BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER I. FROM CHARYBDIS TO SCYLLA.

Night comes on early in January. The streets were already dark when Gringoire issued forth from the Courts. This gloom pleased him; he was in haste to reach some obscure and deserted alley, in order there to meditate at his ease, and in order that the philosopher might place the first dressing upon the wound of the poet. Philosophy, moreover, was his sole refuge, for he did not know where he was to lodge for the night. After the brilliant failure of his first theatrical venture, he dared not return to the lodging which he occupied in the Rue Grenier-sur-l'Eau, opposite to the Port-au-Foin, having depended upon receiving from monsieur the provost for his epithalamium, the wherewithal to pay Master Guillaume Doulx-Sire, farmer of the taxes on cloven-footed animals in Paris, the rent which he owed him, that is to say, twelve sols parisian; twelve times the value of all that he possessed in the world, including his trunk-hose, his shirt, and his cap. After reflecting a moment, temporarily sheltered beneath the little wicket of the prison of the treasurer of the Sainte-Chappelle, as to the

shelter which he would select for the night, having all the pavements of Paris to choose from, he remembered to have noticed the week previously in the Rue de la Savaterie, at the door of a councillor of the parliament, a stepping stone for mounting a mule, and to have said to himself that that stone would furnish, on occasion, a very excellent pillow for a mendicant or a poet. He thanked Providence for having sent this happy idea to him; but, as he was preparing to cross the Place, in order to reach the tortuous labyrinth of the city, where meander all those old sister streets, the Rues de la Barillerie, de la Vielle-Draperie, de la Savaterie, de la Juiverie, etc., still extant to-day, with their nine-story houses, he saw the procession of the Pope

of the Fools, which was also emerging from the court house, and rushing across the courtyard, with great cries, a great flashing of torches, and the music which belonged to him, Gringoire. This sight revived the pain of his self-love; he fled. In the bitterness of his dramatic misadventure, everything which reminded him of the festival of that day irritated his wound and made it bleed.

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He was on the point of turning to the Pont Saint-Michel; children were running about here and there with fire lances and rockets.

"Pest on firework candles!" said Gringoire; and he fell back on the Pont au Change. To the house at the head of the bridge there had been affixed three small banners, representing the king, the dauphin, and Marguerite

of Flanders, and six little pennons on which were portrayed the Duke of Austria, the Cardinal de Bourbon, M. de Beaujeu, and Madame Jeanne de France, and Monsieur the Bastard of Bourbon, and I know not whom else; all being illuminated with torches. The rabble were admiring.

"Happy painter, Jehan Fourbault!" said Gringoire with a deep sigh; and he turned his back upon the bannerets and pennons. A street opened before him; he thought it so dark and deserted that he hoped to there escape from all the rumors as well as from all the gleams of the festival. At the end of a few moments his foot came in contact with an obstacle; he stumbled and fell. It was the May truss, which the clerks of the clerks' law court had deposited that morning at the door of a president of the parliament, in honor of the solemnity of the day. Gringoire bore this new disaster heroically; he picked himself up, and reached the water's edge. After leaving behind him the civic Tournelle* and the criminal tower, and skirted the great walls of the king's garden, on that unpaved strand where the mud reached to his ankles, he reached the western point of the city, and considered for some time the islet of the Passeur-aux-Vaches, which has disappeared beneath the bronze horse of the Pont Neuf. The islet appeared to him in the shadow like a black mass, beyond the narrow strip of whitish water which separated him from it. One could divine by the ray of a tiny light the sort of hut in the form of a beehive where the ferryman of cows took refuge at night.

* A chamber of the ancient parliament of Paris.

"Happy ferryman!" thought Gringoire; "you do not dream of glory, and you do not make marriage songs! What matters it to you, if kings and Duchesses of Burgundy marry? You know no other daisies (marguerites) than those which your April greensward gives your cows to browse upon; while I, a poet, am hooted, and shiver, and owe twelve sous, and the soles of my shoes are so transparent, that they might serve as glasses for your lantern! Thanks, ferryman, your cabin rests my eyes, and makes me forget Paris!"

He was roused from his almost lyric ecstacy, by a big double Saint-Jean cracker, which suddenly went off from the happy cabin. It was the cow ferryman, who was taking his part in the rejoicings of the day, and letting off fireworks.

This cracker made Gringoire's skin bristle up all over.

"Accursed festival!" he exclaimed, "wilt thou pursue me everywhere? Oh! good God! even to the ferryman's!"

Then he looked at the Seine at his feet, and a horrible temptation took possession of him:

"Oh!" said he, "I would gladly drown myself, were the water not so cold!"

Then a desperate resolution occurred to him. It was, since he could not escape from the Pope of the Fools, from Jehan Fourbault's bannerets, from May trusses, from squibs and crackers, to go to the Place de Grève.

"At least," he said to himself, "I shall there have a firebrand of joy wherewith to warm myself, and I can sup on some crumbs of the three great armorial bearings of royal sugar which have been erected on the public refreshment-stall of the city."

CHAPTER II. THE PLACE DE GREVE.

There remains to-day but a very imperceptible vestige of the Place de Grève, such as it existed then; it consists in the charming little turret, which occupies the angle north of the Place, and which, already enshrouded in the ignoble plaster which fills with paste the delicate lines of its sculpture, would soon have disappeared, perhaps submerged by that flood of new houses which so rapidly devours all the ancient façades of Paris.

The persons who, like ourselves, never cross the Place de Grève without casting a glance of pity and sympathy on that poor turret strangled between two hovels of the time of Louis XV., can easily reconstruct in their minds the aggregate of edifices to which it belonged, and find again entire in it the ancient Gothic place of the fifteenth century.

It was then, as it is to-day, an irregular trapezoid, bordered on one side by the quay, and on the other three by a series of lofty, narrow, and gloomy houses. By day, one could admire the variety of its edifices, all sculptured in stone or wood, and already presenting complete specimens of the different domestic architectures of the Middle Ages, running back from the fifteenth to the eleventh century, from the casement which had begun to dethrone the arch, to the Roman semicircle, which had been supplanted by the ogive, and which still occupies, below

it, the first story of that ancient house de la Tour Roland, at the corner of the Place upon the Seine, on the side of the street with the Tannerie. At night, one could distinguish nothing of all that mass of buildings, except the black indentation of the roofs, unrolling their chain of acute angles round the place; for one of the radical differences between the cities of that time, and the cities of the present day, lay in the façades which looked upon the places and streets, and which were then gables. For the last two centuries the houses have been turned round.

In the centre of the eastern side of the Place, rose a heavy and hybrid construction, formed of three buildings placed in juxtaposition. It was called by three names which explain its history, its destination, and its architecture: "The House of the Dauphin," because Charles V., when Dauphin, had inhabited it; "The Marchandise," because it had served as town hall; and "The Pillared House" (domus ad piloria), because of a series of large pillars which sustained the three stories. The city found there all that is required for a city like Paris; a chapel in which to pray to God; a plaidoyer, or pleading room, in which to hold hearings, and to repel, at need, the King's people; and under the roof, an arsenac full of artillery. For the bourgeois of Paris were aware that it is not sufficient to pray in every conjuncture, and to plead for the franchises of the city, and they had always in reserve, in the garret of the town hall, a few good rusty arquebuses. The Grève had then that sinister aspect which it preserves to-day from the execrable ideas which it awakens, and from the sombre town hall of Dominique Bocador, which has replaced the Pillared House. It must be admitted that a

permanent gibbet and a pillory, "a justice and a ladder," as they were called in that day, erected side by side in the centre of the pavement, contributed not a little to cause eyes to be turned away from that fatal place, where so many beings full of life and health have agonized; where, fifty years later, that fever of Saint Vallier was destined to have its birth, that terror of the scaffold, the most monstrous of all maladies because it comes not from God, but from man.

It is a consoling idea (let us remark in passing), to think that the death penalty, which three hundred years ago still encumbered with its iron wheels, its stone gibbets, and all its paraphernalia of torture, permanent and riveted to the pavement, the Grève, the Halles, the Place Dauphine, the Cross du Trahoir, the Marché aux Pourceaux, that hideous Montfauçon, the barrier des Sergents, the Place aux Chats, the Porte Saint-Denis, Champeaux, the Porte Baudets, the Porte Saint Jacques, without reckoning the innumerable ladders of the provosts, the bishop of the chapters, of the abbots, of the priors, who had the decree of life and death,--without reckoning the judicial drownings in the river Seine; it is consoling to-day, after having lost successively all the pieces of its armor, its luxury of torment, its penalty of imagination and fancy, its torture for which it reconstructed every five years a leather bed at the Grand Châtelet, that ancient suzerain of feudal society almost expunged from our laws and our cities, hunted from code to code, chased from place to place, has no longer, in our immense Paris, any more than a dishonored corner of the Grève,--than a miserable guillotine, furtive, uneasy, shameful, which seems always afraid of being caught in the act, so quickly does it disappear after having dealt its blow.

CHAPTER III. KISSES FOR BLOWS.

When Pierre Gringoire arrived on the Place de Grève, he was paralyzed. He had directed his course across the Pont aux Meuniers, in order to avoid the rabble on the Pont au Change, and the pennons of Jehan Fourbault; but the wheels of all the bishop's mills had splashed him as he passed, and his doublet was drenched; it seemed to him besides, that the failure of his piece had rendered him still more sensible to cold than usual. Hence he made haste to draw near the bonfire, which was burning magnificently in the middle of the Place. But a considerable crowd formed a circle around it.

