. Two elegant courses and a desert were presently dispatched; the whole time employed in eating I know not how many good dishes, and drinking a variety of choice wines, not exceeding thirty-five minutes. At the end of the repast, coffee was presented to the company in an adjoining room, after which the opera of *Tarare* was the attraction of the evening.

I have already mentioned to you that General A----y had put into my hand *L'Histoire du Canal du Midi*, written by himself. From a perusal of this interesting work, it appears that one of his ancestors[1] was the first who conceived the idea of that canal, which was not only planned by him, but entirely completed under his immediate direction. Having communicated his plan to Riquet, the latter submited it to Colbert, and, on its being approved by Lewis XIV, became *contractor* for all the works of that celebrated undertaking, which he did not live to see finished. Riquet, however, not content with having derived from the undertaking every advantage of honour and emolument, greedily snatched from the original projector the meed of fame, so dearly earned by the unremitting labour of thirty successive years. These facts are set forth in the clearest light in the above-mentioned work, in which I was carefully examining General A----y's plans for the improvement of this famous canal, when I was most agreeably interrupted.

I had expressed to the General a wish to know the nature of the establishment of which he is the director, at the same time apprizing him that this wish did not extend to any thing that could not with propriety be made public. He obligingly promised that I should be gratified, and this morning I received ftom him a very friendly letter, accompanied by the following account of the

DÉPÔT DE LA GUERRE.

The general *Dépôt* or repository of maps and plans of war, &c, &c, was established by LOUVOIS, in 1688. This was the celebrated period when France, having attained the highest degree of splendour, secured her glory by the results of an administration enlightened in all its branches.

At the beginning of its institution, the *Dépôt de la guerre* was no more than archives, where were collected, and preserved with order, the memoirs of the generals, their correspondence, the accounts yet imperfect, and the traces of anterior military operations.

The numerous resources afforded by this collection alone, the assistance and advantages derived from it on every occasion, when it was necessary to investigate a military system, or determine an important operation, suggested the idea of assembling it under a form and classification more methodical. Greater attention and exactness were exerted in enriching the *Dépôt* with every thing that might complete the theoretical works and practical elucidations of all the branches of the military art,

Marshal DE MAILLEBOIS, who was appointed director of this establishment in 1730, was one of the first authors of the present existing order. The classification at first consisted only in forming registers of the correspondence of the generals, according to date, distinguishing it by *different wars*. It was divided into two parts, the former containing the letters of the generals; and the latter, the minutes or originals of the answers of the king and his ministers. To each volume was added a summary of the contents, and, in regular succession, the journal of the military operations of the year. These volumes, to the number of upwards of two thousand seven hundred, contain documents from the eleventh century to the close of the last American war; but the series is perfect only from the year 1631. This was a valuable mine for a historiographer to explore; and, indeed, it is well known that the *Memoirs of Turenne and of Condé*, the *History of the war of 1741*, and part of the fragments of the *Essay on the Manners and History of Nations*, by Voltaire, were compiled and digested from the original letters and memoirs preserved in the *Dépôt de la guerre*.

Geographical engineers did not then exist as a corps. Topography was practised by insulated officers, impelled thereto by the rather superficial study of the mathematics and a taste for drawing; because it was for them a mean of obtaining more advantageous employments in the staffs of the armies: but the want of a central point, the difference of systems and methods, not admitting of directing the operations to one same principle, as well as to one same object, topography, little encouraged, was making but a slow progress, when M. DE CHOISEUIL established, as a particular corps, the officers who had applied themselves to the practice of that

science. The *Dépôt* was charged to direct and assemble the labours of the new corps. This authority doubled the utility of the *Dépôt*: its results had the most powerful influence during the war from 1757 to 1763.

Lieutenant-General De VAULT, who had succeeded Marshal De MAILLEBOIS as director of the *Dépôt de la guerre*, conceived, and executed a plan, destined to render still more familiar and secure the numerous documents collected in this establishment. He first retrenched from the *Military Correspondences and Memoirs* all tedious repetitions and unnecessary details; he then classed the remainder under the head of a different army or operation, without subjecting himself to any other order than a simple chronology; but he caused each volume to be preceded by a very succinct, historical summary, in order to enable the reader to seize the essence of the original memoirs and documents, the text of which was faithfully copied in the body of each volume, In this manner did he arrange all the military events from the German war in 1677 to the peace of 1763. This analysis forms one hundred and twenty five volumes.

It is easy to conceive how much more interesting these historical volumes became by the addition, which took place about the same epoch, of the labours of the geographical engineers employed in the armies. The military men having it at the same time in his power to follow the combinations of the generals with the execution of their plans, imbibes, without difficulty, the principles followed by great captains, or improves himself from the exact account of the errors and faults which it is so natural to commit on critical occasions.

When all the establishments of the old *régime* were tottering, or threatened by the revolutionary storm, measures were suggested for preserving the *Dépôt de la guerre*, and, towards the end of 1791, it was transferred from Versailles to Paris. Presently the new system of government, the war declared against the emperor, and the foreseen conflagration of Europe, concurred to give a new importance to this establishment. Alone, amidst the general overthrow, it had preserved a valuable collection of the military and topographical labours of the monarchy, of manuscripts of the greatest importance, and a body of information of every kind respecting the resources, and the country, of the powers already hostile, or on the point of becoming so. All the utility which might result from the *Dépôt* was then felt, and it was thought necessary to give it a new organization.[2]

The *Dépôt de la guerre*, however, would have attained but imperfectly the object of its institution, had there not been added to its topographical treasure, the richest, as well as the finest, collection in Europe of every geographical work held in any estimation. The first epochs of the revolution greatly facilitated the increase of its riches of that description. The general impulse, imprinted on the mind of the French nation, prompted every will towards useful sacrifices. Private cabinets in possession of the scarcest maps, gave them up to the government, The suppression of the monasteries and abbeys caused to flow to the centre the geographical riches which they preserved in an obscurity hurtful to the progress of that important science: and thus the *Dépôt de la guerre* obtained one of the richest collections in Europe.[3] The government, besides, completed it by the delivery of the great map of France by CASSINI, begun in 1750, together with all the materials forming the elements of that grand work. It is painful to add that not long before that period (in 1791) the corps of geographical engineers, which alone could give utility to such valuable materials had been suppressed.[4]

In the mean time, the sudden changes in the administrative system had dispersed the learned societies employed in astronomy, or the mathematical sciences. The *National Observatory* was disused. The celebrated astronomers attached to it had no rallying point: they could not devote themselves to their labours but amidst the greatest difficulties; the salary allowed to them was not paid; the numerous observations, continued for two centuries, were on the point of being interrupted.

The *Dépôt de la guerre* then became the asylum of those estimable men. This establishment excited and obtained the reverification of the measure of an arc of the meridian, in order to serve as a basis for the uniformity of the weights and measures which the government wished to establish.

MÉCHAIN, DELAMBRE, NOUET, TRANCHOT, and PERNY were dispatched to different places from Barcelona to Dunkirk. After having established at each extremity of this line a base, measured with the greatest exactness, they were afterwards to advance their triangles, in order to ascend to the middle point of the line. This operation, which has served for rectifying a few errors that the want of perfection in the instruments had occasioned to be introduced into the measure of the meridian of CASSINI, may be reckoned one of the most celebrated works which have distinguished the close of the eighteenth century.

The establishment of the system of administration conformably to the constitution of the year III (1795) separated the various elements which the *Dépôt de la guerre* had found means to preserve. The *Board of Longitude* was established; the *National Institute* was formed to supply the place of the *Academy of Sciences*, &c. The *Dépôt de la guerre* was restored solely to its ancient prerogatives. Two years before, it had been under the necessity of forming new geographical engineers and it succeeded in carrying the number sufficiently high to suffice for the wants of the fourteen armies which France had afterwards on foot.[5] These officers being employed in the service of the staffs, no important work was undertaken. But, since the 18th of Brumaire, year VIII, (9th of November, 1799) the Consuls of the Republic have bestowed

particular attention on geographical and topographical operations. The new limits of the French territory require that the map of it should be continued; and the new political system, resulting from the general pacification, renders necessary the exact knowledge of the states of the allies of the Republic.

The *Dépôt de la guerre* forms various sections of geographers, who are at present employed in constructing accurate maps of the four united departments. Piedmont, Savoy, Helvetia, and the part of Italy comprised between the Adige and the Adda. One section, in conjunction with the Bavarian engineers, is constructing a topographical map of Bavaria: another section is carrying into execution the military surveys, and other topographical labours, ordered by General MOREAU for the purpose of forming a map of Suabia.

The *Dépôt* has just published an excellent map of the Tyrol, reduced from that of PAYSAN, and to which have been added the observations made by Chevaliers DUPAY and LA LUCERNE. It has caused to be resumed the continuation of the superb map of the environs of Versailles, called *La carte des chasses*, a master-piece of topography and execution in all the arts relating to that science. Since the year V (1795), it has also formed a library composed of upwards of eight thousand volumes or manuscripts, the most rare, as well as the most esteemed, respecting every branch of the military art in general.

Although, in the preceding account, General A----y, with that modesty which is the characteristic of a superior mind, has been totally silent respecting his own indefatigable exertions, I have learned from the best authority, that France is soon likely to derive very considerable advantages from the activity and talent introduced by him, as director, into every branch of the *Dépôt de la guerre*, and of which he has afforded in his own person an illustrious example.

In giving an impulse to the interior labours of the *Dépôt*, the sole object of General A----y is to make this establishment lose its *paralyzing* destination of archives, in which, from time to time, literati might come to collect information concerning some periods of national or foreign history. He is of opinion that these materials ought to be drawn from oblivion, and brought into action by those very persons who, having the experience of war, are better enabled than any others to arrange its elements. Instruction and method being the foundations of a good administration, of the application of an art and of a science, as well as of their improvement, he has conceived the idea of uniting in a classical work the exposition of the knowledge necessary for the direction of the *Dépôt*, for geographical engineers, staff-officers, military men in general, and historians. This, then, is the object of the *Mémomorial du Dépôt de la guerre*, a periodical work, now in hand, which will become the guide of every establishment of this nature[6], by directing with method the various labours used in the application of mathematical and physical sciences to topography, and to that art which, of all others, has the greatest influence on the destiny of empires: I mean the art military. The improvements of which it is still susceptible will be pointed out in the *Mémorial*, and every new idea proposed on the subject will there be critically investigated.

In transcribing General A----y's sketch of this extremely-interesting establishment, I cannot but reflect on the striking contrast that it presents, in point of geographical riches, even half a century ago, to the disgraceful poverty, in that line, which, about the same period, prevailed in England, and was severely felt in the planning of our military expeditions.

I remember to have been told by the late Lord Howe, that, when he was captain of the Magnanime at Plymouth, and was sent for express to London, in the year 1757, in order to command the naval part of an expedition to the coast of France, George II, and the whole cabinet council, seemed very much astonished at his requiring the production of a map of that part of the enemy's coast against which the expedition was intended. Neither in the apartment where the council sat, nor in any adjoining one, was any such document; even in the Admiralty-office no other than an indifferent map of the coast could be found: as for the adjacent country, it was so little known in England, that, when the British troops landed, their commander was ignorant of the distance of the neighbouring villages.

Of late years, indeed, we have ordered these matters better; but, to judge from circumstances, it should seem that we are still extremely deficient in geographical and topographical knowledge; though we are not quite so ill informed as in the time of a certain duke, who, when First Lord of the Treasury, asked in what part of Germany was the Ohio?

P.S. In order to give you, at one view, a complete idea of the collections of the *Dépôt de la guerre*, and of what they have furnished during the war for the service of the government and of the armies, I shall end my letter by stating that, independently of eight thousand chosen volumes, among which is a valuable collection of atlases, of two thousand seven hundred volumes of old archives, and of upwards of nine hundred *cartons* or pasteboard boxes of modern original documents, the *Dépôt* possesses one hundred and thirty-one volumes and seventy-eight *cartons* of descriptive memoirs, composed at least of fifty memoirs each, four thousand seven hundred engraved maps, of each of which there are from two to twenty-five copies, exclusively of those printed at the *Dépôt*, and upwards of seven thousand four hundred valuable manuscript maps, plans, or drawings of marches, battles, sieges, &c.

By order of the government, it has furnished, in the course of the war, seven thousand two hundred and seventy-eight engraved maps, two hundred and seven manuscript maps or plans,

sixty-one atlases of various parts of the globe, and upwards of six hundred descriptive memoirs.

Footnote 1: FRANÇOIS ANDREOSSY; who was the great great grandfather of the present French ambassador at our court. Return to text

Footnote 2: On the 25th of April, 1792, was published a regulation, decreed by the king, respecting the general direction of the *Dépôt de la guerre*. The annual expense of the establishment, at that time amounted to 68,000 francs, but the geographical and historical departments were not filled. *Note of the Author.* Return to text

Footnote 3: An *Agence des cartes* was appointed, by the National Assembly, to class these materials, and arrange them in useful order. Return to text

Footnote 4: At the juncture alluded to (1793), the want of geographical engineers having been felt as soon as the armies took the field, three brigades were formed, each consisting of twelve persons. The composition of the *Dépôt de la guerre*, was increased in proportion to its importance: intelligent officers were placed there; and no less than thirty-eight persons were employed in the interior labour, that is, in drawing plans of campaigns, sieges, &c. *Note of the Author*. Return to text

Footnote 5: That tempestuous period having dispersed the then director and his assistants, the *Dépôt de la guerre* remained, for some time, without officers capable of conducting it in a manner useful to the country. In the mean while, wants were increasing, and military operations daily becoming more important, when, in 1793, CARNOT, then a member of the Committee of Public Welfare, formed a private cabinet of topography, the elements of which he drew from the *Dépôt de la guerre*. This was a first impulse given to these valuable collections. *Note of the Author*. Return to text

Footnote 6: Prince Charles is employed at Vienna in forming a collection of books, maps, and military memoirs for the purpose of establishing a *Dépôt* for the instruction of the staff-officers of the Austrian army. Spain has also begun to organize a system of military topography in imitation of that of France. Portugal follows the example. What are we doing in England? Return to text

LETTER XXVII

Paris, December 3, 1801.

In this season, when the blasts of November have entirely stripped the trees of their few remaining leaves, and Winter has assumed his hoary reign, the garden of the *Tuileries*, loses much of the gaiety of its attractions. Besides, to frequent that walk, at present, is like visiting daily one of our theatres, you meet the same faces so often, that the scene soon becomes monotonous. As well for the sake of variety as exercise, I therefore now and then direct my steps along the

BOULEVARDS.

This is the name given to the promenades with which Paris is, in part, surrounded for an extent of six thousand and eighty-four toises.

They are distinguished by the names of the *Old* and the *New*. The *Old*, or *North Boulevards*, commonly called the *Grands Boulevards*, were begun in 1536, and, when faced with ditches, which were to have been dug, they were intended to serve as fortifications against the English who were ravaging Picardy, and threatening the capital. Thence, probably, the etymology of their name; *Boulevard* signifying, as every one knows, a bulwark.

However this may be, the extent of these *Old* Boulevards is two thousand four hundred toises from the *Rue de la Concorde* to the *Place de la Liberté*, formerly the site of the Bastille. They were first planted in 1660, and are formed into three alleys by four rows of trees: the middle alley is appropriated to carriages and persons on horseback, and the two lateral ones are for foot-passengers.

Here, on each side, is assembled every thing that ingenuity can imagine for the diversion of the idle stroller, or the recreation of the man of business. Places of public entertainment, ambulating musicians, exhibitions of different kinds, temples consecrated to love or pleasure, Vauxhalls, ball-rooms, magnificent hotels, and other tasteful buildings, &c. Even the coffee-houses and taverns here have their shady bowers, and an agreeable orchestra. Thus, you may always dine in Paris with a band of music to entertain you, without additional expense.

The *New* Boulevards, situated to the south, were finished in 1761. They are three thousand six hundred and eighty-three toises in extent from the *Observatoire* to the *Hôtel des Invalides*. Although laid out much in the same manner as the *Old*, there is little resemblance between them; each having a very distinct appearance.

On the *New Boulevards*, the alleys are both longer and wider, and the trees are likewise of better growth. There, the prospect is rural; and the air pure; while cultivated fields, with growing corn, present themselves to the eye. Towards the town, however, stand several pretty houses; little theatres even were built, but did not succeed. This was not their latitude. But some skittle-grounds and tea-gardens, lately opened, and provided with swings, &c. have attracted much company of a certain class in the summer.

In this quarter, you seldom meet with a carriage, scarcely ever with persons sprucely dressed, but frequently with honest citizens, accompanied by their whole family, as plain in their garb as

in their manners. Lovers too with their mistresses, who seek solitude, visit this retired walk; and now and then a poor poet comes hither, not to sharpen his appetite, but to arrange his numbers.

Before, the revolution, the *Old* Boulevards, from the *Porte St. Martin* to the *Théâtre Favart*, was the rendezvous of the *élegantes*, who, on Sundays and Thursdays, used to parade there slowly, backward and forward, in their carriages, as our belles do in Hyde Park; with this difference, that, if their admirers did not accompany them, they generally followed them to interchange significant glances, or indulge in amorous parley. I understand that the summer lounge of the modern *élegantes* has, of late years, been from the corner of the *Rue Grange Batelière* to that of the *Rue Mont-Blanc*, where the ladies took their seats. This attracting the *muscadins* in great numbers, not long since obtained for that part of the Boulevard the appellation of *Petit Coblentz*.

Nearly about the middle of the North Boulevard stand two edifices, which owe their erection to the vanity of Lewis XIV. In the gratification of that passion did the *Grand Monarque* console himself for his numerous defeats and disappointments; and the age in which he lived being fertile in great men, owing, undoubtedly, to the encouragement he afforded them, his display of it was well seconded by their superior talents. Previously to his reign, Paris had several gates, but some of these being taken down, arcs of triumph, in imitation of those of the Romans, were erected in their stead by *Louis le Grand*, in commemoration of his exploits. And this too, at a time when the allies might, in good earnest, have marched to Paris, had they not, by delay, given Marshal Villars an opportunity of turning the tide of their victories on the plain of Denain. Such was the origin of the

PORTE SAINT DENIS.

The magnificence of its architecture classes it among the first public monuments in Paris. It consists of a triumphal arch, insulated in the manner of those of the ancients: it is seventy-two feet in diameter as well as in elevation, and was executed in 1672, by BULLET from the designs of BLONDEL.

On each side of the principal entrance rise two sculptured pyramids, charged with trophies of arms, both towards the faubourg, and towards the city. Underneath each of these pyramids is a small collateral passage for persons on foot. The arch is ornamented with two bas-reliefs: the one facing the city represents the passage of the Rhine; and the other, the capture of Maestricht.

On the frieze on both sides LUDOVICO MAGNO was formerly to be read, in large characters of gilt bronze. This inscription is removed, and to it are substituted the word *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*.

On arriving from Calais, you enter Paris by the *Porte St. Denis*. It was also by the *Porte St. Denis* that kings and queens made their public entry. On these occasions, the houses in all the streets through which they passed, were decorated with silk hangings and tapestry, as far as the cathedral of *Notre-Dame*. Scented waters perfumed the air in the form of *jets d'eau*; while wine and milk flowed from the different public fountains.

Froissard relates that, on the entrance of Isabeau de Bavière, there was in the *Rue St. Denis* a representation of a clouded heaven, thickly sown with stars, whence descended two angels who gently placed on her head a very rich crown of gold, set with precious stones, at the same time singing verses in her praise.

It was on this occasion that Charles VI, anxious for a sight of his intended bride, took a fancy to mix in the crowd, mounted on horseback behind Savoisi, his favourite. Pushing forward in order to approach her, he received from the serjeants posted to keep off the populace several sharp blows on the shoulders, which occasioned great mirth in the evening, when the circumstance was related before the queen and her ladies.

Proceeding along the Boulevard towards the east, at a short distance from the *Porte St. Denis*, you arrive at the

PORTE SAINT MARTIN.

Although this triumphal arch cannot be compared to the preceding in magnificence, it was nevertheless executed by the same artists, having been erected in 1674. It is pierced with three openings, the centre one of which is eighteen feet wide, and the two others nine. The whole structure, which is fifty-four feet both in height and breadth, is rusticated, and in the spandles of the arch are four bas-reliefs; the two towards the city represent the capture of Besançon, and the rupture of the triple alliance; and those towards the faubourg, the capture of Lomberg, and the defeat of the Germans under the emblem of an eagle repulsed by the god of war. These bas-reliefs are crowned by an entablature of the Doric order, surmounted by an attic. The *Porte St. Martin* is the grand entrance into Paris from all parts of Flanders.

At the west extremity of this *North* Boulevard, facing the *Rue de la Concorde*, stands an unfinished church, called *La Magdeleine*, whose cemetery received not only the bodies of Lewis XVI, his consort, and his sister, but of the greater part of the victims that perished by guillotine.

In the space comprised between *La Magdeleine* and the *Vieille Rue du Temple*, I speak within compass when I say that there are sometimes to be seen fifty ambulating conjurers of both sexes.

They all vary the form of their art. Some have tables, surmounted by flags, bearing mysterious devices; some have wheels, with compartments adapted to every age and profession—One has a robe charged with hieroglyphics, and tells you your fortune through a long tube which conveys the sound to your ear; the other makes you choose in a parcel, a square piece of white paper, which becomes covered with characters at the moment when it is thrown into a jug that appears empty. The secret of this is as follows:

The jug contains a little sulphuret of potash, and the words are written with acetite of lead. The action of the exterior air, on, the sulphuret of potash, disengages from it sulphurated hydrogen gas, which, acting on the oxyd of lead, brings to view the characters that before were invislble.

Here, the philosophic Parisians stop before the movable stall of an astrologer, who has surmounted it with an owl, as an emblem of his magic wisdom. Many of them take this animal for a curiosity imported from foreign countries; for they are seldom able to distinguish a bat from a swallow.

"Does that bird come from China, my dear?" says a lusty dame to her elderly husband, a shopkeeper of the *Rue St. Denis*.—"I don't know, my love," replies the other.—"What eyes it has got," continues she; "it must see a great deal better than we." "No;" cries a countryman standing by; "though its eyes are so big, it can't, in broad day, tell a cow from a calf."

The lady continues her survey of the scientific repository; and the conjurer, with an air of importance, proposes to her to draw, for two *sous*, a motto from Merlin's wheel. "Take one, my dear," says the husband; "I wish to know whether you love me." The wife blushes and hesitates; the husband insists; she refuses, and is desirous of continuing her walk, saying that it is all foolishness.—"What if it is?" rejoins the husband, "I've paid, so take a motto to please me." For this once, the lady is quite at a nonplus; she at last consents, and, with a trembling hand, draws a card from the magic wheel: the husband unrolls it with eagerness and confidence, and reads these words: "*My young lover is and will be constant*."—"What the devil does this mean?" exclaims the old husband; quite disconcerted. —"'Tis a mistake," says the conjurer; "the lady put her hand into the wrong box; she drew the motto from the wheel for *young girls*, instead of that for *married women*. Let *Madame* draw again, she shall pay nothing more."—"No, Mr. Conjurer," replies the shopkeeper, "that's enough. I've no faith in such nonsense; but another time, madam, take care that you don't put your hand into the wrong box." The fat lady, with her face as red as fire, follows her husband, who walks off grumbling, and it is easy to see, by their gestures, that the fatal motto has sown discord in the family, and confirmed the shopkeeper's suspicions.

Independently of these divers into futurity, the corners of streets and walls of public squares, are covered with hand-bills announcing books containing secrets, sympathetic calculations of numbers in the lottery, the explanation of dreams in regard to those numbers, together with the different manners of telling fortunes, and interpreting prognostics.

At all times, the marvellous has prevailed over simple truth, and the Cumæan Sibyl attracted the inquisitive in greater crowds than Socrates, Plato, or any philosopher, had pupils in the whole course of their existence.

In Paris, the sciences are really making a rapid progress, notwithstanding the fooleries of the pseudo-philosophers, who parade the streets, and here, on the *Boulevards*, as well as in other parts of the town, exhibit lessons of physics.

One has an electrifying machine, and phials filled with phosphorus: for two *sous*, he gives you a slight shock, and makes you a present of a small phial.

Farther on, you meet with a *camera obscura*, whose effect surprises the spectators the more, as the objects represented within it have the motion which they do not find in common optics.

There, you see a double refracting telescope: for two *sous*, you enjoy its effect. At either end, you place any object whatever, and though a hat, a board, or a child be introduced between the two glasses, the object placed appears not, on that account, the less clear and distinct to the eye of the person looking through the opposite glass. *Pierre* has seen, and cannot believe his eyes: *Jacques* wishes to see, and, on seeing, is in ecstacy: next comes *Fanchon*, who remains stupified. Enthusiasm becomes general, and the witnesses of their delirium are ready to go mad at not having two *sous* in their pocket.

Another fellow, in short, has a microscope, of which he extols the beauty, and, above all, the effects: he will not describe the causes which produce them, because he is unacquainted with them; but, provided he adapts his lessons to the understanding of those who listen to him, this is all he wants. Sometimes he may be heard to say to the people about him: "Gentlemen, give me a creeping insect, and for one *sou*, I will shew it to you as big as my fist." Sometimes too, unfortunately for him, the insect which he requires is more easily found among part of his auditors, than the money.

P.S. For the preceding account of the Parisian conjurers I am indebted to M. Pujoulx.

LETTER XXVIII.

Paris, December 4, 1802.

In one of your former letters you questioned me on a subject, which, though it had not escaped my notice, I was desirous to avoid, till I should be able to obtain on it some precise information. This I have done; and I hasten to present you with the following sketch, which will afford you a tolerably-correct idea of the

FRENCH FUNDS, AND NATIONAL DEBT.

The booked or consolidated debt is called

TIERS CONSOLIDÉ,

from its being the consolidated third of the national debt, of which the remaining two-thirds were reimbursed in *Bons de deux Tiers* in 1797 and 98. It bears interest at five per Cent. payable half yearly at the *Banque de France*. The payment of the interest is at present six months in arrear. But the intention of the government is, by paying off in specie the interest of one whole year, to pay in future as soon as due.

The days of payment are the 1st of Germinal (23d of March) and the 1st of Vendémiaire (23d of September).

This stock purchased at the present price of from 55 to 60 would produce from eight to nine per cent. The general opinion is, that it will rise to 80; and as it is the chief stock, and the standard of the national credit, it is the interest, and must be the constant object of the government to keep up its price.

There is a *Caisse d'amortissement* or Sinking Fund, for the special purpose of paying off this stock, the effect of which, though not exactly known, must shortly be very considerable. The *Tiers Consolidé* is saleable and transferable at a moment's warning, and at a trifling expense. It is not subject to taxation, nor open to attachments, either on the principal or interest.

For purchasing, no sort of formality is required; but for receiving interest, or selling, it is necessary to produce a power of attorney. An established rule is, that the seller always retains his right to half a year's interest at the succeeding stated period of payment, so that he who purchases in the interval between March and September, is entitled to the interest commencing from the 23d of the latter month only; and he who buys between September and March, receives not his first dividend till the 23d of the following September.

TIERS PROVISOIRE.

This is the debt, yet unbooked, which is composed of the provisional claims of the creditors of the emigrants, the contractors, and various other holders of claims on the government.

The *Tiers Provisoire* is to be booked before the 1st of Vendémiaire, year XII of the Republic (23d of September, 1803), and will from that day bear interest of five per cent; so that, setting aside the danger of any retrospect in the interval, and that of any other change, it is at the present price, of from 15 to 50, cheaper than the *Tiers Consolidé* to which, in about eighteen months, it will, in every respect, be assimilated.

BONS DE DEUX TIERS,

Is paper issued for the purpose of reimbursing the reduced two-thirds of the National Debt, and in the origin rendered applicable to the purchase of national houses and estates in the French Colonies, since ordered to be funded at five per cent; so that the price of this species of paper is entirely subordinate to that of the *Tiers Consolidé* and supposing that to be 60 francs per cent, the *Bon de deux Tiers* would be worth 3 francs. There are no hopes, however distant, that the government will ever restore the *Bons de deux Tiers* to their original value.

BONS DE TROIS QUARTS,

So called from having been issued for the purpose of reimbursing the three-fourths of the interest of the fifth and sixth years of the Republic (1797 to 1798). They are, in all respects, assimilated to the preceding stock.

COUPONS D'EMPRUNT FORCÉ.

These are the receipts given by the government to the persons who contributed to the various forced loans. This paper is likewise assimilated to the two last-mentioned species, with this difference, that it is generally considered as a less sacred claim, and is therefore liquidated with greater difficulty. The holders of these three claims are hastening the liquidation and consolidation of them, and they are evidently right in so doing.

QUARTS AU NOM ET QUART NUMÉRAIRE.

This paper is thus denominated from its having been issued for the purpose of reimbursing the fourth of the dividend of the fifth and sixth years of the Republic (1797 to 1798). It is generally thought that this very sacred claim on the government will be funded *in toto*.

RACHATS DE RENTE,

Is the name given to the redemption of perpetual annuities due by individuals to the government, on a privileged mortgage on landed estates; the said annuities having been issued by the government in times of great distress, for the purpose of supplying immediate and urgent events.

This paper is not only a mere government security, but is also specially mortgaged on the estates of the person who owes the annuity to the government, and who is, at any time, at liberty to redeem it at from twenty to twenty-five years purchase. Claims of this description, mortgaged on most desirable estates near the metropolis, might be obtained for less than 60 per cent; which, at the interest of five per cent, and with the additional advantage, in some instances, of the arrears of one or two years, would produce between eight and nine per cent.

Next to the *Tiers Consolidé*, *Rachats de Rente* are particularly worthy of attention; indeed, this debt is of so secure and sacred a nature, that the government has appropriated a considerable part of it to the special purpose and service of the hospitals and schools; two species of institutions which ought ever to be sheltered from all vicissitudes, and which, whatever may be the form or character of the government, must be supported and respected.

ACTIONS DE LA BANQUE DE FRANCE.

These are shares in the National Bank of France, which are limited to the number of thirty thousand, and were originally worth one thousand francs each; they therefore form a capital of 30,000,000 francs, or £1,250,000 sterling, and afford as follows:

1. A dividend which at present, and since the foundation, has averaged from eight to ten per cent, arising from the profits on discount.
2. A profit of from four to five per cent more on the discount of paper, which every holder of an *action* or share effects at the Bank, at the rate of one-half per cent per month, or six per cent for the whole year.

The present price of an *action* is about twelve hundred francs, which may be considered as producing:

80 francs; dividend paid by the Bank on each share.
30 francs; certain profits according to the present discount of bills.
110 francs; per share 10-10/11 per cent.

Actions de la Banque de France, though subject, in common with all stocks, to the influence of the government, are, however, far more independent of it than any other, and are the more secure, as the National Bank is not only composed of all the first bankers, but also supported by the principal merchants in the country. This investment is at present very beneficial, and certainly promises great eventual advantages. The dividends are paid in two half-yearly instalments.

ACTIONS DE LA CAISSE DE COMMERCE,
ET ACTIONS DU COMPTOIR COMMERCIAL.

The *Caisse de Commerce* and the *Comptoir Commercial* are two establishments on the same plan, and affording, as nearly as possible, the same advantages as the *Banque de France*: the only difference is as follows:

1. These last two are, as far as any commercial establishment can be, independent of the government, and are more so than the *Banque de France*, as the *actions* or shares are not considered as being a public fund.
2. The *Actions de la Caisse de Commerce* limited in number to two thousand four hundred, originally cost 5000 francs, and are now worth 6000. The holder of each *action* moreover, signs circulating notes to the amount of five thousand francs, which form the paper currency of the Bank, and for the payment of which the said holder would be responsible, were the Bank to stop payment.
3. The *Actions du Comptoir Commercial* are still issued by the administrators of the establishment. The number of *actions* is not as yet limited: the price of each *action* is fifteen hundred francs (*circa* £60 sterling), and the plan and advantages are almost entirely similar to those of the two last-mentioned institutions.

The *Banque de France* the *Caisse de Commerce*, and the *Comptoir Commercial*, discount three times a week. The first, the paper of the banking-houses and the principal commercial houses holding bank-stock; the second, the paper of the wholesale merchants of every class; and the third, the paper of retailers of all descriptions; and in a circulation which amounts to 100 millions of francs (*circa* 4 millions sterling) per month, there have not, it is said, been seen, in the course of the last month, protests to the amount of 20,000 francs.

BONS DE L'AN VII ET DE L'AN VIII.

Is a denomination applied to paper, issued for the purpose of paying the dividend of the debt during the seventh and eighth years of the Republic.

These *Bons* are no further deserving of notice than as they still form a part of the floating debt, and are an article of the supposed liquidation at the conclusion of the present summary. It is therefore unnecessary to say more of them.

ARRÉRAGES DES ANNÉES V ET VI.

These are the arrears due to such holders of stock as, during the fifth and sixth years of the Republic, had not their dividend paid in *Bons de trois Quarts* and *Quart Numéraire*, mentioned in Art. IV and VI of this sketch. I also notice them as forming an essential part of the above-mentioned supposed liquidation, at the end of the sketch, and shall only add that it is the general opinion that they will be funded.

To the preceding principal investments and claims on the government, might be added the following:

Coupes de Bois.
Cédules Hypothécaires.
Rescriptions de Domaines Nationaux.
Actions de la Caisse des Rentiers.
Actions des Indes.
Bons de Moines et Réligieuses.
Obligations de Reçeveur.

However, they are almost entirely unworthy of attention, and afford but occasionally openings for speculation. Of the last, *(Obligations de Reçeveur)* it may be necessary to observe that they are monthy acceptances issued by the Receivers-General of all the departments, which the government has given to the five bankers, charged with supplying money for the current service, as security for their advances, and which are commonly discounted at from 7/8 to one per cent per month.

I shall terminate this concise, though accurate sketch of the French funds by a general statement of the National Debt, and by an account of an annuity supposed to be held by a foreigner before the revolution, and which, to become *Tiers Consolidé*, must undergo the regular process of reduction and liquidation.

National Debt.

	Francs.
Consolidated Stock *(Tiers Consolidé)*	38,750,000
Floating Debt, to be consolidated, about	23,000,000
Life Annuities	20,000,000
Ecclesiastical, Military, and other Pensions	19,000,000
	100,750,000
The value of a *franc* is something more than 10*d*. English money: according to which calculation, the National Debt of France is in round numbers no more than	£4,000,000

Supposed liquidation of an annuity of £100. sterling, or 2,400 *livres tournois* held by a foreigner before the war and yet unliquidated.

	Francs.
Original Annuity	2,400
Tiers Consolidé *Bons de deux Tiers*	2,400

The actual value of the whole, including the arreared dividends up to the present day is as follows:

	Francs.
Tiers Consolidé as above, 800 francs sold at 60 francs	9,600
Bons de deux Tiers, ditto 1600 francs sold at 3 francs	48

Arrears from the first year of the Republic to the fifth ditto (23d of September, 1792 to the 23d of September, 1797) are to be paid in Assignats, and are of no value.

Arrears of the fifth and sixth years supposed to be liquidated so as to afford 25 per cent of their nominal value, about	600
Arrears in *Bons* for the year VII, valued at 50 per	

cent loss	400
Arrears of the year VIII, due in *Bons*, valued at 25 per cent loss	600
Arrears of the year IX, due in specie	600
Arrears of the year X, of which three months are nearly elapsed	200
Total of the principal and interest of an original annuity of 2,400 livres, reduced (according to law) to 800	12,248
Or in sterling, *circa*	£500

I had almost forgot that you have asked me more than once for an explanation of the exact value of a modern franc. The following you may depend on as correct.

The *unité monétaire* is a piece of silver of the weight of five *grammes*, containing a tenth of alloy and nine tenths of pure silver. It is called *Franc*, and is subdivided into *Décimes*, and *Centimes*: its value is to that of the old *livre tournois* in the proportion of 81 to 80.

	Value in livres tournois.		
	liv.	sous.	deniers.
Franc	1	0	3
Décime		2	0.3
Centime			2.43

LETTER XXIX.

Paris, December 7, 1801.

At the grand monthly parade of the 15th of last Brumaire, I had seen the First Consul chiefly on horseback: on which account, I determined to avail myself of that of the 15th of the present month of Frimaire, in order to obtain a nearer view of his person. On these occasions, none but officers in complete uniform are admitted into the palace of the *Tuileries*, unless provided with tickets, which are distributed to a certain number at the discretion of the governor. General A----y sent me tickets by ten o'clock this morning, and about half after eleven, I repaired to the palace.

On reaching the vestibule from the garden of the *Tuileries*, you ascend the grand stair-case to the left, which conducts you to the guard-room above it in the centre pavilion. Hence you enter the apartments of the Chief Consul.

On the days of the grand parade, the first room is destined for officers as low as the rank of captain, and persons admitted with tickets; the second, for field-officers; the third, for generals; and the fourth, for councellors of state, and the diplomatic corps. To the east, the windows of these apartments command the court-yard where the troops are assembled; while to the west, they afford a fine view of the garden of the *Tuileries* and the avenue leading to the *Barrière de Chaillot*. In the first-room, those windows which overlook the parade were occupied by persons standing five or six in depth, some of whom, as I was informed, had been patient enough to retain their places for the space of two or three hours, and among them were a few ladies. Here, a sort of lane was formed from door to door by some grenadiers of the consular guard. I found both sides of this lane so much crowded, that I readily accepted the invitation of a *chef de brigade* of my acquaintance to accompany him into the second room; this, he observed, was no more than a privilege to which I was entitled. This room was also crowded; but it exhibited a most brilliant *coup d'œil* from the great variety and richness of the uniforms of the field-officers here assembled, by which mine was entirely eclipsed. The lace or embroidery is not merely confined to the coats, jackets, and pantaloons, but extends to the sword belts, and even to the boots, which are universally worn by the military. Indeed, all the foreign ambassadors admit that none of the levees of the European courts can vie in splendour with those of the Chief Consul.

My first care on entering this room, was to place myself in a situation which might afford me an uninterrupted view of BONAPARTE. About twenty-five minutes past twelve, his sortie was announced by a *huissier*. Immediately after, he came out of the inner apartment, attended by several officers of rank, and, traversing all the other rooms with a quick step, proceeded, uncovered, to the parade, the order of which I have described to you in a former letter. On the present occasion, however, it lasted longer on account of the distribution of arms of honour, which the First Consul presents with his own hand to those heroes who have signalized themselves in fighting their country's battles.

This part of the ceremony, which was all that I saw of the parade yesterday, naturally revived in my mind the following question, so often agitated: "Are the military successes of the French the consequences of a new system of operations and new tactics, or merely the effect of the blind courage of a mass of men, led on by chiefs whose resolutions were decided by presence of mind

alone and circumstances?"

The latter method of explaining their victories has been frequently adopted, and the French generals have been reproached with lavishing the lives of thousands for the sake of gaining unimportant advantages, or repairing inconsiderable faults.

Sometimes, indeed, it should seem that a murderous obstinacy has obtained them successes to which prudence had not paved the way; but, certainly, the French can boast, too, of memorable days when talent had traced the road to courage, when vast plans combined with judgment, have been followed with perseverance, when resources have been found in those awful moments in which Victory, hovering over a field of carnage, leaves the issue of the conflict doubtful, till a sudden thought, a ray of genius, inclines her in favour of the general, thus inspired, and then art may be said to triumph over art, and valour over valour.

And whence came most of these generals who have shewn this inspiration, if I may so term it? Some, as is well known, emerged from the schools of jurisprudence; some, from the studies of the arts; and others, from the counting-houses of commerce, as well as from the lowest ranks of the army. Previously to the revolution it was not admitted, in this country at least, that such sources could furnish men fit to be one day the arbiters of battles and of the fate of empires. Till that period, all those Frenchmen who had distinguished themselves in the field, had devoted themselves from their infancy to the profession of arms, were born near the throne of which they constituted the lustre, or in that cast who arrogated to themselves the exclusive right of defending their country. The glory of the soldier was not considered; and a private must have been more than a hero to be as much remarked as a second lieutenant.

Men of reflection, seeing the old tactics fail against successful essays, against enthusiasm whose effects are incalculable, studied whether new ideas did not direct some new means; for it would have been no less absurd to grant all to valour than to attribute all to art. But to return to the main subject of my letter.

In about three quarters of an hour, BONAPARTE came back from the parade, with the same suite as before, that is, preceded by his aides-de-camp, and followed by the generals and field-officers of the consular guard, the governor of the palace, the general commanding the first military division, and him at the head of the garrison of Paris. For my part, I scarcely saw any one but himself; BONAPARTE alone absorbed my whole attention.

A circumstance occurred which gave me an opportunity of observing the Chief Consul with critical minuteness. I had left the second room, and taken my station in front of the row of gazers, close to the folding-doors which opened into the first room, in order to see him receive petitions and memorials. There was no occasion for BONAPARTE to cast his eyes from side to side, like the *Grand Monarque* coming from mass, by way of inviting petitioners to approach him. They presented themselves in such numbers that, after he put his hat under his arm, both his hands were full in a moment. To enable him to receive other petitions, he was under the necessity of delivering the first two handfuls to his aides-de-camp. I should like to learn what becomes of all these papers, and whether he locks them up in a little desk of which he alone has the key, as was the practice of Lewis XIV.

When BONAPARTE approached the door of the second room, he was effectually impeded in his progress by a lady, dressed in white, who, throwing herself at his feet, gracefully presented to him a memorial, which he received with much apparent courtesy; but still seemed, by his manner, desirous to pass forward. However, the crowd was so considerable and so intent on viewing this scene, that the grenadiers, posted near the spot where it took place, were obliged to use some degree of violence before they could succeed in clearing a passage.

Of all the portraits which you and I have seen of BONAPARTE in England, that painted by Masquerier, and exhibited in Piccadilly, presents the greatest resemblance. But for his side-face, you may, for twelve *sous*, here procure a perfect likeness of it at almost every stall in the street. In short, his features are such as may, in my opinion, be easily copied by any artist of moderate abilities. However incompetent I may be to the task, I shall, as you desire it, attempt to *sketch* his person; though I doubt not that any French *commis*, in the habit of describing people by words, might do it greater justice.

BONAPARTE is rather below the middle size, somewhat inclined to stoop, and thin in person; but, though of a slight make, he appears to be muscular, and capable of fatigue; his forehead is broad, and shaded by dark brown hair, which is cut short behind; his eyes, of the same colour, are full, quick, and prominent; his nose is aquiline; his chin, protuberant and pointed; his complexion, of a yellow hue; and his cheeks, hollow. His countenance, which is of a melancholy cast, expresses much sagacity and reflection: his manner is grave and deliberate, but at the same time open. On the whole, his aspect announces him to be of a temperate and phlegmatic disposition; but warm and tenacious in the pursuit of his object, and impatient of contradiction. Such, at least, is the judgment which I should form of BONAPARTE from his external appearance.

While I was surveying this man of universal talent, my fancy was not idle. First, I beheld him, flushed with ardour, directing the assault of the *téte-de-pont* at *Lodi*; next dictating a proclamation to the Beys at *Cairo*, and styling himself the friend of the faithful; then combating the ebullition of his rage on being foiled in the storming of *Acre* I afterwards imagined I saw him

like another CROMWELL, expelling the Council of Five Hundred at *St. Cloud*, and seizing on the reins of government: when established in power, I viewed him, like HANNIBAL, crossing the *Alps*, and forcing victory to yield to him the hard-contested palm at *Marengo*; lastly, he appeared to my imagination in the act of giving the fraternal embrace to Caprara, the Pope's legate, and at the same time holding out to the see of Rome the re-establishment of catholicism in France.

Voltaire says that "no man ever was a hero in the eyes of his *valet-de-chambre*." I am curious to know whether the valet of the First Consul be an exception to this maxim. As to BONAPARTE'S public character, numerous, indeed, are the constructions put on it by the voice of rumour: some ascribe to him one great man of antiquity as a model; some, another; but many compare him, in certain respects, to JULIUS CÆSAR, as imitators generally succeed better in copying the failings than the good qualities of their archetypes, let us hope, supposing this comparison to be a just one, that the Chief Consul will, in one particular, never lose sight of the generous clemency of that illustrious Roman—who, if any spoke bitterly against him, deemed it sufficient to complain of the circumstance publicly, in order to prevent them from persevering in the use of such language. "*Acerbè loquentibus satis habuit pro concione denunciare, ne perseverarent.*"

"The character of a great man," says a French political writer, who denies the justness of this comparison, "like the celebrated picture of Zeuxis, can be formed only of a multitude of imitations, and it is as little possible for the observer to find for him a single model in history, as it was for the painter of Heraclea to discover in nature that of the ideal beauty he was desirous of representing[1]."—"The French revolution," observes the same author, a little farther on, "has, perhaps, produced more than one CÆSAR, or one CROMWELL; but they have disappeared before they have had it in their power to give full scope to their ambition[2]." Time will decide on the truth and impartiality of these observations of M. HAUTERIVE.

As at the last monthly parade, BONAPARTE was habited in the consular dress, that is, a coat of scarlet velvet, embroidered with gold: he wore jockey boots, carelessly drawn over white cotton pantaloons, and held in his hand a cocked hat, with the national cockade only. I say only, because all the generals wear hats trimmed with a splendid lace, and decorated with a large, branching, tricoloured feather.

After the parade, the following, I understand, is the *étiquette* usually observed in the palace. The Chief Consul first gives audience to the general-officers, next to the field-officers, to those belonging to the garrison, and to a few petitioners. He then returns to the fourth apartment, where the counsellors of state assemble. Being arrived there, notice is sent to the diplomatic corps, who meet in a room on the ground-floor of the palace, called *La Salle des Ambassadeurs*. They immediately repair to the levee-room, and, after paying their personal respects to the First Consul, they each introduce to him such persons, belonging to their respective nations, as they may think proper. Several were this day presented by the Imperial, Russian, and Danish ambassadors: the British minister, Mr. Jackson, has not yet presented any of his countrymen nor will he, in all probability, as he is merely a *locum tenens*. After the levee, the Chief Consul generally gives a dinner of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred covers, to which all those who have received arms of honour, are invited.

Before I left the palace, I observed the lady above-mentioned, who had presented the memorial, seated in one corner of the room, all in tears, and betraying every mark of anxious grief: she was pale, and with her hair dishevelled; but, though by no means handsome, her distressed situation excited a lively interest in her favour. On inquiry, I was informed that it was Madame Bourmont, the wife of a Vendean chief, condemned to perpetual imprisonment for a breach of the convention into which he had jointly entered with the agents of the French government.

Having now accomplished my object, when the crowd was somewhat dispersed, I retired to enjoy the fine weather by a walk in the

CHAMPS ELYSÉES.

After traversing the garden of the *Tuileries* and the *Place de la Concorde*, from east to west, you arrive at this fashionable summer promenade. It is planted with trees in quincunx; and although, in particular points of view, this gives it a symmetrical air; yet, in others, the hand of art is sufficiently concealed to deceive the eye by a representation of the irregular beauties of nature. The French, in general, admire the plan of the garden of the *Tuileries*, and think the distribution tasteful; but, when the trees are in leaf, all prefer the *Champs Elysées*, as being more rural and more inviting. This spot, which is very extensive, as you may see by the Plan of Paris, has frequently been chosen for the scene of national fêtes, for which it is, in many respects, better calculated than the *Champ de Mars*. However, from its proximity to the great road, the foliage is imbrowned by the dust, and an idea of aridity intrudes itself on the imagination from the total absence of water. The sight of that refreshing element recreates the mind, and communicates a powerful attraction even to a wilderness.

In fact, at this season of the year, the *Champs Elysées* resemble a desert; but, in summer, they present one of the most agreeable scenes that can be imagined. In temporary buildings, of a tasteful construction, you then find here *restaurateurs*, &c, where all sorts of refreshments may be procured, and rooms where "the merry dance" is kept up with no common spirit. Swings and roundabouts are also erected, as well as different machines for exercising the address of those who are fond of running at a ring, and other sports. Between the road leading to *l'Étoile*, the *Bois*

de Boulogne, &c, and that which skirts the Seine, formerly called the *Cours de la Reine*, is a large piece of turf, where, in fine weather, and especially on Sundays, the Parisian youths amuse themselves at foot-ball, prison-bars, and long tennis. Here, too, boys and girls assemble, and improve their growth and vigour by dancing, and a variety of healthful diversions; while their relations and friends, seated on the grass, enjoy this interesting sight, and form around each group a circle which is presently increased by numbers of admiring spectators.

Under the shade of the trees, on the right hand, as you face the west, an immense concourse of both sexes and all ages is at the same time collected. Those who prefer sitting to walking occupy three long rows of chairs, set out for hire, three deep on each side, and forming a lane through which the great body of walkers parade. This promenade may then be said to deserve the appellation of *Elysian Fields*, from the number of handsome women who resort hither. The variety of their dresses and figures, the satisfaction which they express in seeing and being seen, their anxious desire to please, which constitutes their happiness and that of our sex, the triumph which animates the countenance of those who eclipse their rivals; all this forms a diversified and amusing picture, which fixes attention, and gives birth to a thousand ideas respecting the art and coquetry of women, as well as what beauty loses or gains by adopting the ever-varying caprices of fashion. Here, on a fine summer's evening, are now to be seen, I am told, females displaying almost as much luxury of dress as used to be exhibited in the days of the monarchy. The essential difference is that the road in the centre is not now, as in those times, covered with brilliant equipages; though every day seems to produce an augmentation of the number of private carriages. At the entrance of the *Champs Elysées* are placed the famous groups of Numidian horses, held in by their vigorous and masterly conductors, two *chefs d'œuvre* of modern art, copied from the group of *Monte-Cavallo* at Rome. By order of the Directory, these statues were brought from *Marly*, where they ornamented the terrace. They are each of them cut out of a block of the most faultless Carrara marble. On the pedestal on which they stood at that once-royal residence, was engraved the name of COSTOU, 1745, without any Christian name: but, as there were two brothers of that name, Nicolas and Guillaume, natives of Lyons, and both excellent sculptors, it is become a matter of doubt by which of them these master-pieces were executed; though the one died in 1733, and the other in 1746. It is conjectured, however, that fraternal friendship induced them to share the fame arising from these capital productions, and that they worked at them in common till death left the survivor the task of finishing their joint labour.

To whichever of the two the merit of the execution may be due, it is certain that the fiery, ungovernable spirit of the horses, as well as the exertion of vigour, and the triumph of strength in their conductors, is very happily expressed. The subject has frequently afforded a comparison to politicians. "These statues," say some observers, "appear to be the emblem of the French people, over whom it is necessary to keep a tight hand."—"It is to be apprehended," add others, "that the reins, which the conductors hold with so powerful an arm, are too weak to check these ungovernable animals."

Footnote 1: *De l'Etat de la France, à la fin de l'an VIII.* page 270. Return to text

Footnote 2: Ibid. page 274. Return to text

LETTER XXX.

Paris, Dccemler 8, 1801.

You desire that I will favour you with a particular account of the means employed to transfer from pannel to canvas those celebrated pictures which I mentioned in my letter of the 13th ult°. Like many other, things that appear simple on being known, so is this process; but it is not, on that account, the less ingenious and difficult in execution.

Such is the great disadvantage of the art of painting that, while other productions of genius may survive the revolution of ages, the creations of the pencil are intrusted to perishable wood or canvas. From the effect of heat, humidity, various exhalations to which they may be carelessly exposed, and even an unperceived neglect in the priming of the pannel or cloth, master-pieces are in danger of disappearing for ever. Happy, then, is it for the arts that this invaluable discovery has been lately brought to so great a degree of perfection, and that the restoration of several capital pictures having been confided to men no less skilful than enlightened, they have thus succeeded in rescuing them from approaching and inevitable destruction.

Of all the fruits of the French conquests, not a painting was brought from Lombardy, Rome, Florence, or Venice, that was not covered with an accumulation of filth, occasioned by the smoke of the wax-tapers and incense used in the ceremonies of the catholic religion. It was therefore necessary to clean and repair them; for to bring them to France, without rendering them fit to be exhibited, would have answered no better purpose than to have left them in Italy. One of those which particularly fixed the attention of the Administration of the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, was the famous picture by RAPHAEL, taken from the *Chiesa delle Contesse* at Foligno, and thence distinguished by the appellation of

MADONNA DI FOLIGNO.

This *chef d'œuvre* was in such a lamentable state of decay, that the French commissioners who

selected it, wereunder the necessity of pasting paper over it in order to prevent the scales, which curled up on many parts of its surface, from falling off during its conveyance to to Paris. In short, had not the saving hand of art interposed, this, and other monuments of the transcendent powers of the Italian school, marked by the corroding tooth of Time, would soon have entirely perished.

As this picture could not be exhibited in its injured state, the Administration of the Museum determined that it should be repaired. They accordingly requested the Minister of the Interior to cause this important operation to be attended by Commissioners chosen from the National Institute. The Class of Physical and Mathematical Sciences of that learned Society appointed to this task, GUYTON and BERTHOLLET, chymists, and the Class of Literature and Fine Arts named VINCENT and TAUNAY, painters.

These Commissioners, in concert with the Administration, having ascertained the state of the picture, it was unanimously agreed that the only mean of saving it would be to remove it from the worm-eaten pannel on which it was painted. It was, besides, necessary to ascertain the safety of the process, in order that, without, exciting the apprehensions of the lovers of the arts, it might be applied to other pictures which required it.

The Report of the four Commissioners before named, respecting the restoration of the *Madonna di Foligno*, has been adopted by the Classes to which they respectively belong, and is to be made to the National Institute at their next public sitting on the 15th of Nivose (5th of January, 1802).

In order to make you perfectly acquainted with the whole of the process, I shall transcribe, for your satisfaction, that part of the Report immediately connected with the art of restoring damaged or decayed paintings. This labour, and the success by which it was attended, are really a memorial of what the genius and industry of the French can achieve. To all those who, like you, possess valuable collections, such information cannot but be particularly interesting.

"The desire of repairing the outrages of time has unfortunately accelerated the decay of several pictures by coarse repainting and bad varnish, by which much of the original work has been covered. Other motives, too, have conspired against the purity of the most beautiful compositions: a prelate has been seen to cause a discordant head of hair to conceal the charms of a Magdalen."

"Nevertheless, efficacious means of restoration have been discovered: a painting, the convass of which is decayed, or the pannel worm-eaten, is transferred to a fresh cloth; the profane touches of a foreign pencil are made to disappear; the effaced strokes are reinserted with scrupulous nicety; and life is restored to a picture which was disfigured, or drawing near to its end. This art has made great progress, especially in Paris, and experienced recent improvement under the superintendance of the Administration of the Museum; but it is only with a religious respect that any one can venture on an operation which may always give rise to a fear of some change in the drawing or colouring, above all when the question is to restore a picture by RAPHAEL."[1]

"The restoration may be divided into two parts; the one, which is composed of mechanical operations, whose object is to detach the painting from the ground on which it is fixed, in order to transfer it to a fresh one; the other, which consists in cleaning the surface of the painting from every thing that can tarnish it, in restoring the true colour of the picture, and in repairing the parts destroyed, by tints skilfully blended with the primitive touches. Thence the distinctive division of the mechanical operations, and of the art of painting, which will be the object of the two parts of this Report. The former particularly engaged the attention of the Commissioners of the *Class of Sciences*; and the latter, which required the habit of handling a scientific pencil, fell to the share of the Commissioners of the *Class of Fine Arts*"

FIRST PART.

"Although the mechanical labour is subdivided into several operations, it was wholly intrusted to Citizen HACQUINS, on whose intelligence, address, and skill, it is our duty to bestow every commendation."

"The picture represents the Virgin Mary, the infant Jesus, St. John, and several other figures of different sizes. It was painted on a pannel of 1-1/2 inches in thickness: a crack extended from its circumference to the left foot of the infant Jesus: it was 4-1/2 lines wide at its upper part, and diminished progressively to the under: from this crack to the right hand border, the surface formed a curve whose greatest bend was 2 inches 5-1/2 lines, and from the crack to the other border, another curve bending 2 inches. The picture was scaling off in several places, and a great number of scales had already detached themselves; the painting was, besides, worm-eaten in many parts."

"It was first necessary to render the surface even: to effect this, a gauze was pasted on the painting, and the picture was turned on its face. After that, Citizen HACQUINS made, in the thickness of the wood, several grooves at some distance from each other, and extending from the upper extremity of the bend to the place where the pannel presented a more level surface. Into these grooves he introduced little wooden wedges; he then covered the whole surface with wet cloths, which he took care to remoisten. The action of the wedges, which swelled by the moisture against the softened pannel, compelled the latter to resume its primitive form: both edges of the crack before-mentioned being brought together, the artist had recourse to glue, in order to unite

the two separated parts. During the desiccation, he laid oak bars across the picture, for the purpose of keeping the pannel in the form which he wished it to assume."

"The desiccation being effected slowly, the artist applied a second gauze on the first, then successively two thicknesses of grey blotting paper."

"This preparation (which the French artists call *cartonnage*) being dry, he laid the picture with its face downward on a table, to which he carefully confined it; he next proceeded to the separation of the wood on which the painting was fixed."

"The first operation was executed by means of two saws, one of which acted perpendicularly; and the other, horizontally: the work of the two saws being terminated, the pannel was found to be reduced to the thickness of 4-1/2 lines. The artist then made use of a plane of a convex form on its breadth: with this instrument he planed the pannel in an oblique direction, in order to take off very short shavings, and to avoid the grain of the wood: by these means he reduced the pannel to 2/3 of a line in thickness. He then took a flat plane with a toothed iron, whose effect is much like that of a rasp which reduces wood into dust: in this manner he contrived to leave the pannel no thicker than a sheet of paper."

"In that state, the wood was successively moistened with clear water, in small compartments, which disposed it to detach itself: then the artist separated it with the rounded point of a knife-blade."

"The picture, thus deprived of all the wood, presented to the eye every symptom of the injury which it had sustained. It had formerly been repaired; and, in order to fasten again the parts which threatened to fall off, recourse had been had to oils and varnishes. But those ingredients passing through the intervals left by such parts of the picture as were reduced to curling scales, had been extended in the impression to the paste, on which the painting rested, and had rendered the real restoration more difficult, without producing the advantageous effect which had thence been expected."

"The same process would not serve for separating the parts of the impression which had been indurated by varnishes, and those where the paste had remained unmixed: it was necessary to moisten the former for some time in small compartments: when they were become sufficiently softened, the artist separated them with the blade of his knife: the others were more easily separated by moistening them with a flannel, and rubbing them slightly. It required all the address and patience of Citizen HACQUINS to leave nothing foreign to the work of the original painter: at length the outline of RAPHAEL was wholly exposed to view, and left by itself."

"In order to restore a little suppleness to the painting, which was too much dried, it was rubbed all over with carded cotton imbibed with oil, and wiped with old muslin: then white lead, ground with oil, was substituted in the room of the impression made by paste, and fixed by means of a soft brush."

"After being left to dry for three months, a gauze was glued on the impression made by oil; and on the latter, a fine canvas."

"When this canvas was dry, the picture was detached from the table, and turned, in order to remove the *cartonnage* from it with water; this operation being effected, the next proceeding was to get rid of the appearance of the inequalities of the surface arising from the curling up of its parts: for that purpose, the artist successively applied on the inequalities, flour-paste diluted. Then having put a greasy paper on the moistened part, he laid a hot iron on the parts curled up, which became level: but it was not till after he had employed the most unequivocal signs to ascertan the suitable degree of heat, that he ventured to come near the painting with the iron."

"It has been seen that the painting, disengaged from its impression made by paste and from every foreign substance, had been fixed on an impression made by oil, and that a level form had been given to the uneven parts of its surface. This master-piece was still to be solidly applied on a new ground: for that, it was necessary to paste paper over it again, detach it from the temporary gauze which had been put on the impression, add a new coat of oxyde of lead and oil, apply to it a gauze rendered very supple, and on the latter, in like manner done over with a preparation of lead, a raw cloth, woven all in one piece, and impregnated, on its exterior surface, with a resinous substance, which was to confine it to a similar canvass fixed on the stretching-frame. This last operation required that the body of the picture, disengaged from its *cartonnage*, or paper facing, and furnished with a new ground, should be exactly applied to the cloth done over with resinous substances, at the same time avoiding every thing that might hurt it by a too strong or unequal extension, and yet compelling every part of its vast extent to adhere to the cloth strained on the stretching-frame. It is by all these proceedings that the picture has been incorporated with a ground more durable than the original one, and guarded against the accidents which had produced the injuries. It was then subjected to restoration, which is the object of the second part of this Report."

"We have been obliged to confine ourselves to pointing out the successive operations, the numerous details of which we have attended; we have endeavoured to give an idea of this interesting art, by which the productions of the pencil may be indefinitely perpetuated, in order only to state the grounds of the confidence that it has appeared to us to merit."

SECOND PART.

"After having given an account of the mechanical operations, employed with so much success in the first part of the restoration of the picture by RAPHAEL, it remains for us to speak of the second, the restoration of the painting, termed by the French artists *restauration pittoresque*. This part is no less interesting than the former. We are indebted to it for the reparation of the ravages of time and of the ignorance of men, who, from their unskilfulness, had still added to the injury which this master-piece had already suffered.

"This essential part of the restoration of works of painting, requires, in those who are charged with it, a very delicate eye, in order to know how to accord the new tints with the old, a profound knowledge of the proceedings employed by masters, and a long experience, in order to foresee, in the choice and use of colours, what changes time may effect in the new tints, and consequently prevent the discordance which would be the result of those changes.

"The art of restoring paintings likewise requires the most scrupulous nicety to cover no other than the damaged parts, and an extraordinary address to match the work of the restoration with that of the master, and, as it were, replace the first priming in all its integrity, concealing the work to such a degree that even unexperienced eye cannot distinguish what comes from the hand of the artist from what belongs to that of the master.

"It is, above all, in a work of the importance of that of which we are speaking, that the friends of the arts have a right to require, in its restoration, all the care of prudence and the exertion of the first talents. We feel a real satisfaction in acquainting you with the happy result of the discriminating wisdom of the Administration of the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS; who, after having directed and superintended the first part of the restoration, employed in the second, that of the painting (which we call *pittoresque*) Citizen ROESER, whose abilities in this line were long known to them, and whose repeated success had justified their confidence."

After having assured the Institute that they consider the *pittoresque* part of the restoration of the *Madonna di Foligno* as pure as it was possible to be desired, the Commissioners proceed to call their attention to some discordance in the original design and colouring of this *chef d'œuvre*, and to make on it some critical observations. This they do in order to prevent any doubts which might arise in the mind of observers, and lead them to imagine that the restoration had, in any manner, impaired the work of RAPHAEL.

They next congratulate themselves on having at length seen this masterpiece of the immortal RAPHAEL restored to life, shining in all its lustre, and through such means, that there ought no longer to remain any fear respecting the recurrence of those accidents whose ravages threatened to snatch it for ever from general admiration.

They afterwards terminate their Report in the following words:

"The Administration of the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, who have, by their knowledge, improved the art of restoration, will, no doubt, neglect nothing to preserve that art in all its integrity; and, notwithstanding repeated success, they will not permit the application of it but to pictures so injured, that there are more advantages in subjecting them to a few risks inseparable from delicate and numerous operations, than in abandoning them to the destruction by which they are threatened. The invitation which the Administration of the Museum gave to the National Institute to attend the restoration of the *Madonna di Foligno* by RAPHAEL, is to us a sure pledge that the enlightened men of whom it is composed felt that they owed an account of their vigilance to all the connoisseurs in Europe."

Footnote 1: It may not be amiss to observe that RAPHAEL employed the *impasto* colour but in few of his pictures, of which the *Transfiguration* is one wherein it is the most conspicuous: his other productions are painted with great transparency, the colours being laid on a white ground; which rendered still more difficult the operation above-mentioned. *Note of the Author.* Return to text

LETTER XXXI.

Paris, December 10, 1801.

"Of all the bridges that were ever built," says Sterne, "the whole world, who have passed over it, must own that the noblest—the grandest—the lightest—the longest—the broadest that ever conjoined land and land together upon the face of the terraqueous globe, is the

PONT NEUF."

The *Pont Neuf* is certainly the largest, and, on account of its situation[1], the most conspicuous, and most frequented of any of the bridges in Paris; but, in the environs of the capital, is one which surpasses them all. This is the *Pont de Neuilly.*

The first stone of the *Pont Neuf* was laid by Henry III in 1578, and the foundation of the piles was begun to be formed on the opposite side; when the troubles of the League forced DU CERCEAU, the architect, to withdraw to foreign countries. The work was not resumed till the reign of Henry IV, who ordered it to be continued under the direction of MARCHAND; but, owing to various

causes, the *Pont Neuf* was not finished till 1674.

The length of this bridge is one thousand and twenty feet, and its breadth seventy-two; which is sufficient to admit of five carriages passing abreast. It is formed of twelve arches, seven of which are on the side of the *Louvre*, and five on the side of the *Quai des Augustins*, extending over the two channels of the river, which is wider in this place, from their junction.

In 1775, the parapets were repaired, and the foot-way lowered and narrowed. SOUFFLOT, the architect of the Pantheon, availed himself of this opportunity to build, on the twenty half-moons which stand immediately above each pile, as many rotundas, in stone, to serve as shops. On the outside, above the arches, is a double cornice, which attracts the eye of the connoisseur in architecture, notwithstanding its mouldering state, on account of the *fleurons* in the antique style, and the heads of Sylvans, Dryads, and Satyrs, which serve as supports to it, at the distance of two feet from each other.

As the mole that forms a projection on this bridge between the fifth and seventh arch, stands facing the *Place Dauphine*, which was built by Henry IV, it was the spot chosen for erecting to him a statue. This was the first public monument of the kind that had been raised in honour of French kings. Under the first, second, and third race, till the reign of Lewis XIII, if the statue of a king was made, it was only for the purpose, of being placed on his tomb, or else at the portal of some church, or royal residence which he had either built or repaired.

Parisians and strangers used to admire this equestrian statue of Henry IV, and before the revolution, all agreed in taking him for the model of goodness. In proof of his popularity, we are told, in the *Tableau de Paris*, that a beggar was one day following a passenger along, the foot-way, of the *Pont Neuf*: it was a festival. "In the name of St. Peter," said the mendicant, "in the name of St. Joseph, in the name of the Virgin Mary, in the name of her divine Son, in the name of God?" Being arrived before the statue of the conqueror of the League, "In the name of *Henri quatre*" exclaimed he, "in the name of *Henri quatre?*"—"Here!" said the passenger, and he gave him a louis d'or.

Unquestionably, no monarch that ever sat on the throne of France was so popular as *Henri quatre*; and his popularity was never eclipsed by any of his successors. Even amidst the rage of the revolutionary storm, the military still held his memory in veneration. On opening the sepultures at St. Denis in 1793, the coffin of Henry IV was the first that was taken out of the vault of the Bourbons. Though he died in 1610, his body was found in such preservation that the features of his face were not altered. A soldier, who was present at the opening of the coffin, moved by a martial enthusiasm, threw himself on the body of this warlike prince, and, after a considerable pause of admiration, he drew his sabre, and cut off a long lock of Henry's beard, which was still fresh, at the same time exclaiming, in very energetic and truly-military terms: "And I too am a French soldier! In future I will have no other whiskers." Then placing this valuable lock on his upper lip, he withdrew, adding emphatically: "Now I am sure to conquer the enemies of France, and I march to victory."

In Paris, all the statues of kings had fallen, while that of Henry IV still remained erect. It was for some time a matter of doubt whether it should be pulled down. "The poem of the *Henriade* pleaded in its favour;" but, says Mercier, "he was an ancestor of the perjured king," Then, and not till then, this venerated statue underwent the same fate.

It has been generally believed that the deed of Ravaillac was dictated by fanaticism, or that he was the instrument employed by the Marchioness of Verneuil and the Duke of Epernon for assassinating that monarch. However, it stands recorded, I am told, in a manuscript found in the National Library, that Ravaillac killed Henry IV because he had seduced his sister, and abandoned her when pregnant. Thus time, that affords a clue to most mysteries, has also solved this historical enigma.

This statue of Henry IV was erected on the 23d of August, 1624. To have insulted it, would, not long since, have been considered as a sacrilege; but, after having been mutilated and trodden under foot, this once-revered image found its way to the mint or the cannon-foundry. On its site now stands an elegant coffeehouse, whence you may enjoy a fine view of the stately buildings which adorn the quays that skirt the river.

While admiring the magnificence of this *coup d'œil*, an Englishman cannot avoid being struck by the multitude of washerwomen, striving to expel the dirt from linen, by means of *battoirs*, or wooden battledores. On each side of the Seine are to be seen some hundreds hard at work, ranged in succession, along the sides of low barks, equal in length to our west-country barges. Such is the vigour of their arm that, for the circumference of half-a-mile, the air resounds with the noise of their incessant blows. After beating the linen for some time in this merciless manner, they scrub it with a hard brush, in lieu of soaping it, so that a shirt which has passed through their hands five or six times is fit only for making lint. No wonder then that Frenchmen, in general, wear coarse linen: a hop-sack could not long resist so severe a process. However, it must be confessed, that some good arises from this evil. These washerwomen insensibly contribute to the diffusion of knowledge; for, as they are continually reducing linen into rags, they cannot but considerably increase the supply, of that article for the manufacture of paper.

Compared to the Thames, even above bridge, the Seine is far from exhibiting a busy scene; a few

rafts of wood for fuel, and some barges occasionally in motion, now and then relieve the monotony of its rarely-ruffled surface. At this moment, its navigation is impeded from its stream being swollen by the late heavy rains. Hence much mischief is apprehended to the country lying contiguous to its banks. Many parts of Paris are overflowed: in some streets where carriages must pass, horses are up to their belly in water; while pedestrians are under the necessity of availing themselves of the temporary bridges, formed with tressels and planks, by the industrious Savoyards. The ill consequences of this inundation are already felt, I assure you; being engaged to dinner yesterday in the *Rue St. Florentin*, I was obliged to step into a punt in order to reach the bottom of the stair-case; and what was infinitely more mortifying to the master of the house, was that, the cellar being rendered inaccessible,—he was deprived of the satisfaction of regaling his guests with his best claret.

On the right hand side of the *Pont Neuf*, in crossing that bridge from the *Quai de l'École* to the *Quai de Conti*, is a building, three stories high, erected on piles, with its front standing between the first and second arches. It is called

LA SAMARITAINE.

Over the dial is a gilt group, representing Jesus Christ and the Samaritan woman near Jacob's well, pourtrayed by a basin into which falls a sheet of water issuing from a shell above. Under the basin is the following inscription:

Fons Hortorum
Puteus aquarum viventium.

These words of the Gospel are here not unaptly applied to the destination of this building, which is to furnish water to the garden of the *Tuileries*, whose basins were not, on that account, the less dry half the year. The water is raised by means of a pump, and afterwards distributed, by several conduits, to the *Louvre* and the *Palais du Tribunat*, as well as to the *Tuileries*.

In the middle, and above the arch, is a superstructure of timber-work faced with gilt lead, where are the bells of the clock and those of chimes, which ought to play every half-hour.

This tasteless edifice interrupts the view in every direction and as it is far from being an ornament to the *Pont Neuf*, no one could now regret its entire removal. Under the old *régime*, however, it was nothing less than a government.

Among the functions of the governor, were included the care of the clock, which scarcely ever told the hour, and that of the chimes, which were generally out of order. When these chimes used to delight Henry IV, it is to be presumed that they were kept in better tune. It was customary to make them play during all public ceremonies, and especially when the king passed.

"The *Pont Neuf*, is in the city of Paris what the heart is in the human body, the centre of motion and circulation: the flux and reflux of inhabitants and strangers crowd this passage in such a manner, that, in order to meet persons one is looking for, it is sufficient to walk here for an hour every day. Here, the *mouchards*, or spies of the police, take their station; and, when at the expiration of a few days, they see not their man, they positively affirm that he is not in Paris."

Such was the animated picture of the *Pont Neuf*, as drawn by Mercier in 1788, and such it really was before the revolution. At present, though this bridge is sometimes thronged with passengers, it presents not, according to my observation, that almost continual crowd and bustle for which it was formerly distinguished. No stoppage now from the press of carriages of any description, no difficulty in advancing quickly through the concourse of pedestrians. Fruit-women, hucksters, hawkers, pedlars, indeed, together with ambulating venders of lottery-tickets, and of *tisane*, crying "*à la fraiche! Qui veut boire?*" here take their stand as they used, though not in such numbers.

But the most sensible diminution is among the shoe-blacks, who stand in the carriage-way, and, with all their implements before them, range themselves along the edge of the very elevated *trottoir* or foot-pavement. The *décrotteurs* of the *Pont Neuf* were once reputed masters of the art: their foresight was equal to their dexterity and expedition. For the very moderate sum of two *liards*, they enabled an abbé or a poet to present himself in the gilded apartments of a dutchess. If it rained, or the rays of the sun were uncommonly ardent, they put into his hand an umbrella to protect the economy of his head-dress during the operation. Their great patrons have disappeared, and, in lieu of a constant succession of customers, the few *décrotteurs* who remain at their old-established station, are idle half the day for want of employment.

These Savoyards generally practise more than one trade, as is indicated by the *enseigne* which is affixed, on a short pole, above their tool-box.

LA FRANCE tond les
chiens coupe les chats
proprement et sa femme
vat en ville et en campagne

Change the name only, and such is, line for line, letter for letter, the most ordinary style of their *annonce*. It is, however, to be presumed, that the republican belles have adopted other favourites

instead of dogs and cats; for no longer is seen, as in the days of royalty, the aspiring or favoured lover carrying his mistress's lap-dog in the public promenades. In fact, the business of dog-shearing, &c. seems full as dead in this part of Paris as that of shoe-cleaning. The *artists* of the *Pont Neuf* are, consequently, chop-fallen; and hilarity which formerly shone on their countenance, is now succeeded by gloomy sadness.

At the foot of the *Pont Neuf* on the *Quai de la Féraille* recruiting-officers used to unfurl their inviting banners, and neglect nothing that art and cunning could devise to insnare the ignorant, the idle, and the unwary. The means which they sometimes employed were no less whimsical than various: the lover of wine was invited to a public-house, where he might intoxicate himself; the glutton was tempted by the sight of ready-dressed turkies, fowls, sausages &c. suspended to a long pole; and the youth, inclined to libertinism, was seduced by the meretricious allurements of a well-tutored doxy. To second these manœuvres, the recruiter followed the object of his prey with a bag of money, which he chinked occasionally, crying out "*Qui en veut?*" and, in this manner, an army of heroes was completed. It is almost superfluous to add, that the necessity of such stratagems is obviated, by the present mode of raising soldiers by conscription.

Before we quit the *Pont Neuf*, I must relate to you an adventure which, in the year 1786, happened to our friend P-----, who is now abroad, in a situation of considerable trust and emolument. He was, at that time, a half-pay subaltern in the British army, and visited Paris, as well from motives of economy as from a desire of acquiring the French language. Being a tall, fresh-coloured young man, as he was one day crossing the *Pont Neuf*, he caught the eye of a recruiting-officer, who followed him from the *Quai de la Féraille* to a coffee-house, in the *Rue St. Honoré*, which our Englishman frequented for the sake of reading the London newspapers. The recruiter, with all the art of a crimp combined with all the politeness of a courtier, made up to him under pretence of having relations in England, and endeavoured, by every means in his power, to insinuate himself into the good graces of his new acquaintance. P----, by way of sport, encouraged the eagerness of the recruiter, who lavished on him every sort of civility; peaches in brandy, together with the choicest refreshments that a Parisian coffee-house could afford, were offered to him and accepted: but not the smallest hint was dropped of the motive of all this more than friendly attention. At length, the recruiter, thinking that he might venture to break the ice, depicted, in the most glowing colours, the pleasures and advantages of a military life, and declared ingenuously that nothing would make him so happy as to have our countryman P---- for his comrade. Without absolutely accepting or rejecting his offer, P---- begged a little delay in order to consider of the matter, at the same time hinting that there was; at that moment, a small obstacle to his inclination. The recruiter, like a pioneer, promised to remove it, grasped his hand with joy and exultation, and departed, singing a song of the same import as that of Serjeant Kite:

> "Come brave boys, 'tis one to ten,
> But we return all gentlemen."

In a few days, the recruiter again met Mr. P---- at his accustomed rendezvous; when, after treating him with coffee, liqueur, &c. he came directly to the point, but neglected not to introduce into his discourse every persuasive allurement. P----, finding himself pushed home, reminded the recruiter of the obstacle to which he had before alluded, and, to convince him of its existence, put into his hand His Britannic Majesty's commission. The astonishment and confusion of the French recruiter were so great that he was unable to make any reply; but instantly retired, venting a tremendous ejaculation.

Footnote 1: By the Plan of Paris, it will be seen that the *Pont Neuf* lies at the west point of the Island called *L'Ile du Palais*, and is, as it were, in the very centre of the capital. Return to text

LETTER XXXII.

Paris, December 13, 1801.

In this gay capital, balls succeed to balls in an almost incredible variety. There are actually an immense number every evening; so that persons fond of the amusement of dancing have full scope for the exercise of their talents in Paris. It is no longer a matter of surprise to me that the French women dance so well, since I find that they take frequent lessons from their master, and, almost every night, they are at a dance of one kind or another. Added to this, the same set of dances lasts the whole season, and go where you will, you have a repetition of the same. However, this detracts not in the smallest degree; from the merit of those Parisian belles who shine as first-rate dancers. The mechanical part of the business, as Mr. C----g would call it, they may thus, acquire by constant practice; but the decorative part, if I may so term the fascinating grace which, they display in all their movements, is that the result of study, or do they hold it from the bounteous hand of Nature?

While I am speaking of balls, I must inform you that, since the private ball of which I gave you so circumstantial an account, I have been at several others, also private, but of a different complexion; inasmuch as pleasure, not profit, was the motive for which they were given, and the company was more select; but, in point of general arrangement, I found them so like the former, that I did not think it worth while to make any one of them the subject of a distinct letter. In this line Madame Recamier takes the lead, but though her balls are more splendid, those of Madame Soubiran are more agreeable. On the 21st of Frimaire, which was yesterday, I was at a public ball

of the most brilliant kind now known in Paris. It was the first of the subscription given this season, and, from the name of the apartment where it is held, it is styled the

BAL DU SALON DES ÉTRANGERS.

Midnight is the general hour for the commencement of such diversions; but, owing to the long train of carriages setting down company at this ball, it was near two o'clock before I could arrive at the scene of action, in the *Rue Grange Batelière*, near the Boulevards.

After I alighted and presented my ticket, some time elapsed before I could squeeze into the room where the dancing was going forward. The spectators were here so intermixed with the dancers, that they formed around them a border as complete as a frame to a picture. It is astonishing that, under such circumstances, a Parisian Terpsichore, far from being embarrassed, lays fresh claim to your applause. With mathematical precision, she measures with her eye the space to which she is restricted by the curiosity of the by-standers. Rapid as lightning, she springs forward till the measure recalling her to the place she left, she traces her orbit, like a planet, at the same time revolving on her axis. Sometimes her "light, fantastic toe" will approach within half an inch of your foot; nay, you shall almost feel her breath on your cheek, and still she will not touch you, except, perhaps, with the skirt of her floating tunic.

Among the female part of the company, I observed several lovely women; some, who might have been taken for Asiatic sultanas, irradiating the space around them by the dazzling brilliancy of their ornaments; others, without jewels, but calling in every other aid of dress for the embellishment of their person; and a few, rich in their native charms alone, verifying the expression of the poet. Truth compels me to acknowledge that six or eight English ladies here were totally eclipsed. For the honour of my country, I could have wished for a better specimen of our excellence in female beauty. No women in the world, or at least none that ever I have met with in the different quarters I have visited, are handsomer than the English, in point of complexion and features. This is a fact which Frenchmen themselves admit; but for grace, say they, our countrywomen stand unrivalled, I am rather inclined to subscribe to this opinion. In a well-educated French woman, there is an ease, an affability, a desire to please and be pleased, which not only render her manners peculiarly engaging, but also influence her gait, her gestures, her whole deportment in short, and captivate admiration. Her natural cheerfulness and vivacity spread over her features an animation seldom to be found in our English fair, whose general characteristics are reserve and coldness. Hence that striking expression which exhibits the grace of the French belles to superior advantage.

Although my memory frequently disappoints me when I wish to retain names, I have contrived to recollect those of three of the most remarkable women in the ball-room. I shall therefore commit them to paper before I forget them. Madame la Princesse de Santa-Croce displayed more diamonds than any of her competitors; Mademoiselle Lescot was the best dancer among several ladies renowned for dancing; and Madame Tallien was, on the whole, the handsomest female that I saw in the room. There might possibly be women more beautiful than she at this ball, but they did not come under my observation.

I had previously seen Madame Tallien at the *Opera Buffa*, and was struck by her appearance before, I knew who she was. On seeing her again at the *Salon des Étrangers*, I inquired of a French lady of my acquaintance, whose understanding and discernment are pre-eminent, if Madame T------ had nothing to recommend her but her personal attractions? The lady's answer is too remarkable for me not to repeat it, which I will do *verbatim*. "In Madame T------," said she, "beauty, wit, goodness of heart, grace, talents, all are united. In a gay world, where malice subsists in all its force, her inconsistencies alone have been talked of, without any mention being made of the numerous acts of beneficence which have balanced, if they have not effaced, her weakness. Would you believe," continued she, "that, in Paris, the grand theatre of misconduct, where moral obligations are so much disregarded, where we daily commit actions which we condemn in others; would you believe, that Madame T------ experiences again and again the mortification of being deprived of the society of this, or that woman who has nothing to boast of but her depravity, and cannot plead one act of kindness, or even indulgence? This picture is very dark," added she, "but the colouring is true."—"What you tell me," observed I, "proves that, notwithstanding the irruption of immorality, attributed to the revolution, it is still necessary for a woman to preserve appearances at least, in order to be received here in what is termed the best company."—"Yes, indeed," replied she; "if a woman neglects that main point in Paris, she will soon find herself lowered in the opinion of the fashionable world, and be at last excluded from even the secondary circles. In London, your people of fashion are not quite so rigid."—"If a husband chooses to wink at his wife's incontinence," rejoined I, "the world on our side of the water is sufficiently complaisant to follow his example. Now with you, character is made to depend more on the observance of etiquette; and, certainly, hypocrisy, when detected, is of more prejudice to society than barefaced profligacy."—The lady then resumed thus concerning the subject of my inquiry. "Were some people to hear me," said she, "they might think that I had drawn you a flattering portrait of Madame T------ and say, by way of contrast, when the devil became old, he turned hermit; but I should answer that, for some years, no twenty-four hours have elapsed without persons, whom I could name on occasion, having begun their daily career by going to see her, who saved their life, when, to accomplish that object, she hazarded her own."

Here then is an additional instance of the noble energy manifested by women during the most calamitous periods of the revolution. Unappalled by the terrors of captivity or of death, their

sensibility impelled them to brave the ferocity of sanguinary tyrants, in order to administer hope or comfort to a parent, a husband, a relation, or a friend. Some of these heroines, though in the bloom of youth, not content with sympathizing in the misfortunes of others, gave themselves up as a voluntary sacrifice, rather than survive those whose preservation they valued more than their own existence. Rome may vaunt her Porcia, or her Cornelia; but the page of her history can produce no such exaltation of the female character as has been exhibited within the last ten years by French women. Examples, like these, of generosity, fortitude, and greatness of soul, deserve to be recorded to the end of time, as they do honour to the sex, and to human nature.

If, according to the scale of Parisian enjoyment, a ball or rout is dull and insipid, *à moins qu'on ne manque d'y être étouffé*, how supreme must have been the satisfaction of the company at the *Salon des Étrangers!* The number present, estimated at seven or eight hundred, occasioned so great a crowd that it was by no means an easy enterprise to pass from one room to another. Of course, there was no opportunity of viewing the apartments to advantage; however, I saw enough of them to remark that they formed a suite elegantly decorated. Some persons amused themselves with cards, though the great majority neither played nor danced, but were occupied in conversing with their acquaintance, There was no regular supper, but substantial refreshments of every kind were to be procured on paying; and other smaller ones, *gratis*.

From the tickets not being transferable, and the bearer's name being inserted in each of them, the company was far more select than it could have been without such a restriction. Most of the foreign ambassadors, envoys, &c. were present, and many of the most distinguished persons of both sexes in Paris. More regard was paid to the etiquette of dress at this ball than, I have ever witnessed here on similar occasions, The ladies, as I have before said, were all *en grande toilette*; and the men with cocked hats, and in shoes and stockings, which is a novelty here, I assure you, as they mostly appear in boots. But what surprised me not a little, was to observe several inconsiderate French youths wear black cockades. Should they persist in such an absurdity, I shall be still more surprised, if they escape admonition from the police. This fashion seemed to be the *ignis fatuus* of the moment; it was never before exhibited in public, and probably will be but of ephemeral duration.

I cannot take leave of this ball without communicating to you a circumstance which occurred there, and which, from the extravagant credulity it exhibits in regard to the effects of sympathy, may possibly amuse you for a moment.

A widow, about twenty years of age, more to be admired for the symmetry of her person, than for the beauty of her features, had, according to the prevailing custom, intrusted her pocket-handkerchief to the care of a male friend, a gentlemanlike young Frenchman of my acquaintance. After dancing, the lady finding herself rather warm, applied for her handkerchief, with which she wiped her forehead, and returned it to the gentleman, who again put it into his pocket. He then danced, but not with her; and, being also heated, he, by mistake, took out the lady's handkerchief, which, when applied to his face, produced, as he fancied, such an effect on him, that, though he had previously regarded her with a sort of indifference, from that moment she engaged all his attention, and he was unable to direct his eyes, or even his thoughts, to any other object.

Some philosophers, as is well known, have maintained that from all bodies there is an emanation of corpuscles, which, coming into contact with our organs, make on the brain an impression, either more or less sympathetic, or of a directly-opposite nature. They tell you, for instance, that of two women whom you behold for the first time, the one the least handsome will sometimes please you most, because there exists a greater *sympathy* between you and her, than between you and the more beautiful woman. Without attempting to refute this absurd doctrine of corpuscles, I shall only observe that this young Frenchman is completely smitten, and declares that no woman in the world can be compared to the widow.

This circumstance reminds me of a still more remarkable effect, ascribed to a similar cause, experienced by Henry III of France. The marriage of the king of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV, with Marguerite de Valois, and that of the Prince de Condé with Marie de Cleves, was celebrated at the Louvre on the 10th of August, 1572. Marie de Cleves, then a most lovely creature only sixteen, after dancing much, finding herself incommoded by the heat of the ball-room, retired to a private apartment, where one of the waiting-women of the queen-dowager, seeing her in a profuse perspiration, persuaded her to make an entire change of dress. She had scarcely left the room when the Duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry III, who had also danced a great deal, entered it to adjust his hair, and, being overheated, wiped his face with the first thing that he found, which happened to be the shift she had just taken off. Returning to the ball, he fixed his eyes on her, and contemplated her with as much surprise as if he had never before beheld her. His emotion, his transports, and the attention which he began to pay her, were the more extraordinary, as during the preceding week, which she had passed at court, he appeared indifferent to those very charms which now made on his heart an impression so warm and so lasting. In short, he became insensible to every thing that did not relate to his passion.

His election to the crown of Poland, say historians, far from flattering him, appeared to him an exile, and when he was in that kingdom, absence, far from diminishing his love, seemed to increase it. Whenever he addressed the princess, he pricked his finger, and never wrote to her but with his blood. No sooner was he informed of the death of Charles IX, than he dispatched a courier to assure her that she should soon be queen of France; and, on his return, his thoughts

were solely bent on dissolving her marriage with the Prince de Condé, which, on account of the latter being a protestant, he expected to accomplish. But this determination proved fatal to the princess; for, shortly after, she was attacked by a violent illness, attributed to poison, which carried her off in the flower of her age.

No words can paint Henry's despair at this event: he passed several days in tears and groans; and when he was at length obliged to shew himself in public, he appeared in deep mourning, and entirely covered with emblems of death, even to his very shoe-strings.

The Princess de Condé had been dead upwards of four months, and buried in the abbey-church of *St. Germain-des-Prés*, when Henry, on entering the abbey, whither he was invited to a grand entertainment given there by Cardinal de Bourbon, felt such violent tremblings at his heart, that not being able to endure their continuance, he was going away; but they ceased all at once, on the body of the princess being removed from its tomb, and conveyed elsewhere for that evening.

His mother, Catherine de Medicis, by prevailing on him to marry Louise de Vaudemont, one of the most beautiful women in Europe, hoped that she would make him forget her whom death had snatched from him, and he himself perhaps indulged a similar hope, but the memoirs of those times concur in asserting that the image of the Princess de Condé was never effaced from his heart, and that, to the day of his assassination, which did not happen till seventeen years after, whatever efforts he made to subdue his passion, were wholly unavailing.

Sympathy is a sentiment to which few persons attach the same ideas. It may be classed in three distinct species. The first seems to have an immediate connexion with the senses; the second, with the heart; and the third, with the mind. Although it cannot be denied that the preference we bestow on this or that woman is the result of the one or the other of these, or even of all three together; yet the analysis of our attachments is, in some cases, so difficult as to defy the investigation of reason. For, as the old song says, some lovers

> Will "whimper and whine
> For lilies and roses,
> For eyes, lips, and noses,
> Or a *tip of an ear*."

To cut the matter short, I think it fully proved, by the example of some of the wisest men, that the affections are often captivated by something indefinable, or, in the words of Corneille,

"Par un je ne sais quoi—qu'on ne peut exprimer."

LETTER XXXIII.

Paris, December 14, 1801.

I have already spoken to you of the *Pont Neuf*. To the east of it, as you will see by the Plan of Paris, the small islands in the middle of the Seine are connected to its banks by several bridges; while to the west, there are two only, though a third is projected, and, previously to the late rise of the river, workmen were employed in driving piles for the foundation. I shall now describe to you these two bridges, beginning with the

PONT NATIONAL.

Before the revolution, this bridge bore the appellation of *Pont Royal*, from its having been built by Lewis XIV, and the expenses defrayed but of his privy purse, to supply the place of one of wood, situated opposite to the *Louvre*, which was carried away by the ice in 1684. It is reckoned one of the most solid bridges in Paris, and, till the existence of the *Pont de la Concorde*, was the only one built across the river, without taking advantage of the islands above-mentioned. It stands on four piles, forming with the two abutments five elliptical arches of a handsome sweep. The span of the centre arch is seventy-two feet, that of the two adjoining sixty-six, and that of the two outer ones sixty. On each side is a raised pavement for foot-passengers, in the middle of which I should imagine that there is breadth sufficient to admit of four carriages passing abreast.

GABRIEL had undertaken this bridge from the designs of MANSARD. The work was already in a state of forwardness, when, at a pile on the side of the *Faubourg St. Germain*, the former could not succeed in excluding the water. A Jacobin, not a clubist, but a Jacobin friar, one FRANÇOIS ROMAIN, who had just finished the bridge of Strasburg, was sent for by the king to the assistance of the French architects, and had the honour of completing the rest of the work.

In the time of Henry IV, there was no bridge over this part of the river, which he used frequently to cross in the first boat that presented itself. Returning one day from the chace, in a plain hunting dress, and having with him only two or three gentlemen, he stepped into a skiff to be carried over from the *Faubourg St. Germain* to the *Tuileries*. Perceiving that he was not known by the waterman, he asked him what people said of the peace, meaning the peace of Vervins, which was just concluded. "Faith! I don't understand this sort of peace," answered the waterman; "there are taxes on every thing, and even, on this miserable boat, with which I have a hard matter to earn my bread."—"And does not the king," continued Henry, "intend to lighten these taxes?"—"The king is a good kind of man enough," replied the waterman; "but he has a lady who

must needs have so many fine gowns and gewgaws; and 'tis we who pay for all that. One would not think so much of it either, if she kept to him only; but, they say, she suffers herself to be kissed by many others."

Henry IV was so amused by this conversation, that, the next morning, he sent for the waterman, and made him repeat, word for word, before the Dutchess of Beaufort, all that he had said the preceding evening. The Dutchess, much irritated, was for having him hanged. "You are a foolish woman," said Henry; "this is a poor devil whom poverty has put out of humour. In future, he shall pay no tax for his boat, and I am convinced that he will then sing every day, *Vive Henri! Vive Gabrielle!*"

The north end of the *Pont National* faces the wing of the palace of the *Tuileries* distinguished by the name of the *Pavillon de Flore*. From the middle of this bridge, you see the city in a striking point of view. Here, the celebrated Marshal de Catinat used frequently to make it part of his morning's amusement to take his stand, and, while he enjoyed the beauty of the prospect, he opened his purse to the indigent as they passed. That philosophic warrior often declared that he never beheld any thing equal to the *coup d'œil* from this station. In fact, on the one side, you discover the superb gallery of the *Louvre*, extending from that palace to the *Tuileries*; and, on the other, the *Palais du Corps Législatif*, and a long range of other magnificent buildings, skirting the quays on each bank of the river.

