CHAPTER VI.
UNPOPULARITY.

The archdeacon and the bellringer, as we have already said, were but little loved by the populace great and small, in the vicinity of the cathedral. When Claude and Quasimodo went out together, which frequently happened, and when they were seen traversing in company, the valet behind the master, the cold, narrow, and gloomy streets of the block of Notre-Dame, more than one evil word, more than one ironical quaver, more than one insulting jest greeted them on their way, unless Claude Frollo, which was rarely the case, walked with head upright and raised, showing his severe and almost august brow to the dumbfounded jeerers.

Both were in their quarter like "the poets" of whom Régnier speaks,—

"All sorts of persons run after poets,
As warblers fly shrieking after owls."

Sometimes a mischievous child risked his skin and bones for the ineffable pleasure of driving a pin into Quasimodo's hump. Again, a young girl, more bold and saucy than was fitting, brushed the priest's black robe, singing in his face the sardonic ditty, "*niche, niche*, the devil is caught." Sometimes a group of squalid old crones, squatting in a file under the shadow of the steps to a porch, scolded noisily as the archdeacon and the bellringer passed, and tossed them this encouraging welcome, with a curse: "Hum! there's a fellow whose soul is made like the other one's body!" Or a band of schoolboys and street urchins, playing hop-scotch, rose in a body and saluted him classically, with some cry in Latin: "*Eia! eia! Claudius cum claudo*!"

But the insult generally passed unnoticed both by the priest and the bellringer. Quasimodo was too deaf to hear all these gracious things, and Claude was too dreamy.

BOOK FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.
ABBAS BEATI MARTINI.

Dom Claude's fame had spread far and wide. It procured for him, at about the epoch when he refused to see Madame de Beaujeu, a visit which he long remembered.

It was in the evening. He had just retired, after the office, to his canon's cell in the cloister of Notre-Dame. This cell, with the exception, possibly, of some glass phials, relegated to a corner, and filled with a decidedly equivocal powder, which strongly resembled the alchemist's "powder of projection," presented nothing strange or

mysterious. There were, indeed, here and there, some inscriptions on the walls, but they were pure sentences of learning and piety, extracted from good authors. The archdeacon had just seated himself, by the light of a three-jetted copper lamp, before a vast coffer crammed with manuscripts. He had rested his elbow upon the open volume of Honorius d'Autun, *De predestinatione et libero arbitrio*, and he was turning over, in deep meditation, the leaves of a printed folio which he had just brought, the sole product of the press which his cell contained. In the midst of his revery there came a knock at his door. "Who's there?" cried the learned man, in the gracious tone of a famished dog, disturbed over his bone.

A voice without replied, "Your friend, Jacques Coictier." He went to open the door.

It was, in fact, the king's physician; a person about fifty years of age, whose harsh physiognomy was modified only by a crafty eye. Another man accompanied him. Both wore long slate-colored robes, furred with minever, girded and closed, with caps of the same stuff and hue. Their hands were concealed by their sleeves, their feet by their robes, their eyes by their caps.

"God help me, messieurs!" said the archdeacon, showing them in; "I was not expecting distinguished visitors at such an hour." And while speaking in this courteous fashion he cast an uneasy and scrutinizing glance from the physician to his companion.

"'Tis never too late to come and pay a visit to so considerable a learned man as Dom Claude Frollo de Tirechappe," replied Doctor Coictier, whose Franche-Comté accent made all his phrases drag along with the majesty of a train-robe.

There then ensued between the physician and the archdeacon one of those congratulatory prologues which, in accordance with custom, at that epoch preceded all conversations between learned men, and which did not prevent them from detesting each other in the most cordial manner in the world. However, it is the same nowadays; every wise man's mouth complimenting another wise man is a vase of honeyed gall.

Claude Frollo's felicitations to Jacques Coictier bore reference principally to the temporal advantages which the worthy physician had found means to extract, in the course of his much envied career, from each malady of the king, an operation of alchemy much better and more certain than the pursuit of the philosopher's stone.

"In truth, Monsieur le Docteur Coictier, I felt great joy on learning of the bishopric given your nephew, my reverend seigneur Pierre Versé. Is he not Bishop of Amiens?"

“Yes, monsieur Archdeacon; it is a grace and mercy of God.”

“Do you know that you made a great figure on Christmas Day at the head of your company of the chamber of accounts, Monsieur President?”

“Vice-President, Dom Claude. Alas! nothing more.”

“How is your superb house in the Rue Saint-André des Arcs coming on? ’Tis a Louvre. I love greatly the apricot tree which is carved on the door, with this play of words: ‘A L’ABRI-COTIER—Sheltered from reefs.’”

“Alas! Master Claude, all that masonry costeth me dear. In proportion as the house is erected, I am ruined.”

“Ho! have you not your revenues from the jail, and the bailiwick of the Palais, and the rents of all the houses, sheds, stalls, and booths of the enclosure? ’Tis a fine breast to suck.”

“My castellany of Poissy has brought me in nothing this year.”

“But your tolls of Triel, of Saint-James, of Saint-Germain-en-Laye are always good.”

“Six score livres, and not even Parisian livres at that.”

“You have your office of counsellor to the king. That is fixed.”

“Yes, brother Claude; but that accursed seigneury of Poligny, which people make so much noise about, is worth not sixty gold crowns, year out and year in.”

In the compliments which Dom Claude addressed to Jacques Coictier, there was that sardonical, biting, and covertly mocking accent, and the sad cruel smile of a superior and unhappy man who toys for a moment, by way of distraction, with the dense prosperity of a vulgar man. The other did not perceive it.

“Upon my soul,” said Claude at length, pressing his hand, “I am glad to see you and in such good health.”

“Thanks, Master Claude.”

“By the way,” exclaimed Dom Claude, “how is your royal patient?”

“He payeth not sufficiently his physician,” replied the doctor, casting a side glance at his companion.

“Think you so, Gossip Coictier,” said the latter.

These words, uttered in a tone of surprise and reproach, drew upon this unknown personage the attention of the archdeacon which, to tell the truth, had not been diverted from him a single moment since the stranger had set foot across the threshold of his cell. It had even required all the thousand reasons which he had for handling tenderly Doctor Jacques Coictier, the all-powerful physician of King Louis XI., to induce him to receive the latter thus accompanied. Hence, there was nothing very cordial in his manner when Jacques Coictier said to him,—

“By the way, Dom Claude, I bring you a colleague who has desired to see you on account of your reputation.”

“Monsieur belongs to science?” asked the archdeacon, fixing his piercing eye upon Coictier’s companion. He found beneath the brows of the stranger a glance no less piercing or less distrustful than his own.

He was, so far as the feeble light of the lamp permitted one to judge, an old man about sixty years of age and of medium stature, who appeared somewhat sickly and broken in health. His profile, although of a very ordinary outline, had something powerful and severe about it; his eyes sparkled beneath a very deep superciliary arch, like a light in the depths of a cave; and beneath his cap which was well drawn down and fell upon his nose, one recognized the broad expanse of a brow of genius.

He took it upon himself to reply to the archdeacon’s question,—

“Reverend master,” he said in a grave tone, “your renown has reached my ears, and I wish to consult you. I am but a poor provincial gentleman, who removeth his shoes before entering the dwellings of the learned. You must know my name. I am called Gossip Tourangeau.”

“Strange name for a gentleman,” said the archdeacon to himself.

Nevertheless, he had a feeling that he was in the presence of a strong and earnest character. The instinct of his own lofty intellect made him recognize an intellect no less lofty under Gossip Tourangeau’s furred cap, and as he gazed at the solemn face, the ironical smile which Jacques Coictier’s presence called forth on his gloomy face, gradually disappeared as twilight fades on the horizon of night. Stern and silent, he had resumed his seat in his great armchair; his elbow rested as usual, on the table, and his brow on his hand. After a few moments of reflection, he motioned his visitors to be seated, and, turning to Gossip Tourangeau he said,—

“You come to consult me, master, and upon what science?”

“Your reverence,” replied Tourangeau, “I am ill, very ill. You are said to be great Æsculapius, and I am come to ask your advice in medicine.”

“Medicine!” said the archdeacon, tossing his head. He seemed to meditate for a moment, and then resumed: “Gossip Tourangeau, since that is your name, turn your head, you will find my reply already written on the wall.”

Gossip Tourangeau obeyed, and read this inscription engraved above his head: “*Medicine is the daughter of dreams*.—JAMBLIQUE.”

Meanwhile, Doctor Jacques Coictier had heard his companion’s question with a displeasure which Dom Claude’s response had but redoubled. He bent down to the ear of Gossip Tourangeau, and said to him, softly enough not to be heard by the archdeacon: “I warned you that he was mad. You insisted on seeing him.”

“’Tis very possible that he is right, madman as he is, Doctor Jacques,” replied his comrade in the same low tone, and with a bitter smile.

“As you please,” replied Coictier dryly. Then, addressing the archdeacon: “You are clever at your trade, Dom Claude, and you are no more at a loss over Hippocrates than a monkey is over a nut. Medicine a dream! I suspect that the pharmacopolists and the master physicians would insist upon stoning you if they were here. So you deny the influence of philtres upon the blood, and unguents on the skin! You deny that eternal pharmacy of flowers and metals, which is called the world, made expressly for that eternal invalid called man!”

“I deny,” said Dom Claude coldly, “neither pharmacy nor the invalid. I reject the physician.”

“Then it is not true,” resumed Coictier hotly, “that gout is an internal eruption; that a wound caused by artillery is to be cured by the application of a young mouse roasted; that young blood, properly injected, restores youth to aged veins; it is not true that two and two make four, and that emprostathonos follows opistathonos.”

The archdeacon replied without perturbation: “There are certain things of which I think in a certain fashion.”

Coictier became crimson with anger.

“There, there, my good Coictier, let us not get angry,” said Gossip Tourangeau. “Monsieur the archdeacon is our friend.”

Coictier calmed down, muttering in a low tone,—

“After all, he’s mad.”

“*Pasque-dieu*, Master Claude,” resumed Gossip Tourangeau, after a silence, “You embarrass me greatly. I had two things to consult you upon, one touching my health and the other touching my star.”

“Monsieur,” returned the archdeacon, “if that be your motive, you would have done as well not to put yourself out of breath climbing my staircase. I do not believe in Medicine. I do not believe in Astrology.”

“Indeed!” said the man, with surprise.

Coictier gave a forced laugh.

“You see that he is mad,” he said, in a low tone, to Gossip Tourangeau. “He does not believe in astrology.”

“The idea of imagining,” pursued Dom Claude, “that every ray of a star is a thread which is fastened to the head of a man!”

“And what then, do you believe in?” exclaimed Gossip Tourangeau.

The archdeacon hesitated for a moment, then he allowed a gloomy smile to escape, which seemed to give the lie to his response: “*Credo in Deum*.”

“*Dominum nostrum*,” added Gossip Tourangeau, making the sign of the cross.

“Amen,” said Coictier.

“Reverend master,” resumed Tourangeau, “I am charmed in soul to see you in such a religious frame of mind. But have you reached the point, great savant as you are, of no longer believing in science?”

“No,” said the archdeacon, grasping the arm of Gossip Tourangeau, and a ray of enthusiasm lighted up his gloomy eyes, “no, I do not reject science. I have not crawled so long, flat on my belly, with my nails in the earth, through the innumerable ramifications of its caverns, without perceiving far in front of me, at the end of the obscure gallery, a light, a flame, a something, the reflection, no doubt, of the dazzling central laboratory where the patient and the wise have found out God.”

“And in short,” interrupted Tourangeau, “what do you hold to be true and certain?”

“Alchemy.”

Coictier exclaimed, “Pardieu, Dom Claude, alchemy has its use, no doubt, but why blaspheme medicine and astrology?”

“Naught is your science of man, naught is your science of the stars,” said the archdeacon, commandingly.

“That’s driving Epidaurus and Chaldea very fast,” replied the physician with a grin.

“Listen, Messire Jacques. This is said in good faith. I am not the king’s physician, and his majesty has not given me the Garden of Dædalus in which to observe the constellations. Don’t get angry, but listen to me. What truth have you deduced, I will not say from medicine, which is too foolish a thing, but from astrology? Cite to me the virtues of the vertical boustrophedon, the treasures of the number ziruph and those of the number zephirod!”

“Will you deny,” said Coictier, “the sympathetic force of the collar bone, and the cabalistics which are derived from it?”

“An error, Messire Jacques! None of your formulas end in reality. Alchemy on the other hand has its discoveries. Will you contest results like this? Ice confined beneath the earth for a thousand years is transformed into rock crystals. Lead is the ancestor of all metals. For gold is not a metal, gold is light. Lead requires only four periods of two hundred years each, to pass in succession from the state of lead, to the state of red arsenic, from red arsenic to tin, from tin to silver. Are not these facts? But to believe in the collar bone, in the full line and in the stars, is as ridiculous as to believe with the inhabitants of Grand-Cathay that the golden oriole turns into a mole, and that grains of wheat turn into fish of the carp species.”

“I have studied hermetic science!” exclaimed Coictier, “and I affirm—”

The fiery archdeacon did not allow him to finish: “And I have studied medicine, astrology, and hermetics. Here alone is the truth.” (As he spoke thus, he took from the top of the coffer a phial filled with the powder which we have mentioned above), “here alone is light! Hippocrates is a dream; Urania is a dream; Hermes, a thought. Gold is the sun; to make gold is to be God. Herein lies the one and only science. I have sounded the depths of medicine and astrology, I tell you! Naught, nothingness! The human body, shadows! the planets, shadows!”

And he fell back in his armchair in a commanding and inspired attitude. Gossip Touraugeau watched him in silence. Coictier tried to grin, shrugged his shoulders imperceptibly, and repeated in a low voice,—

“A madman!”

“And,” said Tourangeau suddenly, “the wondrous result,—have you attained it, have you made gold?”

“If I had made it,” replied the archdeacon, articulating his words slowly, like a man who is reflecting, “the king of France would be named Claude and not Louis.”

The stranger frowned.

“What am I saying?” resumed Dom Claude, with a smile of disdain. “What would the throne of France be to me when I could rebuild the empire of the Orient?”

“Very good!” said the stranger.

“Oh, the poor fool!” murmured Coictier.

The archdeacon went on, appearing to reply now only to his thoughts,—

“But no, I am still crawling; I am scratching my face and knees against the pebbles of the subterranean pathway. I catch a glimpse, I do not contemplate! I do not read, I spell out!”

“And when you know how to read!” demanded the stranger, “will you make gold?”

“Who doubts it?” said the archdeacon.

“In that case Our Lady knows that I am greatly in need of money, and I should much desire to read in your books. Tell me, reverend master, is your science inimical or displeasing to Our Lady?”

“Whose archdeacon I am?” Dom Claude contented himself with replying, with tranquil hauteur.

“That is true, my master. Well! will it please you to initiate me? Let me spell with you.”

Claude assumed the majestic and pontifical attitude of a Samuel.

“Old man, it requires longer years than remain to you, to undertake this voyage across mysterious things. Your head is very gray! One comes forth from the cavern only with white hair, but only those with dark hair enter it. Science alone knows well how to hollow, wither, and dry up human faces; she needs not to have old age bring her faces already furrowed. Nevertheless, if the desire possesses you of putting yourself under discipline at your age, and of deciphering the formidable alphabet of the sages, come to me; ’tis well, I will make the effort. I will not tell you, poor old man, to go and visit the sepulchral chambers of the pyramids, of which ancient Herodotus speaks, nor the brick tower of Babylon, nor the immense white marble sanctuary of the Indian temple of Eklinga. I, no more than yourself, have seen the Chaldean masonry works constructed according to the sacred form of the Sikra, nor the temple of Solomon, which is destroyed, nor the stone doors of the sepulchre of the kings of Israel, which

are broken. We will content ourselves with the fragments of the book of Hermes which we have here. I will explain to you the statue of Saint Christopher, the symbol of the sower, and that of the two angels which are on the front of the Sainte-Chapelle, and one of which holds in his hands a vase, the other, a cloud—"

Here Jacques Coictier, who had been unhorsed by the archdeacon's impetuous replies, regained his saddle, and interrupted him with the triumphant tone of one learned man correcting another,—"*Erras amice Claudi*. The symbol is not the number. You take Orpheus for Hermes."

"'Tis you who are in error," replied the archdeacon, gravely. "Dædalus is the base; Orpheus is the wall; Hermes is the edifice,—that is all. You shall come when you will," he continued, turning to Tourangeau, "I will show you the little parcels of gold which remained at the bottom of Nicholas Flamel's alembic, and you shall compare them with the gold of Guillaume de Paris. I will teach you the secret virtues of the Greek word, *peristera*. But, first of all, I will make you read, one after the other, the marble letters of the alphabet, the granite pages of the book. We shall go to the portal of Bishop Guillaume and of Saint-Jean le Rond at the Sainte-Chapelle, then to the house of Nicholas Flamel, Rue Manvault, to his tomb, which is at the Saints-Innocents, to his two hospitals, Rue de Montmorency. I will make you read the hieroglyphics which cover the four great iron cramps on the portal of the hospital Saint-Gervais, and of the Rue de la Ferronnerie. We will spell out in company, also, the façade of Saint-Côme, of Sainte-Geneviève-des-Ardents, of Saint Martin, of Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie—."

For a long time, Gossip Tourangeau, intelligent as was his glance, had appeared not to understand Dom Claude. He interrupted.

"*Pasque-dieu*! what are your books, then?"

"Here is one of them," said the archdeacon.

And opening the window of his cell he pointed out with his finger the immense church of Notre-Dame, which, outlining against the starry sky the black silhouette of its two towers, its stone flanks, its monstrous haunches, seemed an enormous two-headed sphinx, seated in the middle of the city.

The archdeacon gazed at the gigantic edifice for some time in silence, then extending his right hand, with a sigh, towards the printed book which lay open on the table, and his left towards Notre-Dame, and turning a sad glance from the book to the church,—"Alas," he said, "this will kill that."

Coictier, who had eagerly approached the book, could not repress an exclamation. “Hé, but now, what is there so formidable in this: ‘GLOSSA IN EPISTOLAS D. PAULI, *Norimbergæ, Antonius Koburger*, 1474.’ This is not new. ’Tis a book of Pierre Lombard, the Master of Sentences. Is it because it is printed?”

“You have said it,” replied Claude, who seemed absorbed in a profound meditation, and stood resting, his forefinger bent backward on the folio which had come from the famous press of Nuremberg. Then he added these mysterious words: “Alas! alas! small things come at the end of great things; a tooth triumphs over a mass. The Nile rat kills the crocodile, the swordfish kills the whale, the book will kill the edifice.”

The curfew of the cloister sounded at the moment when Master Jacques was repeating to his companion in low tones, his eternal refrain, “*He is mad!*” To which his companion this time replied, “I believe that he is.”

It was the hour when no stranger could remain in the cloister. The two visitors withdrew. “Master,” said Gossip Tourangeau, as he took leave of the archdeacon, “I love wise men and great minds, and I hold you in singular esteem. Come to-morrow to the Palace des Tournelles, and inquire for the Abbé de Sainte-Martin, of Tours.”