"Accursed Parisians!" he said to himself (for Gringoire, like a true dramatic poet, was subject to monologues) "there they are obstructing my fire! Nevertheless, I am greatly in need of a chimney corner; my shoes drink in the water, and all those cursed mills wept upon me! That devil of a Bishop of Paris, with his mills! I'd just like to know what use a bishop can make of a mill! Does he expect to become a miller instead of a bishop? If only my malediction is needed for that, I bestow it upon him! and his cathedral, and his mills! Just see if those boobies will put themselves out! Move aside! I'd like to know what they are doing there! They are warming themselves, much pleasure may it give them! They are watching a hundred fagots burn; a fine spectacle!"

On looking more closely, he perceived that the circle was much larger than was required simply for the purpose of getting warm at the king's fire, and that this concourse of people had not been attracted solely by the beauty of the hundred fagots which were burning.

In a vast space left free between the crowd and the fire, a young girl was dancing.

Whether this young girl was a human being, a fairy, or an angel, is what Gringoire, sceptical philosopher and ironical poet that he was, could not decide at the first moment, so fascinated was he by this dazzling vision.

She was not tall, though she seemed so, so boldly did her slender form dart about. She was swarthy of complexion, but one divined that, by day, her skin must possess that beautiful golden tone of the Andalusians and the Roman women. Her little foot, too, was Andalusian, for it was both pinched and at ease in its graceful shoe. She danced, she turned, she whirled rapidly about on an old Persian rug, spread negligently under her feet; and each time that her radiant face passed before you, as she whirled, her great black eyes darted a flash of lightning at you.

All around her, all glances were riveted, all mouths open; and, in fact, when she danced thus, to the humming of the Basque tambourine, which her two pure, rounded arms raised above her head, slender, frail and vivacious as a wasp, with her corsage of gold without a fold, her variegated gown puffing out, her bare shoulders, her delicate limbs,

which her petticoat revealed at times, her black hair, her eyes of flame, she was a supernatural creature.

"In truth," said Gringoire to himself, "she is a salamander, she is a nymph, she is a goddess, she is a bacchante of the Menelean Mount!"

At that moment, one of the salamander's braids of hair became unfastened, and a piece of yellow copper which was attached to it, rolled to the ground.

"Hé, no!" said he, "she is a gypsy!"

All illusions had disappeared.

She began her dance once more; she took from the ground two swords, whose points she rested against her brow, and which she made to turn in one direction, while she turned in the other; it was a purely gypsy effect. But, disenchanted though Gringoire was, the whole effect of this picture was not without its charm and its magic; the bonfire illuminated, with a red flaring light, which trembled, all alive, over the circle of faces in the crowd, on the brow of the young girl, and at the background of the Place cast a pallid reflection, on one side upon the ancient, black, and wrinkled façade of the House of Pillars, on the other, upon the old stone gibbet.

Among the thousands of visages which that light tinged with scarlet, there was one which seemed, even more than all the others, absorbed in

contemplation of the dancer. It was the face of a man, austere, calm, and sombre. This man, whose costume was concealed by the crowd which surrounded him, did not appear to be more than five and thirty years of age; nevertheless, he was bald; he had merely a few tufts of thin, gray hair on his temples; his broad, high forehead had begun to be furrowed with wrinkles, but his deep-set eyes sparkled with extraordinary youthfulness, an ardent life, a profound passion. He kept them fixed incessantly on the gypsy, and, while the giddy young girl of sixteen danced and whirled, for the pleasure of all, his revery seemed to become more and more sombre. From time to time, a smile and a sigh met upon his lips, but the smile was more melancholy than the sigh.

The young girl, stopped at length, breathless, and the people applauded her lovingly.

"Djali!" said the gypsy.

Then Gringoire saw come up to her, a pretty little white goat, alert, wide-awake, glossy, with gilded horns, gilded hoofs, and gilded collar, which he had not hitherto perceived, and which had remained lying curled up on one corner of the carpet watching his mistress dance.

"Djali!" said the dancer, "it is your turn."

And, seating herself, she gracefully presented her tambourine to the goat.

"Djali," she continued, "what month is this?"

The goat lifted its fore foot, and struck one blow upon the tambourine. It was the first month in the year, in fact.

"Djali," pursued the young girl, turning her tambourine round, "what day of the month is this?"

Djali raised his little gilt hoof, and struck six blows on the tambourine.

"Djali," pursued the Egyptian, with still another movement of the tambourine, "what hour of the day is it?"

Djali struck seven blows. At that moment, the clock of the Pillar House rang out seven.

The people were amazed.

"There's sorcery at the bottom of it," said a sinister voice in the crowd. It was that of the bald man, who never removed his eyes from the gypsy.

She shuddered and turned round; but applause broke forth and drowned the morose exclamation.

It even effaced it so completely from her mind, that she continued to question her goat.

"Djali, what does Master Guichard Grand-Remy, captain of the pistoliers of the town do, at the procession of Candlemas?"

Djali reared himself on his hind legs, and began to bleat, marching along with so much dainty gravity, that the entire circle of spectators burst into a laugh at this parody of the interested devoutness of the captain of pistoliers.

"Djali," resumed the young girl, emboldened by her growing success, "how preaches Master Jacques Charmolue, procurator to the king in the ecclesiastical court?"

The goat seated himself on his hind quarters, and began to bleat, waving his fore feet in so strange a manner, that, with the exception of the bad French, and worse Latin, Jacques Charmolue was there complete,--gesture, accent, and attitude.

And the crowd applauded louder than ever.

"Sacrilege! profanation!" resumed the voice of the bald man.

The gypsy turned round once more.

"Ah!" said she, "'tis that villanous man!" Then, thrusting her under

lip out beyond the upper, she made a little pout, which appeared to be familiar to her, executed a pirouette on her heel, and set about collecting in her tambourine the gifts of the multitude.

Big blanks, little blanks, targes* and eagle liards showered into it.

* A blank: an old French coin; six blanks were worth two sous and a half; targe, an ancient coin of Burgundy, a farthing.

All at once, she passed in front of Gringoire. Gringoire put his hand so recklessly into his pocket that she halted. "The devil!" said the poet, finding at the bottom of his pocket the reality, that is, to say, a void. In the meantime, the pretty girl stood there, gazing at him with her big eyes, and holding out her tambourine to him and waiting. Gringoire broke into a violent perspiration.

If he had all Peru in his pocket, he would certainly have given it to the dancer; but Gringoire had not Peru, and, moreover, America had not yet been discovered.

Happily, an unexpected incident came to his rescue.

"Will you take yourself off, you Egyptian grasshopper?" cried a sharp voice, which proceeded from the darkest corner of the Place.

The young girl turned round in affright. It was no longer the voice of the bald man; it was the voice of a woman, bigoted and malicious.

However, this cry, which alarmed the gypsy, delighted a troop of children who were prowling about there.

"It is the recluse of the Tour-Roland," they exclaimed, with wild laughter, "it is the sacked nun who is scolding! Hasn't she supped? Let's carry her the remains of the city refreshments!"

All rushed towards the Pillar House.

In the meanwhile, Gringoire had taken advantage of the dancer's embarrassment, to disappear. The children's shouts had reminded him that he, also, had not supped, so he ran to the public buffet. But the little rascals had better legs than he; when he arrived, they had stripped the table. There remained not so much as a miserable camichon at five sous the pound. Nothing remained upon the wall but slender fleurs-de-lis, mingled with rose bushes, painted in 1434 by Mathieu Biterne. It was a meagre supper.

It is an unpleasant thing to go to bed without supper, it is a still less pleasant thing not to sup and not to know where one is to sleep. That was Gringoire's condition. No supper, no shelter; he saw himself pressed on all sides by necessity, and he found necessity very crabbed. He had long ago discovered the truth, that Jupiter created men during a fit of misanthropy, and that during a wise man's whole life, his destiny

holds his philosophy in a state of siege. As for himself, he had never seen the blockade so complete; he heard his stomach sounding a parley, and he considered it very much out of place that evil destiny should capture his philosophy by famine.

This melancholy revery was absorbing him more and more, when a song, quaint but full of sweetness, suddenly tore him from it. It was the young gypsy who was singing.

Her voice was like her dancing, like her beauty. It was indefinable and charming; something pure and sonorous, aerial, winged, so to speak. There were continual outbursts, melodies, unexpected cadences, then simple phrases strewn with aerial and hissing notes; then floods of scales which would have put a nightingale to rout, but in which harmony was always present; then soft modulations of octaves which rose and fell, like the bosom of the young singer. Her beautiful face followed, with singular mobility, all the caprices of her song, from the wildest inspiration to the chastest dignity. One would have pronounced her now a mad creature, now a queen.

The words which she sang were in a tongue unknown to Gringoire, and which seemed to him to be unknown to herself, so little relation did the expression which she imparted to her song bear to the sense of the words. Thus, these four lines, in her mouth, were madly gay,--

Un cofre de gran riqueza

Hallaron dentro un pilar,
Dentro del, nuevas banderas
Con figuras de espantar.*

* A coffer of great richness
In a pillar's heart they found,
Within it lay new banners,
With figures to astound.

And an instant afterwards, at the accents which she imparted to this stanza,--

Alarabes de cavallo
Sin poderse menear,
Con espadas, y los cuellos,
Ballestas de buen echar,

Gringoire felt the tears start to his eyes. Nevertheless, her song breathed joy, most of all, and she seemed to sing like a bird, from serenity and heedlessness.