These quays, nearly to the number of thirty, are faced with stone, and crowned with parapets breast high, which, in eighteen or twenty different spots, open to form watering-places. The Seine, being thus confined within its bed, the eye is never displeased here by the sight of muddy banks like those of the Thames, or the nose offended by the smell arising from the filth which the common sewers convey to the river.

The galiot of *St. Cloud* regularly takes its departure from the *Pont National*. Formerly, on Sundays and holidays, it used to be a very entertaining sight to contemplate the Paris cocknies crowding into this vessel. Those who arrived too late, jumped into the first empty boat, which frequently overset, either through the unskilfulness of the waterman, or from being overloaded. In consequence of such accidents, the boats of the Seine are prohibited from taking more than sixteen passengers.

Not many years ago, an excursion to *St. Cloud* by water, was an important voyage to some of the Parisians, as you may see by referring to the picture which has been drawn of it, under the title of "*Voyage de Paris à Saint Cloud par mer, et le retour de Saint Cloud à Paris par terre*."

Following the banks of the Seine, towards the west, we next come to the

PONT DE LA CONCORDE.

This bridge, which had long been wished for and projected, was begun in 1787, and finished in 1790. Its southern extremity stands opposite to the *Palais du Corps Législatif*; while that of the north faces the *Place de la Concorde*, whence it not only derives its present appellation, but has always experienced every change of name to which the former has been subject.

The lightness of its apearance is less striking to those who have seen the *Pont de Neuilly*, in which PERRONET, Engineer of bridges and highways, has, by the construction of arches nearly flat, so eminently distinguished himself. He is likewise the architect of this bridge, which is four hundred and sixty-two feet in length by forty-eight in breadth. Like the *Pont National*, it consists of five elliptical arches. The span of the centre arch is ninety-six feet; that of the collateral ones, eighty-seven; and that of the two others near the abutments, sixty-eight. Under one of the latter is a tracking-path for the facility of navigation.

The piles, which are each nine feet in thickness, have, on their starlings, a species of pillars that support a cornice five feet and a half high. Perpendicularly to these pillars are to rise as many pyramids, which are to be crowned by a parapet with a balustrade: in all these, it is intended to display no less elegance of workmanship than the arches present boldness of design and correctness of execution.

On crossing these bridges, it has often occurred to me, how much the Parisians must envy us the situation of our metropolis. If the Seine, like the Thames, presented the advantage of braving the moderate winds, and of conveying, by regular tides, the productions of the four quarters of the globe to the quays which skirt its banks, what an acquisition would it not be to their puny commerce! What a gratification to their pride to see ships discharging their rich cargoes at the foot of the *Pont de la Concorde!* The project of the canal of Languedoc must, at first, have apparently presented greater obstacles; yet, by talents and perseverance, these were overcome at a time when the science of machinery of every description was far less understood than it is at the present moment.

It appears from the account of Abbon, a monk of the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, that, in the year 885, the Swedes, Danes, and Normans, to the number of forty-five thousand men, came to lay siege to Paris, with seven hundred sail of ships, exclusively of the smaller craft, so that, according to this historian, who was an eye-witness of the fact, the river Seine was covered with their vessels for the space of two leagues.

Julius Cæsar tells us, in the third book of his Commentaries, that, at the time of his conquest of the Gauls, in the course of one winter, he constructed six hundred vessels of the wood which then grew in the environs of Paris; and that, in the following spring, he embarked his army, horse and foot, provisions and baggage, in these vessels, descended the Seine, reached Dieppe, and thence crossed over to England, of which, he says, he made a conquest.

About forty years ago, the scheme engaged much attention. In 1759, the Academy of Sciences, Belles-Lettres, and Arts of Rouen, proposed the following as a prize-question: "Was not the Seine formerly navigable for vessels of greater burden than those which are now employed on it; and are there not means to restore to it, or to procure it, that advantage?" In 1760, the prize was adjourned; the memoirs presented not being to the satisfaction of the Academy. In 1761, the new candidates having no better success, the subject was changed.

However, notwithstanding this discouragement, we find that, on the 1st of August, 1766, Captain Berthelot actually reached the *Pont Royal* in a vessel of one hundred and sixty tons burden. When, on the 22d of the same month, he departed thence, loaded with merchandise, the depth of the water in the Seine was twenty-five feet, and it was nearly the same when he ascended the river. This vessel was seven days on her passage from Rouen to Paris: but a year or two ago, four days only were employed in performing the same voyage by another vessel, named the *Saumon*.

Engineers have ever judged the scheme practicable, and the estimate of the necessary works, signed by several skilful surveyors, was submitted to the ministry of that day. The amount was forty-six millions of livres (circa £1,916,600 sterling).

But what can compensate for the absence of the tide? This is an advantage, which, in a commercial point of view, must ever insure to London a decided superiority over Paris. Were the Seine to-morrow rendered navigable for vessels of large burden, they must, for a considerable distance, be tracked against the stream, or wait till a succession of favourable winds had enabled them to stem it through its various windings; whereas nothing can be more favourable to navigation than the position of London. It has every advantage of a sea-port without its dangers. Had it been placed lower down, that is, nearer to the mouth of the Thames, it would have been more exposed to the insults of a foreign enemy, and also to the insalubrious exhalations of the swampy marshes. Had it been situated higher up the river, it would have been inaccessible to ships of large burden.

Thus, by no effort of human invention or industry can Paris rival London in commerce, even on the supposition that France could produce as many men possessed of the capital and spirit of enterprise, for which our British merchants are at present unrivalled.

Yet, may not this pre-eminence in commercial prosperity lead to our destruction, as the gigantic conquests of France may also pave the way to her ruin? Alas! the experience of ages proves this melancholy truth, which has also been repeated by Raynal: "Commerce," says that celebrated writer, "in the end finds its ruin in the riches which it accumulates, as every powerful state lays the foundation of its own destruction in extending its conquests."

LETTER XXXIV.

Paris, December 16, 1801.

No part of the engagement into which I have entered with you, so fully convinces me of my want of reflection, and shews that my zeal, at the time, got the better of my judgment, as my promising you some ideas on

FRENCH LITERATURE.

It would, I now perceive, be necessary to have inhabited France for several years past, with the determined intention of observing this great empire solely in that single point of view, to be able to keep my word in a manner worthy of you and of the subject. It would be necessary to write a large volume of rational things; and, in a letter, I ought to relate them with conciseness and truth; draw sketches with rapidity, but clearness; in short, express positive results, without deviating from abstractions and generalities, since you require from me, on this subject, no more than a letter, and not a book.

I come to the point. I shall consider literature in a double sense. First, the thing in itself; then, its connexions with the sciences, and the men who govern. In England, it has been thought, or at least insinuated in some of the papers and periodical publications, that literature had been totally annihilated in France within the last twelve years. This is a mistake: its aberrations have been taken for eclipses. It has followed the revolution through all its phases.

Under the Constituent Assembly, the literary genius of the French was turned towards politics and eloquence. There remain valuable monuments of the fleeting existence of that assembly. MIRABEAU, BARNAVE, CAZALÈS, MAURY, and thirty other capital writers, attest this truth. Nothing fell from their lips or their pen that did not hear at the same time the stamp of philosophy and literature.

Under the Legislative Assembly and the Convention, the establishments of the empire of letters

were little respected. Literati themselves became victims of the political collisions of their country; but literature was constantly cultivated under several forms. Those who shewed themselves its oppressors, were obliged to assume the refined language which it alone can supply, and that, at the very time when they declared war against it.

Under the Directorial government, France, overwhelmed by the weight of her long misfortunes, first cast her eye on the construction of a new edifice, dedicated to human knowledge in general, under the name of *National Institute*. Literature there collected its remains, and those who cultivate it, as members of this establishment, are not unworthy of their office. Such as are not admitted into this society, notwithstanding all the claims the most generally acknowledged, owe this omission to moral or political causes only, on which I could not touch, without occupying myself about persons rather than the thing itself.

The French revolution, which has levelled so many gigantic fortunes, is said (by its advocates) to have really spread a degree of comfort among the inferior classes. Indeed, if there are in France, as may be supposed, much fewer persons rolling in riches, there are, I am informed, much fewer pining in indigence. This observation, admitting it to be strictly true, may, with great propriety, be applied to French literature. France no longer has a VOLTAIRE or a ROUSSEAU, to wield the sceptre of the literary world; but she has a number of literary degrees of public interest or simple amusement, which are perfectly well filled. Few literati are without employ, and still fewer are beneath their functions. The place of member of the Institute is a real public function remunerated by the State. It is to this cause, and to a few others, which will occur to you beforehand, that we must attribute the character of gravity which literature begins to assume in this country. The prudery of the school of DORAT would here be hissed. Here, people will not quarrel with the Graces; but they will no longer make any sacrifice to them at the expense of common sense.

In this literary republic still exist, as you may well conceive, the same passions, the same littleness, the same intrigues as formerly for arriving at celebrity, and keeping in that envied sphere; but all this makes much less noise at the present juncture. It is this which has induced the belief that literature had diminished its intensity, both in form and object: that is another mistake. The French literati are mostly a noisy class, who love to make themselves conspicuous, even by the clashing of their pretensions; but, to the great regret of several among them, people in this country now attach a rational importance only to their quarrels, which formerly attracted universal attention. The revolution has been so great an event; it has overthrown such great interests; that no one here can any longer flatter himself with exciting a personal interest, except by performing the greatest actions.

I must also make a decisive confession on this matter, and acknowledge that literature, which formerly held the first degree in the scale of the moral riches of this nation, is likely to decline in priority and influence. The sciences have claimed and obtained in the public mind a superiority resulting from the very nature of their object; I mean utility. The title of *savant* is not more brilliant than formerly; but it is more imposing; it leads to consequence, to superior employments, and, above all, to riches. The sciences have done so much for this people during their revolution, that, whether through instinct, or premeditated gratitude, they have declared their partiality towards the *savans*, or men of science, to the detriment of the mere literati. The sciences are nearly allied both to pride and national interest; while literature concerns only the vanity and interest of a few individuals. This difference must have been felt, and of itself alone have fixed the esteem of the public, and graduated their suffrages according to the merit of the objects. Regard being had to their specific importance, I foresee that this natural classification will be attended with happy consequences, both for sciences and literature.

I have been enabled to observe that very few men of science are unacquainted with the literature of their country, whether for seeking in it pleasing relaxation, or for borrowing from it a magic style, a fluent elocution, a harmony, a pomp of expression, with which the most abstract meditations can no longer dispense to be received favourably by philosophers and men of taste. Very few literati, on the other hand, are unacquainted with philosophy and the sciences, and, above all, with natural knowledge; whether not to be too much in arrear with the age in which they live, and which evidently inclines to the study of Nature, or to give more colour and consistence to their thoughts, by multiplying their degrees of comparison with the eternal type of all that is great and fertile.

It has been so often repeated that HOMER, OSSIAN, and MILTON, knew every thing known in their times; that they were at once the greatest natural philosophers and the best moralists of their age, that this truth has made an impression on most of the adepts in literature; and as the impulse is given, and the education of the present day by the retrenchment of several unnecessary pursuits, has left, in the mind of the rising generation, vacancies fit to be filled by a great variety of useful acquirements, it appears to me demonstrated, on following analogy, and the gradations of human improvement, that the sciences, philosophy, and literature will some day have in France but one common domain, as they there have at present, with the arts, only one central point of junction.

The French government has flattered the literati and artists, by calling them in great numbers round it and its ministers, either to give their advice in matters of taste, or to serve as a decoration to its power, and an additional lustre to the crown of glory with which it is endeavouring to encircle itself; but, in general, the palpable, substantial, and solid distinctions

have been reserved for men of science, chymists, naturalists, and mathematicians: they have seats in the Senate, in the Tribunate, in the Council of State, and in all the Administrations; while LAHARPE, the veteran of French literature, is not even a member of the Institute, and is reduced to give lessons, which are, undoubtedly, not only very interesting to the public, but also very profitable to himself, and produce him as much money, at least, as his knowledge has acquired him reputation.

It results from what I have said, that French literature has not experienced any apparent injury from the revolutionary storm: it has only changed its direction and means: it has still remaining talents which have served their time, talents in their maturity, and talents in a state of probation, and of much promise.

Persons of reflection entertain great hopes from the violent shock given to men's minds by the revolution; from that silent inquietude still working in their hearts; from that sap, full of life, circulating with rapidity through this body politic. "The factions are muzzled," say they; "but the factious spirit still ferments under the curb of power; if means can be found to force it to evaporate on objects which belong to the domain of illusion and sensibility, the result will prove a great blessing to France, by carrying back to the arts and to literature, and even to commerce, that exuberance of heat and activity which can no longer be employed without danger on political subjects."

The same men, whom I have just pointed out, affirm that England herself will feel, in her literary and scientific system, a salutary concussion from the direction given here to the public mind. They expect with impatience that the British government will engage in some great measure of public utility, in order that the rivalship subsisting between the two nations on political and military points, which have no longer any object, may soon become, in France, the most active and most powerful vehicle for different parts of her interior improvement.

Of all kinds of literature, *Epic Poetry* is the only one in which France has not obtained such success as to place her on a level with TASSO and MILTON. To make amends, her poets have followed with advantage the steps of ARIOSTO, without being able to surpass him. From this school have issued two modern epic poems: *La guerre des dieux payens contre les dieux chretiens*, by PARNY and *La conquête de Naples*, by GUDIN. The former is distinguished by an easy versification, and an imagination jocose and fertile, though, certainly, far too licentious. Educated in the school of DORAT, he possesses his redundance and grace, without his fatuity. His elegies are worthy of TIBULLUS; and his fugitive pieces are at once dictated by wit and sentiment: thus it was that CHAULIEU wrote, but with more negligence. The latter has thought to compensate for the energy and grace that should give life to his subject (which he considers only in a playful and satirical light), by a truly tiresome multitude of incidents. Conceive three huge volumes in octavo, for a poem which required but one of a moderate size, and, in them, a versification frequently negligent. These are two serious faults, which the French will not readily overlook. No where are critics more severe, on the one hand, against redundance that is steril, and on the other, respecting the essential composition of verse, which ought always to flow with grace, even when under restraint. Catholicism, however, has no more reason to be pleased with the loose scenes presented in this work, than christianity, in general, has with the licentious pictures of PARNY; but GUDIN is far less dangerous to Rome, because he will be less read.

Several authors have devoted their labours to *Tragedy*, during the course of the revolution. CHÉNIER has produced a whole theatre, which will remain to posterity, notwithstanding his faults, as he has contrived to cover them with beauties. ARNAULT and MERCIER of Compiegne are two young authors that seem to have been educated in the school of DUCIS, who is at this day the father of all the present tragic writers. The pieces which they have produced have met with some success, and are of considerable promise.

Comedy lost a vigorous supporter under the tyranny of ROBESPIERRE. This was FABRE D'EGLANTINE. That poet seldom failed of success, drew none but bold characters, and placed himself, by his own merit, between MOLIÈRE and DESTOUCHES. COLIN D'HARLEVILLE and LEGOUVÉ produce agreeable pieces which succeed. They paint, with an easy and graceful pencil, the absurdities and humours of society; but their pieces are deficient in plot and action. FABRÉ D'EGLANTINE pourtrayed, in striking colours, those frightful vices which are beyond the reach of the law. His pieces are strongly woven and easily unravelled. PICARD seems to have taken GOLDONI, the celebrated Venetian comic writer, for his model. Like him, an excellent painter, a writer by impulse, he produces, with wonderful fecundity, a number of interesting comedies, which make the audience laugh till they shed tears, and how and then give great lessons. PALISSOT, CAILHAVA, and MERCIER are still living; but no longer produce any thing striking.

I shall say little of French eloquence. Under the new form of government, orators have less opportunity and less scope for displaying transscendant talents than during the first years of the revolution. Two members of the government, CAMBACÉRÈS and LEBRUN, have distinguished themselves in this career by close, logical argument, bright conceptions, and discriminating genius. BENJAMIN CONSTANT and GUINGUÉNÉ, members of the Tribunate, shewed themselves to advantage last year, as I understand, in some productions full of energy and wisdom. DEMEUNIER and BOISSI D'ANGLAS are already, in the Tribunate, veterans of eloquence; but the man who unites, in this respect, all the approbation of that body, and even of France, is DAUNOU. In exterior means he is deficient; but his thoughts proceed at once from a

warm heart and an open mind, guided by a superior genius; and his expressions manifest the source from which they flow.

Several capital works of the historic kind have made their appearance in France within the last ten years; but, with the exception of those of celebrated voyagers or travellers, such as LA PÉROUSE, BAUDIN, SONNINI, LABILLARDIÈRE, OLIVIER, ANDRÉ MICHAUD, &c. those whose object has been to treat of the arts, sciences, and manners of Greece, such as the travels of Anacharsis, of Pythagoras, or of Antenor; those whose subject has not been confined to France, such as the *Précis de l'histoire générale*, by ANQUETIL; people ought to be on their guard against the merit even of productions written mediately or immediately on the revolution, its causes, and consequences. The passions are not yet sufficiently calmed for us not to suspect the spirit of party to interpose itself between men and truth. The most splendid talents are frequently in this line only the most faithless guide. It is affirmed, however, that there are a few works which recommend themselves, by the most philosophic impartiality; but none of these have as yet fallen under my observation. A striking production is expected from the pen of the celebrated VOLNEY. This is a *Tableau Physique des États Unis*; but it is with regret I hear that its appearance is delayed by the author's indisposition.

Novels are born and die here, as among us, with astonishing abundance. The rage for evocations and magic spectres begins to diminish. The French assert that they have borrowed it from us, and from the school of MRS. RADCLIFF, &c. &c. They also assert, that the policy of the royalist-party was not unconnected with this propagation of cavernous, cadaverous adventures, ideas, and illusions, intended, they say, by the impression of a new moral terror to infatuate their countrymen again with the dull and soporific prestiges of popery. They see with joy that the taste for pleasure has assumed the ascendency, at least in Paris, and that novels in the English style no longer make any one tremble, at night by the fireside, but the old beldams of the provincial departments.

The less important kinds of literature, such as the *Apologue* or *Moral Fable*, which is not at this day much in fashion; the *Eclogue* or *Idyl*, whose culture particularly belongs to agrestical and picturesque regions; *Political Satire*, which is never more refined than under the influence of arbitrary power; these kinds, to which I might add the *Madrigal* and *Epigram*, without being altogether abandoned, are not generally enough cultivated here to obtain special mention. I shall make an exception only in favour of the pastoral poems of LECLERC (of Marne and Loire) of which I have heard a very favourable account.

At the end of a revolution which has had periods so ensanguined, *Romance*, (romantic poetry) must have been cultivated and held in request. It has been so, especially by sentimental minds, and not a little too through the spirit of party; this was likely to be the case, since its most affecting characteristic is to mourn over tombs.

Lyric poetry has been carried by LEBRUN, CHÉNIER, &c. to a height worthy of JEAN BAPTISTE ROUSSEAU. The former, above all, will stand his ground, by his weight, to the latest posterity; while hitherto the lyric productions of CHÉNIER have not been able to dispense with the charm of musical harmony. FONTANES, CUBIÈRES, PONS DE VERDUN, BAOUR-LORNIAN, and DESPAZE are secondary geniuses, who do not make us forget that DELISLE and the Chevalier BERTIN are still living; but whose fugitive pieces sometimes display many charms.

When you shall be made acquainted that Paris, of all the cities in the world, is that where the rage for dancing is the most *nationalized*, where, from the gilded apartments of the most fashionable quarters to the smoky chambers of the most obscure suburbs, there are executed more capers in cadence, than in any other place on earth, you will not be surprised if I reserve a special article for one of the kinds of literature that bears the most affinity to this distinctive diversion of the Parisian belles, which has led MERCIER to say, that their city was the *guingette* of Europe; I mean *Song*. Perhaps, a subject new and curious to treat on, would be the influence of vocal music on the French revolution. Every one knows that this people marched to battle singing; but, independently of the subject being above my abilities, it would carry me too far beyond the limited plan which I have prescribed to myself.

Let it suffice for you to know, that there has existed in Paris a sort of lyric manufactory, which, under the name of "*Diners du vaudeville*" scrupulously performed, for several years, an engagement to furnish, every month, a collection of songs very agreeable and very captivating. These productions are pretty often full of allusions, more or less veiled, to the political events of the moment; seldom, however, have they been handled as very offensive weapons against persons or institutions. The friends of mirth and wine are seldom dark and dangerous politicians. This country possesses a great number of them, who combine the talents required by the gravest magistracy with all the levity of the most witty and most cheerful *bon vivant*. I shall quote at random FRANÇOIS DE NEUFCHÂTEAU, the two SÉGURS, PIIS, &c. &c. Others, such as BARRÉ, DESFONTAINES, and RADET, confine themselves to their exclusive functions of professed song-makers, and write only for the little musical theatres, or for the leisure of their countrymen and their evening-amusements.

It is impossible to terminate a sketch of the literature of France, without saying a word of such of the *Journals* as I have yet perused, which are specially devoted to it. The *Mercure de France* is one of those held in most esteem; and habit, as well as the spirit of party, concurs in making the fortune of this journal. There exists another, conducted by a member of the Institute, named

POUGENS, under the title of *Bibliothèque Française*, which is spoken of very favourably. But that which appears every ten days, under the name of *Décade Philosophique*, is the best production of the sort. A society of literary men, prudent, well-informed, and warmly attached to their country, are its authors, and deposit in it a well-digested analysis of every thing new that appears in the arts, sciences, or literature. Nevertheless, a labour so carefully performed, is perfectly disinterested. This is the only enterprise of the kind that does not afford a livelihood to its associates, and is supported by a zeal altogether gratuitous.

Without seeking to blame or approve the title of this last-mentioned journal, I shall only remark that the word *Décade*, coupled with the word *Philosophique*, becomes in the eyes of many persons a double cause of reprobation; and that, at this day, more than ever, those two words are, in the opinion the most in fashion, marked by a proscription that is reflected on every thing which belongs to the science of philosophy.

This would be the moment to inquire into the secret or ostensible causes which have led to the retrograde course that is to be remarked in France in the ideas which have been hitherto reckoned as conducive to the advancement of reason. This would be the moment to observe the new government of France endeavouring to balance, the one by the other, the opinions sprung from the Republic, and those daily conjured up from the Monarchy; holding in *equilibrio* two colours of doctrines so diametrically opposite, and consequently two parties equally dissatisfied at not being able to crush each other, *neutralizing* them, in short, by its immense influence in the employment of their strength, when they bewilder or exhaust themselves uselessly for its interests; but I could not touch on these matters, without travelling out of the domain of literature, which is the only one that is at present familiar to me, in order to enter into yours, where you have not leisure to direct me; and you may conceive with what an ill grace I should appear, in making before you, in politics, excursions, which, probably, would have for me the inconvenience of commanding great efforts, without leaving me the hope of adding any thing to your stock of information.

LETTER XXXV.

Paris, December 18, 1801.

Divided as Paris is by the Seine, it seldom happens that one has not occasion to cross it more than once in the course of the day. I shall therefore make you acquainted with the bridges which connect to its banks the islands situated in that part of the river I have not yet described. Being out of my general track, I might otherwise forget to make any further mention of them, which would be a manifest omission, now you have before you the Plan of Paris.

We will also embrace the opportunity of visiting the *Palais de Justice* and the Cathedral of *Notre-Dame*. East of the *Pont-Neuf*, we first arrive at the

PONT AU CHANGE.

This bridge, which leads from the north bank of the Seine to the *Ile du Palais*, is one of the most ancient in Paris. Though, like all those of which I have now to speak, it crosses but one channel of the river, it was called the *Grand Pont*, till the year 1141, when it acquired its present name on Lewis VII establishing here all the money-changers of Paris.

It was also called *Pont aux Oiseaux*, because bird-sellers were permitted to carry on their business here, on condition of letting loose two hundred dozen of birds, at the moment when kings and queens passed, in their way to the cathedral, on the day of their public entry. By this custom, it was intended to signify that, if the people had been oppressed in the preceding reign, their rights, privileges, and liberties would be fully re-established under the new monarch.

On the public entry of Isabeau de Bavière, wife of Charles VI, a Genoese stretched a rope from the top of the towers of *Notre-Dame* to one of the houses on this bridge: he thence descended, dancing on this rope, with a lighted torch in each hand. Habited as an angel, he placed a crown on the head of the new queen, and reascending his rope, he appeared again in the air. The chronicle adds that, as it was already dark, he was seen by all Paris and the environs.

This bridge was then of wood, and covered with houses also of wood. Two fires, one of which happened in 1621, and the other in 1639, occasioned it to be rebuilt of stone in 1647.

The *Pont au Change* consists of seven arches. Previously to the demolition of the houses, which, till 1786, stood on each side of this bridge, the passage was sufficiently wide for three carriages.

Traversing the *Ile du Palais* from north to south, in order to proceed from the *Pont au Change* to the *Pont St. Michel*, we pass in front of the

PALAIS DE JUSTICE.

Towards the end of the ninth century, this palace was begun by Eudes. It was successively enlarged by Robert, son of Hugh Capet, by St. Lewis, and by Philip the Fair. Under Charles V, who abandoned it to occupy the *Hôtel St. Paul*, which he had built, it was nothing more than an assemblage of large towers, communicating with each other by galleries. In 1383, Charles VI

made it his residence. In 1431, Charles VII relinquished it to the Parliament of Paris. However, Francis I. took up his abode here for some time.

It was in the great hall of this palace that the kings of France formerly received ambassadors, and gave public entertainments.

On Whitsunday, 1313, Philip the Fair here knighted his three sons, with all the ceremonies of ancient chivalry. The king of England, our unfortunate Edward II, and his abominable queen Isabella, who were invited, crossed the sea on purpose, and were present at this entertainment, together with a great number of English barons. It lasted eight days, and is spoken of, by historians, as a most sumptuous banquet.

This magnificent hall, as well as great part of the palace, being reduced to ashes in 1618, it was rebuilt, in its present state, under the direction of that skilful architect, JACQUES DE BROSSES. It is both spacious and majestic, and is the only hall of the kind in France: the arches and arcades which support it are of hewn stone.

Another fire, which happened in 1776, consumed all the part extending from the gallery of prisoners to the *Sainte Chapelle*, founded by St. Lewis, and where, before the revolution, were shewn a number of costly relics. The ravages occasioned by this fire, were repaired in 1787, and the space in front laid open by the erection of uniform buildings in the form of a crescent. To two gloomy gothic gates has been substituted an iron railing, of one hundred and twenty feet in extent, through which is seen a spacious court formed by two wings of new edifices, and a majestic façade that affords an entrance to the interior of the palace.

In this court Madame La Motte, who, in 1786, made so conspicuous a figure in the noted affair of the diamond necklace, was publicly whipped. I was in Paris at the time, though not present at the execution of the sentence.

In the railing, are three gates, the centre one of which is charged with garlands and other gilt ornaments. At the two ends are pavilions decorated with four Doric pillars. Towards the *Pont St. Michel* is a continuation of the building ornamented with a bas-relief, at present denominated *Le serment civique*.

At the top of a flight of steps, is an avant-corps, with four Doric columns, a balustrade above the entablature, four statues standing on a level with the base of the pillars, and behind, a square dome.

These steps lead you to the *Mercière* gallery, having on the one side, the *Sainte Chapelle*, and on the other, the great hall, called the *Salle des Procureurs*. In this extensive hall are shops, for the sale of eatables and pamphlets, which, since the suppression of the Parliament, seem to have little custom, as well as those of the milliners, &c. in the other galleries.

In what was formerly called the *grande chambre*, where the Parliament of Paris used to sit, the ill-fated Lewis XVI, in 1788, held the famous bed of justice, in which D'ESPRESMENIL, one of the members of that body, struck the first blow at royalty; a blow that was revenged by a *lettre de cachet*, which exiled him to the *Ile de St. Marguerite*, famous for being the place of confinement of the great personage who was always compelled to wear an *iron mask*. The courage of this counsellor, who was a noble and deputy of the *noblesse*, may be considered as the *primum mobile* of the revolution. Under the despotism of the court, he braved all its vengeance; but, in the sequel, he afforded a singular proof of the instability of the human mind. After haying stirred up all the parliaments against the royal authority, he again became the humble servant of the crown.

After the revolution, the *Palais de Justice* became the seat of the Revolutionary Tribunal, where the satellites of Robespierre, not content with sending to the scaffold sixty victims at a time, complained of the insufficiency of their means for bringing to trial all the enemies of liberty. Dumas, at one time president of this sanguinary tribunal, proposed to his colleagues to join to the hall, where the tribunal sat, part of the great hall of the palace, in order to assemble there five or six hundred victims at a time; and on its being observed to him that such a sight might in the end disgust the people; "Well," said he, "there's but one method of accomplishing our object, without any obstacle, that is to erect a guillotine in the court-yard of every prison, and cause the prisoners to be executed there during the night." Had not Robespierre's downfall involved that of all his blood-thirsty dependents, there seems no doubt that this plan would have been carried into speedy execution.

Nothing can paint the vicissitude of human events in colours more striking than the transitions of this critical period. Dumas who made this proposal, and had partially satisfied his merciless disposition by signing, a few hours before, the death-warrant of sixty victims, was the very next day brought before the same tribunal, composed of his accomplices, or rather his creatures, and by them condemned to die. Thus did experience confirm the general observation, that the multiplicity and enormity of punishments announces an approaching revolution. The torrents of blood which tyrants shed, are, in the end, swelled by their own.

In lieu of a tribunal of blood, the *Palais de Justice* is now appropriated to the sittings of the three tribunals, designated by the following titles: *Tribunal de cassation*, *Tribunal d'appel*, and *Tribunal*

de première instance. The first of these, the *Tribunal de cassation*, occupies the audience-chambers of the late parliament; while the *grande chambre* is appointed for the meetings of its united Sections. The decoration of this spacious apartment is entirely changed: it is embellished in the antique style; and a person in contemplating it might fancy himself at Athens.

Adjoining to the *Palais de Justice*, is the famous prison, so dreaded in the early periods of the revolution, called

LA CONCIERGERIE.

From this fatal abode, neither talent, virtue, nor patriotism could, at one time, secure those who possessed such enviable qualities. Lavoisier, Malsherbes, Condorcet, &c. were here successively immured, previously to being sent to the guillotine. Here too the unfortunate Marie-Antoinette lived in a comfortless manner, from the 2nd of July, 1793, to the 13th of October following, the period of her condemnation.

On being reconducted to the prison, at four o'clock in the morning, after hearing her sentence read, the hapless queen displayed a fortitude worthy of the daughter of the high-minded Maria Theresa. She requested a few hours' respite, to compose her mind, and entreated to be left to herself in the room which she had till then occupied. The moment she was alone, she first cut off her hair, and then laying aside her widow's weeds, which she had always worn since the death of the king, put on a white dress, and threw herself on her bed, where she slept till eleven o'clock the same morning, when she was awakened, in order to be taken to the scaffold.

Continuing to cross the *Ile du Palais* in a direction towards the south, we presently reach the

PONT ST. MICHEL.

This bridge stands in a direct line with the *Pont au Change*, and is situated on the south channel of the river. It was formerly of wood: but having been frequently destroyed, it was rebuilt with stone in 1618, and covered on both sides with houses. From the *Pont Neuf*, the back of these buildings has a most disagreeable and filthy appearance. It is said that they are to be taken down, as those have been which stood on the other bridges.

In severe winters, when there is much ice in the river, it is curious, on the breaking up of the frost, to behold families deserting their habitations, like so many rats, and carrying with them their valuables, from the apprehension that these crazy tenements might fall into the river. This wise precaution is suggested by the knowledge of these bridges, when built of wood, having been often swept away by ice or great inundations.

The *Pont St. Michel* consists of four arches. Its length is two hundred and sixty-eight feet, by sixty in breadth, including the houses, between which is a passage for three carriages.

If, to avoid being entangled in narrow, dirty streets, we return, by the same route, to the north bank of the Seine, and proceed to the westward, along the *Quai de Gévres*, which is partly built on piles, driven into the bed of the river, we shall come to the

PONT NOTRE-DAME.

A wooden bridge, which previously existed here, having been frequently carried away by inundations, Lewis XII ordered the construction of the present one of stone, which was begun in 1499, and completed in 1507. It was built from the plan of one JOCONDE, a Cordelier, and native of Verona, and is generally admired for the solidity, as well as beauty of its architecture. It consists of six arches, and is two hundred and seventy-six feet in length. Formerly it was bordered by houses, which were taken down in 1786: this has rendered the quarter more airy, and consequently more salubrious.

It was on this bridge that the Pope's Legate reviewed the ecclesiastical infantry of the League, on the the 3d of June, 1590. Capuchins, Minimes, Cordeliers, Jacobins or Dominicans, Feuillans, &c. all with their robe tucked up, their cowl thrown behind, a helmet on their head, a coat of mail on their body, a sword by their side, and a musquet on their shoulder, marched four by four, headed by the reverend bishop of Senlis, bearing a spontoon. But some of this holy soldiery, forgetting that their pieces were loaded with ball, wished to salute the Legate, and killed by his side one of his chaplains. His Eminence finding that it began to grow hot at this review, hastened to give his benediction, and vanished.

December 18, in continuation.

Traversing once more two-thirds of the *Ile du Palais* in a direction from north to south, and then striking off to the east, up the *Rue de Callandre*, we reach the

CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE-DAME.

This church, the first ever built in Paris, was begun about the year 375, under the reign of the emperor Valentinian I. It was then called *St. Etienne* or *St. Stephen's*, and there was as yet no other within the walls of this city in 1522, when Childebert, son of Clovis, repaired and enlarged it, adding to it a new basilic, which was dedicated to *Notre Dame* or Our Lady.

More anciently, under Tiberius, there had been, on the same spot, an altar in the open air, dedicated to Jupiter and other pagan gods, part of which is still in being at the MUSEUM OF FRENCH MONUMENTS, in the *Rue des Petits Augustins*.

These two churches existed till about the year 1160, under the reign of Lewis the Young, when the construction of the present cathedral was begun partly on their foundations. It was not finished till 1185, during the reign of Philip Augustus.

This Gothic Church is one of the handsomest and most spacious in France. It has a majestic and venerable appearance, and is supported by one hundred and twenty clustered columns. Its length is three hundred and ninety feet by one hundred and forty-four in breadth, and one hundred and two in height.

We must not expect to find standing here the twenty-six kings, benefactors of this church, from Childeric I to Philip Augustus, fourteen feet high, who figured on the same line, above the three doors of the principal façade. They have all fallen under the blows of the iconoclasts, and are now piled up behind the church. There lie round-bellied Charlemagne, with his pipe in his mouth, and Pepin the Short, with his sword in his hand, and a lion, the emblem of courage, under his feet. The latter, like Tydeus, mentioned in the Iliad, though small in stature, was stout in heart, as appears from the following anecdote related of him by the monk of St. Gal.

In former times, as is well known, kings took a delight in setting wild beasts and ferocious animals to fight against each other. At one of thege fights, between a lion and a bull, in the abbey of Ferrières, Pepin the Short, who knew that some noblemen were daily exercising their pleasantry on his small stature, addressed to them this question: "Which of you feels himself bold enough to kill or separate those terrible animals?" Seeing that not one of them stepped forward, and that the proposal alone made them shudder: "Well," added he, "'tis I then who will perform the feat." He accordingly descended from his place, drew his sword, killed the lion, at another stroke cut off the head of the bull, and then looking fiercely at the railers: "Know," said he to them, "that stature adds nothing to courage, and that I shall find means to bring to the ground the proud persons who shall dare to despise me, as little David laid low the great giant Goliah." Hence the attribute given to the statue of king Pepin, which not long since adorned the façade of *Notre-Dame*.

The groups of angels, saints, and patriarchs, which, no doubt, owe their present existence only to their great number, still present to the eye of the observer that burlesque mixture of the profane and religious, so common in the symbolical representations of the twelfth century. These figures adorn the triple row of indented borders of the arches of the three doors.

Two enormous square towers, each two hundred and two feet in height, and terminated by a platform, decorate each end of the cathedral. The ascent to them is by a winding staircase of three hundred and eighty-nine steps, and their communication is by a gallery which has no support but Gothic pillars of a lightness that excites admiration.

Independently of the six bells, which have disappeared with the little belfry that contained them, in the two towers were ten, one of which weighed forty-four thousand pounds.

At the foot of the north tower is the rural calendar or zodiac, which has been described by M. Le Gentil, member of the Academy of Sciences. The Goths had borrowed from the Indians this custom of thus representing rustic labours at the entrance of their temples.

Another Gothic bas-relief, which is seen on the left, in entering by the great door, undoubtedly represents that condemned soul who, tradition says, rose from his bier, during divine service, in order to pronounce his own damnation.

None of the forty-five chapels have preserved the smallest vestige of their ornaments. Those which escaped the destructive rage of the modern Vandals, have been transported to the MUSEUM OF FRENCH MONUMENTS. The most remarkable are the statue of Pierre de Gondi, archbishop of Paris, the mausoleum of the Conte d'Harcourt, designed by his widow, the modern Artemisia, and executed by Pigalle, together with the group representing the vow of St. Lewis, by Costou the elder. Six angels in bronze, which were seen at the further end of the choir, have also been removed thither.

The stalls present, in square and oval compartments, bas-reliefs very delicately sculptured, representing subjects taken from the life of the Holy Virgin and from the New Testament. Of the two episcopal pulpits, which are at the further end, the one, that of the archbishop, represents the martyrdom of St. Denis; the other, opposite, the cure of king Childebert, by the intercession of St. Germain.

Some old tapestry, hung scantily round the choir, makes one regret the handsome iron railing, so richly wrought, by which it was inclosed, and some valuable pictures, which now figure in the grand Gallery of the CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE ARTS.

The nave, quite as naked as the choir and the sanctuary, had been enriched, as far as the space would admit, with pictures, twelve feet high, given for a long time, on every first of May, by the Goldsmiths' company and the fraternity of St. Anne and St. Marcel.

On the last pillar of the nave, on the right, was the equestrian statue of Philip of Valois. That king was here represented on horseback, with his vizor down, sword in hand, and armed cap-à-pié, in the very manner in which he rode into the cathedral of *Notre-Dame*, in 1328, after the battle of Cassel. At the foot of the altar he left his horse, together with his armour, which he had worn in the battle, as an offering to the Holy Virgin, after having returned thanks to God and to her, say historians, for the victory he had obtained through her intercession.

Above the lateral alleys, as well of the choir as of the nave, are large galleries, separated by little pillars of a single piece, and bordered by iron balustrades. Here spectators place themselves to see grand ceremonies. From their balconies were formerly suspended the colours taken from the enemy: these are now displayed in the *Temple of Mars* at the HÔTEL DES INVALIDES.

The organ, which appears to have suffered no injury, is reckoned one of the loudest and most complete in France. It is related that Daquin, an incomparable organist, who died in 1781, once imitated the nightingale on it so perfectly, that the beadle was sent on the roof of the church, to endeavour to discover the musical bird.

Some of the stained glass is beautiful. Two roses, restored to their original state, the one on the side of the archipiscopal palace in 1726, and the other above the organ, in 1780, prove by their lustre, that the moderns are not so inferior to the ancients, in the art of painting on glass, as is commonly imagined.

Should your curiosity lead you to contemplate the house of Fulbert, the canon, the supposed uncle to the tender Héloïse, where that celebrated woman passed her youthful days, you must enter, by the cloister of *Notre-Dame*, into the street that leads to the *Pont Rouge*, since removed. It is the last house on the right under the arcade, and is easily distinguished by two medallions in stone, preserved on the façade, though it has been several times rebuilt during the space of six hundred years. All the authors who have written on the antiquities of Paris, speak of these medallions as being real portraits of Abélard and Héloïse. It is presumable that they were so originally; but, without being a connoisseur, any one may discover that the dresses of these figures are far more modern than those peculiar to the twelfth century; whence it may be concluded that the original portraits having been destroyed by time, or by the alterations which the house has undergone, these busts have been executed by some more modern sculptor of no great talents.

Leaving the cathedral, by the *Rue Notre-Dame*, and turning to the left, on reaching the *Marché Palu*, we come to the

PETIT PONT.

Like the *Pont St. Michel*, this bridge is situated on the south channel of the river, and stands in a direct line with the *Pont Notre-Dame*. It originally owed its construction to the following circumstance.

Four Jews, accused of having killed one of their converted brethren, were condemned to be publicly whipped through all the streets of the city, on four successive Sundays. After having suffered the half of their sentence, to redeem themselves from the other half, they paid 18,000 francs of gold. This sum was appropriated to the erection of the *Petit Pont*, the first stone of which was laid by Charles VI, in 1395.

In 1718, two barges, loaded with hay, caught fire, and being cut loose, drifted under the arches of this bridge, which, in the space of four hours, was consumed, together with the houses standing on it. The following year it was rebuilt, but without houses.

Proceeding to the east, along the quays of the *Ile du Palais*, you will find the

PONT AU DOUBLE.

This little bridge, situated behind the *Hôtel-Dieu*, of which I shall speak hereafter, is destined for foot-passengers only, as was the *Pont Rouge*. The latter was the point of communication between the *Cité* and the *Ile St. Louis*; but the frequent reparations which it required, occasioned it to be removed in 1791, though, by the Plan of Paris, it still appears to be in existence. However, it is in contemplation to replace it by another of stone.[1]

Supposing that you have regained the north bank of the Seine, by means of the *Pont Notre-Dame*, you follow the quays, which skirt that shore, till you reach the

PONT MARIE.

This bridge forms a communication between the *Port St. Paul* and the *Ile St. Louis*. The *Pont Marie* was named after the engineer who engaged with Henry IV to build it; but that prince having been assassinated; the young king, Lewis XIII, and the queen dowager, laid the first stone in 1614: it was finished, and bordered with houses, in 1635. It consists of five arches. Its length is three hundred feet by sixty-two in breadth. An inundation having carried away two of the arches, in 1658, they were repaired without the addition of houses, and in 1789, the others were removed.

Passing through the *Rue des Deux Ponts*, which lies in a direct line with the *Pont Marie*, we arrive at the

PONT DE LA TOURNELLE.

This bridge takes its name from the *Château de la Tournelle*, contiguous to the *Porte St. Bernard*, where the galley-slaves used formerly to be lodged, till they were sent off to the different public works. It consists of six arches of solid construction, and is bordered on each side by a foot-pavement.

You are now acquainted with all the bridges in Paris; but should you prefer crossing the Seine in a boat, there are several ferries between the bridges, and at other convenient places. Here, you may always meet with a waterman, who, for the sum of one *sou*, will carry you over, whether master or lackey. Like the old ferryman Charon, he makes no distinction of persons.

Footnote 1: Workmen are, at this moment, employed in the construction of three new bridges. The first, already mentioned, will form a communication between the *ci-devant Collège des Quatre Nations* and the *Louvre*; the second, between the *Ile du Palais* and the *Ile St. Louis*; and the third, between the *Jardin des Plantes* and the Arsenal. Return to text

LETTER XXXVI.

Paris, December 20, 1801.

What a charming abode is Paris, for a man who can afford to live at the rate of a thousand or fifteen hundred pounds a year! Pleasures wait not for him to go in quest of them; they come to him of their own accord; they spring up, in a manner, under his very feet, and form around him an officious retinue. Every moment of the day can present a new gratification to him who knows how to enjoy it; and, with prudent management, the longest life even would not easily exhaust so ample a stock.

Paris has long been termed an epitome of the world. But, perhaps, never could this denomination be applied to it with so much propriety as at the present moment. The chances of war have not only rendered it the centre of the fine arts, the museum of the most celebrated masterpieces in existence, the emporium where the luxury of Europe comes to procure its superfluities; but the taste for pleasure has also found means to assemble here all the enjoyments which Nature seemed to have exclusively appropriated to other climates.

Every country has its charms and advantages. Paris alone appears to combine them all. Every region, every corner of the globe seems to vie in hastening to forward hither the tribute of its productions. Are you an epicure? No delicacy of the table but may be eaten in Paris.—Are you a toper? No delicious wine but may be drunk, in Paris.—Are you fond of frequenting places of public entertainment? No sort of spectacle but may be seen in Paris.—Are you desirous of improving your mind? No kind of instruction but may be acquired in Paris.—Are you an admirer of the fair sex? No description of female beauty but may be obtained in Paris.—Are you partial to the society of men of extraordinary talents? No great genius but comes to display his knowledge in Paris.—Are you inclined to discuss military topics? No hero but brings his laurels to Paris.—In a word, every person, favoured by Nature or Fortune, flies to enjoy the gifts of either in Paris. Even every place celebrated in the annals of voluptuousness, is, as it were, reproduced in Paris, which, in some shape or another, presents its name or image.

Without going out of this capital, you may, in the season when Nature puts on her verdant livery, visit *Idalium*, present your incense to the Graces, and adore, in her temple, the queen of love; while at *Tivoli*, you may, perhaps, find as many beauties and charms as were formerly admired at the enchanting spot on the banks of the Anio, which, under its ancient name of *Tibur*, was so extolled by the Latin poets; and close to the Boulevard, at *Frascati*, you may, in that gay season, eat ices as good as those with which Cardinal de Bernis used to regale his visiters, at his charming villa in the *Campagna di Roma*. Who therefore need travel farther than Paris to enjoy every gratification?

If then, towards the close of a war, the most frightful and destructive that ever was waged, the useful and agreeable seem to have proceeded here hand in hand in improvement, what may not be expected in the tranquillity of a few years' peace? Who knows but the emperor Julian's "*dear Lutetia*" may one day vie in splendour with Thebes and its hundred gates, or ancient Rome covering its seven mountains?

However, if *Tivoli* and *Frascati* throw open their delightful recesses to the votaries of pleasure only in spring and summer, even now, during the fogs of December, you may repair to

PAPHOS.

It might almost be said that you enter this place of amusement gratis, for, though a slight tribute of seventy-five *centimes* (*circa* seven-pence halfpenny sterling) is required for the admission of every person, yet you may take refreshment to the amount of that sum, without again putting your hand into your pocket; because the counter mark, given at the door, is received at the bar as ready-money.

This speculation, the first of the kind in France, and one of the most specious, is, by all accounts, also one of the most productive. It would be too rigorous, no doubt, to compare the frequenters of the modern PAPHOS to the inhabitants of the ancient. Here, indeed, you must neither look for *élégantes*, nor *muscadins*; but you may view belles, less gifted by Fortune, indulging in innocent recreation; and for a while dispelling their cares, by dancing to the exhilarating music of an orchestra not ill composed. Here, the grisette banishes the *ennui* of six days' application to the labours of her industry, by footing it away on Sunday. Hither, in short, the less refined sons and daughters of mirth repair to see and be seen, and to partake of the general diversion.

PAPHOS is situated on that part of the Boulevard, called the *Boulevard du Temple*, whither I was led the other evening by that sort of curiosity, which can be satisfied only when the objects that afford it aliment are exhausted. I had just come out of another place of public amusement, at no great distance, called

LA PHANTASMAGORIE.

This is an exhibition in the *Cour des Capucines*, adjoining to the Boulevard, where ROBERTSON, a skilful professor of physics, amuses or terrifies his audience by the appearance of spectres, phantoms, &c. In the piece which I saw, called *Le Tombeau de Robespierre*, he carries illusion to an extraordinary degree of refinement. His cabinet of physics is rich, and his effects of optics are managed in the true style of French gallantry. His experiments of galvanism excite admiration. He repeats the difficult ones of M. VOLTA, and clearly demonstrates the electrical phenomena presented by the metallic pile. A hundred disks of silver and a hundred pieces of zinc are sufficient for him to produce attractions, sparks, the divergency of the electrometer, and electric hail. He charges a hundred Leyden bottles by the simple contact of the metallic pile. ROBERTSON, I understand, is the first who has made these experiments in Paris, and has succeeded in discharging VOLTA's pistol by the galvanic spark.

FITZJAMES, a famous ventriloquist, entertains and astonishes the company by a display of his powers, which are truly surprising.

You may, perhaps, be desirous to procure your family circle the satisfaction of enjoying the *Phantasmagoria*, though not on the grand scale on which it is exhibited by ROBERTSON. By the communication of a friend, I am happy in being enabled to make you master of the secret, as nothing can be more useful in the education of children than to banish from their mind the deceitful illusion of ghosts and hobgoblins, which they are so apt to imbibe from their nurses. But to the point—"You have," says my author, "only to call in the first itinerant foreigner, who perambulates the streets with a *galantee-show* (as it is commonly termed in London), and by imparting to him your wish, if he is not deficient in intelligence and skill, he will soon be able to give you a rehearsal of the apparition of phantoms: for, by approaching or withdrawing the stand of his show, and finding the focus of his glasses, you will see the objects diminish or enlarge either on the white wall, or the sheet that is extended.

"The illusion which leads us to imagine that an object which increases in all its parts, is advancing towards us, is the basis of the *Phantasmagoria*, and, in order to produce it with the *galantee-show*, you have only to withdraw slowly the lantern from the place on which the image is represented, by approaching the outer lens to that on which the object is traced: this is easily done, that glass being fixed in a moveable tube like that of an opera-glass. As for approaching the lantern gradually, it may be effected with the same facility, by placing it on a little table with castors, and, by means of a very simple mechanism, it is evident that both these movements may be executed together in suitable progression.

"The deception recurred to by phantasmagorists is further increased by the mystery that conceals, from the eyes of the public, their operations and optical instruments: but it is easy for the showman to snatch from them this superiority, and to strengthen the illusion for the children whom you choose to amuse with this sight. For that purpose, he has only to change the arrangement of the sheet, by requiring it to be suspended from the ceiling, between him and the spectators, much in the same manner as the curtain of a playhouse, which separates the stage from the public. The transparency of the cloth shews through it the coloured rays, and, provided it be not of too thick and too close a texture, the image presents itself as clear on the one side as on the other.

"If to these easy means you could unite those employed by ROBERTSON, such as the black hangings, which absorb the coloured rays, the little musical preparations, and others, you might transform all the *galantee-shows* into as many *phantasmagorias*, in spite of the priority of invention, which belongs, conscientiously, to Father KIRCHER, a German Jesuit, who first found means to apply his knowledge respecting light to the construction of the magic lantern.

"The coloured figures, exhibited by the phatasmagorists, have no relation to these effects of light: they are effigies covered with gold-beater's skin, or any other transparent substance, in which is placed a dark lantern. The light of this lantern is extinguished or concealed by pulling a string, or touching a spring, at the moment when any one wishes to seize on the figure, which, by this contrivance, seems to disappear.

"The proprietors of the grand exhibitions of *phantasmagoria* join to these simple means a combination of different effects, which they partly derive from the phenomena, presented by the

camera obscura. Some faint idea of that part of physics, called optics, which NEWTON illuminated, by his genius and experience, are sufficient for conceiving the manner in which these appearances are produced, though they require instruments and particular care to give them proper effect."

Such is the elucidation given of the *phantasmagoria* by an intelligent observer, whose friend favoured me with this communication.

LETTER XXXVII.

Paris, December 21, 1801.

If Paris affords a thousand enjoyments to the man of fortune, it may truly be said that, without money, Paris is the most melancholy abode in the world. Privations are then the more painful, because desires and even wants are rendered more poignant by the ostentatious display of every object which might satisfy them. What more cruel for an unfortunate fellow, with an empty purse, than to pass by the kitchen of a *restaurateur*, when, pinched by hunger, he has not the means of procuring himself a dinner? His olfactory nerves being still more readily affected when his stomach is empty, far from affording him a pleasing sensation, then serve only to sharpen the torment which he suffers. It is worse than the punishment of Tantalus, who, dying with thirst, could not drink, though up to his chin in water.

Really, my dear friend, I would advise every rich epicure to fix his residence in this city. Without being plagued by the details of housekeeping, or even at the trouble of looking at a bill of fare, he might feast his eye, and his appetite too, on the inviting plumpness of a turkey, stuffed with truffles. A boar's head set before him, with a Seville orange between its tusks, might make him fancy that he was discussing the greatest interests of mankind at the table of an Austrian Prime Minister, or British Secretary of State; while *pâtés* of *Chartres* or of *Périgord* hold out to his discriminating palate all the refinements of French seasoning. These, and an endless variety of other dainties, no less tempting, might he contemplate here, in walking past a *magazin de comestibles* or provision-warehouse.

Among the changes introduced here, within these few years, I had heard much of the improvements in the culinary art, or rather in the manner of serving up its productions; but, on my first arrival in Paris, I was so constantly engaged in a succession of dinner-parties, that some time elapsed before I could avail myself of an opportunity of dining at the house of any of the fashionable

RESTAURATEURS.

This is a title of no very ancient date in Paris. *Traiteurs* have long existed here: independently of furnishing repasts at home, these *traiteurs*, like Birch in Cornhill, or any other famous London cook, sent out dinners and suppers. But, in 1765, one BOULANGER conceived the idea of *restoring* the exhausted animal functions of the debilitated Parisians by rich soups of various denominations. Not being a *traiteur*, it appears that he was not authorized to serve ragouts; he therefore, in addition to his *restorative* soups, set before his customers new-laid eggs and boiled fowl with strong gravy sauce: those articles were served up without a cloth, on little marble tables. Over his door he placed the following inscription, borrowed from Scripture: "*Venite ad me omnes qui stomacho laboratis, et ego restaurabo vos.*"

Such was the origin of the word and profession of *restaurateur*.

Other cooks, in imitation of BOULANGER, set up as *restorers*, on a similar plan, in all the places of public entertainment where such establishments were admissible. Novelty, fashion, and, above all, dearness, brought them into vogue. Many a person who would have been ashamed to be seen going into a *traiteur's*, made no hesitation of entering a *restaurateur's*, where he paid nearly double the price for a dinner of the same description. However, as, in all trades, it is the great number of customers that enrich the trader, rather than the select few, the *restaurateurs*, in order to make their business answer, were soon under the necessity of constituting themselves *traiteurs*; so that, in lieu of one title, they now possess two; and this is the grand result of the primitive establishment.

At the head of the most noted *restaurateurs* in Paris, previously to the revolution, was LA BARRIÈRE in the *ci-devant Palais Royal*; but, though his larder was always provided with choice food, his cellar furnished with good wines, his bill of fare long, and the number of his customers considerable, yet his profits, he said, were not sufficiently great to allow him to cover his tables with linen. This omission was supplied by green wax cloth; a piece of economy which, he declared, produced him a saving of near 10,000 livres (*circa* 400£ sterling) per annum in the single article of washing. Hence you may form an idea of the extent of such an undertaking. I have often dined at LA BARRIÈRE'S was always well served, at a moderate charge, and with remarkable expedition. Much about that time, BEAUVILLIERS, who had opened, within the same precincts, a similar establishment, but on a more refined plan, proved a most formidable rival to LA BARRIÈRE, and at length eclipsed him.

After a lapse of almost eleven years, I again find this identical BEAUVILLIERS still in the full enjoyment of the greatest celebrity. ROBERT and NAUDET in the *Palais du Tribunat*, and VÉRY

on the *Terrace des Feuillant* dispute with him the palm in the art of Apicius. All these, it is true, furnish excellent repasts, and their wines are not inferior to their cooking: but, after more than one impartial trial, I think I am justified in giving the preference to BEAUVILLIERS. Let us then take a view of his arrangements: this, with a few variations in price or quality, will serve as a general picture of the *ars coquinaria* in Paris.

On the first floor of a large hotel, formerly occupied, perhaps, by a farmer-general, you enter a suite of apartments, decorated with arabesques, and mirrors of large dimensions, in a style no less elegant than splendid, where tables are completely arranged for large or small parties. In winter, these rooms are warmed by ornamental stoves, and lighted by *quinquets*, a species of Argand's lamps. They are capable of accommodating from two hundred and fifty to three hundred persons, and, at this time of the year, the average number that dine here daily is about two hundred; in summer, it is considerably decreased by the attractions of the country, and the parties of pleasure made, in consequence, to the environs of the capital.

On the left hand, as you pass into the first room, rises a sort of throne, not unlike the *estrado* in the grand audience-chamber of a Spanish viceroy. This throne is encircled by a barrier to keep intruders at a respectful distance. Here sits a lady, who, from her majestic gravity and dignified bulk, you might very naturally suppose to be an empress, revolving in her comprehensive mind the affairs of her vast dominions. This respectable personage is Madame BEAUVILLIERS, whose most interesting concern is to collect from the gentlemen in waiting the cash which they receive at the different tables. In this important branch, she has the assistance of a lady, somewhat younger than herself, who, seated by her side, in stately silence, has every appearance of a maid of honour. A person in waiting near the throne, from his vacant look and obsequious carriage, might, at first sight, be taken for a chamberlain; whereas his real office, by no means an unimportant one, is to distribute into deserts the fruit and other *et ceteras*, piled up within his reach in tempting profusion.

We will take our seats in this corner, whence, without laying down our knife and fork, we can enjoy a full view of the company as they enter. We are rather early: by the clock, I perceive that it is no more than five: at six, however, there will scarcely be a vacant seat at any of the tables. "*Garçon, la carte*!"—"*La voilà devant vous, Monsieur.*"

Good heaven! the bill of fare is a printed sheet of double *folio*, of the size of an English newspaper. It will require half an hour at least to con over this important catalogue. Let us see; Soups, thirteen sorts.—*Hors-d'œuvres*, twenty-two species.—Beef, dressed in eleven different ways.—Pastry, containing fish, flesh and fowl, in eleven shapes. Poultry and game, under thirty-two various forms.—Veal, amplified into twenty-two distinct articles.—Mutton, confined to seventeen only.—Fish, twenty-three varieties.—Roast meat, game, and poultry, of fifteen kinds.—Entremets, or side-dishes, to the number of forty-one articles.—Desert, thirty-nine.—Wines, including those of the liqueur kind, of fifty-two denominations, besides ale and porter.—Liqueurs, twelve species, together with coffee and ices.

Fudge! fudge! you cry—Pardon me, my good friend, 'tis no fudge. Take the tremendous bill of fare into your own hand. *Vide et lege*. As we are in no particular hurry, travel article by article through the whole enumeration. This will afford you the most complete notion of the expense of dining at a fashionable *restaurateur's* in Paris.

BEAUVILLIERS, RESTAURATEUR

Anciennement à la grande Tavernede la République, Palais-Egalité,
No. 142, Présentement Rue de la LOI, No. 1243.

PRIX DES METS POUR UNE PERSONNE.—LES ARTICLES DONT LES PRIX NE SONT POINT FIXES, MANQUENT.

POTAGES.

	fr.	s.
Potage aux laitues et petits pois	0	15
Potage aux croûtons à la purée	0	15
Potage aux choux	0	15
Potage au consommé	0	12
Potage au pain	0	12
Potage de santé	0	12
Potage au vermicel	0	12
Potage au ris	0	12
Potage à la julienne	0	12
Potage printanier	0	15
Potage à la purée	0	15
Potage au lait d'amandes	0	15
Potage en tortue	1	10

HORS-D'ŒUVRES.

Tranche de melon	1	0
Artichaud à la poivrade	0	15
Raves et Radis	0	6
Salade de concombres	1	10
Thon mariné	1	10
Anchois à l'huile	1	5
Olives	0	15
Pied de cochon à la Sainte Mènéhould	0	12
Cornichons	0	8
Petit salé aux choux	1	5
Saucisses aux choux	0	18
1 Petit Pain de Beurre	0	4
2 Œufs frais	0	12
1 Citron	0	8
Rissole à la Choisy	1	0
Croquette de volaille	1	4
3 Rognons à la brochette	1	0
Tête de veau en tortue	2	5
Tête de veau au naturel	1	0
1 Côtelette de porc frais, sauce robert	1	0
Chou-Croûte garni	1	10
Jambon de Mayence aux épinards	1	5

ENTRÉES DE BŒUF.

	fr.	s.
Bœuf au naturel ou à la sauce	0	15
Bœuf aux choux ou aux légumes	0	18
Carnebif	1	10
Rosbif	1	5
Filet de Bœuf sauté dans sa glace	1	5
Bifteck	1	5
Entre-côte, sauce aux cornichons	1	5
Palais de Bœuf au gratin	1	4
Palais de Bœuf à la poulette ou à l'Italienne	1	0
Langue de Bœuf glacée aux épinards	1	0
Jarrets de veau	0	15

ENTRÉES DE PATISSERIE.

Pâté chaud de légumes	1	5
2 petits Pâtés à la Béchamel	1	4
2 petits Pâtés au jus	0	16
1 Pâté chaud d'anguille	1	10
1 Pâté chaud de crêtes et de rognons de coqs	2	0
Tourte de godiveau	1	0
Tourte aux confitures	1	5
Vol-au-Vent de filets de volailles	2	0
Vol-au-Vent de Saumon frais	1	10
Vol-au-Vent de morue à la Béchamel	1	5
Vol-au-Vent de cervelle de veau à l'Allemande	1	5

ENTRÉES DE VOLAILLES.

Toutes les entrées aux Truffes sont de 15 de plus.

	fr.	s.
Caille aux petits pois	2	10
Pigeon à la crapaudine	2	10
Chapon au riz, le quart	2	15
Chapon au gros sel, le quart	2	10
Demi-poulet aux Truffes ou aux Huitres	4	0
Fricassée de poulets garnie, la moitié	3	10
Fricassée de poulets, la moitié	3	0

Salade de volaille	3	0
Friteau de poulet, la moitié	3	0
Demi-poulet à la ravigotte ou à la tartare	3	0
Marinade de poulet, la moitié	3	0
Le quart d'un poulet à l'estragon ou à la crème ou aux laitues	1	10
Blanquette de poularde	2	10
1 cuisse de poulet aux petits pois	2	0
1 cuisse de volaille au jambon	2	0
2 côtelettes de poulet	3	0
1 cuisse ou aile de poulet en papillote	1	10
1 cuisse de poulet à la Provençale	1	10
Ragoût mêlé de crêtes et de rognons de coqs	3	0
Capilotade de volaille	3	0
Filet de poularde au suprême	3	0
Mayonaise de volaille	3	0
Cuisses de Dindon grillées, sauce robert	3	0
Le quart d'un Canard aux petits pois ou aux navets	1	10
Foie gras en caisses ou en matelote		
Perdrix aux choux, la moitié		
Salmi de perdreau au vin de Champagne		
Pigeons en compote ou aux petits pois	2	10
Béchamel de blanc de volaille	2	10
2 cuisses de poulet en hochepot	1	10
Ailerons de dinde aux navets	1	10
Blanc de volaille aux concombres	3	0

ENTRÉES DE VEAU.

	fr.	s.
Riz de veau piqué, à l'oseille ou à la chicorée	2	0
Riz de veau à la poulette	2	0
Fricandeau aux petits pois	1	5
Fricandeau à la chicorée	1	4
Fricandeau à la ravigotte	1	4
Fricandeau à l'oseille	1	4
Fricandeau à l'Espagnole	1	4
Côtelette de veau au jambon	1	4
Côtelette de veau aux petits pois	1	10
Côtelette de veau en papillotte	1	5
Côtelette de veau panée, sauce piquante	1	0
Côtelette de veau, sauce tomate	1	5
Blanquette de veau	1	0
Oreille de veau à la ravigotte	1	4
Oreille de veau farcie, frite	1	4
Oreille de veau frite ou en marinade	1	4
Cervelle de veau en matelote	1	4
Cervelle de veau à la purée	1	4
Tendons de veau panés, grillés, sauce piquante	1	4
Tendons de veau à la poulette	1	4
Tendons de veauen macédoine	1	5
Tendons de veau aux petits pois	1	5

ENTRÉES DE MOUTON.

Gigot de mouton braisé, aux légumes	1	0
Tendons de mouton grillés	0	18
Tendons de mouton aux petits pois	1	5
Hachi de mouton à la Portugaise	1	0
2 Côtelettes de mouton à la minute	1	5
2 Côtelettes de mouton aux racines	1	5
2 Côtelettes de mouton au naturel	0	18
2 Côtelettes de pré	1	0

Epigramme d'agneau		
2 Côtelettes d'agneau au naturel		
Tendons d'agneau aux pointes d'asperges		
Tendons d'agneau aux petits pois		
Blanquette d'agneau		
Filet de chevreuil	1	5
Côtelette de chevreuil		
Queue de mouton à la purée	1	5
Queue de mouton à l'oseille ou à la chicorée	1	5

ENTRÉES DE POISSONS.

	fr.	s.
Merlan frit		
Maquereau à la maître d'hôtel		
Saumon frais, sauce aux câpres	2	10
Raie, sauce aux câpres ou au beurre noir	1	10
Turbot, sauce aux câpres	2	10
Cabillaud		
Morue fraîche au beurre fondu		
Morue d'Hol. à la maître-d'hôtel ou à la Provençale	1	10
Sole frite		
Sole sur le plat	5	0
Eperlans frits		
Barbue		
Turbotin		
Matelote de carpe et d'anguille	2	0
Tronçon d'anguille à la tartare	1	10
Carpe frite, la moitié	2	0
Perche du Rhin à la Vallesfiche		
Goujons frits	1	5
Truite au bleu		
Laitance de carpe		
Moules à la poulette	1	5
Homard	3	0
Esturgeon	2	10

RÔTS.

	fr.	s.
Bécasse		
3 Mauviettes		
Poularde fine 9fr. la moitié	4	10
Poulet Normand, 7fr. la moitié	3	10
Poulet gras, 6fr. la moitié	3	0
1 Pigeon de volière	2	10
Perdreau rouge		
Perdreau gris	3	10
Caneton de Rouen		
Caille	2	0
Agneau		
Veau	1	0
Mouton		
Levreau		
Grive		
Obergine	1	10

ENTREMETS.

Gelée de citron	1	10
Concombres à la Béchamel	1	10
Laitues a jus	1	10
Petits pois à la Française ou à l'Anglaise	1	10
Haricots verts à la poulette ou à l'Anglaise	1	10
Haricots blancs à la maître-d'hôtel	0	18

Fèves de marais	1	10
Artichaud à la sauce	1	10
Artichaud à la barigoul	1	10
Artichaud frit	1	5
Truffes au vin de Champagne		
Truffes à l'Italienne		
Croûte aux truffes		
Navets		
Carottes	0	18
Epinards au jus	0	18
Chicorée au jus	1	5
Céleri au jus		
Choux-fleurs à la sauce ou au parmesan	1	10
Macédoine de légumes	1	5
Pommes de terre à la maître-d'hôtel	0	18
Champignons à la Bordelaise	1	4
Croûtes aux champignons	1	10
Œufs brouillés au jus	0	15
Œufs au beurre noir	1	0
Omelette aux fines herbes	0	15
Omelette aux rognons ou au jambon	1	0
Omelette au sucre ou aux confitures	1	5
Omelette soufflée	1	10
Beignets de pommes	1	10
Charlotte de pommes	1	10
Charlotte aux confitures	2	0
Riz soufflé	1	10
Soufflé aux pommes de terre	1	10
Le petit pôt de crème	0	10
Macaroni d'Italie au parmesan	1	5
Fondu	1	4
Plumpuding	1	10
Eorevisses	2	0
Salade	1	0

DESSERT.

	fr.	s.
Cerneaux	0	15
Raisins	1	5
Fraises		
Cerises		
Groseilles		
Framboises		
Abricot	0	8
Pêche	0	12
Prunes	0	3
Figue	0	5
Amandes	0	15
Noisettes	0	12
Pommes à la Portugaise		
Poires	0	8
Pomme		
Compote de verjus épépine		
Compote d'épine-vinette		
Compote de poires	1	4
Compote de pommes		
Compote de cerises	1	4
Nix Vert	0	10
Meringue	0	8
Compote de groseilles	1	4
Compote d'abricot	1	4

Compote de pêche	1	4
Confitures	1	4
Cerises liquides	1	4
Marmelade d'abricots	1	10
Gelée de groseilles	1	4
Biscuit à la crème	1	8
Fromage à la crème	1	10
Fromage de Roquefort	0	10
Fromage de Viry	0	15
Fromage de Gruyère	0	8
Fromage de Neufehâtel	0	5
Fromage de Clochestre ou Chester	0	10
Cerises à l'eau-de-vie	0	12
Prunes à l'eau-de-vie	0	12
Abricots à l'eau-de-vie		
Pêches à l'eau-de-vie		

VINS.

	fr.	s.
Clarette	6	0
Vin de Bourgogne	1	15
Vin de Chablis	2	0
Vin de Beaune	2	5
Vin de Mulsaux	3	0
Vin de Montrachet	3	10
Vin de Pomard	3	10
Vin de Volnay	3	10
Vin de Nuits	3	10
Vin de Grave	5	0
Vin de Soterne	5	0
Vin de Champagne mousseux	5	0
Vin de champagne, mousseux	4	0
Tisane de Champagne	3	10
Vin de Rosé	5	0
Vin de Silery rouge	6	0
Vin de Silery blanc	6	0
Vin de Pierri	5	0
Vin d'Aï	5	0
Vin de Porto	6	0
Latour	6	0
Vin de Côte-Rôtie	5	0
Vin du Clos Vougeot de 88	7	4
Clos St. Georges	6	0
Vin de Pomarel	6	0
Vin du Rhin	8	0
Vin de Chambertin	5	0
Vin de l'Hermitage rouge	5	0
Vin de l'Hermitage blanc	6	0
Vin delà Romanée	5	0
Ronflante Conti	8	0
Vin de Richebourg	5	0
Chevalier montrachet	6	0
Vin de Vône	5	0
Vîn de Bordeaux de Ségur	5	0
Vin de Bordeaux Lafite	5	0
Vin de Saint Emilion	5	0
Bierre forte ou porter	2	0
Bierre	0	10

VINS DE LIQUEURS.

	fr.	s.

Vin de Chereste, demi-bouteille	4	0
Vin de Malvoisie, *idem*	4	0
Madère sec *id.*	4	0
Malaga	3	0
Alicante *id.*	3	0
Muscat	3	0
Le petit verre	0	10
Vermouth		
Chipre		
Calabre		
Paille		
Palme		
Constance		
Tokai		
Le petit verre	1	0

LIQUEURS.

Anisette d'Hollande	0	15
Anisette de Bordeaux	0	12
Eau-de-vie d'Andaye	0	10
Fleur d'Orange	0	10
Cuirasseau	0	10
Rhum	0	10
Kirschewaser	0	10
Eau Cordiale de Coradon	0	15
Liqueurs des Isles	0	15
Marasquin	0	15
Eau-de-vie de Dantzick	0	15
Eau-de-vie de Coignac	0	8
Casé, la tasse 12s. la demie	0	8
Glace	0	15

One advantage, well deserving of notice, of this bill of fare with the price annexed to each article, is, that, when you have made up your mind as to what you wish to have for dinner, you have it in your power, before you give the order, to ascertain the expense. But, though you see the price of each dish, you see not the dish itself; and when it comes on the table, you may, perhaps, be astonished to find that a pompous, big-sounding name sometimes produces only a scrap of scarcely three mouthfuls. It is the mountain in labour delivered of a mouse.

However, if you are not a man of extraordinary appetite, you may, for the sum of nine or ten francs, appease your hunger, drink your bottle of Champagne or Burgundy, and, besides, assist digestion by a dish of coffee and a glass of liqueur. Should you like to partake of two different sorts of wine, you may order them, and drink at pleasure of both; if you do not reduce the contents below the moiety, you pay only for the half bottle. A necessary piece of advice to you as a stranger, is, that, while you are dispatching your first dish, you should take care to order your second, and so on in progression to the end of the chapter: otherwise, for want of this precaution, when the company is very numerous, you may, probably, have to wait some little time between the acts, before you are served.

This is no trifling consideration, if you purpose, after dinner, to visit one of the principal theatres: for, if a new or favourite piece be announced, the house is full, long before the raising of the curtain; and you not only find no room at the theatre to which you first repair; but, in all probability, this disappointment will follow you to every other for that evening.

Nevertheless, ten or fifteen minutes are sufficient for the most dainty or troublesome dish to undergo its final preparation, and in that time you will have it smoking on the table. Those which admit of being completely prepared beforehand, are in a constant state of readiness, and require only to be set over the fire to be warmed. Each cook has a distinct branch to attend to in the kitchen, and the call of a particular waiter to answer, as each waiter has a distinct number of tables, and the orders of particular guests to obey in the dining-rooms. In spite of the confused noise arising from the gabble of so many tongues, there being probably eighty or a hundred persons calling for different articles, many of whom are hasty and impatient, such is the habitual good order observed, that seldom does any mistake occur; the louder the vociferations of the hungry guests, the greater the diligence of the alert waiters. Should any article, when served, happen not to suit your taste, it is taken back and changed without the slightest murmur.

The difference between the establishments of the fashionable *restaurateurs* before the revolution, and those in vogue at the present day, is, that their profession presenting many candidates for public favour, they are under the continual necessity of employing every resource

of art to attract customers, and secure a continuance of them. The commodiousness and elegance of their rooms, the savouriness of their cooking, the quality of their wines, the promptitude of their attendants, all are minutely criticized; and, if they study their own interest, they must neglect nothing to flatter the eyes and palate. In fact, how do they know that some of their epicurean guests may not have been of their own fraternity, and once figured in a great French family as *chef de cuisine*?

Of course, with all this increase of luxury, you must expect an increase of expense: but if you do not now dine here at so reasonable a rate as formerly, at least you are sumptuously served for your money. If you wish to dine frugally, there are numbers of *restaurateurs*, where you may be decently served with *potage*, *bouilli*, an *entrée*, an *entremet*, bread and desert, for the moderate sum of from twenty-six to thirty *sous*. The addresses of these cheap eating-houses, if they are not put into your hand in the street, will present themselves to your eye, at the corner of almost every wall in Paris. Indeed, all things considered, I am of opinion that the difference in the expense of a dinner at a *restaurateur's* at present, and what it was ten or eleven years ago, is not more than in the due proportion of the increased price of provisions, house-rent, and taxes.

The difference the most worthy of remark in these rendezvous of good cheer, unquestionably consists in the company who frequent them. In former times, the dining-rooms of the fashionable *restaurateurs* were chiefly resorted to by young men of good character and connexions, just entering into life, superannuated officers and batchelors in easy circumstances, foreigners on their travels, &c. At this day, these are, in a great measure, succeeded by stock-jobbers, contractors, fortunate speculators, and professed gamblers. In defiance of the old proverb, "*le ventre est le plus grand de tous nos ennemis*," guttling and guzzling is the rage of these upstarts. It is by no means uncommon to see many of them begin their dinner by swallowing six or seven dozen of oysters and a bottle of white wine, by way of laying a foundation for a *potage en tortue* and eight or ten other rich dishes. Such are the modern parvenus, whose craving appetites, in eating and drinking, as in every thing else, are not easily satiated.

It would be almost superfluous to mention, that where rich rogues abound, luxurious courtesans are at no great distance, were it not for the sake of remarking that the former often regale the latter at the *restaurateurs*, especially at those houses which afford the convenience of snug, little rooms, called *cabinets particuliers*. Here, two persons, who have any secret affairs to settle, enjoy all possible privacy; for even the waiter never has the imprudence to enter without being called. In these asylums, Love arranges under his laws many individuals not suspected of sacrificing at the shrine of that wonder-working deity. Prudes, whose virtue is the universal boast, and whose austerity drives thousands of beaux to despair, sometimes make themselves amends for the reserve which they are obliged to affect in public, by indulging in a private *tête-à-tête* in these mysterious recesses. In them too, young lovers frequently interchange the first declarations of eternal affection; to them many a husband owes the happiness of paternity; and without them the gay wife might, perhaps, be at a loss to deceive her jealous Argus, and find an opportunity of lending an attentive ear to the rapturous addresses of her aspiring gallant.

What establishment then can be more convenient than that of a *restaurateur*? But you would be mistaken, were you to look for *cabinets particuliers* at every house of this denomination, Here, at BEAUVILLIERS', for instance, you will find no such accommodation, though if you dislike dining in public, you may have a private room proportioned to the number of a respectable party: or, should you be sitting at home, and just before the hour of dinner, two or three friends call in unexpectedly, if you wish to enjoy their company in a quiet, sociable manner, you have only to dispatch your *valet de place* to BEAUVILLIERS' or to the nearest *restaurateur* of repute for the bill of fare, and at the same time desire him to bring table-linen, knives, silver forks, spoons, and all other necessary appurtenances. While he is laying the cloth, you fix on your dinner, and, in little more than a quarter of an hour, you have one or two elegant courses, dressed in a capital style, set out on the table. As for wine, if you find it cheaper, you can procure that article from some respectable wine-merchant in the neighbourhood. In order to save trouble, many single persons, and even small families now scarcely ever cook at home; but either dine at a *restaurateur's*, or have their dinners constantly furnished from one of these sources of culinary perfection.

But, while I am relating to you the advantages of these establishments, time flies apace: 'tis six o'clock.—If you are not disposed to drink more wine, let us have some coffee and our bill. When you want to pay, you say: "*Garçon, la carte payante!*" The waiter instantly flies to a person, appointed for that purpose, to whom he dictates your reckoning. On consulting your stomach, should you doubt what you have consumed, you have only to call in the aid of your memory, and you will be perfectly satisfied that you have not been charged with a single article too much or too little.

Remark that portly man, so respectful in his demeanour. It is BEAUVILLIERS, the master of the house: this is his most busy hour, and he will now make a tour to inquire at the different tables, if his guests are all served according to their wishes. He will then, like an able general, take a central station, whence he can command a view of all his dispositions. The person, apparently next in consequence to himself, and who seems to have his mind absorbed in other objects, is the butler: his thoughts are, with the wine under his care, in the cellar.

Observe the cleanly attention of the waiters, neatly habited in close-bodied vests, with white aprons before them: watch the quickness of their motions, and you will be convinced that no

scouts of a camp could be more *on the alert*. An establishment, so extremely well conducted, excites admiration. Every spring of the machine duly performs its office; and the regularity of the whole might serve as a model for the administration of an extensive State. Repair then, ye modern Machiavels, to N° 1243, *Rue de la Loi*; and, while you are gratifying your palate, imbibe instruction from BEAUVILLIERS.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

PARIS

AS IT WAS AND AS IT IS;

OR

A Sketch of the French Capital,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION,

WITH RESPECT TO

SCIENCES,
LITERATURE,
ARTS,
RELIGION,
EDUCATION,
MANNERS,
AND
AMUSEMENTS;

COMPRISING ALSO

A correct Account of the most remarkable National Establishments and Public Buildings.

In a Series of Letters,

WRITTEN BY AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER,

DURING THE YEARS 1801-2,

TO A FRIEND IN LONDON.

Ipsâ varietate tentamus efficere, ut alia aliis, quædem fortasse omnibus placeant. PLIN. Epist.

VOL. II

LONDON

1803

A SKETCH OF PARIS, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Paris, December 23, 1801.

An establishment at once deserving of the attention of men of feeling, particularly of those who, in cultivating literature, apply themselves to the science of metaphysics and grammar; an establishment extremely interesting to every one, the great difficulties of which mankind had, repeatedly, in the course of ages, endeavoured to encounter, and which had driven to despair all those who had ventured to engage in the undertaking; an establishment, in a word, which produces the happiest effects, and in a most wonderful manner, is the

NATIONAL INSTITUTION OF THE DEAF AND DUMB.

To the most religious of philanthropists is France indebted for this sublime discovery, and the Abbé SICARD, a pupil of the inventor; the Abbé de l'Epée, has carried it to such a degree of perfection, that it scarcely appears possible to make any further progress in so useful an undertaking. And, in fact, what can be wanting to a species of instruction the object of which is to establish between the deaf and dumb, and the man who hears and speaks, a communication like that established between all men by the knowledge and practice of the same idiom; when the

deaf and dumb man, by the help of the education given him, succeeds in decomposing into phrases the longest period; into simple propositions, the most complex phrase; into words, each proposition; into simple words, words the most complex: and when he distinguishes perfectly words derived from primitives; figurative words from proper ones; and when, after having thus decomposed the longest discourse, he recomposes it; when, in short, the deaf and dumb man expresses all his ideas, all his thoughts, and all his affections; when he answers, like men the best-informed, all questions put to him, respecting what he knows through the nature of his intelligence, and respecting what he has learned, either from himself or from him who has enlightened his understanding? What wish remains to be formed, when the deaf and dumb man is enabled to learn by himself a foreign language, when he translates it, and writes it, as well as those of whom it is the mother-tongue?

Such is the phenomenon which the Institution of the deaf and dumb presents to the astonishment of Europe, under the direction, or rather under the regeneration of the successor of the celebrated Abbé de l'Epée. His pupils realize every thing that I have just mentioned. They write English and Italian as well as they do French. Nothing equals the justness and precision of their definitions.

Nor let it be imagined that they resemble birds repeating the tunes they have learned. Never have they been taught the answer to a question. Their answers are always the effect of their good logic, and of the ideas of objects and of qualities of beings, acquired by a mind which the Institutor has formed from the great art of observation.

This institution was far short of its present state of perfection at the death of the celebrated inventor, which happened on the 23d of December 1789. During the long career of their first father, the deaf and dumb had been able to find means only to write, under the dictation of signs, words whose import was scarcely known to them. When endeavours were made to make them emerge from the confined sphere of the first wants, not one of them knew how to express in writing any thing but ideas of sense and wants of the first necessity. The nature of the verb, the relations of tenses, that of other words comprehended in the phrase, and which form the syntax of languages, were utterly unknown to them. And, indeed, how could they answer the most trifling question? Every thing in the construction of a period was to them an enigma.

It was not long before the successor of the inventor discovered the defect of this instruction, which was purely mechanical and acquired by rote. He thought he perceived this defect in the *concrete* verb, in which the deaf and dumb, seeing only a single word, were unable to distinguish two ideas which are comprehended in it, that of affirmation and that of quality. He thought he perceived also that defect in the expression of the qualities, always presented, in all languages, out of the subjects, and never in the noun which they modify; and, by the help of a process no less simple than ingenious and profound, he has made the deaf and dumb comprehend the most arduous difficulty, the nature of abstraction; he has initiated them in the art of generalizing ideas by presenting to them the adjective in the noun, as the quality is in the object, and the quality subsisting alone and out of the object, having no support but in the mind, for him who considers it, and but in the abstract noun for him who reads the expression of it. He has, in like manner, separated the verb from the quality in concrete verbs, and communicated to the deaf and dumb the knowledge of the true verb, which he has pointed out to them in the termination of all the French verbs, by reattaching to the subject, by a line agreed on, its verbal quality. This line he has translated by the verb *to be*, the only verb recognized by philosophic grammarians.

These are the two foundations of this very extraordinary source of instruction, and on which all the rest depend. The pronouns are learned by nouns; the tenses of conjugation, by the three absolute tenses of conjugation of all languages; and these, by this line, so happily imagined, which is a sign of the present when it connects the verbal quality and the subject, a sign of the past when it is intersected, a sign of the future when it is only begun.

All the conjugations are reduced to a single one, as are all the verbs. The adverbs considered as adjectives, when they express the manner, and as substitutes for a preposition and its government, when they express time or place, &c. The preposition represented as a mean of transmitting the influence of the word which precedes it to that which follows it; the articles serving, as in the English language, to determine the extent of a common noun. Such is a summary of the grammatical system of the Institutor of the deaf and dumb.

It is the metaphysical part, above all, which, in this institution, is carried to such a degree of simplicity and clearness, that it is within reach of understandings the most limited. And, indeed, one ought not to be astonished at the rapid progress of the deaf and dumb in the art of expressing their ideas and of communicating in writing with every speaker, as persons absent communicate with each other by similar means. In the space of eighteen months, a pupil begins to give an account in writing of the actions of which he is rendered a witness, and, in the space of five years, his education is complete.

The objects in which the deaf and dumb are instructed, are Grammar, the notions of Metaphysics and Logic, which the former renders necessary, Religion, the Use of the Globes, Geography, Arithmetic, general notions of History, ancient and modern, of Natural History, of Arts and Trades, &c.

These unfortunates, restored by communication to society, from which Nature seemed to have

intended to exclude them, are usefully employed. One of their principal occupations is a knowledge of a mechanical art. Masters in the most ordinary arts are established in the house of the deaf and dumb, and every one there finds employment in the art which best suits his inclination, his strength, and his natural disposition. In this school, which is established at the extremity of the *Faubourg St. Jacques*, is a printing-office, where some are employed as compositors; others, as pressmen. In a preparatory drawing-school they are taught the rudiments of painting, engraving, and Mosaic, for the last of which there are two workshops. There is also a person to teach engraving on fine grained stones, as well as a joiner, a tailor, and a shoemaker. The garden, which is large, is cultivated by the deaf and dumb. Almost every thing that is used by them is made by themselves. They make their own bedsteads, chairs, tables, benches, and clothes. The deaf and dumb females too make their shirts, and the rest of their linen.

Thus their time is so taken up that, with the exception of three hours devoted to moral instruction, all the rest is employed in manual labour.

Such is this establishment, where the heart is agreeably affected at the admirable spectacle which presents at once every thing that does the most honour to human intelligence, in the efforts which it has been necessary to make in order to overcome the obstacles opposed to its development by the privation of the sense the most useful, and that of the faculty the most essential to the communication of men with one another, and the sight of the physical power employed in seeking, in arts and trades, resources which render men independent.

But to what degree are these unfortunates deaf, and why are they dumb?

It is well known that they are dumb because they are deaf, and they are more or less deaf, when they are so only by accident, in proportion as the auditory nerve is more or less braced, or more or less relaxed. In various experiments made on sound, some have heard sharp sounds, and not grave ones; others, on the contrary, have heard grave sounds, and not sharp ones.

All would learn, were it deemed expedient to teach them, the mechanism of speech. But, besides that the sounds which they would utter, would never be heard by themselves, and they would never be conscious of having uttered them, those, sounds would be to those who might listen to them infinitely disagreeable. Never could they be of use, to them in conversing with us, and they would serve only to counteract their instruction.

Woe be to the deaf and dumb whom it should be proposed to instruct by teaching them to speak! How, in fact, can, the development of the understanding be assisted by teaching them a mechanism which has no object or destination, when the thought already formed in the mind, by the help of signs which fix the ideas, restores not the mechanism of speech?

Of this the Institutor has been fully sensible, and, although in his public lessons, he explains all the efforts of the vocal instrument or organ of the voice, and proves that he could, as well as any other man, teach the deaf and dumb to make use of it, all his labour is confined to exercising the instrument of thought, persuaded that every thing will be obtained, when the deaf and dumb shall have learned to arrange their ideas, and to think.

It is then only that the Institutor gives lessons of analysis. But, how brilliant are they! You think yourself transported into a class of logic. The deaf and dumb man has ceased to be so. A contest begins between him and his master. All the spectators are astonished; every one wishes to retain what is written on both sides. It is a lesson given to all present.

Every one is invited to interrogate the deaf and dumb man, and he answers to any person whatsoever, with a pen or pencil in his hand, and in the same manner puts a question. He is asked, "What is Time?"—"Time," says the dumb pupil, "is a portion of duration, the nature of which is to be successive, to have commenced, and consequently to have passed, and to be no more; to be present, and to be so through necessity. Time," adds he, "is the fleeting or the future." As if in the eyes of the dumb there was nothing real in Time but the future.—"What is eternity?" says another to him—"It is a day without yesterday, or to-morrow," replies the pupil. —"What is a sense?"—"It is a vehicle for ideas."—"What is duration?"—"It is a line which has no end, or a circle."—"What is happiness?"—"It is a pleasure which never ceases."—"What is God?"—"The author of nature, the sun of eternity."—"What is friendship?"—"The affection of the mind."—"What is gratitude?"—"The memory of the heart."

There are a thousand answers of this description, daily collected at the lessons of the deaf and dumb by those who attend them, and which attest the superiority of this kind of instruction over the common methods. Thus, this institution is not only, in regard to beneficence and humanity, deserving of the admiration of men of feeling, it merits also the observation of men of superior understanding and true philosophers, on account of the ingenious process employed here to supply the place of the sense of seeing by that of hearing, and speech by gesture and writing.

I must not conceal from my countrymen, above all, that the Institutor, in his public lessons, formally declares, that it is by giving to the French language the simple form of ours, and accommodating to it our syntax, he has been chiefly successful in making the deaf and dumb understand that of their own country. I must also add, that it is no more than a justice due to the Institutor to say that, in the midst of the concourse of auditors, who press round him, and who offer him the homage due to his genius and philanthropy, he shews for all the English an

honourable preference, acknowledging to them, publicly, that this attention is a debt which he discharges in return for the asylum that we granted to the unfortunate persons of his profession, who, emigrating from their native land, came among us to seek consolation, and found another home.

Should ever this feeble sketch of so interesting an institution reach SICARD, that religious philosopher, who belongs as much to every country in the world as to France, the land which gave him birth, he will find in it nothing more than the expression of the gratitude of one Englishman; but he may promise himself that as soon as the definitive treaty of peace shall have reopened a free intercourse between the two nations, the sentiments contained in it will be adopted by all the English who shall witness the extraordinary success of his profoundly-meditated labours. They will all hasten to pay their tribute of admiration to a man, whose most gratifying reward consists in the benefits which he has had the happiness to confer on that part of his fellow-creatures from whom Nature has withheld her usual indulgence.

LETTER XXXIX.

Paris, December 25, 1801.

Much has been said of the general tone of immorality now prevailing in this capital, and so much, that it becomes necessary to look beyond the surface, and examine whether morals be really more corrupt here at the present day than before the revolution. To investigate the subject through all its various branches and ramifications, would lead me far beyond the limits of a letter. I shall therefore, as a criterion, take a comparative view of the increase or decrease of the different classes of women, who, either publicly or privately, deviate from the paths of virtue. If we begin with the lowest rank, and ascend, step by step, to the highest, we first meet with those unfortunate creatures, known in France by the general designation of

PUBLIC WOMEN.

Their number in Paris, twelve years ago, was estimated at thirty thousand; and if this should appear comparatively small, it must be considered how many amorous connexions here occupy the attention of thousands of men, and consequently tend to diminish the number of *public* women.

The question is not to ascertain whether it be necessary, for the tranquillity of private families, that there should be public women. Who can fairly estimate the extent of the mischief which they produce, or of that which they obviate? Who can accurately determine the best means for bringing the good to overbalance the evil? But, supposing the necessity of the measure, would it not be proper to prevent, as much as possible, that complete mixture by which virtuous females are often confounded with impures?

Charlemagne, though himself a great admirer of the sex, was of that opinion. He had, in vain, endeavoured to banish entirely from Paris women of this description; by ordering that they should be condemned to be publicly whipped, and that those who harboured them, should carry them on their shoulders to the place where the sentence was put in execution. But it was not a little singular that, while the emperor was bent on reforming the morals of the frail fair, his two daughters, the princesses Gifla and Rotrude, were indulging in all the vicious foibles of their nature.

Charlemagne, who then resided in the *Palais des Thermes*, situated in the *Rue de la Harpe*, happened to rise one winter's morning much earlier than usual. After walking for some time about his room, he went to a window which looked into a little court belonging to the palace. How great was his astonishment, when, by the twilight, he perceived his second daughter, Rotrude, with Eginhard, his prime minister, on her back, whom she was carrying through the deep snow which had fallen in the night in order that the foot-steps of a man might not be traced.

When Lewis the *débonnaire*, his successor, ascended the throne, he undertook to reform these two princesses, whose father's fondness had prevented him from suffering them to marry. The new king began by putting to death two noblemen who passed for their lovers, thinking that this example would intimidate, and that they would find no more: but it appears that he was mistaken, for they were never at a loss. Nor is this to be wondered at, as these princesses to a taste for literature joined a very lively imagination, and were extremely affable, generous, and beneficent; on which account, says Father Daniel, they died universally regretted.

Experience having soon proved that public women are a necessary evil in great cities, it was resolved to tolerate them. They therefore began to form a separate body, became subject to taxes, and had their statutes and judges. They were called *femmes amoureuses*, *filles folles de leur corps*, and, on St. Magdalen's day, they were accustomed to form annually a solemn procession. Particular streets were assigned to them for their abode; and a house in each street, for their commerce.