The archdeacon returned to his chamber dumbfounded, comprehending at last who Gossip Tourangeau was, and recalling that passage of the register of Sainte-Martin, of Tours:—*Abbas beati Martini, SCILICET REX FRANCIÆ, est canonicus de consuetudine et habet parvam præbendam quam habet sanctus Venantius, et debet sedere in sede thesaurarii*.

It is asserted that after that epoch the archdeacon had frequent conferences with Louis XI., when his majesty came to Paris, and that Dom Claude’s influence quite overshadowed that of Olivier le Daim and Jacques Coictier, who, as was his habit, rudely took the king to task on that account.

CHAPTER II.
THIS WILL KILL THAT.

Our lady readers will pardon us if we pause for a moment to seek what could have been the thought concealed beneath those enigmatic words of the archdeacon: “This will kill that. The book will kill the edifice.”

To our mind, this thought had two faces. In the first place, it was a priestly thought. It was the affright of the priest in the presence of a new agent, the printing press. It was the terror and dazzled amazement of the men of the sanctuary, in the presence of the luminous press of Gutenberg. It was the pulpit and the manuscript taking the alarm at

the printed word: something similar to the stupor of a sparrow which should behold the angel Legion unfold his six million wings. It was the cry of the prophet who already hears emancipated humanity roaring and swarming; who beholds in the future, intelligence sapping faith, opinion dethroning belief, the world shaking off Rome. It was the prognostication of the philosopher who sees human thought, volatilized by the press, evaporating from the theocratic recipient. It was the terror of the soldier who examines the brazen battering ram, and says:—"The tower will crumble." It signified that one power was about to succeed another power. It meant, "The press will kill the church."

But underlying this thought, the first and most simple one, no doubt, there was in our opinion another, newer one, a corollary of the first, less easy to perceive and more easy to contest, a view as philosophical and belonging no longer to the priest alone but to the savant and the artist. It was a presentiment that human thought, in changing its form, was about to change its mode of expression; that the dominant idea of each generation would no longer be written with the same matter, and in the same manner; that the book of stone, so solid and so durable, was about to make way for the book of paper, more solid and still more durable. In this connection the archdeacon's vague formula had a second sense. It meant, "Printing will kill architecture."

In fact, from the origin of things down to the fifteenth century of the Christian era, inclusive, architecture is the great book of humanity, the principal expression of man in his different stages of development, either as a force or as an intelligence.

When the memory of the first races felt itself overloaded, when the mass of reminiscences of the human race became so heavy and so confused that speech naked and flying, ran the risk of losing them on the way, men transcribed them on the soil in a manner which was at once the most visible, most durable, and most natural. They sealed each tradition beneath a monument.

The first monuments were simple masses of rock, "which the iron had not touched," as Moses says. Architecture began like all writing. It was first an alphabet. Men planted a stone upright, it was a letter, and each letter was a hieroglyph, and upon each hieroglyph rested a group of ideas, like the capital on the column. This is what the earliest races did everywhere, at the same moment, on the surface of the entire world. We find the "standing stones" of the Celts in Asian Siberia; in the pampas of America.

Later on, they made words; they placed stone upon stone, they coupled those syllables of granite, and attempted some combinations. The Celtic dolmen and

cromlech, the Etruscan tumulus, the Hebrew galgal, are words. Some, especially the tumulus, are proper names. Sometimes even, when men had a great deal of stone, and a vast plain, they wrote a phrase. The immense pile of Karnac is a complete sentence.

At last they made books. Traditions had brought forth symbols, beneath which they disappeared like the trunk of a tree beneath its foliage; all these symbols in which humanity placed faith continued to grow, to multiply, to intersect, to become more and more complicated; the first monuments no longer sufficed to contain them, they were overflowing in every part; these monuments hardly expressed now the primitive tradition, simple like themselves, naked and prone upon the earth. The symbol felt the need of expansion in the edifice. Then architecture was developed in proportion with human thought; it became a giant with a thousand heads and a thousand arms, and fixed all this floating symbolism in an eternal, visible, palpable form. While Dædalus, who is force, measured; while Orpheus, who is intelligence, sang;—the pillar, which is a letter; the arcade, which is a syllable; the pyramid, which is a word,—all set in movement at once by a law of geometry and by a law of poetry, grouped themselves, combined, amalgamated, descended, ascended, placed themselves side by side on the soil, ranged themselves in stories in the sky, until they had written under the dictation of the general idea of an epoch, those marvellous books which were also marvellous edifices: the Pagoda of Eklinga, the Rhamseion of Egypt, the Temple of Solomon.

The generating idea, the word, was not only at the foundation of all these edifices, but also in the form. The temple of Solomon, for example, was not alone the binding of the holy book; it was the holy book itself. On each one of its concentric walls, the priests could read the word translated and manifested to the eye, and thus they followed its transformations from sanctuary to sanctuary, until they seized it in its last tabernacle, under its most concrete form, which still belonged to architecture: the arch. Thus the word was enclosed in an edifice, but its image was upon its envelope, like the human form on the coffin of a mummy.

And not only the form of edifices, but the sites selected for them, revealed the thought which they represented, according as the symbol to be expressed was graceful or grave. Greece crowned her mountains with a temple harmonious to the eye; India disembowelled hers, to chisel therein those monstrous subterranean pagodas, borne up by gigantic rows of granite elephants.

Thus, during the first six thousand years of the world, from the most immemorial pagoda of Hindustan, to the cathedral of Cologne, architecture was the great

handwriting of the human race. And this is so true, that not only every religious symbol, but every human thought, has its page and its monument in that immense book.

All civilization begins in theocracy and ends in democracy. This law of liberty following unity is written in architecture. For, let us insist upon this point, masonry must not be thought to be powerful only in erecting the temple and in expressing the myth and sacerdotal symbolism; in inscribing in hieroglyphs upon its pages of stone the mysterious tables of the law. If it were thus,—as there comes in all human society a moment when the sacred symbol is worn out and becomes obliterated under freedom of thought, when man escapes from the priest, when the excrescence of philosophies and systems devour the face of religion,—architecture could not reproduce this new state of human thought; its leaves, so crowded on the face, would be empty on the back; its work would be mutilated; its book would be incomplete. But no.

Let us take as an example the Middle Ages, where we see more clearly because it is nearer to us. During its first period, while theocracy is organizing Europe, while the Vatican is rallying and reclassing about itself the elements of a Rome made from the Rome which lies in ruins around the Capitol, while Christianity is seeking all the stages of society amid the rubbish of anterior civilization, and rebuilding with its ruins a new hierarchic universe, the keystone to whose vault is the priest—one first hears a dull echo from that chaos, and then, little by little, one sees, arising from beneath the breath of Christianity, from beneath the hand of the barbarians, from the fragments of the dead Greek and Roman architectures, that mysterious Romanesque architecture, sister of the theocratic masonry of Egypt and of India, inalterable emblem of pure catholicism, unchangeable hieroglyph of the papal unity. All the thought of that day is written, in fact, in this sombre, Romanesque style. One feels everywhere in it authority, unity, the impenetrable, the absolute, Gregory VII.; always the priest, never the man; everywhere caste, never the people.

But the Crusades arrive. They are a great popular movement, and every great popular movement, whatever may be its cause and object, always sets free the spirit of liberty from its final precipitate. New things spring into life every day. Here opens the stormy period of the Jacqueries, Pragueries, and Leagues. Authority wavers, unity is divided. Feudalism demands to share with theocracy, while awaiting the inevitable arrival of the people, who will assume the part of the lion: *Quia nominor leo*. Seignory pierces through sacerdotalism; the commonality, through seignory. The face of Europe is changed. Well! the face of architecture is changed also. Like civilization, it has turned a page, and the new spirit of the time finds her ready to write at its dictation. It returns from the crusades with the pointed arch, like the nations with liberty.

Then, while Rome is undergoing gradual dismemberment, Romanesque architecture dies. The hieroglyph deserts the cathedral, and betakes itself to blazoning the donjon keep, in order to lend prestige to feudalism. The cathedral itself, that edifice formerly so dogmatic, invaded henceforth by the *bourgeoisie*, by the community, by liberty, escapes the priest and falls into the power of the artist. The artist builds it after his own fashion. Farewell to mystery, myth, law. Fancy and caprice, welcome. Provided the priest has his basilica and his altar, he has nothing to say. The four walls belong to the artist. The architectural book belongs no longer to the priest, to religion, to Rome; it is the property of poetry, of imagination, of the people. Hence the rapid and innumerable transformations of that architecture which owns but three centuries, so striking after the stagnant immobility of the Romanesque architecture, which owns six or seven. Nevertheless, art marches on with giant strides. Popular genius amid originality accomplish the task which the bishops formerly fulfilled. Each race writes its line upon the book, as it passes; it erases the ancient Romanesque hieroglyphs on the frontispieces of cathedrals, and at the most one only sees dogma cropping out here and there, beneath the new symbol which it has deposited. The popular drapery hardly permits the religious skeleton to be suspected. One cannot even form an idea of the liberties which the architects then take, even toward the Church. There are capitals knitted of nuns and monks, shamelessly coupled, as on the hall of chimney pieces in the Palais de Justice, in Paris. There is Noah's adventure carved to the last detail, as under the great portal of Bourges. There is a bacchanalian monk, with ass's ears and glass in hand, laughing in the face of a whole community, as on the lavatory of the Abbey of Bocherville. There exists at that epoch, for thought written in stone, a privilege exactly comparable to our present liberty of the press. It is the liberty of architecture.

This liberty goes very far. Sometimes a portal, a façade, an entire church, presents a symbolical sense absolutely foreign to worship, or even hostile to the Church. In the thirteenth century, Guillaume de Paris, and Nicholas Flamel, in the fifteenth, wrote such seditious pages. Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie was a whole church of the opposition.

Thought was then free only in this manner; hence it never wrote itself out completely except on the books called edifices. Thought, under the form of edifice, could have beheld itself burned in the public square by the hands of the executioner, in its manuscript form, if it had been sufficiently imprudent to risk itself thus; thought, as the door of a church, would have been a spectator of the punishment of thought as a book. Having thus only this resource, masonry, in order to make its way to the light, flung itself upon it from all quarters. Hence the immense quantity of cathedrals which

have covered Europe—a number so prodigious that one can hardly believe it even after having verified it. All the material forces, all the intellectual forces of society converged towards the same point: architecture. In this manner, under the pretext of building churches to God, art was developed in its magnificent proportions.

Then whoever was born a poet became an architect. Genius, scattered in the masses, repressed in every quarter under feudalism as under a *testudo* of brazen bucklers, finding no issue except in the direction of architecture,—gushed forth through that art, and its Iliads assumed the form of cathedrals. All other arts obeyed, and placed themselves under the discipline of architecture. They were the workmen of the great work. The architect, the poet, the master, summed up in his person the sculpture which carved his façades, painting which illuminated his windows, music which set his bells to pealing, and breathed into his organs. There was nothing down to poor poetry,—properly speaking, that which persisted in vegetating in manuscripts,—which was not forced, in order to make something of itself, to come and frame itself in the edifice in the shape of a hymn or of prose; the same part, after all, which the tragedies of Æschylus had played in the sacerdotal festivals of Greece; Genesis, in the temple of Solomon.

Thus, down to the time of Gutenberg, architecture is the principal writing, the universal writing. In that granite book, begun by the Orient, continued by Greek and Roman antiquity, the Middle Ages wrote the last page. Moreover, this phenomenon of an architecture of the people following an architecture of caste, which we have just been observing in the Middle Ages, is reproduced with every analogous movement in the human intelligence at the other great epochs of history. Thus, in order to enunciate here only summarily, a law which it would require volumes to develop: in the high Orient, the cradle of primitive times, after Hindoo architecture came Phœnician architecture, that opulent mother of Arabian architecture; in antiquity, after Egyptian architecture, of which Etruscan style and cyclopean monuments are but one variety, came Greek architecture (of which the Roman style is only a continuation), surcharged with the Carthaginian dome; in modern times, after Romanesque architecture came Gothic architecture. And by separating there three series into their component parts, we shall find in the three eldest sisters, Hindoo architecture, Egyptian architecture, Romanesque architecture, the same symbol; that is to say, theocracy, caste, unity, dogma, myth, God: and for the three younger sisters, Phœnician architecture, Greek architecture, Gothic architecture, whatever, nevertheless, may be the diversity of form inherent in their nature, the same signification also; that is to say, liberty, the people, man.

In the Hindu, Egyptian, or Romanesque architecture, one feels the priest, nothing but the priest, whether he calls himself Brahmin, Magian, or Pope. It is not the same in the architectures of the people. They are richer and less sacred. In the Phœnician, one feels the merchant; in the Greek, the republican; in the Gothic, the citizen.

The general characteristics of all theocratic architecture are immutability, horror of progress, the preservation of traditional lines, the consecration of the primitive types, the constant bending of all the forms of men and of nature to the incomprehensible caprices of the symbol. These are dark books, which the initiated alone understand how to decipher. Moreover, every form, every deformity even, has there a sense which renders it inviolable. Do not ask of Hindoo, Egyptian, Romanesque masonry to reform their design, or to improve their statuary. Every attempt at perfecting is an impiety to them. In these architectures it seems as though the rigidity of the dogma had spread over the stone like a sort of second petrifaction. The general characteristics of popular masonry, on the contrary, are progress, originality, opulence, perpetual movement. They are already sufficiently detached from religion to think of their beauty, to take care of it, to correct without relaxation their parure of statues or arabesques. They are of the age. They have something human, which they mingle incessantly with the divine symbol under which they still produce. Hence, edifices comprehensible to every soul, to every intelligence, to every imagination, symbolical still, but as easy to understand as nature. Between theocratic architecture and this there is the difference that lies between a sacred language and a vulgar language, between hieroglyphics and art, between Solomon and Phidias.

If the reader will sum up what we have hitherto briefly, very briefly, indicated, neglecting a thousand proofs and also a thousand objections of detail, he will be led to this: that architecture was, down to the fifteenth century, the chief register of humanity; that in that interval not a thought which is in any degree complicated made its appearance in the world, which has not been worked into an edifice; that every popular idea, and every religious law, has had its monumental records; that the human race has, in short, had no important thought which it has not written in stone. And why? Because every thought, either philosophical or religious, is interested in perpetuating itself; because the idea which has moved one generation wishes to move others also, and leave a trace. Now, what a precarious immortality is that of the manuscript! How much more solid, durable, unyielding, is a book of stone! In order to destroy the written word, a torch and a Turk are sufficient. To demolish the constructed word, a social revolution, a terrestrial revolution are required. The barbarians passed over the Coliseum; the deluge, perhaps, passed over the Pyramids.

In the fifteenth century everything changes.

Human thought discovers a mode of perpetuating itself, not only more durable and more resisting than architecture, but still more simple and easy. Architecture is dethroned. Gutenberg's letters of lead are about to supersede Orpheus's letters of stone.

The book is about to kill the edifice.

The invention of printing is the greatest event in history. It is the mother of revolution. It is the mode of expression of humanity which is totally renewed; it is human thought stripping off one form and donning another; it is the complete and definitive change of skin of that symbolical serpent which since the days of Adam has represented intelligence.

In its printed form, thought is more imperishable than ever; it is volatile, irresistible, indestructible. It is mingled with the air. In the days of architecture it made a mountain of itself, and took powerful possession of a century and a place. Now it converts itself into a flock of birds, scatters itself to the four winds, and occupies all points of air and space at once.

We repeat, who does not perceive that in this form it is far more indelible? It was solid, it has become alive. It passes from duration in time to immortality. One can demolish a mass; how can one extirpate ubiquity? If a flood comes, the mountains will have long disappeared beneath the waves, while the birds will still be flying about; and if a single ark floats on the surface of the cataclysm, they will alight upon it, will float with it, will be present with it at the ebbing of the waters; and the new world which emerges from this chaos will behold, on its awakening, the thought of the world which has been submerged soaring above it, winged and living.

And when one observes that this mode of expression is not only the most conservative, but also the most simple, the most convenient, the most practicable for all; when one reflects that it does not drag after it bulky baggage, and does not set in motion a heavy apparatus; when one compares thought forced, in order to transform itself into an edifice, to put in motion four or five other arts and tons of gold, a whole mountain of stones, a whole forest of timber-work, a whole nation of workmen; when one compares it to the thought which becomes a book, and for which a little paper, a little ink, and a pen suffice,—how can one be surprised that human intelligence should have quitted architecture for printing? Cut the primitive bed of a river abruptly with a canal hollowed out below its level, and the river will desert its bed.

Behold how, beginning with the discovery of printing, architecture withers away little by little, becomes lifeless and bare. How one feels the water sinking, the sap

departing, the thought of the times and of the people withdrawing from it! The chill is almost imperceptible in the fifteenth century; the press is, as yet, too weak, and, at the most, draws from powerful architecture a superabundance of life. But practically beginning with the sixteenth century, the malady of architecture is visible; it is no longer the expression of society; it becomes classic art in a miserable manner; from being Gallic, European, indigenous, it becomes Greek and Roman; from being true and modern, it becomes pseudo-classic. It is this decadence which is called the Renaissance. A magnificent decadence, however, for the ancient Gothic genius, that sun which sets behind the gigantic press of Mayence, still penetrates for a while longer with its rays that whole hybrid pile of Latin arcades and Corinthian columns.

It is that setting sun which we mistake for the dawn.

Nevertheless, from the moment when architecture is no longer anything but an art like any other; as soon as it is no longer the total art, the sovereign art, the tyrant art,—it has no longer the power to retain the other arts. So they emancipate themselves, break the yoke of the architect, and take themselves off, each one in its own direction. Each one of them gains by this divorce. Isolation aggrandizes everything. Sculpture becomes statuary, the image trade becomes painting, the canon becomes music. One would pronounce it an empire dismembered at the death of its Alexander, and whose provinces become kingdoms.

Hence Raphael, Michael Angelo, Jean Goujon, Palestrina, those splendors of the dazzling sixteenth century.

Thought emancipates itself in all directions at the same time as the arts. The arch-heretics of the Middle Ages had already made large incisions into Catholicism. The sixteenth century breaks religious unity. Before the invention of printing, reform would have been merely a schism; printing converted it into a revolution. Take away the press; heresy is enervated. Whether it be Providence or Fate, Gutenburg is the precursor of Luther.

Nevertheless, when the sun of the Middle Ages is completely set, when the Gothic genius is forever extinct upon the horizon, architecture grows dim, loses its color, becomes more and more effaced. The printed book, the gnawing worm of the edifice, sucks and devours it. It becomes bare, denuded of its foliage, and grows visibly emaciated. It is petty, it is poor, it is nothing. It no longer expresses anything, not even the memory of the art of another time. Reduced to itself, abandoned by the other arts, because human thought is abandoning it, it summons bunglers in place of artists. Glass replaces the painted windows. The stone-cutter succeeds the sculptor. Farewell all sap, all originality, all life, all intelligence. It drags along, a lamentable

workshop mendicant, from copy to copy. Michael Angelo, who, no doubt, felt even in the sixteenth century that it was dying, had a last idea, an idea of despair. That Titan of art piled the Pantheon on the Parthenon, and made Saint-Peter's at Rome. A great work, which deserved to remain unique, the last originality of architecture, the signature of a giant artist at the bottom of the colossal register of stone which was closed forever. With Michael Angelo dead, what does this miserable architecture, which survived itself in the state of a spectre, do? It takes Saint-Peter in Rome, copies it and parodies it. It is a mania. It is a pity. Each century has its Saint-Peter's of Rome; in the seventeenth century, the Val-de-Grâce; in the eighteenth, Sainte-Geneviève. Each country has its Saint-Peter's of Rome. London has one; Petersburg has another; Paris has two or three. The insignificant testament, the last dotage of a decrepit grand art falling back into infancy before it dies.