The gypsy's song had disturbed Gringoire's revery as the swan disturbs the water. He listened in a sort of rapture, and forgetfulness of

everything. It was the first moment in the course of many hours when he did not feel that he suffered.

The moment was brief.

The same woman's voice, which had interrupted the gypsy's dance, interrupted her song.

"Will you hold your tongue, you cricket of hell?" it cried, still from the same obscure corner of the place.

The poor "cricket" stopped short. Gringoire covered up his ears.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "accursed saw with missing teeth, which comes to break the lyre!"

Meanwhile, the other spectators murmured like himself; "To the devil with the sacked nun!" said some of them. And the old invisible kill-joy might have had occasion to repent of her aggressions against the gypsy had their attention not been diverted at this moment by the procession of the Pope of the Fools, which, after having traversed many streets and squares, debouched on the Place de Grève, with all its torches and all its uproar.

This procession, which our readers have seen set out from the Palais de Justice, had organized on the way, and had been recruited by all the knaves, idle thieves, and unemployed vagabonds in Paris; so that it

presented a very respectable aspect when it arrived at the Grève.

First came Egypt. The Duke of Egypt headed it, on horseback, with his counts on foot holding his bridle and stirrups for him; behind them, the male and female Egyptians, pell-mell, with their little children crying on their shoulders; all--duke, counts, and populace--in rags and tatters. Then came the Kingdom of Argot; that is to say, all the thieves of France, arranged according to the order of their dignity; the minor people walking first. Thus defiled by fours, with the divers insignia of their grades, in that strange faculty, most of them lame, some cripples, others one-armed, shop clerks, pilgrim, hubins, bootblacks, thimble-riggers, street arabs, beggars, the blear-eyed beggars, thieves, the weakly, vagabonds, merchants, sham soldiers, goldsmiths, passed masters of pickpockets, isolated thieves. A catalogue that would weary Homer. In the centre of the conclave of the passed masters of pickpockets, one had some difficulty in distinguishing the King of Argot, the grand coësre, so called, crouching in a little cart drawn by two big dogs. After the kingdom of the Argotiers, came the Empire of Galilee. Guillaume Rousseau, Emperor of the Empire of Galilee, marched majestically in his robe of purple, spotted with wine, preceded by buffoons wrestling and executing military dances; surrounded by his macebearers, his pickpockets and clerks of the chamber of accounts. Last of all came the corporation of law clerks, with its maypoles crowned with flowers, its black robes, its music worthy of the orgy, and its large candles of yellow wax. In the centre of this crowd, the grand officers of the Brotherhood of Fools bore on their shoulders a litter more loaded down with candles than the reliquary of Sainte-Geneviève in

time of pest; and on this litter shone resplendent, with crosier, cope, and mitre, the new Pope of the Fools, the bellringer of Notre-Dame, Quasimodo the hunchback.

Each section of this grotesque procession had its own music. The Egyptians made their drums and African tambourines resound. The slang men, not a very musical race, still clung to the goat's horn trumpet and the Gothic rubebbe of the twelfth century. The Empire of Galilee was not much more advanced; among its music one could hardly distinguish some miserable rebec, from the infancy of the art, still imprisoned in the re-la-mi. But it was around the Pope of the Fools that all the musical riches of the epoch were displayed in a magnificent discord. It was nothing but soprano rebecs, counter-tenor rebecs, and tenor rebecs, not to reckon the flutes and brass instruments. Alas! our readers will remember that this was Gringoire's orchestra.

It is difficult to convey an idea of the degree of proud and blissful expansion to which the sad and hideous visage of Quasimodo had attained during the transit from the Palais de Justice, to the Place de Grève. It was the first enjoyment of self-love that he had ever experienced. Down to that day, he had known only humiliation, disdain for his condition, disgust for his person. Hence, deaf though he was, he enjoyed, like a veritable pope, the acclamations of that throng, which he hated because he felt that he was hated by it. What mattered it that his people consisted of a pack of fools, cripples, thieves, and beggars? it was still a people and he was its sovereign. And he accepted seriously all this ironical applause, all this derisive respect, with which the crowd

mingled, it must be admitted, a good deal of very real fear. For the hunchback was robust; for the bandy-legged fellow was agile; for the deaf man was malicious: three qualities which temper ridicule.

We are far from believing, however, that the new Pope of the Fools understood both the sentiments which he felt and the sentiments which he inspired. The spirit which was lodged in this failure of a body had, necessarily, something incomplete and deaf about it. Thus, what he felt at the moment was to him, absolutely vague, indistinct, and confused. Only joy made itself felt, only pride dominated. Around that sombre and unhappy face, there hung a radiance.

It was, then, not without surprise and alarm, that at the very moment when Quasimodo was passing the Pillar House, in that semi-intoxicated state, a man was seen to dart from the crowd, and to tear from his hands, with a gesture of anger, his crosier of gilded wood, the emblem of his mock popeship.

This man, this rash individual, was the man with the bald brow, who, a moment earlier, standing with the gypsy's group had chilled the poor girl with his words of menace and of hatred. He was dressed in an ecclesiastical costume. At the moment when he stood forth from the crowd, Gringoire, who had not noticed him up to that time, recognized him: "Hold!" he said, with an exclamation of astonishment. "Eh! 'tis my master in Hermes, Dom Claude Frollo, the archdeacon! What the devil does he want of that old one-eyed fellow? He'll get himself devoured!"

A cry of terror arose, in fact. The formidable Quasimodo had hurled himself from the litter, and the women turned aside their eyes in order not to see him tear the archdeacon asunder.

He made one bound as far as the priest, looked at him, and fell upon his knees.

The priest tore off his tiara, broke his crozier, and rent his tinsel cope.

Quasimodo remained on his knees, with head bent and hands clasped. Then there was established between them a strange dialogue of signs and gestures, for neither of them spoke. The priest, erect on his feet, irritated, threatening, imperious; Quasimodo, prostrate, humble, suppliant. And, nevertheless, it is certain that Quasimodo could have crushed the priest with his thumb.

At length the archdeacon, giving Quasimodo's powerful shoulder a rough shake, made him a sign to rise and follow him.

Quasimodo rose.

Then the Brotherhood of Fools, their first stupor having passed off, wished to defend their pope, so abruptly dethroned. The Egyptians, the men of slang, and all the fraternity of law clerks, gathered howling round the priest.

Quasimodo placed himself in front of the priest, set in play the muscles of his athletic fists, and glared upon the assailants with the snarl of an angry tiger.

The priest resumed his sombre gravity, made a sign to Quasimodo, and retired in silence.

Quasimodo walked in front of him, scattering the crowd as he passed.

When they had traversed the populace and the Place, the cloud of curious and idle were minded to follow them. Quasimodo then constituted himself the rearguard, and followed the archdeacon, walking backwards, squat, surly, monstrous, bristling, gathering up his limbs, licking his boar's tusks, growling like a wild beast, and imparting to the crowd immense vibrations, with a look or a gesture.

Both were allowed to plunge into a dark and narrow street, where no one dared to venture after them; so thoroughly did the mere chimera of Quasimodo gnashing his teeth bar the entrance.

"Here's a marvellous thing," said Gringoire; "but where the deuce shall I find some supper?"

CHAPTER IV. THE INCONVENIENCES OF FOLLOWING A PRETTY WOMAN THROUGH THE STREETS IN THE EVENING.

Gringoire set out to follow the gypsy at all hazards. He had seen her, accompanied by her goat, take to the Rue de la Coutellerie; he took the Rue de la Coutellerie.

"Why not?" he said to himself.

Gringoire, a practical philosopher of the streets of Paris, had noticed that nothing is more propitious to revery than following a pretty woman without knowing whither she is going. There was in this voluntary abdication of his freewill, in this fancy submitting itself to another fancy, which suspects it not, a mixture of fantastic independence and blind obedience, something indescribable, intermediate between slavery and liberty, which pleased Gringoire,--a spirit essentially compound, undecided, and complex, holding the extremities of all extremes, incessantly suspended between all human propensities, and neutralizing one by the other. He was fond of comparing himself to Mahomet's coffin, attracted in two different directions by two loadstones, and hesitating eternally between the heights and the depths, between the vault and the pavement, between fall and ascent, between zenith and nadir.

If Gringoire had lived in our day, what a fine middle course he would

hold between classicism and romanticism!

But he was not sufficiently primitive to live three hundred years, and 'tis a pity. His absence is a void which is but too sensibly felt to-day.

Moreover, for the purpose of thus following passers-by (and especially female passers-by) in the streets, which Gringoire was fond of doing, there is no better disposition than ignorance of where one is going to sleep.

So he walked along, very thoughtfully, behind the young girl, who hastened her pace and made her goat trot as she saw the bourgeois returning home and the taverns--the only shops which had been open that day--closing.

"After all," he half thought to himself, "she must lodge somewhere; gypsies have kindly hearts. Who knows?--"

And in the points of suspense which he placed after this reticence in his mind, there lay I know not what flattering ideas.

Meanwhile, from time to time, as he passed the last groups of bourgeois closing their doors, he caught some scraps of their conversation, which broke the thread of his pleasant hypotheses.

Now it was two old men accosting each other.

"Do you know that it is cold, Master Thibaut Fernicle?" (Gringoire had been aware of this since the beginning of the winter.)

"Yes, indeed, Master Boniface Disome! Are we going to have a winter such as we had three years ago, in '80, when wood cost eight sous the measure?"