A penitentiary asylum, called *les Filles Dieu*, was founded at Paris in 1226, and continued for some years open for the reception of *female sinners who had gone astray, and were reduced to beggary*. In the time of St. Lewis, their number amounted to two hundred; but becoming rich, they became dissolute, and in 1483, they were succeeded by the reformed nuns of Fontevrault.

When I was here in the year 1784, a great concourse of people daily visited this convent in order to view the body of an ancient virgin and martyr, said to be that of St. Victoria, which, having been lately dug up near Rome, had just been sent to these nuns by the Pope. This relic being exposed for some time to the veneration and curiosity of the Parisian public, the devout wondered to see the fair saint with a complexion quite fresh and rosy, after having been dead for several centuries, and, in their opinion, this was a miracle which incontestably proved her sanctity. The incredulous, who did not see things in the same light, thought that the face was artificial, and that it presented one of those holy frauds which have so frequently furnished weapons to impiety. But they were partly mistaken: the nuns had thought proper to cover the face of the saint with a mask, and to clothe her from head to foot, in order to skreen from the eyes of the public the hideous spectacle of a skeleton.

In 1420, Lewis VIII, with a view of distinguishing impures from modest women, forbade the former to wear golden girdles, then in fashion. This prohibition was vain, and the virtuous part of the sex consoled themselves by the testimony of their conscience, whence the old proverb: "*Bonne rénommée vaut mieux que ceinture dorée*."

Another establishment, first called *Les Filles pénitentes ou repenties*, and afterwards *Filles de St. Magloire*, was instituted in 1497 by a Cordelier, and had the same destination. He preached against libertinism, and with such success, that two hundred dissolute women were converted by his fervent eloquence. The friar admitted them into his congregation, which was sanctioned by the Pope. Its statutes, which were drawn up by the Bishop of Paris, are not a little curious. Among other things, it was established, that "none should be received but women who had led a dissolute life, and that, in order to ascertain the fact, they should be examined by matrons, who should swear on the Holy Evangelists to make a faithful report."

There can be no doubt that women were well taken care of in this house, since it was supposed that virtue even might assume the mask of vice to obtain admission. The fact is singular. "To prevent girls from prostituting themselves in order to be received, those who shall have been once examined and refused, shall be excluded for ever.

"Besides, the candidates shall be obliged to swear, under penalty of their eternal damnation, in presence of their confessor and six nuns, that they did not prostitute themselves with a view of entering into this congregation; and in order that women of bad character may not wait too long before they become converted, in the hope that the door will always be open to them, none will be received above the age of thirty."

This community, for some years, continued tolerably numerous; but its destination had been changed long before the suppression of convents, which took place in the early part of the revolution. All the places of public prostitution in Paris, after having been tolerated upwards of four hundred years, were abolished by a decree of the States General, held at Orleans in 1560. The number of women of the town, however, was far from being diminished, though their profession was no longer considered as a trade; and as they were prohibited from being any where, that is, in any fixed place, they were compelled to spread themselves every where.

At the present day, the number of these women in Paris is computed at twenty-five thousand: they are taken up as formerly, in order to be sent into infirmaries, whence they, generally, come out only to return to their former habits. Twelve years ago, those apprehended underwent a public examination once a month, and were commonly sentenced to a confinement, more or less long, according to the pleasure of the minister of the police. The examination of them became a matter of amusement for persons of not over-delicate feelings. The hardened females, neither respecting the judge not the audience, impudently repeated the language and gestures of their traffic. The judge added a fortnight's imprisonment for every insult, and the most abandoned were confined only a few months longer in the *Salpétrière*.

Endeavours have since been made to improve the internal regulation of this and similar houses of correction; but, as far as my information goes, with little success. For want of separating, from the beginning of their confinement, the most debauched from those whom a moment of distress or error has thrown into these scenes of depravity, the contamination of bad example rapidly spreads, and those who enter dissolute, frequently come out thievish; while all timidity is banished from the mind of the more diffident. Besides, it is not always the most culpable who fall into the hands of the police, the more cunning and experienced, by contriving to come to terms with its agents, employed on these errands, generally escape; and thus the object in view is entirely defeated.

On their arrival at the *Salpétrière*, the healthy are separated from the diseased; and the latter are sent to *Bicêtre*, where they either find a cure or death. Your imagination will supply the finishing strokes of this frightful picture.—These unfortunate victims of indigence or of the seduction of man, are deserving of compassion. With all their vices, they have, after all, one less than many of their sex who pride themselves on chastity, without really possessing it; that is, hypocrisy. As they shew themselves to be what they really are, they cannot make the secret mischief which a detected prude not unfrequently occasions under the deceitful mask of modesty. Degraded in their own eyes, and being no longer able to reign through the graces of virtue, they fall into the opposite extreme, and display all the audaciousness of vice.

The next class we come to is that which was almost honoured by the Greeks, and tolerated by the

Romans, under the denomination of

COURTESANS.

By courtesans, I mean those ladies who, decked out in all the luxury of dress, if not covered with diamonds, put up their favours to the highest bidder, without having either more beauty or accomplishments, perhaps, than the distressed female who sells hers at the lowest price. But caprice, good fortune, intrigue, or artifice, sometimes occasions an enormous distance between women who have the same views.

If the ancients made great sacrifices for the Phrynes, the Laïses, or the Aspasias of the day, among the moderns, no nation has, in that respect, surpassed the French. Every one has heard of the luxurious extravagance of Mademoiselle Deschamps, the cushion of whose *chaise-percée*, was trimmed with point-lace of very considerable value, and the harness of whose carriage was studded with paste, in imitation of diamonds. This woman, however, lived to repent of her folly; and if she did not literally die in a poorhouse, she at least ended her days in wretchedness.

Before the revolution, of all the gay ladies in Paris, Madame Grandval displayed the greatest luxury in her equipage; and Mademoiselle D'Hervieux, in her house. I knew them both. The former I have seen at Longchamp, as well as at the annual review of the king's household troops, in a splendid coach, as fine as that of any Lord Mayor, drawn by a set of eight English grays, which cost a hundred and twenty guineas a horse. She sat, like a queen, adorned with a profusion of jewels; and facing her was a *dame de compagnie*, representing a lady of the bedchamber. Behind the carriage, stood no less than three tall footmen, besides a chasseur, in the style of that of the Duke of Gloucester, in rich liveries, with swords, canes, and bags.

As for the house of Mademoiselle D'Hervieux, it was every thing that oriental luxury, combined with French taste, could unite on a small scale. Although of very low origin, and by no means gifted with a handsome person, this lady, after having, rather late in life, obtained an introduction on the opera-stage as a common *figurante*, contrived to insinuate herself into the good graces of some rich protectors. On the *Chaussée d'Antin*, they built for her this palace in miniature, which, twelve years ago, was the object of universal admiration, and, in fact, was visited by strangers as one of the curiosities of Paris.

At the present day, one neither sees nor hears of such favourites of fortune; and, for want of subjects to paint under this head, I must proceed to those of the next rank, who are styled

KEPT WOMEN.

What distinctions, what shades, what different names to express almost one and the same thing! From the haughty fair in a brilliant equipage, figuring, like a favourite Sultana, with "all the pride, pomp, and circumstance" of the toilet, down to the hunger-pinched female, who stands shivering in the evening at the corner of a street, what gradations in the same profession!

Before the revolution, there were reckoned in Paris eight or ten thousand women to whom the rich nobility or financiers allowed from a thousand pounds a year upwards to an almost incredible amount. Some of these ladies have ruined a whole family in the short space of six months; and, having nothing left at the year's end, were then under the necessity of parting with their diamonds for a subsistence. Although many of them are far inferior in opulence to the courtesans, they are less depraved, and, consequently, superior to them in estimation. They have a lover, who pays, and from whom they, in general, get all they can, at the same time turning him into ridicule, and another whom, in their turn, they pay, and for whom they commit a thousand follies.

These women used to have no medium in their attachments; they were either quite insensible to the soft passion, or loved almost to distraction. On the wane, they had the rage for marrying, and many of them found men who, preferring fortune to honour, disgraced themselves by such alliances. Some of these ladies, if handsome, were not unfrequently taken by a man of fortune, and kept from mere ostentation, just as he would sport a superlatively elegant carriage, or ride a very capital horse; others were maintained from caprice, which, like Achilles's spear, carried with it its own antidote; and then, of course, they passed into the hands of different keepers. It cannot be denied, however that a few of these connexions were founded on attachment; and when the woman, who was the object of it, was possessed of understanding, she assumed the manners and deportment of a wife. Indeed, now and then a keeper adopted the style of oriental gallantry.

Beaujon, the banker of the court, who had amassed an immense fortune, indulged himself in his old age, and, till his death, in a society composed of pretty women, some of whom belonged to what was then termed good families, among which he had diffused his presents. In an elegant habitation, called *la Chartreuse*, which he erected in the *Faubourg du Roule*, as a place of occasional retirement, was a most curious apartment, representing a bower, in the midst of which was placed a bedstead in imitation of a basket of flowers: four trees, whose verdant foliage extended over part of the ceiling, which was painted as a sky, seemed to shade this basket, and supported drapery, suspended to their branches. This was M. Beaujon's Temple of Venus.

The late Prince of Soubise, for some years, constantly kept ten or a dozen ladies. The only intercourse he had with them, was to breakfast or chat with them twice or thrice a month, and

latterly he maintained several old stagers, in this manner, from motives of benevolence. At the end of the month, all these ladies came in their carriages at a fixed hour, in a string, as it were, one after the other. The steward had their money ready; they afterwards, one by one, entered a very spacious room furnished with large closets, filled with silks, muslins, laces, ribbands, &c. The prince distributed presents to each, according to her age and taste: thus ended a visit of mere ceremony, interspersed with a few words of general gallantry.

Such was the style in which many women were kept by men of fortune under the old *régime*. At the present day, if we except twenty or thirty perhaps, it would be no easy matter to discover any women supported in a style of elegance in Paris, and the lot of these seems scarcely secured but from month to month. The reason of this mystery is, that the modern Crœsuses having mostly acquired their riches in a clandestine manner, they take every possible precaution to prevent the reports in circulation concerning their ill-gotten pelf from being confirmed by a display of luxury in their *chères amies*. On this account, many a matrimonial connexion, I am told, is formed between them and women of equivocal character, on the principle, that a man is better able to check the extravagant excesses of his wife than those of his mistress.

We now arrive at that class of females who move in a sphere of life the best calculated for making conquests. I mean

OPERA-DANCERS.

When a spectator, whose eyes are fascinated by the illusion of scenic decorations, contemplates those beauties whose voluptuous postures, under the form of Calypso, Eucharis, Delphis, &c. awaken desire in the mind of youth, and even of persons of maturer years, he forgets that the divinities before him are women, who not unfrequently lavish their favours on the common herd of mortals. His imagination lends to them a thousand secret charms which they possess not; and he cannot be persuaded that they are not tremblingly alive to a passion which they express with so much apparent feeling. It is in their arms only that he discovers his error. To arrive at this point, many an Englishman has sacrificed thousands of pounds; while his faithless fair has been indulging in all the wantonness of her disposition, perhaps, with some obscure Frenchman among the long train of her humble admirers. Hence the significant appellation of *Milord Pot-au-feu*, given to one who supports a woman whose favours another enjoys *gratis*.

Such an opera-dancer used formerly to exhibit herself in a blaze of jewels in the lobby, and according to the style in which she figured, did she obtain respect from her companions. The interval between them was proportioned to the degree of opulence which the one enjoyed over the other, so that the richer scarcely appeared to belong to the same profession as the poorer. To the former, every shopkeeper became a candidate for custom; presents were heaped on presents, and gold was showered on her in such a manner that she might, for the time, almost have fancied herself a second Danaë.

In the midst of this good fortune, perhaps, an obscure rival suddenly started into fashion. She then was eclipsed by her whom, a few days before, she disdained. Instead of a succession of visiters, her house was deserted; and, at the expiration of the year, the proud fair, awakened from her golden dream by the clamours of her importunate creditors, found herself without one friend to rescue her valuables from their rapacious gripe.

No wonder, then, that this order of things, (excepting the reverse by which it was sometimes followed) was very agreeable to the great majority of these capering beauties, and, doubtless, they wished its duration. For, among the reports of the *secret* police, maintained by Lewis XVI, in 1792, it appears by a letter addressed to M. de Caylus, and found among the King's papers in the palace of the *Tuileries*, that most of the female opera-dancers were staunch *aristocrates*; but that democracy triumphed among the women who sang at that theatre. This little anecdote shews how far curiosity was then stretched to ascertain what is called public opinion; and I have no doubt that the result confirmed the correctness of the statement.

The opera-stage was certainly never so rich as it now is in first-rate female dancers, yet the frail part of these beauties were never so deficient, perhaps, in wealthy admirers. Proceeding to the next order of meretricious fair, we meet with that numerous one denominated

GRISETTES.

This is the name applied to those young girls who, being obliged to subsist by their labour, chiefly fill the shops of milliners, mantua-makers, and sellers of ready-made linen, &c.

The rank which ought to be assigned to them, I think, is between opera-dancers and demireps. You may smile at the distinction; but, as Mr. Tickle justly observes, in the Spectator, we should vary our appellations of these fair criminals, according to circumstances. "Those who offend only against themselves," says he, "and are not a scandal to society; but, out of deference to the sober part of the world, have so much good left in them as to be ashamed, must not be comprehended in the common word due to the worst of women. Regard is to be had to their situation when they fell, to the uneasy perplexity in which they lived under senseless and severe parents, to the importunity of poverty, to the violence of a passion in its beginning well-grounded, to all the alleviations which make unhappy women resign the characteristic of their sex, modesty. To do otherwise than thus," adds he, "would be to act like a pedantic Stoic, who thinks all crimes alike,

and not as an impartial spectator, who views them with all the circumstances that diminish or enhance the guilt."

If we measure them by this standard, *grisettes* appear entitled to be classed immediately below demireps; for, as Lear says of his daughter,

> "-------- Not to be the worst
> Stands in some rank of praise."

Their principal merit consists in their conducting themselves with a certain degree of decorum and reserve, and in being susceptible of attachment. Born in an humble sphere, they are accustomed from their infancy to gain their livelihood by their industry. Like young birds that feel the power of using their wings, they fly from the parent-nest at the age of sixteen; and, hiring a room for themselves, they live according to their means and fancy.

More fortunate in their indigence than the daughters of petty tradesmen, they overleap the limits of restraint, while their charms are in full lustre; and sometimes their happiness arises from being born in poverty. In marrying an artisan of their own class, they see nothing but distress and servitude, which are by no means compatible with their spirit of independence. Vanity becomes their guide, and is as bad a guide as distress; for it prompts them to add the resources of their youth and person to those of their needle. This double temptation is too strong for their weak virtue. They therefore seek a friend to console them on Sundays for the *ennui* of the remainder of the week, which must needs seem long, when they are sitting close at work from morning to night. In general, they are more faithful than any of the other classes of the frail part of the sex, and may be supported at little expense, and without scandal.

It would require almost the powers of the inquisition to ascertain whether *grisettes* have increased or diminished since the revolution; but their number is, and always has been, immense in Paris. An object highly deserving of the attention of the French legislators would be to find a remedy for this evil. A mortal blow should, no doubt, be struck at the luxury of the toilet; as the rage for dress has, I am convinced, undermined the virtue of as many women as the vile stratagems of all the Lotharios in being. Leaving these matters to some modern Lycurgus, I shall end my letter. But, in my eager haste to close it, I must not omit a class, which has increased in a proportion equal to the decrease of kept women. As they have no precise designation in France, I shall take the liberty of applying to them, that of

DEMIREPS.

Without having the shameless effrontery of vice, these ladies have not the austere rigour of virtue. Seeing that professed courtesans insnared the most promising youths, and snatched them from other women, this description of females sprang up, in a manner, to dispute with them, under the rose, the advantages which the others derived from their traffic. If they have not the same boldness in their carriage, their looks bespeak almost as much complaisance. They declaim loudly against women of all the classes before-mentioned, for the best possible reason; because these are their more dangerous rivals. It is certain that a virtuous woman cannot hold the breach of chastity too much in abhorrence, but every Lucretia ought to have "a tear for pity," especially towards the fallen part of her sex. Nothing can be more disgusting than to hear women, who are known to have transgressed, forget their own frailties, and rail against the more unguarded, and, consequently, more artless part of womankind, without mercy or justice.

Demireps, in general, profess the greatest disinterestedness in their connexions; but if they receive no money at the moment of granting their favours, they accept trinkets and other presents which have some value. It is not at all uncommon for a man to think that he has a *bonne fortune*, when he finds himself on terms of intimacy with such a woman. Enraptured at his success, he repeats his visits, till one day he surprises his belle, overwhelmed by despair. He eagerly inquires the cause. After much entreaty, she informs him that she has had ill luck at play, and, with anguish in her looks, laments that she is ruined beyond redemption. The too credulous admirer can do no less than accommodate her secretly with a sufficient sum to prevent her from being taken to task by her husband; and thus the disinterested lady proves, in the end, a greater drain to the gallant's pocket than the most mercenary courtesan.

The man who would wish to recommend himself to their favour, scarcely need take any further trouble than to change some of their trinkets, which are no longer in fashion. Sometimes he may meet with a husband, who, conniving at his wife's infidelity, will shew him every mark of attention. In that case, the lover is quite at home, and his presence being equally agreeable to the obliging husband as to the kind wife, when they are all three assembled, they seem to fit their several places like the three sides of an equilateral triangle.

Since the revolution, the increase of demireps is said to have diminished most sensibly the class of what are termed kept women. Indeed, it is affirmed by some, that the number of the former has, within these few years, multiplied in a tenfold proportion. Others again maintain that it is no greater than it was formerly; because, say they, the state of society in Paris is not near so favourable to amorous intrigue as that which existed under the old *régime*. Riches being more equally divided, few persons, comparatively speaking, are now sufficiently affluent to entertain large parties, and give routs, balls, and suppers, where a numerous assemblage afforded, to those inclined to dissipation, every opportunity of cultivating an intimate acquaintance. I must

confess that these reasons, assigned by some worthy Frenchmen whose opinions I respect, do not altogether accord with the result of my observation; and, without taking on myself to controvert them, I am persuaded that truth will bear me out in asserting, that, if the morals of that class of society in which I have chiefly mixed during the different periods of my stay in France, are not deteriorated, they are certainly not improved since I last visited Paris.

After having painted, in regular succession, and with colours occasionally borrowed, the general portrait of all those classes of females whose likeness every English traveller has, no doubt, met with, I must find a little corner of my canvass for a small number of women who might, probably, be sought in vain out of Paris. However great a recommendation their rarity may be in the eyes of some, still it is not the only quality that points them out to the notice of the impartial observer.

When a man has come to his senses respecting the sex, or, according to the vulgar adage, sown his wild oats, he naturally seeks a sincere friend to whom he can unbosom himself with confidence. Experience warns him that few men are to be trusted; and unless he has had the good fortune to meet with a virtuous wife, blessed with an engaging temper and a good understanding, he must even, like Junius, be the depository of his own secret. In Paris, however, he may find one of those scarce females, who, being accustomed early in life to reflection, possess the firm mind of a man, combined with the quick sensibility of a woman.

When the illusion of the first passions is dissipated, their reason becomes unclouded. Renouncing every narrow thought, they raise themselves to the knowledge of the most weighty affairs, and, by an active observation of mankind, are accustomed to discriminate every shade of character. Hence their penetration is great; and they are capable of giving good advice on important occasions. In short, a French woman at thirty makes an excellent friend, and, attaching herself to the man she esteems, thinks no sacrifice too great for the advancement of his interest, or the security of his happiness or reputation.

The friendship between man and woman is a thousand times more sweet than that between one man and another. A woman's friendship is active, vigilant, and at the same time tender. French women cherish more sincerely their old friends than their young lovers. They may perchance deceive the lover, but never the friend; the latter they consider as a sacred being. Whence, no doubt, Rousseau (who has not spared the Parisian ladies) has been led to say: "I would never have sought in Paris a wife, still less a mistress; but I would willingly have made there a female friend; and this treasure would, perhaps, have consoled me for not finding the other two."

LETTER XL.

Paris, December 27, 1801.

About thirty years ago, a public insult offered to human nature, in the person of some unfortunate blind men belonging to the Hospital of the *Quinze-vingts*, and repeated daily for the space of two months, suggested to a spectator the idea of avenging it in a manner worthy of a true philanthropist.

In a coffeehouse of the *Foire St. Ovide*, in Paris, were placed ten blind beggars, muffled up in grotesque dresses and long pointed caps, with large paste-board spectacles on their nose, without glass: music and lights were set before them; and one of them was characterized as Midas, with the ears of an ass, and the addition of a peacock's tail, spread behind him. He sang, while all the others played the same parts of a monotonous tune, without either taste or measure; and the unfeeling public turned into derision the unfortunate actors in this infamous scene. This happened in September 1771.

From that moment, M. VALENTIN HAÜY, brother to the celebrated mineralogist of that name, animated by a noble enthusiasm, conceived the project of teaching the blind to write and read, and of placing in their hands books and music, printed by themselves. After employing twelve years in maturing it, at length, in 1784, he ventured to carry it into execution. To so laudable and benevolent a purpose, he devoted all his fortune; and hence originated the establishment known in Paris, since the year 1791, by the title of

NATIONAL INSTITUTION OF THE INDUSTRIOUS BLIND.

Presently M. HAÜY found his plan seconded by the Philanthropic Society, and the benefactions and advice of several persons, no less distinguished for understanding than benevolence, contributed not a little to encourage his zeal in its prosecution. The following were the primary objects of the establishment.

1. To withdraw the blind from the dangerous paths of idleness.
2. To procure them certain means of subsistence by the execution of pleasant and easy labours.
3. To restore them to society.
4. To console them for their misfortune.

To rescue the blind from idleness is, unquestionably, of itself a great blessing, as it preserves them from an infinite number of vices, and consequently must be approved by the moralist. But another advantage, equally deserving of approbation, is to cause them to find, in their labour, an infallible resource against indigence. Previously to the execution of this beneficent plan, a young

blind child, born of poor parents, was reduced to the melancholy and humiliating necessity of standing in a public thoroughfare, exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, to beg its bread, and, at present, it has no occasion to owe its livelihood but to its own labour.

The children that M. HAÜY had to educate were, in general, of the class of artisans, though a few belonged to that of artists and men of science. Some were born with a little aptitude for mechanical labours, others with a great disposition for the arts and sciences. These considerations naturally pointed out to him his plan of instruction, which is divided into four branches.

I. Handicraft work, viz. Spinning, knitting, making of cord, fringe, trimming, ribband, pasteboard, &c.

   Task-masters direct the execution of these works, which are as easy to the blind as to the clear-sighted.

II. Education, viz. Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, literature, history, foreign languages, arts and sciences.

   This education of blind children is carried on by means of raised-work or relief, and is intrusted to other blind people whose education is completed. The latter not only instruct their unfortunate fellow-sufferers, but also the clear-sighted.

   The sense of feeling is so refined in blind children, that a pupil, a little informed, becomes perfectly acquainted with maps by handling them: he points out with his finger countries and towns; if a map is presented to him upside down, he places it in a proper manner, and if one map is substituted to another, he instantly discovers the deception.

III. Printing, viz. In black characters, for the public. In relief, for themselves.

   In black, they have printed no inconsiderable number of voluminous works, for the use of the public. In relief, they have printed for themselves a catechism, a grammar, and a great quantity of music. No where but at this institution, and at the MUSEUM OF THE BLIND, of which I shall presently speak, is there to be found an office for printing in relief.

IV. Music, viz. Vocal and instrumental, and composition.

   The music of the blind pupils has always been employed with the greatest success in public festivals, playhouses, balls, coffeehouses, and many public and private assemblies. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the decided taste of the blind for music, and of the consolation which it affords them. Deprived of their eyes, they seem to become all ears.

No sooner had M. HAÜY rendered public his first essays, than the learned, and especially the members of the *ci-devant* Academy of Sciences, stamped them with their approbation, as appears by a Report signed by some of the most distinguished of that body, such as DESMARETS, LA ROCHEFOUCAULT, CONDORCET, &c. Professors of the arts, cultivated by his pupils, such as printing, music, &c. were equally eager to acknowledge to what an astonishing degree the blind had succeeded in appropriating to themselves the enjoyment of those arts. Three of the first master-printers in Paris certified the intelligence and skill of the blind pupils; and a concert was executed by them to the no small satisfaction of the *ci-devant* Academy of Music.

Persons of every degree now wished to be spectators of the result of these essays. Lewis XVI sent for the Industrious Blind, their machinery, &c. to Versailles; he visited them when at work, and inspected their several performances, attended by all the royal family, princes of the blood, ministers, ambassadors, &c. After having procured the inhabitants of that town this interesting sight for several successive days, he rewarded the blind with marks of his favour and encouragement.

The government, which succeeded to the monarchy, shewed no less interest in the progress of M. HAÜY'S undertaking. The different legislatures, which have successively governed France, promoted it by various decrees. In proportion as the number of the pupils increased, so did the resources of their industrious activity. By a law which was solicited by M. HAÜY, and which excited and kept up a singular emulation among his pupils, the blind, in preference to the clear-sighted of equal merit, were admitted to the various secondary employments of the establishment. From that period, the first blind pupils, formed by M. HAÜY, being promoted to the functions of teachers, transmitted with success to young blind children, sent for instruction, from different parts of the Republic, the first elements of education given them by himself and assistants. By virtue of this law, the office of house-steward was intrusted to LESUEUR, a blind pupil who had already discharged it with credit at a banker's. It will scarcely be believed, no doubt, that a blind man can be a cashier, receive money coming in, either from the public treasury, or from the industry of his brothers in misfortune; make of it a suitable division; buy commodities necessary for life and clothing; introduce the strictest economy into his disbursements; by means of his savings, procure the establishment the implements and machinery of the Industrious Blind; in times of real scarcity, make use of the productions of the labour of the grown blind, to maintain the young blind pupils, and that, with all these concerns on his hands, his accounts should always be ready for inspection.

M. HAÜY informs me that out of fifteen or twenty of his old pupils, whom he has connected by the ties of marriage, ten or twelve are fathers; and that they have children more fortunate than the authors of their days, since the enjoy the benefit of sight. But the most interesting part of these connexions is, that the blind father (on the principle of the plan before-stated) teaches his clear-sighted son reading, arithmetic, music, and every thing that it is possible to teach without the help of the eyes.

Raised work, or relief, is the simple and general process by means of which M. HAÜY forms his pupils, and there are a great number of them whose abilities would excite the pride of many a clear-sighted person. For instance, in addition to the before-mentioned LESUEUR, who is an excellent geographer and a good mathematician, might be quoted HUARD, a man of erudition and a correct printer; likewise CAILLAT, a capital performer on the violin, and a celebrated composer. For vocal and instrumental music, printing, and handicraft work, there might be noticed thirty or forty, as well as ten or twelve for knowledge relating to the sciences.

It may not be improper to observe, that M. HAÜY always first puts a frame into the hands of his pupils, and that he has made a law, to which he scrupulously adheres, not to lean too much towards the *agreeable* arts, unless the pupil manifest for them a peculiar disposition.

Hence you may form an idea of the proficiency which these unfortunates attain under the auspices of the benevolent M. HAÜY. In the compass of a letter, or even of several letters, it is impossible to develope proceedings which it is more easy to put into execution than to describe. The process alone of printing in relief would require a vast number of pages, and some plates, in order to make it perfectly intelligible; but the greater part of what composes these branches of instruction is amply detailed in a work, which I shall communicate to you, entitled "*Essai sur l'Éducation des Aveugles*, *par* Valentin Haüy, *auteur de la manière de les instruire*," printed under the sanction of the *ci-devant* Academy of Sciences.

By a law on public education, passed in July 1796, several establishments were to be founded in favour of blind children, in the principal towns of the Republic; but, in consequence of the political changes which have since occurred in the government, it has never been carried into execution.

In October, 1800, the Consuls decreed that the *National Institution of the Industrious Blind* should be united to the Hospital of the *Quinze-vingts*, together with the soldiers who had lost their sight in Egypt. M. HAÜY is shortly to be honoured by a pension, as a reward for the services which he has bestowed on those afflicted with blindness. At the present moment, he is engaged in founding a second establishment, of a similar nature, which is to take the name of

MUSEUM OF THE BLIND.

On my asking M. HAÜY, whether he would not retire, as it was intended he should, on his pension? "This favour of the government," replied he, "I consider as a fresh obligation, silently imposed on me, to continue to be of service to the blind. The first establishment, supported and paid by the nation, belonged to the poor. In forming the second," added he, "I have yielded to the wishes of parents in easy circumstances, who were desirous of giving to their blind children a liberal education."

I have already mentioned, that, agreeably to M. HAÜY'S plan, the blind instruct the clear-sighted; and in this Museum, which is situated *Rue Sainte Avoie, Hôtel de Mêsme, No. 19*, the former are to be seen directing a class of fifty youths, whom they instruct in every branch before-mentioned, writing excepted. It is also in contemplation to teach a blind pupil *pasigraphy*, or universal language, invented by DEMAIMIEUX.

M. HAÜY details to strangers every part of his plan with the most patient and obliging attention. When he had concluded, I could not avoid expressing a wish that the art of instructing the blind in the fullest extent might be speedily introduced among all nations. "After having paid to my country," rejoined M. HAÜY, "the merited homage of my invention, my anxiety to contribute to the relief of the afflicted, wherever they may be found, gives birth to the desire of propagating, as much as possible, an institution which enlightened men and philanthropists have been pleased to recommend to the attention of foreigners and to the esteem of my countrymen, as may be seen by consulting different literary publications from the year 1785 down to the present time, particularly the new French Encyclopædia, at the article *Aveugle*."

"I should," added he, "perform a task very agreeable to my feelings in concurring, by my advice and knowledge, to lay in England the foundation of an establishment of a description similar to either of those which I have founded in Paris. One of my pupils in the art of instructing the blind, M. GRANCHER, a member of several learned societies in France, and possessed of my means and method, would voluntarily devote his talents and experience to the success of such an undertaking, to which he is himself strongly attached through philanthropy and zeal for my reputation."—"I am persuaded," interrupted I, "that were the advantages of such an establishment made public in England, it would receive the countenance and support of every friend of human nature."—"It is an unquestionable fact," concluded M. Haüy, "that an institution of fifty blind, well conducted, ought, by their labour, to produce more than would defray its expenses. I have already even tried with success to apply to the English tongue my method of reading, which is so contrived for the French language, that I need not give more than two or

three lessons to a blind child, in order to enable him to teach himself to read, without the further help of any master."

LETTER XLI.

Paris, December 29, 1801.

Such a crowd of different objects present themselves to my mind, whenever I sit down to write to you, that, frequently as I have visited the Grand French Opera since my arrival here, I have been hesitating whether I should make it the subject of this letter. However, as it is one of the first objects of attraction to a stranger, and the first in a theatrical point of view, I think you cannot be too soon introduced to a knowledge of its allurements. Let us then pass in review the

THÉÂTRE DES ARTS ET DE LA REPUBLIQUE.[1]

Previously to the revolution, the French opera-house, under the name of *Académie Royale de Musique*, was situated on the Boulevard, near the *Porte St. Martin*. Except the façade, which has been admired, there was nothing very remarkable in the construction of this theatre, but the dispatch with which it was executed.

The old opera-house in the *Palais Royal* having been burnt down on the 8th of June 1781, M. LENOIR, the architect, built a new one in the short space of sixty days, and, within a fortnight after, it was decorated and opened. Had an hospital been reduced to ashes, observes an able writer, it would have required four years at least to determine on the eligibility of new plans.—But a theatre, constructed with such expedition, excited apprehensions respecting its stability: it was necessary to remove them, and, by way of *trying the house*, the first representation was given *gratis*. This had the desired effect: after having sustained the weight of between two and three thousand market-women, oyster-wenches, shoe-blacks, chimney-sweepers, porters, &c, it was deemed sufficiently solid to receive a more refined audience.

At the beginning of the year 1793, the interior of this quickly-built theatre was also destroyed by fire. But the opera experienced no interruption: such an event would be regarded as a public calamity in the capital. In fact, this expensive establishment affords employ to a vast number of persons. The singers, dancers, musicians, machinists, painters, tailors, dress-makers, scene-shifters, &c. attached to it, would constitute a little nation. The richness and variety of the dresses give activity to several branches of trade, and its representations involve all the agreeable arts. These united attractions captivate foreigners, and induce them to squander considerable sums of money in the country. Hence, were the opera-house shut up, commerce would suffer; there would be an absolute void in the pleasures of the Parisians; and, as experience proves, these volatile people would sooner resign every thing most valuable than any portion of their amusements. Besides, without such an establishment, the talents of singers and dancers could not be maintained in their present perfection. It holds out to them constant encouragement and remuneration; while, compared to any other theatre, it excites in the spectators a greater number of pleasing sensations. How then could it be dispensed with?

Accordingly, when the disaster befell the theatre of the *Porte St. Martin*, it was considered as a fortunate circumstance that the present opera-house was just finished. The performers of the *ci-devant Académie de Musique* immediately established themselves in this new asylum, which is situated in the *Rue de la Loi*, facing the National Library, and opened it to the public under the name of *Théâtre des Arts*. I must observe, by the way, that, in France, all players, dancers, musicians, and every one who exercises an art, are now styled *artistes*.

The form of this house is nearly a parallelogram: one of the shorter sides is occupied by the stage, and the other three are slightly curved. In general, one is ill placed here, except in the boxes in front of the stage, and in the pit, the seats of which rise abruptly, in the manner of an amphitheatre, from the orchestra to the first tier of boxes. The Chief Consul has chosen for himself the stage-box, as I believe we term it in England, on the right hand of the actors. It is elegantly decorated with scarlet velvet, embroidered in gold. The ornaments (I am not speaking of the scenery) are neither of superlative elegance, nor do they display extraordinary taste. The curtain, however, is majestic and beautiful, as well as the ceiling.

"Here," says a French author, "arts, graces, genius, and taste conspire to produce a most magnificent, a most brilliant, and most enchanting spectacle. Here heroes come to life again to sing their love and their despair; here many a goddess is seen to mix with mortals, many a Venus to descend from the radiant Olympus in order to throw herself into the arms of more than one Anchises."—Certainly, if splendid decorations, rich and appropriate dresses, the most skilful machinists, the most distinguished composers, a numerous and most select orchestra, some excellent actors, together with the most celebrated dancers in Europe, of both sexes, constitute a brilliant spectacle, this justly deserves that title. In these magnificent arrangements, we see again the Grand French Opera, as it appeared in the most splendid days of the monarchy. With the exception of the singing, every other department at this theatre is much improved; the only drawback that I can discover at the representation of the same pieces, which I have often seen here before the revolution, consists in the exterior of the spectators. Between the acts, when I transport myself in idea to the former period, and, looking round the house, form a comparison, I find the republican audience far less brilliant, owing, no doubt, to the absence of that glare of

diamonds, embroidery, lace, and other finery, which distinguished the frequenters of the opera under the old government.

The performances at the opera being, in general, more calculated for charming the eyes and ears, than gratifying the understanding, it is, consequently, the most frequented of any of the capital.

> "-------- With the many
> Action is eloquence, and th' eyes of th' ignorant
> More learned than their ears."

There is, however, no piece represented at this theatre that a stranger ought not to see, either on account of the music, or of the spectacle and its decorations. The operas, or lyric tragedies, which, from the number of times they have been performed, appear to have obtained the greatest success, are those of GLUCK. The originality, the energy, the force and truth of declamation of this great musician were likely to render him successful, especially among the French, who applauded the two last-mentioned qualities on their other national theatre.

With the exception of one only, all the works of GLUCK have remained as stock-pieces, and are played from time to time. They are five in number; namely, *Iphigénie en Aulide*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Orphée et Euridice*, *Armide*, and *Alceste*. That which could not maintain its ground, and consequently fell, was *Narcisse*. The flimsiness of the poem was the cause; for the music, I am assured, is the finest that GLUCK ever composed, and several pieces of it have been repeatedly performed in the Parisian concerts.

The *Didon* of PICCINI and the *Œdipe à Colonne* of SACCHINI have had no less success than the operas of GLUCK. They are very frequently represented.

It may not, perhaps, be unseasonable to remind you that, from twenty to twenty-five years ago, when the old operas of LULLI and RAMEAU were laid aside, and replaced by modern works, two parties were formed, which, from the name of the musician that each adopted, were called, the one, *Gluckists*; and the other, *Piccinists*. Their inveteracy was great, somewhat like that which, forty years before, existed between the *Molinists* and *Jansenists*: and few persons, if any, I believe, remained neuter. Victory seems to have crowned the former party. Indeed the music of GLUCK possesses a melody which is wonderfully energetic and striking. PICCINI is skilful and brilliant in his harmony, as well as sweet and varied in his composition; but this style of beauty has been thought to be deficient in expression. Truth obliges me to say, that, of PICCINI'S works, no opera is now played but his *Didon*, and that his other productions, which, to the best of my recollection, are *Alys*, an opera called *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and *Pénélope*, have fallen. This was ascribed to the mediocrity of the language; a part of an opera somewhat essential, though no great attention seems to be bestowed on it. But if people here are not very difficult as to the style of the language, they require at least an action well conducted and interesting. When the piece is of itself cold, it is not in the power of the finest music to give it warmth. The *Œdipe à Colonne* of SACCHINI is reckoned by many persons the *chef-d'œuvre* of operas. That able musician has there excelled in all that is graceful, noble, and pathetic; but it exhibits not the tragic fire that is to be found in the works of GLUCK. SACCHINI has left behind him another composition, called *Arvire et Evéline*, which, though a cold subject, taken from the history of England, is held in estimation.

At this theatre are also performed what the French term *opéras de genre*. These are a species of comic opera, in which is introduced a great deal of show and bustle. *Panurge*, *La Caravanne*, *Anacréon*, *Tarare*, *Les Prétendus*, *Les Mystères d'Isis*, &c. are of this description. The music of the first three is by GRÉTRY. It is considered as replete with grace, charm, and truth of expression. The poem of *Panurge* is an *estravaganza*. Those of the *Caravanne* and of *Anacréon* are but indifferent. It required no small share of talent to put words into the mouth of the charming poet, whose name is given to the last-mentioned piece; but M. GUY appears not to have thought of this. *Tarare* is a tissue of improbabilities and absurdities. The poem is frequently nothing but an assemblage of words which present no meaning. It is a production of the celebrated BEAUMARCHAIS, who has contrived to introduce into it a sort of impious metaphysics, much in fashion here before the revolution. The music is by SALIERI; it is very agreeable. The decorations are brilliant and diversified. The piece is preceded by a prologue (which no other opera has) representing the confusion and separation of the elements; and at the time of its first appearance, I remember it was said that chaos was the image of the author's head.

Les Prétendus is a piece in one act, the plot of which is weak, though of a gay cast. The music is charming. It is by LE MOYNE, who died a few years ago, at an early period of life. *Les Mystères d'Isis*, which is now the rage, is an incoherent parody from a German opera, called *the Enchanted Flute*. To say that the music is by MOZART, dispenses me from any eulogium. The decorations are extremely beautiful and varied: a scene representing paradise is really enchanting.

After speaking of lyric tragedies, I should have mentioned those which are either in rehearsal, or intended to be brought forward at this theatre. They consist of *Hécube*, *Andromaque*, *Sémiramis*, and *Tamerlan*. Although none of them are spoken of very highly, they will, in all probability, succeed in a certain degree; for a piece scarcely ever has a complete fall at the opera. This theatre has so many resources in the decorations, music, and dancing, that a new piece is seldom

destitute of something worth seeing.

What, at the present day, proves the greatest attraction to the opera, is the dancing. How bad soever may be a piece, when it is interspersed with fine ballets, it is sure of having a certain run. Of these I shall say no more till I come to speak of that department.

The weakest part of the performances at the opera is the singing. All are agreed as to the mediocrity of the singers at this theatre, called *lyric*. No one can say that, within the last ten or twelve years, they are improved. To any person fond of the Italian style, it would be a sort of punishment to attend while some of the singers here go through a scene. On the stage of the French comic opera, it has been adopted, and here also a similar change is required; but with the will to accomplish it, say its partisans, the means, perhaps, might still be wanting. The greater part of the old performers have lost their voice, and those who have not, do not appear to have sufficiently followed the progress of modern taste to be able all at once to embrace a new manner.

The first singer at the opera, in point of talent, is LAÏS. He even leaves all the others far behind him, if we consider him only as a singer. He is a *tenore*, according to the expression of the Italians, and a *taille*, according to that of the French: in the *cantabile* or graceful style, he is perfect; but he ought to avoid tragic pieces requiring exertion, in which his voice, though flexible, is sometimes disagreeable, and even harsh. Besides, he is absolutely deficient in nobleness of manner; and his stature and countenance are better suited to low character. Indeed, he chiefly performs in the operas termed here *opéras de genre*, such as *Panurge*, *La Caravanne*, *Anacréon*, and *Les Prétendus*. In these, his acting is correct, and his delivery judicious.

LAÏS is no less famous for the violence of his political opinions than for his talents as a singer. At the period when the abettors of the reign of terror were, in their turn, hunted down, for a long time he durst not appear on the stage. He was accused by his brother performers of having said that the opera would never go on well till a guillotine should be placed on the stage. This stroke was levelled against the greater part of the actors and the musicians belonging to the orchestra. However, as LAÏS could not be reproached with any culpable *actions*, he found zealous defenders, and the public sacrificed their resentment to their pleasure. This lenity appears not to have had on him the effect which one would imagine. He still possesses every requisite for singing well, but seems indifferent as to the means of pleasing, and exerts himself but little.

If singers were esteemed by seniority, and perhaps by employment, LAINEZ would be reckoned the first at this theatre. He is a counter-tenor, and performs the parts of a lover. His voice is very strong, and, besides singing through his nose, he screams loud enough to split one's ears. I have already observed that the ears of a tasteful amateur would sometimes be shocked at this theatre. The same remark, no doubt, was equally just some time ago; for J. J. ROUSSEAU, when he was told that it was intended to restore to him the free admission which he had enjoyed at the opera, replied that this was unnecessary, because he had at the door of his country-residence the screech owls of the forest of Montmorency. Those who are partial to LAINEZ think him an excellent actor. This means that he has some warmth, and bestirs himself like a demoniac. When the heroes of the opera wore hair-powder, nothing was more comic than to see him shake his head, which was instantly enveloped in a cloud of dust. At this signal the plaudits burst forth with great violence, and the would-be singer, screaming with still greater loudness, seemed on the point of bursting a blood-vessel.

It is reported that, not long since, a great personage having sent for the *artists* belonging to the opera, said to them, addressing himself to LAINEZ, "Gentlemen, do you intend to keep long your old singers?"[2] The same personage then turning round to the dancers added, "As for you, gentlemen of the dance, none but compliments can be paid to you."

LAFORÊT who (as the French express it), *doubles* LAINEZ, that is, performs the same characters in his absence, has little more to recommend him than his zeal. His voice is tolerably agreeable, but not strong enough for so large a house. As an actor he is cold and aukward.

Next comes CHÉRON: he sings bass. His voice is strong, and the tone of it sonorous and clear. However, it is thought to be weakened, and although this singer sometimes throws out fine tones, he is reproached with a want of taste and method. He is a sorry actor. Indeed, he very seldom makes his appearance, which some attribute to idleness; and others, to his state of health. The latter is likely to be occasionally deranged, as in point of epicurism, he has as great a reputation as our celebrated Quin.

ADRIEN, who *doubles* CHÉRON, is an excellent actor; but his means do not equal his intelligence. He presents himself wonderfully well; all his movements, all his gestures have dignity, grace, and ease. There are, for the same employment, other secondary singers, some of whom are by no means backward in exertion, particularly DUFRESNE; but an impartial observer can say nothing more in their commendation.

Let us now examine the qualifications of *Mesdames les cantatrices*.

The first female singer at the opera is Mademoiselle MAILLARD. By means of a rather pretty face, a clear voice, and a cabal of malcontents (for there are some every where and in every line), she obtained loud applause, when she first appeared some years ago as the rival of the charming

ST. HUBERTI. Since the revolution, France has lost this celebrated actress, and probably for ever. She emigrated, and has since married the *ci-devant* Comte d'Antraigues. Although she had not a powerful voice, she sang with the greatest perfection; and her impressive and dignified style of acting was at least equal to her singing.

At the present day, Mademoiselle MAILLARD has succeeded Madame ST. HUBERTI, and is, as I have said, the first singer, in point of rank. She is become enormous in bulk, and as the Italians express it, *canta a salti*. Her powerful voice fills the house, but she is not unfrequently out of tune: her declamation is noisy; while her masculine person gives her in all her motions the air of a Bacchante. These qualities, no doubt, recommended her to the notice of CHAUMETTE, the proclaimer of atheism, under whose auspices she more than once figured as the goddess of reason. She has, nevertheless, occasionally distinguished herself as an actress; and those who love noise, admire the effect of her transitions. But I give the preference to Mademoiselle LATOUR, who has a melodious pipe, which you will probably hear, as it is said that she has not retired from the stage, where she frequently reminded the public of the fascinating ST. HUBERTI, particularly in the character of *Didon*.

Since the prolonged absence of Mademoiselle LATOUR, Madame BRANCHU *doubles* Mademoiselle MAILLARD. She is of much promise both as a singer and actress. Her voice is agreeable, but not extensive.

Mademoiselle ARMAND is another most promising singer, who has a more powerful organ than Madame BRANCHU, and when she has perfectly acquired the art of modulating it, will, doubtless, prove a very valuable acquisition to this theatre. Her voice has much sweetness, and sometimes conveys to the ear the most flattering sounds, as its low tones are grave without being harsh, and its high ones sonorous without being sharp. She seems to execute the most difficult pieces of music with considerable ease; but she is deficient in action.

Mademoiselle HENRY is strong as to method, but weak as to means, in singing. There are several other female singers; but, in my opinion, their merits do not entitle them to particular mention.

Twelve or fourteen years ago, the opera was much better provided with singers than it is at the present moment. Their voices, in every line of this department, were well-toned and powerful. They easily reached the highest notes according to the tone given by the diapason. Since then, the powers of most of the singers who still remain on the stage have diminished, and those called in to supply the place of such as are dead or have retired, are not near so rich in voice as their predecessors. The diapason, however, has remained the same: to this, in a great measure, may be attributed those shrieks and efforts which disgust foreigners, unaccustomed to the French method. At the Parisian comic opera, in consequence of a remonstrance from the principal singers, their diapason has been lowered half a tone; and it seems necessary to examine whether the same rule be not applicable to this theatre.

The choruses, notwithstanding, are now given here with more effect and precision than I ever remember at any former period. In these, the ear is no longer offended by exaggerated extensions of the voice, and, on the whole, they are sung in a grand and graceful style.

The orchestra, which is ably led by REY, has also experienced a manifest improvement. The principal musicians, I understand, have been recently changed; and the first artists are engaged for the execution of the solos, and nothing can now be wished for, either as to the spirit and correctness of the overtures, or to the melody and taste of the accompaniments.

The Chief Consul is said to be particularly partial to Italian music. In consequence, KREUTZER, a capital violin, and also a celebrated composer, has been dispatched to Italy by the French government, for the express purpose of selecting and purchasing the finest musical compositions which can be procured in that land of harmony. Thus, the advice given by ROUSSEAU, in his *Dictionnaire de Musique*, has at length been followed.

So much for the singing department of the opera, which, as you see, with some exceptions, is but indifferent: in my next, I shall speak of the dancing.

Footnote 1: Since the above letter was written, this Lyric theatre has changed its name for that of *Théâtre de l'Opéra*. This seems like one of the minor modifications, announcing the general retrograde current setting towards the readoption of old habits; for the denomination of *Théâtre des Arts* was certainly unobjectionable, as poetry, music, dancing, painting, and mechanics, concurred in rendering more pompous and more surprising the effects which a fertile genius, when governed by reason, might assemble here for the gratification of the public. The addition of the words *et de la République* was probably given to it from patriotic zeal, at the time when the *Royal Academy of Music* was abolished by the decree which annihilated all similar monarchical institutions. Return to text

Footnote 2: It appears that, from pique, this old opera-singer refused to sing on Easter-Sunday last, (1802) at the cathedral of *Notre-Dame*. Return to text

LETTER XLII

Paris, December 30, 1801.

Dancing, like the other arts in France, has, during the revolution, experienced the vicissitudes of this new order of things; but also, like the other arts, it has made a progress equally astonishing

and rapid. However, it must not thence be inferred that dancing, particularly theatrical, had not attained a certain degree of superiority long before the revolution; yet a most evident improvement has been made in it, not only by the old-established dancers, who then seemed almost to have done their best, but by the numerous competitors who have since made their appearance.

It is not in the power of words to convey an adequate idea of the effect produced on the senses by some of the ballets. In lieu of those whimsical capers, forced attitudes, vague and undefined gestures of a set of dancers whose movements had no signification, dancing now forms an animated, graceful, and diversified picture, in which all the human passions are feelingly pourtrayed. Their language is the more expressive from its being more refined and concentrated. In the silence of pantomime, recourse is had to every ingenious gesture, in order to impart to them greater force and energy; and, in this mute play, restraint seems to kindle eloquence. Every motion has its meaning; the foot speaks as well as the eye, and the sensations of the mind are expressed by the attitudes of the body. A delicate sentiment is rendered with the rapidity of lightning. Love, fear, hope, and despair, change countenances, and say every thing that they wish to say, void of deceit, as if falsehood no longer existed as soon as the mouth ceased to open.

It should not be forgotten that it was NOVERRE who first brought about in France this reform in what were till then called ballets, without deserving the title. He banished wigs, hoop-petticoats, and other preposterous habiliments, and, by dint of superior genius, seconded by taste and perseverance, introduced those historical pictures, replete with grace, expression, and sentiment, in the room of the flat, insipid, and lifeless caricatures, which had hitherto usurped admiration.

But, though NOVERRE, and, after him, the GARDELS, introduced on the Parisian stage the pantomimic art in all the lustre in which it flourished on the theatres of Greece and Rome, yet they had been anticipated by HILWERDING in Germany, and ANGIOLINI in Italy, two celebrated men, who, in a distinguished manner, laid the foundations of a species of modern entertainment, before known only by the annals of ancient history. Those who have trod in their steps have infinitely surpassed them in attractions, and, by their scientific compositions, acquired a justly-merited reputation.

GARDEL, who, for the last fifteen years, has been the first dancer at the opera, shews himself but seldom. After having, during that long period, received the warmest and best deserved applause, either in the execution of the noble style of dancing, or in the composition of ballets, he seems now to have devoted himself almost exclusively to the last-mentioned branch of his art, and the perfection to which he daily carries it, may well compensate the public for the privation of his talents in the line of execution.

The most famous pantomimical ballets or *ballets d'action* (as they are styled) now represented here, are *Psyché*, *Télémaque*, *Le Jugement de Paris*, *Mirza*, and *la Dansomanie*. The impression to which I have before alluded, is particularly observable during the representation of the first three (composed by GARDEL), the charm of which would be weakened by any attempt at description. No spectator, be his disposition ever so cold and indifferent, can behold them unmoved. Every effort of human skill and invention is exerted to excite astonishment and admiration. The *ensemble* of the *spectacle* and decorations correspond to the fertile genius of the author. It is the triumph of the art, and there may be fixed the limits of pantomime, embellished by dancing. Nothing more perfect than the rapid change of scenery. Meteors, apparitions, divinities borne on clusters of clouds or in cars, appear and disappear, as if by enchantment, exhibiting situations the most picturesque and striking.

BOULAY, the principal machinist, is, perhaps, the first in his line in Europe. In the opera of *Armide*, I have seen him raise into the air nearly one half of the theatre. He executes whatever is proposed to him, no matter how difficult, and he is well seconded by the painters and draughtsmen. The new decorations display much taste, and produce an effect truly wonderful.

Had I not already made the remark, you might have concluded from the general tenour of my observations, that the dancing forms the most brilliant part, of the *spectacle* at this theatre, or, in other words, that the accessory prevails over the main subject. It is no longer, as heretofore, a few capital dancers of both sexes who form the ornament of the opera. Almost all the competitors in this line are so many *virtuosi* who deserve and equally participate the plaudits of the public. There is not among them any mediocrity. The establishment of the *école de la danse* is for this theatre a nursery, where Terpsichore finds, in great numbers, the most promising plants for the decoration of her temple. It is saying little to affirm that nothing equals the superiority of talents of this description which the opera comprehends at the present moment. These advantages, I understand, are chiefly due to GARDEL. He has given the example and the precept, and, through his guidance, the art of dancing is become doubly captivating.

After having supplied most of the principal cities in Europe with capital dancers, this theatre, far from being impoverished, is still in possession of a numerous train of first-rate *artists* of both sexes in every style of dancing. The men are GARDEL, MILON, ST. AMAND, DESHAIES, GOYON, BEAUPRÉ, BRANCHU, BEAULIEU, AUMER, LÉON, TAGLIONI, DUPORT, and VESTRIS.

It is unnecessary to speak of the talents of VESTRIS, as they are as well known in London as in Paris. I shall therefore content myself with remarking that he delights in exhibiting feats of agility; but as his age increases, connoisseurs think that he declines a little. Nevertheless, he is

still, in reality, the first dancer at the opera. It is said that his son, ARMAND VESTRIS, will, in time, be able to supply his place; in the mean while, DUPORT bids fair to fill it, in case the "*Dieu de la danse*" should retire; not to mention DESHAIES, who has lately met with an accident which has disabled him for the present; but who, when on the stage in the presence of Vestris, has shewn that he could also astonish and delight the spectators. Without having the boldness of his rival, he exhibits more certainty and *à-plomb*. In the character of *Télémaque*, he appears with all the grace of Apollo. If excellence in dancing be allowed to consist less in the efforts of the dancer, than in the ease and gracefulness of his attitudes, and the lightness and precision of his steps, DESHAIES may he classed in the first rank of his profession.

In this exercise, as in every thing else, there is a just medium, and this is more particularly observed by the principal female dancers. The names of these are GARDEL, CLOTILDE, CHEVIGNY, PÉRIGNON, COLLOMB, CHAMEROI,[1] SAULNIER, VESTRIS, DELISLE, MILLIÈRE, LOUISE, FÉLICITÉ, DUPORT, TAGLIONI, ALINE, ÉTIENNE, JACOTOT, FLORINE, ADÈLE, to whom may be added two most promising *débutantes*, LA NEUVILLE and BIGOTINI, whose first appearance I witnessed.

Though Madame GARDEL, wife of the principal ballet-master, shines in *demi-caractère*, her talents, in the different parts in which she is placed, are above all panegyric. As NOVERRE has said somewhere of a famous dancer, "she is always tender, always graceful, sometimes a butterfly, sometimes a zephyr, at one moment inconstant, at another faithful; always animated by a new sentiment, she represents with voluptuousness all the shades of love." To sum up her merits, she is really in her art the female Proteus of the lyric scene. Mademoiselle CLOTILDE is a tall, elegant woman, who dances in the serious style. All her movements, made with precision, exhibit the beautiful proportion of her finely-modelled figure; but, owing to her stature, she appears to most advantage in pantomime, particularly in the character of *Calypso* in the ballet of *Télémaque*. In the same ballet, MILLIÈRE, in the part of *Eucharis*, displays her playful graces and engaging mien. CHEVIGNY is full of expression in pantomime, and dances in great perfection, notwithstanding her *embonpoint*. PÉRIGNON and COLLOMB are superior in the comic style, and all the others are not without some peculiar exellence.[2]

I should never finish, were I to attempt to particularize the merits of all these fascinating women, who, as well as the men, have, of late, alternately interchanged the characters they performed in the ballets of action. Even those introduced occasionally in the fêtes given and received by the heroes in the different operas, present a real contest, in which the first-rate dancers of both sexes exert themselves to snatch the palm from their rivals. When a theatre possesses such a richness, variety, and assemblage of talents in the same art, it may boldly stylo itself the first in Europe. But I must confess that an innovation has been introduced here which detracts much from what has always been considered as fine dancing. I mean the mania of *pirouettes*. This, however, seems less to be attributed to a decided *penchant* of the dancers than to that of a new public, not yet familiarized to what constitutes true taste.

During a revolution, every thing changes, every thing assumes a new face. What was entitled to please yesterday in times of tranquillity, is to-day, during the jar of public opinion, and will be to-morrow subject to all the variations of caprice. The marvellous and gigantic usurp the place of the natural, and claim alone the right to entertain. True it is that the dancers have found means to render this new manner interesting, while they have enjoyed the sweets of it. The pleasure of being applauded is so great, that it is no easy matter to withstand the powerful allurement of the plaudits of a numerous audience. Boileau has said, "*Aimez-vous la muscade? On en a mis par tout*." The French dancers, following his example, have said, "*Aimez-vous les pirouettes?*" The public have answered *oui*; and *pirouettes* are all the rage.

When a certain king of Bisnagar sneezes, the court, the town, the provinces, all the subjects of his empire, in short, sneeze in imitation of their monarch. Without departing from my subject, I shall only observe that *pirouettes*, like this sneezing, have found their way from the opera-stage into the circles of every class of society in Paris. There lies the absurdity. The young Frenchmen have been emulous to dance like dancers by profession; the women have had the same ambition; and both men and women have, above all, been desirous to shine like them in *pirouettes*. Thence most of the dances, formerly practised in society, in which simple and natural grace was combined with a certain facility and nobleness of execution, have been entirely laid aside. It must be acknowledged, that, among the dancers in private company, there are many, indeed, who, by dint of imitation and study, have attained a great degree of perfection. But I now perceive that people here no longer dance for their amusement; they dance to gratify their vanity, and many a person who has not practised some hours in the morning under the tuition of his master, excuses himself in the evening, pretends to be lame, and declines dancing.

The taste and elegance of the dresses of the opera-dancers, like those of the heroes and heroines of the sock and buskin, leave nothing to be wished for. In lieu of drawers, which all women, without exception, were formerly obliged to wear on the stage[3], those who dance have now substituted silk pantaloons, woven with feet, in order to serve also as stockings. In some particular characters, they wear these of flesh colour, and it is not then easy, at first sight, to distinguish whether it be or be not the clothing of nature.

The French opera having been long considered as the grand national theatre, it has ever been the pride of the government, whether monarchical or republican, to support it in a manner worthy of the nation. In fact, the disbursements are so great, that it would be impossible for the receipts to

cover them, though the performances are seldom suspended for more than two days in the week, and the house is generally crowded. This theatre is managed by the government, and on its account. The Minister of the Interior appoints a commissioner to superintend its operations, and managers to conduct them. During the old *régime*, the opera cost the crown annually from one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand livres. What the extraordinary expenses of this house are, under the present government, is not so easily ascertained; but, from the best information that I have been able to procure, their amount is from three to four hundred thousand francs a year. Here is a considerable increase; but it must be remembered that the price of several articles is now greatly augmented, if not doubled.

The receipt of the opera, on an average, used to be from twelve to fifteen thousand livres a night; what it is at this day, is not positively known. Formerly, the produce of the boxes, let by the year, was such, that nine thousand livres were paid, in a manner, before the doors were thrown open. That resource is almost void at present; nevertheless, this house being more spacious than the old one, the prices of admission higher, and the performance, perhaps, more constantly attended, the money taken at the door cannot well be less than it was formerly. It then cost much less than it does now to bring out a new piece. Thirty or forty thousand livres were sufficient for the production of the most magnificent opera; while the disbursements to be made for *Tamerlan* will, it is thought, amount to upwards of eighty thousand francs. At this rate, the first representation of the *Mystères d'Isis*, of which so much has been said, must have been attended with an expense of more than a hundred thousand. Scandal whispers, that the managers of the opera are rather partial to expensive pieces; but as they are accountable for their conduct to the Minister of the Interior, I should presume that they must act as honourable men.

The salaries are not considerable at this theatre. The first performers have not more than twelve thousand francs a year, exclusively of the *feux*, which is the sum given to each of them, when they perform. This, I understand, does not exceed a louis a night. Those who have a name, indemnify themselves by going, from time to time, to play in the great commercial towns of the departments, such as Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, &c. where they generally collect a rich harvest. It is said that VESTRIS has received from the government a gratification to prevent him from visiting the British metropolis; and it is also reported that DIDELOT and LABORIE have made vain efforts to return to the Parisian opera; but that the managers, faithful to their instructions, refuse to readmit such of the old performers as have voluntarily quitted it. What attaches performers to the opera-house is the *pension de retraite.* They all eventually obtain it, even the chorus-singers.

The remuneration of authors, that is, of the poet and composer of the music, is to each three hundred francs for every representation, when the piece is not less than three acts. This is the most common division. I know of no operas in one act; those in two are paid in the above proportion.[4]

Footnote 1: The refusal made by the Rector of St. Roch to admit into that church the corpse of Mademoiselle CHAMEROI, has informed us in England of the loss which this theatre has sustained in that young and accomplished dancer. She died, generally regretted, in consequence of being delivered of a child of which VESTRIS considered himself as the real father. However, M. DE MARKOFF, the Russian ambassador at Paris, stood sponsor to the infant, and, according to the scandalous chronicle, was not contented with being only a spiritual father. The Parisian public have consoled themselves for this loss by talking a great deal about the scene to which it gave rise. It seems that the Rector was decidedly in the wrong, the dancers of the opera never having been comprised in the papal excommunication which involved players. The persons composing the funeral procession were also in the wrong to go to St. Roch, since the Rector had positively declared that the corpse of Mademoiselle CHAMEROI should not enter the church. Return to text

Footnote 2: In a preceding note, VESTRIS has been mentioned as the reputed lover of Mademoiselle CHAMEROI, and from this instance of illicit intercourse, it might, perhaps, be erroneously inferred that most of the Parisian female opera-dancers had overleaped the pale of virtue. Without pretending to enter the lists as the champion of their character, though I admire their talents as warmly as any amateur, truth induces me to observe that many of these ladies enjoy an unblemished reputation. Madame VESTRIS, in particular, is universally represented as a young and pretty woman, much attached to her faithless husband, and, notwithstanding his improper example, a constant observer of the most exemplary conduct. Return to text

Footnote 3: Many years ago, a Parisian actress, coming on the stage in the part of *Mérope*, in the tragedy of that name, her petticoats somehow happened to catch in the side-scene, and, in her hasty endeavours to disentangle them, she exhibited to the audience the hind part of her person. In consequence of this accident, a *sentence de police* enjoined every woman, whether actress or dancer, not to appear on the boards of any theatre, without drawers. Return to text

Footnote 4: GARDEL has lately added another sprig of laurel to his brow, by the production of a new pantomimical ballet, called *Daphnis et Pandrose, ou la vengeance de l'amour*. He has borrowed the subject from a story of Madame DE GENLIS, who took it from fable. Every resource of his inexhaustible genius has been employed to give the happiest effect to this charming work, to enumerate the beauties of which is, by general report, beyond the powers of language. All the first-rate dancers of both sexes are placed in the most advantageous point of view throughout this ballet. Madame GARDEL performs in it the part of Cupid, with all the charms, wiles, and graces which poets ascribe to the roguish deity. The other characters are represented in a manner no less interesting. In short, music, dancing, pantomime, dress, decoration, every thing in this piece, concurs to stamp it as one of the most wonderful productions of the kind ever exhibited to the admiration of the public. Return to text

LETTER XLIII.

Paris, January 1, 1802.

Fast locked in the arms of Morpheus, and not dreaming of what was to happen, as Lord North said, when the king caused him to be awakened, in the dead of the night, to deliver up the seals, so was I roused this morning by a message from an amiable French lady of my acquaintance, requesting me to send her some *bonbons*. "*Bonbons*!" exclaimed I, "in the name of wonder, Rosalie, is your mistress so childishly impatient as to send you trailing through the snow, on purpose to remind me that I promised to replenish her *bonbonnière*?"—"Not exactly so, Monsieur," replied the *femme de chambre*, "Madame was willing to be the first to wish you a happy new year."—"A new year!" said I, "by the republican calendar, I thought that the new year began on the 1st of Vendémiaire."—"Very true," answered she; "but, in spite of new laws, people adhere to old customs; wherefore we celebrate the first of January."—"As to celebrating the first of January, *à la bonne heure*, Rosalie," rejoined I, "I have no sort of objection; but I wish you had adhered to some of your other old customs, and, above all, to your old hours. I was not in bed till past six o'clock this morning, and now, you wake me at eight with your congratulations."—"Never mind, Monsieur," said she, "you will soon drop asleep again; but my mistress hopes that you will not fail to make one of her party on the *Fête des Rois*."—"Good heaven!" exclaimed I again, "what, is a counterrevolution at hand, that the *Fête des Rois* must also be celebrated?"—"'Tis," interrupted Rosalie, "only for the pleasure of drawing for king and queen."—"Tell Madame," added I, "that I will accept her invitation."—Dismissing the *soubrette* with this assurance, at the same time not forgetting to present her with a new year's gift, she at once revealed the secret of her early visit, by hinting to me that, among intimate friends, it was customary to give *étrennes*. This, in plain English, implies nothing more nor less than that I must likewise make her mistress a present, on the principle, I suppose, that *les petits cadeaux entretiennent l'amitié*.

My reflection then turned on the instability of this people. After establishing a new division of time, they return to the old one, and celebrate, as formerly, the first of January. Now, it is evident that the former accords better with the order of nature, and that autumn was the first season which followed the creation. Why else should apples of irresistible ripeness and beauty have presented themselves to the eye of our first parents in the garden of Eden? This would not have been the case, had the world commenced in winter.

Besides, a multitude of advantages would accrue to the French from an adherence to the 1st of Vendémiaire, or 23d of September of the Gregorian calendar, as the first day of the year. The weather, after the autumnal equinox, is generally settled, in consequence of the air having been purified by the pre-existing gales, the ordinary forerunners of that period: and the Parisians would not be obliged to brave the rain, the wind, the cold, the frost, the snow, &c. in going to wish a happy new year to their fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relations. For to all this are they now exposed, unless they choose to ruin themselves in coach-hire. The consequence is that they are wet, cold, and dirty for two or three successive days, and are sure to suffer by a sore throat, rheumatism, or fever, all which entail the expensive attendance of the faculty; whereas, did they celebrate the 23d of September as new year's day, they might, in a quiet, unassuming manner, pay all their visits on foot, and, in that season, this exercise would neither be prejudicial to their purse nor their health.

I do not immediately recollect whether I have spoken to you of the long-expected account of the French expedition to Egypt, by DENON: yet I ought not to have omitted to inform you that, upwards of two months ago, I set down your name for a copy of this splendid work. It will cost you 360 francs; but you will have one of the proof impressions. I have seen a specimen of the letter-press, which is to consist of a folio volume, printed by Didot. The plates, amounting to upwards of one hundred and forty in number, are entirely engraved from DENON'S original drawings, without any reduction or enlargement, with the exception of that representing the Battle of the Pyramids, the size of which has been increased at the express desire of BONAPARTE. I have often amused myself on a morning in contemplating these drawings; but the crowd of curious persons being generally great, I determined to seize the opportunity of examining them more at leisure to-day, when the French are entirely engaged in interchanging the compliments of the season. I found DENON himself diligently employed on some of the engravings; and so anxious is he for the publication of the work, that he toils early and late to forward its appearance.

Notwithstanding the anxiety he feels on that account, this estimable artist takes a real pleasure in explaining the subject of his drawings; and, by means of his obliging communications, I am now become tolerably well acquainted with Egypt. What country, in fact, has a better claim to fix attention than that which served as a cradle to human knowledge, and the history of which goes back to the first ages of the world; a country, where every thing seems to have commenced? Laws, arts, sciences, and even fables, which derive their origin from nature, whose attributes they immortalize, and which, at a subsequent period, formed the ground-work of the ingenious fictions of mythology.

What idea must we not conceive of the industry and civilization of a people who erected those celebrated monuments, anterior to the annals of history, to the accounts even of tradition, those pyramids which have unalterably withstood all the ravages of time?

When we look back on the ancients, the Greeks and Romans almost exclusively divide our attention. The former, it is true, carried farther the love and the culture of the fine arts; while the latter are more remarkable for the great traits of their character; though both acquired that renown which mankind have so improperly attached to the success of arms.

But, in allowing to Greece all the interest which she claims, in so many respects, we cannot forget that she was originally peopled by Egyptian colonies; that it was Egyptians who, in later times, carried thither the knowledge of the arts, the most necessary and the most indispensable to society; and that, at the epoch which preceded the splendid days of Greece, it was also into Egypt that the sages went to acquire that knowledge of a superior kind, which constituted their glory, and rendered their country illustrious.

What keeps up a sort of rivalship between Greece and Egypt is that, independently of the priority of knowledge, the former had the eminent advantage of opening her arms to philosophy and the sciences, which, forsaking their adoptive country, and not being able to survive the loss of liberty, fled back to their natal soil, and found, in the Museum of Alexandria, an asylum, which neither the Lyceum, the Portico, nor the Academy, could longer afford them at Athens. Thus, to the reign of the Ptolemies are we, unquestionably, indebted for the preservation of the knowledge acquired by the ancients.

Apropos, I forgot to mention to you that BERTHOLET, a Senator and Member of the Institute, communicated to that society, in one of its sittings last month, a letter from FOURIER, the geometrician, and member of the late Institute of Egypt. This *savant*, in the researches he made in Upper Egypt, discovered and delineated several zodiacs, which, he says, fully confirm the theory of DUPUIS, respecting the origin and antiquity of the figures of the zodiac. As far back as the year 1781, DUPUIS published a memoir, since reprinted in his large work, entitled *De l'Origine des Cultes*, in which he presumes that the zodiac, such as it has been transmitted to us by the Greeks, is of Egyptian origin, and that it goes back to fifteen thousand years, at least, before the era of the French revolution.

LETTER XLIV.

Paris, January 3, 1802.

An almost uninterrupted succession of wet weather has, of late, precluded me from the regular enjoyment of a morning walk. But, with the new year, we had a heavy fall of snow, which has since been succeeded by a severe frost. I gladly availed myself of this opportunity of taking exercise, and yesterday, after viewing the skaiters in that part of the *Champs Elysées* which had been inundated, and is now frozen, I immediately proceeded to the

HÔTEL DES INVALIDES.

This majestic edifice was projected by Henry IV, and executed, by order of Lewis XIV, after the designs of BRUANT, who laid the foundation on the 30th of November, 1671. It is composed of five courts, surrounded by buildings. The middle court is as large as all the other four.

A spacious esplanade planted with trees, an outer court surrounded by a wall newly-built, form the view towards the river, and lead to the principal façade, which is twelve hundred feet in extent. This façade has, within these few years, been entirely polished anew: the details of sculpture have, perhaps, gained by the operation; but the architecture has certainly lost that gloomy tint which gave to this building a manly and respectable character. In the middle of this façade, in the arched part above the great gate, was a bas-relief of Lewis XIV on horseback.

This gate leads to the great court, which is decorated by two rows of arcades, the one above the other, forming, on the two stories, uniform galleries which give light to the apartments of the circumference. The windows, which serve to light the upper apartments of the façade, are remarkable from their being placed in cuirasses, as those of the great court are in trophies of arms.

From this court, you enter the church, now called the *Temple of Mars*. It is ornamented with the Corinthian order, and has the form of a Greek cross. The pulpit no longer exists. The altar, which was magnificently decorated, is likewise destroyed.

The chapels, to the number of six, were each ornamented by a cupola painted in fresco, and statues in marble by the greatest masters, which, after being left for some time exposed to the injuries of the air in the court looking towards the country, are at length deposited in the MUSEUM OF FRENCH MONUMENTS.

To the arches of this temple are suspended the standards and colours taken from the enemy. Two British flags only contribute to augment the number. The oldest of these trophies have been removed from *Notre-Dame*. When they were formerly displayed in that cathedral, a general, who was constantly victorious, was called by the people the *upholsterer of Notre-Dame*; an energetic appellation which spoke home to the feelings. But, however calculated these emblems of victory may be to foster heroism in the mind of youth, and rekindle valour in the heart of old age, what a subject of reflection do they not afford to the philanthropist! How can he, in fact, contemplate these different flags, without regretting the torrents of blood which they have cost his fellow-creatures?

In this *Temple of Mars* is erected the monument of TURENNE, whose body, after various removals, was conveyed hither, in great pomp, on the 1st of Vendémiaire, year IX (23d of September, 1800) conformably to a decree of the Consuls, and immediately deposited in the

inside of this tomb.

The present government of France seems to have taken the hint from St. Foix, who expresses his astonishment that Lewis XIV never conceived the idea of erecting, in the *Hôtel des Invalides*, mausolea, with the statues of the generals who had led with the greatest glory the armies of the nation. "Where could they be more honourably interred," says he, "than amidst those old soldiers, the companions of their fatigues, who, like themselves, had lavished their blood for their country?"[1]

At the age of sixty-four, TURENNE was killed by a cannon-ball, while reconnoitring the enemy's batteries near the village of Salzbach in Germany, on the 27th of July, 1675. No less esteemed for his virtues as a man, than honoured for his talents as a general, he at last fell a victim to his courage. His soldiers looked up to him as to a father, and in his life-time always gave him that title. After his death, when they saw the embarrassment in which it left the generals who succeeded him in the command of the army: "*Let loose old Piebald*," said they, "*he will guide us*." [2] The same ball which (to borrow a line from Pope) laid

"The *god-like* TURENNE prostrate in the dust,"

likewise took off the arm of ST. HILAIRE, Lieutenant-general of artillery: his son, who was beside him at the moment, uttered a cry of grief. "*'Tis not me, my son, that you must bewail*," said ST. HILAIRE; "*'tis that great man.*"

The Marshal was as much lamented by the enemy as he was by his own countrymen; and MONTECUCULLI, the general opposed to him, when he learned the loss which France had sustained in the person of TURENNE, exclaimed: "Then a man is dead who was an honour to human nature!"

The Germans, for several years, left untilled the field where he was killed; and the inhabitants shewed it as a sacred spot. They respected the old tree under which, he reposed a little time before his death, and would not suffer it to be cut down. The tree perished only, because soldiers of all nations carried away pieces of it out of respect to his memory.

TURENNE had been interred in the abbey of St. Denis, and at the time of the royal vaults being opened in 1793, by order of the National Convention, the remains of that great captain were respected amid the general destruction which ensued. From the eagerness of the workmen to behold them, his tomb was the very first that was opened. When the lid of the coffin was removed, the Marshal was found in such a state of preservation that he was not at all disfigured: the features of his face, far from being changed, were perfectly conformable to the portraits and medallions of TURENNE in our possession.

This monument, now placed in the *Temple of Mars*, had been erected to that warrior in the abbey of St. Denis, and was preserved through the care of M. LENOIR; after being seen for five years in the MUSEUM OF FRENCH MONUMENTS, of which he is the director, it was removed hither by the before-mentioned decree of the Consuls. LE BRUN furnished the designs from which it was executed. The group, composed of TURENNE in the arms of Immortality, is by TUBY; the accessory figures, the one representing Wisdom, and the other, Valour, are by MARSY. The bas-relief in bronze in the middle of the cenotaph is likewise by TURY, and represents TURENNE charging the enemy at the battle of Turckheim, in 1675.

The dome forms a second church behind the large one, to which it communicates. Its exterior, entirely covered with lead, is surrounded by forty pillars of the Composite order, and ornamented with twelve large gilt coats of mail, crowned with helmets, which serve as skylights, and with a small lantern with pillars which support a pyramid, surmounted by a large ball and a cross.

All the architecture of the dome, which is called the new church, is from the design of MANSARD. Its elevation, from the ground-floor, is three hundred feet; and its diameter, fifty. It has the character of elegance. The beauty of its proportion, its decoration, and especially all the parts which concur in forming the pyramid, render it a master-piece of architecture. But nothing commands admiration like the interior, though it may be said to be three-fourths damaged. The twelve windows, by which it is lighted, but which the observer below cannot perceive, are ornamented with coupled piasters, resting on a continued pedestal. On the broad band, which was formerly adorned with flower-de-luces, and at this day with emblems of liberty, were the medallions of twelve of the most famous kings of France: namely, Clovis, Dagobert, Childebert, Charlemagne, Lewis the Debonair, Charles the Bald, Philip Augustus, St. Lewis, Lewis XII, Henry IV, Lewis XIII, and Lewis XIV. The first arch, distributed into twelve equal parts, presented the twelve apostles, painted in fresco by JOUVENET. The second arch, painted by LA FOSSE, represented the apotheosis of St. Lewis, offering to God his sword and crown. The pavement, which alone has not suffered, is in compartments of different marbles of great value.

The portal, which looks towards the country, is thirty toises in extent. Of all the figures which decorated this façade, those of the Four Virtues; namely, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude, and Prudence, are the only ones that have been suffered to remain in their places. They are by COYZEVOX.

The other objects most worthy of notice in this spacious, building, which, together with its

precincts, occupies seventeen *arpens*, are the refectories and kitchens, which are very extensive. Formerly, neither of these were kept in such high order as they are at present. The tables of the private soldiers are now better supplied; sirloins of beef and legs of mutton being no longer roasted for the officers only. In the four refectories, where the soldiers dine, twelve in a mess, they are regularly served with soup, bouilli, a plate of vegetables, and a pint of unadulterated wine. When Peter the Great visited this establishment, the Invalids happened to be at dinner, the czar, on entering the first refectory, poured out a bumper of wine, and drank it off in a military style to the health of the veterans, whom he termed his comrades.

The halls are ornamented with paintings representing the conquests of Lewis XIV. During the reign of terror the features of the *Grand Monarque*, who made a conspicuous figure in these pictures, were concealed by a coat of dark paint, which answered the purpose of a mask. BONAPARTE has ordered this mask to be removed, so that the ambitious monarch now reappears in all his former glory.

Whatever may be said in praise of establishments of this description, for my part, I see nothing in them but the gratification of national pride. The old soldiers, are, in a manner, without a comrade, though living in the midst of their brother warriors. The good fellowship which they have witnessed in camps no longer subsists. The danger of battles, the weight of fatigues, and the participation of privations and hardships, no longer form the tie of common interest, by which they were once united. This, being dissolved, they seek in vain that reciprocity of little kindnesses which they used to find in their own regiments and armies. All hope of promotion or change being at an end, their only consolation is to enjoy the present by indulging in reveries concerning the past.

Instead of being doomed to end their days in this sort of stately confinement, subject to restrictions which render life so dull and monotonous, how different would these veterans feel, could they retire to the bosom of their families and friends! Then, indeed, would they dwell with delight on the battles and sieges in which they had served, enumerating their many hair-breadth escapes, and detailing the particulars of the fight in which they lost their deficient leg or arm. After a pause, the sense of their country's gratitude operating powerfully on their mind, would soothe every painful recollection. Their auditors, impressed with admiration, would listen in silence to the recital of the well-fought day, and, roused by the call of national honour, cheerfully step forth to emulate these mutilated heroes, provided they were sure of a *free* asylum, when reduced to their helpless condition.

Whether I enter the *Hôtel des Invalides*, or *Chelsea Hospital*, such are the reflections which never fail to occur to me, when I visit either of those establishments, and contemplate the dejected countenances of the maimed beings that inhabit them.

Experience tells us that men dislike enjoyments, regularly prepared for them, if under restraint, and prefer smaller gratifications, of which they can partake without control. Policy, as well as prudence, therefore dictates a departure from the present system of providing for those maimed in fighting the battles of their nation.

In a word, I am fully persuaded that the sums expended in the purchase of the ground and construction of this magnificent edifice, together with the charges of maintaining the establishment, would have formed a fund that might have enabled the government to allow every wounded soldier a competent pension for life, in proportion to the length of his services, and the injuries which he might have suffered in defence of his country.

From the *Hôtel des Invalides* are avenues, planted with trees, which, on one side, communicate to the *New Boulevards*, and, on the other, to the

CHAMP DE MARS.

This extensive inclosure was originally intended for the exercises of the *École Militaire*, in front of which it is situated, as you will perceive by referring to the Plan of Paris. Its form is a parallelogram of four hundred and fifty toises in length by one hundred and fifty in breadth. It is surrounded by ditches, faced with masonry, which are bordered on each side by a double row of trees, extending from the façade of the *ci-devant École Militaire* to the banks of the Seine. That building, I shall observe *en passant*, was founded in 1751, by Lewis XV, for the military education of five hundred young gentlemen, destitute of fortune, whose fathers had died in the service. It stands on the south side of the *Champ de Mars*, and serves at present as barracks for the horse-grenadiers of the consular guard. On the third story of one of the wings is a national observatory, which was constructed at the instigation of Lalande, the celebrated astronomer.

The various scenes of which the *Champ de Mars* has successively been the theatre, are too interesting to be passed over in silence. Indeed, they exhibit the character of the nation in such striking colours, that to omit them, would be like omitting some of the principal features in the drawing of a portrait. Often have they been mentioned, it is true; but subsequent events have so weakened the remembrance of them, that they now present themselves to the mind more like dreams than realities. However, I shall touch on the most remarkable only.

In 1790, a spacious arena, encompassed by a mound of earth, divided into seats so as to accommodate three hundred thousand spectators, was formed within this inclosure. To complete

it speedily for the ceremony of the first federation, required immense labour. The slow progress of twenty-five thousand hired workmen could not keep pace with the ardent wishes of the friends of liberty. But those were the days of enthusiasm: concord and harmony then subsisted among the great majority of the French people. What other sentiments, in fact, could daily bring together, in the *Champ de Mars*, two hundred and fifty thousand persons of every class, without distinction of age or sex, to work at the necessary excavation? Thus, at the end of a week, the amphitheatre was completed as if by enchantment.

Never, perhaps, since the time of the Spartans, was seen among any people such an example of cordial union. It would be difficult for the warmest imagination to conceive a picture so varied, so original, so animated. Every corporation, every society was ambitious of the honour of assisting in the erection of the altar of the country: all wished to contribute, by individual labour, to the arrangement of the place where they were to swear to defend the constitution. Not a man, woman, or child remained an idle spectator. On this occasion, the aged seemed to have recovered the vigour of youth, and women and children to have acquired the strength of manhood. In a word, men of all trades and professions were confounded, and cheerfully handled the pickaxe and shovel: delicate females, sprucely dressed, were seen here and there wheeling along barrows filled with earth; while long strings of stout fellows dragged heavy loads in carts and waggons. As the electric matter runs along the several links of an extensive chain, so patriotism seemed to have electrified this whole mass of people. The shock was universal, and every heart vibrated in unison.

The general good order which prevailed among this vast assemblage, composed indiscriminately of persons of every rank and condition, was truly surprising. No sort of improper discourse, no dispute of any kind occurred. But what is still more singular and more worthy of remark is, that the mutual confidence shewn by so many people, strangers to each other, was in no one instance abused. Those who threw off their coats and waistcoats, leaving them to the fate of chance, during the time they were at work elsewhere, on their return to the same spot found them untouched. Hence, as Paris is known to abound with *filoux*, it may be inferred that the *amor patriæ* had deadened in them the impulse of their ordinary vocation.

Franklin, when promoting the emancipation of America, during his residence in Paris, probably did not foresee that the French would soon borrow his favourite expression, and that it would become the burden of a popular air. Yet so it happened; and even Lewis XVI himself participated in the patriotic labours of the *Champ de Mars*, while different bands of military music made the whole inclosure resound with *ça ira*.

To these exhilarating scenes succeeded others of the most opposite nature. Hither the guillotine was transported for the execution of the greatest astronomer of the age, and this with no other view than to prolong his punishment. Bailly, as every one knows, was the first mayor of Paris after the revolution. Launched into the vortex of politics, he became involved in the proscriptions which ensued during the reign of terror, and was dragged from prison to the *Champ de Mars*, where, though exposed to the most trying insults, he died, like a philosopher, with Socratic calmness.

In no one of the numerous victims of the revolution was the instability of popular favour more fully exemplified than in Bailly. In this *Champ de Mars*, where he had published martial law in consequence of a decree of the Convention, in the very place where he had been directed by the representatives of the people to repel the factions, he expired under the guillotine, loaded with the execration of that same people of whom he had been the most venerated idol.

Since those sanguinary times, the *Champ de Mars* has chiefly been the site chosen for the celebration of national fêtes, which, within these few years, have assumed a character more distinguished than any ever seen under the old *régime*. These modern Olympics consist of chariot-races and wrestling, horse and foot races, ascensions of balloons, carrying three or four persons, descents from them by means of a parachute, mock-fights and aquatic tilting. After the sports of the day, come splendid illuminations, grand fire-works, pantomimes represented by two or three hundred performers, and concerts, which, aided by splendid decorations, are not deficient in point of effect: the evening concludes with dancing.

During the existence of the directorial government, the number of national fêtes had been considerably increased by the celebration of party triumphs. They are at present reduced to the two great epochs of the revolution, the taking of the Bastille on the 14th of July, 1789, and the foundation of the Republic on the 23d of September, 1792. On the anniversary of those days, the variety of the exhibitions always attracted an immense concourse. The whole of this mound, whose greatest diameter is upwards of eight hundred yards, was then covered with spectators; but were the *Champ de Mars* now used on such occasions, they would be compelled to stand, there being no longer any seats for their accommodation.

The subject of national fêtes has, in this country, employed many pens, and excited much discussion. Some say that they might be rendered more interesting from the general arrangement; while others affirm that they might be made to harmonize more with the affections and habits of the people. In truth, this modern imitation of the Greek festivals has fallen far short of those animating, mirth-inspiring scenes, so ably described by the learned author of Anacharsis, where, to use his own words, "every heart, eagerly bent on pleasure, endeavoured to expand itself in a thousand different ways, and communicated to others the impression which rendered it

happy." Whatever exertions have hitherto been made to augment the splendour of these days of festivity, it seems not to admit of a doubt that they are still susceptible of great improvement. If the French have not the wine of *Naxos*, their goblets may at least sparkle with *vin de Surenne*; the *Champs Elysées* may supply the place of the shady bowers of *Delos*; and, in lieu of the name of the ill-fated NICIAS, the first promoter of the sports formerly celebrated in that once-happy island, the air may be made to ring with the name of the more fortunate BONAPARTE.

Footnote 1: *Essais historiques sur Paris*. Return to text

Footnote 2: This was the name given by the soldiers to the Marshal's favourite charger. Return to text

LETTER XLV.

Paris, January 6, 1802.

In speaking of the interior of the *Louvre*, in one of my former letters, I think I mentioned the various learned and scientific societies, which, under the name of Academies, formerly held their sittings in that palace. For the sake of facilitating a comparison between the past and the present, it may be necessary to state the professed object of those different institutions.

French Academy. The preservation of the purity of the French language, its embellishment and augmentation.

Academy of Sciences. The progress of the sciences, the encouragement of researches and discoveries, as well in physics, geometry, and astronomy, as in those sciences which are applicable to the daily wants of society.

Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres. The composition of inscriptions, of the subjects of medals, and their mottos, the research of the manners, habits, customs, and monuments of antiquity, as well as all literature relating to history.

Academy of Painting and Sculpture.
Academy of Architecture.
The titles of these are a sufficient explanation.

All these academies were founded by Lewis XIV, at the instigation of his minister Colbert; with the exception of the French Academy, which owed its origin to Cardinal Richelieu. This was a misfortune for that society; for custom had established it as a law that every new member, on the day of his reception, should not only pronounce a panegyric on him whom he succeeded, but also on the founder of the institution. It certainly was not very philosophical for men of enlightened understanding, and possessing even a common portion of sensibility, to make an eulogium on a minister so cruel, a man of a spirit so diabolically vindictive, that he even punished the innocent to revenge himself on the guilty. De Thou, the celebrated author of the *History of his own time*, had told some truths not very favourable to the memory of the Cardinal's great uncle. In consequence, the implacable minister, under false pretences, caused the philosophic historian's eldest son to be condemned and decapitated, saying: "De Thou, the father, has put my name into his history, I will put the son into mine."

It is well known, from their memoirs, that these academies included among their members men of eminent talents. The Academy of Sciences, in particular, could boast of several first-rate geniuses in the different branches which they respectively cultivated, and the unremitting labours of some of them have, no doubt, greatly contributed to enlarge the sphere of human knowledge. During the early part of the revolution, all these monarchical institutions were overthrown, and on their ruins rose the

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.[1]

This establishment was formed, agreeably to a decree of the National Assembly passed on the 3d of Brumaire, year IV (25th of October, 1796). By that decree, it appears that the Institute belongs to the whole Republic, though its point of union is fixed in Paris. Its object is to extend the limits of the arts and sciences in general, by an uninterrupted series of researches, by the publication of discoveries, by a correspondence with the learned societies of foreign countries, and by such scientific and literary labours as tend to general utility and the glory of the Republic.

It is composed of one hundred and forty-four members, resident in Paris, and of an equal number scattered over the departments. The number of its foreign associates is twenty-four. It is divided into three classes, and each class into several sections, namely:

Mathematical and Physical Sciences.
Moral and Political Sciences.
Literature and the Fine Arts.
The Mathematical Class is divided into ten sections; each of which consists of six members. Of this class, there are sixty members in Paris, and as many in the departments, where they are divided, in the same manner, into ten sections, each of six members.

The first section comprehends Mathematics.

The second, Mechanical Arts.
The third, Astronomy.
The fourth, Experimental Physics.
The fifth, Chemistry.
The sixth, Natural History and Mineralogy.
The seventh, Botany and vegetable Physics.
The eighth, Anatomy and Zoology.
The ninth, Medicine and Surgery.
The tenth, Rural Economy and the Veterinary Art.

The Moral and Political Class is divided into six sections, each consisting of six members, making in all thirty-six members in Paris, and an equal number in the departments.

The first section comprises the Analysis of Sensations and Ideas.
The second, Morals.
The third, Social Science and Legislation.
The fourth, Political Economy.
The fifth, History.
The sixth, Geography.

The Class of Literature and Fine Arts is divided into eight sections, each of six members, forty-eight of whom reside in Paris, and as many in the departments.

The first section includes Grammar.
The second, Ancient Languages.
The third, Poetry.
The fourth, Antiquities and Monuments.
The fifth, Painting.
The sixth, Sculpture.
The seventh, Architecture.
The eighth, Music and Declamation.

Twice in every decade, each class holds a meeting: that of the first class takes place on the first and sixth days; that of the second, on the second and seventh days; and that of the third, on the third and eighth days. Every six months each class elects its president and two secretaries, who continue in office during that interval.

On the fifth day of the first decade of every month is held a general meeting of the three classes, the purpose of which is to deliberate on affairs, relating to the general interests of the Institute. The chair is then taken by the oldest of the three presidents, who, at these meetings, presides over the whole society.

The National Institute has four public quarterly meetings, on the 15th of the months of Vendémiaire, Nivôse, Germinal, and Messidor. Each class annually proposes two prize questions, and in the general meetings, the answers are made public, and the premiums distributed. The united sections of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture nominate the pupils who are to visit Rome, and reside there in the national palace, at the expense of the Republic, in order to study the Fine Arts. Conformably to the decree by which the Institute was organised, six of its members were to travel at the public charge, with a view of collecting information, and acquiring experience in the different sciences; and twenty young men too were to visit foreign countries for the purpose of studying rural economy: but the expenses of the war and other matters have occasioned such a scarcity of money as, hitherto, to impede these undertakings.

The apartments of the Institute are on the first floor of the *Louvre*, or, as it is now styled, the *Palais Nationial des Sciences et des Arts*. These apartments, which were once inhabited by Henry IV, are situated on the west side of that building. Before you arrive at the hall of the Institute, you pass through a handsome antichamber, in which are the statues of Molière, Racine, Corneille, La Fontaine, and Montesquieu. This hall, which is oblong and spacious, formerly served for the meetings of the Academy of Sciences. Its sides are adorned with colonnades, and the ceiling is richly painted and decorated. In the intercolumniations are fourteen marble statues (seven on each side) of some of the most celebrated men that France has produced: namely, Condé, Tourville, Descartes, Bayard, Sully, Turenne, Daguessau, Luxembourg, L'Hôpital, Bossuet, Duquesne, Catinat, Vauban, and Fenelon. Parallel to the walls, tables are set, covered with green cloth, at which the members take their places.

At the upper end of the hall is the chair of the President, and on each side below him are seated the two Secretaries. A little on one side again is the tribune, from which the members who speak address the assembly, after having asked leave of the President, who never quits the chair during the whole meeting. The space appropriated to the members is inclosed by a railing, between which and the walls, the hall is surrounded by benches for the spectators, among whom there are generally many of the fair sex.

The library of the Institute consists of three spacious apartments, which are said to contain about sixteen thousand volumes. On one side of the hall is an apartment, destined for the communications of correspondents. There is also an apartment for the secretary and his deputies, and a large room containing a collection of machines and models, (among which are several of

shipping), as well as every apparatus necessary for chemical and physical experiments.