If, in place of the characteristic monuments which we have just described, we examine the general aspect of art from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, we notice the same phenomena of decay and phthisis. Beginning with François II., the architectural form of the edifice effaces itself more and more, and allows the geometrical form, like the bony structure of an emaciated invalid, to become prominent. The fine lines of art give way to the cold and inexorable lines of geometry. An edifice is no longer an edifice; it is a polyhedron. Meanwhile, architecture is tormented in her struggles to conceal this nudity. Look at the Greek pediment inscribed upon the Roman pediment, and vice versâ. It is still the Pantheon on the Parthenon: Saint-Peter's of Rome. Here are the brick houses of Henri IV., with their stone corners; the Place Royale, the Place Dauphine. Here are the churches of Louis XIII., heavy, squat, thickset, crowded together, loaded with a dome like a hump. Here is the Mazarin architecture, the wretched Italian pasticcio of the Four Nations. Here are the palaces of Louis XIV., long barracks for courtiers, stiff, cold, tiresome. Here, finally, is Louis XV., with chiccory leaves and vermicelli, and all the warts, and all the fungi, which disfigure that decrepit, toothless, and coquettish old architecture. From François II. to Louis XV., the evil has increased in geometrical progression. Art has no longer anything but skin upon its bones. It is miserably perishing.

Meanwhile what becomes of printing? All the life which is leaving architecture comes to it. In proportion as architecture ebbs, printing swells and grows. That capital of forces which human thought had been expending in edifices, it henceforth expends in books. Thus, from the sixteenth century onward, the press, raised to the level of decaying architecture, contends with it and kills it. In the seventeenth century it is already sufficiently the sovereign, sufficiently triumphant, sufficiently established in its victory, to give to the world the feast of a great literary century. In the eighteenth,

having reposed for a long time at the Court of Louis XIV., it seizes again the old sword of Luther, puts it into the hand of Voltaire, and rushes impetuously to the attack of that ancient Europe, whose architectural expression it has already killed. At the moment when the eighteenth century comes to an end, it has destroyed everything. In the nineteenth, it begins to reconstruct.

Now, we ask, which of the three arts has really represented human thought for the last three centuries? which translates it? which expresses not only its literary and scholastic vagaries, but its vast, profound, universal movement? which constantly superposes itself, without a break, without a gap, upon the human race, which walks a monster with a thousand legs?—Architecture or printing?

It is printing. Let the reader make no mistake; architecture is dead; irretrievably slain by the printed book,—slain because it endures for a shorter time,—slain because it costs more. Every cathedral represents millions. Let the reader now imagine what an investment of funds it would require to rewrite the architectural book; to cause thousands of edifices to swarm once more upon the soil; to return to those epochs when the throng of monuments was such, according to the statement of an eye witness, "that one would have said that the world in shaking itself, had cast off its old garments in order to cover itself with a white vesture of churches." *Erat enim ut si mundus, ipse excutiendo semet, rejecta vetustate, candidam ecclesiarum vestem indueret*. (GLABER RADOLPHUS.)

A book is so soon made, costs so little, and can go so far! How can it surprise us that all human thought flows in this channel? This does not mean that architecture will not still have a fine monument, an isolated masterpiece, here and there. We may still have from time to time, under the reign of printing, a column made I suppose, by a whole army from melted cannon, as we had under the reign of architecture, Iliads and Romanceros, Mahabâhrata, and Nibelungen Lieds, made by a whole people, with rhapsodies piled up and melted together. The great accident of an architect of genius may happen in the twentieth century, like that of Dante in the thirteenth. But architecture will no longer be the social art, the collective art, the dominating art. The grand poem, the grand edifice, the grand work of humanity will no longer be built: it will be printed.

And henceforth, if architecture should arise again accidentally, it will no longer be mistress. It will be subservient to the law of literature, which formerly received the law from it. The respective positions of the two arts will be inverted. It is certain that in architectural epochs, the poems, rare it is true, resemble the monuments. In India, Vyasa is branching, strange, impenetrable as a pagoda. In Egyptian Orient, poetry has

like the edifices, grandeur and tranquillity of line; in antique Greece, beauty, serenity, calm; in Christian Europe, the Catholic majesty, the popular naïvete, the rich and luxuriant vegetation of an epoch of renewal. The Bible resembles the Pyramids; the Iliad, the Parthenon; Homer, Phidias. Dante in the thirteenth century is the last Romanesque church; Shakespeare in the sixteenth, the last Gothic cathedral.

Thus, to sum up what we have hitherto said, in a fashion which is necessarily incomplete and mutilated, the human race has two books, two registers, two testaments: masonry and printing; the Bible of stone and the Bible of paper. No doubt, when one contemplates these two Bibles, laid so broadly open in the centuries, it is permissible to regret the visible majesty of the writing of granite, those gigantic alphabets formulated in colonnades, in pylons, in obelisks, those sorts of human mountains which cover the world and the past, from the pyramid to the bell tower, from Cheops to Strasbourg. The past must be reread upon these pages of marble. This book, written by architecture, must be admired and perused incessantly; but the grandeur of the edifice which printing erects in its turn must not be denied.

That edifice is colossal. Some compiler of statistics has calculated, that if all the volumes which have issued from the press since Gutenberg's day were to be piled one upon another, they would fill the space between the earth and the moon; but it is not that sort of grandeur of which we wished to speak. Nevertheless, when one tries to collect in one's mind a comprehensive image of the total products of printing down to our own days, does not that total appear to us like an immense construction, resting upon the entire world, at which humanity toils without relaxation, and whose monstrous crest is lost in the profound mists of the future? It is the anthill of intelligence. It is the hive whither come all imaginations, those golden bees, with their honey.

The edifice has a thousand stories. Here and there one beholds on its staircases the gloomy caverns of science which pierce its interior. Everywhere upon its surface, art causes its arabesques, rosettes, and laces to thrive luxuriantly before the eyes. There, every individual work, however capricious and isolated it may seem, has its place and its projection. Harmony results from the whole. From the cathedral of Shakespeare to the mosque of Byron, a thousand tiny bell towers are piled pell-mell above this metropolis of universal thought. At its base are written some ancient titles of humanity which architecture had not registered. To the left of the entrance has been fixed the ancient bas-relief, in white marble, of Homer; to the right, the polyglot Bible rears its seven heads. The hydra of the Romancero and some other hybrid forms, the Vedas and the Nibelungen bristle further on.

Nevertheless, the prodigious edifice still remains incomplete. The press, that giant machine, which incessantly pumps all the intellectual sap of society, belches forth without pause fresh materials for its work. The whole human race is on the scaffoldings. Each mind is a mason. The humblest fills his hole, or places his stone. Rétif de La Bretonne brings his hod of plaster. Every day a new course rises. Independently of the original and individual contribution of each writer, there are collective contingents. The eighteenth century gives the *Encyclopedia*, the revolution gives the *Moniteur*. Assuredly, it is a construction which increases and piles up in endless spirals; there also are confusion of tongues, incessant activity, indefatigable labor, eager competition of all humanity, refuge promised to intelligence, a new Flood against an overflow of barbarians. It is the second tower of Babel of the human race.

BOOK SIXTH.

CHAPTER I.
AN IMPARTIAL GLANCE AT THE ANCIENT MAGISTRACY.

A very happy personage in the year of grace 1482, was the noble gentleman Robert d'Estouteville, chevalier, Sieur de Beyne, Baron d'Ivry and Saint Andry en la Marche, counsellor and chamberlain to the king, and guard of the provostship of Paris. It was already nearly seventeen years since he had received from the king, on November 7, 1465, the comet year,[27] that fine charge of the provostship of Paris, which was reputed rather a seigneury than an office. *Dignitas*, says Joannes Lœmnœus, *quæ cum non exigua potestate politiam concernente, atque prærogativis multis et juribus conjuncta est*. A marvellous thing in '82 was a gentleman bearing the king's commission, and whose letters of institution ran back to the epoch of the marriage of the natural daughter of Louis XI. with Monsieur the Bastard of Bourbon.

The same day on which Robert d'Estouteville took the place of Jacques de Villiers in the provostship of Paris, Master Jehan Dauvet replaced Messire Helye de Thorrettes in the first presidency of the Court of Parliament, Jehan Jouvenel des Ursins supplanted Pierre de Morvilliers in the office of chancellor of France, Regnault des Dormans ousted Pierre Puy from the charge of master of requests in ordinary of the king's household. Now, upon how many heads had the presidency, the chancellorship, the mastership passed since Robert d'Estouteville had held the provostship of Paris. It had been "granted to him for safekeeping," as the letters patent said; and certainly he kept it well. He had clung to it, he had incorporated himself with it, he had so identified himself with it that he had escaped that fury for change which possessed Louis XI., a tormenting and industrious king, whose policy it was to maintain the elasticity of his power by frequent appointments and revocations. More than this; the

brave chevalier had obtained the reversion of the office for his son, and for two years already, the name of the noble man Jacques d'Estouteville, equerry, had figured beside his at the head of the register of the salary list of the provostship of Paris. A rare and notable favor indeed! It is true that Robert d'Estouteville was a good soldier, that he had loyally raised his pennon against "the league of public good," and that he had presented to the queen a very marvellous stag in confectionery on the day of her entrance to Paris in 14.... Moreover, he possessed the good friendship of Messire Tristan l'Hermite, provost of the marshals of the king's household. Hence a very sweet and pleasant existence was that of Messire Robert. In the first place, very good wages, to which were attached, and from which hung, like extra bunches of grapes on his vine, the revenues of the civil and criminal registries of the provostship, plus the civil and criminal revenues of the tribunals of Embas of the Châtelet, without reckoning some little toll from the bridges of Mantes and of Corbeil, and the profits on the craft of Shagreen-makers of Paris, on the corders of firewood and the measurers of salt. Add to this the pleasure of displaying himself in rides about the city, and of making his fine military costume, which you may still admire sculptured on his tomb in the abbey of Valmont in Normandy, and his morion, all embossed at Montlhéry, stand out a contrast against the parti-colored red and tawny robes of the aldermen and police. And then, was it nothing to wield absolute supremacy over the sergeants of the police, the porter and watch of the Châtelet, the two auditors of the Châtelet, *auditores castelleti*, the sixteen commissioners of the sixteen quarters, the jailer of the Châtelet, the four enfeoffed sergeants, the hundred and twenty mounted sergeants, with maces, the chevalier of the watch with his watch, his sub-watch, his counter-watch and his rear-watch? Was it nothing to exercise high and low justice, the right to interrogate, to hang and to draw, without reckoning petty jurisdiction in the first resort (*in prima instantia*, as the charters say), on that viscomty of Paris, so nobly appanaged with seven noble bailiwicks? Can anything sweeter be imagined than rendering judgments and decisions, as Messire Robert d'Estouteville daily did in the Grand Châtelet, under the large and flattened arches of Philip Augustus? and going, as he was wont to do every evening, to that charming house situated in the Rue Galilée, in the enclosure of the royal palace, which he held in right of his wife, Madame Ambroise de Loré, to repose after the fatigue of having sent some poor wretch to pass the night in "that little cell of the Rue de Escorcherie, which the provosts and aldermen of Paris used to make their prison; the same being eleven feet long, seven feet and four inches wide, and eleven feet high?"[28]

And not only had Messire Robert d'Estouteville his special court as provost and vicomte of Paris; but in addition he had a share, both for eye and tooth, in the grand

court of the king. There was no head in the least elevated which had not passed through his hands before it came to the headsman. It was he who went to seek M. de Nemours at the Bastille Saint Antoine, in order to conduct him to the Halles; and to conduct to the Grève M. de Saint-Pol, who clamored and resisted, to the great joy of the provost, who did not love monsieur the constable.

Here, assuredly, is more than sufficient to render a life happy and illustrious, and to deserve some day a notable page in that interesting history of the provosts of Paris, where one learns that Oudard de Villeneuve had a house in the Rue des Boucheries, that Guillaume de Hangest purchased the great and the little Savoy, that Guillaume Thiboust gave the nuns of Sainte-Geneviève his houses in the Rue Clopin, that Hugues Aubriot lived in the Hôtel du Porc-Épic, and other domestic facts.

Nevertheless, with so many reasons for taking life patiently and joyously, Messire Robert d'Estouteville woke up on the morning of the seventh of January, 1482, in a very surly and peevish mood. Whence came this ill temper? He could not have told himself. Was it because the sky was gray? or was the buckle of his old belt of Montlhéry badly fastened, so that it confined his provostal portliness too closely? had he beheld ribald fellows, marching in bands of four, beneath his window, and setting him at defiance, in doublets but no shirts, hats without crowns, with wallet and bottle at their side? Was it a vague presentiment of the three hundred and seventy livres, sixteen sous, eight farthings, which the future King Charles VII. was to cut off from the provostship in the following year? The reader can take his choice; we, for our part, are much inclined to believe that he was in a bad humor, simply because he was in a bad humor.

Moreover, it was the day after a festival, a tiresome day for every one, and above all for the magistrate who is charged with sweeping away all the filth, properly and figuratively speaking, which a festival day produces in Paris. And then he had to hold a sitting at the Grand Châtelet. Now, we have noticed that judges in general so arrange matters that their day of audience shall also be their day of bad humor, so that they may always have some one upon whom to vent it conveniently, in the name of the king, law, and justice.

However, the audience had begun without him. His lieutenants, civil, criminal, and private, were doing his work, according to usage; and from eight o'clock in the morning, some scores of *bourgeois* and *bourgeoises*, heaped and crowded into an obscure corner of the audience chamber of Embas du Châtelet, between a stout oaken barrier and the wall, had been gazing blissfully at the varied and cheerful spectacle of civil and criminal justice dispensed by Master Florian Barbedienne,

auditor of the Châtelet, lieutenant of monsieur the provost, in a somewhat confused and utterly haphazard manner.

The hall was small, low, vaulted. A table studded with fleurs-de-lis stood at one end, with a large arm-chair of carved oak, which belonged to the provost and was empty, and a stool on the left for the auditor, Master Florian. Below sat the clerk of the court, scribbling; opposite was the populace; and in front of the door, and in front of the table were many sergeants of the provostship in sleeveless jackets of violet camlet, with white crosses. Two sergeants of the Parloir-aux-Bourgeois, clothed in their jackets of Toussaint, half red, half blue, were posted as sentinels before a low, closed door, which was visible at the extremity of the hall, behind the table. A single pointed window, narrowly encased in the thick wall, illuminated with a pale ray of January sun two grotesque figures,—the capricious demon of stone carved as a tail-piece in the keystone of the vaulted ceiling, and the judge seated at the end of the hall on the fleurs-de-lis.

Imagine, in fact, at the provost's table, leaning upon his elbows between two bundles of documents of cases, with his foot on the train of his robe of plain brown cloth, his face buried in his hood of white lamb's skin, of which his brows seemed to be of a piece, red, crabbed, winking, bearing majestically the load of fat on his cheeks which met under his chin, Master Florian Barbedienne, auditor of the Châtelet.

Now, the auditor was deaf. A slight defect in an auditor. Master Florian delivered judgment, none the less, without appeal and very suitably. It is certainly quite sufficient for a judge to have the air of listening; and the venerable auditor fulfilled this condition, the sole one in justice, all the better because his attention could not be distracted by any noise.

Moreover, he had in the audience, a pitiless censor of his deeds and gestures, in the person of our friend Jehan Frollo du Moulin, that little student of yesterday, that "stroller," whom one was sure of encountering all over Paris, anywhere except before the rostrums of the professors.

"Stay," he said in a low tone to his companion, Robin Poussepain, who was grinning at his side, while he was making his comments on the scenes which were being unfolded before his eyes, "yonder is Jehanneton du Buisson. The beautiful daughter of the lazy dog at the Marché-Neuf!—Upon my soul, he is condemning her, the old rascal! he has no more eyes than ears. Fifteen sous, four farthings, parisian, for having worn two rosaries! 'Tis somewhat dear. *Lex duri carminis*. Who's that? Robin Chief-de-Ville, hauberkmaker. For having been passed and received master of the said trade! That's his entrance money. He! two gentlemen among these knaves! Aiglet de Soins,

Hutin de Mailly Two equerries, *Corpus Christi!* Ah! they have been playing at dice. When shall I see our rector here? A hundred livres parisian, fine to the king! That Barbedienne strikes like a deaf man,—as he is! I'll be my brother the archdeacon, if that keeps me from gaming; gaming by day, gaming by night, living at play, dying at play, and gaming away my soul after my shirt. Holy Virgin, what damsels! One after the other my lambs. Ambroise Lécuyère, Isabeau la Paynette, Bérarde Gironin! I know them all, by Heavens! A fine! a fine! That's what will teach you to wear gilded girdles! ten sous parisis! you coquettes! Oh! the old snout of a judge! deaf and imbecile! Oh! Florian the dolt! Oh! Barbedienne the blockhead! There he is at the table! He's eating the plaintiff, he's eating the suits, he eats, he chews, he crams, he fills himself. Fines, lost goods, taxes, expenses, loyal charges, salaries, damages, and interests, gehenna, prison, and jail, and fetters with expenses are Christmas spice cake and marchpanes of Saint-John to him! Look at him, the pig!—Come! Good! Another amorous woman! Thibaud-la-Thibaude, neither more nor less! For having come from the Rue Glatigny! What fellow is this? Gieffroy Mabonne, gendarme bearing the crossbow. He has cursed the name of the Father. A fine for la Thibaude! A fine for Gieffroy! A fine for them both! The deaf old fool! he must have mixed up the two cases! Ten to one that he makes the wench pay for the oath and the gendarme for the amour! Attention, Robin Poussepain! What are they going to bring in? Here are many sergeants! By Jupiter! all the bloodhounds of the pack are there. It must be the great beast of the hunt—a wild boar. And 'tis one, Robin, 'tis one. And a fine one too! *Hercle!* 'tis our prince of yesterday, our Pope of the Fools, our bellringer, our one-eyed man, our hunchback, our grimace! 'Tis Quasimodo!"

It was he indeed.

It was Quasimodo, bound, encircled, roped, pinioned, and under good guard. The squad of policemen who surrounded him was assisted by the chevalier of the watch in person, wearing the arms of France embroidered on his breast, and the arms of the city on his back. There was nothing, however, about Quasimodo, except his deformity, which could justify the display of halberds and arquebuses; he was gloomy, silent, and tranquil. Only now and then did his single eye cast a sly and wrathful glance upon the bonds with which he was loaded.

He cast the same glance about him, but it was so dull and sleepy that the women only pointed him out to each other in derision.