"Bah! that's nothing, Master Thibaut, compared with the winter of 1407, when it froze from St. Martin's Day until Candlemas! and so cold that the pen of the registrar of the parliament froze every three words, in the Grand Chamber! which interrupted the registration of justice."

Further on there were two female neighbors at their windows, holding candles, which the fog caused to sputter.

"Has your husband told you about the mishap, Mademoiselle la Boudraque?"

"No. What is it, Mademoiselle Turquant?"

"The horse of M. Gilles Godin, the notary at the Châtelet, took fright at the Flemings and their procession, and overturned Master Philippe Avrillot, lay monk of the Célestins."

"Really?"

"Actually."

"A bourgeois horse! 'tis rather too much! If it had been a cavalry horse, well and good!"

And the windows were closed. But Gringoire had lost the thread of his ideas, nevertheless.

Fortunately, he speedily found it again, and he knotted it together without difficulty, thanks to the gypsy, thanks to Djali, who still walked in front of him; two fine, delicate, and charming creatures, whose tiny feet, beautiful forms, and graceful manners he was engaged in admiring, almost confusing them in his contemplation; believing them to be both young girls, from their intelligence and good friendship; regarding them both as goats,--so far as the lightness, agility, and dexterity of their walk were concerned.

But the streets were becoming blacker and more deserted every moment. The curfew had sounded long ago, and it was only at rare intervals now that they encountered a passer-by in the street, or a light in the windows. Gringoire had become involved, in his pursuit of the gypsy, in that inextricable labyrinth of alleys, squares, and closed courts which surround the ancient sepulchre of the Saints-Innocents, and which resembles a ball of thread tangled by a cat. "Here are streets which possess but little logic!" said Gringoire, lost in the thousands of circuits which returned upon themselves incessantly, but where the young girl pursued a road which seemed familiar to her, without hesitation and

with a step which became ever more rapid. As for him, he would have been utterly ignorant of his situation had he not espied, in passing, at the turn of a street, the octagonal mass of the pillory of the fish markets, the open-work summit of which threw its black, fretted outlines clearly upon a window which was still lighted in the Rue Verdelet.

The young girl's attention had been attracted to him for the last few moments; she had repeatedly turned her head towards him with uneasiness;
she had even once come to a standstill, and taking advantage of a ray of light which escaped from a half-open bakery to survey him intently, from head to foot, then, having cast this glance, Gringoire had seen her make that little pout which he had already noticed, after which she passed on.

This little pout had furnished Gringoire with food for thought. There was certainly both disdain and mockery in that graceful grimace. So he dropped his head, began to count the paving-stones, and to follow the young girl at a little greater distance, when, at the turn of a street, which had caused him to lose sight of her, he heard her utter a piercing cry.

He hastened his steps.

The street was full of shadows. Nevertheless, a twist of tow soaked in oil, which burned in a cage at the feet of the Holy Virgin at the street corner, permitted Gringoire to make out the gypsy struggling in the arms

of two men, who were endeavoring to stifle her cries. The poor little goat, in great alarm, lowered his horns and bleated.

"Help! gentlemen of the watch!" shouted Gringoire, and advanced bravely. One of the men who held the young girl turned towards him. It was the formidable visage of Quasimodo.

Gringoire did not take to flight, but neither did he advance another step.

Quasimodo came up to him, tossed him four paces away on the pavement with a backward turn of the hand, and plunged rapidly into the gloom, bearing the young girl folded across one arm like a silken scarf. His companion followed him, and the poor goat ran after them all, bleating plaintively.

"Murder! murder!" shrieked the unhappy gypsy.

"Halt, rascals, and yield me that wench!" suddenly shouted in a voice of thunder, a cavalier who appeared suddenly from a neighboring square.

It was a captain of the king's archers, armed from head to foot, with his sword in his hand.

He tore the gypsy from the arms of the dazed Quasimodo, threw her across his saddle, and at the moment when the terrible hunchback, recovering from his surprise, rushed upon him to regain his prey, fifteen or

sixteen archers, who followed their captain closely, made their appearance, with their two-edged swords in their fists. It was a squad of the king's police, which was making the rounds, by order of Messire Robert d'Estouteville, guard of the provostship of Paris.

Quasimodo was surrounded, seized, garroted; he roared, he foamed at the mouth, he bit; and had it been broad daylight, there is no doubt that his face alone, rendered more hideous by wrath, would have put the entire squad to flight. But by night he was deprived of his most formidable weapon, his ugliness.

His companion had disappeared during the struggle.

The gypsy gracefully raised herself upright upon the officer's saddle, placed both hands upon the young man's shoulders, and gazed fixedly at him for several seconds, as though enchanted with his good looks and with the aid which he had just rendered her. Then breaking silence first, she said to him, making her sweet voice still sweeter than usual,--

"What is your name, monsieur le gendarme?"

"Captain Phoebus de Châteaupers, at your service, my beauty!" replied the officer, drawing himself up.

"Thanks," said she.

And while Captain Phoebus was turning up his moustache in Burgundian fashion, she slipped from the horse, like an arrow falling to earth, and fled.

A flash of lightning would have vanished less quickly.

"Nombrill of the Pope!" said the captain, causing Quasimodo's straps to be drawn tighter, "I should have preferred to keep the wench."

"What would you have, captain?" said one gendarme. "The warbler has fled, and the bat remains."

CHAPTER V. RESULT OF THE DANGERS.

Gringoire, thoroughly stunned by his fall, remained on the pavement in front of the Holy Virgin at the street corner. Little by little, he regained his senses; at first, for several minutes, he was floating in a sort of half-somnolent revery, which was not without its charm, in which aeriel figures of the gypsy and her goat were coupled with Quasimodo's heavy fist. This state lasted but a short time. A decidedly vivid sensation of cold in the part of his body which was in contact with the pavement, suddenly aroused him and caused his spirit to return to the surface.

"Whence comes this chill?" he said abruptly, to himself. He then perceived that he was lying half in the middle of the gutter.

"That devil of a hunchbacked cyclops!" he muttered between his teeth; and he tried to rise. But he was too much dazed and bruised; he was forced to remain where he was. Moreover, his hand was tolerably free; he stopped up his nose and resigned himself.

"The mud of Paris," he said to himself--for decidedly he thought that he was sure that the gutter would prove his refuge for the night; and what can one do in a refuge, except dream?--"the mud of Paris is particularly stinking; it must contain a great deal of volatile and nitric salts. That, moreover, is the opinion of Master Nicholas Flamel, and of the

alchemists--"

The word "alchemists" suddenly suggested to his mind the idea of Archdeacon Claude Frollo. He recalled the violent scene which he had just witnessed in part; that the gypsy was struggling with two men, that Quasimodo had a companion; and the morose and haughty face of the archdeacon passed confusedly through his memory. "That would be strange!" he said to himself. And on that fact and that basis he began to construct a fantastic edifice of hypothesis, that card-castle of philosophers; then, suddenly returning once more to reality, "Come! I'm freezing!" he ejaculated.

The place was, in fact, becoming less and less tenable. Each molecule of the gutter bore away a molecule of heat radiating from Gringoire's loins, and the equilibrium between the temperature of his body and the temperature of the brook, began to be established in rough fashion.

Quite a different annoyance suddenly assailed him. A group of children, those little bare-footed savages who have always roamed the pavements of Paris under the eternal name of gamins, and who, when we were also children ourselves, threw stones at all of us in the afternoon, when we came out of school, because our trousers were not torn--a swarm of these young scamps rushed towards the square where Gringoire lay, with shouts and laughter which seemed to pay but little heed to the sleep of the neighbors. They were dragging after them some sort of hideous sack; and the noise of their wooden shoes alone would have roused the dead. Gringoire who was not quite dead yet, half raised himself.

"Ohé, Hennequin Dandéche! Ohè, Jehan Pincebourde!" they shouted in deafening tones, "old Eustache Moubon, the merchant at the corner, has just died. We've got his straw pallet, we're going to have a bonfire out of it. It's the turn of the Flemish to-day!"

And behold, they flung the pallet directly upon Gringoire, beside whom they had arrived, without espying him. At the same time, one of them took a handful of straw and set off to light it at the wick of the good Virgin.

"S'death!" growled Gringoire, "am I going to be too warm now?"

It was a critical moment. He was caught between fire and water; he made a superhuman effort, the effort of a counterfeiter of money who is on the point of being boiled, and who seeks to escape. He rose to his feet, flung aside the straw pallet upon the street urchins, and fled.

"Holy Virgin!" shrieked the children; "'tis the merchant's ghost!"

And they fled in their turn.

The straw mattress remained master of the field. Belleforet, Father Le Juge, and Corrozet affirm that it was picked up on the morrow, with great pomp, by the clergy of the quarter, and borne to the treasury of the church of Saint Opportune, where the sacristan, even as late as 1789, earned a tolerably handsome revenue out of the great miracle of

the Statue of the Virgin at the corner of the Rue Mauconseil, which had, by its mere presence, on the memorable night between the sixth and seventh of January, 1482, exorcised the defunct Eustache Moubon, who, in order to play a trick on the devil, had at his death maliciously concealed his soul in his straw pallet.

CHAPTER VI. THE BROKEN JUG.