Although I have several times attended the private meetings of the three classes, I have thought that the printed accounts of their proceedings, which I subjoin, would be more satisfactory than a hasty sketch from my pen. However, as I promised to describe to you one of the public sittings of the Institute, I shall now inform you of what passed at that held yesterday, the 15th of Nivôse, year X, (5th of January, 1802), at which I was present.

On this occasion, BIGOT-PRÉAMENEU, one of the members of the class of Moral and Political Sciences, was the President. The sitting was opened by proclaiming the nomination of three foreign associates, elected by the Institute in its general sitting of the 5th of Nivôse; namely, Mr. JEFFERSON, Sir JOSEPH BANKS, and HAYDN, the celebrated musical composer. A prize was then awarded to Citizen Framery, a literary character residing in Paris, for having solved the following question proposed by the class of Literature and Fine Arts. "To analyze the relations existing between music and declamation, and determine the means of applying declamation to music, without detracting from the charms of melody."

DELAMBRE read an account of the life and works of Cousin.

DÉGÉRANDO, an account of the education which the young savage of Aveyron receives from Itard, physician to the Institution of the Deaf and Dumb.

PRONY, the result of observations made with a French instrument and an English one, for the purpose of determining the relation between the French metre and the English foot.

Next were heard notes, by CAMUS, on the public exhibitions of the productions of French Industry, which took place in the years VI and IX of the Republic.

Then, the report of the restoration of the famous picture known by the name of the *Madonna di Foligno*, which I have already communicated to you.

BUACHE, the celebrated geographer, read some observations on the ancient map of the Romans, commonly called Peutinger's map, as well as on the geography of the anonymous writer of Ravenna. The sitting was terminated by an account of the life and works of Dumoustier, read by COLIN D'HARLEVILLE.

The members of the Institute have a full-dress and a half-dress. The former consists of a suit of black, embroidered in dark green silk, with a cocked hat. The latter is the same, but the embroidery is confined to the collar and cuffs of the coat, which is trimmed with a cord edging,

P.S. Yesterday evening was married Mademoiselle Beauharnois, daughter-in-law of the First Consul, to Louis Bonaparte, one of his younger brothers.

Footnote 1: At the end of this volume will be found the new organization of the Institute, conformably to a decree of the government, dated the 3d of Pluviôse, year XI. Return to text

LETTER XLVI.

Paris, January 7, 1802.

Knowing you to be an amateur of Italian music, I am persuaded that you will wish to be made acquainted with the theatre where you may enjoy it in full perfection. It is distinguished by the appellation of

OPÉRA BUFFA.

This establishment is not new in the French metropolis. In 1788, Paris was in possession of an excellent company of Italian comedians, who then performed in the *Théâtre de Monsieur*, in the palace of the *Tuileries*, which is now converted into a hall for the sittings of the Council of State. The success of this company had a rapid influence on the taste of the discerning part of the French public. This was the less extraordinary as, perhaps, no Italian sovereign had ever assembled one composed of so many capital performers. In Italy, there are seldom more than two of that degree of merit in a company; the rest are not attended to, because they are not worth the trouble: but here every department was complete, and filled by persons deservedly enjoying a high reputation in their own country; such as MANDINI, RAFFANELLI, SIMONI, MENGOZZI, VIGANONI, ROVEDINO, and Signoras MORICHELLI and BALETTI.

The events of 1792 banished from Paris this admired assemblage. A new company of Italian comedians has been formed here within these few months: they at first occupied a charming little theatre constructed for the use of a society, called *La Loge Olympique*; but are lately removed to the *Théâtre Favart*, on the Boulevard. Before the revolution, this was called *le Théâtre Italien*. The façade is decorated with eight very large Ionic pillars. The house is of an oval form, and the interior distribution deserving of praise, in as much as it is far more commodious than that of any other theatre in Paris. The audience here too is generally of a more select description. Among the female amateurs, Madame Tallien is one of its most constant visiters, and, in point of grace and beauty, one of its greatest ornaments.

At the head of this new company, may be placed RAFFANELLI, the same whom I have just mentioned. He is a consummate comedian, and more to be commended in that point of view than as a singer. RAFFANELLI has a countenance to which he gives any cast he pleases: his features, from their wonderful pliability, receive every impression: his eye is quick; his delivery, natural and correct; and his action, easy. Sometimes he carries his buffooneries too far, merely to excite laughter; but as he never fails in his object, this defect may be overlooked. His best characters are *Taddeo* in *Il Rè Theodora*, *il Governatore* in *La Molinara*, the Father in *Furberia e Puntiglio*, and the Deaf Man in *Il Matrimonio Secreto*. It is necessary to see him in these different operas to form a just idea of the truth and humour with which he represents them. Although he is but an indifferent singer, his method is good, and he seizes the spirit of the composer with perfect discrimination. In *morceaux d'ensemble*, he is quite at home, and when he dialogues with the orchestra, he shews much energy and feeling. Independently of these gifts, Nature has granted to RAFFANELLI another most valuable privilege. She seems to have exempted him from the impression of time. In 1788 and 89, I saw him frequently, both on and off the stage; after a lapse of upwards of twelve years, he appears again to my eyes exactly the same man. I cannot perceive in him the smallest change.

The tenor of the new company is LAZZARINI. His method too is very good; he sings with taste, expression, and feeling; but his voice is extremely weak: his powers appear exhausted; and it is only by dint of painful efforts that he succeeds in giving to his singing those embellishments which his taste suggests, but which lose their grace and charm when they are laboured. In short, LAZZARINI communicates to the audience an unpleasant sensation in proving that he has real talents.

Neither the same reproaches nor the same praises can be bestowed on PARLAMAGNI. He is a good counter-tenor, but has a harshness in the high tones, which he does not always reach with perfect justness. He is also deficient in ease and grace. PARLAMAGNI, however, having an advantageous person, and the air of a Frenchman, is a great favourite with the Parisian *dilettanti*. He is a tolerably good comedian, and in some scenes of buffoonery, his acting is natural, and his manner free and unaffected.

The *prima donna* of the Italian company is Signora STRINA-SACCHI. She possesses a fine voice, and no small share of taste, joined to great confidence and a perfect acquaintance with the stage. Sometimes she is rather apt to fatigue the ear by sounds too shrill, and thus breaks the charm produced by her singing. As for her acting, it is as extraordinary as can well be imagined; for her vivacity knows no bounds; and her passion, no restraint. She appears to conceive justly, to feel very warmly, and she plays in the same manner. In her, Nature commands every thing; Art, nothing. The parts in which she shines most, are *La Molinara* and *Gianina*; in these, she literally follows the impulse given her by her situation, without concerning herself in the least, whether it is *secundum artem*; but certain that it is natural and conformable to the character and habits of the personage she represents. *Anima in voce* is the characteristic of her singing: the same epithet may be applied to her recitative and her acting: in these she displays no less spirit and animation.

After Signora SACCHI, comes Signora PARLAMAGNI. She is a young, and rather pretty woman, not unlike a French actress in her manner. Her voice is free and clear, and her method by no means to be disdained. She wants habit and confidence. This is evident in her performance of a part new to her; for it is only after a few representations that she feels herself at her ease. Then the public appreciate her powers, which she exhibits to advantage; and her exertions are rewarded by reiterated marks of their satisfaction.

Unfortunately it is the nature of an Italian opera-house to have its shelf poorly furnished. It cannot, however, be denied that the managers of the *Opera Buffa* take every pains to vary and increase their stock. The following are the pieces which I have seen at this theatre.

Furberia e Puntiglio, which is a second-hand imitation of GOLDONI. The music, by Signor MARCELLO DI CAPUA, is agreeable, particularly a quartetto and a cavatina. RAFFANELLI shines in this piece as a first-rate actor.

Il Matrimonio Secreto, the chef-d'œuvre of CIMAROSA, and of its kind, perhaps, the most charming opera extant. Throughout it, the composer has lavished beauties; there is not to be found in it an air of inferior merit, or which, of itself alone, would not sustain the reputation of a piece. What then can be said of a work in which they are all united? Nothing can surpass the variety, spirit, grace, and originality of the duos, terzettos, quartettos, &c. with which this opera abounds. CIMAROSA has here combined the strength of German harmony with the grace which constitutes the charm of Italian melody. He is particularly famous for the brilliancy of his ideas, the fecundity of his genius, the richness of his style, and, above all, for the finish of his pictures.

The certain effect of such a production is to eclipse every thing put in competition with it. This effect is particularly conspicuous at the representation of other pieces, the music of which is by the same composer.

Gianina e Bernadone, another of CIMAROSA'S productions, makes less impression, though it is in the graceful style, what *Il Matrimonio Secreto* is in the serio-comic.

La Molinara, however, upholds the reputation of that celebrated composer, PAËSIELLO. This opera requires no eulogium. Selections from it are daily repeated in the public and private

concerts in Paris. *Il Matrimonio Secreto* is a masterpiece of spirit and originality, while *La Molinara* is a model of grace, melody, and simplicity.

To the great regret of the lovers of Italian music, CIMAROSA died not long since, just as he was preparing to visit Paris. But his fame will long survive, as his works bear the stamp of true genius, combined with taste and judgment. His *Italiana in Londra* is just announced for representation.

Il Matrimonio Inaspettato, a composition of PAËSIELLO, is likewise in rehearsal, as well as *Le Nozze di Dorina*, by SARTI, and *La Vilanella Rapita*, by BIANCHI. MOZART too will soon enter the lists; his *Dom Giovanni* is to be speedily brought forward.

The orchestra of the *Opéra Buffa*, though far from numerous, is extremely well-composed. It accompanies the singers with an *ensemble*, a grace, and precision deserving of the highest encomium. BRUNI, a distinguished Italian composer, is the leader of the band, and PARENTI, a professor, known also by several admired productions, presides at the piano-forte.

NEUVILLE, the manager of this theatre, is gone to Italy for the purpose of completing the company by the addition of some eminent performers.[1] In its present state, the *Opéra Buffa* maintains its ground. It is thought that the French government will assist it in case of necessity, and even make it a national establishment; a commissary or agent having been appointed to superintend its proceedings.

Footnote 1: The *Opéra Buffa*, the constant object of the jealousy of the other lyric theatres, because it constitutes the delight of real amateurs of music, has, during the year 1802, acquired several new performers. Two of these only, Madame BOLLA and MARTINELLI, deserve particular mention. Madame BOLLA is a good figure on the stage, and though her features are not regular, yet they are susceptible of the most varied expression. Her voice, which is a species of feminine *tenore*, astonishes by the purity and firmness of its grave tones; while her brilliant and sure method easily conceals its small extent in the higher notes. MARTINELLI is a species of counter-tenor. His voice has already lost much of its strength, and has not that clearness which serves as an excuse for every thing; but connoisseurs find that he takes care to calculate its effects so as to make amends, by the art of transitions, for that firmness in which it is deficient. He is much applauded in the *cantabile*, which he sings with uncommon precision, and he particularly shines in the counter-parts which charm in the Italian *finales*. As an actor, MARTINELLI, though inferior to RAFFANELLI, is also remarkable. His manner is easy and natural, and his countenance capable of assuming the most comic expression. Return to text

LETTER XLVII.

Paris, January 9, 1802.

The exaggerated accounts of the interior state of France which have reached us, through various channels, during the late obstinate struggle, have diffused so many contradictions, that it is by no means surprising we still continue so ill-informed in England on many points most intimately connected with the morals of the French nation. Respecting none of these, have we been more essentially mistaken than the

PRESENT STATE OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

I am given to understand, from unquestionable authority, that there are at this moment, and have been for the last four years, no less than from thirty-five to forty thousand churches where divine service has been regularly performed throughout the different departments of the Republic. It is therefore a gross error to suppose that the christian religion was extinguished in France. The recent arrangements made between the French government and the See of Rome will consolidate that religion, which was, in a great measure, re-established long before his Holiness occupied the papal chair. I shall illustrate this truth by a summary of the proceedings of the constitutional clergy.

The last general assembly of the clergy of France, held in 1789, the account of which has never been printed, already presented facts which announced that the necessity of reforming abuses was felt, and the epoch when that reform would take place was foreseen. In this assembly several bishops spoke with much force on the subject.

The disastrous state of the finances, brought about by the shameful dilapidations of the court, occasioned a deficit which it was necessary to make good. This consideration, joined to the spirit of cupidity, jealous of the estates of the clergy, immediately caused every eye to turn towards that mortmain property, in order to employ it in the liquidation of the national debt.

In the *Moniteur*, and other journals of the time, may be seen what successive steps gradually led to the abolition of tythes, and the decision which placed the estates of the clergy at the disposal of the nation.

The civil constitution of the clergy was a severe check given to the many existing abuses. It really brought back the Gallican church to the discipline of the first ages. It snatched from the Pope the power of giving the canonical institution to bishops. Those who have thought proper to tax with novelty this constitution, have only to look into history. They will see that, during twelve hundred years, bishops received the canonical institution from the metropolitans, and not from the Pope. Thus to tax with intrusion the constitutional bishops, and condemn them because they have

received that institution from the metropolitans, is to condemn the first twelve centuries of christianity.

This civil constitution served as a pretext to the dignified clergy, irritated at the loss of their estates, for concerting a combined resistance to the new laws, in the hope that this resistance would lead to a subversion which would restore to them their riches. Thence the refusal of the oath "to be faithful to the nation, to the law, and to the king, to guide faithfully the flock intrusted to their care, and to maintain with all their power the constitution decreed by the assembly, and sanctioned by the king." Thence the line of division between the clergy who had taken the oath and those who had not.

The Constituent Assembly, who had decreed the above oath, declared, that the refusal of giving this pledge of fidelity should be considered as a voluntary resignation. The royal sanction had rendered the above decree a law of the State. Almost the whole of the bishops, a great number of rectors, and other ecclesiastics, refused to take this oath, already taken by several among them who were deputies to the assembly.

They were, in consequence, declared to have resigned; and measures were taken for supplying their place. The people proceeded to effect this by electors authorized by law. A respectable number of ecclesiastics, who had already submitted to the law, accepted the elections. These priests thought that obedience to the national authority which respected and protected religion, was a catholic dogma. What resistance could be made to legitimate power, which neither attacked the dogma, nor morality, nor the interior and essential discipline of the church? It was, say they, resisting God himself. They thought that the pastor was chosen, and sent solely for the care of the flock intrusted to him; that, when difficult circumstances, flight, for instance, voluntary or forced, the prohibition from all functions, pronounced by the civil power, rendered the holy ministry impossible, or that the pastor could not exericise it, without declaring himself in open insurrection, the pretended unremoveable rights then ceased with the sacred duties which they could not discharge, without being accused of rebellion.

The dissentient bishops drew many priests into their party. Most of them spread themselves over Europe, where they calumniated at their ease the patriotic clergy. Those of their adherents who had remained in the interior of this country, kindled a civil war, tormented people's consciences, and disturbed the peace of families, &c. This conduct, which engendered the horrible scenes in La Vendée, provoked repressive measures, emanated from legislative authority.

Enemies without and within, say the constitutional clergy, wished to create a disgust to liberty, by substituting to it licentiousness. And, indeed, the partisans of the dissentient clergy were seen to coalesce with the unbelievers, in order to produce the sacrilegious disorders which broke out every where in the year 1793.

The clergy who had taken the oath had organized the dioceses; the bishops, in general, had bestowed great pains in spreading in every parish the word of the gospel; for they preached themselves, and this was more than was done by their predecessors, who, engaged only in spending, frequently in a shameful manner, immense revenues, seldom or never visited their dioceses. The constitutional clergy followed a plan more conformable to the gospel, which gained them the affection of the well-disposed part of the nation.

These priests were of opinion that the storm which threatened religion, required imperiously the immediate presence of the pastor, and that, in the day of battle, it was necessary to be in person at the breach. They were of opinion that the omission or impossibility of fulfilling minute and empty formalities, imposed by a Concordat, rejected from the beginning by all the public bodies and the church of France, and annihilated at the moment by the will of the representatives of the nation, sanctioned by royal authority, could not exempt them from accepting holy functions presented by all the constituted authorities, and on which evidently depended the preservation of religion, the salvation of the faithful, and the peace of the State.

But, when persecution manifested itself, the clergy who had taken the oath, became equally the victims of persecuting rage. Some failed in this conjuncture; but the greater number remained intrepid in their principles. Accordingly several constitutional bishops and priests were dragged to the scaffold. If, on the one hand, the dastardly GOBEL was guillotined, the same fate attended the respectable EXPILLY, bishop of Quimper, AMOURETTE, bishop of Lyons, and GOUTTES, bishop of Autun, &c.

The dissentient clergy reproach some constitutional priests with having married, and even with having apostatized; but they say not that, among the dissentient, there are some who; have done the same. If the number of the latter is smaller, it is because the greater part of them were out of France; but what would they have done, if, like the constitutional clergy, they had either had the axe suspended over their head, or the guillotine accompanying all their steps?

In England, where the French priests were not thus exposed, there are some who have likewise married, and even some who have apostatized.

It is well known that, amidst the terrors of impiety, GRÉGOIRE, bishop of Blois, declared that he braved them, and remained attached to his principles and duties, as a christian and bishop. He firmly believed that, in doing so, he was pronouncing his sentence of death, and, for eighteen

months, he was in expectation of ascending the scaffold. The same courage animated the majority of the constitutional bishops and priests. They exercised secretly their ministry, and consoled the faithful. As soon as the rage for persecution began to abate, GRÉGOIRE and some other bishops, who had kept up a private correspondence with the clergy of various dioceses for the purpose of encouraging them, concerted together in order to reorganize worship. In Nivôse year III (January 1795), GRÉGOIRE demanded this liberty of worship of the National Convention. He was very sure of meeting with outrages, and he experienced some; but to speak in the tribune, was speaking to France and to all Europe, and, in the then state of things, he was almost certain of staggering public opinion, which would force the Convention to grant the free exercise of religion. Accordingly, some time after having refused the liberty of worship on the demand of GRÉGOIRE, that assembly granted it, though with evident reluctance, on a Report of BOISSY D'ANGLAS, which insulted every species of worship.

The constitutional bishops had already anticipated this moment by their writings and their pastoral letters, &c. They then compiled two works, entitled *Lettres Encycliques*, to which the bishops and priests of the various dioceses adhered. The object of these works, which are monuments of wisdom, piety, and courage, was to reorganize public worship in all the dioceses, according to the principles of the primitive church. They pronounced a formal exclusion from ecclesiastical functions against all prevaricating priests or married ones, as well as all those who had the cowardice to deliver up their authority for preaching, and abdicate their functions. Some interested persons thought this too severe. Those bishops persisted in their decision, and, by way of answer, they reprinted a translation of the celebrated treatise of St. Cyprian de Lapsis. On all sides, they reanimated religions zeal, caused pastors for the various sees to be elected by the people, and consecrated by the metropolitan bishops. They held synods, the arts of which form a valuable collection, equally honourable to their zeal and knowledge. They did more.

For a long time past the custom of holding councils had fallen into disuse. They convoked a national council, notwithstanding the unfavourableness of a silent persecution; and, in spite of the penury which afflicted the pastors, the latter had the courage to expose themselves in order to concur in it. This council was opened with the greatest solemnity on the 15th of August, 1797, the day of the Assumption of the Virgin. It sat for three months. The canons and decrees of this assembly, which have been translated into Italian and German, have been printed in one volume.

This council was published in the different dioceses, and its regulations were put into force. During this time, the government, ever hostile to religion, had not abandoned the project of persecuting and perhaps of destroying it. The voice of the public, who called for this religion, and held in esteem the constitutional clergy as religious and patriotic, checked, in some respects, the hatred of the Directory and its agents. Then the spirit of persecution took a circuitous way to gain its end: this was to cry down religion and its ministers, to promote theophilanthropy, and enforce the transferring of Sunday to the *décade*, or tenth day of every republican month.

The bishops, assembled at Paris, again caused this project to miscarry, and, in their name, GRÉGOIRE compiled two consultations against the transferring of Sunday to the *décade*. The adhesion of all the clergy was the fruit of his labour; but all this drew on him numerous outrages, the indigence to which he was at that time reduced, and multiplied threats of deportation. The functions which he had discharged, and the esteem of the friends of religion, formed around him a shelter of opinion that saved him from deportation, to which were condemned so many unfortunate and virtuous constitutional priests, who were crowded, with the refractory among others, into vessels lying in the road of Rochefort.

GRÉGOIRE remonstrated against this grievance, and obtained an alleviation for his brethren; but it is to be remarked that, in giving an account of their enlargement, the dissentient priests have taken good care not to mention to whom they were indebted for having provoked in their behalf this act of humanity and justice.

The constitutional clergy continued their labours, struggling incessantly against calumny and libels, either from their dissentient brethren or from the agents of the directorial government. This clergy convoked a second national council for the year 1801. It was preceded by a vast number of synods, and by eight metropolitan councils.

This second national council was opened at Paris on St. Peter's day of the same year. Several decrees had already been carried, one of which renewed, in the face of the whole church, the example of the bishops of Africa, by a solemn invitation of the dissentients to conferences for the grand affair which separated them from the constitutional clergy. The different congregations were on the point of presenting to the general meeting their labours on the dogma, morality, and discipline. A report on the liturgy by GRÉGOIRE, bishop of Blois and vice-president of the council; and a similar report on the plan of education for ecclesiastics, occupied the members of this assembly, when all at once the government manifested its wish to see the council closed, on account of the Concordat which it had just arranged with the Pope.

Notwithstanding this proceeding, which trenched on the rights of a national church, the fathers of the council suspended their remonstrances, in order not to afford any pretext to those who might have wished to perpetuate religious troubles. Wherefore, after having sat six weeks and pronounced the suspension of the national council, &c. they separated quietly without quitting Paris.

Their presence was necessary for the execution of the decree of the conferences. The eighteen members destined for that purpose by the council, after having held several meetings, presented themselves at the Cathedral of *Notre-Dame*, the place appointed and proclaimed by the council throughout all the extent of France. For three successive days, morning and evening, they there assembled. At the expiration of that time, on seeing that the dissentient kept themselves concealed, the members of the constitutional clergy took for witnesses of this generous and open proceeding the vast body of people who had repaired to *Notre-Dame*, and by two energetic and moving discourses, delivered by BELMAY, bishop of Carcassonne, and GRÉGOIRE, bishop of Blois, terminated the council after the accustomed prayers.

M. SPINA, archbishop of Corinth, charged by the court of Rome with part of the affairs to be transacted with the First Consul, about the middle of September, sent to the constitutional bishops a brief which he announced to come from Pius VII, in order to induce them on the part of the Pope to give up the episcopal sees they had occupied, and return to unity. An invitation so insulting, received by all these bishops, drew on M. SPINA energetic answers, which made the Pope and himself sensible how wrong they were to accuse of intrusion and schism bishops, whose canonical institution was conformable to that of the bishops of the first twelve centuries, and who had always professed the warmest love for catholic unity.

But as there was little good to be expected from M. SPINA, some bishops made their complaints to the government in a spirited and well-composed memorial, denouncing the Pope's brief as an attack on the liberties of the Gallican church and the rights of the Republic. This measure had its effect. The government passed a decree for prohibiting the publication of the Rescripts of Rome, if they should not be found conformable to the rules and usages observed in France.

During these transactions, the Cardinal Legate, CAPRARA, arrived in Paris. The Concordat had just been signed. The constitutional bishops, without remonstrating against it, no sooner learnt that the government wished them to resign, than they hastened to do so, the more willingly, as they had a thousand times made the promise whenever the good of religion and of the country should require it. A similar generosity was expected on the part of the emigrated bishops. Have they been to blame in refusing? This question may, in a great measure, depend on the arrangement of the Concordat, and the imperious and menacing tone of the court of Rome which demanded of them the resignation of their former sees.[1]

Footnote 1: For the gratification of the reader is here annexed an account of the Pope's conduct in regard to the constitutional clergy, since the promulgation of the Concordat.

At length the nominations took place. A small number of those appointed to the sixty new dioceses, were taken from the constitutional clergy. The others were taken from the mass of the refractory and those who had retracted, and the greater number formed the most eloquent apology of the constitutional bishops. They all received the institution from the Pope, who announced it with an air of triumph to the college of Cardinals, in his collocution of the 24th of May, 1802. He had good reason to congratulate himself at this epoch, the more so as he had been made to believe that the re-elected constitutional clergy had made a retraction, and received penitence and absolution. The author of this calumny was BERNIER, who had been charged by the Cardinal Legate with a step so worthy of his former military exploits. It was solemnly contradicted. After the decree of absolution which BERNIER had ventured to present to these bishops was thrown with indignation into the fire of PORTALIS, the counsellor of state charged by the government with religious affairs, who was witness to the transaction. Indeed, he had in this encouraged the bishops to imitate his own example in getting rid, by the same means, of a brief which the Legate had transmitted to him in order to absolve him from the guilt he might have incurred by taking part in the revolution.

The government wished to pacify religious troubles; but the majority of the dissentient bishops began to foment new disputes, by requiring retractations from the constitutional clergy, who, for the most part, have stood firm amidst privations of every description. However, the mischief made not the progress which there was every reason to apprehend: the government pronounced its opinion thereon by prohibiting bishops from requiring any thing more than submission to the Concordat, and obedience to the new bishops. Notwithstanding the wise intentions of the government, sincerely desirous of peace and concord, it is only in the dioceses fallen to the constitutional bishops that a good understanding prevails. Most of the disentient clergy continue to promote discord, and torment their constitutional brethren. BOISCHOLLET, bishop of Séez, MONTAULT, bishop of Angers, and some others, have been sent for to Paris, in order to be reprimanded and cautioned to behave better.

It is proper to mention the documents which Cardinal CAPRARA has distributed to all the bishops. They form a collection of thirteen papers, which might not improperly be called an analysis of the decretals of Isidorus. On these, no doubt, good canonists will debate at some future day, in order to shame the court of Rome, by pointing out its absurdities and blunders; and certainly the respect which catholics owe to the Holy See ought not to prevent then from resisting the pretensions of the Pope. Return to text

LETTER XLVIII.

Paris, January 10, 1802.

Going the other day to call on M. S----i, I stopped by the way, to examine an edifice which, when I first visited Paris in 1784, engaged no small share of public attention. It was, at that time, one of the principal objects pointed out to the curiosity of strangers. At one period of the revolution, you will, doubtless, recollect the frequent mention made of the

PANTHEON.

Conceive my surprise, on learning that this stately building, after having employed the hands of so many men, for the best part of half a century, was not only still unfinished; but had threatened

approaching ruin. Yes—like the Gothic abbey at Fonthill, it would, by all accounts, have fallen to the ground, without the aid of vandalism, had not prompt and efficacious measures been adopted, to avert the impending mischief.

This monument, originally intended for the reception of the shrine of St. Geneviève, once the patroness of the Parisians, is situated on an eminence, formerly called *Mont St. Étienne*, to the left of the top of the *Rue St. Jacques*, near the *Place de l'Estrapade*. It was begun under the reign of Lewis XV, who laid the first stone on the 6th of September, 1764. During the American war, the works were suspended; but, early in the year 1784, they were resumed with increasing activity. The sculpture of this church already presented many attributes analogous to its object, when, in 1793, it was converted into a Pantheon.

The late M. SOUFFLOT furnished the plan for the church, which, in point of magnificence, does honour both to the architect and to the nation.

Its form is a Greek cross, three hundred and forty feet in length by two hundred and fifty in breadth. The porch, which is an imitation of that of the Pantheon at Rome, consists of a peristyle of twenty-two pillars of the Corinthian order. Eighteen of these are insulated, and are each five feet and a half in diameter by fifty-eight in height, including their base and capital. They support a pediment, which combines the boldness of the Gothic with the beauty of the Greek style. This pediment bears the following inscription:

> "AUX GRANDS HOMMES,
> LA PATRIE RECONNAISSANTE."

In the delirium of the revolutionary fever, when great crimes constituted great men, this sanctuary of national gratitude was polluted. MARAT, that man of blood, was, to use the modern phraseology, *pantheonized*, that is, interred in the Pantheon. When the delirium had, in some measure, subsided, and reason began to resume her empire, he was *dispantheonized*; and, by means of quick-lime, his canonized bones were confounded with the dust. This apotheosis will ever be a blot in the page of the history of the revolution.

However, it operated as a check on the inconsiderate zeal of hot-brained patriots in bestowing the honours of the Pantheon on the undeserving. MIRABEAU was, consequently, *dispantheonized*; and, in all probability, this temple will, in future, be reserved for the ashes of men truly great; legislators whose eminent talents and virtues have benefited their fellow-citizens, or warriors, who, by distinguishing themselves in their country's cause, have really merited that country's gratitude.

The interior of this temple consists of four naves, in whose centre rises an elegant dome, which, it is said, is to be painted in fresco by DAVID. The naves are decorated by one hundred and thirty fluted pillars, also of the Corinthian order, supporting an entablature, which serves as a base for lofty *tribunes*, bordered by stone balustrades. These pillars are three feet and a half in diameter by nearly twenty-eight feet in height.

The inside of the dome is incircled by sixteen Corinthian pillars, standing at an equal distance, and lighted by glazed apertures in part of the intercolumniations. They support a cupola, in the centre of which is an opening, crowned by another cupola of much more considerable elevation.

To survey the interior of the Pantheon, in its present state, is rather a matter of eager curiosity than of pleasing enjoyment. The precautions taken to prevent the fall of the whole building, which was apprehended from the almost tottering state of the dome, have necessitated the erection of such a quantity of scaffolding, that it is no easy task to gain an uninterrupted view of its majestic pillars, of the delicate and light foliage of its capitals, and of its proud and triple canopy. I mounted the ladders, and braved the dust of stone and plaster, amidst the echoing sound of saws, chisels, and mallets, at work in different directions.

Mercier is said to have offended several of the partisans of Voltaire by observing that, through a strange inconsistency, the constant flatterer not only of royalty in general, but of kings in particular, and of all the great men and vices of the age in which he lived, here shares the gratitude of a republic with the *man of nature and truth*, as Jean-Jacques is styled on his sepulchral monument. Thus, in the first instance, says he, a temple, consecrated to stern republican virtue, contains the remains of a great poet who could not strike superstition, without wounding morals.—Unquestionably, the *Pucelle* is a work, which, like a blight on a promising crop, has committed incalculable ravage among the rising generation. Notwithstanding the numerous inscriptions which now adorn the tomb of Voltaire, perhaps, at some future distant period, he may experience the fate of Mirabeau, and be *dispantheonized*.

But why meddle with the cold remains of any great genius? Would it not have been more rational to inscribe the name of Rousseau in this national temple, and leave his corpse to rot undisturbed, in the *Ile des Peupliers*, at Ermenonville.

Though circumstances prevented me from ascending to the dome, you will, no doubt, expect me to say something of its exterior architecture. It represents a circular temple, formed by thirty-four pillars, like those of the interior, of the Corinthian order, and each, base and capital included, thirty-four feet in height by three feet and one third in diameter. This colonnade is

supported by a circular stylobate, which rests on an octagon base, and is surrounded by a gallery, bordered by an iron balustrade. The cupola, rising above the attic, would appear crushed, were not a stranger apprised that the pedestal on the top is to be surmounted by a bronze figure of Fame, twenty-eight feet in height, and weighing fifty-two thousand pounds. The pedestal is encircled by a second gallery at an elevation of one hundred and sixty-six feet, to reach which you ascend a flight of four hundred and sixty stone steps. As the Pantheon itself stands on a considerable eminence, the prospect from this gallery is extensive and commanding.

This sumptuous edifice may truly be said to exhibit a monument of the weakness of man. Like him, before arrived at maturity, it is attacked by indisposition. The architects, like so many physicians, were not for some time agreed as to the seat of the evil. Each proposed his means of cure as the most infallible; But all coincided in one opinion, that the danger was imminent. Their skill has been exerted, and, no doubt, with effect; for all apprehension of further mischief is now removed.

When I was taking a last look at this proud temple, I could not help regretting that one half of the money already expended on it, had not been appropriated to the erection of airy hospitals in the different quarters of this populous city. Any one who had formerly visited the *Hôtel-Dieu* in Paris would, I am confident, have participated in this sentiment.

What strange fatality impels men to persevere in such unprofitable erections? This was the first question which suggested itself to me, on getting fairly out of the Pantheon. Is it to gratify an excess of national vanity, or create a superior degree of admiration in the mind of foreigners? If so, the aim is missed: for, as majesty, fallen from the pinnacle of power, becomes more interesting, so do ruins inspire greater veneration than the most pompous structure, towering in the splendour of its perfection. Experience tells us that every truncated pillar, every remnant, in short, of past grandeur, rouses attention, and speaks home to the contemplative mind; while these modern edifices, however firmly erect on their base, excite, comparatively speaking, but a feeble interest. In future ages, perhaps, when the Pantheon of Paris shall be prostrate on the ground, and the wreck of its stately dome be overrun with moss and ivy, it may, probably, attract as much notice as the far-tamed temple of Jupiter-Ammon.

P.S. On the evening of the 8th, BONAPARTE left Paris for Lyons, where TALLEYRAND, Minister for foreign affairs, has been for some days preparing for the great event which is expected to take place. When a public measure is in agitation, the result is generally anticipated by the eagerness of mankind; and whispers the least audible are magnified into authentic information. Those even who may be presumed to derive their intelligence from the best sources, not unfrequently misconceive what they have heard, and consequently mislead others. I will not, however, mislead you, by repeating any of the rumours in circulation here: in a short time, the *Moniteur* will, no doubt, explain the real object of this journey.

LETTER XLIX.

Paris, January 12,1802.

As no city in Europe presents so many advantages as this for the cultivation of literature, arts, and sciences, it is not surprising that it should contain great numbers of literati, artists, and men of science, who form themselves into different associations. Independently of the National Institute, Paris can boast of several other

SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

The following are the names of those held in most esteem.

SOCIÉTÉ PHILOTECHNIQUE.
SOCIÉTÉ LIBRE DES SCIENCES, LETTRES, ET ARTS.
ATHÉNÉE (*ci-devant* LYCÉE) DES ARTS.
SOCIÉTÉ PHILOMATIQUE.
SOCIÉTÉ ACADÉMIQUE DES SCIENCES.
SOCIÉTÉ GALVANIQUE.
SOCIÉTÉ DES BELLES-LETTRES.
ACADÉMIE DE LÉGISLATION.
OBSERVATEURS DE L'HOMME.
ATHÉNÉE DE PARIS, *ci-devant* LYCÉE RÉPUBLICAIN.

Though, in all these societies, you may meet with a great number of estimable men, many of whose names may be found in the major part of them, yet that which holds the first rank in the public esteem, as well from the respectability of the members of whom it is composed, as from the proofs of talents which are necessary in order to be admitted into it, is the

SOCIÉTÉ PHILOTECHNIQUE.

Indeed, almost all its members are men whose works hove rendered them celebrated throughout Europe. Hitherto, with the exception of the National Institute, this is the only society to which the government has granted the honour of receiving it as a body, or by deputation, on solemn occasions; and by that alone, it has *nationalized*, at least tacitly, its institution. It is also the only

one which, to the present moment, has preserved the right of holding its public and private sittings in the *Louvre*, since that palace has been ordered to be wholly evacuated. A report has been spread that the hall of the *ci-devant* French Academy is destined for it; but as yet nothing is determined in this respect.

Its number is confined to sixty resident members, and twenty free associates or veterans. It is necessary to have been ten years among the resident members, in order to have a right to be admitted into the number of the twenty free associates, who enjoy prerogatives, without being bound to take a part in the labours of the society. This favour, however, may be granted to those who are for a time called from Paris by public functions, such as embassies, prefectures, &c.

This society meets on the 2nd, 12th and 22nd of every month at seven o'clock in the evening. Its various committees have their particular days for assembling. Its officers consist of a President, a Vice-President, a general and perpetual Secretary, a temporary Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Keeper of the records.

It holds its public sittings at noon on the last Sunday of the second month of every *trimestre*, or quarter of the republican year, namely, Brumaire, Pluviôse, Floréal, and Thermidor.

It is composed of men of science, literati, and artists; but, resembling a family rather than a society, its principles of friendship admit of no classes. On the 19th of every month, it celebrates its foundation by an entertainment, at which its members have the liberty of introducing their friends.

It reckons among its members, in the Sciences, LACÉPÈDE, FOURCROY, CUVIER, GEOFFROY, ROTROU, RUEL, LE CLERC, GAUTHEROT, GINGEMBRE, &c.

In Literature, BOUFFLERS, LEGOUVÉ, ANDRIEUX, JOSEPH LAVALLÉE, MARIUS ARNAUD, SICARD, GUILLARD, GUICHARD, FRANÇOIS DE NEUFCHÂTEAU, MARGOURIT, RENAUD DE ST. JEAN-D'ANGELY, AMAURY and ALEXANDRE DUVAL, SAY, DESPRÉS, MARSOLIER, BROUSSE, DES FAUCHERETS, PIGAULT LE BRUN, POUGENS, FRAMERY, COLIN D'HARLEVILLE, LA CHABEAUSSIÈRE, &c.

In the Arts, viz. Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Music, Declamation, and Dancing, REGNAULT, VALENCIENNES, SILVESTRE the Father, BARBIER the elder, BARTHELEMY, SAUVAGE, LETHIERS, PAJOU, CHAUDET, NORRY, LEGRAND, BIENAIMÉ, DECOTTE, director of the medals, FOUBERT, honorary administrator of the Central Museum, LA RIVE the tragedian, GOSSEC, MARTINI, LE SUEUR, GAVAUX, KALKBRUMER, ADRIEN the elder, GARDEL, &c.

The general and perpetual Secretary is JOSEPH LAVALLÉE.

SOCIÉTÉ, LIBRE DES. SCIENCES, LETTRES, ET ARTS.

It is composed of the junction of the old *Museum of Paris* and of the Society called that of the *Nine Sisters*. It is divided into classes, is unlimited in the number of its members, admits associated correspondents and foreigners, holds its private sittings at the *Oratoire* in the *Rue St. Honoré*, every Thursday, and its public ones at six o'clock in the evening on the 9th of the first months of the *trimestre*; namely, Vendémiaire, Nivôse, Germinal, and Messidor. Its officers consist of a President, taken alternately from the three classes, of two temporary Secretaries, a Treasurer, and a Keeper of the records.

This Society is modelled a little too much after the Institute, and it is easy to see that the former aims at rivaling the latter. This *esprit de corps*, which cannot well be perceived but by nice observers, has this advantage; it inspires a sort of emulation. But the society having neglected to limit the number of its members, and having thereby deprived itself of the means of appearing difficult as to admission, it thence results that its labours are not equally stamped with the impression of real talent; and if, in fact, it be ambitious, that is a great obstacle to its views.

ATHENÉE (*ci-devant* LYCÉE) DES ARTS.[1]

In imitation of our Royal Society, it comprises not only the sciences, literature, and the arts, but also arts and trades, mechanics, inventions, &c. Its members are not idle, and they are a useful body, as they excite emulation by medals, civic crowns, premiums, and rewards. Their number is considerable and unlimited; a condition which is an evil in the last-mentioned society, and a good in this, whose nature is not so much to shine as to encourage industry.

It was for a while in disrepute, because DESAUDRAY, the director who founded it, exercised over it a tyrannic sway; it has succeeded in getting rid of him, and, since then, several persons of merit, who had before kept aloof, aspire to the honour of being admitted into it.

For some time past it has adopted a custom, too obsequious and absurd, of choosing none but ministers for its Presidents. By this, it exposes its liberty and its opinion, and gives itself chains, the weight of which it will feel some day, when too late to shake them off.

It holds its general sittings at the *Oratoire* every Monday, when it hears the reports of its numerous committees, who have their particular days for meeting. Its public sittings are held at the same place, but at no fixed periods.

Its officers consist of a President, a Vice-President, two Secretaries, three Conservators, a Treasurer, and a Keeper of the records.

It has associated correspondents throughout Europe.

SOCIÉTÉ PHILOMATIQUE.

It is wholly devoted to natural, physical, and mathematical sciences. It assembles on Fridays, in the *Rue d'Anjou*, *Faubourg St. Germain*. It has no public sittings; but is merely a private meeting of men of learning, who publish once a month a *bulletin* very important to the sciences, and to be commended, besides, for its composition, perspicuity, and conciseness. This publication is of a 4to size, consists of a single sheet of print, and has for its title *Bulletin des Sciences par la Société Philomatique*.

SOCIÉTÉ ACADÉMIQUE DES SCIENCES.

This Society is recently formed: It employs itself on the Sciences only; has not yet held any public sittings, nor published any memoirs. Consequently, nothing can yet be said of its labours, or interior regulation.

SOCIÉTÉ GALVANIQUE.

Its name indicates the sole object of its labours. It is newly formed, and composed of men eminently distinguished in Medicine and Physics. It has called in a few literati. Its officers are the same in the other Societies. It holds its sittings at the *Oratoire* every Tuesday at eleven o'clock in the morning. Its labours are pursued with ardour and it has already made several important experiments. It announces zeal, and talents, as well as-great defects, and aspires to fame, perhaps, a little too much; but it may still maintain its ground.

SOCIÉTÉ DES BELLES-LETTRES.

It is somewhat frivolous. Public sittings every month. Half poetry, half music. It meets at the *Oratoire* every Wednesday at seven o'clock in the evening. It arose from a small emigration of the *Lycée des Arts*, at this day *l'Athénée*, during the tyranny of DESAUDRAY, and originally bore the title of *Rosati*. A few men of merit, a great number of youths, and some useless members. Too many futile readings, too many fugitive verses, too many little rivalships. It is faulty on account of its regulations, the basis of which is weak, and it exhibits too much parsimony in its expenses. It has not enough of that public consideration which perpetuates establishments of this description. Under such circumstances, it is to be apprehended that it will not support itself.

ACADÉMIE DE LÉGISLATION.

This is a fine institution, recently founded. It is composed of the most celebrated lawyers, and a few distinguished literati. It meets on the first of every month, gives every day courses of lectures on all the branches of jurisprudence to a great number of pupils; has established conferences, where these pupils form themselves to the art of speaking, by pleading on given points of law. It publishes two periodical works every month, the one entitled, *Bulletin de Jurisprudence* and the other, *Annales de Jurisprudence.* The preliminary discourse of the first volume of the latter is by JOSEPH LAVALLÉE, and has done him considerable credit. He is, however, a literary character, and not a lawyer.

This academy has officers of the same description as those of the other Societies. Senator LANJUINAIS is the President at this moment. It occupies the *Hôtel de la Briffe*, *Quai Voltaire*.

SOCIÉTÉ DES OBSERVATEURS DE L'HOMME.

It assembles at the *Hôtel de la Rochefoucauld*, *Rue de Seine*, *Faubourg St. Germain,* and is composed of very estimable men. Its labours, readings, and discussions are too metaphysical. In point of officers, it is formed like the other Societies. Citizen JUAFFRET is perpetual Secretary.

ATHÉNÉE DE PARIS, *ci-devant* LYCÉE RÉPUBLICAIN.

This society has survived the revolutionary storm, having been established as far back as the year 1787. According to the *programme* published for the present year 1802, its object is to propagate the culture of the sciences and literature; to make known the useful improvements in the arts; to afford pleasure to persons of all ages, by presenting to every one such attractions as may suit his taste, and to unite in literary conferences the charms of the mildest of human occupations.

To strangers, the *Athénée* holds out many advantages. On being presented by one of the founders or a subscriber, and paying the annual subscription of 96 francs, you receive an admission-ticket, which, however, is not transferrable. This entitles you to attend several courses of lectures by some of the most eminent professors, such as FOURCROY, CUVIER, LA HARPE, DÉGÉRANDO, SUË, HASSENFRATZ, LEGRAND, &c. The subjects for the year are as follows:

Experimental Physics, Chymistry, Natural History, Anatomy and Physiology, Botany, Technology or the application of sciences to arts and trades, Literature, Moral Philosophy, Architecture, together with the English, Italian, and German languages.

The lectures are always delivered twice, and not unfrequently thrice a day, in a commodious room, provided with all the apparatus necessary for experiments. On a Sunday, an account of the order in which they are to be given in the course of the following week, is sent to every subscriber. There is no half-subscription, nor any admission *gratis*; but ladies pay no more than 48 francs for their annual ticket.

Independently of so many sources of instruction, the *Athénée*, as is expressed in the *programme*, really affords to subscribers the resources and charms of a numerous and select society. The apartments, which are situated near the *Palais du Tribunat*, in the *Rue du Lycée*, are open to them from nine o'clock in the morning to eleven at night. Several rooms are appropriated to conversation; one of which, provided with a piano-forte and music, serves as a rendezvous for the ladies. The subscribers have free access to the library, where they find the principal literary and political journals and papers, both French and others, as well as every new publication of importance. A particular room, in which silence is duly observed, is set apart for reading.

Footnote 1: This Society has laid aside the title of *Lyceum* since the decree of the government, which declares that this denomination is to be applied only to the establishments for public instruction. Return to text

LETTER L.

Paris, January 13, 1802.

I have spoken to you of palaces, museum, churches, bridges, public gardens, playhouses, &c. as they have chanced to fall under my observation; but there still remain houses of more than one description which I have not yet noticed, though they are certainly more numerous here than in any other city in Europe. I shall now speak of

COFFEEHOUSES.

Their number in Paris has been reckoned to exceed seven hundred; but they are very far from enjoying a comparative degree of reputation. Celebrity is said to be confined to about a dozen only, which have risen into superior consequence from various causes. Except a few resorted to by the literati or wits of the day, or by military officers, they are, in general, the rendezvous of the idle, and the refuge of the needy. This is so true, that a frequenter of a coffeehouse scarcely ever lights a fire in his own lodging during the whole winter. No sooner has he quitted his bed, and equipped himself for the day, than he repairs to his accustomed haunt, where he arrives about ten o'clock in the morning, and remains till eleven at night, the hour at which coffeehouses are shut up, according to the regulation of the police. Not unfrequently persons of this description make a cup of coffee, mixed with milk, with the addition of a penny-roll, serve for dinner; and, be their merit what it may, they are seldom so fortunate as to be consoled by the offer of a rich man's table.

Here, no person who wishes to be respected, thinks of lounging in a coffeehouse, because it not only shews him to be at a loss to spend his time, which may fairly be construed into a deficiency of education or knowledge, but also implies an absolute want of acquaintance with what is termed good company. Certain it is that, with the exceptions before-mentioned, a stranger must not look for good company in a coffee-house in Paris; if he does, he will find himself egregiously disappointed.

Having occasion to see an advertisement in an English newspaper, I went a few evenings ago to one of the most distinguished places of this sort in the *Palais du Tribunat*: the room was extremely crowded. In five minutes, one of the company whom I had seen taking out his watch on my entrance, missed it; and though many of the by-standers afterwards said they had no doubt that a person of gentlemanly exterior, who stood near him, had taken it, still it would have been useless to charge that person with the fact, as the watch had instantly gone through many hands, and the supposed accomplices had been observed to decamp with uncommon expedition. What diverted me not a little, was that the person suspected coolly descanted on the imprudence of taking out a valuable watch in a crowd of strangers; and, after declaiming the most virulent terms against the dishonesty of mankind; he walked away very quietly. Notwithstanding his appearance and manner were so much in his favour, he had no sooner affected his retreat than some subalterns of the police, not thief-takers, but *mouchards* or spies, some of whom are to be met with in every principal coffeehouse, cautioned the master of the house against suffering his presence in future, as he was a notorious adventurer.

You must not, however, imagine from this incident, that a man cannot enter a coffeehouse in Paris, without being a sufferer from the depredations of the nimble-fingered gentry. Such instances are not, I believe, very frequent here; and though it is universally allowed that this capital abounds with adventurers and pickpockets of every description, I am of opinion that there is far less danger to be apprehended from them than from their archetypes in London. Everyone knows that, in our refined metropolis, a lady of fashion cannot give a ball or a rout, without engaging Mr. Townsend, or some other Bow street officer, to attend in her ball, in order that his presence may operate as a check on the audacity of knavish intruders.

The principle coffeehouses here are fitted up with taste and elegance. Large mirrors form no

inconsiderable part of their decoration. There are no partitions to divide them into boxes. The tables are of marble; the benches and stools are covered with Utrecht velvet. In winter, an equal degree of warmth is preserved in them by means of a large stove in the centre, which, from its figure, is an ornamental piece of furniture; while, in summer, the draught of air which it maintains, contributes not a little to cool the room. In the evening, they are lighted by *quinquets* in a brilliant manner.

Formerly, every coffeehouse in Paris used to have its chief orator; in those of the more remote part of the suburbs you might, I am informed, hear a journeyman tailor or shoemaker hold forth on various topics. With the revolution, politics were introduced; but, at the present day, that is a subject which seems to be entirely out of the question.

In some coffeehouses, where literati and critics assemble, authors and their works are passed in review, and to each is assigned his rank and estimation. When one of these happens to have been checked in his dramatic career by an *undiscerning* public, he becomes, in his turn, the most merciless of critics.

In many of these places, the "busy hum" is extremely tiresome; German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Russ, together with English and French, all spoken at the same time and in the same room, make a confusion of tongues as great almost as that which reigned at Babel. In addition to the French newspapers, those of England and Germany may be read; but as they are often bespoke by half a dozen persons in succession, it requires no small degree of patience to wait while these quidnuncs are conning over every paragraph.

Independently of coffee, tea, and chocolate, ices, punch and liqueurs may be had in the principal coffeehouses; but nothing in the way of dinner or supper, except at the subterraneous ones in the *Palais du Tribunat*, though there are many of a rather inferior order where substantial breakfasts in the French style are provided. Whether Voltaire's idea be just, that coffee clears the brain, and stimulates the genius, I will not pretend to determine: but if this be really the case, it is no wonder that the French are so lively and full of invention; for coffee is an article of which they make an uncommon consumption. Indeed, if Fame may be credited, the prior of a monastery in Arabia, on the word of a shepherd who had remarked that his goats were particularly frisky when they had eaten the berries of the coffee-tree, first made a trial of their virtue on the monks of his convent, in order to prevent them from sleeping during divine service.

Be this as it may, Soliman Aga, ambassador of the Porte to Lewis XIV, in 1669, was the first who introduced the use of coffee in Paris. During a residence of ten years in the French capital, he had conciliated the friendship of many persons of distinction, and the ladies in particular took a pleasure in visiting him. According to the custom of his country, he presented them with coffee; and this beverage, however disgusting from its colour and bitterness, was well received, because it was offered by a foreigner, in beautiful china cups, on napkins ornamented with gold fringe. On leaving the ambassador's parties, each of the guests, in the enthusiasm of novelty, cried up coffee, and took means to procure it. A few years after, (in 1672) one Paschal, an Armenian, first opened, at the *Foire St. Germain*, and, afterwards on the *Quai de l'École*, a shop similar to those which he had seen in the Levant, and called his new establishment *café*. Other Levantines followed his example; but, to fix the fickle Parisian, required a coffeeroom handsomely decorated. PROCOPE acted on this plan, and his house was successively frequented by Voltaire, Piron, Fontenelle, and St. Foix.

As drinking, which was then in vogue, was pursued less on account of the pleasure which it afforded, than for the sake of society, the French made no hesitation in deserting the tavern for the coffeehouse. But, in making this exchange, it has been remarked, by the observers of the day, that they have not only lost their taste for conviviality, but are become more reserved and insincere than their forefathers, whose hearts expanded by the free use of the generous juice of the grape; thus verifying the old maxim, *in vino veritas.*

No small attraction to a Parisian coffeehouse is a pretty female to preside in the bar, and in a few I have seen very handsome women; though this post is commonly assigned to the mistress or some confidential female relation. Beset as they are from morn to night by an endless variety of flatterers, the virtue of a Lucretia could scarcely resist such incessant temptation. In general, they are coquetish; but, without coquetry, would they be deemed qualified for their employment?

Before the revolution, I remember, in the *ci-devant Palais Royal*, a coffeehouse called *Le café mécanique*. The mechanical contrivance, whence it derived its name, was of the most simple nature. The tables stood on hollow cylinders, the tops of which, resembling a salver with its border, were level with the plane of the table, but connected with the kitchen underneath. In the bar sat a fine, showy lady, who repeated your order to the attendants below, by means of a speaking-trumpet. Presently the superficial part of the salver, descended through the cylinder, and reascending immediately, the article called for made its appearance. This *café méchanique* did not long remain in being, as it was not found to answer the expectation of the projector. But besides six or seven coffeehouses on the ground-floor of the *Palais du Tribunat*, there are also several subterraneous ones now open.

In one of these, near the *Théâtre Français,* is a little stage, on which farces, composed for the purpose, are represented *gratis*. In another, is an orchestra consisting entirely of performers belonging to the National Institution of the Blind. In a third, on the north side of the garden, are a

set of musicians, both vocal and instrumental, who apparently never tire; for I am told they never cease to play and sing, except to retune their instruments. Here a female now and then entertains the company with a solo on the French horn. To complete the sweet melody, a merry-andrew habited *à la sauvage*, "struts his hour" on a place about six feet in length, and performs a thousand ridiculous antics, at the same time flogging and beating alternately a large drum, the thunder-like sound of which is almost loud enough to give every auditor's brain a momentary concussion.

A fourth subterraneous coffeehouse in the *Palais du Tribunat* is kept by a ventriloquist, and here many a party are amused by one of their number being repeatedly led into a mistake, in consequence of being ignorant of the faculty possessed by the master of the house. This man seems to have no small share of humour, and exercises it apparently much to his advantage. In three visits which I paid to his cellar, the crowd was so great that it was extremely difficult to approach the scene of action, so as to be able to enjoy the effect of his ludicrous deceptions.

A friend of mine, well acquainted with the proper time for visiting every place of public resort in Paris, conducted me to all these subterraneous coffeehouses on a Sunday evening, when they were so full that we had some difficulty to find room to stand, for to find a seat was quite impossible. Such a diversity of character I never before witnessed in the compass of so small a space. However, all was mirth and good-humour. I know not how they contrive to keep these places cool in summer; for, in the depth of winter, a more than genial warmth prevails in them, arising from the confined breath of such a concourse. On approaching the stair-case, if the orchestra be silent, the entrance of these regions of harmony is announced by a heat which can be compared only to the true Sirocco blast such as you have experienced at Naples.

LETTER LI.

Paris, January 15, 1802.

As after one of those awful and violent convulsions of nature which rend the bosom of the earth, and overthrow the edifices standing on its surface, men gradually repair the mischief it has occasioned, so the French, on the ruins of the ancient colleges and universities, which fell in the shock of the revolution, have from time to time reared new seminaries of learning, and endeavoured to organize, on a more liberal and patriotic scale, institutions for

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

The vast field which the organization of public instruction presents to the imagination has, as may be, supposed, given birth to a great number of systems more or less practicable; but, hitherto, it should seem that political oscillations have imprinted on all the new institutions a character of weakness which, if it did not absolutely threaten speedy ruin, announced at least that they would not be lasting. When the germs of discord prevailed, it was not likely that men's minds should be in that tranquil state necessary for the reestablishment of public seminaries, to lay the foundations of which, in a solid and durable manner, required the calm of peace and the forgetfulness of misfortune.

After the suppression of the colleges and universities existing under the monarchy, and to which the *Collège de France* in Paris is the sole exception, the National Convention, by a decree of the 24th of Nivôse, year III (14th of January 1795) established *Normal* Schools throughout the Republic. Professors and teachers were appointed to them; and it was intended that, in these nurseries, youth should be prepared for the higher schools, according to the new plan of instruction. However, in less than a year, these *Normal* Schools were shut up; and, by a law of the 3d of Brumaire, year IV (25th of October, 1796) Primary, Secondary, and Central Schools were ordered to be established in every department.

In the Primary Schools, reading, writing, and arithmetic formed the chief part of the instruction. Owing to various causes, the Secondary Schools, I understand, were never established. In the Central Schools, the internal regulation was to be as follows.

The whole of the instruction was divided into three classes or sections. In the first, were taught drawing, natural history, and ancient and modern languages. In the second, mathematics, physics, and chymistry. In the third, universal grammar, the fine arts, history, and legislation. Into the first class the pupils were to be received at the age of twelve; into the second, at fourteen; and into the third, at sixteen. In each Central School were to be a public library, a botanic garden, and an apparatus of chymical and physical instruments. The professors were to be examined and chosen by a *Jury of Instruction*, and that choice confirmed by the administration of the department.

The government, in turning its attention to the present state of the public schools, and comparing them with the wants and wishes of the inhabitants of the Republic, has found that the Primary Schools have been greatly neglected, and that the Central Schools have not been of so much utility as was expected. Alarmed at the consequences likely to be produced by a state of things which leaves a great part of the present generation destitute of the first rudiments of knowledge, the government has felt that the reorganization of these schools is become an urgent duty, and that it is impossible to delay longer to carry it into execution.

The *Special* Schools of Arts and Sciences are mostly confined to Paris. The other rich and populous cities of the Republic have undoubtedly a claim to similar institutions. There is at present no School of Jurisprudence, and but one of Medicine.

The celebrated FOURCROY[1] has been some time engaged in drawing up a plan for the improvement of public instruction. In seeking a new mode of teaching appropriate to the present state of knowledge and to the genius of the French nation, he has thought it necessary to depart from the beaten track. Enlightened by the past, he has rejected the ancient forms of the universities, whose philosophy and acquirements, for half a century past, called for reformation, and no longer kept pace with the progress of reason. In the Central Schools he saw institutions few in number, and too uniformly organized for departments varying in population, resources, and means. He has, nevertheless, taken what was good in each of these two systems successively adopted, and removed their abuses. Without losing sight of the success due to good masters and skilful professors, he has, above all, thought of the means of insuring the success of the new schools by the competition of the scholars. He is of opinion that to found literary and scientific institutions on a solid basis, it is necessary to begin by attaching to them pupils, and filling the classes with students, in order not to run the risk of filling them with professors. Such is the object which FOURCROY wishes to attain, by creating a number of national pensions, so considerable that their funds, when distributed in the Lyceums, may be sufficient for their support.

Agreeably to these ideas, the following is said to be the outline of the new organization of public instruction. It is to be divided into four classes; viz. Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Lyceums, and Special Schools.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

A Primary School may belong to several *communes* at a time, according to the population and the locality of these *communes*.

The teachers are to be chosen by the mayors and municipal councils.

The under-prefects are to be specially charged with the organization of these schools, and give an account of their state, once a month, to the prefects.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Every school established in the *commune* or kept by private individuals, in which are taught the Latin and French languages, the first principles of geography, history and mathematics, is to be considered as a Secondary School.

The government promises to encourage the establishment of Secondary Schools, and reward the good instruction that shall be given in them, either by granting a spot for keeping them, or by the distribution of gratuitous places in the Lyceums, to such of the pupils as shall have distinguished themselves most, and by gratifications to the fifty masters who shall have qualified most pupils for the Lyceums.

No Secondary School is to be established without the authority of the government. The Secondary Schools and private schools, whose instruction is found superior to that of the Primary Schools, are to be placed under the superintendance and particular inspection of the prefects.

LYCEUMS.

There is to be one Lyceum at least in the district of every tribunal of appeal.

Here are to be taught ancient languages, rhetoric, logic, morality, and the elements of the mathematical and physical sciences. To these are to be added drawing, military exercises and the agreeable arts.

Instruction is to be given to the pupils placed here by the government, to those of the Secondary Schools admitted through competition, to those whose parents may put them here as boarders, and also to day-scholars.

In each Lyceum is to be a director, who is to have immediately under him a censor of studies, and an administrator who are all to be nominated by the First Consul.

In the former institutions, which are to be replaced by these new ones, a vigilant eye was not constantly kept on the state of the schools themselves, nor on that of the studies pursued in them. According to the new plan, three inspectors-general, appointed by the First Consul, are to visit them carefully, and report to the government their situation, success, and defects. This new supervisorship is to be, as it were, the key-stone of the arch, and to keep all the parts connected.

The fourth and highest degree of public instruction is to be acquired in the

SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

This is the name to be applied to those of the upper schools, where are particularly taught, and in the most profound manner, the useful sciences, jurisprudence, medicine, natural history, &c. But

schools of this kind must not be confounded with the Schools for Engineers, Artillery, Bridges and Highways, Hydrography, &c. which, *special* as they are essentially, in proportion to the sciences particularly taught in them, are better described, however, by the name of *Schools for Public Services*, on account of the immediate utility derived from them by the government.

In addition to the *Special* Schools now in existence, which are to be kept up, new ones are to be established in the following proportion:

Ten Schools of Jurisprudence. These useful institutions, which have been abolished during the last ten years, are, by a new organization, to resume the importance that they had lost long before the revolution. The pupils are to be examined in a manner more certain for determining their capacity, and better calculated for securing the degree of confidence to be reposed in those men to whose knowledge and integrity individuals are sometimes forced to intrust their character and fortune.

Three new Schools of Medicine, in addition to the three at present in being. These also are to be newly organized in the most perfect manner.

The mathematical and physical sciences have made too great a progress in France, their application to the useful arts, to the public service, and to the general prosperity, has been too direct, says FOURCROY, for it not to be necessary to diffuse the taste for them, and to open new asylums where the advantages resulting from them may be extended, and their progress promoted. There are therefore to be four new *Special* Schools of Natural History, Physics, and Chymistry, and also a *Special* School devoted to transcendent Mathematics.

The mechanical and chymical arts, so long taught in several universities in Germany under the name of *technology*, are to have two *Special* Schools, placed in the cities most rich in industry and manufactures. These schools, generally wished for, are intended to contribute to the national prosperity by the new methods which they will make known, the new instruments and processes which they will bring into use, the good models of machines which they will introduce, in a word, by every means that mechanics and chymistry can furnish to the arts.

A School of Public Economy, enlightened by Geography and History, is to be opened for those who may be desirous to investigate the principles of governments, and the art of ascertaining their respective interests. In this school it is proposed to unite such an assemblage of knowledge as has not yet existed in France.

To the three principal schools of the arts dependent on design, which are at present open, is to be added a fourth, become necessary since those arts bring back to France the pure taste of the beautiful forms, of which Greece has left such perfect models.

In each of the observatories now in use is to be a professor of astronomy, and the art of navigation is expected to derive new succour from these schools, most of which are placed in the principal sea-ports. A knowledge of the heavens and the study of the movements of the celestial bodies, which every year receives very remarkable augmentations from the united efforts of the most renowned geometricians and the most indefatigable observers, may have a great influence on the progress of civilization. On which account the French government is extremely eager to promote the science of astronomy.

The language of neighbouring nations, with whom the French have such frequent intercourse, is to be taught in several Lyceums, as being a useful introduction to commerce.

The art of war, of which modern times have given such great examples and such brilliant lessons, is to have its *special* school, and this school, on the plan which it is intended to be established by receiving as soldiers youths from the Lyceums, will form for the French armies officers equally skilful in theory as in practice.

This new Military School must not be confounded with the old *école militaire*. Independently of its not being destined for a particular class, which no longer exists in this country, the mode of instruction to be introduced there will render it totally different from the establishment which bore the same name.

It is to be composed of five hundred pupils, forming a battalion, and who are to be accustomed to military duty and discipline; it is to have at least ten professors, charged to teach all the theoretical, practical, and administrative parts of the art of war, as well as the history of wars and of great captains.

Of the five hundred pupils of the Special Military School, two hundred are to be taken from among the national pupils of the Lyceums, in proportion to their number in each of those schools, and three hundred from among the boarders and day-scholars, according to the examination which they must undergo at the end of their studies. Every year one hundred of the former are to be admitted, and two hundred of the latter. They are to be maintained two years in the Special Military School, at the expense of the Republic. These two years are to be considered as part of their military service.

According to the report made of the behaviour and talents of the pupils of the Military School, the government is to provide them with appointments in the army.

NATIONAL PUPILS.

There are to be maintained at the expense of the Republic six thousand four hundred pupils, as boarders in the Lyceums and Special Schools.

Out of these six thousand four hundred boarders, two thousand four hundred are to be chosen by the government from among the sons of officers and public functionaries of the judicial, administrative, or municipal order, who shall have served the Republic with fidelity, and for ten years only from among the children of citizens belonging to the departments united to France, although they have neither been military men nor public functionaries.

These two thousand four hundred pupils are to be at least nine years of age, and able to read and write.

The other four thousand are to be taken from double the number of pupils of the Secondary Schools, who, according to an examination where their talents are put in competition, are to be presented to the government.

The pupils, maintained in the Lyceums, are not to remain there more than six years at the expense of the nation. At the end of their studies, they are to undergo an examination, after which a fifth of them are to be placed in the different Special Schools according to their disposition, in order to be maintained there from two to four years at the expense of the Republic.

The annual cost of all these establishments is estimated at near eight millions of francs, (*circa* £336,000 sterling) which exceeds by at least two millions the amount of the charges of the public instruction for the few preceding years; but this augmentation, which will only take place by degrees, and at soonest in eighteen months, appears trifling, compared to the advantages likely to result from the new system.

Whenever this plan is carried into execution, what hopes may not France conceive from the youth of the rising generation, who, chosen from among those inclined to study, will, in all probability, rise to every degree of fame! The surest pledge of the success of the measure seems to consist in the spirit of emulation which is to be maintained, not only among the pupils, but even among the professors in the different schools; for emulation, in the career of literature, arts and sciences, leads to fame, and never fails to turn to the benefit of society; whereas jealousy, in the road of ambition and fortune, produces nothing but hatred and discord.

> "Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
> Is emulation in the learn'd and brave."

So much for the plan.[2] In your last letter, you desire that I will afford you some means of appreciating the essential difference between the old system of education pursued in France, and the basis on which public instruction is now on the point of being reorganised and established. You must be sensible that the comparison of the two modes, were I to enter deeply into the question, would far exceed the limits of a letter. But, though I have already extended this to a certain length, I can, in a few more lines, enable you to compare and judge, by informing you, from the best authority, what has been the spirit which has dictated the new organization.

There are very few men who know how to confine themselves within just bounds. Some yield to the mania of innovation, and imagine that they create only because they destroy and change. Others bend under the yoke of old habits. Some, solely because they have remained strangers to the sciences, would wish that youth should be employed only in the study of languages and literature. Others who, no doubt, forget that every learned man, who aims at a solid reputation, ought to sacrifice to the Muses, before he penetrates into the sanctuary of science, would wish education to be confined to the study of the exact sciences, and that youth should be occupied on things, before they are acquainted with words.

For the sole reason that the old system of instruction bore too exclusively on the study of the learned languages, it was to be feared that the new one, through a contrary excess, would proscribe the Greek and Latin. The study of these two languages, as FOURCROY has observed to me, is not merely useful to those who wish to acquire a thorough knowledge of the French, which has borrowed from them no small number of words, but it is only from the perusal of the great writers of antiquity, on whom the best among the moderns have formed themselves, that we can imbibe the sentiment of the beautiful, the taste, and the rectitude of mind equally necessary, whether we feel ourselves attracted towards eloquence or poetry, or raise ourselves to the highest conceptions of the physical or mathematical sciences.

At no time can the instruction given to a youth be otherwise considered than as a preparatory mean, whose object is to anticipate his taste and disposition, and enable him to enter with more firmness into the career which he is intended to follow.

From an attentive perusal of the plan, of which I have traced you the leading features, you will be convinced that the study of the sciences will gain by the new system, without that of literature being in danger of losing. The number of professors is increased, and yet the period of education is not prolonged. A pupil will always be at liberty to apply himself more intensely to the branch to which he is impelled by his particular inclination. He may confine himself to one course of

lectures, or attend to several, according to his intellectual means. He will not be compelled to stop in his career, merely because the pupils of his class do not advance. In short, neither limits nor check have been put to the progress that may be made by talent.

I here give you only a principal idea, but the application of it, improved by your sagacity and knowledge, will be sufficient to answer all the objections which may be started against the new plan of instruction, and which, when carefully investigated, may be reduced to a single one; namely, that literature is sacrificed to the sciences.

Footnote 1: Counsellor of State, now charged with the direction and superintendance of public instruction. Return to text

Footnote 2: The new organization of public instruction was decreed by the government on the 11th of Floréal, year X. Return to text

LETTER LII.

Paris, January 18, 1802.

Of all the private lodgings in Paris, none certainly can be more convenient for the residence of a single man than those of

MILLINERS.

I have already said that such is the profession of my landlady. Whenever I am disposed for a little lively chitchat, I have only to step to the next door but one into her *magazin de modes*, where, like a favourite courtier, under the old *régime*, I have both *les grandes et les petites entrées*, or, in plain English, I may either introduce myself by the public front entrance, or slip in by the private back-door.

Here, twenty damsels are employed in making up head-dresses which are hourly produced and varied by fashion. Closely confined to the counter, with a needle in their hand, they are continually throwing their eyes towards the street. Not a passenger escapes their notice. The place the nearest to the window is in the greatest request, as being most favourable for catching the transient homages of the crowds of men continually passing and repassing. It is generally occupied by the beauty of the *magazin* or warehouse; for it would be resented as an almost unpardonable offence to term this emporium of taste a *boutique* or shop.

Before each of them is a block, on which they form and adjust the gallant trophy destined to heighten the loveliness of some ambitious fair who has set her heart on surpassing all her rivals at an approaching ball. Montesquieu observes, in his Persian letters, that "if a lady has taken it into her head to appear at an assembly in a particular dress, from that moment fifty persons of the working class must no longer sleep, or have time to eat and drink. She commands, and is obeyed more expeditiously than the king of Persia, because interest has greater sway than the most powerful monarch on earth."

In the morning, some of these damsels wait on the ladies with bandboxes of millinery. Obliged by their profession to adorn the heads of other women, they must stifle the secret jealousy of their sex, and contribute to set off the person of those who not unfrequently treat them with hauteur. However, they are now and then amply revenged: sometimes the proud rich lady is eclipsed by the humble little milliner. The unadorned beauty of the latter destroys the made up charms of the coquette: 'tis the triumph of nature over art.

If, perchance, the lover drops in, fatal consequences ensue. His belle cannot but lose by the comparison: her complexion appears still more artificial beside the natural bloom of the youthful *marchande*. In a word, the silent admirer all at once becomes faithless.

Many a young Parisian milliner has made a jump from behind the counter into a fashionable carriage, even into that of an English peer. Strange revolution of fortune! In the course of a few days, she returns to the same shop to make purchases, holding high her head; and exulting in her success. Her former mistress, sacrificing her rage to her interest, assumes a forced complaisance; while her once-dear companions are ready to burst with envy.

Millinery here constitutes a very extensive branch of trade. Nothing short of the creative genius of the French could contrive to give, again and again, a new form to things the most common. In vain do females of other countries attempt to vie with them; in articles of tasteful fancy they still remain unrivaled.

From Paris, these studious mistresses of invention give laws to the polished world. After passing to London, Berlin, Hamburg, and Vienna, their models of fashion are disseminated all over Europe. These models alike travel to the banks of the Neva and the shores of the Propontis. At Constantinople, they find their way into the seraglio of the Grand Signior; while, at Petersburg, they are servilely copied to grace the Empress of Russia. Thus, the fold given to a piece of muslin or velvet, the form impressed on a ribband, by the hand of an ingenious French milliner, is repeated among all nations.

A fashion here does not last a week, before it is succeeded by another novelty; for a French woman of *bon ton*, instead of wearing what is commonly worn by others, always aims at appearing in something new. It is unfortunately too true, that the changeableness of taste and inconstancy of fashion in France furnish an aliment to the luxury of other countries; but the principle of this communication is in the luxury of this gay and volatile people.

You reproach me with being silent respecting the *bals masqués* or masquerades, mentioned in my enumeration of the amusements of Paris. The fact is that a description of them will scarcely furnish matter for a few lines, still less a subject for a letter. However, in compliance with custom, I have been more than once to the

BAL DE L'OPÉRA.

This is a masquerade frequently given in the winter, at the theatre of the grand French opera, where the pit is covered over, as that is of our opera-house in the Haymarket. From the powerful draught of air, which, coming from behind the scenes, may well be termed *vent de coulisse*, the room is as cold as the season.

Since the revolution, masquerades were strictly forbidden, and this prohibition continued under the directorial government. It is only since BONAPARTE'S accession to the post of Chief Magistrate, that the Parisians have been indulged with the liberty of wearing disguises during the carnival.

Of all the amusements in Paris, I have ever thought this the most tiresome and insipid. But it is the same at the *Bal de l'Opéra* as at *Frascati*, *Longchamp*, and other points of attraction here; every one is soon tired of them, and yet every one flocks thither. In fact, what can well be more tiresome than a place where you find persons masked, without wit or humour? Though, according to the old French saying, "*I faut avoir bien peu d'esprit pour ne pas en avoir sous le masque?*"

The men, who at a masquerade here generally go unmasked, think it not worth while to be even complaisant to the women, who are elbowed, squeezed, and carried by the tide from one end of the room to the other, before they are well aware of it. Dominos are the general dress. The music is excellent; but it is not the fashion to dance; and *les femmes de bonne compagnie*, that is, well-bred women, are condemned to content themselves with the dust they inhale; for they dare not quit their mask to take any refreshment. But, notwithstanding these inconveniences, it is here reckoned a fine thing to have been at a *bal masqué* when the crowd was great, and the pressure violent; as the more the ladies have shared in it, the more they congratulate themselves on the occasion.

Before the revolution, the *grand ton* was for gentlemen to go to the *Bal de l'Opéra* in a full-dress suit of black, and unmasked. Swords were here prohibited, as at Bath. This etiquette of dress, however, rendered not the company more select.

I remember well that at a masked ball at the Parisian opera, in the year 1785, the very first beau I recognized in the room, parading in a *habit de cour*, was my own *perruquier*. As at present, the amusement of the women then consisted in teazing the men; and those who had a disposition for intrigue, gave full scope to the impulse of their nature. The *fille entretenue*, the *duchesse*, and the *bourgeoise*, disguised under a similar domino, were not always distinguishable; and I have heard of a certain French marquis, who was here laid under heavy contribution for the momentary gratification of his caprice, though the object of it proved to be no other than his own *cara sposa*.

LETTER LIII.

Paris, January 19, 1802.

When you expressed your impatience to be informed of the dramatic amusements in Paris, I promised to satisfy you as soon as I was able; for I knew that you would not be contented with a superficial examination. Therefore, in reviewing the principal scenic establishments, I shall, as I have done before, exert my endeavours not only to make you acquainted with the *best* performers in every department, but also with the *best* stock-pieces, in order that, by casting your eye on the *Affiches des Spectacles*, when you visit this capital, you may at once form a judgment of the quality and quantity of the entertainment you are likely to enjoy at the representation of a particular piece, in which certain performers make their appearance. Since the revolution, the custom of printing the names of the actors and dancers in each piece, has been introduced. Formerly, amateurs often paid their money only to experience a disappointment; for, instead of seeing the hero or heroine that excited their curiosity, they had a bad duplicate, or, as the French term it, a *double*, imposed on them, more frequently through caprice than any other motive. This is now obviated; and, except in cases of sudden and unforeseen indisposition, you may be certain of seeing the best performers whenever their name is announced.

In speaking of the theatres, the pieces represented, and the merits of the performers, I cannot be supposed to be actuated by any prejudice or partiality whatever. I have, it is true, been favoured with the oral criticism of a man of taste, who, as a very old acquaintance, has generally accompanied me to the different *spectacles*; but still I have never adopted his sentiments, unless

the truth of them had been confirmed by my own observation. From him I have been favoured with a communication of such circumstances respecting them as occurred during the revolution, when I was absent from Paris. You may therefore confidently rely on the candour and impartiality of my general sketch of the theatres; and if the stage be considered as a mirror which reflects the public mind, you will thence be enabled to appreciate the taste of the Parisians. Without forgetting that

"*La critique est aisée, mais l'art est difficile*,"

I shall indulge the hope that you will be persuaded that truth alone has guided my pen in this attempt to trace the attractions of the

THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE.

The house, now occupied by the performers of this theatre, was built at the beginning of the revolution by the late duke of Orleans, who, according to the opinion of those best acquainted with his schemes of profit, intended it for the representation of the grand French opera, for which, nevertheless, it is not sufficiently spacious.

It stands adjoining to the south-west angle of the *Palais du Tribunat*, with its front entrance in the *Rue de la Loi*. Its façade presents a row of twelve Doric columns, surmounted by as many Corinthian pilasters, crowned by their entablature. On the first story is an exterior gallery; ornamented by an iron balustrade, which runs the whole length of the façade, and communicates with the lobby. On the north side, and at the back of the theatre, on the ground-floor, are several covered galleries, bordered by shops, which communicate with the *Rue St. Honoré* and the *Palais du Tribunat*.

The vestibule, where four stair-cases terminate, is of an elliptic form, surrounded by three rows of Doric pillars. Above the vestibule, which is on the ground-floor, are the pit and lobby. The inside of the house, which is immoderately lofty, presents seven tiers of boxes, and, in the circumference, six Corinthian pillars. The ornaments, numerously scattered, are in relief. At a certain elevation, the plan of the house is changed by a recess made facing the stage. Two angels, above the stage-boxes, shock the eye by their enormous size. The boxes to the number of two hundred and twenty-two, are said to contain thirteen hundred persons; and the pit, including the *orchestre*,[1] seven hundred and twenty-four, making in all two thousand and twenty persons. The construction of this house is remarkable for iron only being employed in lieu of wood. The architect was LOUIS.

This theatre, which was begun in 1787, was finished in 1790, when, all privileges having been done away, it was first opened by a company of French comedians, who played tragedy and comedy. It then took the name of *Théâtre Français de la Rue de Richelieu*, which street was afterwards and is now called *Rue de la Loi*. Being opened at the commencement of the revolution, it naturally adopted its principles; and, when the National Convention had proclaimed the Republic, it assumed the pompous name of *Théâtre de la République*. The greater part of the actors who performed here, rendered themselves remarkable for their *revolutionary* ardour, and, during the reign of terror, it became a privileged theatre.

The *Comédie Française* in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, which, in its interior, presented the handsomest playhouse in Paris, was called *l'Odéon* a few years ago, and, since then, has been reduced by fire to a mere shell, the walls only being left standing. In 1789, this theatre appeared to follow the torrent of the revolution, and changed its name for that of *Théâtre de la Nation*. Nevertheless, the actors did not, on that account, relinquish the title of *Comédiens ordinaires du Roi*. Shortly after, they even became, in general, the declared partisans of the old *régime*, or at least of the court. Their house was frequently an *arena* where the two parties came to blows, particularly on the occasion of the tragedy of *Charles Neuf*, by CHÉNIER, and of the comedy of *L'Ami des Loix*. The former of these pieces, represented in the first ebullition of the revolution, was directed against the court; and the comedians refused to bring it on the stage, at the time of the assemblage of the national guards in Paris, on the 14th of July, 1790, known by the title of *Federation*. The latter was played after the massacres of September 1792, and had been composed with the laudable view of bringing back the public mind to sentiments of humanity, justice, and moderation. The maxims which it contained, being diametrically opposite to those of the plunderers who then reigned, that is, the members of the *commune* of Paris, the minority of the National Convention, the Jacobins, Cordeliers, &c. they interrupted the representation, and, after a great uproar, the piece was prohibited.

This minority of which I have just spoken, having succeeded in subduing the majority, nothing now stopped the rage of the revolutionary party. All those who gave them umbrage were imprisoned, and put to death with the forms of law. The comedians of the French theatre were thrown into prison; it appears that they were, both men and women, partly destined for the scaffold, and that if they escaped, it was through the address of a clerk of one of the Committees of Public Welfare or of Public Safety, who repeatedly concealed the documents containing the charges brought against them. It is said that the comedians purpose to prove their gratitude, so long delayed, to this young man, without putting themselves to any expense, by giving for his benefit an extraordinary representation.[2]

At length the happy 9th of Thermidor arrived; the prisons were thrown open; and, as you may

well imagine in such a nation as this, the French comedians were not the last to be set at liberty. However, their theatre was not immediately restored to them. It was occupied by a sort of bastard *spectacle*, with the actors of which they were then obliged to form an association. This did not last long. The French comedians were received by the manager of the lyric theatre of the *Rue Feydeau*, whom they afterwards ruined. The actors of comedy, properly so called, contrived to expel those of tragedy, with whom they thought they could dispense; and, shortly, they themselves, notwithstanding their reputation, were deserted by the public. The heroes and heroines, with Mademoiselle RAUCOURT at their head, took possession of the theatre of the *Rue de Louvois*, and there prospered. But, after the 18th of Fructidor, (5th of September, 1797) the Directory caused this house to be shut up: the reason assigned was the representation given here of a little comedy, of ancient date however, and of no great importance, in which a knavish valet is called MERLIN, as was the Minister of Justice of that day, who since became director, not of the theatre, but of the republic. Mademoiselle RAUCOURT, who was directress of this theatre, returned with her company to the old theatre of the *Faubourg St. Germain*, which then took the name of *l'Odéon*.

In the mean time, the theatre of the *Rue de Richelieu* had perceptibly declined, after the fall of Robespierre, and the public appeared to have come to a positive determination to frequent it no longer. The manager of the *Théâtre Feydeau*, M. SARGENT, formerly a banker, who was rich, and enjoyed a good reputation, succeeded in uniting all the actors of the *Comédie Française* and those of the *Théâtre de la République*. This effected his own ruin. When he had relinquished the management of the undertaking, the government took it in hand, and definitively organized this tragic and comic association, to superintend which it appointed a special commissioner.

The *repertoire* (or list of pieces which are here played habitually, or have been acted with applause) is amazingly well furnished, and does infinite honour to French literature. It may be divided into two parts, the ancient and the modern. It is the former that deserves the encomium which I have just bestowed. In the line of Tragedy, it is composed of the greater part of the pieces of the four principal pillars of the temple of the French Melpomene: namely CORNEILLE[3], RACINE, CRÉBILLON, and VOLTAIRE, to whom may be added DU BELLOY, as well as of some detached pieces, such as *Iphigénie en Tauride* by GUIMOND DE LA TOUCHE, *Le Comte de Warwick* and *Philoctète* by LA HARPE. The modern *repertoire*, or list of stock-pieces, is formed of the tragedies of M. M. DUCIS, CHÉNIER, ARNAULT, LEGOUVÉ, and LE MERCIER.

In the line of Comedy, it is also very rich. You know that, at the head of the French comic authors, stands MOLIÈRE, who, in this country at least, has no equal, either among the ancients or the moderns. Several of his pieces are still represented, though they are not numerously attended; as well because manners are changed, as because the actors are no longer able to perform them. Next to MOLIÈRE, but at a great interval, comes REGNARD, whom the French comedians have deserted, for much the same reason: they no longer give any plays from the pen of this author, who possessed the *vis comica*, except *Les Folies Amoureuses*, a pretty little comedy in three acts. We no longer hear of his *Joueur* and his *Légataire Universel*, which are *chefs d'œuvre*. There are likewise the works of DESTOUCHES, who has written *Le Glorieux, Le Dissipateur*, and *La Fausse Agnès*, which are always played with applause. *Le Méchant*, by GRESSET, is a masterpiece in point of style, and *La Métromanie*, by PIRON, the best of French comedies, next to those of MOLIÈRE and REGNARD. Then come the works of LA CHAUSSÉE, who is the father of the *drame*, and whose pieces are no longer represented, though he has composed several, such as *La Gouvernante*, *L'École des Mères*, *Le Préjugé à la Mode*, which, notwithstanding, their whining style, are not destitute of merit, and those of DANCOURT, who has written several little comedies, of a very lively cast, which are still played, and those of MARIVAUX, whose old metaphysical jargon still pleases such persons as have their head full of love. I might augment this list by the name of several other old authors, whose productions have more or less merit.

The number of modern French comic authors is very limited; for it is not even worthwhile to speak of a few little comedies in one act, the title of which the public scarcely remember. According to this calculation, there is but one single comic author now living. That is COLIN D'HARLEVILLE, who has written *L'Inconstant*, *Les Châteaux en Espagne*, *Le Vieux Célibataire*, and *Les Mœurs du Jour*, which are still represented. *Le Vieux Célibataire* is always received with much applause. In general, the pieces of M. COLIN are cold, but his style is frequently graceful: he writes in verse; and the whole part of *L'Inconstant* is very agreeably written. Indeed, that piece is the best of this author.

FABRE D'EGLANTINE is celebrated as an actor in the revolution (I mean on the political stage), and as the author who has produced the best piece that has appeared since *La Métromanie*. It is the *Philinte de Molière*, which, in some measure, forms a sequel to the comedy of the *Misanthrope*. Nevertheless, this title is ill chosen; for the character of the *Philinte* in the piece of MOLIÈRE, and that of FABRE'S piece scarcely bear any resemblance. We might rather call it the *Égoiste*. Although the comic part of it is weak, the piece is strongly conceived, the fable very well managed, the style nervous but harsh, and the third act is a *chef-d'œuvre*.

Since the death of FABRE, another piece of his has been acted, entitled *Le Précepteur*. In this piece are to be recognized both his manner and his affected philosophical opinions. His object is to vaunt the excellence of the education recommended by J. J. ROUSSEAU, though the revolution has, in a great measure, proved the fallacy of the principles which it inculcates. As these, however, are presented with art, the piece had some success, and still maintains its ground on

the stage. It was played for the first time about two years ago. The surname of EGLANTINE, which FABRE assumed, arose from his having won the prize at the Floral games at Toulouse. The prize consisted of an *eglantine* or wild rose in gold. Before he became a dramatic author, he was an actor and a very bad actor. Being nominated member of the National Convention, he distinguished himself in that assembly, not by oratorical talents, but by a great deal of villainy. He did not think as he acted or spoke. When the *montagnards*[4] or mountaineers, that is, those monsters who were always thirsting for blood, divided, he appeared for some time to belong to the party of DANTON, who, however, denied him when they were both in presence of each other at the bar of the revolutionary tribunal. DANTON insisted that he who had been brought to trial for a just cause, if not a just motive, ought not to be confounded with stealers of port-folios.[5] They were both sentenced to die, and accordingly executed.

Among the comic authors of our age, some people would reckon DUMOUSTIER, whose person was held in esteem, but whose works are below mediocrity. They are *Le Conciliateur*, a comedy in five acts, and *Les Femmes*, a comedy in three acts. The latter appears to be the picture of a brothel. They are both still played, and both have much vogue, which announces the total decline of the art.

There is a third species of dramatic composition, proscribed by the rules of good taste, and which is neither tragedy nor comedy, but participates of both. It is here termed *drame*. Although LA CHAUSSÉE is the father of this tragi-comic species of writing, he had not, however, written any *tragédies bourgeoises*, and the French declare that we have communicated to them this contagion; for their first *drame*, *Beverley, ou le Joueur Anglais* is a translation in verse from the piece of that name of our theatre. The celebrated LEKAIN[6] opposed its being acted, and affirmed with reason that this mixture of the two species of drama hurt them both. MOLÉ, who was fond of applause easily obtained, was the protector of the piece, and played the part of *Beverley* with success; but this *drame* is no longer performed on the Parisian stage. Next to this, comes *Le Père de Famille*, by DIDEROT. It is a long sermon. However, it presents characters well drawn. This species of composition is so easy that the number of *drames* is considerable; but scarcely any of them are now performed, except *Eugénie* and *La Mère Coupable*, by BEAUMARCHAIS,[7] which are frequently represented. I shall not finish this article without reminding you that MERCIER has written so many *drames* that he has been called *Le Dramaturge*. All his are become the prey of the little theatres and the aliment of the provincial departments. This circumstance alone would suffice to prove the mediocrity of the *drame*. MONVEL, of whom I shall soon have occasion to speak, would well deserve the same title.

Footnote 1: This is a place, so called in French theatres, comprising four or five rows of benches, parted off, between the place where the musicians are seated and the front of the pit. Return to text

Footnote 2: It is not mentioned whether these sons and daughters of Thespis, who have since gained a great deal of money, have offered any *private* remuneration to their benefactor, rather to their guardian-angel. [TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: The scan of this footnote was imperfect. Some of the text was interpolated.] Return to text

Footnote 3: Of course, PIERRE CORNEILLE is here meant. THOMAS CORNEILLE, who was surnamed the Great, must not, however be forgotten. THOMAS is the author of *Ariane* and *le Comte d'Essex*, a tragedy much esteemed, and which is deserving of estimation. Return to text

Footnote 4: Thus called, because they formed a very close and very elevated group at one of the extremities of the hall of the National Convention. Return to text

Footnote 5: FABRE D'EGLANTINE was tried for having, in concert with certain stock-jobbers, proposed and caused the adoption of decrees concerning the finances. Return to text

Footnote 6: LEKAIN said humourously that to play the *drame* well, it was sufficient to know how to make a summerset. Return to text

Footnote 7: Every one is acquainted with the two comedies written by this author, *Le Barbier de Seville* and *Le Mariage de Figaro*. The astonishing run of the latter, which was acted one hundred and fifty succeeding nights, was greatly owing to BEAUMARCHAIS having there turned into ridicule several persons of note in the ministry and the parliament: *La Mère Coupable*, which is often given, is the sequel to *Le Mariage de Figaro*, as that piece is to *Le Barbier de Seville*. Return to text

LETTER LIV.

Paris, January 20, 1802.

Let us now examine the merits of the principal performers belonging to the *Théâtre Français*.

TRAGEDY.

Noble Fathers, or characters of Kings.
VANHOVE, MONVEL, ST. PRIX, and NAUDET.

VANHOVE. This king of the *Théâtre Français* neither has majesty nor nobleness of manner. His countenance is mean, and his make common. His monotonous and heavy utterance is sometimes intermingled with yelping sounds. He possesses no sensibility, and substitutes noise for expression. His mediocrity caused him to be received at the old *Comédie Française*; for the first or principal actors of that theatre were rather fond of receiving persons of weak talents, merely

that they might be set off. He *doubled* BRIZARD, whom nature had endowed with the happiest gifts for tragedy.

VANHOVE was the first player ever called for by a Parisian audience after the representation, in order to express to him their satisfaction. However, it may be proper to observe that, in such cases, it is always some friend of the author who takes the lead. VANHOVE no longer obtains this favour at present, and is seldom applauded. He also plays the parts of fathers in comedy.

MONVEL. This actor is not near so old as VANHOVE; but the decay of his person is such that, when he plays, he seems a skeleton bestirring itself, or that is set in motion. It is a misfortune for him that his physical means betray his talents. MONVEL is a man of genius. Thus gifted, it is not astonishing that he has a just diction, and is not deficient in intelligence. Some persons doubt whether he has real sensibility; but he at least presents the appearance of it. He, in some measure, breaks his voice, and vents mournful accents which produce much effect. With a constitution extremely weak, it is impossible that he should perform characters which require energy and pride. He therefore confines himself to those in which the pathetic is predominant, or which do not imperiously demand great efforts, such as *Auguste* in *Cinna*, *Burrhus* in *Britannicus*, *Brutus* in the tragedy of that name (now no longer played), *Lusignan* in *Zaire*, *Zopire* in *Mahomet*, *Fénélon*[1] and *l'Abbé de l'Epée* in the two pieces of that name. His stock of characters then is by no means extensive. We may also add to it the part of *Ésope à la cour*, in the comedy of that name by BOURSAULT, which he plays or recites in great perfection, because it is composed of fables only. MONVEL delivers them with neatness and simplicity. For this part he has no equal in France.[2]

MONVEL is author as well as actor. He has composed several comic operas and *drames*; and his pieces, without being good, have always obtained great applause. His *drames* are *l'Amant Bourru*, *Clémentine et Désormes*, *Les Amours de Bayard*, *Les Victimes Cloitrées*, &c. You will find in them forced situations, but set off by sentiment. He is lavish of stage-effect and that always pleases the multitude. *L'Amant Bourru* has alone remained as a stock-piece.

By his zeal for the revolution, he alienated from him a great part of the public. When every principle of religion was trodden under foot, and, under the name of festivals of reason or of the goddess of reason, orgies of the most scandalous nature were celebrated in the churches, MONVEL ascended the pulpit of the parish of St. Roch, and preached *atheism* before an immense congregation. Shortly after, Robespierre caused the National Convention to proclaim the following declaration: "*The French people acknowledge the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.*" MONVEL trembled; and it is probable that, had not that sanguinary tyrant been overthrown, the atheistical preacher would have descended from the pulpit only to ascend the scaffold.[3]

ST. PRIX. He has no fixed employment. Sometimes he plays the parts of kings, sometimes those of lovers; but excels in none. He would be a very handsome man, were it possible to be so with a face void of expression. Nature has given him a strong but hollow voice; and he recites so coldly, that he makes the public yawn, and seems sometimes to yawn himself. When he means to display warmth, he screams and fatigues the ear without mercy.