Meanwhile Master Florian, the auditor, turned over attentively the document in the complaint entered against Quasimodo, which the clerk handed him, and, having thus glanced at it, appeared to reflect for a moment. Thanks to this precaution, which he

always was careful to take at the moment when on the point of beginning an examination, he knew beforehand the names, titles, and misdeeds of the accused, made cut and dried responses to questions foreseen, and succeeded in extricating himself from all the windings of the interrogation without allowing his deafness to be too apparent. The written charges were to him what the dog is to the blind man. If his deafness did happen to betray him here and there, by some incoherent apostrophe or some unintelligible question, it passed for profundity with some, and for imbecility with others. In neither case did the honor of the magistracy sustain any injury; for it is far better that a judge should be reputed imbecile or profound than deaf. Hence he took great care to conceal his deafness from the eyes of all, and he generally succeeded so well that he had reached the point of deluding himself, which is, by the way, easier than is supposed. All hunchbacks walk with their heads held high, all stutterers harangue, all deaf people speak low. As for him, he believed, at the most, that his ear was a little refractory. It was the sole concession which he made on this point to public opinion, in his moments of frankness and examination of his conscience.

Having, then, thoroughly ruminated Quasimodo's affair, he threw back his head and half closed his eyes, for the sake of more majesty and impartiality, so that, at that moment, he was both deaf and blind. A double condition, without which no judge is perfect. It was in this magisterial attitude that he began the examination.

"Your name?"

Now this was a case which had not been "provided for by law," where a deaf man should be obliged to question a deaf man.

Quasimodo, whom nothing warned that a question had been addressed to him, continued to stare intently at the judge, and made no reply. The judge, being deaf, and being in no way warned of the deafness of the accused, thought that the latter had answered, as all accused do in general, and therefore he pursued, with his mechanical and stupid self-possession,—

"Very well. And your age?"

Again Quasimodo made no reply to this question. The judge supposed that it had been replied to, and continued,—

"Now, your profession?"

Still the same silence. The spectators had begun, meanwhile, to whisper together, and to exchange glances.

“That will do,” went on the imperturbable auditor, when he supposed that the accused had finished his third reply. “You are accused before us, *primo*, of nocturnal disturbance; *secundo*, of a dishonorable act of violence upon the person of a foolish woman, *in præjudicium meretricis; tertio*, of rebellion and disloyalty towards the archers of the police of our lord, the king. Explain yourself upon all these points.—Clerk, have you written down what the prisoner has said thus far?”

At this unlucky question, a burst of laughter rose from the clerk’s table caught by the audience, so violent, so wild, so contagious, so universal, that the two deaf men were forced to perceive it. Quasimodo turned round, shrugging his hump with disdain, while Master Florian, equally astonished, and supposing that the laughter of the spectators had been provoked by some irreverent reply from the accused, rendered visible to him by that shrug of the shoulders, apostrophized him indignantly,—

“You have uttered a reply, knave, which deserves the halter. Do you know to whom you are speaking?”

This sally was not fitted to arrest the explosion of general merriment. It struck all as so whimsical, and so ridiculous, that the wild laughter even attacked the sergeants of the Parloi-aux-Bourgeois, a sort of pikemen, whose stupidity was part of their uniform. Quasimodo alone preserved his seriousness, for the good reason that he understood nothing of what was going on around him. The judge, more and more irritated, thought it his duty to continue in the same tone, hoping thereby to strike the accused with a terror which should react upon the audience, and bring it back to respect.

“So this is as much as to say, perverse and thieving knave that you are, that you permit yourself to be lacking in respect towards the Auditor of the Châtelet, to the magistrate committed to the popular police of Paris, charged with searching out crimes, delinquencies, and evil conduct; with controlling all trades, and interdicting monopoly; with maintaining the pavements; with debarring the hucksters of chickens, poultry, and water-fowl; of superintending the measuring of fagots and other sorts of wood; of purging the city of mud, and the air of contagious maladies; in a word, with attending continually to public affairs, without wages or hope of salary! Do you know that I am called Florian Barbedienne, actual lieutenant to monsieur the provost, and, moreover, commissioner, inquisitor, *controller*, and examiner, with equal power in provostship, bailiwick, preservation, and inferior court of judicature?—”

There is no reason why a deaf man talking to a deaf man should stop. God knows where and when Master Florian would have landed, when thus launched at full speed in lofty eloquence, if the low door at the extreme end of the room had not suddenly opened, and given entrance to the provost in person. At his entrance Master Florian

did not stop short, but, making a half-turn on his heels, and aiming at the provost the harangue with which he had been withering Quasimodo a moment before,—

“Monseigneur,” said he, “I demand such penalty as you shall deem fitting against the prisoner here present, for grave and aggravated offence against the court.”

And he seated himself, utterly breathless, wiping away the great drops of sweat which fell from his brow and drenched, like tears, the parchments spread out before him. Messire Robert d’Estouteville frowned and made a gesture so imperious and significant to Quasimodo, that the deaf man in some measure understood it.

The provost addressed him with severity, “What have you done that you have been brought hither, knave?”

The poor fellow, supposing that the provost was asking his name, broke the silence which he habitually preserved, and replied, in a harsh and guttural voice, “Quasimodo.”

The reply matched the question so little that the wild laugh began to circulate once more, and Messire Robert exclaimed, red with wrath,—

“Are you mocking me also, you arrant knave?”

“Bellringer of Notre-Dame,” replied Quasimodo, supposing that what was required of him was to explain to the judge who he was.

“Bellringer!” interpolated the provost, who had waked up early enough to be in a sufficiently bad temper, as we have said, not to require to have his fury inflamed by such strange responses. “Bellringer! I’ll play you a chime of rods on your back through the squares of Paris! Do you hear, knave?”

“If it is my age that you wish to know,” said Quasimodo, “I think that I shall be twenty at Saint Martin’s day.”

This was too much; the provost could no longer restrain himself.

“Ah! you are scoffing at the provostship, wretch! Messieurs the sergeants of the mace, you will take me this knave to the pillory of the Grève, you will flog him, and turn him for an hour. He shall pay me for it, *tête Dieu!* And I order that the present judgment shall be cried, with the assistance of four sworn trumpeters, in the seven castellanies of the viscomty of Paris.”

The clerk set to work incontinently to draw up the account of the sentence.

"*Ventre Dieu!* 'tis well adjudged!" cried the little scholar, Jehan Frollo du Moulin, from his corner.

The provost turned and fixed his flashing eyes once more on Quasimodo. "I believe the knave said '*Ventre Dieu!*' Clerk, add twelve deniers Parisian for the oath, and let the vestry of Saint Eustache have the half of it; I have a particular devotion for Saint Eustache."

In a few minutes the sentence was drawn up. Its tenor was simple and brief. The customs of the provostship and the viscomty had not yet been worked over by President Thibaut Baillet, and by Roger Barmne, the king's advocate; they had not been obstructed, at that time, by that lofty hedge of quibbles and procedures, which the two jurisconsults planted there at the beginning of the sixteenth century. All was clear, expeditious, explicit. One went straight to the point then, and at the end of every path there was immediately visible, without thickets and without turnings; the wheel, the gibbet, or the pillory. One at least knew whither one was going.

The clerk presented the sentence to the provost, who affixed his seal to it, and departed to pursue his round of the audience hall, in a frame of mind which seemed destined to fill all the jails in Paris that day. Jehan Frollo and Robin Poussepain laughed in their sleeves. Quasimodo gazed on the whole with an indifferent and astonished air.

However, at the moment when Master Florian Barbedienne was reading the sentence in his turn, before signing it, the clerk felt himself moved with pity for the poor wretch of a prisoner, and, in the hope of obtaining some mitigation of the penalty, he approached as near the auditor's ear as possible, and said, pointing to Quasimodo, "That man is deaf."

He hoped that this community of infirmity would awaken Master Florian's interest in behalf of the condemned man. But, in the first place, we have already observed that Master Florian did not care to have his deafness noticed. In the next place, he was so hard of hearing that he did not catch a single word of what the clerk said to him; nevertheless, he wished to have the appearance of hearing, and replied, "Ah! ah! that is different; I did not know that. An hour more of the pillory, in that case."

And he signed the sentence thus modified.

"'Tis well done," said Robin Poussepain, who cherished a grudge against Quasimodo. "That will teach him to handle people roughly."

CHAPTER II.
THE RAT-HOLE.

The reader must permit us to take him back to the Place de Grève, which we quitted yesterday with Gringoire, in order to follow la Esmeralda.

It is ten o'clock in the morning; everything is indicative of the day after a festival. The pavement is covered with rubbish; ribbons, rags, feathers from tufts of plumes, drops of wax from the torches, crumbs of the public feast. A goodly number of *bourgeois* are "sauntering," as we say, here and there, turning over with their feet the extinct brands of the bonfire, going into raptures in front of the Pillar House, over the memory of the fine hangings of the day before, and to-day staring at the nails that secured them a last pleasure. The venders of cider and beer are rolling their barrels among the groups. Some busy passers-by come and go. The merchants converse and call to each other from the thresholds of their shops. The festival, the ambassadors, Coppenole, the Pope of the Fools, are in all mouths; they vie with each other, each trying to criticise it best and laugh the most. And, meanwhile, four mounted sergeants, who have just posted themselves at the four sides of the pillory, have already concentrated around themselves a goodly proportion of the populace scattered on the Place, who condemn themselves to immobility and fatigue in the hope of a small execution.

If the reader, after having contemplated this lively and noisy scene which is being enacted in all parts of the Place, will now transfer his gaze towards that ancient demi-Gothic, demi-Romanesque house of the Tour-Roland, which forms the corner on the quay to the west, he will observe, at the angle of the façade, a large public breviary, with rich illuminations, protected from the rain by a little penthouse, and from thieves by a small grating, which, however, permits of the leaves being turned. Beside this breviary is a narrow, arched window, closed by two iron bars in the form of a cross, and looking on the square; the only opening which admits a small quantity of light and air to a little cell without a door, constructed on the ground-floor, in the thickness of the walls of the old house, and filled with a peace all the more profound, with a silence all the more gloomy, because a public place, the most populous and most noisy in Paris swarms and shrieks around it.

This little cell had been celebrated in Paris for nearly three centuries, ever since Madame Rolande de la Tour-Roland, in mourning for her father who died in the Crusades, had caused it to be hollowed out in the wall of her own house, in order to immure herself there forever, keeping of all her palace only this lodging whose door was walled up, and whose window stood open, winter and summer, giving all the rest to the poor and to God. The afflicted damsel had, in fact, waited twenty years for

death in this premature tomb, praying night and day for the soul of her father, sleeping in ashes, without even a stone for a pillow, clothed in a black sack, and subsisting on the bread and water which the compassion of the passers-by led them to deposit on the ledge of her window, thus receiving charity after having bestowed it. At her death, at the moment when she was passing to the other sepulchre, she had bequeathed this one in perpetuity to afflicted women, mothers, widows, or maidens, who should wish to pray much for others or for themselves, and who should desire to inter themselves alive in a great grief or a great penance. The poor of her day had made her a fine funeral, with tears and benedictions; but, to their great regret, the pious maid had not been canonized, for lack of influence. Those among them who were a little inclined to impiety, had hoped that the matter might be accomplished in Paradise more easily than at Rome, and had frankly besought God, instead of the pope, in behalf of the deceased. The majority had contented themselves with holding the memory of Rolande sacred, and converting her rags into relics. The city, on its side, had founded in honor of the damoiselle, a public breviary, which had been fastened near the window of the cell, in order that passers-by might halt there from time to time, were it only to pray; that prayer might remind them of alms, and that the poor recluses, heiresses of Madame Rolande's vault, might not die outright of hunger and forgetfulness.

Moreover, this sort of tomb was not so very rare a thing in the cities of the Middle Ages. One often encountered in the most frequented street, in the most crowded and noisy market, in the very middle, under the feet of the horses, under the wheels of the carts, as it were, a cellar, a well, a tiny walled and grated cabin, at the bottom of which a human being prayed night and day, voluntarily devoted to some eternal lamentation, to some great expiation. And all the reflections which that strange spectacle would awaken in us to-day; that horrible cell, a sort of intermediary link between a house and the tomb, the cemetery and the city; that living being cut off from the human community, and thenceforth reckoned among the dead; that lamp consuming its last drop of oil in the darkness; that remnant of life flickering in the grave; that breath, that voice, that eternal prayer in a box of stone; that face forever turned towards the other world; that eye already illuminated with another sun; that ear pressed to the walls of a tomb; that soul a prisoner in that body; that body a prisoner in that dungeon cell, and beneath that double envelope of flesh and granite, the murmur of that soul in pain;—nothing of all this was perceived by the crowd. The piety of that age, not very subtle nor much given to reasoning, did not see so many facets in an act of religion. It took the thing in the block, honored, venerated, hallowed the sacrifice at need, but did not analyze the sufferings, and felt but moderate pity for them. It brought some pittance to

the miserable penitent from time to time, looked through the hole to see whether he were still living, forgot his name, hardly knew how many years ago he had begun to die, and to the stranger, who questioned them about the living skeleton who was perishing in that cellar, the neighbors replied simply, “It is the recluse.”

Everything was then viewed without metaphysics, without exaggeration, without magnifying glass, with the naked eye. The microscope had not yet been invented, either for things of matter or for things of the mind.

Moreover, although people were but little surprised by it, the examples of this sort of cloistration in the hearts of cities were in truth frequent, as we have just said. There were in Paris a considerable number of these cells, for praying to God and doing penance; they were nearly all occupied. It is true that the clergy did not like to have them empty, since that implied lukewarmness in believers, and that lepers were put into them when there were no penitents on hand. Besides the cell on the Grève, there was one at Montfaucon, one at the Charnier des Innocents, another I hardly know where,—at the Clichon House, I think; others still at many spots where traces of them are found in traditions, in default of memorials. The University had also its own. On Mount Sainte-Geneviève a sort of Job of the Middle Ages, for the space of thirty years, chanted the seven penitential psalms on a dunghill at the bottom of a cistern, beginning anew when he had finished, singing loudest at night, *magna voce per umbras*, and to-day, the antiquary fancies that he hears his voice as he enters the Rue du Puits-qui-parle—the street of the “Speaking Well.”

To confine ourselves to the cell in the Tour-Roland, we must say that it had never lacked recluses. After the death of Madame Roland, it had stood vacant for a year or two, though rarely. Many women had come thither to mourn, until their death, for relatives, lovers, faults. Parisian malice, which thrusts its finger into everything, even into things which concern it the least, affirmed that it had beheld but few widows there.

In accordance with the fashion of the epoch, a Latin inscription on the wall indicated to the learned passer-by the pious purpose of this cell. The custom was retained until the middle of the sixteenth century of explaining an edifice by a brief device inscribed above the door. Thus, one still reads in France, above the wicket of the prison in the seignorial mansion of Tourville, *Sileto et spera*; in Ireland, beneath the armorial bearings which surmount the grand door to Fortescue Castle, *Forte scutum, salus ducum*; in England, over the principal entrance to the hospitable mansion of the Earls Cowper: *Tuum est*. At that time every edifice was a thought.

As there was no door to the walled cell of the Tour-Roland, these two words had been carved in large Roman capitals over the window,—

TU, ORA.

And this caused the people, whose good sense does not perceive so much refinement in things, and likes to translate *Ludovico Magno* by *Porte Saint-Denis*, to give to this dark, gloomy, damp cavity, the name of "The Rat-Hole." An explanation less sublime, perhaps, than the other; but, on the other hand, more picturesque.

CHAPTER III.
HISTORY OF A LEAVENED CAKE OF MAIZE.

At the epoch of this history, the cell in the Tour-Roland was occupied. If the reader desires to know by whom, he has only to lend an ear to the conversation of three worthy gossips, who, at the moment when we have directed his attention to the Rat-Hole, were directing their steps towards the same spot, coming up along the water's edge from the Châtelet, towards the Grève.

Two of these women were dressed like good *bourgeoises* of Paris. Their fine white ruffs; their petticoats of linsey-woolsey, striped red and blue; their white knitted stockings, with clocks embroidered in colors, well drawn upon their legs; the square-toed shoes of tawny leather with black soles, and, above all, their headgear, that sort of tinsel horn, loaded down with ribbons and laces, which the women of Champagne still wear, in company with the grenadiers of the imperial guard of Russia, announced that they belonged to that class wives which holds the middle ground between what the lackeys call a woman and what they term a lady. They wore neither rings nor gold crosses, and it was easy to see that, in their ease, this did not proceed from poverty, but simply from fear of being fined. Their companion was attired in very much the same manner; but there was that indescribable something about her dress and bearing which suggested the wife of a provincial notary. One could see, by the way in which her girdle rose above her hips, that she had not been long in Paris. Add to this a plaited tucker, knots of ribbon on her shoes—and that the stripes of her petticoat ran horizontally instead of vertically, and a thousand other enormities which shocked good taste.

The two first walked with that step peculiar to Parisian ladies, showing Paris to women from the country. The provincial held by the hand a big boy, who held in his a large, flat cake.

We regret to be obliged to add, that, owing to the rigor of the season, he was using his tongue as a handkerchief.

The child was making them drag him along, *non passibus æquis*, as Virgil says, and stumbling at every moment, to the great indignation of his mother. It is true that he was looking at his cake more than at the pavement. Some serious motive, no doubt, prevented his biting it (the cake), for he contented himself with gazing tenderly at it. But the mother should have rather taken charge of the cake. It was cruel to make a Tantalus of the chubby-cheeked boy.

Meanwhile, the three demoiselles (for the name of *dames* was then reserved for noble women) were all talking at once.

“Let us make haste, Demoiselle Mahiette,” said the youngest of the three, who was also the largest, to the provincial, “I greatly fear that we shall arrive too late; they told us at the Châtelet that they were going to take him directly to the pillory.”

“Ah, bah! what are you saying, Demoiselle Oudarde Musnier?” interposed the other Parisienne. “There are two hours yet to the pillory. We have time enough. Have you ever seen any one pilloried, my dear Mahiette?”

“Yes,” said the provincial, “at Reims.”

“Ah, bah! What is your pillory at Reims? A miserable cage into which only peasants are turned. A great affair, truly!”

“Only peasants!” said Mahiette, “at the cloth market in Reims! We have seen very fine criminals there, who have killed their father and mother! Peasants! For what do you take us, Gervaise?”

It is certain that the provincial was on the point of taking offence, for the honor of her pillory. Fortunately, that discreet damoiselle, Oudarde Musnier, turned the conversation in time.

“By the way, Damoiselle Mahiette, what say you to our Flemish Ambassadors? Have you as fine ones at Reims?”

“I admit,” replied Mahiette, “that it is only in Paris that such Flemings can be seen.”

“Did you see among the embassy, that big ambassador who is a hosier?” asked Oudarde.

“Yes,” said Mahiette. “He has the eye of a Saturn.”

“And the big fellow whose face resembles a bare belly?” resumed Gervaise. “And the little one, with small eyes framed in red eyelids, pared down and slashed up like a thistle head?”

“’Tis their horses that are worth seeing,” said Oudarde, “caparisoned as they are after the fashion of their country!”

“Ah my dear,” interrupted provincial Mahiette, assuming in her turn an air of superiority, “what would you say then, if you had seen in ’61, at the consecration at Reims, eighteen years ago, the horses of the princes and of the king’s company? Housings and caparisons of all sorts; some of damask cloth, of fine cloth of gold, furred with sables; others of velvet, furred with ermine; others all embellished with goldsmith’s work and large bells of gold and silver! And what money that had cost! And what handsome boy pages rode upon them!”