After having run for some time at the top of his speed, without knowing whither, knocking his head against many a street corner, leaping many a gutter, traversing many an alley, many a court, many a square, seeking flight and passage through all the meanderings of the ancient passages of the Halles, exploring in his panic terror what the fine Latin of the maps calls tota via, cheminum et viaria, our poet suddenly halted for lack of breath in the first place, and in the second, because he had been collared, after a fashion, by a dilemma which had just occurred to his mind. "It strikes me, Master Pierre Gringoire," he said to himself, placing his finger to his brow, "that you are running like a madman. The little scamps are no less afraid of you than you are of them. It strikes me, I say, that you heard the clatter of their wooden shoes fleeing southward, while you were fleeing northward. Now, one of two things, either they have taken flight, and the pallet, which they must have forgotten in their terror, is precisely that hospitable bed in search of which you have been running ever since morning, and which madame the Virgin miraculously sends you, in order to recompense you for having made a morality in her honor, accompanied by triumphs and mummeries; or

the children have not taken flight, and in that case they have put the brand to the pallet, and that is precisely the good fire which you need to cheer, dry, and warm you. In either case, good fire or good bed, that

straw pallet is a gift from heaven. The blessed Virgin Marie who stands at the corner of the Rue Mauconseil, could only have made Eustache Moubon die for that express purpose; and it is folly on your part to flee thus zigzag, like a Picard before a Frenchman, leaving behind you what you seek before you; and you are a fool!"

Then he retraced his steps, and feeling his way and searching, with his nose to the wind and his ears on the alert, he tried to find the blessed pallet again, but in vain. There was nothing to be found but intersections of houses, closed courts, and crossings of streets, in the midst of which he hesitated and doubted incessantly, being more perplexed and entangled in this medley of streets than he would have been even in the labyrinth of the Hôtel des Tournelles. At length he lost patience, and exclaimed solemnly: "Cursed be cross roads! 'tis the devil who has made them in the shape of his pitchfork!"

This exclamation afforded him a little solace, and a sort of reddish reflection which he caught sight of at that moment, at the extremity of a long and narrow lane, completed the elevation of his moral tone. "God be praised!" said he, "There it is yonder! There is my pallet burning." And comparing himself to the pilot who suffers shipwreck by night, "Salve," he added piously, "salve, maris stella!"

Did he address this fragment of litany to the Holy Virgin, or to the pallet? We are utterly unable to say.

He had taken but a few steps in the long street, which sloped downwards,

was unpaved, and more and more muddy and steep, when he noticed a very singular thing. It was not deserted; here and there along its extent crawled certain vague and formless masses, all directing their course towards the light which flickered at the end of the street, like those heavy insects which drag along by night, from blade to blade of grass, towards the shepherd's fire.

Nothing renders one so adventurous as not being able to feel the place where one's pocket is situated. Gringoire continued to advance, and had soon joined that one of the forms which dragged along most indolently, behind the others. On drawing near, he perceived that it was nothing else than a wretched legless cripple in a bowl, who was hopping along on his two hands like a wounded field-spider which has but two legs left. At the moment when he passed close to this species of spider with a human countenance, it raised towards him a lamentable voice: "La buona mancia, signor! la buona mancia!"*

* Alms.

"Deuce take you," said Gringoire, "and me with you, if I know what you mean!"

And he passed on.

He overtook another of these itinerant masses, and examined it. It was

an impotent man, both halt and crippled, and halt and crippled to such a degree that the complicated system of crutches and wooden legs which sustained him, gave him the air of a mason's scaffolding on the march. Gringoire, who liked noble and classical comparisons, compared him in thought to the living tripod of Vulcan.

This living tripod saluted him as he passed, but stopping his hat on a level with Gringoire's chin, like a shaving dish, while he shouted in the latter's ears: "Senor cabellero, para comprar un pedaso de pan!"*

* Give me the means to buy a bit of bread, sir.

"It appears," said Gringoire, "that this one can also talk; but 'tis a rude language, and he is more fortunate than I if he understands it." Then, smiting his brow, in a sudden transition of ideas: "By the way, what the deuce did they mean this morning with their Esmeralda?"

He was minded to augment his pace, but for the third time something barred his way. This something or, rather, some one was a blind man, a little blind fellow with a bearded, Jewish face, who, rowing away in the space about him with a stick, and towed by a large dog, droned through his nose with a Hungarian accent: "Facitote caritatem!"

"Well, now," said Gringoire, "here's one at last who speaks a Christian tongue. I must have a very charitable aspect, since they ask alms of

me in the present lean condition of my purse. My friend," and he turned towards the blind man, "I sold my last shirt last week; that is to say, since you understand only the language of Cicero: Vendidi hebdomade nuper transita meam ultimam chemisan."

That said, he turned his back upon the blind man, and pursued his way. But the blind man began to increase his stride at the same time; and, behold! the cripple and the legless man, in his bowl, came up on their side in great haste, and with great clamor of bowl and crutches, upon the pavement. Then all three, jostling each other at poor Gringoire's heels, began to sing their song to him,--

"Caritatem!" chanted the blind man.

"La buona mancia!" chanted the cripple in the bowl.

And the lame man took up the musical phrase by repeating: "Un pedaso de pan!"

Gringoire stopped up his ears. "Oh, tower of Babel!" he exclaimed.

He set out to run. The blind man ran! The lame man ran! The cripple in the bowl ran!

And then, in proportion as he plunged deeper into the street, cripples in bowls, blind men and lame men, swarmed about him, and men with one arm, and with one eye, and the leprous with their sores, some emerging

from little streets adjacent, some from the air-holes of cellars, howling, bellowing, yelping, all limping and halting, all flinging themselves towards the light, and humped up in the mire, like snails after a shower.

Gringoire, still followed by his three persecutors, and not knowing very well what was to become of him, marched along in terror among them, turning out for the lame, stepping over the cripples in bowls, with his feet imbedded in that ant-hill of lame men, like the English captain who got caught in the quicksand of a swarm of crabs.

The idea occurred to him of making an effort to retrace his steps. But it was too late. This whole legion had closed in behind him, and his three beggars held him fast. So he proceeded, impelled both by this irresistible flood, by fear, and by a vertigo which converted all this into a sort of horrible dream.

At last he reached the end of the street. It opened upon an immense place, where a thousand scattered lights flickered in the confused mists of night. Gringoire flew thither, hoping to escape, by the swiftness of his legs, from the three infirm spectres who had clutched him.

"Onde vas, hombre?" (Where are you going, my man?) cried the cripple, flinging away his crutches, and running after him with the best legs that ever traced a geometrical step upon the pavements of Paris.

In the meantime the legless man, erect upon his feet, crowned Gringoire

with his heavy iron bowl, and the blind man glared in his face with flaming eyes!

"Where am I?" said the terrified poet.

"In the Court of Miracles," replied a fourth spectre, who had accosted them.

"Upon my soul," resumed Gringoire, "I certainly do behold the blind who see, and the lame who walk, but where is the Saviour?"

They replied by a burst of sinister laughter.

The poor poet cast his eyes about him. It was, in truth, that redoubtable Cour des Miracles, whither an honest man had never penetrated at such an hour; the magic circle where the officers of the Châtelet and the sergeants of the provostship, who ventured thither, disappeared in morsels; a city of thieves, a hideous wart on the face of Paris; a sewer, from which escaped every morning, and whither returned every night to crouch, that stream of vices, of mendicancy and vagabondage which always overflows in the streets of capitals; a monstrous hive, to which returned at nightfall, with their booty, all the drones of the social order; a lying hospital where the bohemian, the disfrocked monk, the ruined scholar, the ne'er-do-wells of all nations, Spaniards, Italians, Germans,--of all religions, Jews, Christians, Mahometans, idolaters, covered with painted sores, beggars by day, were transformed by night into brigands; an immense dressing-room, in a word,

where, at that epoch, the actors of that eternal comedy, which theft, prostitution, and murder play upon the pavements of Paris, dressed and undressed.

It was a vast place, irregular and badly paved, like all the squares of Paris at that date. Fires, around which swarmed strange groups, blazed here and there. Every one was going, coming, and shouting. Shrill laughter was to be heard, the wailing of children, the voices of women. The hands and heads of this throng, black against the luminous background, outlined against it a thousand eccentric gestures. At times, upon the ground, where trembled the light of the fires, mingled with large, indefinite shadows, one could behold a dog passing, which resembled a man, a man who resembled a dog. The limits of races and species seemed effaced in this city, as in a pandemonium. Men, women, beasts, age, sex, health, maladies, all seemed to be in common among these people; all went together, they mingled, confounded, superposed; each one there participated in all.

The poor and flickering flames of the fire permitted Gringoire to distinguish, amid his trouble, all around the immense place, a hideous frame of ancient houses, whose wormeaten, shrivelled, stunted façades, each pierced with one or two lighted attic windows, seemed to him, in the darkness, like enormous heads of old women, ranged in a circle, monstrous and crabbed, winking as they looked on at the Witches' Sabbath.

It was like a new world, unknown, unheard of, misshapen, creeping,

swarming, fantastic.

Gringoire, more and more terrified, clutched by the three beggars as by three pairs of tongs, dazed by a throng of other faces which frothed and yelped around him, unhappy Gringoire endeavored to summon his presence of mind, in order to recall whether it was a Saturday. But his efforts were vain; the thread of his memory and of his thought was broken; and, doubting everything, wavering between what he saw and what he felt, he put to himself this unanswerable question,--

"If I exist, does this exist? if this exists, do I exist?"

At that moment, a distinct cry arose in the buzzing throng which surrounded him, "Let's take him to the king! let's take him to the king!"

"Holy Virgin!" murmured Gringoire, "the king here must be a ram."