NAUDET. This man, who is great only in stature, quitted the rank of serjeant in the *Gardes Françaises* to become a bad player. In the character of kings, he scarcely now appears but to personate tyrants. He is very cold, and speaks through his nose like a Capuchin friar, which has gained him the appellation of the Reverend Father NAUDET.

First parts or principal lovers, in Tragedy.
TALMA, and LAFOND.

TALMA. The great reputation which circumstances and his friends[4] have given to this actor has, probably, rendered him celebrated in England. His stature and his voice (which, in theatrical language, is called *organ*), should seem to qualify him for the parts of *jeunes premiers* only, of which I shall say more hereafter. Accordingly he made his *début* in that line about fifteen or sixteen years ago. Without being brilliant, his first appearances were successful, and he was received on trial. He soon caused himself to be remarked by the correctness of his dress.[5] But what fixed attention on TALMA, was the part of *Charles Neuf*, which he plays in the tragedy of that name.[6] In the riots to which this piece gave rise in 1790, TALMA figured as a patriot. Having fallen out with the comedians who had behaved ill to him, and no longer placed him in any other parts than those of confidants, he was engaged at the new *Théâtre Français* of the *Rue de Richelieu*, where it was proposed to him to perform the characters which pleased him best, that is, the best in each piece. Thus he was seen alternately personating young princes, heroes, and tyrants.

TALMA is now reduced to those of the old stock. The characters he at present represents are *Cinna* in the tragedy of that name by CORNEILLE, *Oreste* in the *Andromaque* of RACINE, *Néron* in the *Britannicus* of the same, *Œdipe* in the tragedy of that name by VOLTAIRE, and *Faïel* in *Gabrielle du Vergy* by DU BELLOY, *Oreste* in *Iphigénie en Tauride* by GUIMOND DE LA TOUCHE, and *Ægisthe* in the *Agamemnon* of LE MERCIER. TALMA also plays many other parts, but, in these, he makes no great figure. He had a great aversion to old pieces, and as long as he preserved his sway at the theatre, very few, if any were performed. In fact, there are many in which he is below mediocrity.

You will certainly expect that I should tell you what constitutes the talent of this performer. He is small in stature, thin in person, and rather ill-made; his arms and legs being bowed, which he takes care to conceal by the fulness of his garments. He has a fine eye, and his features are regular, but too delicate for the perspective of the theatre. He has long since adopted the antique head-dress,[7] and has contributed to bring it into fashion. He distinguished himself formerly in Paris by wearing clothes of a strange form. As an actor, he has no nobleness of manner, and not unfrequently his gestures are aukward. His deportment is always ungraceful, though he often endeavours to imitate the posture of the antique statues; but even then he presents only a caricature. His countenance has little or no expression, except in moments of rage or terror. In pourtraying the latter sentiment, all the faculties of his soul appear absorbed; yet, though his distraction seems complete, there is a sort of silliness blended with his stupor, which certain persons take for truth, and which is much more perceptible in the rest of his characters. In rage, he is a tiger mangling his prey, and sometimes you might believe that you heard that animal drawing his breath. TALMA has never expressed well a tender, generous, or noble sentiment. His soul is neither to be softened nor elevated; and, to produce effect, he must be in a terror or in a rage; but then he makes a great impression on the majority of the public. His utterance is slow, minced, and split into syllables. His voice is hollow; but, in moments of rage, it is strong, yet without being of a considerable volume. He is generally reproached with being deficient in sensibility: I think, however, that, by dint of labour, he might paint feeling; for I have heard him render delicate passages happily enough. He is accused here of having adopted the English style of acting, though, as far as my opinion goes, with little or no foundation. Be this as it may, he passed the early part of his youth in London, where his father resides, and follows the profession of a dentist. The son may now be about thirty-eight years of age.

TALMA preserves the reputation of being a zealous partisan of the revolution; but I am confidently assured that he never injured any one, and held in horror the assassinations which have left an indelible stain on that event. He was intimately connected with the deputies, styled *Girondists* or *Brisotins*, who perished on the scaffold, after their party was overcome, on the 31st of May, 1793, by that of the ferocious mountaineers. The latter warmly reproached TALMA with having, in the year 1792, after the retreat of the Prussians, given a *fête* or grand supper to the famous DUMOURIEZ, with whom they were beginning to fall out, and whom they accused of treason for not having taken the king of Prussia prisoner. The hideous MARAT, I am told, went to call on that general at TALMA'S, where the company received him very cavalierly, and when he was gone, DUGAZON the actor, hot-headed revolutionist as he was, by way of pleasantry, pretended to purify the room by burning sugar in a chaffing-dish. All this amounted to more than was necessary for being condemned by the revolutionary tribunal; and TALMA, being detested by ROBESPIERRE, would, in all probability, have been delivered over to that tribunal, but for the protection of DAVID, the celebrated painter, who was concerting with him about changing the form of dress of the French people. During all the reign of terror, TALMA and his wife were in continual fear of the scaffold.

LAFOND. TALMA reigned, and was in possession of the first cast of parts. Of these, he played whatever suited him, and rejected what he disliked, when about a year ago, there appeared in the same line a young actor of a rather tall and well-proportioned stature, and whom Nature had, besides, gifted with an agreeable countenance and a tolerably good voice. He had played in the provincial theatres; but, in order to overcome every obstacle which might be opposed to his *début*, he became a pupil of DUGAZON, an actor of comedy, and what is more singular, of one more frequently a buffoon than a comedian. The latter, however, is said to possess a knowledge of the style of playing of the actors who, thirty years ago, graced the French stage, and consequently may be capable of giving good advice.

By means of this powerful protection, LAFOND got the better of every difficulty. This actor made his first appearance in the character of *Achille* in the tragedy of *Iphigénie en Aulide* by RACINE. He was not the Achilles of Homer, nor even that of the piece, or at best he represented him in miniature. However, his diction generally just, his acting, some grace, and, above all, the fatigue and *ennui* which TALMA impressed on many of the spectators, procured this rival a decisive success. As is customary in such cases, the newspapers were divided in opinion. The majority declared for LAFOND, and none of the opposite side spoke unfavourably of him. It was not so with TALMA. Some judged him harshly, calling him a detestable actor, while others bestowed on him the epithet of *sublime*, which, at the present day, has scarcely any signification; so much is it lavished on the most indifferent performers. This instance proves the fact; for if TALMA has reached the *sublime*, it is *le sublime de la Halle*.

These two rivals might live in peace; the parts which suit the one, being absolutely unfit for the talents of the other. TALMA requires only concentered rage, sentiments of hatred and vengeance, which certainly belong to tragedy, but which ought not to be expressed as if they came from the mouth of a low fellow, unworthy of figuring in an action of this kind; and LAFOND is little qualified for any other than graceful parts, bordering on knight-errantry or romance. His best character is *Achille*. I have also seen him perform, if not in a manner truly tragic, at least highly satisfactory, *Rodrigue* in *Le Cid* of CORNEILLE, and the part of *Tancrède* in VOLTAIRE'S tragedy of that name. LAFOND obtains the preference over TALMA in the character of *Orosmane* in the tragedy of *Zaïre*; a character which is the touchstone of an actor. Not that he excels in it. He has not a marked countenance, the dignity, the tone of authority, the energy, and the extreme sensibility which characterize this part. He is not the Sultan who commands. He is, if you please, a young *commis* very amorous, a little jealous, who gets angry, and becomes good-humoured

again; but at least he is not a ferocious being, as TALMA represents *Orosmane*, in moments of rage and passion, or an unfeeling one in those which require sensibility.

LAFOND is reproached sometimes with a bombastic and inflated tone. Feeling that he is deficient in the necessary powers, he swells his voice, which is prejudicial to truth, and without truth, there is no theatrical illusion. Nature had intended him for the parts of young lovers, of which I shall presently speak. His features are too delicate, his countenance not sufficiently flexible, and his person bespeaks too little of the hero, for great characters. But when he first appeared, there was a vacancy in this cast of parts, and none in the other.

Jeunes Premiers, *or parts of young Lovers*.
ST. FAL, DAMAS, and DUPONT.

ST. FAL. This performer, who is upwards of forty-five, has never had an exterior sufficiently striking to turn the brain of young princesses. Every thing in his person is common, and his acting is really grotesque. However, not long since he frequently obtained applause by a great affectation of sensibility and a stage-trick, which consists in uttering loud, harsh, and hoarse sounds after others faint and scarcely articulated. He has, besides, but a trivial or burlesque delivery, and no dignity, no grace in his deportment or gestures.

DAMAS. He is much younger than ST. FAL, but his gait and carriage are vulgar. He is not deficient in warmth; but all this is spoiled by a manner the most common. He first played at the theatres on the *Boulevard*, and will never be able to forget the lessons he imbibed in that school. It is with him as with the rabbits of which BOILEAU makes mention, in one of his Satires where he describes a bad dinner,

> "-------- et qui, nés dans Paris,
> Sentaient encore le chou dont ils furent nourris."

The *drame* is the style in which DAMAS best succeeds. There is one in particular, *Le Lovelace Français*, where he personates an upholsterer of the *Rue St. Antoine*, who has just been cornuted by the young Duke of Richelieu. This part he performs with much truth, and *avec rondeur*, as the critics here express it, to signify plain-dealing. But DAMAS is no less ignoble in comedy than in tragedy.

DUPONT. This young actor, who is of a very delicate constitution, has never had what we call great powers on the stage; and a complaint in his tongue has occasioned a great difficulty in his articulation. Without having a noble air, he has something distinguishing in his manner. His delivery is correct; but the defect of which I have spoken has rendered him disagreeable to the public, who manifest it to him rather rudely, though he has sometimes snatched from them great applause.

After all the actors I have mentioned, come the confidants, a dull and stupid set, of whom one only deserves mention, not as an actor, but as an author. This is DUVAL. He has written that pretty comic opera, entitled *Le Prisonnier*, as well as *Maison à vendre*, and several *drames*, among which we must not forget *Le Lovelace Français, ou la Jeunesse du Duc de Richelieu*, the piece before-mentioned.

January 20, in continuation.

Next follow the daughters of Melpomene, or those heroines who make the most conspicuous figure in Tragedy.

Characters of Queens.
Mesdames RAUCOURT and VESTRIS.

Mademoiselle RAUCOURT. Never did *début* make more noise than that of this actress, who appeared for the first time on the French stage about thirty years ago, and might then be sixteen or seventeen years of age. She was a pupil of Mademoiselle CLAIRON, who had a numerous party, composed of Encyclopædists, French academicians, and almost all the literati of Paris. The zeal of her friends, the youth, tall stature, and person of the *débutante* supplied the place of talent; and her instructress has recorded in her memoirs that all her labour was lost. The success, however, of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT was such, that there were, it is said, several persons squeezed to death at the door of the playhouse. What increased enthusiasm in favour of the young actress was, that a reputation for virtue was granted to her as great and as justly merited as that for talent. Her father declared in the public lobby that he would blow out her brains if he suspected her of having the smallest intrigue. He kept not his word. Besides, it is well known that his daughter always took care to conduct herself in such a manner as to set the foresight even of jealousy at defiance. Her *penchant* not leaving her the resource to which women of her profession generally recur, and her expenses being considerable, her debts increased; and to avoid the pursuit of her creditors she took refuge in Germany with her tender friend, Mademoiselle SOUK, who has since been mistress to the late king of Prussia. They both travelled over that country, and a thousand reports are circulated to their shame; but the most disgraceful of these are said to be unfounded. The protection of the queen of France, who paid her debts repeatedly, at length restored her to the *Comédie Française*. Such inconsiderate conduct did no small injury to that unfortunate princess, whom I mention with concern on such

an occasion.

The stature of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT is colossal, and when she presents herself, she has a very imposing look. Her face, however, is not so noble; she has small eyes, and her features have not that flexibility necessary for expressing the movements of the passions. Her voice was formerly very full in the *medium* of level-speaking; but it seemed like that of a man. When you heard it for the first time, you thought that, in impassioned sentences, she was going to thunder; but, on the contrary, she assumed a very extensive *falsetto*, which formed the most singular contrast with the dull sounds that had preceded it. That defect, perhaps, is somewhat less striking at the present day; but the voice of this actress is become hoarse, like that of persons who make a frequent use of strong liquors. The delivery of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT is, in general, just and correct; for she is allowed to have understanding; yet, as she neither has warmth nor sensibility, she produces scarcely any effect. Plaudits most frequently burst forth when she appears; but, though these are obtained, she never touches the feelings of the spectator, she never reaches his heart, even in the parts, where she has had the most vogue. That of *Médée*, in which she has begun to reestablish her declining reputation, was neither better felt nor better expressed. She was indebted for the success she obtained in it only to the magician's robe, to the wand, and to a stage-trick which consists in stooping and then raising herself to the utmost height at the moment when she apostrophizes the sun. In the scene of Medea with her children, a heart-rending and terrible scene, there was nothing but dryness and a total absence of every maternal feeling.

The characters of queens, which Mademoiselle RAUCOURT performs, are the first cast of parts at the theatre. It consists of those of mothers and a few parts of enraged or impassioned lovers. In the works of CORNEILLE, the principal ones are *Cléopatre* in *Rodogune*, and *Cornélie* in the *Mort de Pompée*. In RACINE'S, the parts of *Athalie* and of *Phèdre* in the tragedies of the same name, of *Agrippine* in *Britannicus*, of *Clitemnestre* in *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and of *Roxane* in *Bajazet*. In VOLTAIRE'S, those of *Mérope* and *Sémiramis*; and, lastly, that of *Médée* in the tragedy by LONGEPIERRE.

Like all the performers belonging to the *Théâtre Français*, Mademoiselle RAUCOURT was imprisoned during the reign of terror. The patriots of that day bore her much ill-will, and it is asserted that Robespierre had a strong desire to send her to the guillotine. When she reappeared on the stage, the public compensated her sufferings, and to this circumstance she owes the rather equivocal reputation she has since enjoyed.

Madame VESTRIS. Although she has been a very long time on the Parisian stage, this actress is celebrated only from the famous quarrel she had twenty years ago with Mademoiselle SAINVAL the elder. Through the powerful protection of the Marshal de DURAS,[8] her lover, she prevailed over her formidable rival, who, however, had on her side the public, and the sublimity of her talent. This quarrel arose from Madame VESTRIS wishing to wrest from Mademoiselle SAINVAL the parts for which she was engaged. A memoir, written by an indiscreet friend, in favour of the latter, which she scorned to disavow, and in which the court was not spared, caused her to be banished from the capital by a *lettre de cachet*. The public, informed of her exile, called loudly for Mademoiselle SAINVAL. No attention was paid to this by the higher powers, and the guard at the theatre was tripled, in order to insure to Madame VESTRIS the possibility of performing her part. Nevertheless, whenever she made her appearance, the public lavished on her hisses, groans, and imprecations. All this she braved with an effrontery, which occasioned them to be redoubled. But, as all commotions subside in time, Madame VESTRIS remained mistress of the stage; while Mademoiselle SAINVAL travelled over the provinces, where the injustice of the court towards her caused no less regret than the superiority of her talent excited admiration.

Madame VESTRIS was rather handsome, and this explains the whole mystery. She had, above all, a most beautiful arm, and paid no small attention to her toilet. She delivers her parts with tolerable correctness, but her tone is heavy and common. The little warmth with which she animates her characters, is the production of an effort; for she neither possesses energy nor feeling. Her gestures correspond with her acting, and she has no dignity in her deportment. She seldom appears on the stage at present, which saves her from the mortification of being hissed. She is now old, and the political opinion of those who frequent most the theatres rouses them against her.

Although the court had really committed itself to favour her, Madame VESTRIS was the first to betray her noble patrons. At the period of the revolution, she quitted the old *Comédie Française*, taking with her DUGAZON, her father, and TALMA, and founded the present theatre, styled *Théâtre de la République*. She was also followed by several authors; for not being able to conceal from herself the mediocrity of her talents, especially in such parts of the old plays as had been performed by other actresses in a manner far superior, she facilitated the representation of new pieces, in which she had not to fear any humiliating comparison. The principal of these authors were LA HARPE, DUCIS, and CHÉNIER. The last, who, besides, is famous as member of the National Convention and other Legislative Assemblies, composed the tragedy of *Charles Neuf*, in which Madame VESTRIS, playing the part of *Catherine de Médicis*, affected, I am told, to advance her under-lip, *à l'Autrichienne*, in order to occasion comparisons injurious to the ill-fated Marie-Antoinette.[9]

Characters of Princesses.
Mesdames FLEURY, TALMA, BOURGOIN, and VOLNAIS.

Mademoiselle FLEURY. She has no longer youth nor beauty, and her talents as an actress are much on a par with her personal attractions. She recites with judgment, but almost always with languor, and betrays a want of warmth. Besides, her powers have declined. However, she sometimes displays energetic flashes of a real tragic truth; but they are borrowed, and it is affirmed, not without foundation, that Mademoiselle SAINVAL the elder (who is still living) has been so obliging as to lend them to her.

Madame TALMA. For this name she is indebted to a divorce, having snatched TALMA from his first wife, an elderly woman who had ruined herself for him, or whom he had ruined. She quitted her first husband, a dancing-master of the name of PETIT, to live under the more than friendly protection of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT.----Madame TALMA is not handsome, and is now on the wane. She plays tragedy, comedy, and the *drame*; but has no real talent, except in the last-mentioned line. In the first, she wants nobleness and energy. Her delivery is monotonous. It is said in her praise, that she has "*tears in her voice*." I believe that it seldom happens to her to have any in her eyes, and that this sensibility, for which some would give her credit, proceeds not from her heart. In comedy, she wishes to assume a cavalier and bold manner, brought into vogue by Mademoiselle CONTAT. This manner by no means suits Madame TALMA, who neither has elegance in her shape, nor animation in her features. In the *drame*, her defects disappear, and her good qualities remain. She then is really interesting, and her efforts to please are rewarded by the applause of the public.

Mademoiselle BOURGOIN. With respect to this young lady, a powerful protection serves her in lieu of talent; for she is handsome. She persists in playing tragedy, which is not her fort. In comedy, she appears to advantage.

Mademoiselle VOLNAIS. This is a very young girl. All she says is in a crying tone, and what is worse, she seems not to comprehend what she says. In the characters which she first represented she was very successful, but is no longer so at the present day.

Characters of Confidantes.
Mesdames SUIN and THÉNARD.

There are two only who are deserving of notice. The one is Madame SUIN, who certainly justifies the character she bears of a woman of judgment; for she has the most just delivery of all the performers belonging to the *Théâtre Français*; but she is advanced in years, and the public often treat her with rudeness. The other confidante is Mademoiselle THÉNARD, who has played the parts of princesses at this theatre with a partial success.

There are also other confidantes, whom it is not worth while to mention.

I shall conclude this account of the tragedians belonging to the *Théâtre Français*, by observing that the revolution is said to have given a new turn to the mind and character of the French women; and the success which several actresses, at this day obtain in the dramatic career, in the line of tragedy, is quoted in support of this opinion. For a number of years past, as has been seen, Melpomene seemed to have placed the diadem on the head of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT, and this tragic queen would probably have grown gray under the garments of royalty, had not the revolution imparted to her sex a degree of energy sufficient for them to dispute her empire. Women here have seen so many instances of cruelty, during the last ten or twelve years, they have participated, in a manner more or less direct, in an order of things so replete with tragical events, that those among them who feel a *penchant* for the stage, find themselves, in consequence, disposed to figure in tragedy.[10]

Footnote 1: *Fénélon* is no longer performed. It is a very bad tragedy by *Chénier*. Return to text

Footnote 2: There are players members of the National Institute. MONVEL belongs to the Class of Literature and the Fine Arts. Return to text

Footnote 3: Notwithstanding the ill effects likely to result from such doctrine, far more dangerous to society than the poniards of a host of assassins, it appears that, when those actors called terrorists, or partisans of terror, were hunted down, MONVEL was not molested. Return to text

Footnote 4: There are a great many enthusiastic admirers of his talent. Return to text

Footnote 5: It is really to TALMA that the French are indebted for the exact truth of costume which is at this day to be admired on the theatres of Paris, especially in new pieces. An inhabitant of a country the most remote might believe himself in his native land; and were an ancient Greek or Roman to come to life again, he might imagine that the fashion of his day had experienced no alteration. Return to text

Footnote 6: The subject of it is the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day. Return to text

Footnote 7: He wears his hair cut short, and without powder. Return to text

Footnote 8: One evening at the opera, M. DE DURAS authoritatively took possession of a box hired for the night by another person. The latter, dreading his power, but at the same time desirous to stigmatize him, said: "'Tis not he who took Minorca, 'tis not he who took this place nor that, the man of whom I complain, never took any thing in his life but my box at the opera!" Return to text

Footnote 9: All the princes and princesses of the House of Austria have the under-lip very prominent. Return to text

Footnote 10: The example of Mesdemoiselles BOURGOIN and VOLNAIS having proved that first-rate talents were not necessary for being received at the *Théâtre Français*, as a tragic queen or princess, the number of candidates rapidly

increased. For several months past, the merit of these *débutantes* has been the general concern of all Paris. Each had her instructor, and, of course, was carefully tutored for the occasion.

M. LEGOUVÉ, the tragic writer, first brought forward on this stage Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS, a girl about twenty, extremely ill-favoured by nature. DUGAZON, the actor, next introduced Madame XAVIER, a very handsome and elegant woman. Lastly, Mademoiselle RAUCOURT presented her pupil, Mademoiselle GEORGES WEIMER, a young girl of perfect beauty. Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS played *Phèdre*, in RACINE'S tragedy of that name, seven successive times. She certainly displayed a semblance of sensibility, and, notwithstanding the disadvantages of her person, produced such an effect on the senses of the debauched Parisian youth by the libidinous manner she adopted in the scene where *Phèdre* declares her unconquerable passion for her son-in-law *Hippolyte*, that her success was complete. What greater proof can be adduced of the vitiated taste of the male part of the audience? She also performed *Sémiramis*, *Didon*, and *Hermione*; but in the first two characters she betrayed her deficiency. The next who entered the lists was Madame XAVIER. On her *début* in *Sémiramis*, she was favourably received by the public; but, afterwards, choosing to act *Hermione*, the partisans of Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS assembled in such numbers as to constitute a decided majority in the theatre. Not content with interrupting Madame XAVIER, and hissing her off the stage, they waited for her at the door of the play-house, and loaded her with the grossest abuse and imprecations. Lastly appeared Mademoiselle GEORGES WEIMER. Warned by the disgraceful conduct of the *Duchesnistes* (as they are called) towards Madame XAVIER, the comedians, by issuing a great number of *orders*, contrived to anticipate them, and obtain a majority, especially in the pit. Mademoiselle GEORGES made her *début* in the character of *Clitemnestre*, and was well received. Her beauty excited enthusiasm, and effected a wonderful change in public opinion. After playing several parts in which Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS had either failed, or was afraid to appear, she at last ventured to rival her in that of *Phèdre*. At the first representation of the piece, Mademoiselle GEORGES obtained only a partial success; but, at the second, she was more fortunate. The consequence, however, had well nigh proved truly tragic. The *Duchesnistes* and *Georgistes* had each taken their posts, the one on the right side of the pit; the other, on the left. When Mademoiselle GEORGES was called for after the performance, and came forward, in order to be applauded, the former party hissed her, when the latter falling on them, a general battle ensued. The guard was introduced to separate the combatants; but the *Duchesnistes* were routed; and, being the aggressors, several of them were conducted to prison. The First Consul assisted at this representation; yet his presence had no effect whatever in restraining the violence of these dramatic factions.

Since then, Mesdemoiselles DUCHESNOIS and GEORGES have both been received into the company of the *Théâtre Français*. Madame XAVIER has returned to the provinces. Return to text

LETTER LV.

Paris, January 22, 1802.

The observation with which I concluded my last letter, might explain why the votaries of Thalia gain so little augmentation to their number; while those of Melpomene are daily increasing. I shall now proceed to investigate the merits of the former, at the *Théâtre Français*.

COMEDY.

Parts of noble Fathers.
VANHOVE and NAUDET.

VANHOVE. This actor is rather more sufferable in comedy than tragedy; but in both he is very monotonous, and justifies the lines applied to him by a modern satirist, M. DESPAZE:

> "VANHOVE, *plus heureux, psalmodie à mon gré;*
> *Quel succès l'attendait, s'il eût été Curé!*"

NAUDET. I have already said that the Reverend Father NAUDET, as he is called, played the parts of tyrants in tragedy. Never did tyrant appear so inoffensive. As well as VANHOVE, in comedy, he neither meets with censure nor applause from the public.

First parts, or principal lovers, in Comedy.
MOLÉ, FLEURY, and BAPTISTE the elder.

MOLÉ. At this name I breathe. Perhaps you have imagined that ill-humour or caprice had till now guided my pen; but, could I praise the talent of MOLÉ as he deserves, you would renounce that opinion.

MOLÉ made his *début* at the *Comédie Française* about forty-five years ago. He had some success; but as the Parisian public did not then become enthusiasts in favour of mere beginners, he was sent into the provinces to acquire practice. At the expiration of two or three years, he returned, and was received to play the parts of young lovers in tragedy and comedy. He had not all the nobleness requisite for the first-mentioned line of acting; but he had warmth and an exquisite sensibility. In a word, he maintained his ground by the side of Mademoiselle DUMESNIL and LEKAIN, two of the greatest tragedians that ever adorned the French stage. For a long time he was famous in the parts of *petits-maîtres*, in which he shone by his vivacity, levity, and grace.

This actor was ambitious in his profession. Although applauded, and perhaps more so than LEKAIN, he was perfectly sensible that he produced not such great, such terrible effects; and he favoured the introduction of the *drame*, which is a mixture of tragedy and comedy. But those who most detest the whining style of this species of composition are compelled to acknowledge that MOLÉ was fascinating in the part of *St. Albin*, in DIDEROT'S *Père de Famille*.

BELLECOURT being dead, MOLÉ took the first parts in comedy, with the exception of a few of

those in which his predecessor excelled, whose greatest merit, I understand, was an air noble and imposing in the highest degree. As this was MOLÉ's greatest deficiency, he endeavoured to make amends for it by some perfection. He had no occasion to have recourse to art. It was sufficient for him to employ well the gifts lavished on him by nature. Though now verging on seventy, no one expresses love with more eloquence (for sounds too have theirs), or with more charm and fire than MOLÉ. In the fourth act of the *Misanthrope*, he ravishes and subdues the audience, when, after having overwhelmed *Célimène* with reproaches, he paints to her the love with which he is inflamed. But this sentiment is not the only one in the expression of which MOLÉ is pre-eminently successful.

In the *Philinte de Molière*, which also bears the title of *La Suite du Misanthrope*, and in which FABRE D'EGLANTINE has presented the contrast between an egotist and a man who sacrifices his interest to that of his fellow-creatures, MOLÉ vents all the indignation of virtue with a warmth, a truth, and even a nobleness which at this day belong only to himself. In short, he performs this part, in which the word *love* is not once mentioned, with a perfection that he maintains from the first line to the last.

In the fifth act of *Le Dissipateur* (a comedy by DESTOUCHES), when he sees himself forsaken by his companions of pleasure, and thinks he is so by his mistress too, the expression of his grief is so natural, that you imagine you see the tears trickling from his eyes. In moments when he pictures love, his voice, which at times is somewhat harsh, is softened, lowers its key, and (if I may so express myself) goes in search of his heart, in order to draw from it greater flexibility and feeling. The effect which he produces is irresistible and universal. Throughout the house the most profound silence is rigidly, but sympathetically enforced; so great is the apprehension of losing a single monosyllable in these interesting moments, which always appear too short. To this silence succeed shouts of acclamation and bursts of applause. I never knew any performer command the like but Mademoiselle SAINVAL the elder.

In no character which MOLÉ performs, does he ever fail to deserve applause; but there is one, above all, which has infinitely added to his reputation. It is that of the *Vieux Célibataire* in the comedy of the same name by COLIN D'HARLEVILLE, which he personates with a good humoured frankness, an air of indolence and apathy, and at the same time a grace that will drive to despair any one who shall venture to take up this part after him. On seeing him in it, one can scarcely believe that he is the same man who renders with such warmth and feeling the part of *Alceste* in the *Misanthrope*, and in the *Suite de Molière*; but MOLÉ, imbibing his talent from nature, is diversified like her.

Caressed by the women, associating with the most amiable persons both of the court and the town, and, in short, idolized by the public, till the revolution, no performer led a more agreeable life than MOLÉ. However, he was not proscribed through it, and this was his fault. Not having been imprisoned like the other actors of the old *Comédie Française*, he had no share in their triumph on their reappearance, and it even required all his talent to maintain his ground; but, as it appears that no serious error could be laid to his charge, and as every thing is forgotten in the progress of events, he resumed part of his ascendency. I shall terminate this article or panegyric, call it which you please, by observing that whenever MOLÉ shall retire from the *Théâtre Français*, and his age precludes a contrary hope, the best stock-pieces can no longer be acted.[1]

FLEURY. A man can no more be a comedian in spite of Thalia than a poet in spite of Minerva. Of this FLEURY affords a proof. This actor is indebted to the revolution for the reputation he now enjoys; but what is singular, it is not for having shewn himself the friend of that great political convulsion. Nature has done little for him. His appearance is common; his countenance, stern; his voice, hoarse; and his delivery, embarrassed; so much so that he speaks only by splitting his syllables. A stammering lover! MOLÉ, it is true, sometimes indulged in a sort of stammer, but it was suited to the moment, and not when he had to express the ardour of love. A lover, such as is represented to us in all French comedies, is a being highly favoured by Nature, and FLEURY shews him only as much neglected by her. A great deal of assurance and a habit of the stage, a warmth which proceeds from the head only, and a sort of art to disguise his defects, with him supply the place of talent. Although naturally very heavy, he strives to appear light and airy in the parts of *petits-maîtres*, and his great means of success consist in turning round on his heel. He was calculated for playing *grims* (which I shall soon explain), and he proves this truth in the little comedy of *Les Deux Pages*, taken from the life of the king of Prussia, the great Frederic, of whose caricature he is the living model. He wished to play capital parts, the parts of MOLÉ, and he completely failed. He ventured to appear in the *Inconstant*, in which MOLÉ is captivating, and it was only to his disgrace. Being compelled to relinquish this absurd pretension, he now confines himself to new or secondary parts, in the former of which he has to dread no humiliating comparison, and the latter are not worthy to be mentioned.

Friends within and without the theatre, and the spirit of party, have, however, brought FLEURY into fashion. He will, doubtless, preserve his vogue; for, in Paris, when a man has once got a name, he may dispense with talent:

> "*Des réputations; on ne sait pourquoi!*"

says GRESSET, the poet, in his comedy of *Le Méchant*, speaking of those which are acquired in the capital of France.

BAPTISTE the elder. But for the revolution, he too would, in all probability, never have figured on the *Théâtre Français*. When all privileges were abolished, a theatre was opened in the *Rue Culture St. Catherine* in Paris, and BAPTISTE was sent for from Rouen to perform the first parts. In *Robert Chef des Brigands* and *La Mère Coupable*, two *drames*, the one almost as full of improbabilities as the other, he had great success; but in *Le Glorieux* he acquired a reputation almost as gigantic as his stature, and as brilliant as his coat covered with spangles. This was the part in which BELLECOURT excelled, and which had been respected even by MOLÉ. The latter at length appeared in it; but irony, which is the basis of this character, was not his talent: yet MOLÉ having seen the court, and knowing in what manner noblemen conducted themselves, BAPTISTE had an opportunity of correcting himself by him in the part of *Le Glorieux*.

The *Théâtre Français* being in want of a performer for such characters, BAPTISTE was called in. Figure to yourself the person of Don Quixote, and you will have an idea of that of this actor, whose countenance, however, is unmeaning, and whose voice seems to issue from the mouth of a speaking-trumpet.

Jeunes premiers, *or young lovers, in Comedy*.
ST. FAL, DUPONT, DAMAS, and ARMAND.

One might assemble what is best in these four actors, without making one perfect *lover*. I have already spoken of the first three, who, in comedy, have nearly the same defects as in tragedy. As for the fourth, he is young; but unfortunately for him, he has no other recommendation.

Characters of Grims, *or* Rôles à manteau.[2]
GRANDMÉNIL and CAUMONT.

GRANDMÉNIL. This performer is, perhaps, the only one who has preserved what the French critics call *la tradition*, that is, a traditionary knowledge of the old school, or of the style in which players formerly acted, and especially in the time of MOLIÈRE. This would be an advantage for him, but for a defect which it is not in his power to remedy; for what avails justness of diction when a speaker can no longer make himself heard? And this is the case with GRANDMÉNIL. However, I would advise you to see him in the character of the *Avare* (in MOLIÈRE'S comedy of that name) which suits him perfectly. By placing yourself near the stage, you might lose nothing of the truth and variety of his delivery, as well as of the play of his countenance, which is facilitated by his excessive meagreness, and to which his sharp black eyes give much vivacity.

GRANDMÉNIL is member of the National Institute.

CAUMONT. He possesses that in which his principal in this cast of parts is deficient, and little more. One continually sees the efforts he makes to be comic, which sufficiently announces that he is not naturally so. However, he has a sort of art, which consists in straining his acting a little without overcharging it.

Parts of Valets.
DUGAZON, DAZINCOURT, and LAROCHELLE.

DUGAZON. One may say much good and much ill of this actor, and yet be perfectly correct. He has no small share of warmth and comic humour. He plays sometimes as if by inspiration; but more frequently too he charges his parts immoderately. PRÉVILLE, who is no common authority, said of DUGAZON: "How well he can play, if he is in the humour!" He is but seldom in the humour, and when he is requested not to overcharge his parts, 'tis then that he charges them most. Not that he is a spoiled child of the public; for they even treat him sometimes with severity. True it is that he is reproached for his conduct during the storms of the revolution. Although advanced in years, he became Aide-de-camp to SANTERRE.----SANTERRE! An execrable name, and almost generally execrated! Is then a mixture of horror and ridicule one of the characteristics of the revolution? And must a painful remembrance come to interrupt a recital which ought to recall cheerful ideas only? In his quality of Aide-de-camp to the Commandant of the national guard of Paris, DUGAZON was directed to superintend the interment of the unfortunate Lewis XVI, and in order to consume in an instant the body of that prince, whose pensioner he had been, he caused it to be placed in a bed of quick lime. No doubt, DUGAZON did no more than execute the orders he received; but he was to blame in putting himself in a situation to receive them.

Not to return too abruptly to the tone which suits an article wherein I am speaking of actors playing comic parts, I shall relate a circumstance which had well nigh become tragic, in regard to DUGAZON, and which paints the temper of the time when it took place. Being an author as well as an actor, DUGAZON had written a little comedy, entitled *Le Modéré*. It was his intention to depress the quality indicated by the title. However, he was thought to have treated his subject ill, and, after all, to have made his *modéré* an honest man. In consequence of this opinion, at the very moment when he was coming off the stage, after having personated that character in his piece, he was apprehended and taken to prison.

DAZINCOURT. In no respect can the same reproaches be addressed to him as to DUGAZON; but as to what concerns the art, it may be said that if DUGAZON goes beyond the mark, DAZINCOURT falls short of it. PRÉVILLE said of the latter as a comedian: "Leaving pleasantry out of the question, DAZINCOURT is well enough." Nothing can be added to the opinion of that

great master.

LAROCHELLE. He has warmth, truth, and much comic humour; but is sometimes a little inclined to charge his parts. He has a good stage face. It appears that he can only perform parts not overlong, as his voice easily becomes hoarse. This is a misfortune both for himself and the public; for he really might make a good comedian.

There are a few secondary actors in the comic line, such as BAPTISTE the younger, who performs in much too silly a manner his parts of simpletons, and one DUBLIN, who is the ostensible courier; not to speak of some others, whose parts are of little importance.

January 22, in continuation,

Principal female Characters, in Comedy.
Mesdemoiselles CONTAT, and MÉZERAY.—Madame TALMA.

Mademoiselle CONTAT. This actress has really brought about a revolution in the theatre. Before her time, the essential requisites for the parts which she performs, were sensibility, decorum, nobleness, and dignity, even in diction, as well as in gestures, and deportment. Those qualities are not incompatible with the grace, the elegance of manners, and the playfulness also required by those characters, the principal object of which is to interest and please, which ought only to touch lightly on comic humour, and not be assimilated to that of chambermaids, as is done by Mademoiselle CONTAT. A great coquette, for instance, like *Célimène* in the *Misanthrope*, ought not to be represented as a girl of the town, nor *Madame de Clainville*, in the pretty little comedy of *La Gageure*, as a shopkeeper's wife.

The innovation made by Mademoiselle CONTAT was not passed over without remonstrance. Those strict judges, those conservators of rules, those arbiters of taste, in short, who had been long in the habit of frequenting the theatre, protested loudly against this new manner of playing the principal characters. "That is not becoming!" exclaimed they incessantly: which signified "that is not the truth!" But what could the feeble remonstrances of the old against the warm applause of the young?

Mademoiselle CONTAT had a charming person, of which you may still be convinced. She was not then, as she is now, overloaded with *embonpoint*, and, though rather inclined to stoop, could avail herself of the advantages of an elevated stature. None of the resources of the toilet were neglected by her, and for a long time the most elegant women in Paris took the *ton* for dress from Mademoiselle CONTAT. Besides, she always had a delicacy of discrimination in her delivery, and a varied sprightliness in the *minutiæ* of her acting. Her voice, though sometimes rather shrill, is not deficient in agreeableness, but is easily modulated, except when it is necessary for her to express feeling. The inferiority of Mademoiselle CONTAT on this head is particularly remarkable when she plays with MOLÉ. In a very indifferent comedy, called *Le Jaloux sans amour*, at the conclusion of which the husband entreats his wife to pardon his faults, MOLÉ contrives to find accents so tender, so affecting; he envelops his voice, as it were, with sounds so soft, so mellow, and at the same time so delicate, that the audience, fearing to lose the most trifling intonation, dare not draw their breath. Mademoiselle CONTAT replies, and, although she has to express the same degree of feeling, the charm is broken.

Being aware that the want of nobleness and sensibility was a great obstacle to her success, this actress endeavoured to insure it by performing characters which require not those two qualities. The first she selected for her purpose was *Susanne* in the *Mariage de Figaro*. *Susanne* is an elegant and artful chambermaid; and Mademoiselle CONTAT possessed every requisite for representing well the part. She had resigned the principal character in the piece to Mademoiselle SAINVAL the younger, an actress who was celebrated in tragedy, but had never before appeared in comedy. On this occasion, I saw Mademoiselle SAINVAL play that ungracious part with a truth, a grace, a nobleness, a dignity, a perfection in short, of which no idea had yet been entertained in Paris.

Another part in which Mademoiselle CONTAT also rendered herself famous, is that of *Madame Evrard*, in the *Vieux Célibataire*.—*Madame Evrard* is an imperious, cunning, and roguish housekeeper; and this actress has no difficulty in seizing the *ton* suitable to such a character. This could not be done by one habituated to a more noble manner. Mademoiselle CONTAT has not followed the impulse of Nature, who intended her for the characters of *soubrettes*; but, when she made her *début*, there were in that cast of parts three or four women not deficient in merit, and it would have taken her a long time to make her way through them.

The parts which Mademoiselle CONTAT plays at present with the greatest success are those in the pieces of MARIVAUX, which all bear a strong resemblance, and the nature of which she alters; for it is also one of her defects to change always the character drawn by the author. The reputation enjoyed by this actress is prodigious; and such a *critique* as the one I am now writing would raise in Paris a general clamour. Her defects, it is true, are less prominent at this day, when hereditary rank is annihilated; and merit, more than manners, raises men to the highest stations. Besides, it is a presumption inherent in the Parisians to believe that they never can be mistaken. To reason with them on taste is useless; it is impossible to compel them to retract when they have once said "*Cela est charmant*."

Before I take leave of Mademoiselle CONTAT, I shall observe that there exists in the *Théâtre Français* a little league, of which she is the head. Besides herself, it is composed of Mademoiselle DEVIENNE, DAZINCOURT, and FLEURY. I am confidently assured that the choice and reception of pieces, and the *début* of performers depend entirely on them. As none of them possess all the requisites for their several casts of parts, they take care to play no other than pieces of an equivocal kind, in which neither *bon ton*, nor *vis comica* is to be found. They avoid, above all, those of MOLIÈRE and REGNARD, and are extremely fond of the comedies of MARIVAUX, in which masters and lackies express themselves and act much alike. The unison is then perfect, and some people call this *de l'ensemble*, as if any could result from such a confusion of parts of an opposite nature. As for new pieces, the members of the league must have nothing but *papillotage* (as the French call it), interspersed with allusions to their own talent, which the public never fail to applaud. When an author has inserted such compliments in his piece, he is sure of its being received, but not always of its being successful; for when the ground is bad, the tissue is good for nothing.

Mademoiselle MÉZERAY. She is of the school of Mademoiselle CONTAT, whence have issued only feeble pupils. But she is very pretty, and has the finest eyes imaginable. She plays the parts of young coquettes, in which her principal dares no longer appear. Without being vulgar in her manner, one cannot say that she has dignity. As for sensibility, she expresses it still less than Mademoiselle CONTAT. However, the absence of this sentiment is a defect which is said to be now common among the French. Indeed, if it be true that they are fickle, and this few will deny, the feeling they possess cannot be lasting.

Madame TALMA. I have already spoken of her merits as a comic actress, when I mentioned her as a tragedian.

Parts of young Lovers.
Mesdemoiselles MARS, BOURGOIN, and GROS.

Mademoiselle MARS. She delivers in an ingenuous manner innocent parts, and those of lovers. She has modest graces, an interesting countenance, and appears exceedingly handsome on the stage. But she will never be a true actress.

Mademoiselle BOURGOIN. She has some disposition for comedy, which she neglects, and has none for tragedy, in which she is ambitious to figure. I have already alluded to her beauty, which is that of a pretty *grisette*.

Mademoiselle GROS. She is the pupil of DUGAZON, and made her *début* in tragedy. The newspaper-writers transformed her into Melpomene, yet so rapid was her decline, that presently she was scarcely more than a waiting woman to Thalia.

Characters, *or foolish Mothers*.
Mesdemoiselles LACHAISSAIGNE and THÉNARD.

The latter of these titles explains the former. In fact, this cast of parts consists of *characters*, that is, foolish or crabbed old women, antiquated dowagers in love, &c. Commonly, these parts are taken up by actresses grown too old for playing *soubrettes*; but to perform them well, requires no trifling share of comic humour; for, in general, they are charged with it. At the present day, this department may be considered as vacant. Mademoiselle LACHAISSAIGNE, who is at the head of it, is very old, and never had the requisites for performing in it to advantage. Mademoiselle THÉNARD begins to *double* her in this line of acting, but in a manner neither more sprightly nor more captivating.

Parts of Soubrettes *or Chambermaids*.
Mesdemoiselles DEVIENNE and DESBROSSES.

Mademoiselle DEVIENNE. If Mademoiselle CONTAT changes the principal characters in comedy into those of chambermaids, Mademoiselle DEVIENNE does the contrary, and from the same motive, namely, because she is deficient in the requisites for her cast of parts, such as warmth, comic truth, and vivacity. Yet, while she assumes the airs of a fine lady, she takes care to dwell on the slightest *équivoque*; so that what would be no more than gay in the mouth of another woman, in hers becomes indecent. As she is a mannerist in her acting, some think it perfect, and they say too that she is charming. However, she must have been very handsome.

Mademoiselle DESBROSSES. The public say nothing of her, and I think this is all she can wish for.

I have now passed in review before you those who are charged to display to advantage the dramatic riches bequeathed to the French nation by CORNEILLE, RACINE, MOLIÈRE, CRÉBILLON, VOLTAIRE, REGNARD, &c. &c. &c. If it be impossible to squander them, at least they may at present be considered as no more than a buried treasure. Although the *chefs d'œuvre* of those masters of the stage are still frequently represented, and the public even appear to see them with greater pleasure than new pieces, they no longer communicate that electric fire which inflames genius, and (if I may use the expression) renders it productive. A great man can, it is true, create every thing himself; but there are minds which require an impulse to be set in motion. Without a CORNEILLE, perhaps the French nation would not have

had a RACINE.

Formerly, people went to the *Théâtre Français* in order to hear, as it were, a continual course of eloquence, elocution, and pronunciation. It even had the advantage over the pulpit and the bar, where vivacity of expression was prohibited or restricted. Many a sacred or profane orator came hither, either privately or publicly, to study the art by which great actors, at pleasure, worked on the feelings of the audience, and charmed their very soul. It was, above all, at the *Théâtre Français* that foreigners might have learned to pronounce well the French language. The audience shuddered at the smallest fault of pronunciation committed by a performer, and a thousand voices instantly corrected him. At the present day, the comedians insist that it belongs to them alone to form rules on this point, and they now and then seem to vie with each other in despising those already established. The audience being perhaps too indulgent, they stand uncorrected.

Whether or not the *Théâtre Français* will recover its former fame, is a question which Time alone can determine. Undoubtedly, many persons of a true taste and an experienced ear have disappeared, and no one now seems inclined to say to the performers: "That is the point which you must attain, and at which you must stop, if you wish not to appear deficient, or to overact your part." But the fact is, they are without a good model, and the spectators, in general, are strangers to the *minutiæ* of dramatic excellence. In tragedy, indeed, I am inclined to think that there never existed at the *Théâtre Français* such a deficiency of superior talents. When LEKAIN rose into fame, there were not, I have been told, any male performers who went as far as himself, though several possessed separately the qualifications necessary for that line. However, there was Mademoiselle DUMESNIL, a pupil of nature, from whom he might learn to express all the passions; while from Mademoiselle CLAIRON he might snatch all the secrets of art.

As for Comedy, it is almost in as desperate a situation. The *ton* of society and that of comedians may have a reciprocal influence, and the revolution having tended to degrade the performance of the latter, the consequences may recoil on the former. But here I must stop.—I shall only add that it is not to the revolution that the decline of the art, either in tragedy or comedy, is to be imputed. It is, I understand, owing to intrigue, which has, for a long time past, introduced pitiful performers on the stage of the *Théâtre Français*, and to a multiplicity of other causes which it would be too tedious to discuss, or even to mention. Notwithstanding the encomiums daily lavished on the performers by the venal pen of newspaper writers, the truth is well known here on this subject. Endeavours are made by the government to repair the mischief by forming pupils; but how are they to be formed without good masters or good models?

Footnote 1: It must grieve every admirer of worth and talent to hear that MOLÉ is now no more. Not long since he paid the debt of nature. As an actor, it is more than probable that "we ne'er shall look on his like again." Return to text

Footnote 2: The word *Grim*, in French theatrical language, is probably derived from *grimace*, and the expression of *Rôles à manteau* arises from the personages which they represent being old men, who generally appear on the stage with a cloak. Return to text

LETTER LVI.

Paris, January 24, 1802.

Among the customs introduced here since the revolution, that of women appearing in public in male attire is very prevalent. The more the Police endeavours to put a stop to this extravagant whim, the more some females seek excuses for persisting in it: the one makes a pretext of business which obliges her to travel frequently, and thinks she is authorized to wear men's clothes as being more convenient on a journey; another, of truly-elegant form, dresses herself in this manner, because she wishes to attract more notice by singularity, without reflecting that, in laying aside her proper garb, she loses those feminine graces, the all-seductive accompaniments of beauty. Formerly, indeed, nothing could tend more to disguise the real shape of a woman than the

COSTUME OF THE FRENCH LADIES.

A head-dress, rising upwards of half a yard in height, seemed to place her face near the middle of her body; her stomach was compressed into a stiff case of whalebone, which checked respiration, and deprived her almost of the power of eating; while a pair of cumbersome hoops, placed on her hips, gave to her petticoats the amplitude of a small elliptical, inflated balloon. Under these strange accoutrements, it would, at first sight, almost have puzzled BUFFON himself to decide in what species such a female animal should be classed. However, this is no longer an enigma.

With the parade of a court, all etiquette of dress disappeared. Divested of their uncouth and unbecoming habiliments, the women presently adopted a style of toilet not only more advantageous to the display of their charms, but also more analogous to modern manners.

No sooner was France proclaimed a republic, than the annals of republican antiquity were ransacked for models of female attire: the Roman tunic and Greek *cothurnus* soon adorned the shoulders of the Parisian *élégantes*; and every antique statue or picture, relating to those periods of history, was, in some shape or another, rendered tributary to the ornament of their person.

This revolution in their dress has evidently tended to strengthen their constitution, and give them a pectoral *embonpoint*, very agreeable, no doubt, to the amateur of female proportion, but the too open exposure of which cannot, in a moral point of view, be altogether approved. These treasures are, in consequence, now as plentiful as they were before uncommon. You can scarcely move a step in Paris without seeing something of this kind to exercise your admiration. Many of those domains of love, which, under the old-fashioned dress, would have been considered as a flat country, now present, through a transparent crape, the perfect rotundity of two sweetly-rising hillocks. As prisoners, wan and disfigured by confinement, recover their health and fulness on being restored to liberty, so has the bosom of the Parisian belles, released from the busk and corset, experienced a salutary expansion.

In a political light, this must afford no small satisfaction to him who takes an interest in the physical improvement of the human species, as it tends to qualify them better for that maternal office, dictated by Nature, and which, in this country, has too long and too frequently been intrusted to the uncertain discharge of a mercenary hireling. Another advantage too arises from the established fashion. Thanks to the ease of their dress, the French ladies can now satisfy all the capacity of their appetite. Nothing prevents the stomach from performing its functions; nothing paralyzes the spring of that essential organ. Nor, indeed, can they be reproached with fastidiousness on that score. From the soup to the desert, they are not one moment idle: they eat of every thing on the table, and drink in due proportion. Not that I would by any means insinuate that they drink more than is necessary or proper. On the contrary, no women on earth are more temperate, in this respect, than the French; they, for the most part, mix water even with their weakest wine; but they also swallow two or three glasses of *vin de dessert*, without making an affected grimace, and what is better, they eat at this rate without any ill consequence, Now, a good appetite and good digestion must strengthen health, and, in general, tend to produce pectoral *embonpoint*.

In this capital, you no longer find among the fair sex those over-delicate constitutions, whose artificial existence could be maintained only by salts, essences, and distilled waters. Charms as fresh as those of Hebe, beauties which might rival the feminine softness of those of Venus, while they bespeak the vigour of Diana, and the bloom of Hygëia, are the advantages which distinguish many of the Parisian belles of the present day, and for which they are, in a great measure, indebted to the freedom they enjoy under the antique costume.

In no part of the world, perhaps, do women pay a more rigid attention to cleanliness in their person than in Paris. The frequent use of the tepid bath, and of every thing tending to preserve the beauty of their fine forms, employ their constant solicitude. So much care is not thrown away. No where, I believe, are women now to be seen more uniformly healthy, no where do they possess more the art of assisting nature; no where, in a word, are they better skilled in concealing and repairing the ravages of Time, not so much by the use of cosmetics, as by the tasteful manner in which they vary the decoration of their person.

LETTER LVII.

Paris, January 25, 1802.

I have already observed that the general effervescence to which the revolution gave birth, soon extended to the seminaries of learning. The alarm-bell resounded even in the most silent of those retreats. Bands of insurgents, intermixed with women, children, and men of every condition, came each moment to interrupt the studies, and, forcing the students to range themselves under their filthy banner, presented to them the spectacle of every excess. It required not all this violence to disorganize institutions already become antiquated,[1] and few of which any longer enjoyed much consideration in the public opinion. The colleges and universities were deserted, and their exercises ceased. Not long after, they were suppressed. The only establishment of this description which has survived the storms of the revolution, and which is no less important from its utility than extensive in its object, is the

COLLÈGE DE FRANCE.

It neither owed this exemption to its ancient celebrity, nor to the talents of its professors; but having no rich collections which could attract notice, no particular estates which could tempt cupidity, it was merely forgotten by the revolutionists, and their ignorance insured its preservation.

The *Collège de France* is, at the present day, in this country, and perhaps in the rest of Europe, the only establishment where every branch of human knowledge is taught in its fullest extent. The object of this institution is to spread the most elevated notions of the sciences, to maintain and pave the way to the progress of literature, either by preserving the taste and purity of the ancient authors, or by exhibiting the order, lustre, and richness of the modern. Its duty is to be continually at the head of all the establishments of public instruction, in order to guide them, lead them on, and, as it were, light them with the torch of knowledge.

This college, which is situated in the *Place de Cambray*, *Rue St. Jacques*, was founded by Francis I. That monarch, distinguished from all cotemporaries by his genius, amiableness, and magnificence, saw in literature the source of the glory of princes, and of the civilization of the

people. He loved and honoured it, not only in the writings of the learned, but in the learned themselves, whom he called about his person, at the same time loading them with encouragement and favours. It is singular that those times, so rude in many respects, were, nevertheless, productive of sentiments the most delicate and noble.

Truth never shuns princes who welcome it. Francis I was not suffered to remain ignorant of the deplorable state in which literature then was in France, and, though very young, he disdained not this information. Nothing, in fact, could approach nearer to barbarism. The impulse Charlemagne had given to study was checked. The torches he had lighted were on the point of being extinguished. That famous university which he had created had fallen into decline. A prey to all the cavils of pedantry, it substituted dispute and quibble to true philosophy.

Nothing was any longer talked of but the *five universals*, *substance*, and *accident*. All the fury of argument was manifested to know whether those were simple figures, or beings really existing, all things equally useful to the revival of knowledge and the happiness of mankind. The Hebrew and Greek tongues were scarcely, if at all, known; the living languages, little cultivated; Latin itself, then almost common, was taught in the most rude and imperfect manner. In short, the most learned body of the State had fallen into the most profound ignorance: a striking example of the necessity of renewing continually and maintaining the life of those bodies employed in instruction.

I am not speaking of the sciences, then entirely unknown. The languages were every thing at this period, on account of their connexion with religion.

The small number of men of merit whom the bad taste of the age had not reached, were striving to restore to literature its lustre, and to men's minds their true direction; but, in order to revive the taste for good studies, it was necessary to create a new establishment for public instruction, which should be sufficiently extensive for acquiring a great influence. It was necessary to assemble men the most celebrated for their talent and reputation, in order that, being thus placed in full view, and presented to public attention, they might rectify the minds of men by their authority, as well as enlighten them by their knowledge.

This undertaking, difficult in itself, became much less so through the circumstances which then existed. Taste seemed to have taken refuge at the court, and the king easily yielded to the reasons of the learned who approached him; but no one took a greater share in this project than the celebrated Erasmus. Remote from it as he was, he accelerated its execution by the disinterested praises which he lavished on it. The king sent to invite him, in the most flattering terms, to take the direction of it and to settle in France; but Erasmus, jealous of liberty, retained besides by the gratitude he owed to Charles V, and by the care he bestowed on the College of Louvain which he had founded, refused this task, equally honourable and useful. He manifested not the less, in his letters, the joy he felt to see studies re-established by the only means which could reanimate them. It is pleasing to the true friends of the sciences to find among those who cultivate them similar traits of generosity and nobleness.

At length peace having restored to France repose and the means of repairing her losses, the king gave himself up without reserve to the desire he had of making the sciences flourish, and realized the grand project of public instruction which had for a long time occupied his mind. The new college took the name of *Collège Royal*. It had professors for the Hebrew and Greek tongues, and some even for the mathematics, philosophy, medicine, and the living languages.

The formation of the *Collège Royal* gave great displeasure to the University. After having held so long without a rival the sceptre of the sciences and literature, it was grating to its members to relinquish it. They could ill bear to see set above it an establishment evidently intended to direct and guide it. Self-love offended seldom forgives, especially when it is animated by the *esprit de corps*. The University depreciated the new college, and endeavoured to fetter it in a thousand ways. At last, those dark intrigues being constantly smothered by the applause which the professors received, the University finished by bringing them before a court of justice. From, envy to persecution there is but one step, and that step was soon taken.

Religion served as a pretext and a cloak for this accusation. It was affirmed that the new professors could not, without danger to the faith, explain the Hebrew and Greek tongues, if they had not been presented to the University to be examined by it, and received from it their mission. To this it was answered, that if the theologians of the University understood Greek and Hebrew, it must be easy for them to denounce the passages in which the new professors had erred, and that if, on the contrary, they did not understand those languages, they ought not to pretend to judge those who taught them. After long debates, things were left in the state in which they were before the trial. Each party continued quietly its lessons, and, as it almost always happens in such cases, reason ended by having its due weight: true it is that it was then supported by royal authority.

The *Collège de France* has not since ceased to make an increasing progress. It even had the valuable advantage of reforming itself successively, and of following new ideas, the necessary result of its constitution and of the lustre that has always surrounded it; two causes which have occasioned its chairs to be sought by the most celebrated men of every description. It is this successive reform which constitutes the distinctive character of the *Collège de France*, and which has always enabled it to fulfil its real object.

Thus, to quote but one example. The chair of Greek philosophy was, in the beginning, intended to make known the writings of the ancient philosophers on the nature of things and the organization of the universe. These were, at that time, the only repositories of human knowledge for mathematics and physics; but, in proportion as the sciences, more advanced, substituted rational theories for hazardous conjectures, the modern discoveries of astronomy were taught, together with the writings of the ancients. The object of this chair, which at the present day bears the name of general physics and mathematics, is to disseminate the most elevated notions of mechanics and the theory of the system of the world. The works taught by its occupier are analytical mechanics and celestial mechanics, that is, those works which form the limits of our knowledge for mathematical analysis, and consequently those of which it is most important to increase the very small number of readers.

By a consequence of that spirit of amelioration which animates this College, some time before the revolution, a chair and a cabinet of experimental physics were added to it.

As for the natural sciences, which are taught here with much depth and detail in several establishments, they have, in the *Collège de France*, a sort of regulator which directs them, as it were, by their generalities. It is, in fact, to this only that an establishment which, by its nature, contains no collection, ought to attach itself, and the philosophy of the sciences, the result and completion of their study, here constitutes the object of all the lectures.

Thus the improvements which the sciences have successively experienced, have always been spread by the instruction of the *Collège Royal*; and among the professors who have occupied its chairs, none can be quoted who have been strangers to their progress.

The revolution, which overthrew in France the ancient universities, suspended for some time the exercises of this establishment; but, under the name of *Collège de France*, it has since resumed a new lustre. It then found itself compelled to new efforts, in order to maintain its place among the scientific institutions, which have emulously risen in every branch of human knowledge. Nevertheless, those different sciences, even natural history, and the curative art, taught with so much perfection in private establishments, have hence derived great advantages, and here it is that public instruction comes at once to be resumed, investigated, and extended.

The present government appears to be perfectly sensible of the importance of such an establishment. The enlightened men, the celebrated *savans*, who approach it, have pointed out in the *Collège de France* a *normal* school, completely formed, and which unites to the extent of its object the ever-powerful ascendant of seniority. The similarity between the circumstances in which this institution is at the present day and those when it was founded, affords the most certain hope of its progress being maintained and accelerated.

This is what appears to me the most interesting in the history of this ancient college. I say nothing of its present professors; their zeal is proved by their assiduous and uninterrupted lessons; their merit is before the judgment of the public; and as for their names, these are indifferent to the results of their labours. If any other motive than that of the interest of the sciences were blended with the information I now communicate, I should not think that, in this letter, I was fulfilling the object of your wishes.

P.S. It may not be useless to mention that no students are attached to the *Collège de France*. The lectures are public; and every one who is desirous of improving his mind in any branch of science, may attend them free of expense or trouble. It is impossible for the friend of learning to withhold his admiration from so noble an institution. What, in fact, can be more liberal than this gratuitous diffusion of knowledge?

Footnote 1: Whatever sentiment may have been preserved respecting the ancient University of Paris, every impartial person must acknowledge that it was several centuries in arrear in regard to every thing which concerns the Arts and Sciences. Peripatetic, when the learned had, with Descartes, renounced the philosophy of Aristotle, it became Cartesian, when they were Newtonians. Such is the too general custom of bodies, engaged in instruction, who make no discoveries. Invested at their formation with great influence over scientific opinions, because they are composed of the best informed men of the day, they wish constantly to preserve those advantages. They with reluctance suffer that there should be formed, elsewhere than in their own bosom, new opinions which might balance theirs; and if the progress of the sciences at last obliges them to abandon their doctrine, they never adopt the most modern theories, were they, in other respects, preferable; but embrace those which existed for some time anterior to them, and which they themselves had before combated. This inertness of bodies, employed in instruction, is an unavoidable evil; because it is the effect of self-love, the most invariable of passions. Return to text

LETTER LVIII.

Paris, January 17, 1802.

If we do not consider the *Opera Buffa* as a national theatre, then the next in rank, after the Grand French Opera and the *Théâtre Français*, is the

THÉÂTRE DE L'OPÉRA COMIQUE.

This house, which is situated in the *Rue Feydeau*, near the *Rue de la Loi*, was opened for the first time in January 1791. The entrance to it is by a circular vestibule, externally decorated with caryatides, and sufficiently spacious for one carriage to enter while another drives off by an

adjoining outlet. At the end of this vestibule is a long gallery, bordered by shops on both sides, which forms a second entrance by the *Rue Filles St. Thomas*.

The interior form of this theatre is a semi-circle, extended in a right line at its extremities, which places the orchestra in a central position, and renders the house one of the fittest in Paris for a concert. Two rows of Gothic pillars, one above the other, occupy nearly all its height; and though it contains eight tiers of boxes, five only are in sight. The same distribution repeated in regard to the stage-boxes, presents a very projecting pavilion, which seems to support a large triumphal arch. However grand this style of architecture may be in appearance, in effect it renders the seats very inconvenient to two-thirds of the spectators. The ornaments consist of a strange mixture of the Greek, Gothic, and Oriental. The house is said to contain two thousand persons.

In the beginning, this theatre united the performers of the original *Opéra Buffa* and some of those belonging to the old French Comic Opera, who played alternately. The former retiring from Paris in 1792, the latter for some time attracted full houses by the excellence of their style of singing, tasteful decorations, and one of the best composed orchestras in the capital.

Since then, it has experienced the changes and vicissitudes attendant on the revolution. At present, the company is composed of a selection from the performers of the *Opéra Comique* of the *Théâtre Favart* (formerly known by the name of *Théâtre Italien*), and those of the lyric theatre of which I am now speaking. This junction has not long been effected. Previously to its taking place, the *Comédie Italienne*, where French comic operas only were represented, was still constituted as it was under the old *régime*, of which it was remarked as being the sole remnant.

Formerly, the French Comic Opera was very rich in stock-pieces, chiefly written by FAVART, SÉDAINE, MARMONTEL, HÈLE,[1] MONVEL, MARSOLIER, HOFFMAN, and others. Their productions were set to music by GRÉTRY, MONSIGNY, PHILIDOR, DÉSAÏDES, DALEYRAC, &c. These pieces are now seldom played, the music of them being antiquated; though for energy and truth of expression some of it surpasses that of many of the more modern compositions. The new authors are little known. The composers of the music are MÉHUL, DALEYRAC before-mentioned, BOYELDIEU, TARCHI, &c. The modern pieces the most in vogue and most attractive are *Le Prisonnier*, *l'Opéra Comique*, a piece so called, *Le Calife de Bagdad*, *Maison à vendre*, *D'Auberge en Auberge*, and a few others of the same description. All these are really pleasing comedies.

The *Théâtre Feydeau* itself was also in possession of a great number of stock-pieces, among which were some in the style of the Grand French Opera. A considerable change seems to have taken place, as the latter are now no longer represented.

In surveying the *Opéra Comique*, one would imagine that, in lieu of one company, two separate ones had been formed to play in the same theatre. The former is the weaker in number, but the stronger in talent. The latter, though weaker, has some good performers, in the long list of those of whom it is composed; but, in general, they are either no longer in their pristine lustre, or have not yet attained a competent degree of perfection.

Seldom are the two companies mixed. Pieces in the style of the modern *Opéra Comique*, in which easy mirth is replaced by quaint jests, are played exclusively by the former. They draw crowded houses, as the public are extremely partial to them. Lyric *drames* are abandoned to the latter, and the old stock-pieces to such of the performers as choose to act in them for a small number of spectators who are so obliging as to enter the house with *orders* or *free* admission. OF all the repositories of old pieces that of the *Comédie Italienne* is the one which is the most entirely neglected. This is rather the fault of the actors than that of the public. There are many old productions which would attract a crowd, were the best performers to play them; but who likes to pay for seeing a master-piece murdered?—We now come to speak of the qualifications of these performers.

Principal Characters and parts of Lovers.
Counter-Tenors.
ELLEVIOU, GAVAUDAN, PHILIPPE, and GAVEAUX.

ELLEVIOU. He is the first singer at the *Opéra Comique*. Nor will this opinion be contradicted by any of the elegant and pretty women who, slaves to the custom of shewing themselves at the first representation of a new piece, never begin to applaud till ELLEVIOU makes his appearance.

This performer is, in fact, gifted with a handsome person, an easy manner, an expressive countenance, and a voice, which, when he modulates it, is charming. His delivery is tolerably good, and in some parts, he is not deficient in warmth and feeling. As a singer, ELLEVIOU leaves behind all those destined to second him. After having begun by singing bass, he has taken the parts of counter-tenor, for which, however, his voice is not suited, but he makes up for this deficiency by a very flexible tenor. He displays much art and a very modern taste. His method too is good; he makes no improper use of his facility by lavishing graces, but his manner is too uniform. This is the greatest objection that can be made to him, in the double capacity of singer and comedian.

GAVAUDAN. This young actor, with a well-proportioned stature and a very agreeable countenance, ranks, at the *Opéra Comique*, next in merit to ELLEVIOU. His voice, as a counter-tenor, is not very brilliant, nor his means extensive; but his taste is good, and his method that of

the modern school. As a player, he has a certain reputation in lyric *dramas*, and especially in those melancholy parts, the characteristic of which is a concentrated passion. He imitates TALMA, and, like him, "outsteps the modesty of Nature."

PHILIPPE. His reputation was begun by the advantages of his person, and he consolidated it by his performance in the line of knight-errantry. *Richard, cœur de lion*, was the part which secured him the public favour. His voice is still an agreeable counter-tenor; but he declines through age. As an actor, he is deficient in nobleness, and his gestures are not dignified; but, being used to the stage, and possessing some feeling, he often produces happy effects.

GAVEAUX. He has been a good singer in his youth, and is a very agreeable composer. He always acquits himself of any part he undertakes, if not in a brilliant manner, at least with credit. Two of his musical productions are stock-pieces, and well worth seeing. *L'Amour Filial* is a happy imitation of the Italian school, and *Sophie et Moncars* is always heard with pleasure.

Characters of Fathers, Valets, or Comic Parts.
Bass-voices.
CHENARD, MARTIN, RÉZICOURT, JULIET, and MOREAU.

CHENARD. Owing to an advantageous person, this actor once stood as high in the favour of the ladies as ELLEVIOU does at present. He still possesses a fine voice, as a bass, but it is not very flexible. In the part of *Monsieur de la France*, in *l'Épreuve Villageoise*, he established his fame as a singer; yet his style is not sufficiently modelled after the modern taste, which is the Italian. As an actor, he is very useful; but, having always been treated by the public like a spoiled child, he is too apt to introduce his own sallies into his parts, which he sometimes charges with vulgarisms of the lowest description.

MARTIN. In the parts of valets, MARTIN cannot be better placed than near ELLEVIOU, whom he seconds with skill and taste. This has led the composers here to an innovation. Formerly, duets in the graceful style between men were seldom heard; but the voices of ELLEVIOU and MARTIN being perfectly adapted to each other, almost all the composers have written for them duets in which the *cantabile* prevails, and concerted cadences are very conspicuous. This, I understand, is unprecedented in Paris.

MARTIN made his *début* in 1783 at the *Théâtre de Monsieur* in the company of Italian buffoons. In this school he acquired that taste which he has since propagated with zeal, if not with success. At the present day, he is accused of loading his singing with superfluous embellishments, or of placing them without judgment in passages or situations where they are ill-suited. However, in *morceaux d'ensemble* he is quite at home, and, of course, shews himself to great advantage. As an actor, he is by no means remarkable, though he sometimes displays intelligence.

RÉZICOURT. He may justly be called a good comedian, without examining his merits as a singer.

JULIET. In the newspapers, this performer is called *inimitable*. His manner is his own; yet, perhaps, it would be very dangerous to advise any one to imitate it. He is not deficient in intelligence, and has the habit of the stage; but his first quality is to be extremely natural, particularly in the parts of Peasants, which he performs with much truth. He seems to be born a player, and though he is not a musician, he always sings in tune and in time.

MOREAU. An agreeable person, open countenance, animation, an ingenuous manner, and an unerring memory. He is very well placed in young Peasants, such as *Le Bon André* and *Lubin* of FAVART, as well as in the parts of Valets.

Mixed characters of every sort.—Tenors.
SOLIÉ, and ST. AUBIN.

SOLIÉ. He first appeared in the parts of young lovers with a tall stature and a handsome face, but neither of them being fashioned for such characters, he met with no applause. His voice was not very brilliant, but his method of singing was replete with grace and taste. For this, however, he obtained no credit; the Parisian public not being yet accustomed to the modern or Italian style. CLAIRVAL, the first singer at the old *Opéra Comique*, happening to be taken suddenly ill one night, SOLIÉ undertook his part at a moment's warning. Success crowned his temerity, and from that moment his merit was appreciated. His best character is *Micheli* in *Les deux Savoyards*, in which he established his reputation. In the pieces of which MÉHUL has composed the music, he shines by the finished manner in which he executes it; the *cantabile* is his fort. As an actor, his declamation is not natural, and his deportment is too much that of a mannerist. However, these defects are compensated by his singing. To the music of others, he does every justice, and that which he composes himself is extremely agreeable.

ST. AUBIN. This performer once had a good voice as a counter-tenor; but as he now plays no other than secondary parts, one might imagine that he is retained at the theatre only in consideration of his wife's talents.

Caricatures and Simpletons.
DOZAINVILLE, and LESAGE.

DOZAINVILLE. The person of this actor is very favourable for caricatures and the characters of

simpletons, which he fills. The meagreness of his countenance renders it very flexible; but not unfrequently he carries this flexibility to grimace. As a singer, he must not be mentioned.

LESAGE. He is a musician, but has little voice. He performs the parts of simple peasants in a natural manner, but with too much uniformity. This is is a general defect attached to those characters.—Let me next introduce the female performers.

First female Singers and Parts of Lovers.
Mesdames ST. AUBIN, SCIO, LESAGE, CRÉTU,
PHILIS the elder, GAVAUDAN, and PINGENET.

Madame ST. AUBIN. She is a capital actress, though chiefly in the parts of young girls; yet she is the main pillar of the *Opéra Comique*. She never has been handsome, at least when closely viewed, and is now on the wane, being turned of forty-five; but her graceful little figure and delicate features make her appear pretty on the stage. Neatness and *naïveté* characterise her acting. She has scarcely any voice, but no other songs than romances or ballads are assigned to her. She formerly played at the Grand French Opera, where she was applauded in noble and impassioned parts, though they are not, in general, suited to her manner. But an actress, high in favour with the public, is always applauded in whatever character she appears. The pieces in which Madame ST. AUBIN excels are *Le Prisonnier, Adolphe et Clara*, and *L'Opéra Comique*, which is the title of a piece, as I have already mentioned.

Madame SCIO. Although she is said not to be well versed in music, she has a very extensive and powerful voice, but its tones have little variety. As an actress, she is very indifferent. Without being mean, she has no nobleness of manner. Like almost all the performers belonging to the *Opéra Comique*, she delivers ill the dialogue, or such sentences as are not set to music. As she frequently strains her acting, persons deficient in taste are pleased to bestow on her the epithet of *great* as an actress. However, she played *Médée* in a lyric tragedy of that name; but such a Medea was never seen! As a singer, Madame Scio is a valuable acquisition to this theatre. In point of person, she is neither ordinary nor handsome.

Mademoiselle LESAGE. Her singing is chaste, but destitute of that musical energy which distinguishes great singers. She plays *les ingénuités* or innocent characters; but is rather a mannerist, instead of being childish. She then employs a false voice, not at all suited to this line of acting, in which every thing should be natural.

Madame CRÉTU. This actress came to Paris from Bourdeaux, preceded by a great reputation. She has been handsome: a clear voice, a good method of singing, a becoming manner of acting, insured her success. She is very useful at this theatre, in pieces where the *vis comica* does not predominate.

Mademoiselle PHILIS the elder. This is a pretty pupil of the famous GARAT. She has a clear pipe, a charming countenance, a quick eye, an agreeable person, and some taste. She possesses as much merit as an actress as a singer.[2]

Madame GAVAUDAN. She is admired for her pretty person, pretty voice, and pretty carriage. No wonder then that she has greatly contributed to the success of the little pieces in the style of *Vaudeville*, which have been performed at this theatre.

Mesdemoiselles PINGENET. These two sisters are nothing as actresses; but seem to aspire to the title of singers, especially the elder, who begins to distinguish herself.

Noble Mothers and Duennas.
Mesdames DUGAZON, PHILIPPE, and GONTHIER.

Madame DUGAZON. Twenty years ago she enjoyed a great name, for which she was indebted to the bad taste that then prevailed. With large prominent eyes, and a broad flat nose, she could not be really handsome; but she had a very animated countenance. In lyric *drames*, she personated country-girls, chambermaids, and princesses. In the first-named cast of parts, she had an ingenuous, open, but rustic manner. She played chambermaids in a style bordering on effrontery. Lastly, she represented princesses, but without any dignity, and also women bereft of their reason. The part in which she had the most vogue was that of *Nina* in *La Folle par amour*. Her madness, however, appeared not to be occasioned by the sensibility of her heart. It was too much inclined to the sentimental cast of Sterne's Maria.

Madame DUGAZON, who ought to have been in possession of a considerable fortune, from the vast sums of money lavished on her by Englishmen, is at this day reduced to perform the parts of mothers, in which she acquits herself so as to deserve neither praise nor censure.

Madame PHILIPPE. Under the name of DESFORGES, she shone formerly in the part of *Marguerite* in *Richard, cœur de lion*. Without being a superior singer, she executes her songs with feeling.

Madame GONTHIER. This actress still enjoys the benefit of her former reputation. She is excellent in a cast of parts become hacknied on the stage; namely, gossips and nurses.

I have said nothing of the *doubles* or duplicates of all these ladies, as they are, in general, bad

copies of the originals.

The choruses of the *Opéra Comique* are not very numerous, and have not the strength and correctness which distinguish those of the Grand French Opera. Nor could this be expected. The orchestra has been lately recomposed, and at present consists of a selection of excellent performers. The scenery, decorations, and dresses are deserving of commendation.[3]

Footnote 1: Or HALE, an Englishman, who wrote *Le Jugement de Midas*, *l'Amant Jaloux*, and *Les Évenemens Imprevus*, pretty lyric comedies, especially the last. Notwithstanding the success of his pieces, this author is said to have died in the greatest distress. Return to text

Footnote 2: Not long since she set off for Russia, without apprizing any one of her intention. Return to text

Footnote 3: The commissioner, appointed by the government to superintend the proceedings of this theatre, has since been replaced by a *Prefect of the Palace*, whose authority is much the same as that exercised when each of the principal theatres in Paris was under the inspection of a *Lord of the Bedchamber*. Return to text

LETTER LIX.

Paris, January 29, 1802.

Whenever the pen of an impartial writer shall trace the history of the French revolution, through all its accompanying vicissitudes, it will be seen that this country owed its salvation to the *savans* or men of science. The arts and sciences, which were revived by their zeal and courage, united with unceasing activity to pave the way to victories abroad, and repair mischiefs at home. Nor can it be denied, that every thing which genius, labour, and perseverance could create, in point of resources, was employed in such a manner that France was enabled, by land, to make head against almost all Europe, and supply her own wants, as long as the war lasted.

The *savans* who had effected such great things, for some time enjoyed unlimited influence. It was well known that to them the Republic was indebted for its safety and very existence. They availed themselves of this favourable moment for insuring to France that superiority of knowledge which had caused her to triumph over her enemies. Such was the origin of the

POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL.

This establishment had a triple object; namely, to form engineers for the different services; to spread in civil society enlightened men, and to excite talents which might promote the sciences. Nothing was neglected that could tend to the accomplishment of a destination so important.

It was, in fact, time to reorganize the instruction of corps destined for public services, the greater part of which were wholly deficient in this respect. Some of them, it is true, had particular schools; but instruction there was feeble and incomplete. That for military engineers at *Mézieres*, the best conducted of all, and which admitted twenty pupils only, had suspended its exercises, in consequence of the revolution. Necessity had occasioned the formation of a provisionary school, where the pupils received rapidly the first notions of the attack and defence of places, after which they were sent to the armies.

Such institutions neither answered the exigencies of the State, nor conduced to its glory. Their weakness was, above all, likely to be felt by men habituated to general ideas, and whose minds were still more exalted, and views enlarged, by the revolution. Those men wished that the new *School for Public Works* should be worthy of the nation. Their plan was extensive in its object, but simple in its execution, and certain in its results.

The first law concerning the *Central School for Public Works*, since called the *Polytechnic School*, was made on the 20th of Ventôse year II. (10th of March 1794). From that moment, much zeal was manifested in making the necessary arrangements for its formation. On the report made to the National Convention respecting the measures taken on this subject, on the 7th of Vendémiaire year III (28th of September 1794) a decree was passed, directing a competition to be opened for the admission of four hundred pupils into this school. The examination was appointed to take place in twenty-two of the principal towns. The candidates were to answer in arithmetic and the elements of algebra and geometry. Those admitted received the allowance of military officers for their travelling expenses to Paris. They were to have annually twelve hundred francs, and to remain in the school three years, after which they were to be called to the different Public Services, when they were judged capable of performing them; and priority was to depend on merit. These services were the duty of military engineers, naval engineers, or ship-builders, artillerists, both military and naval, engineers of bridges and highways, geographical engineers, and engineers of mines, and to them were added the service of the pupils of the school of aërostation, which GUYTON MORVEAU had caused to be established at Meudon, for the purpose of forming the aërostatic company destined for manœuvring air-balloons, applied to the art of war, as was seen at *Maubeuge*, *Fleurus*, *Aix-la-Chapelle*, &c.

However, the conception of this project was far more easy than its execution. It was doing little to choose professors from among the first men of science in Europe, if their lessons were not fixed in the mind of the pupils. Being unable to communicate them to each pupil in private, they stood in need of agents who should transmit them to this numerous assemblage of youth, and be, as it were, the nerves of the body. To form these was the first object.

Among the young men who had presented themselves at the competition, twenty of the most distinguished were selected. Philosophical instruments and a chemical laboratory were provided for them, and they were unremittingly exercised in every part of the plan which it was resolved to execute. These pupils, the greater part of whom had come from the schools for Public Service, felt the insufficiency of the instruction which they had there received. Eager to learn, their mind became inflamed by the presence of the celebrated men who were incessantly with them. The days sufficed not for their zeal; and in three months they were capable of discharging the functions for which they were intended.

Nor was this all. At a time when opinion and power might change from one moment to another, much risk was incurred if a definitive form was not at once given to the *Polytechnic School*. The authors of this vast project had seen the revolution too near not to be sensible of that truth. But they wished first, by a trial made on a grand scale, to insure their method, class the pupils, and shew what might be expected from them. They therefore developed to them, in rapid lectures, the general plan of instruction.

This plan had been drawn up agreeably to the views of men the best informed, amongst whom MONGE must be particularly mentioned. He had been professor at *Mezières*, and had there given the first lessons of descriptive geometry, that science so useful to the engineer. The enumeration of the various parts of instruction was reduced to a table, printed by order of the Committee of Public Safety. It comprehends mathematics, analysis applied to descriptive geometry and to the mechanism of solids and fluids, stereotomy, drawing, civil architecture, fortification, general physics, chymistry, mineralogy, and their application to the arts.

In three months, the work of three years was explained. A real enthusiasm was excited in these youths on finding themselves occupied by the sublimest ideas which had employed the mind of man. Amidst the divisions and animosities of political party, it was an interesting sight, to behold four hundred young men, full of confidence and friendship, listening with profound attention to the lectures of the celebrated *savans* who had been spared by the guillotine.

The results of so great an experiment surpassed the most sanguine expectations. After this preliminary instruction, the pupils were divided into brigades, and education took the course it was intended should follow.

What particularly distinguishes this establishment, is that the pupils not only receive oral lessons, but they must give in written solutions, present drawings, models, or plans for the different parts, and themselves operate in the laboratories.

On the 1st of Germinal year III (22d of March 1795) the annual courses were commenced. They were then distributed for three years, but at this day they last two only. At the same time a decree was passed, regulating the number of professors, adjuncts, ushers, the holding of the meetings of the council of instruction and administration, the functions of the director, administrator, inspector of the studies, secretary of the council, librarian, keepers of the collection of drawings, models, &c.

Since that epoch, the *Polytechnic School*, often attacked, even in the discussions of the *Legislative Body*, has maintained its ground by the impression of the reputation of the men who act there as professors, of the depth of the knowledge which makes the object of their lessons, and of the youths of superior talent who issue from it every year. The law which after many adjournments, has fixed its existence is dated the 25th of Frimaire year VIII (16th of December 1799.)

The most important changes introduced, are the determination of the age to be received into this school, which is from sixteen to twenty, the reduction of the pupils to the number of three hundred, the rank which is given them of serjeant of artillery of the first class, their pay fixed on the same footing, together with a fund of assistance for those labouring under difficulties, the obligation to wear a uniform, the establishment of a council of improvement, composed of three members of the National Institute, of examiners, of a general-officer or superior agent of each of the branches of the Public Service, of the director, and four commissioners taken from the council of instruction.

This council assembles every year, inquires into the state of the school, proposes its views of amelioration, respecting every department, and makes a report to the government. One of its principal functions is to harmonise the instruction with that of the Schools of Engineers, Artillery, &c. into which the pupils enter after the final examination they undergo previously to their departure.

After this, to judge of the advantages of the *Polytechnic School*, it is sufficient to cast an eye on the printed reports, which present an account of the persons it furnishes to the different services, of those who have been taken from it for the expedition to Egypt, for the corps of *aspirans de la marine* or midshipmen, for entering into the line vith the rank of officers, or into the department of commissaries of war, (into which they are admitted after their examination if no places are vacant in the Schools for Public Service), of those who have been called on to profess the sciences in the central schools (Lyceums) of the departments, some to fill the first professors' chairs in Paris, such as at the *Collège de France* and the *École Polytechnique*, of those, in short, who have quitted this school to introduce into the manufactories the knowledge which they had

acquired. The last-mentioned circumstance has always been a consideration for carrying the number of pupils beyond the presumable wants of the different Public Services.

You see that this is no more than a summary of what might be said and collected from the journals of the *Polytechnic School*, (which already form four volumes in 4to. independently of the classic works published by the professors), for giving a complete history of this interesting establishment, which attracts the notice of foreigners of all nations. BONAPARTE takes no small interest in the labours of the *Polytechnic School*, and has often said that it would be difficult to calculate the effects of the impulse which it has given towards the mathematical sciences, and of the aggregate of the knowledge imparted to the pupils.

The *Polytechnic School*, which is under the authority of the Minister of the Interior, occupies an extensive range of building, formerly known by the name of *Le petit Palais Bourbon*, contiguous to the *Palais du Corps Legislatif*. The different apartments contain every thing necessary for the elucidation of the arts and sciences here taught; but the pupils reside not at the school: they lodge and board with their friends, on the salary allowed them by the nation, and repair thither only for the prosecution of their studies.

LETTER LX.

Paris, January 30, 1802.

To judge from the records of the Old Bailey, one would conclude that, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, London must contain a greater number of dishonest persons of both sexes than any metropolis in Europe. But, though more notorious thieves and daring robbers may perhaps, be found in London than in many other great cities, yet I will venture to affirm that Paris contains more

PICKPOCKETS AND SHARPERS.

However superior too our rogues may be in boldness, I apprehend that, in dexterity, they are far inferior to those to be met with among our neighbours. To elude a more vigilant inspection, the latter are compelled to exert more art and cunning. In this dissipated capital, which is a grand theatre where they can display all their talent, and find a greater number of dupes, adventurers and swindlers of every description have long been famous; but it should seem that the females here of that stamp deserve to be no less celebrated.

Not many years ago, I heard of an English lady of quality being detected in the very act of secreting a quantity of valuable lace, to which she had taken a particular fancy at a great haberdasher's in Pall-Mall. It was said that she endeavoured to exculpate herself for this inadvertency on the ground of being in a pregnant state, which had produced an irrisistible longing. However this may be, she might here have got a lesson, as will appear from the following instance of ingenuity very lately practised by one of her own sex.

In the *ci-devant Palais Royal*, a haberdasher of note keeps a shop where the highest-priced articles of female wear are exhibited, immediately on coming from the hands of the manufacturer or inventor. The other day, a lady somewhat turned of thirty, of genteel appearance and engaging address, entered this shop, and asked to see some white lace veils. Several were shewn to her at the price of from twenty-five to fifty louis each. These not being sufficiently rich to please her taste, others more costly were produced, and she fixed on one of eighty louis in value. Standing before a glass, she immediately put on this veil *à la réligieuse*, that is, in the form of the hood of a nun's dress. Then taking from her bosom her little purse, she found it to contain no more than twenty louis in bankpaper, which she paid to the haberdasher as a deposit for the veil, at the same time desiring him to send one of his men with her to her *homme d'affaires* or agent, in order that he might bring back the other sixty.

As a Parisian tradesman is always extremely glad to get rid of his goods, she had no difficulty in carrying her point; and, having selected from among the shopmen a shamefaced youth of eighteen, took him with her in the hackney-coach which she had kept in waiting. She gave the coachman her orders, and away he drove to a famous apothecary's, in the *Rue St. Honoré*. "This," said she to the shopman, "is the residence of my *homme d'affaires*: follow me, and you shall have your money." She accordingly alighted, and, after saying a few words in the ear of the doctor, on whose credulity she had already exercised her genius, desired him to take the young man to his private room, and settle the business, while she remained to chat with his wife.

The unsuspecting youth, seeing the lady on such terms of intimacy in the family, made no hesitation to follow the doctor to a back-parlour, where, to his extreme surprise, he was closely questioned as to his present state of health, and the rise and progress of the disorder which he had caught through his own imprudence. The more he denied the circumstance, the more the doctor persisted in his endeavours to procure ocular demonstration. The latter had previously locked the door, having been apprized by the lady that her son was exceedingly bashful, and that stratagem, and even a certain degree of violence, perhaps, must be employed to obtain evidence of a complaint, which, as it injured her *dear boy's* constitution, disturbed her own happiness and peace of mind. The doctor was proceeding to act on this information, when the young shopman, finding his retreat cut off, vociferously demanded the sixty louis which he was come to receive in

payment for the veil. "Sixty louis in payment for a veil!" re-echoed the doctor. "Your mother begged me to examine you for a complaint which you have inconsiderately contracted in the pursuit of pleasure." The *dénouement* now taking place, the two dupes hastened back to the shop, when they found that the lady had decamped, having previously discharged the coach, in order that she might not be traced by the number.

The art of purloining a watch, a snuff-box, or a purse, unperceived by the owner, may, no doubt, be acquired by constant practice, till the novice becomes expert in his profession: but the admirable presence of mind displayed by Parisian sharpers must, in a great measure, be inherited from nature. What can well surpass an example of this kind mentioned by a celebrated French writer?

A certain person who had been to receive a sum of money at a banker's, was returning home with it in a hired carriage. The coachman, not remembering the name of the street whither he had been ordered to drive, got off his box, and opened the coach-door to ask it. He found the person dead and cold. At his first exclamation, several people collected. A sharper who was passing by, suddenly forced his way through the crowd, and, in a lamentable and pathetic voice, called out: "'Tis my father! What a miserable wretch am I!" Then, exhibiting every mark of the most poignant grief, he got into the coach, and, crying and sobbing, kissed the dead man's face. The bystanders were affected, and dispersed, saying, one to another, "What an affectionate son!" The sharper drove on in the coach, where he found the bags of money, which were an unexpected booty, and, stopping it at a door, told the coachman that he wished to apprize his sister of the melancholy accident that had just happened. He alighted, and shut the coach-door, leaving the corpse as naked as it came into the world. The coachman, having waited a long time, inquired in vain at the house for the young man and his sister; no one had any knowledge of her, him, or the deceased.

I remember when I was last in Paris, at the beginning of the revolution, being shewn a silversmith's shop, whence a few articles having been stolen, the master was induced to examine in what manner the thieves gained admittance. Discovering an aperture where he conjectured that a man's hand might be introduced, he prepared a noose with a proper cord, and remained in waiting the following night to see if they would repeat their visit. At a late hour, when all was quiet, he perceived a man's hand thrust through the aperture; instantly he drew tight the noose, and thought he had effectually secured the culprit; but he was mistaken. The fellow's accomplices, fearing that the apprehension of one of them would lead to the discovery of all, on finding it impossible to extricate him by any other means, cut off his wrist. When the patrole arrived at the spot, on the call of the silversmith, he was not a little astonished to find that his prisoner had escaped, though with the loss of a hand, which remained fast in the noose.

With respect to these more daring classes of rogues, every year almost produces some new race of them. Since the revolution, the criminal code having condemned to death none but those guilty of murder, housebreakers, to avoid the penalty of the law, had recourse to a practice, which put the persons whom they subjected to it to the most severe pain. This was to hold their feet to the fire till they declared where all their moveable property was to be found. Hence these villains obtained the name of *chauffeurs*. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the Police, they still occasionally exercise their cruelties in some of the departments, as may be seen by the proceedings of the criminal tribunals. I have also heard of another species of assassins, who trained blood-hounds to seize a man by the throat in certain solitary places, and then came afterwards, and plundered him at their ease. When apprehended, they coolly said: "We did not kill the man, but found him dead."

As in former times, all sentences passed on criminals, tried in Paris, whether condemned to die or not, are put into execution on the

PLACE DE GRÈVE.

The first sentence executed here was that passed on *Marguerite Porette*, a female heretic, who was burnt alive in the year 1310.

Among the punishments which it has been found necessary to re-establish is that of marking with a hot iron. Criminals, condemned to imprisonment in irons, are exposed for two hours on a scaffold in the middle of this square. They are seated and tied to a post, having above them a label with the words of their sentence. They are clad in woollen pantaloons and a waistcoat with sleeves, one half of each of which is white; the other, brown. After being exposed two hours, they are stripped, and to their shoulder is applied a hot iron, which there leaves the impression of the letter V, for *voleur*, thief. Women, not being condemned to imprisonment in irons; are exempt from the penalty of being marked. This punishment is said to produce considerable effect on the culprits, as well as on the spectators. Previously to its being revived, persons convicted of thieving were insolent beyond all endurance.

The *Place de Grève* is a parallelogram, one of the long sides of which is occupied by the *ci-devant Hôtel de Ville*, a tasteless edifice, begun in 1533, but not finished till 1605.

Before the revolution, the *Place de Grève* was alternately the theatre of punishments and rejoicings. On the same pavement, where scaffolds were erected for the execution of criminals, rose superb edifices for public festivals.

Here, when any criminal of note was to suffer, the occupiers of the adjoining houses made a rich harvest by letting their apartments. Every window that commanded a view of the horrid scene, was then hired at a most exorbitant price. Women of the first rank and fashion, decked in all the luxury of dress, graced even the uppermost stories. These weak-nerved females, who would have fainted at the sight of a spider mangling a fly, stood crowded together, calmly viewing the agonies of an expiring malefactor, who, after having been racked on the wheel, was, perhaps, denied the *coup de grace* which would, in an instant, have rid him of his miserable existence.

The death of a regicide was a sort of gala to these belles; while the lead was melting over the furnace, the iron pinchers heating in the fire, and the horses disposed for tearing asunder the four quarters of the victim of the laws, some of them amused themselves with an innocent game at cards, in sight of all these terrible preparations, from which a man of ordinary feeling would avert his looks with horror.

How happens it that, in all countries on the continent, ladies flock to these odious spectacles? Every where, I believe, the populace run to behold them; but that a female of superior birth and breeding can deliberately seek so inhuman a gratification is a mystery which I cannot explain, unless, indeed, on the principle of shewing themselves, as well as that of seeing the show.

"*Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsæ*."

LETTER LXI.

Paris, February 2, 1802.

Independently of the general organization of Public Instruction, according to the new plan, of which I have before traced you the leading features, there exist several schools appropriate to different professions, solely devoted to the Public Service, and which require particular knowledge in the arts and sciences. Hence they bear the generic name of

SCHOOLS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES.