“That,” replied Oudarde dryly, “does not prevent the Flemings having very fine horses, and having had a superb supper yesterday with monsieur, the provost of the merchants, at the Hôtel-de-Ville, where they were served with comfits and hippocras, and spices, and other singularities.”

“What are you saying, neighbor!” exclaimed Gervaise. “It was with monsieur the cardinal, at the Petit Bourbon that they supped.”

“Not at all. At the Hôtel-de-Ville.

“Yes, indeed. At the Petit Bourbon!”

“It was at the Hôtel-de-Ville,” retorted Oudarde sharply, “and Dr. Scourable addressed them a harangue in Latin, which pleased them greatly. My husband, who is sworn bookseller told me so.”

“It was at the Petit Bourbon,” replied Gervaise, with no less spirit, “and this is what monsieur the cardinal’s procurator presented to them: twelve double quarts of hippocras, white, claret, and red; twenty-four boxes of double Lyons marchpane, gilded; as many torches, worth two livres a piece; and six demi-queues[29] of Beaune wine, white and claret, the best that could be found. I have it from my husband, who is a cinquantenier[30], at the Parloir-aux Bourgeois, and who was this morning comparing the Flemish ambassadors with those of Prester John and the Emperor of Trebizond, who came from Mesopotamia to Paris, under the last king, and who wore rings in their ears.”

“So true is it that they supped at the Hôtel-de-Ville,” replied Oudarde but little affected by this catalogue, “that such a triumph of viands and comfits has never been seen.”

“I tell you that they were served by Le Sec, sergeant of the city, at the Hôtel du Petit-Bourbon, and that that is where you are mistaken.”

“At the Hôtel-de-Ville, I tell you!”

“At the Petit-Bourbon, my dear! and they had illuminated with magic glasses the word *Hope*, which is written on the grand portal.”

“At the Hôtel-de-Ville! At the Hôtel-de-Ville! And Husson-le-Voir played the flute!”

“I tell you, no!”

“I tell you, yes!”

“I say, no!”

Plump and worthy Oudarde was preparing to retort, and the quarrel might, perhaps, have proceeded to a pulling of caps, had not Mahiette suddenly exclaimed,—“Look at those people assembled yonder at the end of the bridge! There is something in their midst that they are looking at!”

“In sooth,” said Gervaise, “I hear the sounds of a tambourine. I believe ’tis the little Esmeralda, who plays her mummeries with her goat. Eh, be quick, Mahiette! redouble your pace and drag along your boy. You are come hither to visit the curiosities of Paris. You saw the Flemings yesterday; you must see the gypsy to-day.”

“The gypsy!” said Mahiette, suddenly retracing her steps, and clasping her son’s arm forcibly. “God preserve me from it! She would steal my child from me! Come, Eustache!”

And she set out on a run along the quay towards the Grève, until she had left the bridge far behind her. In the meanwhile, the child whom she was dragging after her fell upon his knees; she halted breathless. Oudarde and Gervaise rejoined her.

“That gypsy steal your child from you!” said Gervaise. “That’s a singular freak of yours!”

Mahiette shook her head with a pensive air.

“The singular point is,” observed Oudarde, “that *la sachette* has the same idea about the Egyptian woman.”

“What is *la sachette*?” asked Mahiette.

“Hé!” said Oudarde, “Sister Gudule.”

“And who is Sister Gudule?” persisted Mahiette.

“You are certainly ignorant of all but your Reims, not to know that!” replied Oudarde. “’Tis the recluse of the Rat-Hole.”

“What!” demanded Mahiette, “that poor woman to whom we are carrying this cake?”

Oudarde nodded affirmatively.

“Precisely. You will see her presently at her window on the Grève. She has the same opinion as yourself of these vagabonds of Egypt, who play the tambourine and tell fortunes to the public. No one knows whence comes her horror of the gypsies and Egyptians. But you, Mahiette—why do you run so at the mere sight of them?”

“Oh!” said Mahiette, seizing her child’s round head in both hands, “I don’t want that to happen to me which happened to Paquette la Chantefleurie.”

“Oh! you must tell us that story, my good Mahiette,” said Gervaise, taking her arm.

“Gladly,” replied Mahiette, “but you must be ignorant of all but your Paris not to know that! I will tell you then (but ’tis not necessary for us to halt that I may tell you the tale), that Paquette la Chantefleurie was a pretty maid of eighteen when I was one myself, that is to say, eighteen years ago, and ’tis her own fault if she is not to-day, like me, a good, plump, fresh mother of six and thirty, with a husband and a son. However, after the age of fourteen, it was too late! Well, she was the daughter of Guybertant, minstrel of the barges at Reims, the same who had played before King Charles VII., at his coronation, when he descended our river Vesle from Sillery to Muison, when Madame the Maid of Orleans was also in the boat. The old father died when Paquette was still a mere child; she had then no one but her mother, the sister of M. Pradon, master-brazier and coppersmith in Paris, Rue Parin-Garlin, who died last year. You see she was of good family. The mother was a good simple woman, unfortunately, and she taught Paquette nothing but a bit of embroidery and toy-making which did not prevent the little one from growing very large and remaining very poor. They both dwelt at Reims, on the river front, Rue de Folle-Peine. Mark this: For I believe it was this which brought misfortune to Paquette. In ’61, the year of the coronation of our King Louis XI. whom God preserve! Paquette was so gay and so pretty that she was called everywhere by no other name than *la Chantefleurie*—blossoming song. Poor girl! She had handsome teeth, she was fond of laughing and displaying them. Now, a maid who loves to laugh is on the road to weeping; handsome teeth ruin handsome eyes. So she was la Chantefleurie. She and her mother earned a precarious living; they had been very destitute since the death of the minstrel; their embroidery did not bring them in more than six farthings a week, which does not amount to quite two eagle liards. Where were the days when Father Guybertant had earned twelve sous parisian, in a

single coronation, with a song? One winter (it was in that same year of ’61), when the two women had neither fagots nor firewood, it was very cold, which gave la Chantefleurie such a fine color that the men called her Paquette![31] and many called her Pâquerette![32] and she was ruined.—Eustache, just let me see you bite that cake if you dare!—We immediately perceived that she was ruined, one Sunday when she came to church with a gold cross about her neck. At fourteen years of age! do you see? First it was the young Vicomte de Cormontreuil, who has his bell tower three leagues distant from Reims; then Messire Henri de Triancourt, equerry to the King; then less than that, Chiart de Beaulion, sergeant-at-arms; then, still descending, Guery Aubergeon, carver to the King; then, Macé de Frépus, barber to monsieur the dauphin; then, Thévenin le Moine, King’s cook; then, the men growing continually younger and less noble, she fell to Guillaume Racine, minstrel of the hurdy-gurdy and to Thierry de Mer, lamplighter. Then, poor Chantefleurie, she belonged to every one: she had reached the last sou of her gold piece. What shall I say to you, my damoiselles? At the coronation, in the same year, ’61, ’twas she who made the bed of the king of the debauchees! In the same year!”

Mahiette sighed, and wiped away a tear which trickled from her eyes.

“This is no very extraordinary history,” said Gervaise, “and in the whole of it I see nothing of any Egyptian women or children.”

“Patience!” resumed Mahiette, “you will see one child.—In ’66, ’twill be sixteen years ago this month, at Sainte-Paule’s day, Paquette was brought to bed of a little girl. The unhappy creature! it was a great joy to her; she had long wished for a child. Her mother, good woman, who had never known what to do except to shut her eyes, her mother was dead. Paquette had no longer any one to love in the world or any one to love her. La Chantefleurie had been a poor creature during the five years since her fall. She was alone, alone in this life, fingers were pointed at her, she was hooted at in the streets, beaten by the sergeants, jeered at by the little boys in rags. And then, twenty had arrived: and twenty is an old age for amorous women. Folly began to bring her in no more than her trade of embroidery in former days; for every wrinkle that came, a crown fled; winter became hard to her once more, wood became rare again in her brazier, and bread in her cupboard. She could no longer work because, in becoming voluptuous, she had grown lazy; and she suffered much more because, in growing lazy, she had become voluptuous. At least, that is the way in which monsieur the curé of Saint-Remy explains why these women are colder and hungrier than other poor women, when they are old.”

“Yes,” remarked Gervaise, “but the gypsies?”

“One moment, Gervaise!” said Oudarde, whose attention was less impatient. “What would be left for the end if all were in the beginning? Continue, Mahiette, I entreat you. That poor Chantefleurie!”

Mahiette went on.

“So she was very sad, very miserable, and furrowed her cheeks with tears. But in the midst of her shame, her folly, her debauchery, it seemed to her that she should be less wild, less shameful, less dissipated, if there were something or some one in the world whom she could love, and who could love her. It was necessary that it should be a child, because only a child could be sufficiently innocent for that. She had recognized this fact after having tried to love a thief, the only man who wanted her; but after a short time, she perceived that the thief despised her. Those women of love require either a lover or a child to fill their hearts. Otherwise, they are very unhappy. As she could not have a lover, she turned wholly towards a desire for a child, and as she had not ceased to be pious, she made her constant prayer to the good God for it. So the good God took pity on her, and gave her a little daughter. I will not speak to you of her joy; it was a fury of tears, and caresses, and kisses. She nursed her child herself, made swaddling-bands for it out of her coverlet, the only one which she had on her bed, and no longer felt either cold or hunger. She became beautiful once more, in consequence of it. An old maid makes a young mother. Gallantry claimed her once more; men came to see la Chantefleurie; she found customers again for her merchandise, and out of all these horrors she made baby clothes, caps and bibs, bodices with shoulder-straps of lace, and tiny bonnets of satin, without even thinking of buying herself another coverlet.—Master Eustache, I have already told you not to eat that cake.—It is certain that little Agnès, that was the child’s name, a baptismal name, for it was a long time since la Chantefleurie had had any surname—it is certain that that little one was more swathed in ribbons and embroideries than a dauphiness of Dauphiny! Among other things, she had a pair of little shoes, the like of which King Louis XI. certainly never had! Her mother had stitched and embroidered them herself; she had lavished on them all the delicacies of her art of embroideress, and all the embellishments of a robe for the good Virgin. They certainly were the two prettiest little pink shoes that could be seen. They were no longer than my thumb, and one had to see the child’s little feet come out of them, in order to believe that they had been able to get into them. ’Tis true that those little feet were so small, so pretty, so rosy! rosier than the satin of the shoes! When you have children, Oudarde, you will find that there is nothing prettier than those little hands and feet.”

“I ask no better,” said Oudarde with a sigh, “but I am waiting until it shall suit the good pleasure of M. Andry Musnier.”

“However, Paquette’s child had more that was pretty about it besides its feet. I saw her when she was only four months old; she was a love! She had eyes larger than her mouth, and the most charming black hair, which already curled. She would have been a magnificent brunette at the age of sixteen! Her mother became more crazy over her every day. She kissed her, caressed her, tickled her, washed her, decked her out, devoured her! She lost her head over her, she thanked God for her. Her pretty, little rosy feet above all were an endless source of wonderment, they were a delirium of joy! She was always pressing her lips to them, and she could never recover from her amazement at their smallness. She put them into the tiny shoes, took them out, admired them, marvelled at them, looked at the light through them, was curious to see them try to walk on her bed, and would gladly have passed her life on her knees, putting on and taking off the shoes from those feet, as though they had been those of an Infant Jesus.”

“The tale is fair and good,” said Gervaise in a low tone; “but where do gypsies come into all that?”

“Here,” replied Mahiette. “One day there arrived in Reims a very queer sort of people. They were beggars and vagabonds who were roaming over the country, led by their duke and their counts. They were browned by exposure to the sun, they had closely curling hair, and silver rings in their ears. The women were still uglier than the men. They had blacker faces, which were always uncovered, a miserable frock on their bodies, an old cloth woven of cords bound upon their shoulder, and their hair hanging like the tail of a horse. The children who scrambled between their legs would have frightened as many monkeys. A band of excommunicates. All these persons came direct from lower Egypt to Reims through Poland. The Pope had confessed them, it was said, and had prescribed to them as penance to roam through the world for seven years, without sleeping in a bed; and so they were called penancers, and smelt horribly. It appears that they had formerly been Saracens, which was why they believed in Jupiter, and claimed ten livres of Tournay from all archbishops, bishops, and mitred abbots with croziers. A bull from the Pope empowered them to do that. They came to Reims to tell fortunes in the name of the King of Algiers, and the Emperor of Germany. You can readily imagine that no more was needed to cause the entrance to the town to be forbidden them. Then the whole band camped with good grace outside the gate of Braine, on that hill where stands a mill, beside the cavities of the ancient chalk pits. And everybody in Reims vied with his neighbor in going to see them. They looked at your hand, and told you marvellous prophecies; they were equal to predicting to Judas that he would become Pope. Nevertheless, ugly rumors were in circulation in regard to them; about children stolen, purses cut, and human flesh

devoured. The wise people said to the foolish: “Don’t go there!” and then went themselves on the sly. It was an infatuation. The fact is, that they said things fit to astonish a cardinal. Mothers triumphed greatly over their little ones after the Egyptians had read in their hands all sorts of marvels written in pagan and in Turkish. One had an emperor; another, a pope; another, a captain. Poor Chantefleurie was seized with curiosity; she wished to know about herself, and whether her pretty little Agnès would not become some day Empress of Armenia, or something else. So she carried her to the Egyptians; and the Egyptian women fell to admiring the child, and to caressing it, and to kissing it with their black mouths, and to marvelling over its little band, alas! to the great joy of the mother. They were especially enthusiastic over her pretty feet and shoes. The child was not yet a year old. She already lisped a little, laughed at her mother like a little mad thing, was plump and quite round, and possessed a thousand charming little gestures of the angels of paradise.

“She was very much frightened by the Egyptians, and wept. But her mother kissed her more warmly and went away enchanted with the good fortune which the soothsayers had foretold for her Agnès. She was to be a beauty, virtuous, a queen. So she returned to her attic in the Rue Folle-Peine, very proud of bearing with her a queen. The next day she took advantage of a moment when the child was asleep on her bed, (for they always slept together), gently left the door a little way open, and ran to tell a neighbor in the Rue de la Séchesserie, that the day would come when her daughter Agnès would be served at table by the King of England and the Archduke of Ethiopia, and a hundred other marvels. On her return, hearing no cries on the staircase, she said to herself: ‘Good! the child is still asleep!’ She found her door wider open than she had left it, but she entered, poor mother, and ran to the bed.—The child was no longer there, the place was empty. Nothing remained of the child, but one of her pretty little shoes. She flew out of the room, dashed down the stairs, and began to beat her head against the wall, crying: ‘My child! who has my child? Who has taken my child?’ The street was deserted, the house isolated; no one could tell her anything about it. She went about the town, searched all the streets, ran hither and thither the whole day long, wild, beside herself, terrible, snuffing at doors and windows like a wild beast which has lost its young. She was breathless, dishevelled, frightful to see, and there was a fire in her eyes which dried her tears. She stopped the passers-by and cried: ‘My daughter! my daughter! my pretty little daughter! If any one will give me back my daughter, I will be his servant, the servant of his dog, and he shall eat my heart if he will.’ She met M. le Curé of Saint-Remy, and said to him: ‘Monsieur, I will till the earth with my finger-nails, but give me back my child!’ It was heartrending, Oudarde; and I saw a very hard man, Master Ponce Lacabre, the procurator, weep. Ah! poor mother!

In the evening she returned home. During her absence, a neighbor had seen two gypsies ascend up to it with a bundle in their arms, then descend again, after closing the door. After their departure, something like the cries of a child were heard in Paquette's room. The mother, burst into shrieks of laughter, ascended the stairs as though on wings, and entered.—A frightful thing to tell, Oudarde! Instead of her pretty little Agnès, so rosy and so fresh, who was a gift of the good God, a sort of hideous little monster, lame, one-eyed, deformed, was crawling and squalling over the floor. She hid her eyes in horror. 'Oh!' said she, 'have the witches transformed my daughter into this horrible animal?' They hastened to carry away the little club-foot; he would have driven her mad. It was the monstrous child of some gypsy woman, who had given herself to the devil. He appeared to be about four years old, and talked a language which was no human tongue; there were words in it which were impossible. La Chantefleurie flung herself upon the little shoe, all that remained to her of all that she loved. She remained so long motionless over it, mute, and without breath, that they thought she was dead. Suddenly she trembled all over, covered her relic with furious kisses, and burst out sobbing as though her heart were broken. I assure you that we were all weeping also. She said: 'Oh, my little daughter! my pretty little daughter! where art thou?'—and it wrung your very heart. I weep still when I think of it. Our children are the marrow of our bones, you see.—My poor Eustache! thou art so fair!—If you only knew how nice he is! yesterday he said to me: 'I want to be a gendarme, that I do.' Oh! my Eustache! if I were to lose thee!—All at once la Chantefleurie rose, and set out to run through Reims, screaming: 'To the gypsies' camp! to the gypsies' camp! Police, to burn the witches!' The gypsies were gone. It was pitch dark. They could not be followed. On the morrow, two leagues from Reims, on a heath between Gueux and Tilloy, the remains of a large fire were found, some ribbons which had belonged to Paquette's child, drops of blood, and the dung of a ram. The night just past had been a Saturday. There was no longer any doubt that the Egyptians had held their Sabbath on that heath, and that they had devoured the child in company with Beelzebub, as the practice is among the Mahometans. When La Chantefleurie learned these horrible things, she did not weep, she moved her lips as though to speak, but could not. On the morrow, her hair was gray. On the second day, she had disappeared.

"'Tis in truth, a frightful tale," said Oudarde, "and one which would make even a Burgundian weep."

"I am no longer surprised," added Gervaise, "that fear of the gypsies should spur you on so sharply."

"And you did all the better," resumed Oudarde, "to flee with your Eustache just now, since these also are gypsies from Poland."

“No,” said Gervais, “’tis said that they come from Spain and Catalonia.”

“Catalonia? ’tis possible,” replied Oudarde. “Pologne, Catalogne, Valogne, I always confound those three provinces, One thing is certain, that they are gypsies.”

“Who certainly,” added Gervaise, “have teeth long enough to eat little children. I should not be surprised if la Smeralda ate a little of them also, though she pretends to be dainty. Her white goat knows tricks that are too malicious for there not to be some impiety underneath it all.”

Mahiette walked on in silence. She was absorbed in that revery which is, in some sort, the continuation of a mournful tale, and which ends only after having communicated the emotion, from vibration to vibration, even to the very last fibres of the heart. Nevertheless, Gervaise addressed her, “And did they ever learn what became of la Chantefleurie?” Mahiette made no reply. Gervaise repeated her question, and shook her arm, calling her by name. Mahiette appeared to awaken from her thoughts.

“What became of la Chantefleurie?” she said, repeating mechanically the words whose impression was still fresh in her ear; then, making an effort to recall her attention to the meaning of her words, “Ah!” she continued briskly, “no one ever found out.”