"To the king! to the king!" repeated all voices.

They dragged him off. Each vied with the other in laying his claws upon him. But the three beggars did not loose their hold and tore him from the rest, howling, "He belongs to us!"

The poet's already sickly doublet yielded its last sigh in this struggle.

While traversing the horrible place, his vertigo vanished. After taking a few steps, the sentiment of reality returned to him. He began to become accustomed to the atmosphere of the place. At the first moment there had arisen from his poet's head, or, simply and prosaically, from his empty stomach, a mist, a vapor, so to speak, which, spreading between objects and himself, permitted him to catch a glimpse of them only in the incoherent fog of nightmare,--in those shadows of dreams which distort every outline, agglomerating objects into unwieldy groups, dilating things into chimeras, and men into phantoms. Little by little, this hallucination was succeeded by a less bewildered and exaggerating view. Reality made its way to the light around him, struck his eyes, struck his feet, and demolished, bit by bit, all that frightful poetry with which he had, at first, believed himself to be surrounded. He was forced to perceive that he was not walking in the Styx, but in mud, that he was elbowed not by demons, but by thieves; that it was not his soul which was in question, but his life (since he lacked that precious conciliator, which places itself so effectually between the bandit and the honest man--a purse). In short, on examining the orgy more closely, and with more coolness, he fell from the witches' sabbath to the dram-shop.

The Cour des Miracles was, in fact, merely a dram-shop; but a brigand's dram-shop, reddened quite as much with blood as with wine.

The spectacle which presented itself to his eyes, when his ragged escort finally deposited him at the end of his trip, was not fitted to bear him back to poetry, even to the poetry of hell. It was more than ever the

prosaic and brutal reality of the tavern. Were we not in the fifteenth century, we would say that Gringoire had descended from Michael Angelo to Callot.

Around a great fire which burned on a large, circular flagstone, the flames of which had heated red-hot the legs of a tripod, which was empty for the moment, some wormeaten tables were placed, here and there, haphazard, no lackey of a geometrical turn having deigned to adjust their parallelism, or to see to it that they did not make too unusual angles. Upon these tables gleamed several dripping pots of wine and beer, and round these pots were grouped many bacchic visages, purple with the fire and the wine. There was a man with a huge belly and a jovial face, noisily kissing a woman of the town, thickset and brawny. There was a sort of sham soldier, a "naquois," as the slang expression runs, who was whistling as he undid the bandages from his fictitious wound, and removing the numbness from his sound and vigorous knee, which
had been swathed since morning in a thousand ligatures. On the other hand, there was a wretched fellow, preparing with celandine and beef's blood, his "leg of God," for the next day. Two tables further on, a palmer, with his pilgrim's costume complete, was practising the lament of the Holy Queen, not forgetting the drone and the nasal drawl. Further on, a young scamp was taking a lesson in epilepsy from an old pretender, who was instructing him in the art of foaming at the mouth, by chewing a morsel of soap. Beside him, a man with the dropsy was getting rid of his swelling, and making four or five female thieves, who were disputing at the same table, over a child who had been stolen that evening, hold

their noses. All circumstances which, two centuries later, "seemed so ridiculous to the court," as Sauval says, "that they served as a pastime to the king, and as an introduction to the royal ballet of Night, divided into four parts and danced on the theatre of the Petit-Bourbon." "Never," adds an eye witness of 1653, "have the sudden metamorphoses of the Court of Miracles been more happily presented. Benserade prepared us for it by some very gallant verses."

Loud laughter everywhere, and obscene songs. Each one held his own course, carping and swearing, without listening to his neighbor. Pots clinked, and quarrels sprang up at the shock of the pots, and the broken pots made rents in the rags.

A big dog, seated on his tail, gazed at the fire. Some children were mingled in this orgy. The stolen child wept and cried. Another, a big boy four years of age, seated with legs dangling, upon a bench that was too high for him, before a table that reached to his chin, and uttering not a word. A third, gravely spreading out upon the table with his finger, the melted tallow which dripped from a candle. Last of all, a little fellow crouching in the mud, almost lost in a cauldron, which he was scraping with a tile, and from which he was evoking a sound that would have made Stradivarius swoon.

Near the fire was a hogshead, and on the hogshead a beggar. This was the king on his throne.

The three who had Gringoire in their clutches led him in front of this

hogshead, and the entire bacchanal rout fell silent for a moment, with the exception of the cauldron inhabited by the child.

Gringoire dared neither breathe nor raise his eyes.

"Hombre, quita tu sombrero!" said one of the three knaves, in whose grasp he was, and, before he had comprehended the meaning, the other had snatched his hat--a wretched headgear, it is true, but still good on a sunny day or when there was but little rain. Gringoire sighed.

Meanwhile the king addressed him, from the summit of his cask,--

"Who is this rogue?"

Gringoire shuddered. That voice, although accentuated by menace, recalled to him another voice, which, that very morning, had dealt the deathblow to his mystery, by drawling, nasally, in the midst of the audience, "Charity, please!" He raised his head. It was indeed Clopin Trouillefou.

Clopin Trouillefou, arrayed in his royal insignia, wore neither one rag more nor one rag less. The sore upon his arm had already disappeared. He held in his hand one of those whips made of thongs of white leather, which police sergeants then used to repress the crowd, and which were called boullayes. On his head he wore a sort of headgear, bound round and closed at the top. But it was difficult to make out whether it was a child's cap or a king's crown, the two things bore so strong a

resemblance to each other.

Meanwhile Gringoire, without knowing why, had regained some hope, on recognizing in the King of the Cour des Miracles his accursed mendicant of the Grand Hall.

"Master," stammered he; "monseigneur--sire--how ought I to address you?" he said at length, having reached the culminating point of his crescendo, and knowing neither how to mount higher, nor to descend again.

"Monseigneur, his majesty, or comrade, call me what you please. But make haste. What have you to say in your own defence?"

"In your own defence?" thought Gringoire, "that displeases me." He resumed, stuttering, "I am he, who this morning--"

"By the devil's claws!" interrupted Clopin, "your name, knave, and nothing more. Listen. You are in the presence of three powerful sovereigns: myself, Clopin Trouillefou, King of Thunes, successor to the Grand Coësre, supreme suzerain of the Realm of Argot; Mathias Hunyadi Spicali, Duke of Egypt and of Bohemia, the old yellow fellow whom you see yonder, with a dish clout round his head; Guillaume Rousseau, Emperor of Galilee, that fat fellow who is not listening to us but caressing a wench. We are your judges. You have entered the Kingdom of Argot, without being an argotier; you have violated the privileges of our city. You must be punished unless you are a capon, a franc-mitou

or a rifodé; that is to say, in the slang of honest folks,--a thief, a beggar, or a vagabond. Are you anything of that sort? Justify yourself; announce your titles."

"Alas!" said Gringoire, "I have not that honor. I am the author--"

"That is sufficient," resumed Trouillefou, without permitting him to finish. "You are going to be hanged. 'Tis a very simple matter, gentlemen and honest bourgeois! as you treat our people in your abode, so we treat you in ours! The law which you apply to vagabonds, vagabonds apply to you. 'Tis your fault if it is harsh. One really must behold the grimace of an honest man above the hempen collar now and then; that renders the thing honorable. Come, friend, divide your rags gayly among these damsels. I am going to have you hanged to amuse the vagabonds, and you are to give them your purse to drink your health. If you have any mummery to go through with, there's a very good God the Father in that mortar yonder, in stone, which we stole from Saint-Pierre aux Boeufs. You have four minutes in which to fling your soul at his head."

The harangue was formidable.

"Well said, upon my soul! Clopin Trouillefou preaches like the Holy Father the Pope!" exclaimed the Emperor of Galilee, smashing his pot in order to prop up his table.

"Messeigneurs, emperors, and kings," said Gringoire coolly (for I know not how, firmness had returned to him, and he spoke with resolution),

"don't think of such a thing; my name is Pierre Gringoire. I am the poet whose morality was presented this morning in the grand hall of the Courts."

"Ah! so it was you, master!" said Clopin. "I was there, xête Dieu! Well! comrade, is that any reason, because you bored us to death this morning, that you should not be hung this evening?"

"I shall find difficulty in getting out of it," said Gringoire to himself. Nevertheless, he made one more effort: "I don't see why poets are not classed with vagabonds," said he. "Vagabond, Aesopus certainly was; Homerus was a beggar; Mercurius was a thief--"

Clopin interrupted him: "I believe that you are trying to blarney us with your jargon. Zounds! let yourself be hung, and don't kick up such a row over it!"

"Pardon me, monseigneur, the King of Thunes," replied Gringoire, disputing the ground foot by foot. "It is worth trouble--One moment!--Listen to me--You are not going to condemn me without having heard me"--

His unlucky voice was, in fact, drowned in the uproar which rose around him. The little boy scraped away at his cauldron with more spirit than ever; and, to crown all, an old woman had just placed on the tripod a frying-pan of grease, which hissed away on the fire with a noise similar to the cry of a troop of children in pursuit of a masker.

In the meantime, Clopin Trouillefou appeared to hold a momentary conference with the Duke of Egypt, and the Emperor of Galilee, who was completely drunk. Then he shouted shrilly: "Silence!" and, as the cauldron and the frying-pan did not heed him, and continued their duet, he jumped down from his hogshead, gave a kick to the boiler, which rolled ten paces away bearing the child with it, a kick to the frying-pan, which upset in the fire with all its grease, and gravely remounted his throne, without troubling himself about the stifled tears of the child, or the grumbling of the old woman, whose supper was wasting away in a fine white flame.