They are comprised under the following denominations.

POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL.
SCHOOL OF ARTILLERY.
MILITARY ENGINEERS.
BRIDGES AND HIGHWAYS.
MINES.
NAVAL ENGINEERS.
NAVIGATION.

In order to be admitted into any of the above schools, the candidates must prove themselves qualified by the preliminary instruction required the examinations at the competition prescribed for each of them. The pupils of these schools receive a salary from the nation. At the head of them is the *Polytechnic School*, of which I have already spoken. This is the grand nursery, whence the pupils, when they have attained a sufficient degree of perfection, are transplanted into the other *Schools for Public Services*. Next come the

SCHOOLS OF ARTILLERY.

There are eight of these in the places where the regiments of artillery are garrisoned. The pupils who are sent thither as officers, after having been examined, apply their knowledge to the arts, to the construction of works, and to the manœuvres of war dependent on artillery. Each school, in which the pupils must remain two years longer, is under the superintendance of a general of brigade of the corps.

SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERS.

This school, united to that of Miners, is established at Metz. Its labours relate to the application of the theoretical knowledge which the pupils have imbibed at the *Polytechnic School*. The objects of these labours is the construction of all sorts of works of fortification, mines and counter-mines, mock-representations of sieges, attack, and defence, the drawing of plans and military surveys, in a word, all the details of the duty of engineers in fortified places and in the field.

The number of pupils is limited to twenty. They have the rank and pay of second lieutenant. The School of Engineers, as well as the Schools of Artillery, is under the authority of the Minister at War.

Much as I wish to compress my subject, I must observe that, previously to leaving the school, the pupils undergo a strict examination respecting the objects of instruction before-enumerated. This examination is intrusted to a *jury* (as the French term it) composed of the commander in chief of the school, a general or field-officer of the corps, appointed every year by the Minister at War, and one of the permanent examiners of the Polytechnic School. *This jury forms the list of merit,*

which regulates the order of promotion. Can we then wonder that the French have the first military engineers in Europe?

SCHOOL OF BRIDGES AND HIGHWAYS.

It was founded in 1787, by TRUDAINE, and continued under the direction of PERRONET, chief engineer of this corps, till his death, which happened in 1794. He was then 86 years of age. By his will, he bequeathed to this school, for the instruction of the pupils whom he loved as his children, his library, his models, his manuscripts, and his portfolios; articles which at this day form an invaluable collection.

This school, which is at present established in the *Hôtel de Chatelet* (formerly belonging to the duke of that name) *Rue de Grenelle*, *St. Germain*, unites the *dépôt* or repository of plans and models to the labours relating to roads, canals, and harbours for trade. The number of pupils admitted is fifty. They are taken from the *Polytechnic School*, and retain the salary which they there received.

The instruction given to them chiefly consists in the application of the principles of physics and mathematics to the art of planning and constructing works relative to roads, canals, and sea-ports, and the buildings belonging thereto; the means of execution, and the mode of forming plans and estimates of the works to be executed, and the order to be observed in keeping the accounts.

The *School of Bridges and Highways* is under the authority of the Minister of the Interior,

PRACTICAL SCHOOLS OF MINES.

One of these schools is established at Geislautern, in the department of La Sarre; and the other, at Pesay, in the department of Mont-Blanc.

The Director and Professors form a committee for the working of the mines of Pesay, as well as for the instruction of the pupils. In consequence of the report of this committee the *Council of Mines* established in Paris, proposes to the government the measures necessary to be adopted. Twenty pupils, who have passed their examination at the *Polytechnic School*, are attached to the practical schools, for the purpose of applying the theoretical part of their instruction. Extra-scholars, with testimonials of good behaviour and capacity, are admitted to be educated at their own expense. These schools are also under the authority of the Minister of the Interior.

SCHOOL OF NAVAL ENGINEERS.

The *School of Naval Architects*, which existed in Paris, has been removed to Brest, under the name of *École des Ingénieurs des Vaisseaux*. No pupils are admitted but such as have been students, at least two years, in the *Polytechnic School*. The examination of the candidates takes place every year, and the preference is given to those who excel in descriptive geometry, mechanics, and the other branches of knowledge appropriated to the first year's study at that school. When the pupils have proved, in the repeated examinations which they must undergo, that they are sufficiently qualified, they are sent to Brest (as vacancies occur), in order to apply the theory they have acquired to the different works carried on in that port, where they find both the example and the precept, and are taught every thing relative to the construction of ships of war and merchant-vessels.

This school is under the authority of the Minister of the naval department. The pupils admitted into it, receive a salary of 1800 francs (*circa* £. 75 sterling) a year.

SCHOOLS OF NAVIGATION.

The Schools of Mathematics and Hydrography, established for the navy of the State, and the Schools of Hydrography destined for the merchant-service, bear the name of *Écoles de Navigation*.

Every year, there is a competition for the admission of candidates for naval employment. The Hydrographical Examiner makes a general tour to the different ports, where he interrogates the pupils in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, statics, and navigation. According to these examinations, they are admitted to the rank of *aspirons de marine* or midshipmen, captains of merchant-ships for long voyages, masters of coasting-vessels, pilots, &c,

By a late decree of the Consuls, no one can be admitted to the examination prescribed for being received as master in the coasting-trade, unless he is twenty-four years of age, and has served five years on board the ships of war belonging to the Republic.

In my letter of the 15th of January, I have shewn you that Public Instruction is to be divided into four classes: 1. In Primary Schools, established by the *Communes*. 2. In Secondary Schools, established by the *Communes*, and kept by private masters. 3. In Lyceums. 4. In *Special Schools*. In the two last-mentioned establishments, the pupils are to be maintained at the expense of the nation.

Before I particularize the *Special Schools*, I must mention a national institution, distinguished by the appellation of

PRYTANÉE FRANÇAIS.

It is divided into four colleges, established at Paris, St. Cyr, St. Germain-en-Laye, and Compiegne. It was destined for the gratuitous education of the children of the military killed in the field of honour, and of public functionaries who might happen to die in the discharge of their office.

By a decree of the Consuls, dated the 1st of Germinal year VIII (22nd of March 1800) the number of pupils, in each of the Colleges of Paris, St. Cyr, and St. Germain-en-Laye, is limited to two hundred, and to three hundred, in that of Compiegne. An augmentation, however, is to be made in favour of the new departments. The pupils are named by the First Consul. On entering the College, they bring a stated proportion of necessaries, after which they are wholly maintained at the expense of the nation till they have finished their studies. The government provides for the advancement of those who give the greatest proof of good conduct and talent. The pupils cannot remain in either of these four colleges beyond the age of eighteen.

As I have before observed, the Central Schools are, in future, to bear the name of Lyceums, and the highest degree of public instruction is to be acquired in the

SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

In these upper schools are to be particularly taught, in the most profound manner, the useful sciences, together with jurisprudence, medicine, natural history, &c. The Special Schools now in existence are to be continued, subject to such modifications as the government may think fit to introduce for the benefit of the Public Service. They are still under the immediate superintendance of the Minister of the Interior.

The *Collège de France* I have before described: the Museum of Natural History, the Special School of docimastic Mineralogy and Chemistry, and that for Oriental languages, I shall speak of elsewhere; but I shall now proceed to give you a rapid sketch of the others which I have not yet noticed, beginning with the

SPECIAL SCHOOL OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE.

This institution was founded in 1648, at the instigation of LE BRUN. It was formerly held in the *Place du Louvre*, but is now removed to the *ci-devant Collège des Quatre-Nations*, which has taken the name of *Palais des Beaux Arts*. This is the only school in Paris that has never indulged in any vacation. Each professor is on duty for two months. During the first month, he gives his lessons in the school of living models; during the other, in the school of the antique, called, *la bosse*. It may not be uninteresting to give you an idea of the

COMPETITIONS.

Every year there is a competition in Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, which is to be called *National Prize*. Its object is to confer on those who have gained the first prize, at present proposed by the Institute, the advantage of an allowance of 1200 francs for five years, which is insured to them at the French School of Fine Arts at Rome. During their stay there, they are lodged, boarded, and taken care of, in case of illness, at the expense of the Republic.

A competition takes place every six months for the rank of places in the schools; and another, every three months for the distribution of medals.

There is also a prize, of 100 francs, founded by M. DE CAYLUS, for a head expressive of character, painted or drawn from nature; and another prize of 300 francs, founded by LATOUR, for a half-length, painted after a model, and of the natural size.

Independently of the competition of the school, there is every year a general competition followed by a distribution of the works of encouragement, granted to the artists who have distinguished themselves most in the annual exhibition of the *Salon du Louvre*. A jury, named by the competitors themselves, examines the different pictures, classes them according to the degree of merit which it finds they possess, and the Minister of the Interior allots to each of the artists *crowned* a sum in payment of a new work which they are bound to furnish to the government.

NATIONAL SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE.

In this school, which is held in the *Louvre*, the Professor of Architecture delivers lectures on the history of that art, and the theory of its different branches, on the orders, and edifices erected by the ancients, and on the works of Vitruvius, Palladio, Scamozzi, and Vignole. He takes no small pains to make known the bold style of Grecian architecture, which the Athenians chiefly employed during the ages when they prided themselves on being a free people.

The Professor of Mathematics explains the principles of arithmetic and elementary geometry, which he applies to the different branches of civil and military architecture, such as levelling, the art of constructing plans, and perspective.

The Professor of Stereotomy, in his lectures, chiefly comprises masonry and carpentry; he points out the best methods of employing those arts in civil and military buildings. His demonstrations relate to the theoretical and practical part of both branches. All the pupils, and students of architecture are indiscriminately admitted to the competition for the great prize of architecture, provided they are not foreigners.

CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.

This establishment, situated in the *Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière*, was founded on the 16th of Thermidor year III, (4th of August 1795) for the preservation and reproduction of music in all its branches.

It is composed of a director, three inspectors of teaching, a secretary, a librarian, and thirty-five professors.

The director presides over the whole establishment; the inspectors superintend the teaching, examine the pupils, and teach the branches of study attributed to them by the regulation.

In the Conservatory, the instruction is divided as follows: composition, harmony, solfaing, singing, violin, violincello, harpsicord, organ, flute, hautboy, clarinette, French-horn, bassoon, trumpet, trombonne, serpent, preparation for singing, and declamation applicable to the lyric stage.

The completion of the study is effected by a series of lectures, treating specially of the relations between the sciences and the art of music.

Three hundred pupils of both sexes, taken in equal number from each department, are instructed gratuitously in the Conservatory. The principal points towards which their studies are directed, are, to keep up music in society, to form artists for the execution of public *fêtes*, for the armies, and for the theatres.

These pupils are admitted after an examination, which takes place four times a year. Prizes are distributed annually, in a public meeting of the Conservatory, to the pupils who distinguish themselves in each branch of study.

February 2, in continuation.

To the preceding brief account of the Conservatory, I shall subjoin a few observations on the

PRESENT STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE.

Till the year 1789, this was the country where the greatest expense was incurred in cultivating music; yet the means which were employed, though very numerous, produced but little effect, and contributed not to the improvement of that art. Every thing even announces that its progress would have been still more retarded, but for the introduction of the Italian Opera, in 1645, by Cardinal Mazarin.

The brilliant success of *Orfeo e Euridice*, in 1647, determined the national taste in favour of this sort of *spectacle*, and gave birth to the wish of transplanting it to the French stage. It was in 1659 that the first opera, with music adapted to a French poem, was performed at Issy.

Since the epoch of the establishment of the French opera, every department belonging to it, with the sole exception of the singing, has been so much improved, that it is become the most brilliant *spectacle* in Europe. But, as the lyric theatres in France were always obliged to seek recruits among the pupils formed in the schools maintained by the clergy for the service of public worship, the influence of the clerical mode of instruction was felt; and this was, in fact, the source of the bad taste which for a long time characterized French singing.

Had the grand opera in France been continued an Italian one, as it was first established, (like those subsequently introduced in the principal cities of Europe) it would have been supported by performers formed by the Conservatories of Italy; and the good taste of those schools would have balanced or proscribed the bad taste of the French cathedrals; but the genius of the seventeenth century chose that the French language, purified and fixed by the writers who rendered it illustrious, should also become the language of the lyric theatre. Musical instruction, remaining entirely subservient to the customs of religion, was unable to keep pace with the rapid progress of the arts and sciences during that brilliant period.

Among the defects of the old system of teaching music, must be placed that of confining it to men; nevertheless, the utility of women in concerts and plays was as incontestable then as it is at the present day. Public instruction was therefore due to them in that point of view; but, had no such consideration existed, they should have been admitted to participate in this instruction, in order to propagate the art in society. The success of this method would have been infallible: as soon as women should have cultivated the musical art with success, its naturalization would have been effected in France, as it has been in Germany and Italy.

The expense of the musical instruction pursued in the schools belonging to the cathedrals was

immense, compared with its results in every branch of the art. As to composers, they produced but a very small number, and few of these distinguished themselves; no instrumental performer of eminence ever issued from them; and, with few exceptions, the singers they formed were very indifferent.

The necessity of introducing a better method of singing induced the government, in 1783, to establish a *Special School of Singing and Declamation.* This institution continued in full exercise for ten years; but, though the celebrated PICCINI was appointed to preside over the vocal department, the habits of the old school obstructed its progress, and prevented it from producing the good which was expected from it.

At the epoch of the dissolution of the monarchical institutions, there remained in France only the School of Music of the Parisian national guard, and that of Singing and Declamation just mentioned. The republican government ordered them to be united, and thus was formed the *Conservatory of Music*.

Nor let it be imagined that policy has had no share in establishing this institution. It has furnished the numerous bands of musicians rendered necessary by the levy of fourteen armies which France had, at one and the same time, in the field. It is well known that music has done almost wonders in reviving the courage of the French soldiers, who, when Victory seemed adverse to them, inclined her in their favour, by rallying to the tune of the *Marseillois*. In the heat of action, joining their voice to the instruments, and raising themselves to a pitch of enthusiasm, they received or dealt out death, while they kept singing this hymn. The French then are no less indebted to ROUGET DE LILLE than the Spartans were to TYRTÆUS. At the beginning of the revolution, they had no songs of the warlike kind, except a few paltry ballads sung about the streets. ROUGET, who was then an officer of engineers at Strasburg, was requested to compose a martial hymn. Full of poetic fire, he shut himself up in his chamber, and, in the course of one night, wrote the words of the *Marseillois*, adapting to them music, also of his own composition. Notwithstanding this patriotic production, and the courage which the author is said to have displayed during the war, he was twice imprisoned, at one time on suspicion of royalism; at another, of terrorism.

Independently of the great number of musicians with which the Conservatory has supplied the armies, it has furnished between two and three hundred to the theatres, as well in Paris as in the departments.[1] The band of the Consular guard was formed from the pupils of the Conservatory, and sixty of them at present compose the orchestra, known in Paris by the name of *Concert Français*, and the execution of which has been much applauded by many celebrated composers.

Its members meet to discuss the theories which may improve and extend the different branches of the musical art. They have already laid the principal foundations of a body of elementary works for teaching them in perfection. *Les Principes élementaires de Musique*, and a *Traité d'Harmonie*, which is said to have gained the universal approbation of the composers of the three schools, assembled to discuss its merits, are already published. A method of singing, established on the best principles of the Italian school, applied to French declamation, is now in the press; and these publications are to be successively followed by other didactic works relative to the history of the art.

A principal cause of the present scarcity of fine voices in France, is the war which she has had to maintain for ten years, by armies continually recruited by young men put in requisition at the period when the voice is forming, and needs to be cultivated in order to acquire the qualities which constitute a good singer.

Formerly, French commerce derived but very little advantage from articles relating to music; but the means employed by the Conservatory may probably turn the scale in favour of this country, as well as render it, in that respect, independent of foreign nations.

Before the revolution, England furnished France with *piano-fortes*, the common price of which was from three to five hundred francs. Germany mostly supplied her with wind and string instruments. German French-horns, though coarsely-made instruments, cost seventy-two francs, and the good violins of the Tyrol were paid for as high as one hundred and twenty. The consumption of these instruments was considerable. Nor will this appear surprising, as previously to the foundation of the Conservatory, the instrumental musicians, employed in the French regiments and places of public amusement, were mostly Germans.

The French *piano-fortes* are now in request in most parts of Europe, and their price has, in consequence, increased from one thousand to two thousand four hundred francs. The price of French-horns, made in Paris, which, from being better finished, are preferable to those of Germany, has, in like manner, risen from three to five hundred francs. Parisian violins have increased in proportion.

With respect to printed music, the French import none; but, on the contrary, export a great deal; and the advantages resulting from these two branches of commerce, together with the stamp-duty attached to the latter, are said to be sufficient to defray the expenses of the musical establishments now existing, or those proposed to be created.

Before I close this letter, I must not omit to mention a very useful institution, for the promotion of

the mechanical arts, established in the *Rue de l'École de Médecine*, and called the

GRATUITOUS SCHOOL FOR DRAWING.

It was founded in the year 1766, for the instruction of fifteen hundred children intended for mechanical professions, and was the first beneficent establishment opened in favour of the common people. Literature, sciences, and liberal arts had every where public schools; mechanical arts alone were neglected. The lower orders, by whom they were exercised, had no other means of learning them, and of developing the faculties of their mind, than the blind routine of apprenticeship.

The success of this school had progressively caused similar ones to be instituted in a great number of towns of France, but most of them are buried under the ruins of the revolution; that of Paris has escaped the general overthrow; and, though it has lost a considerable portion of its revenue, it still admits about six hundred pupils. They are taught every thing relative to the mechanical arts, such as drawing in all its various branches, military, civil, and naval architecture, hydraulics, arithmetic, land-surveying, mensuration, perspective, stone-cutting, and in short such parts of mathematics and practical geometry as relate to those different objects.

The Gratuitous School for Drawing must not be assimilated to establishments intended for improving the taste of those who follow the career of the liberal arts. It presents immediately to the children of the lower orders of the people the instruction that suits them best. Here, every thing is useful. Not only are the pupils instructed *gratis*, but the school furnishes to the indigent, recommended by one of the founders, the paper, pencils, and instruments necessary for their studies in the classes, and also models for exercising their talents at home.

I shall speak elsewhere of the *Special School of Medicine* of Paris; there are two others, one at Montpellier, and one at Strasburg. At Alfort, near Paris, is established, on a grand scale, a

VETERINARY SCHOOL.

It would lead me too far to particularize every department of this extensive establishment; but one of these is too useful to be passed over in silence. Here are spacious hospitals where animals are classed, not only according to their species, but also according to the species of disorder by which they are affected. Every person may bring hither sick animals, on paying for their food and medicaments only, the operations and dressings being performed and applied *gratis*.

There are also Veterinary Schools at Lyons, Turin, and Rodez.

In addition to all these schools are to be established, in different parts of the Republic, the following new *Special Schools*.

Ten of Jurisprudence.
Three of Medicine.
Four of Natural History, Physics, and Chymistry.
One of Transcendent Mathematics.
Two of Technology.
One of Public Economy, enlightened by Geography and History.
One of the Arts dependent on design, and, lastly,
A new Military School.

From the foregoing enumeration, it is evident that the government can never be at a loss for persons duly qualified to perform the duties of every branch of the Public Service. True it is that the nation is at a considerable expense in giving to them the instruction which fits them for the employment; but, in return, what advantages does not the nation derive from the exertion of their talent?

Footnote 1: In France are reckoned seventy-fire lyric theatres, exclusively of those in the newly-united departments.

LETTER LXII.

Paris, February 5, 1802.

In one of your recent letters, you interrogated me respecting the changes which the revolution had produced in the ceremonies immediately connected with the increase and decrease of population. While the subject is fresh in my mind, I shall present the contrast which I have observed, in the years 1789-90 and 1801-2, in the ceremony of

FUNERALS.

Under the old *régime*, there was no medium in them; they were either very indecorous or very expensive. I have been positively assured that eighteen francs were paid for what was called a parish-funeral, and not unfrequently a quarrel arose between the agent of the rector and the relations of the deceased. However, as it was necessary to bury every one, the *Commissaire de police* declared the fact, if the relations were unable to pay. Those for whom eighteen francs

were paid, had a coffin in which they were buried; the others were laid in a common coffin or shell, from which they were taken to be put into the ground. In a parish-funeral, whether paid or not, several dead bodies were assembled, that is, they were carried one after the other, but at the same time to the same ground. They were conducted by a single priest, reciting by the way the accustomed prayers.

Other funerals were varied without end, according to the fortune or pleasure of the relations. For persons of the richest class, a flaming chapel was constructed at the entrance of the house. This chapel was hung with black cloth, and in it was placed the corpse, surrounded by lighted torches. The apartments were also hung with black for the reception of the persons who were to attend the funeral procession. The priests came to conduct the corpse from the house of the deceased. They were more or less numerous, had or had not wax tapers, according to the will of those who defrayed the expenses. If the presentation of the corpse at the parish-church took place in the morning, a mass was sung; if in the evening, obsequies only were chaunted, and the former service was deferred till the next morning. The relations and friends, in mourning, followed the corpse. These persons walked in the procession, according to their degree of relationship to the deceased, and besides their complete mourning-suit, wore a black cloak, more or less long, according to the quality of the persons (or the price paid for it), and a flapped hat, from which was suspended a very long crape band. Their hair, unpowdered, fell loose on their back. In lieu of a cloak, lawyers, whether presidents, counsellors, attornies, or tipstaffs, wore their black gown. On the cuff of their coat, men wore weepers, consisting of a band of cambric. Every one wore black gloves, and likewise a long pendent white cravat. People of the highest rank wore *cottés crépés*, that is, a sort of crape petticoat, which fell from the waist to the feet. This was meant to represent the ancient coat of arms.

Servants in mourning, or pages for princes, supported the train of the cloak or gown of persons above the common rank. Other servants, also in mourning, surrounded the relations and friends of the deceased, holding torches with his armorial bearings, if he was a *noble*. Persons extremely rich or very elevated in rank, hired a certain number of poor (from fifty to three hundred), over whom were thrown several ells of coarse iron gray cloth, to which no particular form was given. They walked before the corpse, holding large lighted torches. The procession was closed by the carriages of persons belonging to it; and their owners did not get into them till their return from the funeral. Sometimes on coming out of the parish-church, where the presentation of the corpse was indispensable, the rector performing the office of magistrate in regard to the delivery of the certificate of presentation, the corpse was carried into a particular church to be buried. This was become uncommon before the revolution, as to do this it was necessary to possess a vault, or pay extremely dear, it being prohibited by law, except in such cases, to bury the dead in churches.

When the deceased belonged to a society or corporation, they sent a deputation to attend him to the grave, or followed in a body, if he was their chief. At the funeral of a prince of the blood, all his household, civil and military, marched in the procession. The *corbillard*, or sort of hearse, in which his highness was carried to *St. Denis*, was almost as large as the moveable theatre which Mr. Flockton transports from fair to fair in England. Calculated in appearance for carrying the body of a giant, it was decorated with escutcheons, and drawn by eight horses, also caparisoned to correspond with the hearse. These, however, were but the trappings of woe.

While this funereal car moved slowly forward amidst a concourse of mourners, its three-fold hangings concealed from the eye of the observer the journeymen coach and harness makers, drinking, and playing at dice on the lid of his highness's coffin, by way of dispelling the *ennui* of the journey. These careless fellows were placed there to be at hand to repair any accident that might happen on the road; so, while, on the outside of the hearse, all wore the appearance of sadness; within, all was mirth; no bad image of the reverse of grandeur and the emptiness of human ostentation.

Such were the ceremonies observed in funerals before the revolution. Passing over the interval, from its commencement in 1789 to the end of the year 1801, I shall describe those practised at the present day. It now depends on the relations to have the corpse presented at the parish-church; but there are many persons who dispense with this ceremony. The priests receive the corpse at the door of the church. It is carried thither in a *corbillard*. Each municipality has its own, and there are twelve municipalities in Paris. Some of them have adopted the Egyptian style; some, the Greek; and others, the Roman, for the fashion of their *corbillard*, according to the taste of the municipality who ordered its construction. It is drawn by two horses abreast, caparisoned somewhat like those of our hearses. The coachman and the four bearers are clothed in iron gray or black. An officer of the police, also clothed in black, and holding a cane with an ivory head, walks before the *corbillard* or hearse. Each corpse has its particular coffin furnished by the municipality. Arrangements have been so made that the rich are made to pay for the poor. The coffin is covered with a black cloth, without a cross, for fear of scaring philosophers and protestants. The relations follow on foot, or in carriages, even in town. Few of them are in mourning, and still fewer wear a cloak.

At the *Sainte Chapelle*, near the *Palais de Justice*, is a private establishment where, mourning is let out for hire. Here are to be had *corbillards* on a more elegant plan. These are carriages hung on springs, and bearing much resemblance to our most fashionable sociables with a standing awning; so much so, that the first of them I saw I mistook for a *mourning* sociable. Some are ornamented with black feathers. Caparisons, hangings, every thing is in black, as well as the coachman. This speculator also lets out mourning coaches, black without and within, like those in

use in London. At a few funerals, these are hired for the mourners, and at a recent one, fifteen of these carriages were counted in the procession. However, this luxury of burials is not entirely come again into fashion. In the inside of the church, every thing passes as formerly.

I shall now proceed from the *grave* to the *gay*, and conclude this letter with a concise observation on

MARRIAGES.

The *civil* act of marriage is entered into at the office of the municipality. But this civil act must not be coufounded with the contract, drawn up by the notary, and containing the stipulations, clauses, and conditions. The former signifies merely that such a man and such a woman take each other for man and wife. There are few, if any, persons married, who, from the municipality, do not repair to the parish-church, or go thither the next morning; the civil act being considered by individuals only as the ceremony of the betrothing, and till the priest has given the nuptial benediction, the relations take care that the intended bride and bridegroom shall have no opportunity of anticipating the duties of marriage.

Political opinions, therefore, prevent but few persons from going to church. Mass is said in a low voice, during which the priest, or the rector, receives the promise of the wedded pair. With little exception, the ceremony is the same for all. Those who pay well are married at the high altar; the rector addresses to them a speech in which he exhorts them to live happily together; the beadles perform their duty; and the organist strikes up a voluntary.

In regard to marriages, the present and former times presenting no other contrast, I have nothing more to add on the subject.

LETTER LXIII.

Paris, February 6, 1803.

The mode of life of the persons with whom I chiefly associate here, precludes me from reading as much as I could wish, either for instruction or amusement. This, you will say, I ought not to regret; for a traveller visits foreign countries to study mankind, not books. Unquestionably, the men who, like splendid folios in a library, make at present the most conspicuous figure in this metropolis, are worth studying; and, could we lay them open to our inspection, as we do books of a common description, it would be extremely entertaining to turn them over every morning, till we had them, in a manner, by heart. But I rather apprehend that they partake, more or less, of the qualities of a book just come out of the hands of the binder, which it is difficult to open. Let us therefore content ourselves with viewing them as we would volumes of a superbly-bound edition, not to be examined by the general observer, and direct our eyes to such objects as are fully exposed to investigation.

In Paris, there are several public libraries, the greater part of them open every day; but that which eclipses all the others, is the

BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE.

Charles V, justly surnamed the *Wise*, from the encouragement he gave to learning, may be considered as the first founder of this library. According to the President Henault, that king had collected nine hundred volumes; whereas king John, his father, possessed not twenty. This collection was placed in a tower of the *Louvre*, called *La Tour de la Librairie*, which was lighted up every night, in order that the learned might pursue their studies there at all hours.

After the death of Charles VI, in 1423, the inventory amounted to no more than one hundred and twenty volumes, though several works had been added, because on the other hand, a great number had been lost.

When Paris fell into the power of the English, in 1429, the Duke of Bedford, then regent of France, purchased these books, for which he paid 1200 livres, and the library was entirely dispersed. Charles VII, being continually engaged in war, could not concern himself in its re-estahlishment. Lewis XI collected the remains scattered in different royal residences, and availed himself of the resources afforded by the invention of printing, which was discovered at Strasburg or Mentz in 1440.

Printers, however, were not established in Paris till 1470, and in that same year, they dedicated to Lewis XI one of the first books which they printed. Books were, at this time, very scarce and dear, and continued so for several years, both before and after the discovery of that invention. Twenty thousand persons then subsisted in France by the sale of the books which they transcribed. This was the reason why printing was not at first more encouraged.

Charles VIII added to this literary establishment such works as he was able to obtain in his conquest of Naples. Lewis XII increased it by the library of Potrarch. Francis I enriched it with Greek manuscripts; but what most contributed to augment the collection was the ordinance of Henry II, issued in 1556, which enjoined booksellers to furnish the royal libraries with a copy on vellum of all the works printed by privilege; and, under the subsequent reigns, it gradually

acquired that richness and abundance which, before the revolution, had caused it to be considered as one of the first libraries in Europe.

In 1789, the *Bibliothèque du Roi*, as it was till then called, was reckoned to contain one hundred and eighty thousand printed volumes, eighty thousand manuscripts, a prodigious numbcr of medals, antiques, and engraved stones, six thousand port-folios of prints, and two thousand engraved plates. But, under its present denomination of *Bibliothèque Nationale*, it has been considerably augmented. Agreeably to your desire, I shall point out whatever is most remarkable in these augmentations.

The buildings, which, since the year 1721, contain this vast collection, formally made part of the *Hôtel Mazarin*. The entrance is by the *Rue de la Loi*. It is at present divided into four departments, and is managed by a conservatory, composed of eight members, namely:

1. Two conservators for the printed books, M. M. CAPPERONNIER and VAN-PRAET.
2. Three for the manuscripts, M. M. LANGLÈS, LAPORTE DUTHEIL, and DACIER.
3. Two for the antiques, medals, and engraved stones, M. M. MILLIN and GOSSELIN.
4. One for the prints and engraved plates, M. JOLY.

The first department, containing the printed books, occupies, on the first floor of the three sides of the court, an extent of about nine hundred feet by twenty-four in breadth. The rooms, which receive light on one side only, are equal in height. In the second room to the right is the *Parnasse Français*, a little mountain, in bronze, covered with figures a foot high, and with medals, representing French poets. Lewis XIV here occupies a distinguished place under the figure of Apollo. It was a present made by TITON DU TILLET.

In another of these rooms, built on purpose, are a pair of globes of an extraordinary size, constructed, in 1683, by Father CORONELLI, a Jesuit, for Cardinal D'ESTRÉES, who presented them to Lewis XIV. The feet of these globes rest in a lower apartment; while their hemispheres project by two apertures made in the floor of fhe first story, and are thus placed within reach of the observer. Their diameter is eleven feet, eleven inches. The celebrated BUTTERFIELD made for them two brass circles, (the one for the meridian, the other for the horizon), each eighteen feet in diameter.

Since the year 1789, the department of printed books has received an augmentation of one hundred and forty thousand volumes, either arising from private acquisitions, or collected in France, Italy, Holland, Germany, or Belgium. Among these is a valuable series of works, some more scarce than others, executed in the XVth century, which has rendered this department one of the most complete in Europe. I shall abstain from entering into a detail of the articles assembled in it, several of which deserve particular notice. A great many ancient specimens of the typographical art are on vellum, and give to this collection a value which it would be no easy matter to appreciate. All the classes of it present a great number, the enumeration of which would far exceed my limits.

The department of manuscripts, which is placed in a gallery one hundred and forty feet in length, by twenty-two in breadth, has been increased in proportion to that of the printed books. The library of Versailles, that of several emigrants, the chapters of various cathedrals, the Sorbonne, the *Collège de Navarre* in Paris, and the different suppressed religious corporations, have enriched it with upwards of twenty thousand volumes; eight thousand of these belonged to the library of *St. Germain-des-Prês*, which was burnt in 1793-4, and was immensely rich in manuscripts and old printed hooks.

About fifteen hundred volumes have been taken from Italy, Holland, and Germany. Among those arrived from Italy, we must distinguish the original manuscript of RUFFIN, a priest of Aquilea, who lived in the IVth century, containing, on papyrus or Egyptian paper, the Latin tranlation of the Jewish antiquities of FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS; the grammar of PROBUS or PALÆMON, a manuscript of the Vth century, on vellum, in uncial characters; a very beautiful volume in Syriac, containing the Four Evangelists, a manuscript on vellum of the VIth century; the two celebrated manuscripts of Virgil of the VIIth century, the one from the Vatican, the other from Florence, both on vellum. A roll, in good preservation, composed of several skins, sewed together, containing the Pentateuch in Hebrew, a manuscript of the IXth century. A Terence, with figures of the time and a representation of the masks introduced on the stage by the ancients, together with the various poetical works of PRUDENTIUS; manuscripts on vellum of the IXth century. The Terence is that of the Vatican, in praise of which Madame DACIER speaks in her translation.

The manuscripts of the ancient Dukes of Burgundy, which had so long constituted the ornament of the library of Brussels, now increase the fame of those which the *Bibliothèque Nationale* already possessed of this description. Their number is about five hundred volumes; the greater part of them are remarkable for the beauty and richness of the miniatures by which they are embellished, and one scarcely inferior in magnificence to the primer of Anne de Bretagne, wife of Lewis XII, to that of Cardinal Richelieu, to the primer and battles of Lewis XIV, and to a heap of other manuscripts which rendered this *ci-devant Bibliothèque du Roi* so celebrated in foreign countries.

Five large apartments on the second floor are occupied by titles and genealogies, which are still preserved here, in about five thousand portfolios or boxes, for the purpose of verifying the claims

to property, and assisting the historian in his researches.

The department of medals, antiques and engraved stones has, since 1789, also experienced an abundant augmentation. The medals are in a cabinet at the end of the Library; the antiques are in another, above it, on the second floor.

In 1790, the engraved stones which had been previously locked up in the drawers of the council-chamber at Versailles, were conveyed hither, to the number of eight hundred. It would be too tedious to dwell on the beauty, merit, and scarceness of these stones, as well as on their finished workmanship and degree of antiquity. Among them, the beautiful ring, called the *seal of Michael Angelo*, claims admiration.

In 1791, some antiquities which constituted part of the treasure of *St. Denis*, were brought hither from that abbey. Among these valuable articles, we must particularly distinguish the chalice of the Abbot SUGER; a vase of sardonyx, with two handles formed of raised snakes, on which are represented, with admirable art, ceremonies relating to the worship of Bacchus; a large gold cup, ornamented with enamel of various colours; a very large urn of porphyry, which formerly served as a sepulchral monument; several baptismal fonts; the arm-chair of King Dagobert, a piece of very extraordinary workmanship for the time in which it was executed. Among the valuable articles removed hither from *La Sainte Chapelle* in Paris, in the same year, are to be particularly remarked a sardonyx, representing the apotheosis of Augustus, and commonly called *l'agathe de la Sainte Chapelle*. This stone is the largest and rarest known of that species. It was brought to France in the year 1383 by king Charles V.

At the end of 1792 the cabinet of medals of *St. Geneviève*, forming in the whole seventeen thousand articles, and its fine collection of antique monuments, increased the new riches accumulated in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. In 1794, a beautiful series of antiquities, consisting of a great number of imperial medals, of nations, cities, and kings, of all sizes, in gold, silver, and bronze, together with little painted figures, busts, instruments of sacrifices, &c. arrived here from Holland.

In 1796, the department of medals was also enriched by several articles from the *Garde-Meuble* or Jewel-Office. Among them were some suits of armour belonging to several of the kings of France, particularly that of Francis I, that of Henry IV, and that of Lewis XIV. These were accompanied by a quantity of arms, helmets, shields, breast-plates, and weapons used in the ancient tournaments, as well as quivers, bows, arrows, swords, &c.

Towards the end of the year 1798 and in 1799, several valuable articles arrived here from Italy, among which are two crowns of gold, enriched with precious stones, worn by the ancient kings of Lombardy, at the time of their coronation; the engraved stones and medals of the Pope's cabinet; a head of Jupiter Ægiochus, on a ground of sardonyx, a master-piece of art, which is above all eulogium; the celebrated Isiac table, in copper incrustated with silver, a valuable table of Egyptian mythology, which is presumed to have been executed, either at Alexandria or at Rome, in the first or second century of the christian era; some oriental weapons; a *fetfa* or diploma of the Grand Signior contained in a silk purse, &c.

The department of prints and engraved plates, formed of the celebrated cabinets of MAHOLLES, BERINGHEN, GAIGNIÈRES, UXELLES, BEGON, GAYLUS, FONTETTE, MARIETTE, &c. contained, before the revolution the most ample, rich, and valuable collection in Europe. It is placed in the *entresol*, and is divided into twelve classes.

The first class comprehends sculptors, architectural engineers, and engravers, from the origin of the French nation to the present day, arranged in schools.

The second, prints, emblems, and devices of piety.

The third, every thing relative to fables and Greek and Roman antiquities.

The fourth, medals, coins, and heraldry.

The fifth, public festivals, cavalcades, and tournaments.

The sixth, arts and mathematics.

The seventh, prints relating to novels and books of entertainment.

The eighth, natural history in all its branches.

The ninth, geography.

The tenth, plans and elevations of ancient and modern buildings.

The eleventh, portraits of all professions, to the number of upwards of fifty thousand.

The twelfth, a collection of the fashions and dresses of almost every country in the world.

Since 1789, the augmentations made to it are considerable. Among these must be distinguished four hundred and thirty-five volumes brought from the library of Versailles, and fifty-two others,

infinitely valuable, respecting China, found at the residence of M. BERTIN, Minister, about eight thousand prints brought from Holland, the greater part of them, very fine impressions; and about twelve thousand collected by different emigrants, almost all modern, indeed, but one half of which are select, and remarkable for their fine preservation.

Among five hundred volumes, obtained from the suppressed religious corporations, are to be remarked one hundred and nine port-folios from the abbey of *St. Victor*, in Paris, containing a beautiful series of mythological, historical, and typographical subjects. This forms a valuable addition to the collection of the same kind of which the department of prints was already in possession.

In one hundred and forty-four volumes brought from Cologne, there are several scarce and singular engravings.

As for sixty articles sent from Italy, they are, with the exception of the *Museum Pio-Clementinum*, in such a state of degradation that they are scarcely fit for any thing but to mark the place which each composition has to occupy.

Since 1789, the department of prints has made several acquisitions deserving of notice, such as the works of LEBAS, MARCENAY, and RODE, all extremely difficult to find complete, and three hundred and seventeen plates sent from Germany by FHAUENHOTZ; most of them executed by foreign engravers, and some are very capital.

A few well-known distinguished artists and amateurs, among whom I must not omit to name DENON, ST. AUBIN, and LAMOTTE, a merchant at Havre, have generously enriched the department of prints with a great number of very valuable ones.

The library is open every day, Sundays, and days of national fêtes excepted, from ten o'clock till two, to persons who wish to read, study, or take notes; and for whom every accommodation is provided; but to such as are attracted by curiosity alone, on the Wednesdays and Fridays of each week, at the same hours. On those days, you may perambulate in the different rooms of this magnificent establishment; on the other days, walking is here prohibited, in order that students may not be interrupted. However, JOHN BULL seems to pay little regard to this prohibition. Englishmen are frequently seen stalking about the rooms at the forbidden time, as if they meant to shew that they disdained the rules of propriety and decorum.[1]

Under the government which succeeded the monarchy, was established, within the precincts of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, a

SCHOOL FOR ORIENTAL LIVING LANGUAGES.

The design of this school, *which is of acknowledged utility in politics and commerce*, is to qualify persons to supply the place of the French droguemans in the East, who, at the beginning of the troubles which distracted France, abandoned the interests of their country, and deserted their stations.

LANGLÈS, president of this school, here teaches the Persian and Malay languages.

SILVESTRE DE SACY, literal and vulgar Arabic.

JAUBERT, Turkish and the Tartarian of the Crimea.

DANSE DE VILLOISON, modern Greek.

In general, very few pupils are instructed here, and the greater part of those who begin the courses of lectures, do not follow them three months. This fact I gathered from the professors themselves. When FRANÇOIS DE NEUFCHÂTEAU was Minister, he had attached to this school an Armenian, named CIREIED, who gave lessons in his native language, which are now discontinued.

A course of archæology is also delivered here by the learned MILLIN. The object of this course is to explain antique monuments, and compare them with passages of the classics. The professor indicates respecting each monument the opinions of the different learned men who have spoken of it: he also discusses those opinions, and endeavours to establish that which deserves to be adopted. Every year he treats on different subjects. The courses which he has already delivered, related to the study of medals, and that of engraved stones; the explanation of the ancient monuments still existing in Spain, France, and England; the history of ancient and modern Egypt; sacred and heroic mythology, under which head he introduced an explanation of almost every monument of literature and art deserving to be known.

Footnote 1: It is the intention of the government to remove the *Bibliothèque Nationale* to the *Louvre*, or *Palais National des Sciences & des Arts*, as soon as apartments can be prepared for its reception. Return to text

LETTER LXIV.

Paris, February 8, 1803.

Having complied with your desire in regard to the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, I shall confine myself to a hasty sketch of the other principal public libraries, beginning with the

BIBLIOTHÈQUE MAZARINE.

By his will, dated the 6th of March 1662, Cardinal MAZARIN bequeathed this library for the convenience of the literati. It was formed by GABRIEL NAUDÉ of every thing that could be found most rare and curious, as well in France as in foreign countries. It occupies one of the pavilions and other apartments of the *ci-devant Collège Mazarin ou des Quatre Nations*, at present called *Palais des Beaux Arts*.

No valuable additions have been made to this library since the revolution; but it is kept in excellent order. The Conservators, LE BLOND, COQUILLE, and PALISSOT, whose complaisance is never tired, are well known in the Republic of Letters. It is open to the public every day, from ten o'clock to two, Sundays, Thursdays, and the days of national fêtes excepted.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE DU PANTHÉON.

Next to the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, this library is said to contain the most printed books and manuscripts, which are valuable on account of their antiquity, scarceness, and preservation. It formerly bore the title of *Bibliothèque de St. Geneviève*, and belonged to the Canons of that order, who had enriched it in a particular manner. The acquisitions it has made since the revolution are not sufficiently important to deserve to be mentioned. With the exception of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, not one of the public libraries in Paris has enjoyed the advantage of making improvements and additions. The library of the *Pantheon* is open to the public on the same days as the *Bibliothèque Mazarine*.

The present Conservators are DAUNOU, VENTENAT, and VIALLON. The first two are members of the National Institute.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE DE L'ARSENAL.

This library, one of the richest in Paris, formerly belonged to the Count d'Artois. It is destined for the *Conservative Senate*, in whose palace a place is preparing for its reception. However, it is thought that this removal cannot take place in less than a year and a half or two years. It has acquired little since the revolution, and is frequented less than the other libraries, because it is rather remote from the fashionable quarters of the town. There are few inquisitive persons in the vicinity of the Arsenal; and indeed, this library is open only on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays of every week from ten o'clock till two. AMEILHON, of the Institute, is Administrator; and SAUGRAIN, Conservator.

Before I quit this library, you will, doubtless expect me to say something of the place from which it derives its appellation; namely,

THE ARSENAL.

It is a pile of building, forming several courts between the *Quai des Célestins* and the *Place de la Liberté*, formerly the *Place de la Bastille*. Charles V had here erected some storehouses for artillery, which were lent very unwillingly by the Provost of Paris to Francis I, who wanted them for the purpose of casting cannon. As was foreseen, the king kept possession of them, and converted them into a royal residence. On the 28th of January 1562, lightning fell on one of the towers, then used as a magazine, and set fire to fifteen or twenty thousand barrels of powder. Several lives were lost, and another effect of this explosion was that it killed all the fishes in the river. Charles IX, Henry III, and Henry IV rebuilt the Arsenal, and augmented it considerably. Before the revolution, the founderies served for casting bronze figures for the embellishment of the royal gardens. The Arsenal then contained only a few rusty muskets and some mortars unfit for service, notwithstanding the energetic inscription which decorated the gate on the *Quai des Célestins*:

> "Ætnæ hæc Henrico Vulcania tela ministrat,
> Tela gigantæos debellatura furores."

NICOLAS BOURBON was the author of these harmonious lines, which so much excited the jealousy of the famous poet, SANTEUIL, that he exclaimed in his enthusiasm, "I would have wished to have made them, and been hanged."

During the course of the revolution, the buildings of the Arsenal have been appropriated to various purposes: at present even they seem to have no fixed destination. Here is a garden, advantageously situated, which affords to the inhabitants of this quarter an agreeable promenade.

The before-mentioned libraries are the most considerable in Paris; but the *National Institute*, the *Conservative Senate*, the *Legislative Body*, and the *Tribunate*, have each their respective library, as well as the *Polytechnic School*, the *Council of the School of Mines*, the *Tribunal of Cassation*, the *Conservatory of Music*, the *Museum of Natural History*, &c.

Independently of these libraries, here are also three literary *dépôts* or repositories, which were

destined to supply the public libraries already formed or to be formed, particularly those appropriated to public instruction. When the Constituent Assembly decreed the possessions of the clergy to be national property, the *Committee of Alienation* fixed on the monasteries of the *Capucins*, *Grands Jésuites*, and *Cordeliers*, in Paris, as *dépôts*, for the books and manuscripts, which they were desirous to save from revolutionary destruction.

LETTER LXV.

Paris, February 9, 1802.

Vive la danse! Vive la danse! seems now to prevail here universally over *"Vive l'amour! Vive la bagatelle!*" which was the rage in the time of LA FLEUR. I have already informed you that, in moments the most eventful, the inhabitants of this capital spent the greater part of their time in

DANCING.

However extraordinary the fact may appear, it is no less true. When the Prussians were at Châlons, the Austrians at Valenciennes, and Robespierre in the Convention, they danced. When the young conscripts were in momentary expectation of quitting their parents, their friends, and their mistresses to join the armies, they danced. Can we then wonder that, at the present hour, when the din of arms is no longer heard, and the toils of war are on the point of being succeeded by the mercantile speculations of peace, dancing should still be the favourite pursuit of the Parisians?

This is so much the case, that the walls of the metropolis are constantly covered by advertisements in various colours, blue, red, green, and yellow, announcing balls of different descriptions. The silence of streets the least frequented is interrupted by the shrill scraping of the itinerant fiddler; while by-corners, which might vie with Erebus itself in darkness, are lighted by transparencies, exhibiting, in large characters, the words "*Bal de Société*."—"Happy people!" says Sterne, "who can lay down all your cares together, and dance and sing and sport away the weights of grievance, which bow down the spirit of other nations to the earth!"

In summer, people dance here in rural gardens, or delightful bowers, or under marquees, or in temporary buildings, representing picturesque cottages, constructed within the limits of the capital: these establishments, which are rather of recent date, are open only in that gay season.

In winter, the upper classes assemble in magnificent apartments, where subscription-balls are given; and taste and luxury conspire to produce elegant entertainments.

However, it is not to the upper circles alone that this amusement is confined; it is here pursued, and with truer ardour too, by citizens of every class and description. An Englishman might probably be at a loss to conceive this truth; I shall therefore enumerate the different gradations of the scale from the report of an impartial eye-witness, partly corroborated by my own observation.

Tradesmen dance with their neighbours, at the residence of those who have the best apartments: and the expense of catgut, rosin, &c. is paid by the profits of the card-table.

Young clerks in office and others, go to public balls, where the *cavalier* pays thirty *sous* for admission; thither they escort milliners and mantua-makers of the elegant class, and, in general, the first-rate order of those engaging belles, known here by the generic name of *grisettes*.

Jewellers' apprentices, ladies' hair-dressers, journeymen tailors and upholsterers dance, at twenty *sous* a head, with sempstresses and ladies' maids.

Journeymen shoemakers, cabinet-makers, and workmen of other trades, not very laborious, assemble in *guingettes*, where they dance French country-dances at three *sous* a ticket, with *grisettes* of an inferior order.

Locksmiths, carpenters, and joiners dance at two *sous* a ticket, with women who constantly frequent the *guinguettes*, a species of dancing-girls, whom the tavern-keepers hire for the day, as they do the fiddlers.

Water-carriers, porters, and, in general, the Swiss and Auvergnats have their private balls, where they execute the dances peculiar to their country, with fruit-girls, stocking-menders, &c.

The porters of the corn-market form assemblies in their own neighbourhood; but the youngest only go thither, with a few *bons vivans*, whose profession it would be no easy matter to determine. Bucksome damsels, proof against every thing, keep them in countenance, either in drinking brandy or in fighting, and not unfrequently at the same *bal de société*, all this goes on at the same time, and, as it were, in unison.

Those among the porters of the corn-market and charcoal carriers, who have a little *manners*, assemble on holidays, in public-houses of a more decent description, with good, plain-spoken market-women, and nosegay-girls. They drink unmixed liquor, and the conversation is somewhat more than *free*; but, in public, they get tipsy, and nothing farther!

Masons, paviours in wooden shoes, tipped with iron, and other hard-working men, in short, repair to *guingettes*, and make the very earth tremble with their heavy, but picturesque capers, forming groups worthy of the pencil of Teniers.

Lastly, one more link completes the chain of this nomenclature of caperers. Beggars, sturdy, or decrepit, dance, as well as their credulous betters: they not only dance, but drink to excess; and their orgies are more noisy, more prolonged, and even more expensive. The mendicant, who was apparently lame in the day, at night lays aside his crutch, and resumes his natural activity; the idle vagabond, who concealed one arm, now produces both; while the wretch whose wound excited both horror and pity, covers for a tune the large blister by which he makes a very comfortable living.

LETTER LXVI.

Paris, February 11, 1802.

In order to confer handsome pensions on the men of science who had benefited mankind by their labours, and who, under the old *régime*, were poorly rewarded, in 1795, LAKANAL solicited and obtained the establishment of the

BUREAU DES LONGITUDES.

As members of this Board of Longitude, the first institution of the kind in France, LAGRANGE, LAPLACE, LALANDE, CASSINI,[1] MÉCHAIN, BORDA,[1] BOUGAINVILLE, FLEURIEU, MESSIER, BUACHE, and CARROCHÉ, the optician, had each 8,000 francs (*circa* £. 330 sterling) a year, and the assistant astronomers, 4,000. Indeed, the professors of that science were in want of pecuniary assistance for the purpose of forming pupils.

The *Bureau des Longitudes* is on a more extensive scale, and possesses greater authority than the Board of Longitude in England. It is charged with the administration of all the Observatories belonging to the Republic, as well as with the correspondence with the astronomers of foreign countries. The government refers to it the examination of memoirs relative to navigation. Such of its members as more specially cultivate practical astronomy in the National Observatories of the capital, are charged to make all Observations which may contribute to the progress of that science, and procure new means for rectifying the tables of the Sun, as well as those which make known the position of the stars, and particularly the tables of the Moon, the improvement of which so essentially concerns the safety of navigation.

The great importance of the last-mentioned tables induced this Board, about three years ago, to propose a premium of 6,000 francs (*circa* £. 250 sterling) for tables of the Moon. LALANDE recommended to BONAPARTE to double it. The First Consul took his advice: and the French now have tables that greatly surpass those which are used in England.[2] A copy of these have, I understand, been sent to Mr. MASKELYNE, our Astronomer-Royal at Greenwich.

The Board of Longitude of France, like that of England, calculates for every year Tables or *Ephemerides*, known in Europe under the title of *Connaissance des Tems*. The French having at length procured able calculators, are now able to dispense with the English *Ephemeris*. Their observations follow each other in such a manner as to render it unnecessary for them to recur to those of Greenwich, of which they have hitherto made continual use. Since the year 1795, the *Connaissance des Tems* has been compiled by JÉROME LALANDE. At the end of the tables and their explanation, it contains a collection of observations, memoirs, and important calculations. The French astronomers are not a little surprised that we publish no similar work in London; while Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Gotha, and Milan set us the example. It is in the last volumes of the *Connaissance des Tems* that JÉROME LALANDE gives the history of astronomy, where you will find every thing that has been done in this science.

The *Bureau des Longitudes* also publishes for every year, in advance, the *Annuaire de la République*, which serves as a rule for all the almanacks compiled in France. The meetings of the Board are held at the

NATIONAL OBSERVATORY.

This edifice, which is situated at the farther end of the *Faubourg St. Jacques*, was constructed in 1664, by order of COLBERT, and under the direction of PERRAULT, the medical architect, who planned the celebrated façade of the *Louvre*.

The form of the building is rectangular. Neither wood nor iron have been employed in its construction. It is arched throughout, and its four sides stand exactly in the direction of the four cardinal points of the horizon. Although its elevation is eighty-five feet, it comprises but two stories, terminated by a flat roof, whence you command a fine view of Paris. You ascend thither by a winding staircase which has a hollow newel. This staircase, consisting of three hundred and sixty steps, extends downward to a similar depth of eighty-five feet, and forms a sort of well, at the bottom of which you can perceive the light. From this well have been observed the different degrees of acceleration in the descent of bodies.

The subterraneous vaults have served for meteorological experiments. In one of them water is

seen to petrify on filtering through the rock above. They lead to near fifty streets or passages, formed by quarries excavated in procuring the stones with which great part of the city of Paris is constructed.

Previously to the year 1777, churches, palaces, whole streets of houses, and the public highway of several quarters of Paris and its environs, were on the point of being swallowed up in gulfs no less vast in depth than in extent. Since then, considerable works have been undertaken to consolidate these subterraneous caverns, and fill up the void, equally dangerous, occasioned by the working of the plaster-quarries.

An accident of a very alarming nature, which happened in the *Rue d'Enfer* in the year 1774; and another, at Montmenil, in 1778, shewed the necessity of expediting these operations, which were followed up with great activity from 1777 to 1789, when their progress was relaxed from the circumstances of the times. These quarries are far more extensive than is commonly imagined. In the department of the Seine alone, they extend under all the south part of Paris, and the roads, plains, and *communes*, to the distance of several leagues round the circumference of this city. Their roof, with the edifices standing on the soil that covers it, is either supported by walls recently built under the foundation of those edifices, or by pillars constructed at different periods in several places. The government is at the expense of providing for the safety of the streets, highways, and public buildings, but that of propping under-ground all private habitations must be defrayed by the proprietor. These ancient quarries had been much neglected, and the means of visiting them was equally dangerous and inconvenient. At present, every precaution is taken to insure the safety of the persons employed in them, as well as the stability of their roof; and for the better superintendance of all the subterraneous constructions of Paris, galleries of communication have been formed of sufficient width to admit the free passage of materials necessary for keeping them in repair.

Let us now find our way out of these labyrinths, and reascending to the surface of the soil, pursue our examination of the Observatory.

In a large room on the first floor is traced the meridian line, which divides this building into two parts. Thence, being extended to the south and north, it crosses France from Colieure to Dunkirk.

On the pavement of one of the rooms is engraved a universal circular map, by CHAZELLES and SÉDILLAN. Another room is called the *Salle aux secrets*, because on applying the mouth to the groove of a pilaster, and whispering, a person placed at the opposite pilaster hears what is said, while those in the middle of the room, hear nothing. This phenomenon, the cause of which has been so often explained, must be common to all buildings constructed in this manner.

In speaking of the *Champ de Mars*, I mentioned that LALANDE obtained the construction of an Observatory at the *ci-devant École Militaire*. Since 1789, he and his nephew have discovered fifty thousand stars; an immense labour, the greater part of them being telescopic and invisible to the naked eye. Of this number, he has already classed thirty thousand.

The CASSINIS had neglected the Observatory in Paris; but when LALANDE was director of this establishment, he obtained from BONAPARTE good instruments of every description and of the largest dimensions. These have been executed by the first artists, who, with the greatest intelligence, have put in practice all the means of improvement which we owe to the fortunate discoveries of the eighteenth century. Of course, it is now as well provided as that of Greenwich. MÉCHAIN, the present director, and BOUVARD, his associate, are extremely assiduous in their astronomical labours.

CARROCHÉ has made for this Observatory a twenty-two feet telescope, which rivals those of HERSCHEL of the same length; and the use of reflecting circles, imagined by MAYER, and brought into use by BORDA, which LENOIR executes in a superior manner, and which we have not yet chosen to adopt in England, has introduced into the observations of the French an accuracy hitherto unknown. The meridian from Dunkirk to Barcelona, measured between the years 1792 and 1798, by DELAMBRE and MÉCHAIN, is of an astonishing exactness. It has brought to light the irregularity of the degrees, which was not suspected. The rules, composed of platina and copper, which LAVOISIER and BORDA imagined for measuring bases, without having occasion to calculate the effect of dilatation, are a singular invention, and greatly surpass what RAMSDEN made for the bases measured in England.

LAPLACE has discovered in the Moon inequalities with which we were not acquainted. The work he has published, under the title of *Mécanique Céleste*, contains the most astonishing discoveries of physical theory, the great inequality of Jupiter and Saturn, the acceleration of the Moon, the equation of the third Satellite of Jupiter, and the flux and reflux of the sea.

BURCKHARDT, one of the associated members of the *Bureau des Longitudes*, is a first-rate astronomer and a man of superior talent. He is at present employed on the difficult task of calculating the very considerable derangements of the planet discovered by OLBERS at Bremen, on the 28th of March 1801.

VIDAL has made, at Mirepoix, more observations of Mercury than all the astronomers for two thousand years past, and these are the most difficult and uncommon.

DELAMBRE has computed tables of the Sun, of Jupiter, of Saturn, and of Herschel; LALANDE, the nephew, has composed tables of Mars; and his uncle, of Mercury, which never deviate more than a few seconds from the observations.

Even during the reign of terror, astronomy was not neglected. Through the interest of CARNOT, CALON, LAKANAL, and FOURCROY, the *Bureau de Consultation des Arts* gave annually the sum of 300,000 francs (*circa* £12,000 sterling) in gratifications to artists.

Afterwards, in 1796, the National Institute, richly endowed, proposed considerable premiums. LALANDE, the uncle, founded one for astronomy; BONAPARTE, another for physics; and the First Consul has promised 60,000 francs (*circa* £2,800 sterling) to any one who shall make a discovery of importance.

France can now boast of two young geometricians, BIOT and PUISSON, who, for analytical genius, surpass all that exist in Europe. It is rather extraordinary that, with the exception of Mr. CAVENDISH and Dr. WARING, England has produced no great geometricians since the death of MACLAURIN, STERLING, and SIMPSON.

The French tables of Logarithms, printed stereotypically, are cleared of all the errors which afflicted calculators of every country. Those of other nations will owe this obligation to Frenchmen.

HERSCHEL no longer looks for comets; but the French astronomers, MESSIER, MÉCHAIN, BOUVARD, and PONS find some. Last year, JÉROME LALANDE deposited 600 francs in the hands of his notary, as a premium to stimulate the efforts of young observers.

February 11, in continuation.

In the spring of 1803, MÉCHAIN will leave Paris for the purpose of extending his meridian to the Balearic Islands. He will measure the length of the pendulum in several places, in order to ascertain the inequality of the earth which the measure of the degrees had indicated. This circumstance reminds me of my neglect in not having yet satisfied your desire to have a short account of the means employed for fixing the standard of the

NEW FRENCH WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

Among the great ideas realized during the first period of the revolution, must be reckoned that of a uniform system of weights and measures. From all parts of France remonstrances were sent against the great variety of those in use. Several kings had endeavoured to remedy this evil, which was so hurtful to lawful trade, and favourable only to fraud and double-dealing. Yet what even *they* had not been able to effect, was undertaken by the Constituent Assembly. It declared that there ought to be but one standard of weights and measures, in a country subject to the same laws. The *Academy of Sciences* was charged to seek and present the best mode of carrying this decree into execution. That society proposed the adoption of the decimal division, by taking for a fundamental unit the ten-millionth part of the quarter of the terrestrial meridian. The motives which determined this choice were the extreme simplicity of decimal calculation, and the advantage of having a measure taken from nature. The latter condition would, in truth, have been accomplished, had there been taken, as a fundamental unit, the length of the pendulum marking seconds for a given latitude; but the measure of an arc of the meridian, executed with the precision to be obtained by the methods and instruments of the present day, was extremely interesting in regard to the theory of the figure of the earth. This influenced the decision of the Academy, and if the motives which it presented to the Constituent Assembly were not exactly the real ones, it is because the sciences have also their policy: it sometimes happens that to serve mankind, one must resolve to deceive them.

All the measures of the metrical system, adopted by the Republic, are deduced from a base taken from nature, the fourth part of the terrestrial meridian; and the divisions of those measures are all subjected to the decimal order employed in arithmetic.

In order to establish this base, the grand and important work of taking a new measure of the terrestrial meridian, from Dunkirk to Barcelona, was begun in 1792. At the expiration of seven years, it was terminated; and the Institute presented the result to the Legislative Body with the original table of the new measures.

MÉCHAIN and DELAMBRE measured the angles of ninety triangles with the new reflecting circles; imagined by MAYER, and which BORDA had caused to be constructed. With these instruments, they made four observations of latitude at Dunkirk, Paris, Évaux, Carcassonne, and Barcelona; two bases measured near Melun and Perpignan, with rules of platina and copper, forming metallic thermometers, were connected with the triangles of the meridian line: the total interval, which was 9°.6738, was found to be 551584.72 toises. As the degrees progressively diminished towards the south, but much more towards the middle than towards the extremities, the middle of the whole arc was taken; and, on comparing it with the degrees measured at Peru, between the years 1737 and 1741, the ellipticity of the earth was concluded to be 1/334 the mean degree, 57008 toises; and the MÈTRE, which is the ten-millionth part of the quarter of the meridian, 443.296 lines of the old French toise which had been used at Peru.

The Commissioners, sent from foreign countries, verified all the calculations, and sanctioned the

results. The experiments of the pendulum made at the observatory, with extreme care, by BORDA, MÉCHAIN, and CASSINI, with a new apparatus, constructed by LENOIR, shewed the pendulum to be 0.99385 of the *mètre*, on reducing it to the freezing point, and in *vacuo*: this would be sufficient for finding again the *mètre*, though all the standards were changed or lost.

Exact experiments, made by LEFÈVRE-GINEAU, with instruments constructed by FORTIN, shewed the weight of the cubic decimetre of distilled water, at the point of the greatest condensation to be 18827.15 grains of the pile of 50 marcs, which is preserved here in the *Hôtel de la Monnaie*, and is called *Le poids de Charlemagne*; the toise being supposed at 13 degrees of the thermometer of 80 degrees. The scales of FORTIN might give a millionth part and more; and LEFÈVRE-GINEAU employed in all these experiments and calculations the most scrupulous degree of exactness.

Thus the MÈTRE or principal unit of the French linear measures has furnished those of the weights; and all this grand system, taken from nature, is connected with the base the most invariable, the size of the earth itself.

The unit of the measures of capacity is a cube whose side is the tenth part of the *mètre*, to which has been given the name of LITRE; the unit of measures of solidity, relative to wood, a cube whose side is the *mètre*, which is called STÈRE. In short, the thousandth part of a *litre* of distilled water, weighed in *vacuo* and at the temperature of melting ice, has been chosen for the unit of weights, which is called GRAMME.

The following TABLE presents the nomenclature of these different Measures, their divisions, and multiples, together with the new Weights, as decreed by the Legislative Body, and to it is annexed their correspondence both with the old French Measures and Weights, and those of England.

LINEAR MEASURES

		FRENCH				**ENGLISH**				
		Toises	Feet	Inches	Lines	Miles	Furlongs	Yards	Feet	Inches
Myriamètre (or League)	10,000 Mètres	5,130	4	5	3.360	6	1	156	0	6
Kilomètre (or Mile)	1,000 Mètres	513	0	5	3.936		4	213	1	10.2
Hectomètre	100 Mètres	51	1	10	1.583			109	1	1
Décamètre	10 Mètres	5	0	9	4.959			10	2	9.7
MÈTRE			3	0	11.296				3	3.371
Décimètre (or Palm)	10th of a Mètre			3	8.330					3.937
Centimètre (or Digit)	100th of a Mètre				4.433					0.393
Millimètre (or Trait)	1,000th of a Mètre				0.443					0.039

AGRARIAN MEASURES

	FRENCH.	**ENGLISH.**		
	square toises	Acres	Roods	Perches
Myriare, square Kilomètre	263244.93	247	0	20
Milare	26324.49	24	2	34
Hectare, or *(Arpent)* square *Hectomètre*	2632.45	2	1	35.4
Décare	263.24			39.54
ARE, (or square Perch) square *Décamètre*	26.32			3.954
Déciare	2.63			.395
Centiare, (or 100th part of a square Perch) square *Mètre*	0.26			.039

MEASURES OF CAPACITY.

	FRENCH.	**ENGLISH.**
		Cubic Inches
Kilolitre, (or Hogshead) cubic *Mètre*	29.1739 cubic feet	61028
Hectolitre, (or *Setier*)	2.9174 cubic feet	6102.8
Décalitre, (or Bushel)	0.2917 cubic feet	610.28
LITRE, (or *Pinte*) cubic *Décimètre*	50.4124 cubic inches	61.028
Décilitre, (or Glass)	5.0412 cubic inches	6.1028

Centilitre	0.5041 cubic inches	.6102
Millitre, cubic *Centimètre*	0.0504 cubic inches	.061

N. B. A *Litre* is nearly equal to 2-7/8 Pints, English Wine Measure.

MEASURES FOR WOOD.

	FRENCH.	**ENGISH.**
		Cubic Feet.
Stère, cubical *Mètre*	29.1739 cubic feet	35.3171
Décistère, (or *Solive*)	2.9174 cubic feet	3.5317
Centistère	0.2917 cubic feet	.3531
Millistère, cubic *Décimètre*	0.0291 cubic feet	.0353

WEIGHTS.

	FRENCH.				**ENGLISH.** TROY.			
	lbs.	oz.	drms.	grains.	lbs.	oz.	dwts.	grains.
Myriagramme	20	6	6	63.5	26	9	15	0.23
Kilogramme, (or Pound) weight of the cubic *Décimètre* of water at 4°. which is the *maximum* of density	2	0	5	35.15	2	8	3	12.02
Hectogramme, (or Ounce)		3	2	10.72		3	4	8.40
Décagramme, (or Drachm)			2	44.27			6	10.44
GRAMME, (or *Denier*) weight of the cubic *Centimètre* at the freezing point				18.827				15.444
Décigramme, (or Grain)				1.883				1.544
Centigramme				0.188				.154
Milligramme, weight of a cubic *Millimètre* of water				0.019				.015

Footnote 1: Since dead. The former is replaced by DELAMBRE. CHABERT and PRONY are elected supernumerary members, and LEFRANÇAIS LALANDE, BOUVARD, and BURCKHARDT, appointed assistant astronomers. Return to text

Footnote 2: The Prize has been awarded to M. BURG, an astronomer at Vienna. Return to text

LETTER LXVII.

Paris, February 14, 1802.

After speaking of the *Board of Longitude* and the *National Observatory*, I must not omit to say a few words of an establishment much wanted in England. I mean the

DÉPÔT DE LA MARINE.

This general repository of maps, charts, plans, journals, and archives of the Navy and the Colonies, is under the direction of a flag-officer. It is situated in the *Rue de la Place Vendôme*; but the archives are still kept in an office at Versailles. To this *Dépôt* are attached the Hydrographer and Astronomer of the Navy, both members of the National Institute and of the Board of Longitude, and also a number of engineers and draughtsmen proportioned to the works which the government orders to be executed.

The title of this *Dépôt* sufficiently indicates what it contains. To it has been lately added a library, composed of all the works relative to navigation, hydrography, naval architecture, and to the navy in general, as well as of all the voyages published in the different dead or living languages. The collection of maps, charts, plans, &c. belonging to it, is composed of originals in manuscript, ancient and modern, of French or foreign sea-charts, published at different times, and of maps of the possessions beyond the seas belonging to the maritime states of Europe and to the United-States of America.

All the commanders of vessels belonging to the State are bound, on their return to port, to address to the Minister of the Naval Department, in order to be deposited in the archives, the journals of their voyage, and the astronomical or other observations which they have been enabled to make, and the charts and plans which they have had an opportunity of constructing.

One of the apartments of the *Dépôt* contains models of ships of war and other vessels, the series of which shews the progress of naval architecture for two centuries past, and the models of the different machines employed in the ports for the various operations relative to building,

equipping, repairing, and keeping in order ships and vessels of war.

The *Dépôt de la Marine* publishes new sea-charts in proportion as new observations or discoveries indicate the necessity of suppressing or rectifying the old ones.

When the service requires it, the engineers belonging to the *Dépôt* are detached to verify parts of the coasts of the French territory in Europe, or in any other part of the world, where experience has proved that time has introduced changes with which it is important to be acquainted, or to rectify the charts of other parts that had not yet been surveyed with the degree of exactness of which the methods now known and practised have rendered such works susceptible.

In the French navy, commanders of ships and vessels are supplied with useful charts and atlases of every description, at the expense of the nation. These are delivered into their care previously to the ship leaving port. When a captain is superseded in his command, he transfers them to his successor; and when the ship is put out of commission, they are returned to the proper office. Why does not the British government follow an example so justly deserving of imitation?

LETTER LXVIII.

Paris, February 15, 1802.

After the beautiful theatre of the old *Comédie Française*, under its new title of *l'Odéon*, became a prey to flames, as I have before mentioned, the comedians belonging it were dispersed on all sides. At length, PICARD assembled a part of them in a house, built at the beginning of the revolution, which, from the name of the street where it is situated, is called the

THÉÂTRE LOUVOIS.

No colonnade, no exterior decoration announces it as a place of public amusement, and any one might pass it at noon-day without suspecting the circumstance, but for the prices of admission being painted in large characters over the apertures in the wall, where the public deposit their money.

This house, which is of a circular form, is divided, into four tiers of boxes. The ornaments in front of them, not being in glaring colours, give, by their pale tint, a striking brilliancy to the dress of the women.

PICARD, the manager of this theatre, is the MOLIÈRE of his company; that is, he is at once author and actor, and, in both lines, indefatigable. Undoubtedly, the most striking, and, some say, the only resemblance he bears to the mirror of French comedy, is to be compelled to bring on the stage pieces in so unfinished a state as to be little more than sketches, or, in other words, he is forced to write in order to subsist his company. Thus then, the stock-pieces of this theatre are all of them of his own composition. The greater part are *imbroglios* bordering on farce. The *vis comica* to be found in them is not easily understood by foreigners, since it chiefly consists in allusions to local circumstances and sayings of the day. However, they sometimes produce laughter in a surprising degree, but more frequently make those laugh who never blush to laugh at any thing.

The most lively of his pieces are *Le Collatéral* and *la Petite Ville*. In the course of last month, he produced one under the name of *La Grande Ville, ou les Provinciaux à Paris*, which occasioned a violent uproar. The characters of this pseudo-comedy are swindlers or fools; and the spectators insisted that the portraits were either too exact a copy of the originals, or not at all like them. By means of much insolence, by means of the guard which was incautiously introduced into the pit, and which put to flight the majority of the audience, and, lastly, by means of several alterations, PICARD contrived to get his piece endured. But this triumph may probably be the signal of his ruin,[1] as the favour of the Parisian public, once lost, is never to be regained.

This histrionic author and manager has written some pieces of a serious cast. The principal are, *Médiocre et Rampant*, and *L'Entrée dans le Monde*. As in *La Grande Ville*, the characters in these are also cheats or fools. Consequently, it was not difficult to conduct the plot, it would have been much more so to render it interesting. These two comedies are written in verse which might almost pass for prose.

The *Théâtre Louvois* is open to all young authors who have the ambition to write for the stage, before they have well stored their mind with the requisites. Novelties here succeed each other with astonishing rapidity. Hence, whatever success PICARD may have met with as an author, he has not been without competitors for his laurels. Out of no less than one hundred and sixty-seven pieces presented for rehearsal and read at this house, one hundred and sixty-five are said to have been refused. Of the two accepted, the one, though written forty years ago, was brought out as a new piece, and damned. However, the ill success of a piece represented here is not remarked; the fall not being great.

The friends of this theatre call it *La petite Maison de Thalie*. They take the part for the whole. It is, in fact, no more than her anti-chamber. As for the drawing-room of the goddess, it is no longer to be found any where in Paris.

The performers who compose PICARD'S company do no injustice to his pieces. It is affirmed that this company has what is called, on the French stage, *de l'ensemble*. With few exceptions, there is an *ensemble*, as it is very indifferent. For such an interpretation to be correct, it would be necessary for all the comedians of the *Théâtre Louvois* to have great talents, and none can be quoted.

PICARD, though not unfrequently applauded, is but a sorry actor. His cast of parts is that of valets and comic characters.

DEVIGNY performs the parts of noble fathers and foolish ones, here termed *dindons*, and grooms, called by the French *jockeis*. The remark, that he who plays every thing plays nothing, has not been unaptly applied to him. He has a defect of pronunciation which shocks even the ear of a foreigner.

DORSAN is naturally cold and stiff, and when he endeavours to repair the former of these defects, the weakness of his powers betrays him. If he speaks correctly, it is without *finesse*, and he never adds by expression to the thought of the author.

CLOZEL is a very handsome young man. He performs the characters of *petits-maîtres* and those of valets, which he confounds incessantly. The other actors of the *Théâtre Louvois* exempt me from naming them.

As for the actresses at this theatre, those only worthy to be mentioned are, Mademoiselle ADELINE, who has a rather pretty face, and plays not ill innocent parts; Mademoiselle BEFFROI, who is handsome, especially in male attire; and Mademoiselle MOLIÈRE, who is a very good *soubrette*. Mademoiselle LESCOT, tired of obtaining applause at the *Théâtre du Vaudeville*, wished to do the same on a larger theatre. Here, she has not even the consolation of saying

"*Tel brille au second rang, qui s'éclipse au premier*."

Madame MOLÉ, who is enormous in bulk, is a coarse caricature, whether she performs the parts of noble mothers, or what the French call *caractères*, that is, singular characters.

The *ci-devant Comédie Italienne* in Paris partly owed its prosperity to the *Vaudeville*, which might be considered as the parent of the *Opéra-Comique*. They were united, when the *drame* being introduced with songs, had like to have annihilated them both. The *Vaudeville* was sacrificed and banished. Several years elapsed before it reappeared. This offspring of French gaiety was thought to be lost for ever; but a few authors had prepared for it an asylum under the name of

THÉÂTRE DU VAUDEVILLE.

This little theatre is situated in the *Rue de Chartres*, which faces the principal entrance of the *Palais du Tribunat*. The interior is of a circular form, and divided into four tiers of boxes. In general, the decorations are not of the first class, but in the dresses the strictest propriety is observed.

The pieces performed at the *Vaudeville* are little comedies of the sentimental cast, a very extensive collection of portraits of French authors and of a few foreigners,[2] some pastoral pieces, parodies closely bordering on the last new piece represented at one of the principal theatres, charming *harlequinades*, together with a few pieces, in some of which parade and show are introduced; in others, scenes of low life and vulgarity; but the latter species is now almost abandoned.

These pieces are almost always composed in conjunction. It is by no means uncommon to see in the play-bills the names of five or six authors to a piece, in which the public applaud, perhaps, no more than three verses of a song. This association of names, however, has the advantage of saving many of them from ridicule.

The authors who chiefly devote themselves to the species of composition from which this theatre derives its name, are BARRÉ, RADET, and DESFONTAINES, who may be considered as its founders. BOURGEUIL, DESCHAMPS, DESPREZ, and the two SÉGURS, also contribute to the success of the *Vaudeville*, together with CHAZET, JOUY, LONGCHAMPS, and some others.

In the exercise of their talents, these writers suffer no striking adventure, no interesting anecdote to escape their satirical humour; but aim the shafts of ridicule at every subject likely to afford amusement. It may therefore be conceived that this house is much frequented. No people on earth can be more fickle than the French in general, and the Parisians in particular, in the choice of their diversions. Like children, they are soon tired of the same toy, and novelty is for them the greatest attraction. Hence, the *Vaudeville*, as has been seen, presents a great variety of pieces. In general, these are by no means remarkable for the just conception of their plan. The circumstance of the moment adroitly seized, and related in some well-turned stanzas, interspersed with dialogue, is sufficient to insure the success of a new piece, especially if adapted to the abilities of the respective performers.

Among them, HENRY would shine in the parts of lovers, were he less of a *mannerist*.

JULIEN may be quoted as an excellent imitator of the beaux of the day.

VERTPRÉ excels in personating a striking character.

CARPENTIER is no bad representative of a simpleton.

CHAPELLE displays much comic talent and warmth in the character of dotards, who talk themselves out of their reason.

LAPORTE, as a speaking Harlequin, has no equal in Paris.

So much for the men: I shall now speak of the women deserving of notice.

Madame HENRY, in the parts of lovers, is to be preferred for her fine eyes, engaging countenance, elegant shape, and clear voice.

Mesdemoiselles COLOMBE and LAPORTE, who follow her in the same line of acting, are both young, and capable of improvement.

Mademoiselle DESMARES is far from being pretty; neither is she much of an actress, but she treads the stage well, and sings not amiss.

Mademoiselle BLOSSEVILLE plays chambermaids and characters of parody with tolerable success.

Mademoiselle DELILLE, however, who performs caricatures and characters where frequent disguises are assumed, is a still greater favourite with the public. So much has been said of the glibness of a female tongue that many of the comparisons made on the subject are become proverbial; but nothing that I ever heard in that way can be compared to the volubility of utterance of Mademoiselle DELILLE, except the clearness of her articulation. A quick and attentive ear may catch every syllable as distinctly as if she spoke with the utmost gravity and slowness. The piece in which she exhibits this talent to great advantage, and under a rapid succession of disguises, is called *Frosine ou la dernière venue*.

Mademoiselle FLEURY makes an intelligent Columbine, not unworthy of LAPORTE.

Madame DUCHAUME represents not ill characters of duennas, country-women, &c.

Nothing can be said of the voice of the different performers of this theatre, on which acccount, perhaps, the orchestra is rather feeble; but still it might be better composed.

During my present visit to Paris, the *Vaudeville*, as it is commonly called, has, I think, insensibly declined. It has, however, been said that its destiny seems insured by the character of the French, and that being the first theatre to bend to the caprices of the day, it can never be out of fashion. Certainly, if satire be a good foundation, it ought to be the most substantial dramatic establishment in Paris. It rests on public malignity, which is its main support. Hence, one might conclude that it will last as long as there is evil doing or evil saying, an absurdity to catch at, an author to parody, a tale of scandal to relate, a rogue to abuse, and, in short, as long as the chapter of accidents shall endure. At this rate, the *Vaudeville* must stand to all eternity.

Whatever may be its defects, it unquestionably exemplifies the character of the nation, so faithfully pourtrayed by Beaumarchais, in the following lines of the *vaudeville* which concludes the *Mariage de Figaro*:

> *"Si l'on opprime, il peste, il crie,*
> *Il s'agite en cent façons,*
> *Tout finit par des chansons."* *bis.*

Footnote 1: The *Théâtre Louvois* is rapidly on the decline. Return to text

Footnote 2: These are pieces the hero of which is a celebrated personage, such as RABELAIS, SCARRON, VOLTAIRE, ROUSSEAU, MALESHERBES, FREDERIC, king of Prussia, &c. &c. Return to text

LETTER LXIX.

Paris, February 17, 1802.

After having traversed the *Pont Neuf*, from the north side of the Seine, you cannot avoid noticing a handsome building to the right, situated on the *Quai de Conti*, facing the river. This is the Mint, or

HÔTEL DE LA MONNAIE.

The construction of this edifice was suggested by M. LAVERDY, Minister of State, and executed under the direction of M. ANTOINE, architect. I do not recollect any building of the kind in Europe that can be compared to it, since it far surpasses the *Zecca* at Venice.

The Abbé Terray (whose name will not be readily forgotten by the State-annuitants of his time,

and for whom Voltaire, as one, said that he preserved his only tooth) when Comptroller-general of the Finances, laid the first stone of the *Hôtél de la Monnaie*, in April 1771.

An avant-corps, decorated with six Ionic pillars, and supported by two wings, from the division of the façade, which is three hundred and thirty-six feet in breadth by eighty-four in elevation. It is distributed into two stories above the ground-floor. Perpendicularly to the six pillars, rise six statues, representing Peace, Commerce, Prudence, Law, Strength, and Plenty.

In this avant-corps are three arches, the centre one of which is the principal entrance of the building. The vestibule is decorated with twenty-four fluted Doric pillars, and on the right hand, is a stair-case, leading to the apartments intended for the use of the officers belonging to the Mint, and in which they hold their meetings. This stair-case is lighted by a dome supported by sixteen fluted pillars of the Ionic order.

The whole building contains six courts: the principal court is one hundred and ten feet in depth by ninety-two in breadth. All round it are covered galleries, terminated by a circular wall alternately pierced with arches and gates.

The entrance of the hall for the money-presses is ornamented by four Doric pillars. This hall is sixty-two feet long by about forty broad, and contains nine money-presses. Above it is the hall of the sizers or persons who prepare the blank pieces for stamping. Next come the flatting-mills. Here, in a word, are all the apartments necessary for the different operations, and aptly arranged for the labours of coinage.

In the principal apartment of the avant-corps of the *Hôtel de la Monnaie*, towards the *Quai de Conti*, is the cabinet known in Paris by the name of the

MUSÉE DES MINES.

This cabinet or Museum was formed in 1778 by M. SAGE, who had then spent eighteen years in collecting minerals. When he began to employ himself on that science forty-five years ago, there existed in this country no collection which could facilitate the study of mineralogy. Docimacy vas scarcely known here by name. France was tributary to foreign countries thirty-seven millions of livres (*circa* £1,541,666 sterling) a year for the mineral and metallic substances which she drew from them, although she possesses them within herself. M. SAGE directed his studies and labours to the research and analysis of minerals. For twenty years he has delivered *gratis* public courses of chymistry and mineralogy. For the advancement of those sciences, he also availed himself of the favour he enjoyed with some persons at court and in the ministry, and this was certainly making a very meritorious use of it. To his care and interest is wholly due the collection of minerals placed in this building. The apartment containing it has, by some, been thought to deviate from the simple and severe style suitable to its destination, and to resemble too much the drawing-room of a fine lady. But those who have hazarded such a reproach do not consider that, at the period when this cabinet was formed, it was not useless, in order to bring the sciences into fashion, to surround them with the show of luxury and the elegance of accessory decoration. Who knows even whether that very circumstance, trifling as it may appear, has not somewhat contributed to spread a taste for the two sciences in question among the great, and in the fashionable world?

However this may be, the arrangement of this cabinet is excellent, and, in that respect, it is worthy to serve as a model. The productions of nature are so disposed that the glazed closets and cases containing them present, as it were, an open book in which the curious and attentive observer instructs himself with the greater facility and expedition, as he can without effort examine and study perfectly every individual specimen.

The inside of the Museum is about forty-five feet in length, thirty-eight in breadth, and forty in elevation. In the middle is an amphitheatre capable of holding two hundred persons. In the circumference are glazed cabinets or closets, in which are arranged methodically and analytically almost all the substances known in mineralogy. The octagonal gallery, above the elliptical amphitheatre, contains large specimens of different minerals. To each specimen is annexed an explanatory ticket. One of the large lateral galleries presents part of the productions of the mines of France, classed according to the order of the departments where they are found. The new transversal gallery contains models of furnaces and machines employed in the working of mines. The third gallery is also destined to contain the minerals of France, the essays and results of which are deposited in a private cabinet. The galleries are decorated with tables and vases of different species of marble, porphyry, and granite, also from the mines of France, collected by SAGE. The cupola which rises above, is elegantly ornamented from the designs of ANTOINE, the architect of the building.

This Museum is open to the public every day from nine o'clock in the morning till two, and, though it has been so many years an object of curiosity, such is the care exerted in superintending it, that it has all the freshness of novelty.

In a niche, on the first landing-place of the stair-case, is the bust of M. SAGE, a tribute of gratitude paid to him by his pupils. SAGE'S principal object being to naturalize in France mineralogy, docimacy, and metallurgy, he first obtained the establishment of a *Special School of Mines*, in which pupils were maintained by the State. Here, he directed their studies, and enjoyed

the happiness of forming intelligent men, capable of improving the science of metallurgy, and promoting the search of ores, &c.

For a number of years past, as I have already observed, SAGE has delivered *gratis*, in this Museum; public courses of chymistry and mineralogy. He attracts hither many auditors by the ease of his elocution, and the address, the grace even which he displays in his experiments. If all those who have attended his lectures are to be reckoned his pupils, there will be found in the number names illustrious among the *savans* of France. Unfortunately, this veteran of science has created for himself a particular system in chymistry, and this system differs from that of LAVOISIER, FOURCROY, GUYTON-MORVEAU, BERTHOLLET, CHAPTAL, &c. The sciences have also their schisms; but the real *savans* are not persecutors. Although SAGE was not of their opinion on many essential points, his adversaries always respected him as the man who had first drawn the attention of the government towards the art of mines, instigated the establishment of the first school which had existed for this important object, and been the author of several good analyses. On coming out of prison, into which he had been thrown during the reign of terror, he found this cabinet of mineralogy untouched. It would then have been easy, from motives of public utility, to unite it to the new School of Mines. But the heads of this new school had, for the most part, issued from the old one, and SAGE was dear to them from every consideration. It was from a consequence of this sentiment that SAGE, who had been a member of the *Academy of Sciences*, not having been comprised in the list of the members of the National Institute at the time of its formation, has since been admitted into that learned body, not as a chymist indeed, but as a professor of mineralogy, a science which owes to him much of its improvement.

The new School of Mines is now abolished, and practical ones are established in the mountains, as I have before mentioned. While I am speaking of mineralogy, I shall take you to view the

CABINET DU CONSEIL DES MINES.

This cabinet of mineralogy, formed at the *Hôtel des Mines*, *Rue de l'Université*, *No. 293*, is principally intended to present a complete collection of all the riches of the soil of the French Republic, arranged in local order. A succession of glazed closets, contiguous and similar to each other, that is about six feet and a half in height by sixteen inches in depth, affords every facility of observing them with ease and convenience. On these cases the names of the departments are inscribed in alphabetical order, and the vacancies which still exist in this geographical collection, are daily filled up by specimens sent by the engineers of mines, who, being spread over the different districts they are charged to visit, employ themselves in recognizing carefully the mineral substances peculiar to each country, in order to submit their views to the government respecting the means of rendering them useful to commerce and to the arts.

The departmental collection, being thus arranged on the sides of the gallery, leaves vacant the middle of the apartments, which is furnished with tables covered with large glazed cases, intended for receiving systematic collections, and the most remarkable mineral substances from foreign countries, distributed in geographical order.

An apartment is specially appropriated to the systematic order adopted by HAÜY in his new treatise on mineralogy; another is reserved for the method of WERNER.

In both these oryctognostic collections, minerals of all countries are indiscriminately admitted. They are arranged by *classes*, *orders*, *genera*, *species*, and *varieties*, with the denominations adopted by the author of the method, and consequently designated by specific names in French for HAÜY'S method, and in German for that of WERNER. The proximity of the two apartments where they are exhibited, affords every advantage for comparing both methods, and acquiring an exact knowledge of mineralogical synonymy. Each of the two methods contains also a geological collection of rocks and various aggregates, classed and named after the principles which their respective authors have thought fit to adopt.

The other apartments are likewise furnished with tables covered with glazed cases, where are exhibited, in a manner very advantageous for study, the most remarkable minerals of every description from foreign countries, among which are:

1. A numerous series of minerals from Russia, such as red chromate of lead, white carbonate of lead, green phosphate of lead; native copper, green and blue carbonate of copper; gold ore from Berezof; iron ore, granitical rocks, fossil shells, in good preservation, from the banks of the Moscorika, and others in the siliceous state, jaspers, crystals of quartz, beril, &c.
2. A collection from the iron and copper mines of Sweden, as well as various crystals and rocks from the same country.
3. A very complete and diversified collection of minerals from the country of Saltzburg.
4. Another of substances procured in England, such as fluates and carbonates of lime from Derbyshire; pyrites, copper and lead ore, zinc, and tin from Cornwall.
5. A collection of tin ore, cobalt, uranite, &c. from Saxony.
6. A series of minerals from Simplon, St. Gothard, the Tyrol, Transylvania, as well as from Egypt and America. All these articles, without being striking from their size, and other accessory qualities to be remarked in costly specimens, incontestably present a rich fund of instruction to persons delirous of fathoming science, by multiplying the points of view under which mineral productions may be observed.

Such is the present state of the mineralogical collection of the *Conseil des Mines*, which the superintendants will, no doubt, with time and attention, bring to the highest degree of perfection. It is open to the public every Monday and Thursday: but, on the other days of the week, amateurs and students have access to it.

A few years before the revolution, France was still considered as destitute of an infinite number of mineral riches, which were thought to belong exclusively to several of the surrounding countries. Germany was quoted as a country particularly favoured, in this respect, by Nature. Yet France is crossed by mountains similar to those met with in Germany, and these mountains contain rocks of the same species as those of that country which is so rich in minerals. What has happened might therefore have been foreseen; namely, that, when intelligent men, with an experienced eye, should examine the soil of the various departments of the Republic, they would find in it not only substances hitherto considered as scarce, but even several of those whose existence there had not yet been suspected. Since the revolution, the following are the

Principal Mineral Substances discovered in France.

Dolomite in the mountains of Vosges and in the Pyrenees.

Carburet of iron or *plumbago*, in the south peak of Bigorre. The same variety has been been found near Argentière, and the valley of Chamouny, department of Mont-Blanc.

A rock of the appearance of *porphyry*, with a *calcareous* base, in the same valley of Chamouny.

Tremolite or *grammatite* of HAÜY, in the same place. These two last-mentioned substances were in terminated crystals.

Red oxyd of titanium, in the same place.

New violet schorl, or *sphene* of HAÜY, (*rayonnante en goutière* of SAUSSURE) in the same place.

Crystallized sulphate of strontia, in the mines of Villefort in La Lozère, in the environs of Paris, at Bartelemont, near the *Salterns* in the department of La Meurthe.

Fibrous and crystallized sulphate of strontia, at Bouvron, near Toul.

Earthy sulphate of strontia, in the vicinity of Paris, near the forest of Montmorency, and to the north-east of it.

Onyx-agate-quartz, at Champigny, in the department of La Seine.

Avanturine-quartz, in the Deux-Sevres.

Marine bodies, imbedded in the soil, a little above the *Oule de Gavernie*.

Anthracite, and its direction determined in several departments.

Other marine bodies, at the height of upwards of 3400 *mètres* or 3683 yards, on the summit of Mont-Perdu, in the Upper Pyrenées.

Wolfram, near St. Yriex, in Upper Vienne.

Oxyd of antimony, at Allemont, in the department of L'Isère.

Chromate of iron, near Gassin, in the department of *Le Var*, at the *bastide* of the cascade.

Oxyd of uranite, at St. Simphorien de Marmagne, in the department of La Côte d'Or.

Acicular arsenical lead ore, at St. Prix, in the department of Saone and Loire. This substance was found among some piles of rubbish, near old works made for exploring a vein of lead ore, which lies at the foot of a mountain to the north-east, and at three quarters of a league from the *commune* of St. Prix.

In this country have likewise been found several varieties of new interesting forms relative to substances already known; several important geological facts have been ascertained; and, lastly, the emerald has here been recently discovered. France already possesses eighteen of the twenty-one metallic substances known. Few countries inherit from Nature the like advantages.

With respect to the administration of the mines of France, the under-mentioned are the regulations now in force.

A council composed of three members, is charged to give to the Minister of the Interior ideas, together with their motives, respecting every thing that relates to mines. It corresponds, in the terms of the law, with all the grantees and with all persons who explore mines, salterns, and quarries. It superintends the research and extraction of all substances drawn from the bosom of the earth, and their various management. It proposes the grants, permissions, and advances to be made, and the encouragements to be given. Under its direction are the two practical schools, and twenty-five engineers of mines, nine of whom are spread over different parts of the French

territory. General information relative to statistics, every thing that can concur in the formation of the mineralogical map of France and complete the collection of her minerals, and all observations and memoirs relative to the art of mines or of the different branches of metallurgy, are addressed by the engineers to the *Conseil des Mines* at Paris.

LETTER LXX.

Paris, February 20, 1802.

Having fully described to you all the theatres here of the first and second rank, I shall confine myself to a rapid sketch of those which may be classed in the third order.[1]

THÉÂTRE MONTANSIER.

This house stands at the north-west angle of the *Palais du Tribunat*. It is of an oval form, and contains three tiers of boxes, exclusively of a large amphitheatre. Before the revolution, it bore the name of *Théâtre des Petits Comédiens du Comte de Beaujolais*, and was famous for the novelty of the spectacle here given. Young girls and boys represented little comedies and comic operas in the following manner. Some gesticulated on the stage; while others, placed in the side-scenes, spoke or sang their parts without being seen. It was impossible to withhold one's admiration from the perfect harmony between the motions of the one and the speaking and singing of the other. In short, this double acting was executed with such precision that few strangers detected the deception.