She added, after a pause,—

“Some said that she had been seen to quit Reims at nightfall by the Fléchembault gate; others, at daybreak, by the old Basée gate. A poor man found her gold cross hanging on the stone cross in the field where the fair is held. It was that ornament which had wrought her ruin, in ’61. It was a gift from the handsome Vicomte de Cormontreuil, her first lover. Paquette had never been willing to part with it, wretched as she had been. She had clung to it as to life itself. So, when we saw that cross abandoned, we all thought that she was dead. Nevertheless, there were people of the Cabaret les Vantes, who said that they had seen her pass along the road to Paris, walking on the pebbles with her bare feet. But, in that case, she must have gone out through the Porte de Vesle, and all this does not agree. Or, to speak more truly, I believe that she actually did depart by the Porte de Vesle, but departed from this world.”

“I do not understand you,” said Gervaise.

“La Vesle,” replied Mahiette, with a melancholy smile, “is the river.”

“Poor Chantefleurie!” said Oudarde, with a shiver,—“drowned!”

“Drowned!” resumed Mahiette, “who could have told good Father Guybertant, when he passed under the bridge of Tingueux with the current, singing in his barge, that one day his dear little Paquette would also pass beneath that bridge, but without song or boat.

“And the little shoe?” asked Gervaise.

“Disappeared with the mother,” replied Mahiette.

“Poor little shoe!” said Oudarde.

Oudarde, a big and tender woman, would have been well pleased to sigh in company with Mahiette. But Gervaise, more curious, had not finished her questions.

“And the monster?” she said suddenly, to Mahiette.

“What monster?” inquired the latter.

“The little gypsy monster left by the sorceresses in Chantefleurie’s chamber, in exchange for her daughter. What did you do with it? I hope you drowned it also.”

“No.” replied Mahiette.

“What? You burned it then? In sooth, that is more just. A witch child!”

“Neither the one nor the other, Gervaise. Monseigneur the archbishop interested himself in the child of Egypt, exorcised it, blessed it, removed the devil carefully from its body, and sent it to Paris, to be exposed on the wooden bed at Notre-Dame, as a foundling.”

“Those bishops!” grumbled Gervaise, “because they are learned, they do nothing like anybody else. I just put it to you, Oudarde, the idea of placing the devil among the foundlings! For that little monster was assuredly the devil. Well, Mahiette, what did they do with it in Paris? I am quite sure that no charitable person wanted it.”

“I do not know,” replied the Rémoise, “’twas just at that time that my husband bought the office of notary, at Beru, two leagues from the town, and we were no longer occupied with that story; besides, in front of Beru, stand the two hills of Cernay, which hide the towers of the cathedral in Reims from view.”

While chatting thus, the three worthy *bourgeoises* had arrived at the Place de Grève. In their absorption, they had passed the public breviary of the Tour-Roland without stopping, and took their way mechanically towards the pillory around which the throng was growing more dense with every moment. It is probable that the spectacle which at that moment attracted all looks in that direction, would have made them

forget completely the Rat-Hole, and the halt which they intended to make there, if big Eustache, six years of age, whom Mahiette was dragging along by the hand, had not abruptly recalled the object to them: “Mother,” said he, as though some instinct warned him that the Rat-Hole was behind him, “can I eat the cake now?”

If Eustache had been more adroit, that is to say, less greedy, he would have continued to wait, and would only have hazarded that simple question, “Mother, can I eat the cake, now?” on their return to the University, to Master Andry Musnier’s, Rue Madame la Valence, when he had the two arms of the Seine and the five bridges of the city between the Rat-Hole and the cake.

This question, highly imprudent at the moment when Eustache put it, aroused Mahiette’s attention.

“By the way,” she exclaimed, “we are forgetting the recluse! Show me the Rat-Hole, that I may carry her her cake.”

“Immediately,” said Oudarde, “’tis a charity.”

But this did not suit Eustache.

“Stop! my cake!” said he, rubbing both ears alternatively with his shoulders, which, in such cases, is the supreme sign of discontent.

The three women retraced their steps, and, on arriving in the vicinity of the Tour-Roland, Oudarde said to the other two,—

“We must not all three gaze into the hole at once, for fear of alarming the recluse. Do you two pretend to read the *Dominus* in the breviary, while I thrust my nose into the aperture; the recluse knows me a little. I will give you warning when you can approach.”

She proceeded alone to the window. At the moment when she looked in, a profound pity was depicted on all her features, and her frank, gay visage altered its expression and color as abruptly as though it had passed from a ray of sunlight to a ray of moonlight; her eye became humid; her mouth contracted, like that of a person on the point of weeping. A moment later, she laid her finger on her lips, and made a sign to Mahiette to draw near and look.

Mahiette, much touched, stepped up in silence, on tiptoe, as though approaching the bedside of a dying person.

It was, in fact, a melancholy spectacle which presented itself to the eyes of the two women, as they gazed through the grating of the Rat-Hole, neither stirring nor breathing.

The cell was small, broader than it was long, with an arched ceiling, and viewed from within, it bore a considerable resemblance to the interior of a huge bishop's mitre. On the bare flagstones which formed the floor, in one corner, a woman was sitting, or rather, crouching. Her chin rested on her knees, which her crossed arms pressed forcibly to her breast. Thus doubled up, clad in a brown sack, which enveloped her entirely in large folds, her long, gray hair pulled over in front, falling over her face and along her legs nearly to her feet, she presented, at the first glance, only a strange form outlined against the dark background of the cell, a sort of dusky triangle, which the ray of daylight falling through the opening, cut roughly into two shades, the one sombre, the other illuminated. It was one of those spectres, half light, half shadow, such as one beholds in dreams and in the extraordinary work of Goya, pale, motionless, sinister, crouching over a tomb, or leaning against the grating of a prison cell.

It was neither a woman, nor a man, nor a living being, nor a definite form; it was a figure, a sort of vision, in which the real and the fantastic intersected each other, like darkness and day. It was with difficulty that one distinguished, beneath her hair which spread to the ground, a gaunt and severe profile; her dress barely allowed the extremity of a bare foot to escape, which contracted on the hard, cold pavement. The little of human form of which one caught a sight beneath this envelope of mourning, caused a shudder.

That figure, which one might have supposed to be riveted to the flagstones, appeared to possess neither movement, nor thought, nor breath. Lying, in January, in that thin, linen sack, lying on a granite floor, without fire, in the gloom of a cell whose oblique air-hole allowed only the cold breeze, but never the sun, to enter from without, she did not appear to suffer or even to think. One would have said that she had turned to stone with the cell, ice with the season. Her hands were clasped, her eyes fixed. At first sight one took her for a spectre; at the second, for a statue.

Nevertheless, at intervals, her blue lips half opened to admit a breath, and trembled, but as dead and as mechanical as the leaves which the wind sweeps aside.

Nevertheless, from her dull eyes there escaped a look, an ineffable look, a profound, lugubrious, imperturbable look, incessantly fixed upon a corner of the cell which could not be seen from without; a gaze which seemed to fix all the sombre thoughts of that soul in distress upon some mysterious object.

Such was the creature who had received, from her habitation, the name of the “recluse”; and, from her garment, the name of “the sacked nun.”

The three women, for Gervaise had rejoined Mahiette and Oudarde, gazed through the window. Their heads intercepted the feeble light in the cell, without the wretched being whom they thus deprived of it seeming to pay any attention to them. “Do not let us trouble her,” said Oudarde, in a low voice, “she is in her ecstasy; she is praying.”

Meanwhile, Mahiette was gazing with ever-increasing anxiety at that wan, withered, dishevelled head, and her eyes filled with tears. “This is very singular,” she murmured.

She thrust her head through the bars, and succeeded in casting a glance at the corner where the gaze of the unhappy woman was immovably riveted.

When she withdrew her head from the window, her countenance was inundated with tears.

“What do you call that woman?” she asked Oudarde.

Oudarde replied,—

“We call her Sister Gudule.”

“And I,” returned Mahiette, “call her Paquette la Chantefleurie.”

Then, laying her finger on her lips, she motioned to the astounded Oudarde to thrust her head through the window and look.

Oudarde looked and beheld, in the corner where the eyes of the recluse were fixed in that sombre ecstasy, a tiny shoe of pink satin, embroidered with a thousand fanciful designs in gold and silver.

Gervaise looked after Oudarde, and then the three women, gazing upon the unhappy mother, began to weep.

But neither their looks nor their tears disturbed the recluse. Her hands remained clasped; her lips mute; her eyes fixed; and that little shoe, thus gazed at, broke the heart of any one who knew her history.

The three women had not yet uttered a single word; they dared not speak, even in a low voice. This deep silence, this deep grief, this profound oblivion in which everything had disappeared except one thing, produced upon them the effect of the grand altar at Christmas or Easter. They remained silent, they meditated, they were ready to kneel. It seemed to them that they were ready to enter a church on the day of Tenebræ.

At length Gervaise, the most curious of the three, and consequently the least sensitive, tried to make the recluse speak:

“Sister! Sister Gudule!”

She repeated this call three times, raising her voice each time. The recluse did not move; not a word, not a glance, not a sigh, not a sign of life.

Oudarde, in her turn, in a sweeter, more caressing voice,—“Sister!” said she, “Sister Sainte-Gudule!”

The same silence; the same immobility.

“A singular woman!” exclaimed Gervaise, “and one not to be moved by a catapult!”

“Perchance she is deaf,” said Oudarde.

“Perhaps she is blind,” added Gervaise.

“Dead, perchance,” returned Mahiette.

It is certain that if the soul had not already quitted this inert, sluggish, lethargic body, it had at least retreated and concealed itself in depths whither the perceptions of the exterior organs no longer penetrated.

“Then we must leave the cake on the window,” said Oudarde; “some scamp will take it. What shall we do to rouse her?”

Eustache, who, up to that moment had been diverted by a little carriage drawn by a large dog, which had just passed, suddenly perceived that his three conductresses were gazing at something through the window, and, curiosity taking possession of him in his turn, he climbed upon a stone post, elevated himself on tiptoe, and applied his fat, red face to the opening, shouting, “Mother, let me see too!”

At the sound of this clear, fresh, ringing child’s voice, the recluse trembled; she turned her head with the sharp, abrupt movement of a steel spring, her long, fleshless hands cast aside the hair from her brow, and she fixed upon the child, bitter, astonished, desperate eyes. This glance was but a lightning flash.

“Oh my God!” she suddenly exclaimed, hiding her head on her knees, and it seemed as though her hoarse voice tore her chest as it passed from it, “do not show me those of others!”

“Good day, madam,” said the child, gravely.

Nevertheless, this shock had, so to speak, awakened the recluse. A long shiver traversed her frame from head to foot; her teeth chattered; she half raised her head and said, pressing her elbows against her hips, and clasping her feet in her hands as though to warm them,—

“Oh, how cold it is!”

“Poor woman!” said Oudarde, with great compassion, “would you like a little fire?”

She shook her head in token of refusal.

“Well,” resumed Oudarde, presenting her with a flagon; “here is some hippocras which will warm you; drink it.”

Again she shook her head, looked at Oudarde fixedly and replied, “Water.”

Oudarde persisted,—“No, sister, that is no beverage for January. You must drink a little hippocras and eat this leavened cake of maize, which we have baked for you.”

She refused the cake which Mahiette offered to her, and said, “Black bread.”

“Come,” said Gervaise, seized in her turn with an impulse of charity, and unfastening her woolen cloak, “here is a cloak which is a little warmer than yours.”

She refused the cloak as she had refused the flagon and the cake, and replied, “A sack.”

“But,” resumed the good Oudarde, “you must have perceived to some extent, that yesterday was a festival.”

“I do perceive it,” said the recluse; “’tis two days now since I have had any water in my crock.”

She added, after a silence, “’Tis a festival, I am forgotten. People do well. Why should the world think of me, when I do not think of it? Cold charcoal makes cold ashes.”

And as though fatigued with having said so much, she dropped her head on her knees again. The simple and charitable Oudarde, who fancied that she understood from her last words that she was complaining of the cold, replied innocently, “Then you would like a little fire?”

“Fire!” said the sacked nun, with a strange accent; “and will you also make a little for the poor little one who has been beneath the sod for these fifteen years?”

Every limb was trembling, her voice quivered, her eyes flashed, she had raised herself upon her knees; suddenly she extended her thin, white hand towards the child, who

was regarding her with a look of astonishment. “Take away that child!” she cried. “The Egyptian woman is about to pass by.”

Then she fell face downward on the earth, and her forehead struck the stone, with the sound of one stone against another stone. The three women thought her dead. A moment later, however, she moved, and they beheld her drag herself, on her knees and elbows, to the corner where the little shoe was. Then they dared not look; they no longer saw her; but they heard a thousand kisses and a thousand sighs, mingled with heartrending cries, and dull blows like those of a head in contact with a wall. Then, after one of these blows, so violent that all three of them staggered, they heard no more.

“Can she have killed herself?” said Gervaise, venturing to pass her head through the air-hole. “Sister! Sister Gudule!”

“Sister Gudule!” repeated Oudarde.

“Ah! good heavens! she no longer moves!” resumed Gervaise; “is she dead? Gudule! Gudule!”

Mahiette, choked to such a point that she could not speak, made an effort. “Wait,” said she. Then bending towards the window, “Paquette!” she said, “Paquette le Chantefleurie!”

A child who innocently blows upon the badly ignited fuse of a bomb, and makes it explode in his face, is no more terrified than was Mahiette at the effect of that name, abruptly launched into the cell of Sister Gudule.

The recluse trembled all over, rose erect on her bare feet, and leaped at the window with eyes so glaring that Mahiette and Oudarde, and the other woman and the child recoiled even to the parapet of the quay.

Meanwhile, the sinister face of the recluse appeared pressed to the grating of the air-hole. “Oh! oh!” she cried, with an appalling laugh; “’tis the Egyptian who is calling me!”

At that moment, a scene which was passing at the pillory caught her wild eye. Her brow contracted with horror, she stretched her two skeleton arms from her cell, and shrieked in a voice which resembled a death-rattle, “So ’tis thou once more, daughter of Egypt! ’Tis thou who callest me, stealer of children! Well! Be thou accursed! accursed! accursed! accursed!”

CHAPTER IV.
A TEAR FOR A DROP OF WATER.

These words were, so to speak, the point of union of two scenes, which had, up to that time, been developed in parallel lines at the same moment, each on its particular theatre; one, that which the reader has just perused, in the Rat-Hole; the other, which he is about to read, on the ladder of the pillory. The first had for witnesses only the three women with whom the reader has just made acquaintance; the second had for spectators all the public which we have seen above, collecting on the Place de Grève, around the pillory and the gibbet.

That crowd which the four sergeants posted at nine o'clock in the morning at the four corners of the pillory had inspired with the hope of some sort of an execution, no doubt, not a hanging, but a whipping, a cropping of ears, something, in short,—that crowd had increased so rapidly that the four policemen, too closely besieged, had had occasion to "press" it, as the expression then ran, more than once, by sound blows of their whips, and the haunches of their horses.

This populace, disciplined to waiting for public executions, did not manifest very much impatience. It amused itself with watching the pillory, a very simple sort of monument, composed of a cube of masonry about six feet high and hollow in the interior. A very steep staircase, of unhewn stone, which was called by distinction "the ladder," led to the upper platform, upon which was visible a horizontal wheel of solid oak. The victim was bound upon this wheel, on his knees, with his hands behind his back. A wooden shaft, which set in motion a capstan concealed in the interior of the little edifice, imparted a rotatory motion to the wheel, which always maintained its horizontal position, and in this manner presented the face of the condemned man to all quarters of the square in succession. This was what was called "turning" a criminal.

As the reader perceives, the pillory of the Grève was far from presenting all the recreations of the pillory of the Halles. Nothing architectural, nothing monumental. No roof to the iron cross, no octagonal lantern, no frail, slender columns spreading out on the edge of the roof into capitals of acanthus leaves and flowers, no waterspouts of chimeras and monsters, on carved woodwork, no fine sculpture, deeply sunk in the stone.

They were forced to content themselves with those four stretches of rubble work, backed with sandstone, and a wretched stone gibbet, meagre and bare, on one side.

The entertainment would have been but a poor one for lovers of Gothic architecture. It is true that nothing was ever less curious on the score of architecture than the worthy gapers of the Middle Ages, and that they cared very little for the beauty of a pillory.

The victim finally arrived, bound to the tail of a cart, and when he had been hoisted upon the platform, where he could be seen from all points of the Place, bound with cords and straps upon the wheel of the pillory, a prodigious hoot, mingled with laughter and acclamations, burst forth upon the Place. They had recognized Quasimodo.

It was he, in fact. The change was singular. Pilloried on the very place where, on the day before, he had been saluted, acclaimed, and proclaimed Pope and Prince of Fools, in the cortège of the Duke of Egypt, the King of Thunes, and the Emperor of Galilee! One thing is certain, and that is, that there was not a soul in the crowd, not even himself, though in turn triumphant and the sufferer, who set forth this combination clearly in his thought. Gringoire and his philosophy were missing at this spectacle.

Soon Michel Noiret, sworn trumpeter to the king, our lord, imposed silence on the louts, and proclaimed the sentence, in accordance with the order and command of monsieur the provost. Then he withdrew behind the cart, with his men in livery surcoats.

Quasimodo, impassible, did not wince. All resistance had been rendered impossible to him by what was then called, in the style of the criminal chancellery, “the vehemence and firmness of the bonds” which means that the thongs and chains probably cut into his flesh; moreover, it is a tradition of jail and wardens, which has not been lost, and which the handcuffs still preciously preserve among us, a civilized, gentle, humane people (the galleys and the guillotine in parentheses).

He had allowed himself to be led, pushed, carried, lifted, bound, and bound again. Nothing was to be seen upon his countenance but the astonishment of a savage or an idiot. He was known to be deaf; one might have pronounced him to be blind.

They placed him on his knees on the circular plank; he made no resistance. They removed his shirt and doublet as far as his girdle; he allowed them to have their way. They entangled him under a fresh system of thongs and buckles; he allowed them to bind and buckle him. Only from time to time he snorted noisily, like a calf whose head is hanging and bumping over the edge of a butcher’s cart.

“The dolt,” said Jehan Frollo of the Mill, to his friend Robin Poussepain (for the two students had followed the culprit, as was to have been expected), “he understands no more than a cockchafer shut up in a box!”

There was wild laughter among the crowd when they beheld Quasimodo’s hump, his camel’s breast, his callous and hairy shoulders laid bare. During this gayety, a man in the livery of the city, short of stature and robust of mien, mounted the platform and placed himself near the victim. His name speedily circulated among the spectators. It was Master Pierrat Torterue, official torturer to the Châtelet.

He began by depositing on an angle of the pillory a black hour-glass, the upper lobe of which was filled with red sand, which it allowed to glide into the lower receptacle; then he removed his parti-colored surtout, and there became visible, suspended from his right hand, a thin and tapering whip of long, white, shining, knotted, plaited thongs, armed with metal nails. With his left hand, he negligently folded back his shirt around his right arm, to the very armpit.

In the meantime, Jehan Frollo, elevating his curly blonde head above the crowd (he had mounted upon the shoulders of Robin Poussepain for the purpose), shouted: “Come and look, gentle ladies and men! they are going to peremptorily flagellate Master Quasimodo, the bellringer of my brother, monsieur the archdeacon of Josas, a knave of oriental architecture, who has a back like a dome, and legs like twisted columns!”