Trouillefou made a sign, and the duke, the emperor, and the passed masters of pickpockets, and the isolated robbers, came and ranged themselves around him in a horseshoe, of which Gringoire, still roughly held by the body, formed the centre. It was a semicircle of rags, tatters, tinsel, pitchforks, axes, legs staggering with intoxication, huge, bare arms, faces sordid, dull, and stupid. In the midst of this Round Table of beggary, Clopin Trouillefou,--as the doge of this senate, as the king of this peerage, as the pope of this conclave,--dominated; first by virtue of the height of his hogshead, and next by virtue of an indescribable, haughty, fierce, and formidable air, which caused his eyes to flash, and corrected in his savage profile the bestial type of the race of vagabonds. One would have pronounced him a boar amid a herd of swine.

"Listen," said he to Gringoire, fondling his misshapen chin with his

horny hand; "I don't see why you should not be hung. It is true that it appears to be repugnant to you; and it is very natural, for you bourgeois are not accustomed to it. You form for yourselves a great idea of the thing. After all, we don't wish you any harm. Here is a means of extricating yourself from your predicament for the moment. Will you become one of us?"

The reader can judge of the effect which this proposition produced upon Gringoire, who beheld life slipping away from him, and who was beginning to lose his hold upon it. He clutched at it again with energy.

"Certainly I will, and right heartily," said he.

"Do you consent," resumed Clopin, "to enroll yourself among the people of the knife?"

"Of the knife, precisely," responded Gringoire.

"You recognize yourself as a member of the free bourgeoisie?"* added the King of Thunes.

* A high-toned sharper.

"Of the free bourgeoisie."

"Subject of the Kingdom of Argot?"

"Of the Kingdom of Argot*."

* Thieves.

"A vagabond?"

"A vagabond."

"In your soul?"

"In my soul."

"I must call your attention to the fact," continued the king, "that you will be hung all the same."

"The devil!" said the poet.

"Only," continued Clopin imperturbably, "you will be hung later on, with more ceremony, at the expense of the good city of Paris, on a handsome stone gibbet, and by honest men. That is a consolation."

"Just so," responded Gringoire.

"There are other advantages. In your quality of a high-toned sharper, you will not have to pay the taxes on mud, or the poor, or lanterns, to which the bourgeois of Paris are subject."

"So be it," said the poet. "I agree. I am a vagabond, a thief, a sharper, a man of the knife, anything you please; and I am all that already, monsieur, King of Thunes, for I am a philosopher; et omnia in philosophia, omnes in philosopho continentur,--all things are contained in philosophy, all men in the philosopher, as you know."

The King of Thunes scowled.

"What do you take me for, my friend? What Hungarian Jew patter are you jabbering at us? I don't know Hebrew. One isn't a Jew because one is a bandit. I don't even steal any longer. I'm above that; I kill. Cut-throat, yes; cutpurse, no."

Gringoire tried to slip in some excuse between these curt words, which wrath rendered more and more jerky.

"I ask your pardon, monseigneur. It is not Hebrew; 'tis Latin."

"I tell you," resumed Clopin angrily, "that I'm not a Jew, and that I'll have you hung, belly of the synagogue, like that little shopkeeper of Judea, who is by your side, and whom I entertain strong hopes of seeing nailed to a counter one of these days, like the counterfeit coin that he is!"

So saying, he pointed his finger at the little, bearded Hungarian Jew who had accosted Gringoire with his facitote caritatem, and who, understanding no other language beheld with surprise the King of Thunes's ill-humor overflow upon him.

At length Monsieur Clopin calmed down.

"So you will be a vagabond, you knave?" he said to our poet.

"Of course," replied the poet.

"Willing is not all," said the surly Clopin; "good will doesn't put one onion the more into the soup, and 'tis good for nothing except to go to Paradise with; now, Paradise and the thieves' band are two different things. In order to be received among the thieves,* you must prove that you are good for something, and for that purpose, you must search the manikin."

* L'argot.

"I'll search anything you like," said Gringoire.

Clopin made a sign. Several thieves detached themselves from the circle, and returned a moment later. They brought two thick posts, terminated

at their lower extremities in spreading timber supports, which made them stand readily upon the ground; to the upper extremity of the two posts they fitted a cross-beam, and the whole constituted a very pretty portable gibbet, which Gringoire had the satisfaction of beholding rise before him, in a twinkling. Nothing was lacking, not even the rope, which swung gracefully over the cross-beam.

"What are they going to do?" Gringoire asked himself with some uneasiness. A sound of bells, which he heard at that moment, put an end to his anxiety; it was a stuffed manikin, which the vagabonds were suspending by the neck from the rope, a sort of scarecrow dressed in red, and so hung with mule-bells and larger bells, that one might have tricked out thirty Castilian mules with them. These thousand tiny bells quivered for some time with the vibration of the rope, then gradually died away, and finally became silent when the manikin had been brought into a state of immobility by that law of the pendulum which has dethroned the water clock and the hour-glass. Then Clopin, pointing out to Gringoire a rickety old stool placed beneath the manikin,--"Climb up there."

"Death of the devil!" objected Gringoire; "I shall break my neck. Your stool limps like one of Martial's distiches; it has one hexameter leg and one pentameter leg."

"Climb!" repeated Clopin.

Gringoire mounted the stool, and succeeded, not without some

oscillations of head and arms, in regaining his centre of gravity.

"Now," went on the King of Thunes, "twist your right foot round your left leg, and rise on the tip of your left foot."

"Monseigneur," said Gringoire, "so you absolutely insist on my breaking some one of my limbs?"

Clopin tossed his head.

"Hark ye, my friend, you talk too much. Here's the gist of the matter in two words: you are to rise on tiptoe, as I tell you; in that way you will be able to reach the pocket of the manikin, you will rummage it, you will pull out the purse that is there,--and if you do all this without our hearing the sound of a bell, all is well: you shall be a vagabond. All we shall then have to do, will be to thrash you soundly for the space of a week."

"Ventre-Dieu! I will be careful," said Gringoire. "And suppose I do make the bells sound?"

"Then you will be hanged. Do you understand?"

"I don't understand at all," replied Gringoire.

"Listen, once more. You are to search the manikin, and take away its purse; if a single bell stirs during the operation, you will be hung. Do

you understand that?"

"Good," said Gringoire; "I understand that. And then?"

"If you succeed in removing the purse without our hearing the bells, you are a vagabond, and you will be thrashed for eight consecutive days. You understand now, no doubt?"

"No, monseigneur; I no longer understand. Where is the advantage to me? hanged in one case, cudgelled in the other?"

"And a vagabond," resumed Clopin, "and a vagabond; is that nothing? It is for your interest that we should beat you, in order to harden you to blows."

"Many thanks," replied the poet.

"Come, make haste," said the king, stamping upon his cask, which resounded like a huge drum! "Search the manikin, and let there be an end to this! I warn you for the last time, that if I hear a single bell, you will take the place of the manikin."

The band of thieves applauded Clopin's words, and arranged themselves in a circle round the gibbet, with a laugh so pitiless that Gringoire perceived that he amused them too much not to have everything to fear from them. No hope was left for him, accordingly, unless it were the slight chance of succeeding in the formidable operation which was

imposed upon him; he decided to risk it, but it was not without first having addressed a fervent prayer to the manikin he was about to plunder, and who would have been easier to move to pity than the vagabonds. These myriad bells, with their little copper tongues, seemed to him like the mouths of so many asps, open and ready to sting and to hiss.

"Oh!" he said, in a very low voice, "is it possible that my life depends on the slightest vibration of the least of these bells? Oh!" he added, with clasped hands, "bells, do not ring, hand-bells do not clang, mule-bells do not quiver!"

He made one more attempt upon Trouillefou.

"And if there should come a gust of wind?"

"You will be hanged," replied the other, without hesitation.

Perceiving that no respite, nor reprieve, nor subterfuge was possible, he bravely decided upon his course of action; he wound his right foot round his left leg, raised himself on his left foot, and stretched out his arm: but at the moment when his hand touched the manikin, his body, which was now supported upon one leg only, wavered on the stool which had but three; he made an involuntary effort to support himself by the manikin, lost his balance, and fell heavily to the ground, deafened by the fatal vibration of the thousand bells of the manikin, which, yielding to the impulse imparted by his hand, described first a rotary

motion, and then swayed majestically between the two posts.

"Malediction!" he cried as he fell, and remained as though dead, with his face to the earth.

Meanwhile, he heard the dreadful peal above his head, the diabolical laughter of the vagabonds, and the voice of Trouillefou saying,--

"Pick me up that knave, and hang him without ceremony." He rose. They had already detached the manikin to make room for him.

The thieves made him mount the stool, Clopin came to him, passed the rope about his neck, and, tapping him on the shoulder,--

"Adieu, my friend. You can't escape now, even if you digested with the pope's guts."

The word "Mercy!" died away upon Gringoire's lips. He cast his eyes about him; but there was no hope: all were laughing.

"Bellevigne de l'Etoile," said the King of Thunes to an enormous vagabond, who stepped out from the ranks, "climb upon the cross beam."

Bellevigne de l'Etoile nimbly mounted the transverse beam, and in another minute, Gringoire, on raising his eyes, beheld him, with terror, seated upon the beam above his head.