To these actors succeeded full-grown performers, who have since continued to play interludes of almost every description. Indeed, this theatre is the receptacle of all the nonsense imaginable; nothing is too absurd or too low for its stage. Here are collected all the trivial expressions to be met with in this great city, whether made use of in the markets, gaming-houses, taverns, or dancing-rooms.

CAROLINE and BRUNET, or BRUNET and CAROLINE. They are like two planets, round which move a great number of satellites, some more imperceptible than others. If to these we add TIERCELIN, an actor of the grotesque species, little more is to be said. Were it not for BRUNET, who makes the most of his comic humour, in playing all sorts of low characters, and sometimes in a manner truly original, and Mademoiselle CAROLINE, whose clear, flexible, and sonorous voice insures the success of several little operas, the *Théâtre Montansier* would not be able to maintain its ground, notwithstanding the advantages of its centrical situation, and the attractions of its lobby, where the impures of the environs exhibit themselves to no small advantage, and literally carry all before them.

We now come to the theatres on the *Boulevard*, at the head of which is to be placed

L'AMBIGU COMIQUE.

This little theatre is situated on the *Boulevard du Temple*, and, of all those of the third order, has most constantly enjoyed the favour of the public. Previously to the revolution, AUDINOT drew hither crowded houses by the representation of comic operas and bad *drames* of a gigantic nature, called here *pantomimes dialoguées*. The effects of decoration and show were carried farther at this little theatre than at any other. Ghosts, hobgoblins, and devils were, in the sequel, introduced. All Paris ran to see them, till the women were terrified, and the men disgusted.

CORSE, the present manager, has of late added considerably to the attraction of the *Ambigu Comique*, by not only restoring it to what it was in the most brilliant days of AUDINOT, but by collecting all the best actors and dancers of the *Boulevard*, and improving on the plan adopted by his predecessor. He has neglected nothing necessary for the advantageous execution of the new pieces which he has produced. The most attractive of these are *Victor*, *le Pélerin blanc*, *L'Homme à trois visages*, *Le Jugement de Salomon*, &c.

The best performers at this theatre are CORSE, the manager, TAUTIN, and Mademoiselle LEVESQUE.

In regard to all the other minor theatres, the enumeration of which I have detailed to you in a preceding letter,[2] I shall briefly, observe that the curiosity of a stranger may be satisfied in paying each of them a single visit. Some of these *petits spectacles* are open one day, shut the next, and soon after reopened with performances of a different species. Therefore, to attempt a description of their attractions would probably be superfluous; and, indeed, the style of the pieces produced is varied according to the ideas of the speculators, the taste of the managers, or the abilities of the performers, who, if not "the best actors in the world," are ready to play either "tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited."

Footnote 1: The Theatre of the *Porte St. Martin* not having been open, when this letter was written, it is not here noticed. It may be considered as of the second rank. Its representations include almost every line of acting; but those for which the greatest expense is incurred are melo-drames and pieces connected with pantomime and parade. The house is the same in which the grand French opera was performed before the revolution. Return to text

Footnote 2: See Vol. i. Letter XXI. Return to text

LETTER LXXI.

Paris, February 22, 1802.

The variety of matter which crowds itself on the mind of a man who attempts to describe this immense capital, forms such a chaos, that you will, I trust, give me credit for the assertion, when I assure you that it is not from neglect or inattention I sometimes take more time than may appear strictly necessary to comply with your wishes. Considering how deeply it involves the peace and comfort of strangers, as well as inhabitants, I am not at all surprised at the anxiety which you express to acquire some knowledge of the

POLICE OF PARIS.

In the present existing circumstances, it might be imprudent, if not dangerous, to discuss, freely openly, so delicate a question. I shall take a middle course. Silence would imply fear; while boldness of expression might give offence; and though I certainly am not afraid to mention the subject, yet to offend, is by no means my wish or intention. In this country, the Post-Office has often been the channel through which the opinion of individuals has been collected. What has been, may again occur; and in such critical times, who knows, but the government may conceive itself justified in not considering as absolutely sacred the letters intrusted to that mode of conveyance? Under these considerations, I shall beg leave to refer you to a work which has gone through the hands of every inquisitive reader; that is the *Tableau de Paris*, published in 1788: but, on recollection, as this letter will, probably, find you in the country, where you may not have an immediate opportunity of gratifying your curiosity, and as the book is become scarce, I shall select from it for your satisfaction a few extracts concerning the Police.

This establishment is necessary and useful for maintaining order and tranquillity in a city like Paris, where the very extremes of luxury and wretchedness are continually in collision. I mean *useful*, when no abuse is made of its power; and it is to be hoped that the present government of France is too wise and too just to convert an institution of public utility into an instrument of private oppression.

Since the machinery of the police was first put in order by M. D'ARGENSON, in 1697, its wheels and springs have been continually multiplied by the thirteen ministers who succeeded him in that department. The last of these was the celebrated M. LENOIR.

The present Minister of the Police, M. FOUCHÉ, has, it seems, adopted, in a great measure, the means put in practice before the revolution. His administration, according to general report, bears most resemblance to that of M. LENOIR: he is said, however, to have improved on that vigilant magistrate: but he surpasses him, I am told, more in augmentation of expenses and agents, than in real changes.[1]

In selecting from the before-mentioned work the following *widely scattered* passages, and assembling them as a *piece of Mosaic*, it has been my endeavour to enable you to form an impartial judgment of the police of Paris, by exhibiting it with all its perfections and imperfections. Borrowing the language of MERCIER, I shall trace the institution through all its ramifications, and, in pointing out its effects, I shall "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice."

If we take it for granted, that the police of Paris is now exercised on the same plan as that pursued towards the close of the old *régime*, this sketch will be the more interesting, as its resemblance to the original will exempt me from adding a single stroke from my own pencil.

"D'ARGENSON was severe," says MERCIER, "perhaps because he felt, in first setting the machine in motion, a resistance which his successors have less experienced. For a long time it was imagined that a Minister of Police ought to be harsh; he ought to be firm only. Several of these magistrates have laid on too heavy a hand, because they were not acquainted with the people of Paris; a people of quick feeling, but not ferocious,[2] whose motions are to be divined, and consequently easy to be led. Whoever should be void of pity in that post, would be a monster."

MERCIER then gives the fragment by FONTENELLE, on the police of Paris and on M. D'ARGENSON, of which I shall select only what may be necessary for elucidating the main subject.

"The inhabitants of a well-governed city," says FONTENELLE, "enjoy the good order which is there established, without considering what trouble it costs those who establish or preserve it, much in the same manner as all mankind enjoy the regularity of the motions of celestial bodies, without having any knowledge of them, and even the more the good order of a police resembles by its uniformity that of the celestial bodies, the more is it imperceptible, and, consequently, the more it is unknown, the greater is its perfection. But he who would wish to know it and fathom it, would be terrified. To keep up perpetually in a city, like Paris, an immense consumption, some sources of which may always be dried up by a variety of accidents; to repress the tyranny of shop-keepers in regard to the public, and at the same time animate their commerce; to prevent the

mutual usurpations of the one over the other, often difficult to discriminate; to distinguish in a vast crowd all those who may easily conceal there a hurtful industry; to purge society of them, or tolerate them only as far as they can be useful to it by employments which no others but themselves would undertake, or discharge so well; to keep necessary abuses within the precise limits of necessity which they are always ready to over-leap; to envelop them in the obscurity to which they ought to be condemned, and not even draw them from it by chastisement too notorious; to be ignorant of what it is better to be ignorant of than to punish, and to punish but seldom and usefully; to penetrate by subterraneous avenues into the bosom of families, and keep for them the secrets which they have not confided, as long as it is not necessary to make use of them; to be present every where without being seen; in short, to move or stop at pleasure an immense multitude, and be the soul ever-acting, and almost unknown, of this great body: these are, in general, the functions of the chief magistrate of the police. It should seem that one man alone could not be equal to them, either on account of the quantity of things of which he must be informed, or of that of the views which he must follow, or of the application which he must exert, or of the variety of conduct which he most observe, and of the characters which he must assume: but the public voice will answer whether M. D'ARGENSON has been equal to them.

"Under him, cleanliness, tranquillity, plenty, and safety were brought to the highest degree of perfection in this city. And, indeed, the late king (Lewis XIV) relied entirely on his care respecting Paris. He could have given an account of a person unknown who should have stolen into it in the dark; this person, whatever ingenuity he exerted in concealing himself, was always under his eye; and if, at last, any one escaped him, at least what produced almost the same effect, no one would have dared to think himself well-concealed.

"Surrounded and overwhelmed in his audiences by a crowd of people chiefly of the lower class, little informed themselves of what brought them, warmly agitated by interests very trifling, and frequently very ill understood, accustomed to supply the place of discourse by senseless clamour, he neither betrayed the inattention nor the disdain which such persons or such subjects might have occasioned."

"FONTENELLE has not," continues MERCIER, "spoken of the severity of M. D'ARGENSON, of his inclination to punish, which was rather a sign of weakness than of strength. Alas! human laws, imperfect and rude, cannot dive to the bottom of the human heart, and there discover the causes of the delinquencies which they have to punish! They judge only from the surface: they would acquit, perhaps, those whom they condemn; they would strike him whom they suffer to escape. But they cannot, I confess, do otherwise. Nevertheless, they ought to neglect nothing that serves to disclose the heart of man. They ought to estimate the strength of natural and indestructible passions, not in their effects, but in their principles; to pay attention to the age, the sex, the time, the day; these are nice rules, which could not be found in the brain of the legislator, but which ought to be met with in that of a Minister of the Police."

"There are also epidemical errors in which the multitude of those who go astray, seems to lessen the fault; in which a sort of circumspection is necessary, in order that punishment may not be in opposition to public interest, because punishment would then appear absurd or barbarous, and indignation might recoil on the law, as well as on the magistrate."

"What a life has a Minister of Police! He has not a moment that he can call his own; he is every day obliged to punish; he is afraid to give way to indulgence, because he does not know that he may not one day have to reproach himself with it. He is under the necessity of being severe, and of acting contrary to the inclination of his heart; not a crime is committed but he receives the shameful or cruel account: he hears of nothing but vicious men and vices; every instant he is told: 'there's a murder! a suicide! a rape!' Not an accident happens but he must prescribe the remedy, and hastily; he has but a moment to deliberate and act, and he must be equally fearful to abuse the power intrusted to him, and not to use it opportunely. Popular rumours, flighty conversations, theatrical factions, false alarms, every thing concerns him.

"Is he gone to rest? A fire rouses him from his bed. He must be answerable for every thing; he must trace the robber, and the lurking assassin who has committed a crime; for the magistrate appears blameable, if he has not found means to deliver him up quickly to justice. The time that his agents have employed in this capture will be calculated, and his honour requires that the interval between the crime and the imprisonment should be the shortest possible. What dreadful duties! What a laborious life! And yet this place is coveted!

"On some occasions, it is necessary for the Minister of Police to demean himself like a true *Greek*, as was the case in the following instance:

"A person, being on the point of making a journey, had in his possession a sum of twenty thousand livres which embarrassed him; he had only one servant, whom he mistrusted, and the sum was tempting. He accordingly requested a friend to be so obliging as to take care of it for him till his return.

"A fortnight after, the friend denied the circumstance. As there was no proof, the civil law could not pronounce in this affair. Recourse was had to the Minister of Police, who pondered a moment, and sent for the receiver, making the accuser retire into an adjoining room:

"The friend arrives, and maintains that he has not received the twenty thousand livres. "Well,"

said the magistrate, "I believe you; and as you are innocent you run no, risk in writing to your wife the note that I am going to dictate. Write."

""My dear wife, all is discovered. I shall be punished if I do not restore you know what. Bring the sum: your coming quickly to my relief is the only way for me to get out of trouble and obtain my pardon."

"'This note,' added the magistrate, 'will fully justify you. Your wife can bring nothing since you have received nothing, and your accuser will be foiled.'

"The note was dispatched; the wife, terrified, ran with the twenty thousand livres.

"Thus the Minister of Police can daily make up for the imperfection and tardiness of our civil laws; but he ought to use this rare and splendid privilege with extreme circumspection.

"The chief magistrate of the police is become a minister of importance; he has a secret and prodigious influence; he knows so many things, that he can do much mischief or much good, because he has in hand a multitude of threads which he can entangle or disentangle at his pleasure; he strikes or he saves; he spreads darkness or light: his authority is as delicate as it is extensive.

"The Minister of Police exercises a despotic sway over the *mouchards* who are found disobedient, or who make false reports: as for these fellows, they are of a class so vile and so base, that the authority to which they have sold themselves, has necessarily an absolute right over their persons.

"This is not the case with those who are apprehended in the name of the police; they may have committed trifling faults: they may have enemies in that crowd of *exempts*, spies, and satellites, who are believed on their word. The eye of the magistrate may be incessantly deceived, and the punishment of these crimes ought to be submitted to a more deliberate investigation; but the house of correction ingulfs a vast number of men who there become still more perverted, and who, on coming out, are still more wicked than when they went in. Being degraded in their own eyes, they afterwards plunge themselves headlong into all sorts of irregularities.

"These different imprisonments are sometimes rendered necessary by imperious circumstances; yet it were always to be wished that the detention of a citizen should not depend on a single magistrate, but that there should be a sort of tribunal to examine when this great act of authority, withdrawn from the eye of the law, ceases to be illegal.

"A few real advantages compensate for these irregular forms, and there are, in fact, an infinite number of irregularities which the slow and grave process of our tribunals can neither take cognizance of, nor put a stop to, nor foresee, nor punish. The audacious or subtle delinquent would triumph in the winding labyrinth of our civil laws. The laws of the police, more direct, watch him, press him, and surround him mose closely. The abuse, is contiguous to the benefit, I admit; but a great many private acts of violence, base and shameful crimes, are repressed by this vigilant and active force which ought, nevertheless, to publish its code and submit it to the inspection of enlightened citizens."

"Could the Minister of Police communicate to the philosopher all he knows, all he learns, all he sees, and likewise impart to him certain secret things, of which he alone is well-informed, there would be nothing so curious and so instructive under the pen of the philosopher; for he would astonish all his brethren. But this magistrate is like the great penitentiary; he hears every thing, relates nothing, and is not astonished at certain delinquencies in the same degree as another man. By dint of seeing the tricks of roguery, the crimes of vice, secret treachery, and all the filth of human actions, he has necessarily a little difficulty in giving credit to the integrity and virtue of honest people. He is in a perpetual state of mistrust; and, in the main, he ought to possess such a character; for, he ought to think nothing impossible, after the extraordinary lessons which he receives from men and from things. In a word, his place commands a continual, and scrutinizing suspicion."

February 22, in continuation.

"Even should not the Parisian have the levity with which he is reproached, reason would justify him in its adoption. He walks surrounded by spies. No sooner do two citizens whisper to each other, than up comes a third, who prowls about in order to listen to what they are saying. The spies of the police are a regiment of inquisitive fellows; with this difference, that each individual belonging to this regiment has a distinct dress, which he changes frequently every day; and nothing so quick or so astonishing, as these sorts of metamorphoses.

"The same spy who figures as a private gentleman in the morning, in the evening represents a priest: at one time, he is a peaceable limb of the law; at another, a swaggering bully. The next day, with a gold-headed cane in his hand, he will assume the deportment of a monied man buried in calculations; the most singular disguises are quite familiar to him. In the course of the twenty-four hours, he is an officer of distinction and a journeyman hair-dresser, a shorn apostle and a scullion. He visits the dress-ball and the lowest sink of vice. At one time with a diamond ring on his finger, at another with the most filthy wig on his head, he almost changes his countenance as

he does his apparel; and more than one of these *mouchards* would teach the French *Roscius* the art of *decomposing* himself; he is all eyes, all ears, all legs; for he trots, I know not how, over the pavement of every quarter of the town. Squatted sometimes in the corner of a coffee-room, you would take him for a dull, stupid, tiresome fellow, snoring till supper is ready: he has seen and heard all that has passed. At another time, he is an orator, and been the first to make a bold speech; he courts you to open your mind; he interprets even your silence, and whether you speak to him or not, he knows what you think of this or that proceeding.

"Such is the universal instrument employed in Paris for diving into secrets; and this is what determines the actions of persons in power more willingly than any thing that could be imagined in reasoning or politics.

"The employment of spies has destroyed the ties of confidence and friendship. None but frivolous questions are agitated, and the government dictates, as it were, to citizens the subject on which they shall speak in the evening in coffee-houses, as well as in private circles.

"The people have absolutely lost every idea of civil or political administration; and if any thing could excite laughter in the midst of an ignorance so deplorable, it would be the conversation of such a silly fellow who constantly imagines that Paris must give the law and the *ton* to all Europe, and thence to all the world.

"The men belonging to the police are a mass of corruption which the Minister of that department divides into two parts: of the one, he makes spies or *mouchards*; of the other, satellites, *exempts*, that is, officers, whom he afterwards lets loose against pickpockets, swindlers, thieves, &c., much in the same manner as a huntsman sets hounds on wolves and foxes.

"The spies have other spies at their heels, who watch over them, and see that they do their duty. They all accuse each other reciprocally, and worry one another for the vilest gain."

I cannot here avoid interrupting my copious but laboriously-gathered selection from MERCIER, to relate an anecdote which shews in what a detestable light *mouchards* are considered in Paris.

A man who appeared to be in tolerably good circumstances, fell in love, and married a girl whom the death of her parents and accumulated distress had driven to a life of dissipation. At the end of a few months, she learnt that her husband was a spy of the police. "Probably," said, she to him, "you did not take up this trade till after you had reflected that in following that of a thief or a murderer, you would have risked your life." On saying this, she ran out of the house, and precipitated herself from the *Pont Royal* into the Seine, where she was drowned.—But to resume the observations of MERCIER.

"It is from these odious dregs," continues our author, "that public order arises.

"When the *mouchards* of the police have acted contrary to their instructions, they are confined in the house of correction; but they are separated from the other prisoners, because they would be torn to pieces by those whom they have caused to be imprisoned, and who would recognize them. They inspire less pity on account of the vile trade which they follow. One sees with surprise, and with still more pain, that these fellows are very young. Spies, informers at sixteen!—O! what a shocking life does this announce!" exclaims MERCIER. "No; nothing ever distressed me more than to see boys act such a part.... And those who form them into squads, who drill them, who corrupt such inexperienced youth!"

Such is the admirable order which reigns in Paris, that a man suspected or described is watched so closely, that his smallest steps are known, till the very moment when it is expedient to apprehend him.

"The description taken of the man is a real portrait, which it is impossible to mistake; and the art of thus describing the person by words, is carried to so great a nicety, that the best writer, after much reflection on the matter, could add nothing to it, nor make use of other expressions.

"The Theseuses of the police are on foot every night to purge the city of robbers, and it might be said that the lions, bears, and tigers are chained by political order.

"There are also the court-spies, the town-spies, the bed-spies, the street-spies, the spies of impures, and the spies of wits: they are all called by the name of *mouchards*, the family name of the first spy employed by the court of France.

"Men of fashion at this day follow the trade of *mouchards*; most of them style themselves *Monsieur le Baron*, *Monsieur le Comte*, *Monsieur le Marquis*. There was a time, under Lewis XV, when spies were so numerous, that it was impossible for friends, who assembled together, to open their heart to each other concerning matters which deeply affected their interest. The ministerial inquisition had posted its sentinels at the door of every room, and listeners in every closet. Ingenuous confidences, made from friends to friends, and intended to die in the very bosom where they had been deposited, were punished as dangerous conspiracies.

"These odious researches poisoned social life, deprived men of pleasures the most innocent, and transformed citizens into enemies who trembled to unbosom themselves to each other.

"One fourth of the servants in Paris serve as spies; and the secrets of families, which are thought the most concealed, come to the knowledge of those interested in being acquainted with them.

"Independently of the spies of the police, ministers have spies belonging to themselves, and keep them in pay: these are the most dangerous of all, because they are less suspected than others, and it is more difficult to know them. By these means, ministers know what is said of them; yet, of this they avail themselves but little. They are more intent to ruin their enemies, and thwart their adversaries, than to derive a prudent advantage from the free and ingenuous hints given them by the multitude.

"It is entertaining enough to consider that, in proper time and place, spies are watching him who, at his pleasure, sets spies to watch other citizens. Thus, the links which connect mankind in political order are really incomprehensible. He who does not admire the manner in which society exists, and is supported by the simultaneous reaction of its members, and who sees not the serpent's *tail* entering its *mouth*, is not born for reflection.

"But the secrets of courts are not revealed through spies; they get wind by means of certain people who are not in the least mistrusted; in like manner the best built ships leak through an imperceptible chink, which cannot be discovered.

"What is interesting in courts, and particularly so in ours," says MERCIER, "is that there is a degree of obscurity spread over all its proceedings. We wish to penetrate what is concealed, we endeavour to know till we learn; thus it is that the most ingenious machine preserves its highest value only till we have seen the springs which set it in motion.

"After having considered the different parts which form the police of the capital, we still perceive all the radii reaching from the centre to the circumference. How many ramifications issue from the same stem! How far the branches extend! What an impulse does not Paris give to other neighbouring cities!

"The police of Paris has an intimate correspondence with that of Lyons and other provincial cities: for it is evident that it would be imperfect, if it could not follow the disturber of public order, and if the distance of a few leagues skreened him from researches.

"The correspondence of the Parisian police is not therefore limited to its walls; it extends much farther; and it is in towns where imprudent or rash persons would imagine that they might give their tongue greater freedom, that the vigilant magistrate pries into conversation, and keeps a watchful eye over those who would measure their audacity by the degree of distance from the capital.

"Thus the police of Paris, after having embraced France, penetrates also into Switzerland, Italy, Holland, and Germany;[3] and when occasion requires, its eye is open on all sides to what can interest the government. When it wishes to know any fact, it is informed of it to a certainty; when it wishes to strike a serious blow, it seldom misses its aim.

"It may easily be conceived that the machine would be incomplete, and that its play would fail in the desired effect, did it not embrace a certain extent. It costs but little to give to the lever the necessary length. Whether the spy be kept in pay at Paris, or a hundred leagues off, the expense is the same, and the utility becomes greater.

"Experience has shewn that these observations admit of essential differences in the branches of the police. Weights and measures must be changed, according to time, place, persons, and circumstances. There are no fixed rules; they must be created at the instant, and the most versatile actions are not destitute of wisdom and reason.

"Of this wholesale legislators are not aware: it is reserved for practitioners to seize these shades of distinction. There must be a customary, and, as it were, every-day policy, in order to decide well without precipitation, without weakness, and without rigour. What would be a serious fault at Paris, would be a simple imprudence at Lyons, an indifferent thing elsewhere, and so on reciprocally.

"Now this science has not only its details and its niceties, it has also its variations, and sometimes even its oppositions. Ministers must have a steady eye and great local experience, in order to be able to strike true, and strike opportunely, without espousing imaginary terrors; which, in matters of police, is the greatest fault that can be committed.[4]

"LYCURGUS, SOLON, LOCKE, and PENN! you have made very fine and majestic laws; but would you have divined these? Although secret, they exist; they have their wisdom, and even their depth. The distance of a few leagues gives to matters of police two colours, which bear to each other no resemblance; and there is no principal town which is not obliged, in modeling its police on that of Paris, to introduce into it the greatest modifications. The motto of every Minister of Police ought to be this: *The letter of the law kills, its spirit gives life.*

"The safety of Paris, during the night, is owing to the guard[5] and two or three hundred *mouchards*, who trot about the streets, and recognize and follow suspected persons. It is chiefly by night that the police makes its captions."

The manner in which these captions are made is humorously, gravely, feelingly, and philosophically described by the ingenious MERCIER. Long as this letter already is, I am confident that you will not regret its being still lengthened by another extract or two relative to this interesting point; thus I shall terminate the only elucidation that you are likely to obtain on a subject which has so strongly excited your curiosity.

"The comic," says our lively author, "is here blended with the serious. The fulminating order, which is going to crush you, is in the pocket of the *exempt*, who feels a degree of pleasure in the exercise of his dreadful functions. He enjoys a secret pride in being bearer of the thunder; he fancies himself the eagle of Jove: but his motion is like that of a serpent. He glides along, dodges you, crouches before you, approaches your ear, and with down-cast eyes and a soft-toned voice, says to you, at the same time shrugging his shoulders: '*Je suis au désespoir, Monsieur; mais j'ai un ordre, Monsieur, qui vous arrête, Monsieur; de la part de la police, Monsieur*.'----'*Moi, Monsieur*?'----'*Vous-même, Monsieur*.'----You waver an instant between anger and indignation, ready to vent all sorts of imprecations. You see only a polite, respectful, well-bred man, bowing to you, mild in his speech, and civil in his manners. Were you the most furious of mankind, your wrath would be instantly disarmed. Had you pistols, you would discharge them in the air, and never against the affable *exempt*. Presently you return him his bows: there even arises between you a contest of politeness and good breeding. It is a reciprocity of obliging words and compliments, till the moment when the resounding bolts separate you from the polite man, who goes to make a report of his mission, and whose employment, by no means an unprofitable one, is to imprison people with all possible gentleness, urbanity, and grace.

"I am walking quietly in the street; before me is a young man decently dressed. All at once four fellows seize on him, collar him, push him against the wall, and drag him away. Natural instinct commands me to go to his assistance; a tranquil witness says to me coolly: 'Don't interfere; 'tis nothing, sir, but a caption made by the police.' The young man is handcuffed, and he disappears.

"I wish to enter a narrow street, a man belonging to the guard is posted there as a sentinel: I perceive several of the populace looking out of the windows. 'What's the matter, sir?' say I.----'Nothing,' replies he; 'they are only taking up thirty girls of the town at one cast of the net.' Presently the girls, with top-knots of all colours, file off, led by the soldiers of the guard, who lead them gallantly by the hand, with their muskets clubbed.

"It is eleven o'clock at night, or five in the morning, there is a knock at your door; your servant opens it; in a moment your room is filled with a squad of satellites. The order is precise, resistance is vain; every thing that might serve as a weapon is put out of your reach; and the *exempt*, who will not, on that account, boast the less of his bravery even takes your brass pocket-inkstand for a pistol.

"The next day, a neighbour, who has heard a noise in the house, asks what it might be: 'Nothing, 'tis only a man taken up by the police.'----'What has he done?'----'No one can tell; he has, perhaps, committed a murder, or sold a suspicious pamphlet.'----'But, sir, there's some difference between those two crimes.'----'May be so; but he is carried off.'

"You have been apprehended; but you have not been shewn the order; you have been put into a carriage closely shut up; you know not whither you are going to be taken; but you may be certain that you will visit the wards or dungeons of some prison.

"Whence proceeds the decree of proscription? You cannot rightly guess.

"It is not necessary to write a thick volume against arbitrary arrests. When one has said, *it is an arbitrary act*, one may, without any difficulty, infer every possible consequence. But all captions are not equally unjust: there are a multitude of secret and dangerous crimes which it would be impossible for the ordinary course of the law to take cognizance of, to put a stop to, and punish. When the minister is neither seduced nor deceived, when he yields not to private passion, to blind prepossession, to misplaced severity, his object is frequently to get rid of a disturber of the public peace; and the police, in the manner in which the machine is set up, could not proceed, at the present day, without this quick, active, and repressive power.

"It were only to be wished that there should be afterwards a particular tribunal, which should weigh in an exact scale the motives of each caption, in order that imprudence and guilt, the pen and the poniard, the book and the libel, might not be confounded.

"The inspectors of police determine on their part a great many subaltern captions; as they are generally believed on their word, and as they strike only the lowest class of the people, the chief readily concedes to them the details of this authority.

"Some yield to their peevishness; others, to their caprice: but who knows whether avarice has not also a share in their proceedings, and whether they do not often favour him who pays at the expense of him who does not pay? Thus the liberty of the distressed and lowest citizens would have a tarif; and this strange tax would bear hard on the very numerous portion of *prostitutes*, *professed gamblers*, *quacks*, *hawkers*, *swindlers*, and *adventurers*, all people who do mischief, and whom it is necessary to punish; but who do more mischief when they are obliged to pay, and purchase, during a certain time, the privilege of their irregularities.

"We have imitated from the English their Vauxhall, their Ranelagh, their whist, their punch, their hats, their horse-races, their jockies, their betting; but," concludes MERCIER, "when shall we copy from them something more important, for instance, that bulwark of liberty, the law of *habeas corpus*?"

Footnote 1: The office of Minister of the Police has since been abolished. M. FOUCHÉ is now a Senator, and the machine of which he was said to be so expert a manager, is confided to the direction of the Prefect of Police, who exercises his functions under the immediate authority of the Ministers, and corresponds with them concerning matters which relate to their respective departments. The higher duties of the Police are at present vested in the *Grand Juge*, who is also Minister of Justice. The former office is of recent creation. Return to text

Footnote 2: Voltaire thought otherwise; and he was not mistaken. Return to text

Footnote 3: I shall exemplify this truth by two remarkable facts. About the year 1775, when M. DE SARTINE was Minister of the Police, several forgeries were committed on the Bank of Vienna; Count DE MERCY, then Austrian ambassador at Paris, was directed to make a formal application for the delinquent to be delivered up to justice. What was his astonishment on receiving, a few hours after, a note from M. DE SARTINE, informing him that the author of the said forgeries had never been in Paris; but resided in Vienna, at the same time mentioning the street, the number of the house, and other interesting particulars!

A circumstance which occurred in 1796, proves that, since the revolution, the system of the Parisian police continues to extend to foreign countries. The English Commissary for prisoners of war was requested by a friend to make inquiry, on his arrival in Paris, whether a French lady of the name of BEAUFORT was living, and in what part of France she resided. He did so; and the following day, the card, on which he had written the lady's name, was returned to him, with this addition: "She lives at No. 47, East-street, Manchester-square, London." Return to text

Footnote 4: The same principle holds good in politics. Return to text

Footnote 5: The municipal guard of Paris at present consists of 2334 men. The privates must be above 30 and under 45 years of age. Return to text

LETTER LXXII.

Paris, February 26, 1802.

Referring to an expression made use of in my letter of the 16th of December last,[1] you ask me "What the sciences, or rather the *savans* or men of science, have done for this people?" With the assistance of a young Professor in the *Collège de France*, who bids fair to eclipse all his competitors, it will not be difficult for me to answer your question.

Let me premise, however, that the *savans* to whom I allude, must not be confounded with the philosophers, called *Encyclopædists*, from their having been the first to conceive and execute the plan of the *Encyclopædia*. These *savans* were DIDEROT, D'ALEMBERT, and VOLTAIRE, all professed atheists, who, by the dissemination of their pernicious doctrine, introduced into France an absolute contempt for all religion. This infidelity, dissolving every social tie, every principle between man and man, between the governing and the governed, in the sequel, produced anarchy, rapine, and all their attendant horrors.

At the beginning of the revolution, every mind being turned towards politics, the Sciences were suddenly abandoned: they could have no weight in the struggle which then occupied every imagination. Presently their existence was completely forgotten. Liberty formed the subject of every writing and every discourse: it seemed that orators alone possessed the power of serving her; and this error was partly the cause of the calamities which afterwards overwhelmed France. The greater part of the *savans* remained simple spectators of the events which were preparing: not one of them openly took part against the revolution. Some involved themselves in it. Those men were urged by great views, and hoped to find, in the renewal of social organization, a mean of applying and realizing their theories. They thought to master the revolution, and were carried away by its torrent; but at that time the most sanguine hopes were indulged. If the love of liberty be no more than a phantom of the brain, if the wish to render men better and happier be no more than a matter of doubt, such errors may be pardoned in those who have paid for them with their life.

It is in the recollection of every one that the National Convention consisted of two parties, which, under the same exterior, were hastening to contrary ends: the one, composed of ignorant and ferocious men, ruled by force; the other, more enlightened, maintained its ground by address. The former, restless possessors of absolute power, and determined to grasp at every thing for preserving it, strove to annihilate the talents and knowledge which made them sensible of their humiliating inferiority. The others, holding the same language, acted in an opposite direction. But being obliged, in order to preserve their influence, never to shew themselves openly, they employed their means with an extreme reserve, and this similarity at once explains the good they did, the evil they prevented, and the calamities which they were unable to avert.

At that time, France was on the very brink of ruin. *Landrecies*, *Le Quesnoy*, *Condé* and *Valenciennes* were in the power of her enemies. *Toulon* had been given up to the English, whose numerous fleets held the dominion of the seas, and occasionally effected debarkations. This country was a prey to famine and terror; *La Vendée*, *Lyons*, and *Marseilles* were in a state of insurrection. No arms, no powder; no ally that could or would furnish any; and its only resource lay in an anarchical government without either plan or means of defence, and skilful only in

persecution. In a word, every thing announced that the Republic would perish, before it could enjoy a year's existence.

In this extremity, two new members were called to the Committee of Public Welfare. These two men organized the armies, conceived plans of campaign, and prepared supplies.

It was necessary to arm nine hundred thousand men; and what was most difficult, it was necessary to persuade a mistrustful people, ever ready to cry out "treason!" of the possibility of such a prodigy. For this purpose, the old manufactories were comparatively nothing; several of them, situated on the frontiers, were invaded by the enemy. They were revived every where with an activity till then unexampled. *Savans* or men of science were charged to describe and simplify the necessary proceedings. The melting of the church-bells yielded all the necessary metal.[2] Steel was wanting; none could be obtained from abroad, the art of making it was unknown. The *Savans* were asked to create it; they succeeded, and this part of the public defence thus became independent of foreign countries.

The exigencies of the war had rendered more glaring the urgent necessity of having good topographical maps, and the insufficiency of those in use became every day more evident. The geographical engineers, which corps had been suppressed by the Constituent Assembly, were recalled to the armies, and although they could not, in these first moments, give to their labours the necessary extent and detail, they nevertheless paved the way to the great results since obtained in this branch of the art military. Nothing is more easy than to destroy; nothing is so difficult, and, above all, so tedious as to reconstruct.

The persons then in power had likewise had the prudence to preserve in their functions such pupils and engineers in the civil line as were of an age to come under the requisition. Whatever might be the want of defenders, it was felt that it requires ten years' study to form an engineer; while health and courage suffice for making a soldier. This disastrous period affords instances of foresight and skill which have not always been imitated in times more tranquil.

The Sciences had just rendered great services to the country. They were calumniated; those who had made use of them were compelled to defend them, and did so with courage. A circumstance, equally singular and unforeseen, occasioned complete recourse to be had to their assistance.

An officer arrived at the Committee of Public Welfare: he announced that the republican armies were in presence of the enemy; but that the French generals durst not march their soldiers to battle, because the brandies were poisoned, and that the sick in the hospitals, having drunk some, had died. He requested the Committee to cause them to be examined, asked for orders on this subject, and wished to set off again immediately.

The most skilful chymists were instantly assembled: they were ordered to analyze the brandies, and to indicate, in the course of the day, the poison and the remedy.

These *savans* laboured without intermission, trusting only to themselves for the most minute details. Scarcely was time allowed them to finish their operations, when they were summoned to appear before the Committee of Public Welfare, over which ROBESPIERRE presided.

They announced that the brandies were not poisoned, and that water only had been added to them, in which was slate in suspension, so that it was sufficient to filter them, in order to deprive them of their hurtful quality.

ROBESPIERRE, who hoped to discover a treason, asked the Commissioners if they were perfectly sure of what they had just advanced. As a satisfactory answer to the question, one of them took a strainer, poured the liquor through it, and drank it without hesitation. All the others followed his example. "What!" said ROBESPIERRE to him, "do you dare to drink these poisoned brandies?"---- "I durst do much more," answered he, "when I put my name to the Report."

This service, though in itself of little importance, impressed the public mind with a conception of the utility of the *savans*, a greater number of whom were called into the Committee of Public Welfare. There they were secure from subaltern informers, with which France abounded. Having concerns only with the members charged with the military department, who were endeavouring to save them, they might, by keeping silence, escape the suspicious looks of the tyrants of the day. There was then but one resource for men of merit and virtue, namely, to conceal their existence, and cause themselves to be forgotten.

In the midst of this sanguinary persecution, all the means of defence employed by France, issued from the obscure retreat where the genius of the Sciences had taken refuge.

Powder was the article for which there was the most urgent occasion. The soldiers were on the point of wanting it. The magazines were empty. The administrators of the powder-mills were assembled to know what they could do. They declared that the annual produce amounted to three millions of pounds only, that the basis of it was saltpetre drawn from India, that extraordinary encouragements might raise them to five millions; but that no hopes ought to be entertained of exceeding that quantity. When the members of the Committee of Public Welfare announced to the administrators that they must manufacture seventeen millions of pounds of powder in the space of a few months, the latter remained stupified. "If you succeed in doing this," said they, "you must have a method of making powder of which we are ignorant."

This, however, was the only mean of saving the country. As the French were almost excluded from the sea, it was impossible to think of procuring saltpetre from India. The *savans* offered to extract all from the soil of the Republic. A general requisition called to this labour the whole mass of the people. Short and simple directions, spread with inconceivable activity, made, of a difficult art, a common process. All the abodes of men and animals were explored. Saltpetre was sought for even in the ruins of Lyons; and soda, collected from among the ashes of the forests of La Vendée.

The results of this grand movement would have been useless, had not the Sciences been seconded by new efforts. Native saltpetre is not fit for making powder; it is mixed with salts and earths which render it moist, and diminish its activity. The process employed for purifying it demanded considerable time. The construction of powder-mills alone would have required several months, and before that period, France might have been subjugated. Chymistry invented new methods for refining and drying saltpetre in a few days. As a substitute for mills, pulverized charcoal, sulphur, and saltpetre were mixed, with copper balls, in casks which were turned round by hand. By these means, powder was made in twelve hours; and thus was verified that bold assertion of a member of the Committee of Public Welfare: "Earth impregnated with saltpetre shall be produced," said he, "and, in five days after, your cannon shall be loaded."

Circumstances were favourable for fixing, in all their perfection, the only arts which occupied France. Persons from all the departments were sent to Paris, in order to be instructed in the manufacture of arms and saltpetre. Rapid courses of lectures were given on this subject. They contributed little to the general movement, which had saved the Republic, but they had an effect no less important, that of bringing to light the astonishing facility of the French for acquiring the arts and sciences; a happy gift which forms one of the finest features in the character of the nation.

Notwithstanding so many services rendered by the Sciences, the learned were not less persecuted; the most celebrated among them were the most exposed. The venerable DAUBENTON, the co-operator in the labours of BUFFON, escaped persecution only because he had written a work on the improvement of sheep, and was taken for a simple shepherd. COUSIN was not so fortunate; yet, in his confinement, he had the stoicism to compose works of geometry, and give lessons of physics to his companions of misfortune.

LAVOISIER, that immortal character, whose generosity in promoting the progress of science could be equalled only by his own enlightened example in cultivating it, was also apprehended. As one of the Commissioners for fixing the standard of weights and measures, great hopes were entertained that he might be restored to liberty. Measures were taken with that intention; but these were not suited to the spirit of the moment. The commission was dissolved, and LAVOISIER left in prison. Shortly after, this ever to be lamented *savant* was taken to the scaffold. He would still be living, had his friends acted on the cupidity of the tyrants who then governed, instead of appealing to their justice.

About this period, some members of the Convention having introduced a discussion in favour of public instruction, it was strongly opposed by the revolutionary party, who saw in the Sciences nothing but a poison which enervated republics. According to them, the finest schools were the popular societies. To do good was then impossible, and to shew an inclination to do it, exposed to the greatest danger the small number of enlightened men France still possessed.

In this point of view, every thing was done that circumstances permitted. A military school was created, where young men from all the departments were habituated to the exercise of arms and the life of a camp. It was called *L'École de Mars*. Its object was not to form officers, but intelligent soldiers, who, spread in the French armies, should soon render them the most enlightened of Europe, as they were already the most inured to the hardships of war.

Thus, a small number of men, whose conduct has been too ill appreciated, alone retarded, by constant efforts, the progress of barbarism and struggled in a thousand ways against the oppression which others contented themselves with supporting.

At length, the bloody throne, raised by ROBESPIERRE, was overthrown: hope succeeded to terror; and victory, to defeat. Then, the Sciences, issuing from the focus in which they had been concentered and concealed, reappeared in all their lustre. The services they had rendered, the dangers which had threatened them, were felt and acknowledged. The plan of campaign, formed by the scientific men, called to the Committee of Public Welfare, had completely succeeded. The French armies had advanced on the rear of those of the allies, and, threatening to cut off their retreat, not only forced them to abandon the places they had taken, but also marched from conquest to conquest on their territory.

The means of having iron, steel, saltpetre, powder, and arms, had been created during the reign of terror. The following were the results of this grand movement at the beginning of the third year of the Republic.

Twelve millions of pounds of saltpetre extracted from the soil of France in the space of nine months. Formerly, scarcely one million was drawn from it.

Fifteen founderies at work for the casting of brass cannon. Their annual produce increased to

7000 pieces. There existed in France but two establishments of this description before the revolution.

Thirty founderies for iron ordnance, yielding 13,000 pieces per year. At the breaking out of the war, there were but four, which yielded annually 900 pieces of cannon.

The buildings for the manufacture of shells, shot, and all the implements of artillery, multiplied in the same proportion.

Twenty new manufactories for side-arms, directed by a new process. Before the war, there existed but one.

An immense manufactory of fire-arms established all at once in Paris, and yielding 140,000 muskets per year, that is, more than all the old manufactories together. Several establishments of this nature formed on the same plan in the different departments of the Republic.

One hundred and eighty-eight workshops for repairing arms of every description. Before the war, there existed but six.

The establishment of a manufactory of carbines, the making of which was till then unknown in France.

The art of renewing the touch-hole of cannon discovered, and carried immediately to a perfection which admits of its being exercised in the midst of camps.

A description of the means by which tar, necessary for the navy, may be speedily extracted from the pine-tree.

Balloons and telegraphs converted into machines of war.

All the process of the arts relative to war simplified and improved by the application of the most learned theories.

A secret establishment formed at Meudon for that purpose. Experiments there made on the oxy-muriate of potash, on fire-balls, on hollow-balls, on ring-balls, &c.

Great works begun for extracting from the soil of France every thing that serves for the construction, equipment, and supplies of ships of war.

Several researches for replacing or reproducing the principal materials which the exigencies of the war had consumed, and for increasing impure potash, which the making of powder had snatched from the other manufactories.

Simple and luminous directions for fixing the art of making soap, and bringing it within reach of the meanest capacity.

The invention of the composition of which pencils are now made in France, the black lead for which was previously drawn from England; and what was inappreciable in those critical circumstances, the discovery of a method for tanning, in a few days, leather which generally required several years' preparation.

In a word, if we speak of the territorial acquisitions, which were the result of the victories obtained by means of the extraordinary resources created by the men of science, France has acquired an extent of 1,498 square leagues, and a population of 4,381,266 individuals; namely, Savoy, containing 411,700 inhabitants; the County of Nice, 93,166; Avignon, the *Comtat Venaissin*, and Dutch Flanders, 200,500; Maëstricht and Venloo, 90,000; Belgium, 1,880,000; the left bank of the Rhine, 1,658,500; Geneva and its territory, 40,000; and Mulhausen, 7,200.

P.S. Paris is now all mirth and gaiety; in consequence of the revived pleasures of the Carnival. I shall not give you my opinion of it till its conclusion.

Footnote 1: See Vol. I. Letter XXXIV. Return to text

Footnote 2: The bells produced 27,442,852 pounds of metal. This article, valued at 10 *sous* per pound, represents 15 millions of francs (*circa* £625,000 sterling). A part served for the fabrication of copper coin, the remainder furnished pieces of ordnance. Return to text

LETTER LXXIII

Paris, February 28, 1802.

In all great cities, one may naturally expect to find great vices; but in regard to gaming, this capital presents a scene which, I will venture to affirm, is not to be matched in any part of the world. No where is the passion, the rage for play so prevalent, so universal: no where does it cause so much havock and ruin. In every class of society here, gamesters abound. From men revelling in wealth to those scarcely above beggary, every one flies to the gaming-table; so that it follows, as a matter of course, that Paris must contain a great number of *Maisons de jeu*, or

They are to be met with in all parts of the town, though the head-quarters are in the *Palais du Tribunat*, or, as it is most commonly called, the *Palais Royal*. Whenever you come to Paris, and see, on the first story, a suite of rooms ostentatiously illuminated, and a blazing reverberator at the door, you may be certain that it is a house of this description.

Before the revolution, gaming was not only tolerated in Paris, but public gaming-houses were then licensed by the government, under the agreeable name of *Académies de jeu*. There, any one might ruin himself under the immediate superintendance of the police, an officer belonging to which was always present. Besides these academies, women of fashion and impures of the first class were allowed to keep a gaming-table or *tripot de jeu*, as it was termed, in their own house. This was a privilege granted to them in order that they might thereby recover their shattered fortune. When all the necessary expenses were paid, these ladies commonly shared the profits with their protectors, that is, with their friends in power, through whose protection the *tripot* was sanctioned. Every one has heard of the fatal propensity to gaming indulged in by the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. The French women of quality followed her pernicious example, as the young male nobility did that of the Count d'Artois and the Duke of Orleans; so that, however decided might be the personal aversion of Lewis XVI to gaming, it never was more in fashion at the court of France than during his reign. This is a fact, which can be confirmed by General S---th and other Englishmen who have played deep at the queen's parties.

At the present day, play is, as I have before stated, much recurred to as a financial resource, by many of the *ci-devant* female *noblesse* in Paris. In their parties, *bouillotte* is the prevailing game; and the speculation is productive, if the company will sit and play. Consequently, the longer the sitting, the greater the profits. The same lady who moralizes in the morning, and will read you a lecture on the mischievous consequences of gaming, makes not the smallest hesitation to press you to sit down at her *bouillotte* in the evening, where she knows you will almost infallibly be a loser. No protection, I believe, is now necessary for a lady who chooses to have a little private gaming at her residence, under the specious names of *société*, *bal*, *thé*, or *concert*. But this is not the case with the *Maisons de jeu*, where the gaming-tables are public; or even with private houses, where the object of the speculation is publicly known. These purchase a license in the following manner. A person, who is said to have several *sleeping* partners, engages to pay to the government the sum of 3,600,000 francs (*circa* £150,000 sterling) a year for the power of licensing all gaming-houses in this capital, and also to account for a tenth part of the profits, which enter the coffer of the minister at the head of the department of the police. This contribution serves to defray part of the expense of greasing the wheels of that intricate machine. Without such a license, no gaming-house can be opened in Paris. Sometimes it is paid for by a share in the profits, sometimes by a certain sum per sitting.

These *Maisons de jeu*, where dupes are pitted against cheats, are filled from morning to night with those restless beings, who, in their eager pursuit after fortune, almost all meet with disappointment, wretchedness, ruin, and every mischief produced by gaming. This vice, however, carries with it its own punishment; but it is unconquerable in the heart which it ravages. It lays a man prostrate before those fantastic idols, distinguished by the synonymous names of fate, chance, and destiny. It banishes from his mind the idea of enriching himself, or acquiring a competence by slow and industrious means. It feeds, it inflames his cupidity, and deceives him in order to abandon him afterwards to remorse and despair.

From the mere impulse of curiosity, I have been led to visit some of the principal *Maisons de jeu*. I shall therefore represent what I have seen.

In a spacious suite of apartments, where different games of chance are played, is a table of almost immeasurable length, covered with a green cloth, with a red piece at one end, and a black, one at the other. It is surrounded by a crowd of persons of both sexes, squeezed together, who, all suspended between fear and hope, are waiting, with eager eyes and open mouth, for the favourable or luckless chance. I will suppose that the banker or person who deals the cards, announces "*rouge perd, couleur gagne*." The oracle has spoken. At these words of fate, on one side of the table, you see countenances smiling, but with a smile of inquietude, and on the other, long faces, on which is imprinted the palid hue of death. However, the losers recover from their stupor: they hope that the next chance will be more fortunate. If that happens, and the banker calls out "*rouge gagne, couleur perd*;" then the scene changes, and the same persons whom you have just seen so gay, make a sudden transition from joy to sadness, and *vice versa*. This contrast no language can paint, and you must see it, in order to conceive how the most headstrong gamblers can spend hour after hour in such a continual state of agitation, in which they are alternately overwhelmed by rage, anguish, and despair. Some are seen plucking out their hair by the roots, scratching their face, and tearing their clothes to pieces, when, after having lost considerable sums, frequently they have not enough left to pay for a breakfast or dinner. What an instructive lesaon for the novice! What a subject of reflection for the philosophic spectator! At these scenes of folly and rapacity it is that the demon of suicide exults in the triumphs he is on the point of gaining over the weakness, avarice, and false pride of mortals. If the wretched victim has not recourse to a pistol, he probably seeks a grave at the bottom of the river.

Among these professed gamblers, it often happens that some of them, in order to create what they term *resources*, imagine tricks and impostures scarcely credible. I shall relate an anecdote which I picked up in the course of my inquiries respecting the garning-houses in Paris. It may be

necessary to premise that the counterfeit louis, which are in circulation in this country, and have nearly the appearance of the real coin, are employed by these knaves; they commonly produce them at night, because they then run less risk of being detected in passing them; but these means are very common and almost out of date.

In the great gaming-houses in Paris, it is customary to have on the table several *rouleaux* of louis d'or. An old, experienced gambler came one day to a house of this class, with his pockets full of leaden *rouleaux* of the exact form and size of those containing fifty louis d'or. He placed at one of the ends of the table (either black or red) one of his leaden *rouleaux*: he lost. The master of the bank took up his *rouleau*, and, without opening it, put it with the good *rouleaux* in the middle of the table, where the bank is kept. The old gambler, without being disconcerted, staked another. He won, and withdrew the good *rouleau* given him, leaving the counterfeit one on the table, at the same time calling out, "I stake ten louis out of the *rouleau*." The cards were drawn; he won: the banker, to pay him the ten louis, took a *rouleau* from the bank. Chance willed that he lighted on the leaden *rouleau*. He endeavoured to break it open by striking it on the table: the *rouleau* withstood his efforts. The gambler, without deranging his features, then said to the banker; "Mind you don't break it." The banker, disconcerted, tore the paper, and, on opening it, found it to contain nothing but lead. There being no positive proof against the gambler, he was permitted to retire, and his only punishment was to be in future excluded from this gaming-house. But he had the consolation of knowing that ninety-nine others would be open to him. However, this and other impostures have led to a regulation, that, in all these houses, the value of every stake should be apparent to the eye, and openly exposed on the table.

From what I have said you might infer that *trente-et-un* (or *rouge et noir*) is the most fashionable game played here; but, though this is the case, it is not the only one in high vogue. Many others, equally pernicious, are pursued at the same time, such as *la roulette*, *passe-dix*, and *biribi*, at which cheats and sharpers can, more at their ease, execute their feats of dexterity and schemes of plunder. Women frequent the gaming-tables as well as the men, and often pledge their last shift to make up a stake. It is shocking to contemplate a young female gamester, the natural beauty of whose countenance is distorted into deformity by a succession of agonizing passions. Yet so distressing an object is no uncommon thing in Paris.

You may, perhaps, be curious to know what are these games, of *trente-et-un*, *biribi*, *passe-dix,* and *la roulette*. Never having played at any of them, such a description as I might pretend to give, could at best be but imperfect. For which, reason I shall not engage in the attempt.

It is confidently affirmed that in the principal towns of France, namely, Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, Rouen, &c. the rage for play is no less prevalent than in the capital, where gaming-houses daily increase in number.[1] They are now established in every quarter in Paris, even the poorest, and there are some where the lowest of the populace can indulge in a *penchant* for gaming, as the stake is proportioned to their means. This is the ruin of every class of inhabitants and of foreigners; so much so, that suicides here increase in exact proportion to the increase of gaming-houses.

Is it not astonishing that the government should suffer, still more promote the existence of an evil so pernicious in every point of view? From the present state of the French finances, it would, notwithstanding, appear that every consideration, however powerful, must yield to the want of money required for defraying the expenses of the department of the Police.

Minima de malis was the excuse of the old government of France for promoting gaming. "From the crowd of dissipated characters of every description, accumulated in great cities," said its partisans, "governments find themselves compelled to tolerate certain abuses, in order to avoid evils of greater magnitude. They are forced to compound with the passions which they are unable to destroy; and it is better that men should be professed gamblers than usurers, swindlers, and thieves." Such was the reasoning employed in behalf of the establishment of the *Académies de jeu*, which existed prior to the revolution. Such is the reasoning reproduced, at the present day, in favour of the *Maisons de jeu*; but, when I reflect on all the horrors occasioned by gaming, I most ardently wish that every argument in favour of so destructive a vice, may be combated by a pen like that of Rousseau, which, Sir William Jones says, "had the property of spreading light before it on the darkest objects, as if he had written with phosphorus on the walls of a cavern."

Footnote 1: During the Carnival of the present year (1803) the masked balls at the grand French Opera were quite deserted, in consequence of a new gaming-house, established solely for foreigners, having, by the payment of considerable sums to the government, obtained permission to give masked balls. These balls were all the rage. There was one every Tuesday, and the employment of the whole week was to procure cards of invitation; for persons were admitted by *invitation* only, no money being taken. The rooms, though spacious, were warm and comfortable; the company, tolerably good, and extremely numerous, but chiefly composed of foreigners. *Treute-et-un, biribi, pharaon, creps*, and other fashionable games were played, so that the *speculators* could very well afford to give all sorts of refreshments, and an elegant supper *gratis*. Return to text

LETTER LXXIV.

Paris, March 1, 1802.

Of all the institutions subsisting here before the revolution, that which has experienced the greatest enlargement is the

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

This establishment, formerly called *Le Jardin du Roi*, and now more commonly known by the name of *Le Jardin des Plantes*, received its present denomination by a decree of the National Convention, dated the 10th of June 1793. It is situated on the south bank of the Seine, nearly facing the Arsenal, and consists of a botanical garden, a collection of natural history, a library of works relating to that science, an amphitheatre for the lectures, and a *ménagerie* of living animals.

Originally, it was nothing more than a garden for medicinal plants, formed under that title, in 1626, by GUY DE LA BROSSE, principal physician to Lewis XIII, who sanctioned the establishment by letters patent. The king's physicians were almost always intendants of this garden till the year 1739, when it was placed under the direction of BUFFON. Before his time, the cabinet was trifling. It consisted only of some curiosities collected by GEOFFROY, and a few shells which had belonged to TOURNEFORT; but, through the zeal of BUFFON, and the care of his co-operator DAUBENTON, it became a general *dépôt* of natural history, and its riches had increased still more than its utility. On the breaking out of the revolution, it had been protected through that sort of respect which the rudest men have for the productions of nature, whence they either receive or expect relief for their sufferings. It had even been constantly defended by the revolutionary administration, under whose control and dependence it was placed. Regarding it, in some measure, as their private property, their pride was interested in its preservation; and had any attempt been made to injure it, they would infallibly have caused an insurrection among the inhabitants of the surrounding *faubourg*. These singular circumstances, joined to the good understanding prevailing among the professors, had maintained this fine establishment in a state, if not increasing, at least stationary. On the revival of order, ideas were entertained of giving to it an extension which had already been projected and decreed, even during the reign of terror.

The botanical garden was enlarged; the extent of the ground intended for the establishment was doubled; a *ménagerie* was formed; new hot-houses and new galleries were constructed; the addition of new professors was confirmed, and all the necessary disbursements were made with magnificence. Thus, in the same place where every production of nature was assembled, natural history was for the first time taught in its aggregate; and these courses of lectures, become celebrated by the brilliancy of the facts illustrated in them, the number of pupils who frequent them, and the great works of which they have been the cause or the motive, have rendered the MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY one of the first establishments of instruction existing in Europe.

Formerly, there were but three professors attached to this establishment. At present, there are no less than thirteen, who each give a course of forty lectures. The courses of zoology and mineralogy take place in the halls of the cabinet containing the collections corresponding to each of those sciences. The courses of botany, anatomy, and chemistry are delivered in the great amphitheatre, and that of natural iconography in the library. The days and hours of the lectures are announced every year by particular advertisements.

The establishment is administered, under the authority of the Minister of the Interior, by the professors, who choose, annually, from among themselves, a director. At present, that situation is held by FOURCROY. Although this celebrated professor, in his lectures on chemistry, must principally attach himself to minerals, the particular object of chemical inquiry, he is far from neglecting vegetable and animal substances, the analysis of which will, in time, spread great light on organic bodies. The most recent discoveries on the exact constitution of bodies are made known in the course of these lectures, and a series of experiments, calculated for elucidating the demonstrations, takes place under the eyes of the auditors.

No one possesses more than FOURCROY the rare talent of classing well his subjects, of presenting facts in a striking point of view, and of connecting them by a succession of ideas extremely rapid, and expressed in a voice whose melody gives an additional charm to eloquence. The pleasure of hearing him is peculiarly gratifying; and, indeed, when he delivers a lecture, the amphitheatre, spacious as it is, is much too small to contain the crowd of auditors. Then, the young pupils are seen with their eyes stedfastly fixed on their master, catching his word with avidity, and fearing to lose one of them; thus paying by their attention the most flattering tribute to the astonishing facility of this orator of science, from whose lips naturally flow, as from a spring, the most just and most select expressions. Frequently too, carried away by the torrent of his eloquence, they forget what they have just heard, to think only of what he is saying. FOURCROY speaks in this manner for upwards of two hours, without any interruption, and, what is more, without tiring either his auditors or himself. He writes with no less facility than he speaks. This is proved by the great number of works which he has published. But in his writings, his style is more calm, more smooth than that of his lectures.

Each professor superintends and arranges the part of the collections corresponding to the science which he is charged to teach. For this purpose, there are also assistant naturalists, whose employment is to prepare the various articles of natural history. The keeper of the cabinet, under the authority of the director, takes all the measures necessary for the preservation of the collections. The principal ones are:

1. The cabinet of natural history, containing the animal kingdom, divided into its classes; the

mineral kingdom; the fossils, woods, fruits, and other vegetable productions, together with the herbals. This cabinet, which occupies the buildings on the right, on entering from the street, is open to students on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, from eleven o'clock till two, and to the public in general every Tuesday and Friday in the afternoon.

2. The library, chiefly composed of works relating to natural history, contains, among other valuable articles, an immense collection of animals and plants, painted on vellum. Three painters are charged to continue this collection under the superintendance of the professors. The library is open to the public every day from eleven o'clock to two.
3. The cabinet of anatomy, containing the preparations relative to the human race and to animals. It is situated in a separate building, and for the present open to students only.
4. The botanical school, containing the plants growing in the open ground, and the numerous hot-houses in which are cultivated those peculiar to warm countries.
5. The *ménagerie* of foreign animals. At the present moment, they are dispersed in various parts of the garden; but they are shortly to be assembled in a spacious and agreeable place.
6. The chemical laboratory and the collection of chemical productions.

To these may be added a laboratory for the preparation of objects of natural history, and another for that of objects of anatomy.

Notwithstanding the improved state to which BUFFON had brought this establishment, yet, through the united care of the several scientific men who have since had the direction of it, the constant attention bestowed on it by the government, and even by the conquests of the French armies, its riches have been so much increased, that its collection of natural history may at this day be considered as the finest in being. The department of the minerals and that of the quadrupeds are nearly complete; that of the birds is one of the most considerable and the handsomest known; and the other classes, without answering yet the idea which a naturalist might conceive of thenm, are, nevertheless, superior to what other countries have to offer.

Among the curious or scarce articles in this Museum, the following claim particular notice:

In the class of quadrupeds, adult individuals, stuffed, such as the camelopard, the hippopotamus, the single-horned rhinoceros, the Madagascar squirrel, the Senegal lemur, two varieties of the oran-outang, the proboscis-monkey, different specimens of the indri, some new species of bats and opossums, the Batavian kangaroo, and several antelopes, ant-eaters, &c.

In the class of birds, a great number of new or rare species, and among those remarkable either for size or beauty, are the golden vulture, the great American eagle, the Impey peacock, the Ju[*blot*] pheasant or argus, the plantain-eater, &c.

Among the reptiles, the crocodile of the Ganges, the fimbriated tortoise of Cayenne, &c.

Among the shells, the glass patella, and a number of valuable, scarce, or new species.

The collection of insects has just been completed through the assiduity of the estimable LAMARCK, the professor who has charge of that department.

In the mineral kingdom, independently of the numerous and select choice of all the specimens, are to be remarked as objects of particular curiosity, the petrifactions of crocodiles' bones found in the mountain of St. Pierre at Maëstricht, and the collection of impressions of fishes from Mount Bolca, near Verona.

At the present moment, the *ménagerie* contains a female elephant only, the male having died since my arrival in Paris, three dromedaries, two camels, five lions, male and female, a white bear, a brown bear, a mangousta, a civet, an alligator, an ostrich, and several other scarce and curious animals, the number and variety of which receive frequent additions. In other parts of the garden are inclosures for land and sea fowls, as well as ponds for fishes.

The denomination of *Jardin des Plantes* is very appropriate to this garden, as it furnishes to all the botanical establishments throughout France seeds of trees and plants useful to the p[*blot*]ess of agriculture and of the arts; and hence the indigent poor are supplied with such medicinal plants as are proper for the cure or relief of their complaints.

LETTER LXXV.

Paris, March 3, 1802.

It has been repeatedly observed that civilized nations adhere to their ancient customs for no other reason than because they are ancient. The French have, above all, a most decided partiality for those which afford them opportunities of amusement. It must therefore have been a subject of no small regret to them, on the annual return of those periods, to find the government taking every measure for the suppression of old habits. For some years since the revolution, all disguises and masquerades were strictly prohibited; but, though the executive power forbade pasteboard masks, its authority could not extend to those mental disguises which have been occasionally worn by many leading political characters in this country. No sooner was the prohibition against masquerading removed, than the Parisians gave full scope to the indulgence of their inclination; and this year was revived, in all its glory, the celebration of

THE CARNIVAL.

Yesterday was the conclusion of that mirthful period, during which Folly seemed to have taken possession of all the inhabitants of this populous city. Every thing that gaiety, whim, humour, and eccentricity could invent, was put in practice to render it a sort of continued jubilee. From morn to night, the concourse of masks of every description was great beyond any former example; but still greater was the concourse of spectators. All the principal streets and public gardens were thronged by singular characters, in appropriate dresses, moving about in small detached parties or in numerous close bodies, on foot, on horseback, or in carriages. The *Boulevards*, the *Rue de la Loi*, and the *Rue St. Honoré*, exhibited long processions of masks and grotesque figures, crowded both in the inside and on the outside of vehicles of all sorts, from a *fiacre* to a German waggon, drawn by two, four, six, and eight horses; while the *Palais Royal*, the *Tuileries*, the *Place de la Concorde*, and the *Champs Elysées* were filled with pedestrian wits, amusing the surrounding multitude by the liveliness of their sallies and the smartness of their repartee. Here S[*blot*]pins, Scaramouches, Punchinellos, Pierrots, Harlequins, and Columbines, together with nuns, friars, abbés, bishops, and *marquis* in caricature, enlivened the scene: there, sultans, sultanas, janissaries, mamlûks, Turks, Spaniards, and Indians, in stately pride, attracted attention. On one side, a Mars and Venus, an Apollo and Daphne, figured under the attributes of heathen mythology: on another, more than one Adam and Eve recalled to mind the origin of the creation.

To the eye of an untravelled Englishman, the novelty of this sight must have been a source of no small entertainment. If he was of a reflecting mind, however, it must have given rise to a variety of observations, and some of them of a rather serious nature. In admiring the order and decency which reigned amidst so much mirth and humour, he must have been desirous to appreciate the influence of political events on the character of this people. In a word, he must have been anxious to ascertain how far the return of our Gallic neighbours to their ancient habits, announces a return to their ancient institutions.

It is well known that the Carnival of modern times is an imitation of the Saturnalia of the ancients, and that the celebration of those festivals was remarkable for the liberty which universally prevailed; slaves being, at that period, permitted to ridicule their masters, and speak with freedom on every subject. During the last years of the French monarchy, the Parisians neglected not to avail themselves of this privilege. When all classes were confounded, at the time of the Carnival, the most elevated became exposed to the lash of the lowest; and, under the mask of satire, the abuses which had crept into religious societies, and the corruption which prevailed in every department of the State, escaped not their bold censure. From a consciousness, no doubt, of their own weakness, the different governments that have ruled over France since the revolution, dreaded the renewal of scenes in which their tottering authority might be overthrown; but such an apprehension cannot have been entertained by the present government, as manifestly appears from the almost unlimited license which has reigned during the late Carnival. Notwithstanding which, it is worthy of remark that no satirical disguises were met with, no shafts of ridicule were aimed at the constituted authorities, no invective was uttered against such and such an opinion, no abuse was levelled against this or that party. Censure and malice either slept or durst not shew themselves, though freedom of expression seemed to be under no restraint.

Formerly, when the people appeared indifferent to the motley amusements of the Carnival, and little disposed to mix in them, either as actors or spectators, it was not uncommon for the government to pay for some masquerading. The *mouchards* and underlings of the police were habited as grotesque characters, calculated to excite curiosity, and promote mirth. They then spread themselves, to the number of two or three thousand, over different parts of the town, and gave to the streets of Paris a false colouring of joy and gladness; for the greater the misery of the people, the more was it thought necessary to exhibit an outward representation of public felicity. But these political impostures, having been seen through, at length failed in their effect, and were nearly relinquished before the revolution. At that time, nothing diverted the populace so much as *attrapes* or bites; and every thing that engendered gross and filthy ideas was sure to please. Pieces of money, heated purposely, were scattered on the pavement, in order that persons, who attempted to pick them up, might burn their fingers. Every sort of bite was practised; but the greatest attraction and acme of delight consisted of *chianlits*, that is, persons masked, walking about, apparently, in their shirt, the tail of which was besmeared with mustard.

At the present day, these coarse and disgusting jokes are evidently laid aside, as some of a more rational kind are exhibited; such as the nun, partly concealed in a truss of straw, and strapped on the catering friar's back; the effect of the galvanic fluid; and many others too numerous to mention. No factitious mirth was this year displayed; it was all natural; and if it did not add to the small sum of happiness of the distressed part of the Parisian community, it must, for a while at least, have made them forget their wretchedness. With few exceptions, every one seemed employed in laughing or in exciting laughter. Many of the characters assumed were such as afforded an opportunity of displaying a particular species of wit or humour; but the dress of some of the masquerading parties, being an excellent imitation of the rich costumes of Asia, must have been extremely expensive.

To conclude, the masked balls at the Opera, on the last days of the Carnival, were numerously attended. Very few characters were here attempted, and those were but faintly supported. Adventures are the principal object of the frequenters of these balls, and I have reason to think that the persons who went in quest of them were not disappointed. In short, though I have often passed the Carnival in Paris, I never witnessed one that went off with greater *éclat*. As the

Turkish Spy observes, a small quantity of ashes, dropped, the day after its conclusion, on the head of these people in disguise, cools their frenzy. From being mad and foolish, they become calm and rational.

LETTER LXXVI.

Paris, March 5, 1802.

As I foresee that my private affairs will, probably, require my presence in England sooner than I expected, I hasten to give you an idea of the principal public edifices which I have not, yet noticed. One of these is the *Luxembourg* Palace, now called the

PALAIS DU SÉNAT CONSERVATEUR.

Mary of Medicis, relict of Henry IV, having purchased of the Duke of Luxembourg his hotel and its dependencies, erected on their site this palace. It was built in 1616, under the direction of JACQUES DE BROSSE, on the plan of the *Pitti* palace at Florence.

Next to the *Louvre*, the *Luxembourg* is the most spacious palace in Paris. It is particularly distinguished for its bold character, its regularity, and the beauty of its proportions. The whole façade is ornamented with coupled pilasters: on the ground-floor, the Tuscan order is employed, and above, the Doric, with alternate rustics. In the four pavilions, placed at the angles of the principal pile, the Ionic has been added to the other two orders, because they are more elevated than the rest of the buildings. Towards the *Rue de Tournon*, the two pavilions communicate by a handsome terrace, in the middle of which is a circular saloon, surmounted by a dome of the most elegant proportion. Beneath this dome is the principal entrance. The court is spacious, and on each side of it are covered arches which form galleries on the ground-floor and in front of the upper story.

The twenty-four pictures which Mary of Medicis had caused to be painted by the celebrated RUBENS, for the gallery of the *Luxembourg*, had been removed from it some years before the revolution. At that time even, they were intended for enriching the Museum of the *Louvre*. Four of them are now exhibited there in the Great Gallery. They are allegorical; with the other twenty, they represent the prosperous part of the history of that queen, and form a striking contrast to the adversity she afterwards experienced through the persecution of Cardinal Richelieu.

To gratify his revenge, he ordered all the furniture, &c. belonging to Mary of Medicis to be sold, together with the statues which then decorated the courts and garden of the *Luxembourg*, and pursued with inveteracy the unfortunate queen who had erected this magnificent edifice. Being exiled from France in 1631, she wandered for a long time in Flanders, and also in England, till the implacable cardinal prevailed on Charles I, to command her to quit the kingdom. In 1642, she took refuge at Cologne, and, at the age of 68, there died in a garret, almost through hunger and distress.

Before the revolution, this palace belonged to MONSIEUR, next brother to Lewis XVI. It has since been occupied by the Directory, each of whose members here had apartments. No material change has yet been made in it; nor does any thing announce that the partial alterations intended, either in its exterior or interior, will speedily be completed.

"----*Pendent opera interrupta minæque, &c.*"

At the present day, the *Luxembourg* is appropriated to the Conservative Senate, whose name it has taken, and who here hold their sittings in a hall, fitted up in a style of magnificence still superior to that of the Legislative Body. But the sittings of the former are not public like those of the latter; and as I had no more than a peep at their fine hall, I cannot enter into a description of its beauties.

However, I took a view of their garden, in which I had formerly passed many a pleasant hour. Here, workmen are employed in making considerable improvements. It was before very irregular, particularly towards the south, where the view from the palace was partly concealed by the buildings of the monastery of the Carthusians. By degrees, these irregularities are made to disappear, and this garden will shortly be laid out in such a manner as to correspond better with the majesty of the palace, and display its architecture to greater advantage. Alleys of trees, which were decayed from age, have been cut down, and replaced by young plants of thriving growth. In front of the south façade is to be a tasteful parterre, with an oblong piece of water in its centre. Beyond the garden is a large piece of ground formerly belonging to the Carthusian monastery, which is now nearly demolished; this ground is to be converted into a national nursery for all sorts of valuable fruit-trees. Being contiguous to the garden of the Senate, with which it communicates, it will furnish a very extensive promenade, and consequently add to the agreeableness of the place.

The present Minister of the Interior, CHAPTAL, who cultivates the arts and sciences with no less zeal than success, purposes to make here essays on the culture of vine-plants of every species, in order to obtain comparative results, which will throw a new light on that branch of rural economy.

A great number of vases and statues are placed in the garden of the Senate. Many of these works are indifferently executed, though a few of them are in a good style. Certainly, a more judicious and more decorous choice ought to have been made. It was not necessary to excite regret in the mind of the moralist, by placing under the eyes of the public figures of both sexes which are repugnant to modesty. If it be really meant to attempt to mend the loose morals of the nation, why are nudities, which may be considered as the leaven of corruption, exposed thus in this and other national gardens in Paris?

March 5, in continuation.

St. Foix, in his "*Essais historiques sur Paris*" speaking of the Bastille, says, "it is a castle, which, without being strong, is one of the most formidable in Europe." In their arduous struggle for liberty, the French have scarcely left a vestige of this dread abode, in which have been immured so many victims of political vengeance. I will not pretend to affirm that such is the description of prisoners now confined in

LE TEMPLE.

But when the liberty of individuals lies at the mercy of arbitrary power, every one has a right to draw his own inference.

This edifice takes its name from the Templars, whose chief residence it was till they were annihilated in 1313. Philip the Fair and Clement V contrived, under various absurd pretences, to massacre and burn the greater part of the knights of this order. The knights of St. John of Jerusalem were put in possession of all the property of the Templars, except such part as the king of France and the Pope thought fit to share between them. The *Temple* then became the provincial house of the Grand Priory of France.

The Grand Priory consisted of the inclosure within the walls of the *Temple*, where stood a palace for the Grand Prior, a church, and several houses inhabited by shopkeepers and mechanics; but, with the considerable domains annexed to it, this post, before the revolution, yielded to the eldest son of the Count d'Artois, as Grand Prior, an annual revenue of 200,000 livres. The inclosure was at that time a place of refuge for debtors, where they enjoyed the privilege of freedom from arrest.

The palace was erected by JACQUES SOUVRÉ, Grand Prior of France. Near it, is a large Gothic tower of a square form, flanked by four round turrets of great elevation, built by HUBERT, treasurer to the Templars, who died in 1222.

It was in this building, which was considered as one of the most solid in France, that Lewis XVI was confined from the middle of September 1792 to the day of his execution. From the 13th of August till that period, the royal family had occupied the part of the palace which has been preserved. This tower, when it had been entirely insulated and surrounded by a ditch, was inclosed by a high wall, which also included part of the garden. The casements were provided with strong iron bars, and masked by those shutters, called, I believe, *trunk-lights*. As for the life which the unhappy monarch led in this prison, a detailed narrative of it has been published in England, by Cléry, his faithful *valet-de-chambre*.

I have not been very anxious to approach the *Temple*, because I concluded that, if fame was not a liar, there was no probability of my having an opportunity of seeing any part of it, except the outer wall. The result was a confirmation of my opinion. Who are its occupiers? What is their number? What are their crimes? These are questions which naturally intrude themselves on the mind, when one surveys the turrets of this new Bastille—for, whether a place of confinement for state-prisoners be called *La Bastille* or *Le Temple*, nevertheless it is a state-prison, and reminds one of slavery, which, as Sterne says, is, in any disguise, a bitter draught; and though thousands, in all ages, have been made to drink of it, still it is not, on that account, less bitter.

LETTER LXXVII

Paris, March 8, 1802.

Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be always able to answer your inquiries without hesitation. Considering the round of amusements in which I live, I flatter myself you will readily admit that it requires no small share of good-will and perseverance to devote so much time to scribbling for your entertainment. As for information, you will, on your arrival in Paris, know how much or how little you have derived from the perusal of my letters. You will then have it in your power to compare and judge. With the originals before you, you cannot be at a loss to determine how far the sketches resemble them.

Some of your inquiries have been already answered in my former letters. Among the number, however, you will find no reply on the subject of the

PRESENT STATE OF THE FRENCH PRESS.

This question being of a nature no less delicate than that concerning the police, you cannot but

commend my discretion in adopting a similar method to gratify your curiosity; that is, to refer you to the intelligent author whom I quoted on the former occasion. If common report speaks the truth—*Sit mihi fas audita loqui?*—the press here is now in much the same state in which it was before the revolution. I shall therefore borrow again the language of MERCIER, who is a famous dreamer, inasmuch as many of his dreams have been realized: yet, with all his foresight and penetration, I question whether he ever dreamt that his picture of the French press, drawn in the interval between the years 1781 and 1788, would still be, in some respects, a true one at the beginning of the year 1802. But, as Boileau shrewdly remarks,

"*Le vrai peut quelquefois n'être pas vraisemblable.*"

"The enemies of books," says our author, "are the enemies of, knowledge, and consequently of mankind. The shackles with which the press is loaded, are an incitement for setting them at defiance. If we were to enjoy a decent liberty, we should no longer have recourse to licentiousness. There are political evils which the liberty of the press prevents, and this is already a great benefit. The interior police of States requires to be enlightened by disinterested writings. There is no one but the philosopher, satisfied with the esteem alone of his fellow-citizens, that can raise himself above the clouds formed by personal interest, and set forth the abuses of insidious custom. In short, the liberty of the press will always be the measure of civil liberty; and it is a species of thermometer, which shews, at one glance, what a people have lost or gained.

"If we adopt this maxim, we are every day losing; for every day the press is more restricted.

"Suffer people to think and speak; the public will judge: they will even find means to correct authors. The surest method to purify the press, is to render it free: obstacles irritate it: prohibitions and difficulties engender the pamphlets complained of.

"Could despotism kill thought in its sanctuary, and prevent us from communicating the essence of our ideas to the mind of our fellow-creatures, it would do so. But not being able quite to pluck out the philosopher's tongue, and cut off his hands, it establishes an inquisition, peoples the frontiers with searchers, spreads satellites, and opens every package, in order to interrupt the infallible progress of morality and truth. Useless and puerile effort! Vain attack on the natural right of general society, and on the patriotic rights of a particular one! Reason, from day to day, strikes nations with a greater lustre, and will at last shine unclouded. It answers no purpose to fear or persecute genius: nothing will extinguish in its hands the torch of truth: the decree which its mouth pronounces, will be repeated by all posterity against the unjust man. He wished to snatch from his fellow-creatures the most noble of all privileges, that of thinking, which is inseparable from that of existing: he will have manifested his weakness and folly; and he will merit the twofold reproach of tyranny and impotence.

"When a very flat, very atrocious, and very calumniating libel appears under a fellow's coat, 'tis a contest who shall have it first. People pay an exorbitant price for it; the hawker who cannot read, and who wishes only to get bread for his poor family, is apprehended, and sent to prison, where he shifts for himself as well as he can.

"The more the libel is prohibited, the more eager we are for it. When we have read it, and we see that nothing compensates for its mean temerity, we are ashamed to have sought after it. We scarcely dare say, *we have read it*: 'tis the scum of low literature, and what is there without its scum?

"Contempt would be the surest weapon against those miserable productions which are equally destitute of truth and talent.

"When will men in power know how to disdain equally the interested encomiums of intriguing flatterers and the satires produced by hunger?

"Besides, those who sit in the first boxes must always expect some shafts levelled at them by those who are in the pit; this becomes almost inevitable. They must needs pay for their more commodious place: at least we attribute to those who rule over us more enjoyments: they have some which they will avow, solely with a view to raise themselves above the multitude. The human heart is naturally envious. Let men in power then forgive or dissemble seasonably: satire will fall to the ground; it is by shewing themselves impassible, that they will disarm ardent malignity.

"Nevertheless, there is a kind of odious libel, which, having every characteristic of calumny, ought to be repressed. This is commonly nothing more than the fruit of anonymous and envenomed revenge: for what are the secret intrigues of courts to any man of letters? He will know time enough that which will suit the pen of history.

"A libeller should be punished, as every thing violent ought to be. But the parties interested should abstain from pronouncing; for where then would be the proportion between the punishment and the crime?

"I apply not the name of libels to those atrocious and gratuitous accusations against the private life of persons in power or individuals unconnected with the government. Such injurious and unmeaning shafts are an attack on honour: their authors should be punished.

"The police detected and apprehended one of its inspectors, who, being charged to discover those libels, proposed the composition of similar ones to some half-starved authors. After having laid for them this infernal snare for the gain of a little money, he informed against them, and sold them to the government.

"These miscreants, blinded by the eager thirst of a little gold, divert themselves with the uneasiness of the government, and the more they see it in the trances of apprehension, the more they delight in magnifying the danger, and doubling its alarms.

"Liberty has rendered the English government insensible to libels. Disdain is certain, before the work is commenced. If the satire is ingenious, people laugh at it, without believing it; if it is flat, they despise it.

"Why cannot the French government partly adopt this indifference? A contempt, more marked, for those vile and unknown pens that endeavour to wound the sensibility of pride, would disgust the readers of the flat and lying satires after which they are so eager, only because they imagine that the government is really offended by them.

"It is to be observed that the productions that flatter more or less public malignity, spread in fugitive sparks a central fire, which, if compressed, would, perhaps, produce an explosion.

"Magistrates have not yet been seen disdaining those obscure shafts, rendering themselves invulnerable from the openness of their proceedings, and considering that praise will be mute, as long as criticism cannot freely raise its voice.

"Let them then punish the flattery by which they are assailed, since they are so much afraid of the libel that always contains some good truths: besides, the public are there to judge the detractor; and no unjust satire ever circulated a fort-night, without being branded with contempt.

"Ministers reciprocally deceive each other when they are attacked in this manner; the one laughs at the storm which has just burst on the other, and promotes secretly what he appears to prosecute openly and with warmth. It would be a curious thing if one could bring to light the good tricks which the votaries of ambition play each other in the road to power and fortune.

"There is nothing now printed in Paris, in the line of politics and history, but satires and falsehoods. Foreigners look down with pity on every thing that emanates from the capital on these matters. Other subjects begin to feel the consequences of this, because the restraint laid on the mind is manifested even in books of simple amusement. The presses of Paris are no longer to serve but for posting-bills, and invitations to funerals and weddings. Almanacks are already a subject too elevated, and the inquisition examines and garbles them.

"When I see a book," says MERCIER, "sanctioned by the government, I would lay a wager, without opening it, that this book contains political falsehoods. The chief magistrate may well say: 'This piece of paper shall be worth a thousand francs;' but he cannot say: 'Let this error become truth,' or, 'let this truth no longer be anything but an error.' He may say it, but he can never compel men's minds to adopt it.

"What is admirable in printing, is that these fine works, which do honour to human genius, are not to be commanded or paid for; on the contrary, it is the natural liberty of a generous mind, which unfolds itself in spite of dangers, and makes a present to human nature, in spite of tyrants. This is what renders the man of letters so commendable, and insures to him the gratitude of future ages.

"O! worthy Englishmen! generous people, strangers to our shameful servitude, carefully preserve among you the liberty of the press: it is the pledge of your freedom. At this day, you alone are the representatives of nearly all mankind; you uphold the dignity of the name of man. The thunderbolts, which strike the pride and insolence of arbitrary power, issue from your happy island. Human reason has found among you an asylum whence she may instruct the world. Your books are not subject to an inquisition; and it would require a long comment to explain to you in what manner permission is at length obtained for a flimsy pamphlet, which no one will read, to be exposed for sale, and remain unsold, on the *Quai de Gévres*.

"We are so absurd and so little in comparison to you," adds MERCIER, "that you would be at a loss to conceive the excess of our weakness and humiliation."

LETTER LXXVIII

Paris, March 9, 1802.

Among the national establishments in this metropolis, I know of none that have experienced so great an amelioration, since the revolution, as the

HOSPITALS AND OTHER CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS;

The civil hospitals in Paris now form two distinct classes. The one comprehends the hospitals for the sick: the other, those for the indigent. The former are devoted to the relief of suffering human

nature; the latter serve as an asylum to children, to the infirm, and to the aged indigent. All persons who are not ill enough to be admitted of necessity into the hospital the nearest to their residence, are obliged to present themselves to the *Bureau Central d'Admissions*. Here they are examined, and if there be occasion, they receive a ticket of admission for the hospital where their particular disorder is treated. At the head of the hospitals for the sick stands that so long known by the appellation of the

HÔTEL-DIEU.

Formerly, nothing more horrid could be conceived than the spectacle presented in this asylum for the afflicted. It was rather a charnel-house than an hospital; and the name of the Creator, over the gate, which recalled to mind the principle of all existence, served only to decorate the entrance of the tomb of the living.

The *Hôtel-Dieu*, which is situated in the *Parvis Notre-Dame*, *Ile du Palais*, was founded as far back as the year 660 by St. Landry, for the reception of the sick and maimed of both sexes, without any exception of persons. Jews, Turks, infidels, pagans, protestants, and catholics were alike admitted, without form or recommendation. Yet, though it contained but 1200 beds, and the number of patients very often exceeded 5000, and, on an average, was never less than 2500, till the year 1786, no steps were taken for enlarging the hospital, or providing elsewhere for those who could not be conveniently accommodated in it. The dead were removed from the wards only on visits made at a fixed time; so that it happened not unfrequently that a poor helpless patient was compelled to remain for hours wedged in between two corpses. The air or the neighbourhood was contaminated by the noisome exhalations continually arising from this abode of pestilence, and that which was breathed within the walls of the hospital was so contagious, as to turn a trifling complaint into a dangerous disorder, and a simple wound into a mortification.

In 1785, the attention of the government being called to this serious evil by various memoirs, the *Academy of Sciences* was directed to investigate the truth of the bold assertions made in these publications. A commission was appointed; but as the revenues of the *Hôtel-Dieu* were immense, for a long time it was impossible to obtain from the Governors any account of their application. However, the Commissioners, directing their attention to the principal object, reported as follows: "We first compared the *Hôtel-Dieu* and the *Hôpital de la Charité* relative to their mortality. In 52 years, the *Hôtel-Dieu*, out of 1,108,741 patients lost 244,720, which is one out of four and a half. *La Charité*, where but one dies out of seven and a half, would have lost only 168,700, whence results the frightful picture that the *Hotel-Dieu*, in 52 years, has snatched from France 99,044 persons, whose lives would have been saved, had the *Hôtel-Dieu* been as spacious, in proportion, as *La Charité*. The loss in these 52 years answers to 1906 deaths per year, and that is nearly the tenth part of the total and annual loss of Paris. The preservation of this hospital in the site it now occupies, and on its present plan, therefore produces the same effect as a sort of plague which constantly desolates the capital."

In consequence of this report, the hospital was enlarged so as to contain about 2000 beds. Since the revolution, the improvements introduced into the interior government of the *Hôtel-Dieu* have been great and rapid. Each patient now has a bed to himself. Those attacked by contagious disorders are transferred to the *Hospice St. Louis*. Insane persons are no longer admitted; men, thus afflicted, are sent to a special hospital established at *Charenton*; and women, to the *Salpétrière*. Nor are any females longer received into the *Hôtel-Dieu* to lie-in; an hospital having been established for the reception of pregnant women. At the *Hôtel-Dieu*, every method has been put in practice to promote the circulation of air, and expel the insalubrious miasmata. One of these, I think, well deserves to be adopted in England.

In the French hospitals, one ward at least is now always kept empty. The moment it becomes so by the removal of the patients into another, the walls are whitewashed, and the air is purified by the fumigation with muriatic acid, according to the plan first proposed by GUYTON-MORVEAU. This operation is alternately performed in each ward in succession; that which has been the longest occupied being purified the first, and left empty till it is again wanted.

The number of hospitals in Paris has been considerably augmented. They are all supported by the government, and not, like those in England, by private benefactions. Sick children of both sexes, from the time of suckling to the age of sixteen, are no longer admitted into the different hospitals; but are received into a special hospital, extremely well arranged, and in a fine, airy situation, beyond the *Barrière de Sèvres*. Two institutions have been formed for the aged, infirm and indigent, who pay, on entrance, a moderate sum. One of these charities is without the *Barrière d'Enfer*; the other, in the *Faubourg St. Martin*. In the same *faubourg*, a *Maison de Santé* is established, where the sick are treated on paying thirty *sous* a day.

An hospital for gratuitous vaccination, founded by the Prefect of the department of La Seine, is now open for the continual treatment of the cow-pox, and the distribution of the matter to all parts of France.

In general, the charitable institutions in Paris have also undergone very considerable improvements since the revolution; for instance, the male orphans, admitted, to the number of two thousand, into the asylum formerly called *La Pitié*, in the *Faubourg St. Victor*, used to remain idle. They were employed only to follow funeral processions. At present, they are kept at work, and instructed in some useful trade.

A new institution for female orphans has been established in the *Faubourg St. Antoine*; for, here, the two sexes are not at present received into the same house, whether hospital or other charitable institution. In consequence of which, Paris now contains two receptacles for *Incurables*, in lieu of the one which formerly existed.

The place of the *Hôpital des Enfans-Trouvés* is also supplied by an establishment, on a large scale, called the

HOSPICE DE LA MATERNITÉ.

It is divided into two branches, each of which occupies a separate house. The one for foundlings, in the *Rue de la Bourbe*, is intended for the reception of children abandoned by their parents. Here they are reared, if not sent into the country to be suckled. The other, in the *Rue d'Enfer*, which may be considered as the General Lying-in Hospital of Paris, is destined for the reception of pregnant women. Upwards of 1500 are here delivered every year.

As formerly, no formality is now required for the admission of new-born infants. In the old Foundling-Hospital, the number annually received exceeded 8000. It is not near so great at present. To those who reflect on the ravages made among the human race by war, during which disease sweeps off many more than are killed in battle, it is a most interesting sight to behold fifty or sixty little foundlings assembled in one ward, where they are carefully fed till they are provided with wet nurses.

I must here correct a mistake into which I have been betrayed, in my letter of the 26th of December, respecting the present destination of

LA SALPÊTRIÈRE.

It is no longer used as a house of correction for dissolute women. Prostitutes, taken up by the police, are now carried to St. Lazare, in the *Rue St. Denis*. Those in want of medical aid, for disorders incident to their course of life, are not sent to *Bicêtre*, but to the *ci-devant* monastery of the Capucins, in the *Rue Caumartin*.

At present, the *Salpêtrière* forms an *hospice* for the reception of indigent or infirm old women, and young girls, brought up in the Foundling-Hospital, are placed here to be instructed in needle-work and making lace. Female idiots and mad women are also taken care of in a particular part of this very extensive building.

The Salpêtrière was erected by Lewis XIII, and founded as an hospital, by Lewis XIV, in 1656. The facade has a majestic appearance. Before the revolution, this edifice was said to lodge 6000 souls, and even now, it cannot contain less than 4000. By the *Plan of Paris*, you will see its situation, to the south-east of the *Jardin des Plantes*.

I shall also avail myself of the opportunity of correcting another mistake concerning

BICÊTRE.

This place has now the same destination for men that the Salpétrière has for women. There is a particular hospital, lately established, for male venereal patients, in the *Rue du Faubourg St. Jacques*.

March 9, in continuation.

Previously to the decree of the 19th of August 1792, which suppressed the universities and other scientific institutions, there existed in France Faculties and Colleges of Physicians, as well as Colleges and Commonalities of Surgeons. From one of those unaccountable contradictions of which the revolution affords so many instances, these were also suppressed at a time when they were becoming most necessary for supplying the French armies with medical men. But as soon as the fury of the revolutionary storm began to abate, the re-establishment of Schools of Medicine was one of the first objects that engaged attention.

Till these latter times, Medicine and Surgery, separated from each other, mutually contended for pre-eminence. Each had its forms and particular schools. They seemed to have divided between them suffering human nature, instead of uniting for its relief. On both sides, men of merit despised such useless distinctions; they felt that the curative art ought to comprehend all the knowledge and all the means that can conduce to its success; but these elevated ideas were combated by narrow minds, which, not being capable of embracing general considerations, always attach to details a great importance. The revolution terminated these disputes, by involving both parties in the same misfortunes.

At the time of the re-establishment of Public Instruction, the *Schools of Health*, founded at Paris, Montpelier, and Strasburg, on plans digested by men the most enlightened, presented a complete body of instruction relative to every branch of the curative art. Physics and chemistry, which form the basis of that art, were naturally included, and nothing that could contribute to its perfection, in the present state of the sciences, was forgotten. The plan of instruction is fundamentally the same in all these schools; but is more extensive in the principal one, that is, in

the

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE OF PARIS.

This very striking monument of modern architecture, situated in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, owes its erection to the partiality which Lewis XV entertained for the art of surgery. That monarch preferred it to every science; he was fond of conversing on it, and took such an interest in it, that, in order to promote its improvement, he built this handsome edifice for the *ci-devant Académie et Écoles de Chirurgie*. The architect was GONDOUIN.

The façade, extending nearly two hundred feet, presents a peristyle of the Ionic order. The interior distribution of this building corresponds with the elegance of its exterior. It contains a valuable library, a cabinet of anatomical preparations (among which is a skeleton that presents a rare instance of a general *anchilosis*) and imitations in wax, a chemical laboratory, a vast collection of chirurgical and philosophical instruments, and a magnificent amphitheatre, the first stone of which was laid by Lewis XVI in December 1774. This lecture-room will conveniently hold twelve hundred persons, and its form and arrangement are such, that a pupil seated the farthest from the subject under dissection, can see all the demonstrations of the Professor as well as if placed near the marble table.

In one wing of the building is an *Hospice de Perfectionnement*, formerly instituted for the reception of rare chirurgical cases only; but into which other patients, labouring under internal disorders of an extraordinary nature, are now likewise admitted.

To this school are attached from twenty to thirty Professors, who lecture on anatomy and physiology; medical chemistry and pharmacy; medical physics; pathology, internal and external; natural history, as connected with medicine, and botany; operative medicine; external and internal clinical cases, and the modern improvements in treating them; midwifery, and all disorders incident to women; the physical education of children; the history of medicine, and its legitimate practice; the doctrine of Hippocrates, and history of rare cases; medical bibliography, and the demonstration of the use of drugs and chirurgical instruments. There are also a chief anatomist, a painter, and a modeller in wax. The lectures are open to the public as well as to the students, who are said to exceed a thousand. Besides this part of instruction, the pupils practise anatomical, chirurgical, and chemical operations. To the number of one hundred and twenty, they form a practical school, divided into three classes, and are successively distributed into three of the clinical hospitals in Paris. At an annual competition, prizes are awarded to the greatest proficients.