And the crowd burst into a laugh, especially the boys and young girls.

At length the torturer stamped his foot. The wheel began to turn. Quasimodo wavered beneath his bonds. The amazement which was suddenly depicted upon his deformed face caused the bursts of laughter to redouble around him.

All at once, at the moment when the wheel in its revolution presented to Master Pierrat, the humped back of Quasimodo, Master Pierrat raised his arm; the fine thongs whistled sharply through the air, like a handful of adders, and fell with fury upon the wretch’s shoulders.

Quasimodo leaped as though awakened with a start. He began to understand. He writhed in his bonds; a violent contraction of surprise and pain distorted the muscles of his face, but he uttered not a single sigh. He merely turned his head backward, to the right, then to the left, balancing it as a bull does who has been stung in the flanks by a gadfly.

A second blow followed the first, then a third, and another and another, and still others. The wheel did not cease to turn, nor the blows to rain down.

Soon the blood burst forth, and could be seen trickling in a thousand threads down the hunchback's black shoulders; and the slender thongs, in their rotatory motion which rent the air, sprinkled drops of it upon the crowd.

Quasimodo had resumed, to all appearance, his first imperturbability. He had at first tried, in a quiet way and without much outward movement, to break his bonds. His eye had been seen to light up, his muscles to stiffen, his members to concentrate their force, and the straps to stretch. The effort was powerful, prodigious, desperate; but the provost's seasoned bonds resisted. They cracked, and that was all. Quasimodo fell back exhausted. Amazement gave way, on his features, to a sentiment of profound and bitter discouragement. He closed his single eye, allowed his head to droop upon his breast, and feigned death.

From that moment forth, he stirred no more. Nothing could force a movement from him. Neither his blood, which did not cease to flow, nor the blows which redoubled in fury, nor the wrath of the torturer, who grew excited himself and intoxicated with the execution, nor the sound of the horrible thongs, more sharp and whistling than the claws of scorpions.

At length a bailiff from the Châtelet clad in black, mounted on a black horse, who had been stationed beside the ladder since the beginning of the execution, extended his ebony wand towards the hour-glass. The torturer stopped. The wheel stopped. Quasimodo's eye opened slowly.

The scourging was finished. Two lackeys of the official torturer bathed the bleeding shoulders of the patient, anointed them with some unguent which immediately closed all the wounds, and threw upon his back a sort of yellow vestment, in cut like a chasuble. In the meanwhile, Pierrat Torterue allowed the thongs, red and gorged with blood, to drip upon the pavement.

All was not over for Quasimodo. He had still to undergo that hour of pillory which Master Florian Barbedienne had so judiciously added to the sentence of Messire Robert d'Estouteville; all to the greater glory of the old physiological and psychological play upon words of Jean de Cumène, *Surdus absurdus*: a deaf man is absurd.

So the hour-glass was turned over once more, and they left the hunchback fastened to the plank, in order that justice might be accomplished to the very end.

The populace, especially in the Middle Ages, is in society what the child is in the family. As long as it remains in its state of primitive ignorance, of moral and intellectual minority, it can be said of it as of the child,—

'Tis the pitiless age.

We have already shown that Quasimodo was generally hated, for more than one good reason, it is true. There was hardly a spectator in that crowd who had not or who did not believe that he had reason to complain of the malevolent hunchback of Notre-Dame. The joy at seeing him appear thus in the pillory had been universal; and the harsh punishment which he had just suffered, and the pitiful condition in which it had left him, far from softening the populace had rendered its hatred more malicious by arming it with a touch of mirth.

Hence, the "public prosecution" satisfied, as the bigwigs of the law still express it in their jargon, the turn came of a thousand private vengeances. Here, as in the Grand Hall, the women rendered themselves particularly prominent. All cherished some rancor against him, some for his malice, others for his ugliness. The latter were the most furious.

"Oh! mask of Antichrist!" said one.

"Rider on a broom handle!" cried another.

"What a fine tragic grimace," howled a third, "and who would make him Pope of the Fools if to-day were yesterday?"

"'Tis well," struck in an old woman. "This is the grimace of the pillory. When shall we have that of the gibbet?"

"When will you be coiffed with your big bell a hundred feet under ground, cursed bellringer?"

"But 'tis the devil who rings the Angelus!"

"Oh! the deaf man! the one-eyed creature! the hunch-back! the monster!"

"A face to make a woman miscarry better than all the drugs and medicines!"

And the two scholars, Jehan du Moulin, and Robin Poussepain, sang at the top of their lungs, the ancient refrain,—

"Une hart
Pour le pendard!

Un fagot
Pour le magot!”[33]

A thousand other insults rained down upon him, and hoots and imprecations, and laughter, and now and then, stones.

Quasimodo was deaf but his sight was clear, and the public fury was no less energetically depicted on their visages than in their words. Moreover, the blows from the stones explained the bursts of laughter.

At first he held his ground. But little by little that patience which had borne up under the lash of the torturer, yielded and gave way before all these stings of insects. The bull of the Asturias who has been but little moved by the attacks of the picador grows irritated with the dogs and banderilleras.

He first cast around a slow glance of hatred upon the crowd. But bound as he was, his glance was powerless to drive away those flies which were stinging his wound. Then he moved in his bonds, and his furious exertions made the ancient wheel of the pillory shriek on its axle. All this only increased the derision and hooting.

Then the wretched man, unable to break his collar, like that of a chained wild beast, became tranquil once more; only at intervals a sigh of rage heaved the hollows of his chest. There was neither shame nor redness on his face. He was too far from the state of society, and too near the state of nature to know what shame was. Moreover, with such a degree of deformity, is infamy a thing that can be felt? But wrath, hatred, despair, slowly lowered over that hideous visage a cloud which grew ever more and more sombre, ever more and more charged with electricity, which burst forth in a thousand lightning flashes from the eye of the cyclops.

Nevertheless, that cloud cleared away for a moment, at the passage of a mule which traversed the crowd, bearing a priest. As far away as he could see that mule and that priest, the poor victim’s visage grew gentler. The fury which had contracted it was followed by a strange smile full of ineffable sweetness, gentleness, and tenderness. In proportion as the priest approached, that smile became more clear, more distinct, more radiant. It was like the arrival of a Saviour, which the unhappy man was greeting. But as soon as the mule was near enough to the pillory to allow of its rider recognizing the victim, the priest dropped his eyes, beat a hasty retreat, spurred on rigorously, as though in haste to rid himself of humiliating appeals, and not at all desirous of being saluted and recognized by a poor fellow in such a predicament.

This priest was Archdeacon Dom Claude Frollo.

The cloud descended more blackly than ever upon Quasimodo's brow. The smile was still mingled with it for a time, but was bitter, discouraged, profoundly sad.

Time passed on. He had been there at least an hour and a half, lacerated, maltreated, mocked incessantly, and almost stoned.

All at once he moved again in his chains with redoubled despair, which made the whole framework that bore him tremble, and, breaking the silence which he had obstinately preserved hitherto, he cried in a hoarse and furious voice, which resembled a bark rather than a human cry, and which was drowned in the noise of the hoots—"Drink!"

This exclamation of distress, far from exciting compassion, only added amusement to the good Parisian populace who surrounded the ladder, and who, it must be confessed, taken in the mass and as a multitude, was then no less cruel and brutal than that horrible tribe of robbers among whom we have already conducted the reader, and which was simply the lower stratum of the populace. Not a voice was raised around the unhappy victim, except to jeer at his thirst. It is certain that at that moment he was more grotesque and repulsive than pitiable, with his face purple and dripping, his eye wild, his mouth foaming with rage and pain, and his tongue lolling half out. It must also be stated that if a charitable soul of a *bourgeois* or *bourgeoise*, in the rabble, had attempted to carry a glass of water to that wretched creature in torment, there reigned around the infamous steps of the pillory such a prejudice of shame and ignominy, that it would have sufficed to repulse the good Samaritan.

At the expiration of a few moments, Quasimodo cast a desperate glance upon the crowd, and repeated in a voice still more heartrending: "Drink!"

And all began to laugh.

"Drink this!" cried Robin Poussepain, throwing in his face a sponge which had been soaked in the gutter. "There, you deaf villain, I'm your debtor."

A woman hurled a stone at his head,—

"That will teach you to wake us up at night with your peal of a dammed soul."

"He, good, my son!" howled a cripple, making an effort to reach him with his crutch, "will you cast any more spells on us from the top of the towers of Notre-Dame?"

"Here's a drinking cup!" chimed in a man, flinging a broken jug at his breast. "'Twas you that made my wife, simply because she passed near you, give birth to a child with two heads!"

“And my cat bring forth a kitten with six paws!” yelped an old crone, launching a brick at him.

“Drink!” repeated Quasimodo panting, and for the third time.

At that moment he beheld the crowd give way. A young girl, fantastically dressed, emerged from the throng. She was accompanied by a little white goat with gilded horns, and carried a tambourine in her hand.

Quasimodo’s eyes sparkled. It was the gypsy whom he had attempted to carry off on the preceding night, a misdeed for which he was dimly conscious that he was being punished at that very moment; which was not in the least the case, since he was being chastised only for the misfortune of being deaf, and of having been judged by a deaf man. He doubted not that she had come to wreak her vengeance also, and to deal her blow like the rest.

He beheld her, in fact, mount the ladder rapidly. Wrath and spite suffocate him. He would have liked to make the pillory crumble into ruins, and if the lightning of his eye could have dealt death, the gypsy would have been reduced to powder before she reached the platform.

She approached, without uttering a syllable, the victim who writhed in a vain effort to escape her, and detaching a gourd from her girdle, she raised it gently to the parched lips of the miserable man.

Then, from that eye which had been, up to that moment, so dry and burning, a big tear was seen to fall, and roll slowly down that deformed visage so long contracted with despair. It was the first, in all probability, that the unfortunate man had ever shed.

Meanwhile, he had forgotten to drink. The gypsy made her little pout, from impatience, and pressed the spout to the tusked month of Quasimodo, with a smile.

He drank with deep draughts. His thirst was burning.

When he had finished, the wretch protruded his black lips, no doubt, with the object of kissing the beautiful hand which had just succoured him. But the young girl, who was, perhaps, somewhat distrustful, and who remembered the violent attempt of the night, withdrew her hand with the frightened gesture of a child who is afraid of being bitten by a beast.

Then the poor deaf man fixed on her a look full of reproach and inexpressible sadness.

It would have been a touching spectacle anywhere,—this beautiful, fresh, pure, and charming girl, who was at the same time so weak, thus hastening to the relief of so much misery, deformity, and malevolence. On the pillory, the spectacle was sublime.

The very populace were captivated by it, and began to clap their hands, crying,—

“Noël! Noël!”

It was at that moment that the recluse caught sight, from the window of her bole, of the gypsy on the pillory, and hurled at her her sinister imprecation,—

“Accursed be thou, daughter of Egypt! Accursed! accursed!”

CHAPTER V.
END OF THE STORY OF THE CAKE.

La Esmeralda turned pale and descended from the pillory, staggering as she went. The voice of the recluse still pursued her,—

“Descend! descend! Thief of Egypt! thou shalt ascend it once more!”

“The sacked nun is in one of her tantrums,” muttered the populace; and that was the end of it. For that sort of woman was feared; which rendered them sacred. People did not then willingly attack one who prayed day and night.

The hour had arrived for removing Quasimodo. He was unbound, the crowd dispersed.

Near the Grand Pont, Mahiette, who was returning with her two companions, suddenly halted,—

“By the way, Eustache! what did you do with that cake?”

“Mother,” said the child, “while you were talking with that lady in the bole, a big dog took a bite of my cake, and then I bit it also.”

“What, sir, did you eat the whole of it?” she went on.

“Mother, it was the dog. I told him, but he would not listen to me. Then I bit into it, also.”

“’Tis a terrible child!” said the mother, smiling and scolding at one and the same time. “Do you see, Oudarde? He already eats all the fruit from the cherry-tree in our orchard of Charlerange. So his grandfather says that he will be a captain. Just let me catch you at it again, Master Eustache. Come along, you greedy fellow!”

BOOK SEVENTH.

CHAPTER I.
THE DANGER OF CONFIDING ONE'S SECRET TO A GOAT.

Many weeks had elapsed.

The first of March had arrived. The sun, which Dubartas, that classic ancestor of periphrase, had not yet dubbed the "Grand-duke of Candles," was none the less radiant and joyous on that account. It was one of those spring days which possesses so much sweetness and beauty, that all Paris turns out into the squares and promenades and celebrates them as though they were Sundays. In those days of brilliancy, warmth, and serenity, there is a certain hour above all others, when the façade of Notre-Dame should be admired. It is the moment when the sun, already declining towards the west, looks the cathedral almost full in the face. Its rays, growing more and more horizontal, withdraw slowly from the pavement of the square, and mount up the perpendicular façade, whose thousand bosses in high relief they cause to start out from the shadows, while the great central rose window flames like the eye of a cyclops, inflamed with the reflections of the forge.

This was the hour.

Opposite the lofty cathedral, reddened by the setting sun, on the stone balcony built above the porch of a rich Gothic house, which formed the angle of the square and the Rue du Parvis, several young girls were laughing and chatting with every sort of grace and mirth. From the length of the veil which fell from their pointed coif, twined with pearls, to their heels, from the fineness of the embroidered chemisette which covered their shoulders and allowed a glimpse, according to the pleasing custom of the time, of the swell of their fair virgin bosoms, from the opulence of their under-petticoats still more precious than their overdress (marvellous refinement), from the gauze, the silk, the velvet, with which all this was composed, and, above all, from the whiteness of their hands, which certified to their leisure and idleness, it was easy to divine they were noble and wealthy heiresses. They were, in fact, Damoiselle Fleur-de-Lys de Gondelaurier and her companions, Diane de Christeuil, Amelotte de Montmichel, Colombe de Gaillefontaine, and the little de Champchevrier maiden; all damsels of good birth, assembled at that moment at the house of the dame widow de Gondelaurier, on account of Monseigneur de Beaujeu and Madame his wife, who were to come to Paris in the month of April, there to choose maids of honor for the Dauphiness Marguerite, who was to be received in Picardy from the hands of the Flemings. Now, all the squires for twenty leagues around were intriguing for this favor for their daughters, and a goodly number of the latter had been already brought or

sent to Paris. These four maidens had been confided to the discreet and venerable charge of Madame Aloïse de Gondelaurier, widow of a former commander of the king's cross-bowmen, who had retired with her only daughter to her house in the Place du Parvis, Notre-Dame, in Paris.

The balcony on which these young girls stood opened from a chamber richly tapestried in fawn-colored Flanders leather, stamped with golden foliage. The beams, which cut the ceiling in parallel lines, diverted the eye with a thousand eccentric painted and gilded carvings. Splendid enamels gleamed here and there on carved chests; a boar's head in faïence crowned a magnificent dresser, whose two shelves announced that the mistress of the house was the wife or widow of a knight banneret. At the end of the room, by the side of a lofty chimney blazoned with arms from top to bottom, in a rich red velvet arm-chair, sat Dame de Gondelaurier, whose five and fifty years were written upon her garments no less distinctly than upon her face.

Beside her stood a young man of imposing mien, although partaking somewhat of vanity and bravado—one of those handsome fellows whom all women agree to admire, although grave men learned in physiognomy shrug their shoulders at them. This young man wore the garb of a captain of the king's unattached archers, which bears far too much resemblance to the costume of Jupiter, which the reader has already been enabled to admire in the first book of this history, for us to inflict upon him a second description.

The damoiselles were seated, a part in the chamber, a part in the balcony, some on square cushions of Utrecht velvet with golden corners, others on stools of oak carved in flowers and figures. Each of them held on her knee a section of a great needlework tapestry, on which they were working in company, while one end of it lay upon the rush mat which covered the floor.

They were chatting together in that whispering tone and with the half-stifled laughs peculiar to an assembly of young girls in whose midst there is a young man. The young man whose presence served to set in play all these feminine self-conceits, appeared to pay very little heed to the matter, and, while these pretty damsels were vying with one another to attract his attention, he seemed to be chiefly absorbed in polishing the buckle of his sword belt with his doeskin glove. From time to time, the old lady addressed him in a very low tone, and he replied as well as he was able, with a sort of awkward and constrained politeness.

From the smiles and significant gestures of Dame Aloïse, from the glances which she threw towards her daughter, Fleur-de-Lys, as she spoke low to the captain, it was easy to see that there was here a question of some betrothal concluded, some marriage

near at hand no doubt, between the young man and Fleur-de-Lys. From the embarrassed coldness of the officer, it was easy to see that on his side, at least, love had no longer any part in the matter. His whole air was expressive of constraint and weariness, which our lieutenants of the garrison would to-day translate admirably as, “What a beastly bore!”

The poor dame, very much infatuated with her daughter, like any other silly mother, did not perceive the officer’s lack of enthusiasm, and strove in low tones to call his attention to the infinite grace with which Fleur-de-Lys used her needle or wound her skein.

“Come, little cousin,” she said to him, plucking him by the sleeve, in order to speak in his ear, “Look at her, do! see her stoop.”

“Yes, truly,” replied the young man, and fell back into his glacial and absent-minded silence.

A moment later, he was obliged to bend down again, and Dame Aloïse said to him,—

“Have you ever beheld a more gay and charming face than that of your betrothed? Can one be more white and blonde? are not her hands perfect? and that neck—does it not assume all the curves of the swan in ravishing fashion? How I envy you at times! and how happy you are to be a man, naughty libertine that you are! Is not my Fleur-de-Lys adorably beautiful, and are you not desperately in love with her?”

“Of course,” he replied, still thinking of something else.

“But do say something,” said Madame Aloïse, suddenly giving his shoulder a push; “you have grown very timid.”

We can assure our readers that timidity was neither the captain’s virtue nor his defect. But he made an effort to do what was demanded of him.

“Fair cousin,” he said, approaching Fleur-de-Lys, “what is the subject of this tapestry work which you are fashioning?”

“Fair cousin,” responded Fleur-de-Lys, in an offended tone, “I have already told you three times. ’Tis the grotto of Neptune.”

It was evident that Fleur-de-Lys saw much more clearly than her mother through the captain’s cold and absent-minded manner. He felt the necessity of making some conversation.

“And for whom is this Neptunerie destined?”

“For the Abbey of Saint-Antoine des Champs,” answered Fleur-de-Lys, without raising her eyes.

The captain took up a corner of the tapestry.

“Who, my fair cousin, is this big gendarme, who is puffing out his cheeks to their full extent and blowing a trumpet?”

“’Tis Triton,” she replied.

There was a rather pettish intonation in Fleur-de-Lys’s laconic words. The young man understood that it was indispensable that he should whisper something in her ear, a commonplace, a gallant compliment, no matter what. Accordingly he bent down, but he could find nothing in his imagination more tender and personal than this,—

“Why does your mother always wear that surcoat with armorial designs, like our grandmothers of the time of Charles VII.? Tell her, fair cousin, that ’tis no longer the fashion, and that the hinge (*gond*) and the laurel (*laurier*) embroidered on her robe give her the air of a walking mantlepiece. In truth, people no longer sit thus on their banners, I assure you.”