Although this school is so numerously attended, and has produced several skilful professors, celebrated anatomists, and a multitude of distinguished pupils, yet it appears that, since there has been no regular admission for physicians and surgeons, the most complete anarchy has prevailed in the medical line. The towns and villages in France are overrun by quacks, who deal out poison and death with an audacity which the existing laws are unable to check. Under the title of *Officiers de Santé*, they impose on the credulity of the public, in the most dangerous manner, by the distribution of nostrums for every disorder. To put a stop to this alarming evil, it is in contemplation to promulgate a law, enacting that no one shall in future practise in France as a physician or surgeon, without having been examined and received into one of the six Special Schools of Medicine, or as an officer of health, without having studied a certain number of years, walked the hospitals, and also passed a regular examination.[1]

At the medical school of Paris are held the meetings of the

SOCIETY OF MEDICINE.

It was instituted for the purpose of continuing the labours of the *ci-devant* Royal Society of Medicine and the old Academy of Surgery. With this view, it is charged to keep up a correspondence, not only with the medical men resident within the limits of the Republic, but also with those of foreign countries, respecting every object that can tend to the progress of the art of healing.

As far back as the year 1777, there existed in Paris a college of Pharmacy. The apothecaries, composing this college, had formed, at their own expense, an establishment for instruction relative to the curative art, in their laboratory and garden in the *Rue de l'Arbalêtre*. Since the revolution, the acknowledged utility of this institution has caused it to be maintained under the title of the

GRATUITOUS SCHOOL OF PHARMACY.

Here are delivered *gratis*, by two professors in each department, public lectures on pharmaceutic chemistry, pharmaceutic natural history, and botany. When the courses are finished, prizes are annually distributed to the pupils who distinguish themselves most by their talents and knowledge.

In the year 1796, the apothecaries of Paris, animated by a desire to render this establishment still more useful, formed themselves into a society, by the name of the

FREE SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES.

Its object is to contribute to the progress of the arts and sciences, particularly pharmacy, chemistry, botany, and natural history. This society admits, as free and corresponding associates, *savans* of all the other departments of France and of foreign countries, who cultivate those sciences and others analogous to them. Some of the most enlightened men in France are to be found among its members.

The advantageous changes made in the teaching of medicine, since the revolution, appear to consist chiefly in the establishment of clinical lectures. The teaching of the sciences, accessory to medicine, partakes more or less advantageously of the great progress made in that of chemistry. It seems that, in general, the students in medicine grant but a very limited confidence to accredited opinions, and that they recur to observation and experience much more than they did formerly. As for the changes which have occurred in the practice of medicine, I think it would be no easy matter to appreciate them with any degree of exactness. Besides, sufficient time has not yet elapsed since the establishment of the new mode of teaching, for them to assume a marked complexion. It is, however, to be observed that, by the death of the celebrated DÉSAULT, Surgery has sustained a loss which is not yet repaired, nor will be perhaps for ages.

Footnote 1: A law to this effect is now made. Return to text

LETTER LXXIX.

Paris, March 12, 1802.

From the account I have given you of the Public Schools here, you will have perceived that, since the revolution, nothing has been neglected which could contribute to the mental improvement of the male part of the rising generation. But as some parents are averse to sending their children to these National Schools, there are now established in Paris a great number of

PRIVATE SEMINARIES FOR YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES.

Several of these are far superior to any that previously existed in France, and are really of a nature to excite admiration, when we consider the cruel divisions which have distracted this country. But it seems that if, for a time, instruction, both public and private, was suspended, no sooner were the French permitted to breathe than a sudden and salutary emulation arose among those who devoted themselves to the important task of conducting these private schools. The great advantage which they appear to me to have over establishments of a similar description in England, is that the scholars are perfectly grounded in whatever they are taught; the want of which, among us, occasions many a youth to forget the greater part of what he has learned long before he has attained the years of manhood.

If several of the schools for boys here are extremely well conducted, some of those for girls appear to be governed with no less care and judgment. In order to be enabled to form an opinion on the present mode of bringing up young girls in France, I have made a point of investigating the subject. I shall, in consequence, endeavour to shew you the contrast which strikes me to have occurred here in

FEMALE EDUCATION.

In France, convents had, at all times, prior to the revolution, enjoyed the exclusive privilege of bringing up young women; and some families had, for a century past, preserved the habit of sending all their daughters to be St. Ursulas, in order to enter afterwards into the world as virtuous wives and tender mothers. The natural result was, that, if the principles of excessive piety which had been communicated to them remained deeply engraved in their heart, they employed the whole day in the duties required by the catholic religion; and the confessor who dictated all these habitual practices, not unfrequently became the director of the temporal concerns of the family, as well as the spiritual. If the young girls, in emerging from the cells of a convent, were disposed to lay aside their religious practices, in order to adopt the customs and pleasures of the world, this sudden transition, from one extreme to the other, made them at once abandon, not only the puerile minutiæ, but also the sacred principles of religion. There was no medium. They either became outrageous devotees, and, neglecting the respectable duties of housewives and mistresses of a family, wrapped themselves up in a great hood, and were incessantly on their knees before the altars of the churches, or, on the other hand, rushed into extravagance and dissipation, and, likewise, deserting a family which claimed their care, dishonoured themselves by the licentiousness of their manners.

At the present time, many women of good abilities and character, deprived of their property by the vicissitudes of the revolution, have established, in Paris and its environs, seminaries, where young girls receive such advice as is most useful to females who are destined to live in the world, and acquirements, which, by employing them agreeably several hours in the day, contribute to the interior happiness of their family, and make them find charms in a domestic life. In short, the superiority of female education in France is decidedly in favour of the present system, whether considered in regard to mental improvement, health, or beauty. With respect to the morals inculcated in these modern French boarding schools, the best answer to all the prejudices might be entertained against them, is that the men, who have married women there educated, find that

they prove excellent wives, and that their accomplishments serve only to embellish their virtues.

LETTER LXXX.

Paris, March 14, 1802.

I plead guilty to your censure in not having yet furnished you with any remarks on the origin of this capital; but you will recollect that I engaged only to give you a mere sketch; indeed, it would require more time and talent than I can command to present you with a finished picture. I speak of things just as they happen to occur to my mind; and provided my letters bring you acquainted with such objects here as are most deserving of attention, my purpose will be fully accomplished. However, in compliance with your pressing request, I shall now briefly retrace the

PROGRESSIVE AGGRANDISEMENT OF PARIS.

Without hazarding any vague conjectures, I may, I think, safely affirm that Cæsar is the first historian who makes mention of this city. In the seventh book of his Commentaries, that conqueror relates that he sent his lieutenant Labienus towards Lutetia; this was the name given by the Gauls to the capital of the Parisii. It was then entirely contained within that island on the Seine, which, at the present day, is called *l'Ile du Palais*.

In comparison to the capitals of the other provinces of Gaul, *Lutetia* was but a sorry village; its houses were small, of a round form, built of wood and earth, and covered with straw and reeds.

After having conquered *Lutetia*, the Romans embellished it with a palace, surrounded it by walls, and erected, at the head of each of the two bridges leading to it, a fortress, one of which stood on the site of the prison called *Le Grand Châtelet*; and the other, on that of *Le Petit Châtelet*. The Yonne, the Marne, and the Oise, being rivers which join the Seine, suggested the idea of establishing a trading company by water, in order to facilitate, by those channels, the circulation of warlike stores and provisions. These merchants were called *Nautæ Parisiaci*. The Romans also erected, near the left bank of the Seine, a magnificent palace and an aqueduct. This palace was called *Thermæ*, on account of its tepid baths.

Julian, being charged to defend Gaul against the irruptions of the barbarians, took up his residence in these *Thermæ* in 360, two years before he was proclaimed emperor, in the square which was in front of this palace. "I was in winter-quarters in my dear *Lutetia*," says he in his *Misopogon*. "Thus is named, in Gaul, the little capital of the Parisii."—"It occupies," observes Abbon, "an inconsiderable island, surrounded by walls, the foot of which is bathed by the river. The entrance to it, on each side, is by a wooden bridge."

Towards the middle of the fifth century, this city passed from the dominion of the Romans to that of the Francs. It was besieged by Childeric I. In 508, Clovis declared it the capital of his kingdom. The long stay which that prince made in it, contributed to its embellishment. Charlemagne founded in it a celebrated school. A little time after, another was established in the abbey of *St. Germain-des-Prés*. In the course of the ninth century, it was besieged and pillaged three times by the Normans.

Philip Augustus surrounded Paris with walls, and comprised in that inclosure a great number of small towns and hamlets in its vicinity. This undertaking occupied twenty years, having been begun in 1190, and finished in 1211. The same king was also the first who caused the streets of this city to be paved. The wars of the English required new fortifications; and, under king John, ditches were dug round the city; and the *Bastille*, erected. These works were continued during the reigns of Charles V and Charles VI.

Francis I, the restorer of literature and of the arts, neglected nothing that might conduce to the farther embellishment of this capital. He caused several new streets to be made, many Gothic edifices to be pulled down, and was, in France, the first who revived Greek architecture, the remains of which, buried by the hand of time, or mutilated by that of barbarians, being collected and compared at Rome, began to improve the genius of celebrated artists, and, in the sequel, led to the production of masterpieces.

The kings, his successors, executed a part of the projects of that prince, and this extensive city imperceptibly lost its irregular and Gothic aspect. The removal of the houses, which, not long since, encumbered the bridges, and intercepted the current of air, has diffused cheerfulness and salubrity.

You will pardon me, I trust, if I here make a retrograde movement, not to recapitulate the aggrandisement of Paris, but to retrace rapidly the progressive amelioration of the manners of its inhabitants. The latter paved the way to the former.

Under the first kings of France of the third race, justice was administered in a summary way; the king, the count, and the viscount heard the parties, and gave a prompt sentence, or else left the controversy to be decided by a pitched battle, if it was of too intricate a nature. No colleges then existed here; the clergy only keeping schools near the Cathedral of *Notre-Dame* for those who were intended for holy orders. The nobles piqued themselves on extreme ignorance, and as many of them could not even sign their own name, they dipped their glove in ink, and stamped it on the

parchment as their signature. They lived on their estates, and if they were obliged to pass three or four days in town, they affected to appear always in boots, in order that they might not be taken for *vassals*. Ten men were sufficient for the collection of all the taxes. There were no more than two gates to the city; and under Lewis surnamed *le Gros*, from his corpulency, the duties at the north gate produced no more than twelve francs a year.

Philip Augustus, being fond of literature, welcomed and protected men of learning. It had appeared to revive under Charlemagne; but the ravages of the Normans occasioned it to sink again into oblivion till the reign of Lewis the Young, father of Philip Augustus. Under the latter, the schools of Paris became celebrated; they were resorted to, not only from the distant provinces, but from foreign countries. The quarter, till lately called *l'Université*, became peopled; and, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was covered by colleges and monasteries. Philip the Fair rendered the Parliament sedentary. He prohibited duelling in civil contentions; and a person might have recourse to a court of justice, without being under the necessity of fighting. Anne de Bretagne, great and majestic in every thing, was desirous of having a court. Ladies who, till then, were born in one castle only to marry and die in another, came to Paris. They were unwilling to leave it, and men followed them thither. All these circumstances increased its inhabitants to a thirtieth part beyond their former number.

The wars of religion under Charles IX and Henry III rendered gold and silver a little more common, by the profanations of the Calvinists, who pillaged the churches, and converted into specie the sacred vases, as well as the shrines and statues of saints. The vast sums of money which the court of Spain lavished in Paris, to support the League, had also diffused a certain degree of affluence among no inconsiderable number of citizens; and it is to be remarked that, under Henry IV, several handsome streets were finished in less than a year.

Henry IV was the first of the kings of France who embellished Paris with regular squares, or open spaces, decorated with the different orders of architecture. After having nearly finished the *Pont Neuf*, he built the *Place Royale*, now called *Place des Fédérés*, and also the *Place Dauphine*.

Towards the end of the administration of Cardinal Richelieu, there no longer existed in France more than one master; and the petty tyrants in the provinces, who had fortified themselves so long in their castles against the royal authority, were seen to come to court, to solicit the most paltry lodging with all the servility of courtiers, and at the same time erect mansions in town with all the splendour of men inflated by pride and power. At last came the reign of Lewis XIV, and presently Paris knew no limits. Its gates were converted into arcs of triumph, and its ditches, being filled up and planted with trees, became public walks. When one considers the character of that monarch, it should seem that Paris ought to have been more embellished under his reign. In fact, had Lewis XIV expended on Paris one-fourth part of the money which he lavished on Versailles,[1] it would have become the most astonishing city in Europe.

However, its great extent and population, magnificent edifices, celebrated national establishments of learning and science, rich libraries, curious cabinets, where lessons of knowledge and genius present themselves to those who have a taste for them, together with its theatres and other places of public entertainment, have long rendered Paris deserving of the admiration of enlightened nations.

Before the revolution, Paris contained 46 parish churches, and 20 others answering the same purpose, 11 abbeys, and 133 monasteries or convents of men and women, 13 colleges, 15 public seminaries, and 26 hospitals. To these must be added the three royal habitations, the *Louvre*, the *Tuileries*, and the *Luxembourg*, also the *Hôtel des Invalides*, the *Palais Royal*, the *Palais Bourbon*, and a great number of magnificent hotels, inhabited by titled or wealthy persons.

Since the revolution, several of these buildings have been destroyed; almost all the monasteries and convents, together with the churches belonging to them, have been sold as national property, and either demolished for the sake of the materials, or converted to different uses. Fifteen principal churches, besides the *Pantheon*, the *Invalides*, *Val-de-Grace*, the *Sorbonne*, and a few others, were preserved as national temples, intended for the celebration of *decadary fétes*, and for a time rendered common to every sort of worship. Most of the old churches were of Gothic architecture, and not much to be commended with respect to art; but several of them were models of boldness, from the lightness of their construction.

The colleges, as I have before observed, are replaced by public schools and private seminaries of every description. The number of the houses in Paris, many of which are from five to eight stories in height, has been estimated at upwards of 80,000. The number of its inhabitants appears to have been over-rated. By an official statement, in which foreigners are not included, it contains no more than 630,000 souls.

During the last year of the republican era, the number of males born in Paris was 9296; and that of females, 9177; making the general total of births 18,473, of which the males, born out of wedlock, amounted to 1792; and the females, to 1852. The number of persons deceased, within the same period, was 10,446 males, and 10,301 females; making together 20,747. The annual decrease in population was consequently 2274 souls. The number of marriages was 3826; and that of divorces, 720; which is nearly 2 out of 11.

The ancient division of Paris consisted of three parts; namely, *La Cité*, *l'Université*, and *La Ville*.

La Cite comprised all the *Ile du Palais*. This is the parent-stock of the capital, whence have extended, like so many branches, the numerous quarters by which it is surrounded. *L'Université* was bordered by the Seine, the *Faubourg St. Bernard*, *St. Victor*, *St. Marcel*, *St. Jacques*, and the *Faubourg St. Germain*. The number of colleges in this quarter, had obtained it the name of *Le Pays Latin*. *La Ville* comprehended all the rest of the capital, not included in the suburbs.

At present, Paris is divided into twelve mayoralties (as you will see by the *Plan*), each of which is presided by a central office of municipal police. The *Faubourgs* retain their ancient names; but those of many of the streets have been changed in the course of the revolution. The *Chaussée d'Antin*, which comprises the new streets north of the *Boulevard Italien*, is now the most fashionable part of the town. The houses here are chiefly inhabited by bankers and persons living in affluence; and apartments in this neighbourhood are considerably dearer than in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, which, comparatively speaking, is deserted.

I have already described the *Porte St. Denis* and the *Porte St. Martin*, which are nothing more than arcs of triumph. In proportion as the limits of the capital became extended, the real gates were removed, but reappeared under the name of *barrières*. These costly edifices were constructed during the ministry of CALONNE, under the direction of LEDOUX, the architect, who has taken a pleasure in varying their form and character. One represents an observatory; another, a chapel; some have the appearance of rusticated buildings; others, that of temples. Under the old *régime* too, the farmers-general had inclosed Paris with a high wall, the extent of which has been estimated at upwards of 10,000 toises. This wall displeased the eye of the Parisians, and, when they were out of humour, induced them to murmur loudly. Whence the following *jeu de mots*:

> *"Le mur, murant Paris, rend Paris murmurout."*

During the revolution, it was by no means uncommon to shut the *barrières*, in order to serve the purposes of party, and favour the arrest of particular persons. To the number of sixty, they are placed at the principal outlets of the suburbs, and occupied by custom-house officers, whose business is to collect duties, and watch that no contraband goods find their way into the city. Formerly, when every carriage entering Paris was stopped and examined (which is not the case at present), the self-importance of these *commis des barrières* could be equalled only by their ignorance.

A traveller arriving from Egypt brought with him a mummy. The case being long, he chose not to fasten it on to his post-chaise, but sent it to Paris by water. When it was landed at the *barrière*, the custom-house officers opened it, and, finding it to contain a black-looking body, decided that this was a man who had been baked in an oven. They took the linen bandages for his burnt shirt, and, after drawing up a *procès-verbal* in due form, sent the mummy to the *Morne*, where dead bodies are exposed in order to be owned. When the proprietor reached Paris, he went to the *barrière* to claim his mummy. The *commis* listened to him and stared at him with astonishment. He grew angry, and at length broke out into a violent passion; when one of the searchers, in a whisper, advised him to decamp, if he wished to avoid the gallows. The traveller, stupified, was obliged to apply to the Minister of the Police, and, with some difficulty, recovered from the *Morne* his Egyptian prince or princess, who, after having been preserved 2000 years, was on the point of being buried in a catholic cemetery, instead of figuring in a cabinet of curiosities.

Footnote 1: The article of lead alone for the water-pipes cost thirty-two millions of livres or £1,333,333 sterling; but

> "Rich in her weeping country's spoils, Versailles!
> May boast a thousand fountains, that can cast
> The tortur'd waters to the distant heav'ns"—

Return to text

LETTER LXXXI.

Paris, March 17, 1802.

An object which must infallibly strike the eye of the attentive observer, who has not visited this capital within the last ten years, is the change in the style of

FRENCH FURNITURE.

This remark may, at first sight, appear trivial; but a second view of the subject will produce reflections on the frivolity of this people, even amidst their intestine commotions, and at the same time shew that they are, in no small degree, indebted to the influence of those events for the taste which is to be distinguished in the new productions of their industry, and, in general, for the progress they have made, not only in the mechanical arts, but also in the sciences of every description. This will appear the more extraordinary, as it should seem natural to presume that the persecution which the protectors of the arts and sciences experienced, in the course of the revolution, was likely to produce quite a contrary effect. But the man of science and the artist, each abandoned to himself, acquired, in that forlorn situation, a knowledge and a taste which very frequently are the result of long study only, seconded by encouragement from the wealthy.

The apartments of the fine ladies, of the rich, of the bankers, and merchants in Paris, and

generally speaking, of all those who, from their business and connexions, have most intercourse with the public and with foreigners, are furnished in the modern mode, that is, in the antique taste. Many of the French artists, being destitute of employment, were compelled through necessity to seek it; some entered into the warehouse of the upholsterer to direct the shape and disposition of his hangings; some, into the manufactory of the paper-maker to furnish him with new patterns; and others, into the shop of the cabinet-maker to sell him sketches of antique forms. Had the easels of these artists been occupied by pictures no sooner finished than paid for, the Grecian bed would not have expelled the *lit à la Polonaise*, in vogue here before the revolution; the Etruscan designs would not have succeeded to the Chinese paper; nor would the curtains with Persian borders have been replaced by that elegant drapery which retraces the pure and simple taste of the people of Attica.

The elegant forms of the modern French *secrétaires*, commodes, chairs, &c. have also been copied from the Greeks and Romans. The ornaments of these are either bronzed or gilt, and are uncommonly well finished. In general, they represent heads of men, women, and animals, designed after the antique. Caryatides are sometimes introduced, as well as Egyptian attributes; the arms of the chairs being frequently decorated with sphinxes. In short, on entering the residence of a *parvenu*, you would fancy yourself suddenly transported into the house of a wealthy Athenian; and these new favourites of Fortune can, without crossing the threshold of their own door, study chaste antiquity, and imbibe a taste for other knowledge, connected with it, in which they are but little versed.

Mahogany is the wood employed for making these modern articles of furniture, whose forms are no less varied than elegant; advantages which cause them to be preferred to the ancient. But the latter, though heavy in their construction, are, nevertheless, thought, by some persons, superior to the former in point of solidity and convenience. The old-fashioned bedsteads and chairs are generally of oak, painted or gilt, and are covered with silk or tapestry of different patterns. The *ci-devant* nobles appear to be greatly attached to them, and preserve them as monuments, which supply the place of the titles and parchments they were forced to burn during the sanguinary periods of the revolution. But this taste is not exclusive; several of the Parisian *bourgeois*, either from economy, or from a wish to appear to have belonged to that class, shew no less eagerness to possess these spoils of the *noblesse*, as furniture for their apartments.

While I am speaking of furniture, it naturally occurs to me that I have not yet taken you to visit

LES GOBELINS.

This national manufactory, which is situated in the *Faubourg St. Marcel*, takes its name from two famous Flemish dyers, who settled in Paris under Francis I. In 1662, COLBERT purchased part of the old premises where the *Gobelins* had carried on their business, and there opened an establishment under the direction of LE BRUN. It was not confined to the manufacture of tapestry only, but was composed of painters, sculptors, engravers, goldsmiths, watch-makers, lapidaries, and other artists and workmen of almost every description, whose pupils and apprentices here acquired their freedom.

Since the revolution, tapestry alone is manufactured here, on two sorts of looms, distinguished by the denominations of *haute* and *basso lisse*, which are fully explained in an interesting *Notice*, published by the intelligent director, GUILLAUMOT, who, it seems, has introduced into each of these branches several recent improvements.

The art of making tapestry originated in England and Flanders, where the cartoons of RAPHAEL and JULIO ROMANO were coarsely copied. It was gradually improved in France, and is now brought here to the greatest perfection. Indeed, a piece of *Gobelin* tapestry may be called a picture painted with wool and silk; but its admirable execution produces an illusion so complete, that skilful painters have been seen to lay their hands on this tapestry, to convince themselves that it was not a real painting.

Tapestry is now entirely out of fashion; and, with the exception of a few small fancy-pieces, the productions of this manufactory are intended solely for the decoration of the national palaces and other public buildings. In 1790 the blood-thirsty MARAT strove hard to annihilate this establishment, by exaggerating the expenses of its maintenance. In 1789, their real amount was 144,000 francs; 116 journeymen and 18 apprentices were then employed, and paid in proportion to their merit and to the quantity of work they performed. In 1791, they were divided into classes, and paid by the day. This regulation produces less work, but its execution is more perfect, since no motive of interest induces the workman to neglect his performance. At present, its expenses cannot be so great, as the number of persons employed is less than 100. Should the penury of the finances not allow the means of re-establishing pupils, this manufactory will be extinguished like a lamp for want of oil. Twenty years are necessary to make a good manufacturer of tapestry; those of the first abilities are now nearly 70 years of age, and therefore it seems high time to prepare for them competent successors.

At *Chaillot*, we shall find another national manufactory, somewhat analogous to the former, and which also claims the attention of the curious observer. From having been fixed in a place originally occupied by a soap-house, it is called

LA SAVONNERIE.

It was established, as far back as 1615, at the instigation of PIERRE DUPONT, who, being forced to quit his native land by the civil commotions arising from the League, went to the Levant. Having seen carpets made without taste or design in that country, he conceived the idea of introducing a manufactory of this kind into France, where it would be susceptible of considerable improvement from the exercise of the arts unknown in Turkey. The project was approved by Henry IV, who first gave DUPONT an establishment in the *Louvre*, which was afterwards transferred to its present situation.

Like the *Gobelins*, the national manufactory of the *Savonnerie* is, and has been, constantly supported by the government, and like it too, contributes to the decoration of the national palaces, &c. Nothing, in the shape of carpets, can answer this purpose better than those manufactured here, the colours of which are extremely brilliant. The close, velvety texture of the manufacture gives a peculiar expression to objects which are copied from nature, such as the hair of animals, the down of fruit, and the lustre of flowers.

From its foundation till the year 1789, this manufactory continued to be under the direction of a contractor, who delivered the carpeting to the government at the rate of 220 francs per square ell. At the revolution, new regulations were established; the workmen were paid by the day, and classed according to their merit. In consequence, though less work is performed, it is executed with greater perfection.

The present government has lately ordered the old patterns, which were overloaded with ornaments and flowers, to be suppressed, and replaced by compositions more simple, more elegant, and infinitely more tasteful. I understand that the workmen are to be put to task-work, under the superintendance of the respectable administrator DUVIVIER, who informs me that the present price of this carpeting amounts to 300 francs per square *mètre* (*circa* 3 ft. 3 inc. English measure). In 1789, thirty persons were employed here, at from 30 to 50 *sous* a day. At present, there are no more than twenty, who daily earn, on an average, 3 francs, and are lodged in the buildings of the manufactory.

Before I lay down my pen, I shall notice a national establishment, equally connected with the subject of this letter; I mean the

MANUFACTORY OF PLATE-GLASS.

Like all the other French manufactories, this has suffered from the revolution and the war; but it has now nearly resumed its former activity, owing to the effects of the peace and the laudable exertions of the government to revive commerce. At this time, it gives employment to about 600 persons.

Before COLBERT founded the present establishment, which is situated in the *Rue de Reuilli*, *Faubourg St. Antoine*, the French drew their plate-glass from Venice; but they have left their masters in this branch very far behind them, and now make mirrors of dimensions of which the Venetians had no idea. These plates are cast at St. Gobin, near La Fère, in the department of L'Aisne, and sent to Paris to be polished and silvered. Here you may witness the process employed in each of these different operations.

A method of joining together two small plates of glass in such a manner that no mark appears, has, I am informed, been lately discovered in Paris. It is said, however, not to be applicable to those of large dimensions. After the operation of this species of soldering, the plates are silvered.

LETTER LXXXII.

Paris, March 19, 1802.

As the period of my stay here is drawing rapidly towards a conclusion, I find much less leisure for writing; otherwise I should, in my last letter, have made you acquainted with an establishment not irrelevant to the leading subject of it, and which, when completed, cannot fail to attract general notice and admiration.

Every one has heard of the PIRANESI. In the year 1800, PIETRO and FRANCESCO, the surviving sons of the celebrated GIOVANNI-BATTISTA, transported to France their immense collection of drawings, with all their plates and engravings. They were welcomed, protected, and encouraged by the French government. Anxious to give to these ingenious artists every facility for the success of an undertaking that they had conceived, it has granted to them the spacious and handsome premises of the *ci-devant Collège de Navarre*, in the *Rue de la Montagne St. Geneviève*, which the PIRANESI will shortly open as an

ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS.

That ancient college is extremely well calculated for such a destination, from the extent of its buildings, its remoteness from noise, and the airiness of its situation. By this liberal conduct to the PIRANESI, the French government has shewn the warm interest it takes in the progress of those arts. The establishment of these Romans is to be divided into three branches. The first is placed in the *Collège de Navarre*; the second is to be in the *Palais du Tribunat*; and the third, at *Morfontaine*.

Three hundred artists of different nations, some of whom are known by master-pieces, while others announce the genius necessary for producing them, are to be distributed in the seven classes of this academy, which include the fine arts of every description. Each artist being at liberty to follow the branch to which he is most partial, it may easily be conceived how noble an emulation will be roused by such an assemblage of talents. Several are now employed here in the workshops of Painting, Sculpture, Mosaic, and Engraving. Let us see in what manner.

The ground-floor is devoted to Sculpture. Here are made, in plaster and terra cotta, models of the finest monuments of Greece and Italy, which are executed in stone of the richest species, such as porphyry, granite, red antique, Parian and Carrara marble. From the hands of the two CARDELLI, and other eminent artists, are seen to issue copies of the most magnificent bas-reliefs of ancient Rome, and the most beautiful friezes of RAPHAEL, MICHAEL ANGELO, JULIO ROMANO, and other great masters of the Italian school; tripods, obelisks, antique vases, articles of furniture in the Egyptian and Chinese taste, together with objects taken from nature, such as the most curious animals in the national *ménagerie*, likewise occupy their talents. All these subjects are executed in different sizes, and form, together or separately, decorations for apartments or tables, particularly pilasters, and plateaux, in which the richness of the materials is surpassed by that of the workmanship.

On the same floor is the workshop of Mosaic. It is under the direction of BELLONI, who has invented methods, by means of which he has introduced Mosaic into articles of furniture, and for the pavement of rich apartments, at prices far inferior to what might be imagined. The principal articles here exhibited, as specimens, are:—1. Superb marble tables and stands, in which are inserted ornaments and pictures in Mosaic, or incrustated in the Florentine manner—2. A large pavement, where the beauty and variety of the marbles are relieved by embellished incrustations —3. Small pictures, in which the painting, in very fine Mosaic, is raised on an even ground of one piece of black marble—4. Large tables, composed of specimens of fine-grained stones, such as jasper, agate, carnelion, lapis lazuli, &c. and also of valuable marbles, distributed into compartments and after a design imitated from the antique, and enriched with a few incrustated pictures, representing animals and flowers. Besides these, here are to be seen other essays of a kind entirely new. These are marbles, intended for furniture, coloured in an indelible manner. Sometimes the figures and ornaments in them are coloured in the ground; sometimes they are in colour, but raised on a ground of white marble.

On the first story is the workshop for Engraving. Here the artists are employed in engraving the seven hills of Rome, ancient circuses of that celebrated city, plans of the *forum*, obelisks of Rome and Egypt, ruins of Pompeia, drawn on the spot by the late J. B. PIRANESI, together with modern subjects, such as the splendid edifices of Paris, the beautiful views of the environs, the national fêtes, and every thing that can deservedly interest artists and persons of taste. On the same story are the plates of the PIRANESI calcography, the place where they are printed, and the warehouse where they are deposited. The engravings, now nearly executed, will form upwards of twenty volumes; and those begun will equal that number.

The second story is occupied by painters in oil-colours; the third, by those in water-colours; the fourth, by draughtsmen in Indian ink and bistre; and the fifth serves for the lodging of the artists, particularly the most skilful among them, who direct the different branches of this establishment. The principal pile of building is crowned by a *Belvedere*, which commands an extensive view of Paris, and seems calculated for promoting the inspirations of genius. Here are copied, in oil, water-colours, Indian ink and bistre, the fresco paintings of RAPHAEL, MICHAEL ANGELO, and JULIO ROMANO; the Vatican, the Farnesian palace, the Villa Altoviti, and the Villa Lante alternately furnishing models no less happily chosen than carefully executed. The antiquities of Herculaneum, so interesting from the knowledge they afford us of the customs of the ancient Romans, and from the elegant decorations of which they have procured us the models, the ruins of Palmyra and Balbeck, those of Greece and Sicily, together with views of Constantinople and of the country in which it is situated, are here rendered with the most exact truth, joined to the most harmonious colouring. Here too are represented; in the three manners before-mentioned, views and sites of Egypt, Greece, Italy, France, and all other countries; cascades, such as those of TERNI, NARNI, and TIVOLI; sea-pieces; landscapes, parks; and gardens; arabesques after RAPHAEL; new and picturesque plants; in a word, decorations formed of an assemblage of every thing most perfect in art and nature.

On the first and second stories are also two exhibition-rooms, for such pictures and works of sculpture as are finished, where the eye wanders agreeably amidst a crowd of objects of an enlivening or serious nature. Here it is that the amateur, after having seen the artists at work in the classes of this academy, fixes his choice on the kind of production which most takes his fancy. These two rooms contain the different articles which are afterwards to be displayed in the two porticos of the *Palais du Tribunat*.

Those elegant and spacious porticos, situated in the most centrical part of Paris, facing the *Rue St. Honoré*, have likewise been granted to the PRIANESI through the special favour of the government. Not only all the productions of their establishment, but also the principal master-pieces in painting, sculpture, and architecture, produced by artists of all nations, will there be exhibited; so that those porticos will present, as it were, an Encyclopædia of the Fine Arts.[1]

Footnote 1: The principal protector of the undertaking of the PIRANESI is JOSEPH BONAPARTE, who has not confined himself to assisting them in the capital. Being desirous to introduce the arts into the country where he passes the finest

season of the year, and to promote the discovery of the PIRANESI, relative to the properties of the argill found at *Morfontaine*, he has given to them for several years the use of a large building and a very extensive piece of ground, ornamented with bowers, where all the subjects modelled at the *Collège de Navarre*, in *terra cotta* or in porcelain of *Morfontaine*, undergo the process of baking. In the last-mentioned place, the PIRANESI purpose to establish a foundery for sculpture in bronze and other metals. The government daily affords to them encouragement and resources which insure the success of their establishment. To its other advantages are added a library, and a printing-office. Return to text

LETTER LXXXIII.

Paris, March 22, 1802.

As to the mechanical arts, if you are desirous to view some of the modern improvements and inventions in that line, you must accompany me to the *Rue St. Martin*, where, in the *ci-devant* priory, is an establishment of recent date, entitled the

CONSERVATORY OF ARTS AND TRADES.

Here is a numerous collection of machines of every description employed in the mechanical arts. Among these is the *belier hydraulique*, newly invented by MONTGOLFIER, by means of which a stream of water, having a few feet of declivity, can be raised to the top of a house by a single valve or sucker, so disposed as to open, to admit the water, and shut, when it is to be raised by compression. By increasing the compression, it can be raised to 1000 feet, and may be carried to a much greater elevation. The commissioners appointed by the Institute to examine this machine, reported that it was new, very simple, very ingenious, and might be extremely useful in turning to account little streams of water for the purposes of agriculture, manufactories, &c.

This reminds me of another singular hydraulic machine, of which I have been informed by a person who attended a trial made of it not long since in Paris.

A basin placed at the height of twenty feet, was filled with water, the fall of which set in motion several wheels and pumps that raised the water again into the basin. The machine was fixed in a place, glazed on all sides, and locked by three different keys. It kept in play for thirty-two days, without the smallest interruption; but the air, the heat, and the wood of the machine, having undoubtedly diminished the water, it no longer ascended into the basin. Till the thirty-second day, many persons imagined that the perpetual motion had been discovered. However, this machine was extremely light, well combined, and very simple in its construction. I ought to observe that it neither acted by springs nor counterpoise; all its powers proceeding from the fall of the water.

The conservatory also contains several models of curious buildings, too numerous to mention.

The mechanical arts in France appear to have experienced more or less the impulse given to the sciences towards the close of the eighteenth century. While calamities oppressed this country, and commerce was suspended, the inventive and fertile genius of the French was not dormant.

The clothiers have introduced woollen articles manufactured on a new plan; and their fine broad cloths and kerseymeres have attained great perfection. The introduction of the Spanish merinos into France has already produced in her wools a considerable amelioration.

Like a phœnix, Lyons is reviving from its ashes, and its silks now surpass, if possible, their former magnificence. Brocaded silk is at present made in a loom worked by one man only, in lieu of two, which the manufacture of that article hitherto demanded. Another new invention is a knitting-loom, by means of which 400 threads are interwoven with the greatest exactness, by merely turning a winch.

The cotton manufactures are much improved, and the manufactories in that line are daily increasing in number and perfection. A new spinning-machine has produced here, I am told, 160,000 ells in length out of a pound of cotton. The fly-shuttle is now introduced into most of the manufactories in this country, and 25 pieces of narrow goods are thus made at once by a single workman. In adopting ARKWRIGHT'S system, the French have applied it to small machines, which occupy no more room than a common spinning-wheel.

Among other branches in which the French mechanics have particularly distinguished themselves, since the revolution, is the making of astronomical and philosophical instruments.

All the machines used here in coining have also been modified and improved. By one of these, the piece is struck at the same time on the edge and on the flat side in so perfect a manner, that the money thus coined cannot he counterfeited.

I have already mentioned the invention of a composition which supplies the place of black lead for pencils, and the discovery of a new and very expeditious method of tanning leather.

New species of earthen-ware have been invented, and those already known have received considerable improvement.

Chemists have put the manufacturers in possession of new means of decomposing and

recomposing substances. Muriat of tin is now made here with such economy, that it is reduced to one-eighth of its former price. This salt is daily used in dying and in the manufacture of printed calicoes. Carbonates of strontia and of baryt, obtained by a new process, will shortly be sold in Paris at 3 francs the *kilogramme*. This discovery is expected to have a great influence on several important arts, such as the manufacture of glass, of soap, &c.

Articles of furniture, jewellery, and every branch dependent on design, are now remarkable for a purer taste than that which they formerly exhibited.

Indeed, the characteristic difference of the present state of French industry, and that in which it was before the revolution, is that most of the proprietors of the manufactories have received a scientific education. At that time, many of them were strangers to the principles applicable to the processes of their art; and, in this respect, they lay at the mercy of the routine, ignorance, and caprice of their workmen. At present, the happy effects of instruction, more widely-diffused, begin to be felt, and, in proportion as it is extended, it excites a spirit of emulation which promises no small advantage to French commerce.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Paris, March 23, 1802.

In the richness of her territory, the abundance of her population, the activity of her inhabitants, and the knowledge comprised in her bosom, France possesses great natural advantages; but the effect which they might have produced on her industry, has been counteracted by the errors of her old government, and the calamities attendant on the revolution. Some public-spirited men, thinking the moment favourable for restoring to them all their influence, have lately met; and from this union has sprung the

SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

It is formed on a scale still more extensive than the *Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, instituted at London. Its meetings are held in the *Louvre*; but, though fixed in the metropolis, it embraces the whole extent of the Republic, and every department will participate in the benefits which it proffers.

The chief objects of this society are: To collect, from all quarters, discoveries and inventions useful to the progress of the arts; to bestow annually premiums and gratuitous encouragements; to propagate instruction, by disseminating manuals on different objects relative to the arts, by combining the lights of theory with the results of practice, and by constructing at its own expense, and disseminating among the public in general, and particularly in the manufactories, such machines, instruments, and apparatus as deserve to be more generally known and brought into use; to make essays and experiments for ascertaining the utility which may be expected from new discoveries; to make advances to artists who may be in distress, or deficient in the means to put in practice the processes of their inventions; to unite by new ties all such persons as from their situation in life, their taste, or their talents, feel an interest in the progress of the arts; to become the centre of similar institutions, which are called for in all the principal manufacturing-towns of the Republic; in a word, to *excite emulation, diffuse knowledge, and assist talents*.

To attain these objects, various committees, consisting of men the most conversant in knowledge relative to the arts, are already appointed, and divide among them *gratuitously* the whole of the labour.

This society, founded, on principles so purely patriotic, will, no doubt, essentially second the strenuous efforts of the government to reanimate the different branches of national industry. The free and spontaneous concurrence of the men of whom it is composed, may unite the power of opinion to that of other means; and public opinion produces naturally that which power and authority obtain only by a slow and difficult progress.

But, while those branches of industry, more immediately connected with the arts, are stimulated by these simultaneous encouragements, that science, on the practice of which depends the welfare of States, is not neglected. Independently of the Council of Agriculture, Commerce and Arts, established under the presidency of the Minister of the Interior, here is a

FREE SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURE.

Its object is to improve agriculture, not only in the department of La Seine, but throughout France. For this purpose, it maintains a regular correspondence with all the agricultural societies of the other departments. It publishes memoirs, in which are inserted the results of its labours, as well as the notices and observations read at the meetings by any one of its members, and the decision which has followed.

Every year it proposes prizes for the solution of some question important to the amelioration of agriculture.

What, at first view, appears extraordinary, is not, on that account, less founded on truth. Amidst the storms of the revolution, agriculture has been improved in France. At a period of happiness

and tranquillity, the soil was not so well cultivated as in times of terror and mourning; because, during the latter, the lands enjoyed the franchises so long wanted. Hands never failed; for, when the men marched to the armies, women supplied their place; and no one was ashamed to handle the spade or the plough.

However, if, in 1789, agriculture in France was far from a state of prosperity, it was beginning to receive new light from the labours of the agricultural societies. That of Paris had given a great impulse to the culture of artificial meadows, potatoes, hemp, flax, and fruit-trees. Practical directions, spread with profusion in the country, had diverted the inhabitants from the routine which they had blindly followed from generation to generation.

Before the revolution, the French began to imitate us in gelding their horses, and giving to their lackies, their coachmen, and their equipages an English appearance; instead of copying us in the cultivation of our land, and adopting the principles of our rural economy. This want of foresight they are now anxious to repair, by increasing their pastures, and enriching them by an extensive variety of plants, augmenting the number of their cattle, whether intended for subsistence or reproduction, and improving the breed by a mixture of races well assorted, procuring a greater quantity of manure, varying their culture so as not to impoverish the soil, and separating their lands by inclosures, which obviate the necessity of constantly employing herdsmen to tend their cattle.

Agriculture has, unquestionably, suffered much, and is still suffering in the western departments. Notwithstanding the succour afforded by the government to rebuild and repair the deserted cottages and barns, to supply them with men and cattle, to set the ploughs to work, and revive industry, it is still evident that the want of confidence which maintains the value of money at an exorbitant rate, the love of stock-jobbing, the impossibility of opening small loans, the excessive price of manual labour, contributions exacted in advance, and the distress of most of the land-owners, who are not in a condition to shew favour to their tenants, are scourges which still overwhelm the country. But I am credibly informed that, in general, the rural inhabitants now lend a more attentive ear to instruction, and that prejudices have less empire over their reason. The great landed proprietors, whom terror had induced to fly their country, have, on recovering possession of their patrimony, converted their parks into arable land. Others, who are not fond of living in town, are daily repairing to their estates, in order to superintend the cultivation of them. No one disdains the simple title of farmer. Old publications relative to agriculture are reprinted in a form more within reach of the capacity of the people; though treatises on domestic animals are still much wanted.

At Rambouillet, formerly the country-seat of the duke of Penthièvre, is an experimental national farm. Fine cattle are now held in high estimation. Flocks of sheep of the Spanish breed are daily increasing; and the number of those of a pure race, already imported, or since bred in France, exceeds 8000.[1] Wide roads, which led to one solitary castle only, have been ploughed, and sown. The rage for ornamental gardens and pleasure-grounds is dying away. The breeding of horses, a branch of industry which the war and the requisition had caused to be abandoned, is on the point of being resumed with increased activity. It is in contemplation to establish studs, on plans better combined and much more favourable to the object than those which formerly existed. In short, the ardent wish of the thinking part of the nation seems to be, that the order which the government is endeavouring to introduce into every branch of its administration, may determine the labourer to proportion his hire to the current price of corn; but all these truths assembled form not such a sketch as you may, perhaps, expect. The state of French agriculture has never yet been delineated on a comprehensive scale, except by Arthur Young. You must persuade him to repeat his tour, if you wish for a perfect picture.[2]

March 22, in continuation.

Most persons are acquainted with DIDOT'S stereotypic editions of the classics, &c. which are sold here for 15 *sous* per copy. Nothing more simple than the plan of this mode of printing. A page is first set up in moveable types; a mould or impression is then taken of the page with any suitable plastic substance, and a solid page is cast from it. The expense of a solid page exceeds not that of resetting it in moveable types; so that, by this invention, the price of books will be considerably reduced, and standard works will never be out of print. Nor are these the only advantages attending the use of stereotype; I must mention another of still greater importance.

By the common method of printing, it is impossible ever to have correct books. They are in the market before all their errors are discovered; and the latest edition of a work, which ought to be the most correct, is necessarily the most faulty; for it presents not only the errors of that from which it was copied, but also those peculiar to itself. Stereotypic books are printed only to answer the extent of the demand; and errors, when discovered, being corrected in the metal, they must, through time and attention, become immaculate; a circumstance of infinite importance in astronomical and mathematical tables of every description.[3]

For elegance of printing, DIDOT is the BENSLEY of Paris; but to see a grand establishment in this line, you must go to the *Rue de la Vrillière*, near the *Place des Victoires*, and visit the

PRINTING-OFFICE OF THE REPUBLIC.

Under the title of *Imprimerie Royale*, this establishment vas formerly placed in the galleries of the *Louvre*. Instituted by Francis I in 1531, it was greatly enlarged and improved under Lewis XIII and Lewis XIV. It has also been considerably augmented since its removal, in 1791, to the hotel belonging to the late Duke of Penthièvre, which it now occupies.

In its present state, it may be considered as the most extensive and most complete typographical establishment in being. Every branch relating to typography, from the casting of the type to the article of binding, is here united. The *dépôt* of punches contains upwards of 30,000 characters of all languages. Among others, here are to be remarked, in all their primitive purity, the beautiful Greek ones of Garamon, engraved by order of Francis I, and which served for the editions of the Stephen, the Byzantine, &c, the oriental characters of the Polyglot of Vitræus, and the collection of exotic characters from the printing-office of the Propaganda. The government business alone constantly employs one hundred presses. A much greater number can be set to work, if wanted.

Independently of the works concerning administration and the sciences, which are executed here at the public cost, the government allows authors to cause to be printed at this office, at their own private expense, such works as, on account of their importance, the difficulty of execution, and the particular types which they require, are entitled to that favour.

On applying to the director, the amateurs of typography are instantly admitted to view this establishment, and shewn every thing interesting in it, with that spirit of liberality which is extended to every public institution here, and which reflects the highest honour on the French nation.

Footnote 1: At the last annual sale at Rambouillet, the average price of a good Spanish ram was no more than 412 francs or £17 sterling. The dearest sold for 620 francs. Return to text

Footnote 2: The statistical accounts of the different departments, which are to be compiled by order of the Minister of the Interior, will specify all the agricultural improvements. The few already published, shew that if the population of France is somewhat diminished in the large towns, it is considerably increased in the country-places. Return to text

Footnote 3: It is, however, to be remarked that the merit of this invaluable invention is not due to France, but to Britain. As far back as the year 1725, a Mr. GED, of Edinburgh, turned his thoughts to the formation of cast letter-press plates, and, in 1736, printed a stereotype edition of Sallust. Being opposed by a combination of printers and booksellers, whose ignorance and prejudices he was unable to overcome, he relinquished the prosecution of his discovery; and thus the stereotypic art was lost to the world, till rediscovered, in 1780, by Mr. ALEXANDER TILLOCH. In the year 1783, Mr. TILLOCH took out a patent for it, in conjunction with Mr. FOULIS, then printer to the University of Glasgow. They printed several books in this manner; but it seems that they also experienced an opposition from the booksellers, and, owing to different circumstances, have not since availed themselves of their patent. Notwithstanding this evidence of priority, the French dispute the invention; and the learned CAMUS, in his "*Historical Sketch of Polytypage and Stereotypage*," affirms, on the authority of LOTTIN, that, towards the end of the seventeenth century, the stereotypic process was put in practice in France, for printing the calendars prefixed to the missals. Hence it is seen that the claim of the English is supported by positive proof; while that of the French rests on bare assertion. Return to text

LETTER LXXXV.

Paris, March 26, 1802.

In visiting a foreign country, and more especially its capital, the traveller, whose object is instruction, enters into the most minute details, in order to obtain a complete knowledge of the various classes of its inhabitants. As Seneca justly observes, in his epistles, what benefit can a person reap from his travels, who spends all his time in examining the beauty and magnificence of public buildings? Will the contemplation of them render him more wise, more temperate, more liberal in his ideas? Will it remove his prejudices and errors? It may amuse him for a time, as a child, by the novelty and variety of objects, which excite an unmeaning admiration. To act thus, adds the learned stoic, is not to travel, it is to wander, and lose both one's time and labour.

"*Non est hoc peregrinari, sed erraie*."

Wherefore Horace, in imitation of Homer, says, in praise of Ulysses,

"*Qui mores hominum multorum vidit, et urbes*."

I have, I hope, given you enough of sights and shows; let us then, my good friend, follow the wise example of the ancients, and take a view of men and manners.

Owing, in some measure, to the levity of French character, and the freedom which now prevails generally enough in all society here, this sort of study, sometimes so tedious, is greatly facilitated. In the Parisian assemblies of the present day, by an almost continual collision, self-love discovers the weak side of an individual whose whole merit consists in a little small-talk, and a rotation of those *jolis petits riens*, which, seconded by a well-favoured countenance and an agreeable carriage, have given him in the world the reputation of an amiable man; while, from another, we see a thousand essential qualities, concealed under a coarse exterior, force themselves into notice, and which his modesty, or more frequently his timidity, prevented him from displaying.

From the preceding preamble, you will naturally conclude that I purpose to appropriate this letter to a few remarks on the

In this city are three very distinct kinds of society. But the order I shall adopt in the description of each of them must not, in any way, lead you to prejudge my opinion respecting the rank which they hold among the French themselves. In this respect, I shall abstain from every sort of reflection, and, confining myself to the simple character of a faithful narrator, shall leave to your sagacity to decide the question.

I shall begin by the society, chiefly composed of the *ci-devant noblesse*, several of whom, never having quitted France, have preserved some of their property; and of emigrants, lately returned to their own country, and who have enough remaining to allow them to have a household establishment, but in a very modest style indeed, compared to that which their rank and fortune enabled them to support before the revolution.

You present yourself at the residence of *Madame la Marquise de C----*. In the anti-room, you declare your name and quality to the groom of the chambers. Then, the opening of one or two folding-doors announces to the mistress of the house, and to the company, the *quantum* of the ceremonies which are to be paid to the newcomer. Keep your eye constantly on the *Marquise*, her behaviour will regulate yours in regard to the individuals who compose her party. In the course of conversation, take special care not to omit the title of the person to whom you address yourself. Such an instance of forgetfulness savours of a man of the new *régime*. Never pronounce the new denominations respecting the divisions of the French territory, the months, the weights, measures, &c. Those words would draw on you an unfavourable interpretation. If you are inclined to hear a discussion on the arts and sciences, or on any new discovery whatever, you seldom find, in these parties, persons who can gratify your taste; though you may meet with many who, as Locke says, "know a little, presume a great deal, and so jump to a conclusion."

From the plebeians, whose presence the *ci-devant* nobles are so condescending as to endure, much obsequiousness and servility are required; and it is expected that the distance of rank should never be forgotten. But the learned or scientific French revolutionist, who admits no other distance than that between knowledge and ignorance, not choosing to submit to such conditions, seldom presents himself at the house of *Madame la Marquise de C----*. However, you will hear her company speak of the court of France, of the interest which each individual had there, and also a few anecdotes not uninteresting, and which will furnish you with some ideas of the brilliant parties there formed. After this discussion, one will talk to you of his regiment; another, of his hunting establishment, of his *châteaux*, of his estates, &c. *Chez Madame la Marquise de C----*, you will find no inconsiderable prepossession against every thing that is not of the old order of things, and even some exclusive pretensions to manners which belong to those only who are real gentlemen. Yet, through all these absurdities, you will always see good-breeding prevail in this society, and the disposition which distinguishes a Frenchman from other polished nations, will here break forth and present itself to you in a striking manner.

While speaking of the *ci-devant noblesse*, I cannot forbear to mention the loss which those who had the happiness of her acquaintance, have sustained by the recent death of Madame DE CHOISEUL, the relict of the duke of that name, minister to Lewis XV. Her virtues shed such a lustre round her, that it reached even the monarch himself, who, when he banished her husband to Chanteloup, wrote to him: "I should have sent you much further, but for the particular esteem I have for Madame DE CHOISEUL, in whose health I take no small interest." This uncommonly-respectable woman will long be quoted and deservedly regretted, because she was modest in greatness, beneficent in prosperity, courageous in misfortune, pure in the vortex of corruption, solid in the midst of frivolity, as simple in her language as she was brilliant in her understanding, and as indulgent to others as she was superior to them in grace and virtue.

I shall next lead you to the house of a *parvenu*, that is, one of those, who, from having made some successful speculations, and possessing a conscience not overnice as to the means of fixing Fortune, is enabled to live in the expensive style of the *ci-devant* court-lords and farmers-general. A letter changed in the person's name, not unfrequently a *de* or a *St.* added, (sometimes both) puzzles the curious, who endeavour to discover what was formerly M. *de St. H------*, now in the enjoyment of an annual income of a hundred thousand francs, or £4000 sterling.

At his house, more than any where else, etiquette is kept up with an extraordinary minuteness; and evil tongues will tell you that it is natural for M. *de St. H------* to remember and avail himself of the observations which he had it in his power to make in the place he formerly occupied. Under his roof, you will find little of that ease and amiableness which are to be remarked in the other societies of Paris. Each individual is on his guard, and afraid of betraying himself by certain expressions, which the force of habit has not yet allowed him to forget. But if you are fond of good music, if you take a pleasure in balls, and in the company of *femmes galantes* or demireps; and even if first-rate jugglers, ventriloquists, and mimics amuse you by their skilful performances, frequent the house of M. *de St. H------*, and every day, or at least every day that he is at home, you will have a new entertainment.

Between the acts, the company make their remarks, each in his own way, on what they have just seen or heard. Afterwards, the conversation turns on the public funds. Little is said, however, on affairs of State, the bankruptcies of the day, and the profit which such or such a speculation might produce. The ladies, after having exhausted the subject of the toilet, finish by giving, as an apology for their own conduct, the charitable enumeration of the peccadilloes which they fancy

they have remarked in other women.

So little am I disposed for gaming, that I forgot to mention *bouillotte*, *quinze*, and also whist and reversi, which are introduced at all these parties. But the two last-mentioned games are reserved for those only who seek in cards nothing more than a recreation from the occupations of the day. At the others, gain is the sole object of the player; and many persons sit at the gaming-table the whole night, and, in the depth of winter even, never leave it till the "garish sun" warns them that it is time to withdraw.

I have now only to introduce you at M. *B------'s*, Counsellor of State. Here you will find the completion of the other two societies, and a very numerous party, which affords to every one a conversation analogous to his taste or his means. Refrain, however, from touching on politics; the French government, still in its infancy, resembles a young plant exposed to the inclemency of the air, and whose growth is directed by skilful hands. This government must remove, and even sometimes destroy every obstacle it meets with, and which may be prejudicial to the form and direction that it thinks proper to give to its branches and various ramifications. Beware, above all, of speaking of the revolution. That string is too delicate to be touched in regard to certain individuals of M. *B------'s* party, perhaps also in regard to himself: for the periods of the calamities which the French have undergone are still quite recent, and the parts that many of these persons may have acted, call to mind recollections too painful, which, for their tranquillity, ought ever to be buried in oblivion. And, in fact, you will always perceive, in the meetings of this class, a harmony, apparent indeed, but which, surprises a stranger the more, as, of all the societies in Paris, it presents to him the greatest medley in point of the persons who compose it.

In this society you will hear very instructive dissertations on the sciences, sound literature, the fine arts, mechanics, and the means of rendering useful the new discoveries, by applying them with economy to the French manufactories, either public or private: for M. *B------* considers it as his duty to receive with distinction all the *savans*, and generally all those called men of talent. In this line of conduct, he follows the example set him by the government; and every one is desirous to appear a Mæcenas in the eyes of Augustus. In other respects, the house of M. *B------* will afford you the agreeble pastimes which you have found at M. *de St. H------'s*.

In Paris, however, are several other societies which, to consider them rightly, are no more than a diminutive of those you have just left; but which, nevertheless, are of a character sufficiently distinct in their composition to justify their pretensions to be classed as well as the others. This difference proceeding chiefly from that of political opinions alone, an acquaintance with the great societies here will enable you to select those of the middle class which you may think proper to frequent, according to your taste, or your manner of seeing and judging of the events of the French revolution. Yet, you must not hence conclude that the conversation turns chiefly on that subject in this particular class of the Parisian societies. They concern themselves less about it perhaps than the others, whether from the little share they have had in it, or because they have but very indirect connexions with the government, or lastly, and this final reason is, I believe, the most conclusive, because a Frenchman, from the nature of his character, ends by forgetting his misfortunes and losses, cares little for the future, and appears desirous to enjoy the present only; following, in that respect, the precept of La Fontaine:

> *"Jouis dès aujourd'hui, tu n'as pas tant à vivre;*
> *Je te rebàts ce mot—car il vaut tout un livre."*

In truth, although, among this people, vexations and enjoyments are almost always the result of imagination, they have preserved the remembrance of their misfortunes only to turn to account the terrible lessons which they have received from them, by adopting, in regard to the present and to the future, that happy philosophy which knows how to yield to the circumstances of the moment. This it is (you may rely on the fact) that has contributed, more than any other cause, to re-establish, in so short a period, the order and tranquillity which France presents to the eyes of astonished foreigners. This it is too that has, in a great measure, obviated the fatal consequences which their past troubles must have made them fear for a long time to come, and for which few remedies could be expected, especially when we reflect on the divisions which the revolution has sown in almost every family in this country.

P. S. The sound of cannon, which strikes my ear at this moment, announces the signature of the definitve treaty. In the evening, a grand illumination will take place to celebrate the return of the most desirable of all blessings.

> "----------O beauteous Peace!
> Sweet union of a State! What else but thou
> Giv'st safety, strength, and glory to a people?"

LETTER LXXXVI.

Paris, March 28, 1802.

Whatever changes may have been introduced by the revolution, in one respect at least, the Parisians still preserve towards foreigners that urbanity for which they were remarkable half a century ago, when Sterne paid them a visit. If you ask a shopkeeper here, of either sex, the way

to a place, perhaps at some distance, he or she neglects the occupation of the moment to direct you, with as much solicitude and attention as though a considerable advantage was to be the result of the given information. It is the small sweet courtesies of life, as that sentimental traveller remarks, which render the road of it less rugged.

Sometimes, indeed, a foreigner pays dearly for the civility shewn him in Paris; but, in laying out his money, he must ever bear in mind that the shopkeepers make no scruple to overcharge their articles to their own countrymen, and some will not blush to take, even from them, a third less than the price demanded.

Soon after my arrival here, I think I mentioned to you the excessive dearness of

FURNISHED LODGINGS.

Since the revolution, their price is nearly doubled, and is extremely high in the most fashionable parts of the town, such as the *Chaussée d'Antin*, the *Rue de la Loi*, the *Rue de la Concorde*, &c. For strangers that know not in Paris any friend who will take the trouble to seek for them suitable apartments, the only way to procure good accommodation is to alight at a ready-furnished hotel, and there hire rooms by the day till they can look about them, and please themselves.

For my own part, I prefer the quiet of a private lodging to the bustle of a public hotel, and, as I have before mentioned, my constant resource, on such occasions, has been the *Petites Affiches*. If you go to the office where this Daily Advertiser is published, and inspect the file, it is ten to one that you immediately find apartments to your wishes.

A single man may now be comfortably lodged here, in a private house with a *porte-cochère*, at from 5 to 8 louis per month; and a small family may be well accommodated, in that respect, at from 12 to 16 louis. A larger party, requiring more room, may obtain excellent apartments at from 20 louis a month upwards, according to the situation, the conveniences, the taste and condition of the furniture, and other contingencies. To prevent subsequent misunderstanding, I would always recommend a written agreement.

The English have hitherto paid dearer than other foreigners for whatever they want in Paris, because they generally trust to their servants, and think it beneath them to look into those matters connected with their own comfort. But the *Milords Anglais* are now entirely eclipsed by the Russian Counts, who give two louis where the English offer one. A person's expenses here, as every where else, materially depend on good management, without which a thoughtless man squanders twice as much as a more considerate one; and while the former obtains no more than the common comforts of life, the latter enjoys all its indulgences.

With respect to the gratifications of the table, I have little to add to what I have already said on that subject, in speaking of the *restaurateurs*. If you choose to become a boarder, you may subscribe at the *Hôtel du Cirque*, *Rue de la Loi*, and sit down every day in good company for about seven louis a month; and there are very respectable private houses, where you may, when once introduced, dine very well for five livres a time; but, at all these places, you are sure to meet either English or Americans; and the consequence is, that you are eternally speaking your mother-tongue, which is a material objection with those who are anxious to improve themselves in the French language. For a man who brings his family to Paris, and resides in private apartments, it might, perhaps, be more advisable to hire a cook, and live *à l'Anglaise* or *à la Française*, according to his fancy.

No conveniences have been so much improved in Paris, since the revolution, as

JOB AND HACKNEY CARRIAGES.

Formerly, the *remises* or job-carriages were far inferior to those in use at the present day; and the old *fiacres* or hackney-coaches were infamous. The carriages themselves were filthy; the horses, wretched; and the coachmen, in tatters, had more the look of beggars than that of drivers.

Now, not only good hackney-coaches, but chariots and cabriolets likewise, figure here on the stands; and many of them have an appearance so creditable that they might even be taken for private French equipages. The regular stipulated fare of all these vehicles is at present 30 *sous* a *course*, and the same for every hour after the first, which is fixed at 40 *sous*.[1] In 1789, it used to be no more than 24. For the 30 *sous*, you may drive from one extremity of Paris to the other, provided you do not stop by the way; for every voluntary stoppage is reckoned a *course*. However, if you have far to go, it is better to agree to pay 40 *sous* per hour, and then you meet with no contradiction. From midnight to six o'clock in the morning, the fare is double.

The present expense of a job-carriage, with a good pair of horses, (including the coachman, who is always paid by the jobman) varies from 22 to 24 louis a month, according to the price of forage. If you use your own carriage, the hire of horses and coachman will cost you from 12 to 15 louis, which, in 1789, was the price of a job-carriage, all expenses included.

Under the old *régime*, there were no stands of cabriolets.[2] These carriages are very convenient to persons pressed for time; but it must be confessed that they are no small annoyance to

pedestrians. Of this Lewis XV was so convinced, that he declared if he were Minister of the Police, he would suffer no cabriolets in Paris. He thought this prohibition beneath his own greatness. To obviate, in some measure, the danger arising both from the want of foot-pavement, and from the inconsiderate rapidity with which these carriages are not unfrequently driven, it is now a law that the neck of every horse in a cabriolet must be provided with bells, and the carriage with two lamps, lighted after dark; yet, in spite of these precautions, and the severity which the police exercises against those who transgress the decree, serious accidents sometimes happen.

Before the revolution, "*gare! gare!*" was the only warning given here to foot-passengers. The master, in his cabriolet, first drove over a person, the servant behind then bawled out "*gare!*" and the maimed pedestrian was left to get up again as he was able. Such brutal negligence now meets with due chastisement.

At a trial which took place here the other day in a court of justice, the driver of a cabriolet was condemned to three months imprisonment in a house of correction, and to pay a fine of 100 francs for maiming a carter. The horse had no bells, as prescribed by law; and the owner of the cabriolet was, besides, condemned, in conjunction with the driver, to pay an indemnification of 3000 francs to the wounded carter, as being civilly responsible for the conduct of his servant.

Notwithstanding the danger of walking in the streets of Paris, such French women as are accustomed to go on foot, traverse the most frequented thoroughfares in the dirtiest weather, at the same time displaying, to the astonished sight of bespattered foreigners, a well-turned leg, a graceful step, and spotless stockings.

If you arrive in Paris without a servant, or (what amounts almost to the same thing) should you bring with you a man ignorant of the French language, you may be instantly accommodated with one or several domestics, under the name of

VALETS-DE-PLACE.

Like every thing else here, the wages of these job-servants are augmented. Formerly, their salary was 30 or 40 *sous* a day: they now ask 4 francs; but, if you purpose to spend a few weeks here, will be glad to serve you for 3. Some are very intelligent; others, very stupid. Most of them are spies of the police; but, as an Englishman in Paris has nothing to conceal, of what consequence is it whether his steps are watched by his own *valet-de-place* or any other *mouchard?* It is usual for them to lay under contribution all the tradesmen you employ; and thus the traiteur, the jobman, &c. contribute to augment their profits. However, if they pilfer you a little themselves, they take care that you are not subjected to too much imposition from others.—To proceed to a few

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

In visiting the French capital, many Englishmen are led into an error. They imagine that a few letters of recommendation will be the means of procuring them admission into other houses besides those of the persons to whom these letters are addressed. But, on their arrival in Paris, they will find themselves mistaken. The houses of the *great* are difficult of access, and those of the secondary class scarcely open with more ease than they did before the revolution. If proper attention be paid to all the letters which a stranger brings, he may be satisfied; though the persons to whom he is recommended, seldom think of taking him to the residence of any of their friends. Therefore, an English traveller, who wishes to mix much in French society, should provide himself with as many letters of recommendation as he can possibly obtain; unless, indeed, he has a celebrated name, which, in all countries, is the best introduction; for curiosity prompts the higher classes to see and examine the man who bears it. The doors of every house will be open to him, when they are shut against other strangers, and he may soon establish an intimacy in the first circles. To those who possess not that advantage, a Frenchman may be induced to offer a dinner, or two, perhaps, and return them a few formal visits. He will profess more than he performs. In a word, he will be polite, but not familiar and friendly.

An Englishman, thus circumstanced, finding that he gains no ground, and is treated with a sort of ceremony, will probably seek other company, dine at the *restaurateurs'*, frequent the *spectacles*, and visit the impures: for such was the life our countrymen, in general, led in Paris before the revolution. Public amusements may, perhaps, make him amends for the want of private society. As, from their astonishing number, they may be varied without end, he may contrive to pass away his evenings. His mornings will, at first, be employed, no doubt, in visiting public curiosities; but, after he has repeatedly surveyed these scenes of attraction, he will fail in what ought to be the grand object of foreign travel, and return home without having acquired a competent knowledge of the manners of the country. He ought therefore to husband proper French acquaintances, and keep up a constant intercourse with them, or he will run a risk of finding himself insulated. Should indisposition confine him to the house for a few days, every one to whom he has been recommended, will suppose him gone, he will no longer be thought of; *ennui* will take possession of him, and, cursing France, he will wish himself safely landed on the shore of Old England.

If this is the case with an Englishman who brings letters to Paris, what must be the situation of one who visits this capital entirely unprovided in that respect? The banker on whom he has a letter of credit, may invite him to a dinner, at which are assembled twenty persons, to all of whom he is a perfect stranger. Without friends, without acquaintances, he will find himself like a

man dropped from the clouds, amidst six or seven hundred thousand persons, driving or walking about in pursuit of their affairs or pleasures. For want of a proper clue to direct him, he is continually in danger of falling into the most detestable company; and the temptations to pleasure are so numerous and so inviting in this gay city, that it requires more fortitude than falls to the lot of many to resist them. Consequently, an untravelled foreigner cannot be too much on his guard in Paris; for it will require every exertion of his prudence and discrimination to avoid being duped and cheated. Above all, he should shun those insinuating and subtle characters who, dexterous in administering that delicious essence which mixes so sweetly with the blood, are ever ready to shew him the curiosities, and introduce him into coteries, which they will represent as respectable, and in which the mistress of the house and her daughters will, probably, conspire to lighten his pocket, and afterwards laugh at his credulity.

As to the reception which the English are likely to meet with here after the ratification of the definitive treaty, (if I may be permitted to judge from personal experience and observation) I think it will, in a great measure, depend on themselves. Therefore, should any of our countrymen complain of being treated here with less attention now than before the revolution, it will, on candid investigation, prove to be their own fault. The essential difference will be found to consist in the respect paid to the man, not, as formerly, in proportion to his money, but to his social worth. The French seem now to make a distinction between individuals only, not between nations. Whence it results that, *cæteris paribus*, the foreigner who possesses most the talent of making himself agreeable in society, will here be the most welcome. Not but, in general, they will shew greater indulgence to an Englishman, and be inclined to overlook in him that which they would consider as highly unpardonable in a stranger of any other country.

On such occasions, their most usual exclamation is "*Les Anglais sont des gens bien extraordinaires! Ma foi! ils sont inconcevables*!" And, indeed, many Englishmen appear to glory in justifying the idea, and *astonishing the natives* by the eccentricity of their behaviour. But these *originals* should recollect that what may be tolerated in a man of superior talent, is ridiculous, if not contemptible, in one undistinguished by such a pretension; and that, by thus *posting* their absurdities to the eyes of a foreign nation, they leave behind them an impression which operates as a real injury in regard to their more rational countrymen. Another circumstance deserves no less animadversion.

In their first essay of foreign travel, our British youths generally carry with them too ample a share of national prepossession and presumption. Accustomed at home to bear down all before them by the weight of their purse, they are too apt to imagine that, by means of a plentiful provision of gold, they may lord it over the continent, from Naples to Petersburg; and that a profuse expenditure of money supersedes the necessity of a compliance with established forms and regulations. Instead of making their applications and inquiries in a proper manner, so as to claim due attention, they more frequently demand as a right what they should rather receive as a favour. Finding themselves disappointed in their vain conclusions, their temper is soured; and, being too proud to retract their error, or even observe a prudent silence, they deal out their impertinence and abuse in proportion to the number of guineas which they may be able to squander. Of course, they cannot but view the peculiar habits and customs of all foreign nations with a jaundiced eye, never reflecting that in most countries are to be found, either in a moral or a physical sense, advantages and disadvantages in which others are deficient. *Le* POUR *et le* CONTRE, as a well-known traveller observes, *se trouvent en chaque nation*. The grand desideratum is to acquire by travel a knowledge of this POUR *et* CONTRE, which, by emancipating us from our prejudices, teaches us mutual toleration—for, of every species of tyranny, that which is exercised on things indifferent in themselves, is the most intolerable. Hence it is less difficult to deprive a nation of its laws than to change its habits.

Footnote 1: When assignats were in circulation, a single *course en fiacre* sometimes cost 600 livres, which was at the rate of 10 livres per minute. But this will not appear extraordinary, when it is known that the depreciation of that paper-currency was such that, at one time, 18,000 livres in assignats could be procured for a single *louis d'or*. Return to text

Footnote 2: A cabriolet is a kind of one-horse chaise, with a standing head, and inclosed in front by a wooden flap, in lieu of one of leather. Behind, there is a place for a footman. Return to text

LETTER LXXXVII

Paris, March 31, 1802.

If I mistake not, I have answered most of the questions contained in your letters; I shall now reply to you on the subject of

DIVORCE.

The number of divorced women to be met with here, especially among the more affluent classes, exceeds any moderate calculation. Nothing can more clearly manifest the necessity of erecting some dike against the torrent of immorality, which has almost inundated this capital, and threatens to spread over all the departments.

Before the revolution, the indissolubility of marriage in France was supposed to promote adultery in a very great degree: the vow was broken because the knot could not be untied. At present, divorces are so easily obtained, that a man or woman, tired of each other, have only to plead

incompatibility of temper, in order to slip their necks out of the matrimonial noose. In short, some persons here change their wedded partner with as much unconcern as they do their linen. Thus, the two extremes touch each other; and either of them has proved equally pernicious to morals.

Formerly, if a Frenchman kept a watchful eye on his wife, he was reckoned jealous, and was blamed. If he adopted a contrary conduct, and she was faithless, he was ridiculed. Not unfrequently, a young miss, emerged from the cloisters of a convent, where she had, perhaps, been sequestered, in order that her bloom might not eclipse the declining charms of her mother, and who appeared timid, bashful, and diffident, was no sooner married to a man in a certain rank in life, than she shone as a meteor of extravagance and dissipation. Such a wife thought of nothing but the gratification of her own desires; because she considered it as a matter of course that all the cares of the family ought to devolve by right on the husband. Provided she could procure the means of satisfying her taste for dress, and of making a figure in the *beau monde*, no other concerns ever disturbed her imagination. If, at first, she had sufficient resolution to resist the contagion of example, and not take a male friend to her bosom, by way of lightening the weight of her connubial chains, she seldom failed, in the end, to follow the fashion of the day, and frequent the gaming-table, where her virtue was sacrificed to discharge her debts of honour.

But what have these *would-be* republicans to allege as an excuse in their favour? They have no convents to initiate young girls in the arts of dissimulation; no debauched court to contaminate, by its example, the wavering principles of the weak part of the sex, or sap the more determined ones of those whose mind is of a firmer texture; nor have they any friendly, sympathizing confessors to draw a spunge, as it were, over the trespasses hid in a snug corner of their heart. No: every one is left to settle his own account with heaven. Yet the libertinism which at present reigns in Paris is sufficient to make a deep impression on persons the least given to reflection.

Il matrimonio, says the Italian proverb, *è un paradiso o un inferno*. In fact, nothing can be compared to the happiness of a married couple, united by sympathy. To them, marriage is really a terrestrial paradise. But what more horrid than the reverse, that is, two beings cursing the fatal hour which brought them together in wedlock? It is a very hell on earth; for surely no punishment can exceed that of being condemned to pass our days with the object of our detestation.

If the indissolubility of marriage in France was formerly productive of such bad consequences; now that the nuptial knot can be loosened with so much facility, there can no longer exist the same plea for adultery. Is then this accumulation of vice less the effect of the institution of divorce in itself, than that of the undigested law by which it was first introduced?

The law of divorce was, I find, projected in 1790, under the auspices of the last Duke of Orleans, who, utterly regardless of the welfare of the State, wished to revolutionize every thing, solely with a view to his own individual interest. His object was to get rid of his wife, who was a woman of strict virtue. This law was decreed on the 20th of September 1792, without any discussion whatever. On the 8th of Nivôse and 4th of Floréal, year II, (29th of December 1794 and 24th of April 1795) the Convention decreed additional laws, all tending to favour the impetuosity of the passions. Thus the door was opened still wider to licentiousness and debauchery. By these laws, an absence of six months is sufficient for procuring a divorce, and, after the observance of certain forms, either of the parties may contract a fresh marriage.

It is not difficult to conceive how many hot-headed, profligate, unprincipled persons, of both sexes, have availed themselves of such laws to gratify their unruly passions, their resentment, their avarice, or their ambition. Oaths, persons, or property, are, in these cases, little respected. If a libertine finds that he cannot possess the object of his desires on any other terms, like Sir John Brute, in the play, he marries her, in order to go to bed to her, and in a few days sues for a divorce. I have been shewn here a Lothario of this description, who, in the course of a short space of time had been married to no less than six different women.

"Divorce," says a judicious French writer, "is a separation, the necessity for which ought to be supported by unquestionable proofs; otherwise, it is nothing more than a legitimate scandal."

The French often wish to assimilate themselves to the Romans, and the Roman laws sanctioned divorce. Let us then examine how far the comparison can, in this respect, be supported.

"Among the Romans," continues he, "the first who availed himself of this privilege was Spurius Corbilius, because his wife was steril. The second divorce was that of C. Sulpicius, because his wife had gone abroad with her hair uncovered, and without a veil over her head. Q. Anstitius divorced on account of having seen his wife speak to a person of her own sex, who was reckoned loose in her conduct; and Sempronius, because his had been to see the public entertainments without having informed him. These different divorces took place about a hundred years after the foundation of Rome. The Romans, after that, were upwards of five hundred years without affording an instance of any divorce. They then were moral and virtuous. But, at length, luxury, that scourge of societies, corrupted their hearts; and divorces became so frequent, that many women reckoned their age by the number of their husbands." To this he might have added, that several Roman ladies of rank were so lost to all sense of shame, that they publicly entered their names among the licensed prostitutes.

"Marriage," concludes he, "presently became nothing more than an object of commerce and speculation; and divorce, a tacit permission for libertinism. Can divorce among the French, be

considered otherwise, when we reflect that this institution, which seemed likely to draw closer the conjugal tie, by restoring it to its state of natural liberty, is, through the abuse made of it, now only a mean of shameful traffic, in which the more cunning of the two ruins the ether, in short, a mound the less against the irruptions of immorality?"

So much for the opinion of a French writer of estimation on the effect of these laws: let us at present endeavour to illustrate it by some examples.

A young lady, seduced by a married man, found herself pregnant. She was of a respectable family: he was rich, and felt the consequences of this event. What was to be done? He goes to one of his friends, whom he knew not to be overburdened with delicacy, and proposes to him to marry this young person, in consideration of a certain sum of money. The friend consents, and the only question is to settle the conditions. They bargain for some time: at last they agree for 10,000 francs (*circa* £410 sterling). The marriage is concluded, the lady is brought to bed, the child dies, and the gentleman sues for a divorce. All this was accomplished in six months. As such opportunities are by no means scarce, he may, in the course of the year, probably, meet with another of the same nature: thus the office of bridegroom is converted into a lucrative situation. The following is another instance of this melancholy truth, but of a different description.

A man about thirty-two years of age, well-made, and of a very agreeable countenance, had been married three months to a young woman of uncommon beauty. He was loved, nay almost adored by her. Every one might have concluded that they were the happiest couple in Paris; and, in fact, no cloud had hitherto overshadowed the serenity of their union. One day when the young bride was at table with her husband, indulging herself in expressing the happiness which she enjoyed, a tipstaff entered, and delivered to her a paper. She read it. What should it be but a subpœna for a divorce? At first she took the thing for a pleasantry: but the husband soon convinced her that nothing was more serious. He assured her that this step would make her fortune, and his own too, if she would consent to the arrangement which he had to propose to her. "You know," said he, "the rich and ugly Madame C----: she has 30,000 francs a year (circa £1250 sterling); she will secure to me the half of her property, provided I will marry her. I offer you a third, if, after having willingly consented to our divorce, you will permit me to see you as my female friend." Such a proposal shocked her at the moment; but a week's reflection effected a change in her sentiments; and the business was completed. *O tempora! O mores!*

But though many married individuals still continue to break their chains, it appears that divorces are gradually decreasing in number; and should the government succeed in introducing into the law on this subject the necessary modifications, of course they will become far less frequent.

Every legislature must be aware to what a degree plays are capable of influencing the opinions of a nation, and what a powerful spring they are for moving the affections. Why then are not theatrical representations here so regulated, that the stage may conduce to the amelioration of morals? Instead of this, in most French comedies, the husband is generally made the butt of ridicule, and the whole plot often lies in his being outwitted by some conceited spark. Marriage, in short, is incessantly railed at in such a lively, satirical manner as to delight nine-tenths of the audience.

This custom was also introduced on our stage under the reign of Charles II; and, not many years ago, it was, I am told, as usual to play *The London Cuckolds* on Lord Mayor's day, as it is now to give a representation of *George Barnwell* during the Easter holidays. Yet, what is this practice of exhibiting a cuckold in a ridiculous point of view, but an apology for adultery, as if it was intended to teach women that their charms are not formed for the possession of one man only? Alas! it is but too true that some of the French belles need no encouragement to infidelity: too soon all scruple is stifled in their bosom; and then, they not only set modesty, but decency too at defiance. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute*; or, as the same idea is more fully expressed by our great moral poet:

> "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
> Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

However, in both the instances which I have adduced, the fault was entirely on the side of the men; and, in general, I believe this will prove to be the case. Recrimination, indeed, is loudly urged by our sex in Paris; they blame the women, with a view of extenuating their own irregularities, which scarcely know any limits.

On a question of a divorce-bill brought on, not long since, in the House of Commons, you may recollect that a member was laughed at, for asserting that if men expected women to reform, they ought to begin by reforming themselves. For my part, I conceive the idea to be perfectly just. Infidelity on the woman's side is, unquestionably, more hurtful to society than a failure of the same sort on the man's; yet, is it reasonable to suppose women to be so exempt from human frailty, as to preserve their chastity inviolate, when men set them so bad an example?

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Circumstances have at length occurred to recall me to England, and as this will, probably, be the last letter that you will receive from me before I have the pleasure of taking you by the hand, I shall devote it to miscellaneous subjects, and, without studying any particular arrangement, speak of them at random, just as they chance to present themselves.

A fellow-creature, whose care-worn countenance and emaciated body claimed a mite from any one who had a mite to bestow, had taken his stand at the gate-way just now as I entered. The recollection of his tale of woe being uppermost in my mind, I begin with

MENDICANTS.

In spite of the calamities which all great political convulsions never fail to engender, the streets of Paris present not at this day that vast crowd of beggars, covered with rags and vermin, by which they were formerly infested. This is to be attributed to the partial adoption of measures for employing the poor; and, doubtless, when receptacles come to be established here, according to the salutary plans introduced into Bavaria by Count Rumford, mendicity will be gradually annihilated.

But, if beggars have decreased in Paris, this is not the case with

PAWNBROKERS.

They seem to have multiplied in proportion to the increase of the number of opportunities afforded for gambling in the lottery, that is, in the ratio of 21 to 2.[1]

Formerly, in addition to the public establishment called the *Mont de Piété*, commissioners were appointed, in different parts of the town, to take in pledges, and make advances on them previously to their being lodged in that grand repository. There, money was lent on them at an interest of 10 per cent; and if the article pledged was not redeemed by a certain time, it was sold by public auction, and, the principal and interest being deducted, the surplus was paid to the holder of the duplicate. Thus the iniquitous projects of usury were defeated; and the rich, as well as the poor, went to borrow at the *Mont de Piété*. To obtain a sum for the discharge of a debt of honour, a dutchess here deposited her diamond ear-rings; while a washerwoman slipped off her petticoat, and pawned it to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

At the present moment, the *Mont de Piété* still exists; but, doubtless, on a different plan; for Paris abounds with *Maisons de prêt*. On the eve of particular days in each month when the shopkeepers' promissory notes become due, they here pledge articles in order to procure the means of making good their payments. But the crowd of borrowers is the greatest on the days immediately preceding those on which the Paris lottery is drawn; the hucksters, marketwomen, porters, retailers of fruit, and unfortunate females, then deposit their wearing apparel at these dens of rapacity, that they may acquire a share of a ticket, the price of which is fixed so low as to be within the purchase of the poorest classes.

The lottery being over, till the next drawing, those persons think no more of their effects, provided they are within two or three of the winning numbers; and thus they gamble away almost every thing belonging to them, even to the very clothes on their back. This is so true that it is not, I understand, at all uncommon in Paris, for a Cyprian nymph to send her last robe to the nearest pawnbroker's, in order to have the chance of a prize in the lottery, and to lie in bed till she obtains the means of purchasing another. Nor is this by far the worst part of the story.

The too credulous followers of Fortune, on finding all their hopes of success blasted, frequently seek a termination of their misery by suicide: and a person of veracity, who made a point of visiting the *Morne* almost daily, assured me that he always knew when the lottery had just been drawn, by the increased number of dead bodies, there exposed, of persons who had put an end to their existence.

These are facts shocking to relate; but, if legislators will promote gaming, either by lotteries, or in any other manner, such are the consequences to be expected.

Another article which has multiplied prodigiously in Paris, since the revolution, consists of

NEWSPAPERS.

In 1789, the only daily papers in circulation here were the *Journal de Paris* and the *Petites Affiches*; for the *Gazette de France* appeared only twice a week. From that period, these ephemeral productions increased so rapidly, that, under the generic name of *Journaux*, upwards of six thousand, bearing different titles, have appeared in France, five hundred of which were published in Paris.

At this time, here is a great variety of daily papers. The most eminent of these are well known in England; such as the *Moniteur*, the only official paper, the sale of which is said to be 20,000 per day; that of the *Journal de Paris*, 16,000; of the *Publiciste*, 14,000; of the *Journal des Débats*, 12,000; of the *Journal des Défenseurs de la Patrie*, 10,000; and of the *Clé du Cabinet*, 6,000. The sale of the others is comparatively trifling, with the exception of the *Petites Affiches*, of which the

number daily sold exceeds 30,000.

In addition to the *Journals*, which I mentioned in my letter of the 16th of December last, the most esteemed are the *Magazin Encyclopédique*, edited by MILLIN, the *Annales de Chimie*, the *Journal des Arts*, the *Journal Polytechnique*, the *Journal des Mines*, the *Journal général des Inventions et des Découvertes*, &c. I stop here, because it would be useless to attempt to send you a complete list of all the French periodical publications, as, in the flux and reflux of this literary ocean, such a list cannot long be expected to preserve its exactness.

Among the conveniences which this city affords in an enviable degree and in great abundance, are

BATHS.

Those of Paris, of every description, still retain their former pre-eminence. The most elegant are the *Bains Chinois* on the north Boulevards, where, for three francs, you may enjoy the pleasure of bathing in almost as much luxury as an Asiatic monarch. Near the *Temple* and at the *Vauxhall d'Été*, also on the old Boulevards, are baths, where you have the advantage of a garden to saunter in after bathing.

On the Seine are several floating baths, the most remarkable of which are the *Bains Vigier*, at the foot of the *Pont National*. The vessel containing them is upwards of 200 feet in length by about 60 in breadth, and presents two tiers of baths, making, on both decks, 140 in number. It is divided in the middle by a large transparent plate of glass, which permits the eye to embrace its whole extent; one half of which is appropriated to men; the other, to women. On each deck are galleries, nine feet wide, ornamented with much architectural taste. On the exterior part of the vessel is a promenade, decorated with evergreens, orange and rose trees, jasmines, and other odoriferous plants. By means of a hydraulic machine, worked by two horses, in an adjoining barge, the reservoirs can be emptied and filled again in less than an hour.

The *Bains Vigier* are much frequented, as you may suppose from their daily consumption of two cords of wood for fuel. Tepid baths, at blood-heat, are, at present, universally used by the French ladies, and, apparently, with no small advantage. The price of one of these is no more than 30 *sous*, linen, &c. included.

If you want to learn to swim, you may be instructed here in that necessary art, or merely take a look at those acquiring it, at the

SCHOOL OF NATATION.

The Seine is the school where the lessons are given, and the police takes care that the pupils infringe not the laws of decency.

It is certain that, as far back as the year 1684, means were proposed in London to transmit signs to a great distance in a very short space of time, and that, towards the close of the seventeenth century, a member of the Academy of Sciences made, near Paris, several minute experiments on the same subject. The paper read at the Royal Society of London, and the detail of the experiments made in France, seem to suggest nearly the same means as those now put in practice, by the two nations, with respect to

TELEGRAPHS.

The construction of those in France differs from ours in consisting of one principal pole, and two arms, moveable at the ends. There are four in Paris; one, on the *Louvre*, which corresponds with Lille; another, on the *Place de la Concorde*, with Brest; a third, on one of the towers of the church of *St. Sulpice*, with Strasburg; and the fourth, on the other tower of the said church, which is meant to extend to Nice, but is as yet carried no farther than Dijon. To and from Lille, which is 120 leagues distant from Paris, intelligence is conveyed and received in six minutes, three for the question, and three for the answer.

Yet, however expeditious this intercourse may seem, it is certain that the telegraphic language may be abridged, by preserving these machines in their present state, but at the same time allotting to each of the signs a greater portion of idea, without introducing any thing vague into the signification.

Independently of the public curiosities, which I have described, Paris contains several

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS.

Among them, those most deserving of attention are:

ADANSON'S cabinet of Natural History, *Rue de la Victoire*.

CASAS' cabinet of Models and Drawings, *Rue de Seine, Faubourg St. Germain*.

CHARLES'S cabinet of Physics, *Palais National des Sciences et des Arts.*

DENON'S cabinet of Drawings, &c. *Hôtel de Bouillon, Rue J. J. Rousseau*.

FOUQUET'S cabinet of Models of Antique Monuments, *Rue de Lille, F. S. G.*

HAUPOIS' cabinet of Mechanics.

SUË'S cabinet of Anatomy, *Rue du Luxembourg*.

TERSAN'S cabinet of Antiquities, *Cloître St. Honoré*.

VAILLANT'S cabinet of Birds, &c. *Rue du Sépulchre, F. S. G.*

VAN-HORREN'S cabinet of Curiosities, *Rue St. Dominique, F. S. G.*

I must observe that, to visit these men of science, without putting them to inconvenience, it is expedient either to procure an introduction, or to address them a note, requesting permission to view their cabinet. This observation holds good with respect to every thing that is not public.

If you are fond of inspecting curious fire-arms, you should examine the *dépôt d'armes* of M. BOUTET in the *Rue de la Loi*, whose manufactory is at Versailles, and also pay a visit to M. REGNIER, at the *Dépôt Central de l'Artillerie*, *Rue de l'Université*, who is a very ingenious mechanic, and will shew you several curious articles of his own invention, such as a *dynamomètre*, by means of which you can ascertain and compare the relative strength of men, as well as that of horses and draught-cattle, and also judge of the resistance of machines, and estimate the moving power you wish to apply to them; a *potamomètre*, by which you can tell the force of running streams, and measure the currents of rivers. M. REGNIER has also invented different kinds of locks and padlocks, which cannot be picked; as well as some curious pistols, &c.

I have, as you will perceive, strictly confined myself to the limits of the capital, because I expect that my absence from it will not be long; and, in my next trip to France, I intend, not only to point out such objects as I may now have neglected, but also to describe those most worthy of notice in the environs of Paris.

If I have not spoken to you of all the metamorphoses occasioned here by the revolution, it is because several of them bear not the stamp of novelty. If the exchange in Paris is now held in the *ci-devant Eglise des Petits Pères*, did we not at Boston, in New England, convert the meeting-houses and churches into riding-schools and barracks?

As the *Charnier des Innocens*, which had subsisted in the centre of Paris for upwards of eight centuries, and received the remains of at least ten millions of human beings, was, before the revolution, turned into a market-place; so is the famous spot where the Jacobin convent stood in the *Rue St. Honoré*, and whence issued laws more bloody than those of Draco, now on the point of being appropriated to a similar destination. The cemetery of St. Sulpice is transformed into a Ranelagh. Over the entrance is written, in large letters, encircled by roses, "BAL DES ZÉPHYRS," and, underneath, you read:

> *"Has ultra metas requiescunt*
> *Beatam spem expectantes."*

And on the door itself:

> *"Expectances misericordiam Dei."*

I was just going to conclude with *Adieu, till we meet*, when I was most agreeably surprised by the receipt of your letter. I am happy to find that, through the kind attention of Mr. Mantell of Dover, whose good offices on this and other simllar occasions claim my most grateful acknowledgments, you have received all the packets and books which I have addressed to you during my present visit to Paris. It is likewise no small gratification to me to learn that my correspondence has afforded to you a few subjects of deep reflection.

As I told you at the time, the task which you imposed on me was more than I could accomplish; and you must now be but too well convinced that the apprehension of my inability was not unfounded. It may not, perhaps, be difficult for a man of sound judgment to seize and delineate the general progress of the human mind during a determined period; but to follow successively, through all their details, the ramifications of the arts and sciences, is a labour which requires much more knowledge and experience than I can pretend to: nor did self-love ever blind me so far as to lead me to presume, for a moment, that success would crown my efforts.

However, I think I have said enough to shew that one of the striking effects of the revolution has been to make the arts and sciences popular in France. It has rendered common those doctrines which had till then been reserved for first-rate *savans* and genuises. The arsenals of the sciences (if I may use the expression) were filled; but soldiers were wanting. The revolution has produced them in considerable numbers; and, in spite of all the disasters and evils which it has occasioned, it cannot be denied that the minds of Frenchmen, susceptible of the least energy, have here received a powerful impulse which has urged them towards great and useful ideas. This impulse has been kept alive and continued by the grand establishments of public instruction, founded

during the course of that memorable period. Thus, in a few words, you are at once in possession both of the causes and the result of the progress of the human mind in this country.

You may, probably, be surprised that I could have written so much, in so short a space of time, amid all the allurements of the French capital, and the variety of pursuits which must necessarily have diverted my attention. Perhaps too, you may think that I might have dwelt less on some of my least interesting details. I must confess that I have, in some measure, subjected myself to such an opinion; but, knowing your wish to acquire every sort of information, I have exerted myself to obtain it from all quarters. To collect this budget has been no easy task; to compress it would have been still more difficult, and, alas! to have transmitted it, in an epistolary form, would have been totally out of my power, but for the assistance of two very ingenious artists, who have not a little contributed to lighten my labour. Introducing themselves to me, very shortly after my arrival, the one furnished me with an everlasting pen; and the other, with an inexhaustible inkstand.

Farewell, my good friend. I have obtained a passport for England. My baggage is already packed up. To-morrow I shall devote to the ceremony of making visits *p. p. c.* that is, *pour prendre congé* of my Parisian friends; and, on the day after, *(Deo volente)* I shall bid adieu to the "paradise of women, the purgatory of men, and the hell of horses."

Footnote 1: Since the revolution, the Paris lottery is drawn three times in each month, in lieu of twice; and lotteries have also been established in the principal towns of the Republic, namely; Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, Rouen, Strasburg, and Brussels. The offices in the capital present the facility of gambling in all these different lotteries as often every month as in that of Paris. Return to text

THE END.

The new organisation of the National Institute, referred to in Letter XLV of this volume, will be found among the prefaratory matter in Vol. I, immediately preceding the Introduction.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PARIS AS IT WAS AND AS IT IS ***

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