Fleur-de-Lys raised her beautiful eyes, full of reproach, “Is that all of which you can assure me?” she said, in a low voice.

In the meantime, Dame Aloïse, delighted to see them thus bending towards each other and whispering, said as she toyed with the clasps of her prayer-book,—

“Touching picture of love!”

The captain, more and more embarrassed, fell back upon the subject of the tapestry,—“’Tis, in sooth, a charming work!” he exclaimed.

Whereupon Colombe de Gaillefontaine, another beautiful blonde, with a white skin, dressed to the neck in blue damask, ventured a timid remark which she addressed to Fleur-de-Lys, in the hope that the handsome captain would reply to it, “My dear Gondelaurier, have you seen the tapestries of the Hôtel de la Roche-Guyon?”

“Is not that the hôtel in which is enclosed the garden of the Lingère du Louvre?” asked Diane de Christeuil with a laugh; for she had handsome teeth, and consequently laughed on every occasion.

“And where there is that big, old tower of the ancient wall of Paris,” added Amelotte de Montmichel, a pretty fresh and curly-headed brunette, who had a habit of sighing just as the other laughed, without knowing why.

“My dear Colombe,” interpolated Dame Aloïse, “do you not mean the hôtel which belonged to Monsieur de Bacqueville, in the reign of King Charles VI.? there are indeed many superb high warp tapestries there.”

“Charles VI.! Charles VI.!” muttered the young captain, twirling his moustache. “Good heavens! what old things the good dame does remember!”

Madame de Gondelaurier continued, “Fine tapestries, in truth. A work so esteemed that it passes as unrivalled.”

At that moment Bérangère de Champchevrier, a slender little maid of seven years, who was peering into the square through the trefoils of the balcony, exclaimed, “Oh! look, fair Godmother Fleur-de-Lys, at that pretty dancer who is dancing on the pavement and playing the tambourine in the midst of the loutish *bourgeois!*”

The sonorous vibration of a tambourine was, in fact, audible. “Some gypsy from Bohemia,” said Fleur-de-Lys, turning carelessly toward the square.

“Look! look!” exclaimed her lively companions; and they all ran to the edge of the balcony, while Fleur-de-Lys, rendered thoughtful by the coldness of her betrothed, followed them slowly, and the latter, relieved by this incident, which put an end to an embarrassing conversation, retreated to the farther end of the room, with the satisfied air of a soldier released from duty. Nevertheless, the fair Fleur-de-Lys’s was a charming and noble service, and such it had formerly appeared to him; but the captain had gradually become *blasé;* the prospect of a speedy marriage cooled him more every day. Moreover, he was of a fickle disposition, and, must we say it, rather vulgar in taste. Although of very noble birth, he had contracted in his official harness more than one habit of the common trooper. The tavern and its accompaniments pleased him. He was only at his ease amid gross language, military gallantries, facile beauties, and successes yet more easy. He had, nevertheless, received from his family some education and some politeness of manner; but he had been thrown on the world too young, he had been in garrison at too early an age, and every day the polish of a gentleman became more and more effaced by the rough friction of his gendarme’s cross-belt. While still continuing to visit her from time to time, from a remnant of common respect, he felt doubly embarrassed with Fleur-de-Lys; in the first place, because, in consequence of having scattered his love in all sorts of places, he had reserved very little for her; in the next place, because, amid so many stiff, formal, and decent ladies, he was in constant fear lest his mouth, habituated to oaths, should suddenly take the bit in its teeth, and break out into the language of the tavern. The effect can be imagined!

Moreover, all this was mingled in him, with great pretentions to elegance, toilet, and a fine appearance. Let the reader reconcile these things as best he can. I am simply the historian.

He had remained, therefore, for several minutes, leaning in silence against the carved jamb of the chimney, and thinking or not thinking, when Fleur-de-Lys suddenly turned and addressed him. After all, the poor young girl was pouting against the dictates of her heart.

“Fair cousin, did you not speak to us of a little Bohemian whom you saved a couple of months ago, while making the patrol with the watch at night, from the hands of a dozen robbers?”

“I believe so, fair cousin,” said the captain.

“Well,” she resumed, “perchance ’tis that same gypsy girl who is dancing yonder, on the church square. Come and see if you recognize her, fair Cousin Phœbus.”

A secret desire for reconciliation was apparent in this gentle invitation which she gave him to approach her, and in the care which she took to call him by name. Captain Phœbus de Châteaupers (for it is he whom the reader has had before his eyes since the beginning of this chapter) slowly approached the balcony. “Stay,” said Fleur-de-Lys, laying her hand tenderly on Phœbus’s arm; “look at that little girl yonder, dancing in that circle. Is she your Bohemian?”

Phœbus looked, and said,—

“Yes, I recognize her by her goat.”

“Oh! in fact, what a pretty little goat!” said Amelotte, clasping her hands in admiration.

“Are his horns of real gold?” inquired Bérangère.

Without moving from her arm-chair, Dame Aloïse interposed, “Is she not one of those gypsy girls who arrived last year by the Gibard gate?”

“Madame my mother,” said Fleur-de-Lys gently, “that gate is now called the Porte d’Enfer.”

Mademoiselle de Gondelaurier knew how her mother’s antiquated mode of speech shocked the captain. In fact, he began to sneer, and muttered between his teeth: “Porte Gibard! Porte Gibard! ’Tis enough to make King Charles VI. pass by.”

“Godmother!” exclaimed Bérangère, whose eyes, incessantly in motion, had suddenly been raised to the summit of the towers of Notre-Dame, “who is that black man up yonder?”

All the young girls raised their eyes. A man was, in truth, leaning on the balustrade which surmounted the northern tower, looking on the Grève. He was a priest. His costume could be plainly discerned, and his face resting on both his hands. But he stirred no more than if he had been a statue. His eyes, intently fixed, gazed into the Place.

It was something like the immobility of a bird of prey, who has just discovered a nest of sparrows, and is gazing at it.

“’Tis monsieur the archdeacon of Josas,” said Fleur-de-Lys.

“You have good eyes if you can recognize him from here,” said the Gaillefontaine.

“How he is staring at the little dancer!” went on Diane de Christeuil.

“Let the gypsy beware!” said Fleur-de-Lys, “for he loves not Egypt.”

“’Tis a great shame for that man to look upon her thus,” added Amelotte de Montmichel, “for she dances delightfully.”

“Fair cousin Phœbus,” said Fleur-de-Lys suddenly, “Since you know this little gypsy, make her a sign to come up here. It will amuse us.”

“Oh, yes!” exclaimed all the young girls, clapping their hands.

“Why! ’tis not worth while,” replied Phœbus. “She has forgotten me, no doubt, and I know not so much as her name. Nevertheless, as you wish it, young ladies, I will make the trial.” And leaning over the balustrade of the balcony, he began to shout, “Little one!”

The dancer was not beating her tambourine at the moment. She turned her head towards the point whence this call proceeded, her brilliant eyes rested on Phœbus, and she stopped short.

“Little one!” repeated the captain; and he beckoned her to approach.

The young girl looked at him again, then she blushed as though a flame had mounted into her cheeks, and, taking her tambourine under her arm, she made her way through the astonished spectators towards the door of the house where Phœbus was calling her, with slow, tottering steps, and with the troubled look of a bird which is yielding to the fascination of a serpent.

A moment later, the tapestry portière was raised, and the gypsy appeared on the threshold of the chamber, blushing, confused, breathless, her large eyes drooping, and not daring to advance another step.

Bérangère clapped her hands.

Meanwhile, the dancer remained motionless upon the threshold. Her appearance had produced a singular effect upon these young girls. It is certain that a vague and indistinct desire to please the handsome officer animated them all, that his splendid uniform was the target of all their coquetries, and that from the moment he presented himself, there existed among them a secret, suppressed rivalry, which they hardly acknowledged even to themselves, but which broke forth, none the less, every instant, in their gestures and remarks. Nevertheless, as they were all very nearly equal in beauty, they contended with equal arms, and each could hope for the victory. The arrival of the gypsy suddenly destroyed this equilibrium. Her beauty was so rare, that, at the moment when she appeared at the entrance of the apartment, it seemed as though she diffused a sort of light which was peculiar to herself. In that narrow chamber, surrounded by that sombre frame of hangings and woodwork, she was incomparably more beautiful and more radiant than on the public square. She was like a torch which has suddenly been brought from broad daylight into the dark. The noble damsels were dazzled by her in spite of themselves. Each one felt herself, in some sort, wounded in her beauty. Hence, their battle front (may we be allowed the expression,) was immediately altered, although they exchanged not a single word. But they understood each other perfectly. Women's instincts comprehend and respond to each other more quickly than the intelligences of men. An enemy had just arrived; all felt it—all rallied together. One drop of wine is sufficient to tinge a glass of water red; to diffuse a certain degree of ill temper throughout a whole assembly of pretty women, the arrival of a prettier woman suffices, especially when there is but one man present.

Hence the welcome accorded to the gypsy was marvellously glacial. They surveyed her from head to foot, then exchanged glances, and all was said; they understood each other. Meanwhile, the young girl was waiting to be spoken to, in such emotion that she dared not raise her eyelids.

The captain was the first to break the silence. "Upon my word," said he, in his tone of intrepid fatuity, "here is a charming creature! What think you of her, fair cousin?"

This remark, which a more delicate admirer would have uttered in a lower tone, at least was not of a nature to dissipate the feminine jealousies which were on the alert before the gypsy.

Fleur-de-Lys replied to the captain with a bland affectation of disdain;—“Not bad.”

The others whispered.

At length, Madame Aloïse, who was not the less jealous because she was so for her daughter, addressed the dancer,—“Approach, little one.”

“Approach, little one!” repeated, with comical dignity, little Bérangère, who would have reached about as high as her hips.

The gypsy advanced towards the noble dame.

“Fair child,” said Phœbus, with emphasis, taking several steps towards her, “I do not know whether I have the supreme honor of being recognized by you.”

She interrupted him, with a smile and a look full of infinite sweetness,—

“Oh! yes,” said she.

“She has a good memory,” remarked Fleur-de-Lys.

“Come, now,” resumed Phœbus, “you escaped nimbly the other evening. Did I frighten you!”

“Oh! no,” said the gypsy.

There was in the intonation of that “Oh! no,” uttered after that “Oh! yes,” an ineffable something which wounded Fleur-de-Lys.

“You left me in your stead, my beauty,” pursued the captain, whose tongue was unloosed when speaking to a girl out of the street, “a crabbed knave, one-eyed and hunchbacked, the bishop’s bellringer, I believe. I have been told that by birth he is the bastard of an archdeacon and a devil. He has a pleasant name: he is called *Quatre-Temps* (Ember Days), *Pâques-Fleuries* (Palm Sunday), *Mardi-Gras* (Shrove Tuesday), I know not what! The name of some festival when the bells are pealed! So he took the liberty of carrying you off, as though you were made for beadles! ’Tis too much. What the devil did that screech-owl want with you? Hey, tell me!”

“I do not know,” she replied.

“The inconceivable impudence! A bellringer carrying off a wench, like a vicomte! a lout poaching on the game of gentlemen! that is a rare piece of assurance. However, he paid dearly for it. Master Pierrat Torterue is the harshest groom that ever curried a knave; and I can tell you, if it will be agreeable to you, that your bellringer’s hide got a thorough dressing at his hands.”

“Poor man!” said the gypsy, in whom these words revived the memory of the pillory.

The captain burst out laughing.

“Corne-de-bœuf! here’s pity as well placed as a feather in a pig’s tail! May I have as big a belly as a pope, if—”

He stopped short. “Pardon me, ladies; I believe that I was on the point of saying something foolish.”

“Fie, sir” said la Gaillefontaine.

“He talks to that creature in her own tongue!” added Fleur-de-Lys, in a low tone, her irritation increasing every moment. This irritation was not diminished when she beheld the captain, enchanted with the gypsy, and, most of all, with himself, execute a pirouette on his heel, repeating with coarse, naïve, and soldierly gallantry,—

“A handsome wench, upon my soul!”

“Rather savagely dressed,” said Diane de Christeuil, laughing to show her fine teeth.

This remark was a flash of light to the others. Not being able to impugn her beauty, they attacked her costume.

“That is true,” said la Montmichel; “what makes you run about the streets thus, without guimpe or ruff?”

“That petticoat is so short that it makes one tremble,” added la Gaillefontaine.

“My dear,” continued Fleur-de-Lys, with decided sharpness, “You will get yourself taken up by the sumptuary police for your gilded girdle.”

“Little one, little one;” resumed la Christeuil, with an implacable smile, “if you were to put respectable sleeves upon your arms they would get less sunburned.”

It was, in truth, a spectacle worthy of a more intelligent spectator than Phœbus, to see how these beautiful maidens, with their envenomed and angry tongues, wound, serpent-like, and glided and writhed around the street dancer. They were cruel and graceful; they searched and rummaged maliciously in her poor and silly toilet of spangles and tinsel. There was no end to their laughter, irony, and humiliation. Sarcasms rained down upon the gypsy, and haughty condescension and malevolent looks. One would have thought they were young Roman dames thrusting golden pins into the breast of a beautiful slave. One would have pronounced them elegant grayhounds, circling, with inflated nostrils, round a poor woodland fawn, whom the glance of their master forbade them to devour.

After all, what was a miserable dancer on the public squares in the presence of these high-born maidens? They seemed to take no heed of her presence, and talked of her aloud, to her face, as of something unclean, abject, and yet, at the same time, passably pretty.

The gypsy was not insensible to these pin-pricks. From time to time a flush of shame, a flash of anger inflamed her eyes or her cheeks; with disdain she made that little grimace with which the reader is already familiar, but she remained motionless; she fixed on Phœbus a sad, sweet, resigned look. There was also happiness and tenderness in that gaze. One would have said that she endured for fear of being expelled.

Phœbus laughed, and took the gypsy's part with a mixture of impertinence and pity.

"Let them talk, little one!" he repeated, jingling his golden spurs. "No doubt your toilet is a little extravagant and wild, but what difference does that make with such a charming damsel as yourself?"

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the blonde Gaillefontaine, drawing up her swan-like throat, with a bitter smile. "I see that messieurs the archers of the king's police easily take fire at the handsome eyes of gypsies!"

"Why not?" said Phœbus.

At this reply uttered carelessly by the captain, like a stray stone, whose fall one does not even watch, Colombe began to laugh, as well as Diane, Amelotte, and Fleur-de-Lys, into whose eyes at the same time a tear started.

The gypsy, who had dropped her eyes on the floor at the words of Colombe de Gaillefontaine, raised them beaming with joy and pride and fixed them once more on Phœbus. She was very beautiful at that moment.

The old dame, who was watching this scene, felt offended, without understanding why.

"Holy Virgin!" she suddenly exclaimed, "what is it moving about my legs? Ah! the villanous beast!"

It was the goat, who had just arrived, in search of his mistress, and who, in dashing towards the latter, had begun by entangling his horns in the pile of stuffs which the noble dame's garments heaped up on her feet when she was seated.

This created a diversion. The gypsy disentangled his horns without uttering a word.

“Oh! here’s the little goat with golden hoofs!” exclaimed Bérangère, dancing with joy.

The gypsy crouched down on her knees and leaned her cheek against the fondling head of the goat. One would have said that she was asking pardon for having quitted it thus.

Meanwhile, Diane had bent down to Colombe’s ear.

“Ah! good heavens! why did not I think of that sooner? ’Tis the gypsy with the goat. They say she is a sorceress, and that her goat executes very miraculous tricks.”

“Well!” said Colombe, “the goat must now amuse us in its turn, and perform a miracle for us.”

Diane and Colombe eagerly addressed the gypsy.

“Little one, make your goat perform a miracle.”

“I do not know what you mean,” replied the dancer.

“A miracle, a piece of magic, a bit of sorcery, in short.”

“I do not understand.” And she fell to caressing the pretty animal, repeating, “Djali! Djali!”

At that moment Fleur-de-Lys noticed a little bag of embroidered leather suspended from the neck of the goat,—

“What is that?” she asked of the gypsy.

The gypsy raised her large eyes upon her and replied gravely,—

“That is my secret.”

“I should really like to know what your secret is,” thought Fleur-de-Lys.

Meanwhile, the good dame had risen angrily,—“Come now, gypsy, if neither you nor your goat can dance for us, what are you doing here?”

The gypsy walked slowly towards the door, without making any reply. But the nearer she approached it, the more her pace slackened. An irresistible magnet seemed to hold her. Suddenly she turned her eyes, wet with tears, towards Phœbus, and halted.

“True God!” exclaimed the captain, “that’s not the way to depart. Come back and dance something for us. By the way, my sweet love, what is your name?”

“La Esmeralda,” said the dancer, never taking her eyes from him.

At this strange name, a burst of wild laughter broke from the young girls.

“Here’s a terrible name for a young lady,” said Diane.

“You see well enough,” retorted Amelotte, “that she is an enchantress.”

“My dear,” exclaimed Dame Aloïse solemnly, “your parents did not commit the sin of giving you that name at the baptismal font.”

In the meantime, several minutes previously, Bérangère had coaxed the goat into a corner of the room with a marchpane cake, without any one having noticed her. In an instant they had become good friends. The curious child had detached the bag from the goat’s neck, had opened it, and had emptied out its contents on the rush matting; it was an alphabet, each letter of which was separately inscribed on a tiny block of boxwood. Hardly had these playthings been spread out on the matting, when the child, with surprise, beheld the goat (one of whose “miracles” this was no doubt), draw out certain letters with its golden hoof, and arrange them, with gentle pushes, in a certain order. In a moment they constituted a word, which the goat seemed to have been trained to write, so little hesitation did it show in forming it, and Bérangère suddenly exclaimed, clasping her hands in admiration,—

“Godmother Fleur-de-Lys, see what the goat has just done!”

Fleur-de-Lys ran up and trembled. The letters arranged upon the floor formed this word,—

PHŒBUS.

“Was it the goat who wrote that?” she inquired in a changed voice.

“Yes, godmother,” replied Bérangêre.

It was impossible to doubt it; the child did not know how to write.

“This is the secret!” thought Fleur-de-Lys.

Meanwhile, at the child’s exclamation, all had hastened up, the mother, the young girls, the gypsy, and the officer.

The gypsy beheld the piece of folly which the goat had committed. She turned red, then pale, and began to tremble like a culprit before the captain, who gazed at her with a smile of satisfaction and amazement.

“Phœbus!” whispered the young girls, stupefied: “’tis the captain’s name!”

“You have a marvellous memory!” said Fleur-de-Lys, to the petrified gypsy. Then, bursting into sobs: “Oh!” she stammered mournfully, hiding her face in both her beautiful hands, “she is a magician!” And she heard another and a still more bitter voice at the bottom of her heart, saying,—“She is a rival!”

She fell fainting.

“My daughter! my daughter!” cried the terrified mother. “Begone, you gypsy of hell!”

In a twinkling, La Esmeralda gathered up the unlucky letters, made a sign to Djali, and went out through one door, while Fleur-de-Lys was being carried out through the other.

Captain Phœbus, on being left alone, hesitated for a moment between the two doors, then he followed the gypsy.