"Now," resumed Clopin Trouillefou, "as soon as I clap my hands, you, Andry the Red, will fling the stool to the ground with a blow of your knee; you, François Chante-Prune, will cling to the feet of the rascal; and you, Bellevigne, will fling yourself on his shoulders; and all three at once, do you hear?"

Gringoire shuddered.

"Are you ready?" said Clopin Trouillefou to the three thieves, who held themselves in readiness to fall upon Gringoire. A moment of horrible suspense ensued for the poor victim, during which Clopin tranquilly thrust into the fire with the tip of his foot, some bits of vine shoots which the flame had not caught. "Are you ready?" he repeated, and opened his hands to clap. One second more and all would have been over.

But he paused, as though struck by a sudden thought.

"One moment!" said he; "I forgot! It is our custom not to hang a man without inquiring whether there is any woman who wants him. Comrade, this is your last resource. You must wed either a female vagabond or the noose."

This law of the vagabonds, singular as it may strike the reader, remains to-day written out at length, in ancient English legislation. (See Burington's Observations.)

Gringoire breathed again. This was the second time that he had

returned to life within an hour. So he did not dare to trust to it too implicitly.

"Holà!" cried Clopin, mounted once more upon his cask, "holà! women, females, is there among you, from the sorceress to her cat, a wench who wants this rascal? Holà, Colette la Charonne! Elisabeth Trouvain! Simone Jodouyne! Marie Piédebou! Thonne la Longue! Bérarde Fanouel! Michelle Genaille! Claude Ronge-oreille! Mathurine Girorou!--Holà! Isabeau-la-Thierrye! Come and see! A man for nothing! Who wants him?"

Gringoire, no doubt, was not very appetizing in this miserable condition. The female vagabonds did not seem to be much affected by the proposition. The unhappy wretch heard them answer: "No! no! hang him; there'll be the more fun for us all!"

Nevertheless, three emerged from the throng and came to smell of him. The first was a big wench, with a square face. She examined the philosopher's deplorable doublet attentively. His garment was worn, and more full of holes than a stove for roasting chestnuts. The girl made a wry face. "Old rag!" she muttered, and addressing Gringoire, "Let's see your cloak!" "I have lost it," replied Gringoire. "Your hat?" "They took it away from me." "Your shoes?" "They have hardly any soles left." "Your purse?" "Alas!" stammered Gringoire, "I have not even a sou." "Let them hang you, then, and say 'Thank you!'" retorted the vagabond wench, turning her back on him.

The second,--old, black, wrinkled, hideous, with an ugliness conspicuous

even in the Cour des Miracles, trotted round Gringoire. He almost trembled lest she should want him. But she mumbled between her teeth, "He's too thin," and went off.

The third was a young girl, quite fresh, and not too ugly. "Save me!" said the poor fellow to her, in a low tone. She gazed at him for a moment with an air of pity, then dropped her eyes, made a plait in her petticoat, and remained in indecision. He followed all these movements with his eyes; it was the last gleam of hope. "No," said the young girl, at length, "no! Guillaume Longuejoue would beat me." She retreated into the crowd.

"You are unlucky, comrade," said Clopin.

Then rising to his feet, upon his hogshead. "No one wants him," he exclaimed, imitating the accent of an auctioneer, to the great delight of all; "no one wants him? once, twice, three times!" and, turning towards the gibbet with a sign of his hand, "Gone!"

Bellevigne de l'Etoile, Andry the Red, François Chante-Prune, stepped up to Gringoire.

At that moment a cry arose among the thieves: "La Esmeralda! La Esmeralda!"

Gringoire shuddered, and turned towards the side whence the clamor proceeded.

The crowd opened, and gave passage to a pure and dazzling form.

It was the gypsy.

"La Esmeralda!" said Gringoire, stupefied in the midst of his emotions, by the abrupt manner in which that magic word knotted together all his reminiscences of the day.

This rare creature seemed, even in the Cour des Miracles, to exercise her sway of charm and beauty. The vagabonds, male and female, ranged themselves gently along her path, and their brutal faces beamed beneath her glance.

She approached the victim with her light step. Her pretty Djali followed her. Gringoire was more dead than alive. She examined him for a moment in silence.

"You are going to hang this man?" she said gravely, to Clopin.

"Yes, sister," replied the King of Thunes, "unless you will take him for your husband."

She made her pretty little pout with her under lip. "I'll take him," said she.

Gringoire firmly believed that he had been in a dream ever since

morning, and that this was the continuation of it.

The change was, in fact, violent, though a gratifying one. They undid the noose, and made the poet step down from the stool. His emotion was so lively that he was obliged to sit down.

The Duke of Egypt brought an earthenware crock, without uttering a word. The gypsy offered it to Gringoire: "Fling it on the ground," said she.

The crock broke into four pieces.

"Brother," then said the Duke of Egypt, laying his hands upon their foreheads, "she is your wife; sister, he is your husband for four years. Go."

CHAPTER VII. A BRIDAL NIGHT.

A few moments later our poet found himself in a tiny arched chamber, very cosy, very warm, seated at a table which appeared to ask nothing better than to make some loans from a larder hanging near by, having a good bed in prospect, and alone with a pretty girl. The adventure smacked of enchantment. He began seriously to take himself for a personage in a fairy tale; he cast his eyes about him from time to time to time, as though to see if the chariot of fire, harnessed to two-winged chimeras, which alone could have so rapidly transported him from Tartarus to Paradise, were still there. At times, also, he fixed his eyes obstinately upon the holes in his doublet, in order to cling to reality, and not lose the ground from under his feet completely. His reason, tossed about in imaginary space, now hung only by this thread.

The young girl did not appear to pay any attention to him; she went and came, displaced a stool, talked to her goat, and indulged in a pout now and then. At last she came and seated herself near the table, and Gringoire was able to scrutinize her at his ease.

You have been a child, reader, and you would, perhaps, be very happy to be one still. It is quite certain that you have not, more than once (and for my part, I have passed whole days, the best employed of my life, at it) followed from thicket to thicket, by the side of running water, on a

sunny day, a beautiful green or blue dragon-fly, breaking its flight in abrupt angles, and kissing the tips of all the branches. You recollect with what amorous curiosity your thought and your gaze were riveted upon this little whirlwind, hissing and humming with wings of purple and azure, in the midst of which floated an imperceptible body, veiled by the very rapidity of its movement. The aerial being which was dimly outlined amid this quivering of wings, appeared to you chimerical, imaginary, impossible to touch, impossible to see. But when, at length, the dragon-fly alighted on the tip of a reed, and, holding your breath the while, you were able to examine the long, gauze wings, the long enamel robe, the two globes of crystal, what astonishment you felt, and what fear lest you should again behold the form disappear into a shade, and the creature into a chimera! Recall these impressions, and you will readily appreciate what Gringoire felt on contemplating, beneath her visible and palpable form, that Esmeralda of whom, up to that time, he had only caught a glimpse, amidst a whirlwind of dance, song, and tumult.

Sinking deeper and deeper into his revery: "So this," he said to himself, following her vaguely with his eyes, "is la Esmeralda! a celestial creature! a street dancer! so much, and so little! 'Twas she who dealt the death-blow to my mystery this morning, 'tis she who saves my life this evening! My evil genius! My good angel! A pretty woman, on my word! and who must needs love me madly to have taken me in that fashion. By the way," said he, rising suddenly, with that sentiment of the true which formed the foundation of his character and his philosophy, "I don't know very well how it happens, but I am her

husband!"

With this idea in his head and in his eyes, he stepped up to the young girl in a manner so military and so gallant that she drew back.

"What do you want of me?" said she.

"Can you ask me, adorable Esmeralda?" replied Gringoire, with so passionate an accent that he was himself astonished at it on hearing himself speak.

The gypsy opened her great eyes. "I don't know what you mean."

"What!" resumed Gringoire, growing warmer and warmer, and supposing that, after all, he had to deal merely with a virtue of the Cour des Miracles; "am I not thine, sweet friend, art thou not mine?"

And, quite ingenuously, he clasped her waist.

The gypsy's corsage slipped through his hands like the skin of an eel. She bounded from one end of the tiny room to the other, stooped down, and raised herself again, with a little poniard in her hand, before Gringoire had even had time to see whence the poniard came; proud and angry, with swelling lips and inflated nostrils, her cheeks as red as an api apple,* and her eyes darting lightnings. At the same time, the white goat placed itself in front of her, and presented to Gringoire a hostile front, bristling with two pretty horns, gilded and very sharp. All this

took place in the twinkling of an eye.

* A small dessert apple, bright red on one side and greenish-white on the other.

The dragon-fly had turned into a wasp, and asked nothing better than to sting.

Our philosopher was speechless, and turned his astonished eyes from the goat to the young girl. "Holy Virgin!" he said at last, when surprise permitted him to speak, "here are two hearty dames!"

The gypsy broke the silence on her side.

"You must be a very bold knave!"

"Pardon, mademoiselle," said Gringoire, with a smile. "But why did you take me for your husband?"

"Should I have allowed you to be hanged?"

"So," said the poet, somewhat disappointed in his amorous hopes. "You had no other idea in marrying me than to save me from the gibbet?"

"And what other idea did you suppose that I had?"

Gringoire bit his lips. "Come," said he, "I am not yet so triumphant in Cupido, as I thought. But then, what was the good of breaking that poor jug?"

Meanwhile Esmeralda's dagger and the goat's horns were still upon the defensive.

"Mademoiselle Esmeralda," said the poet, "let us come to terms. I am not a clerk of the court, and I shall not go to law with you for thus carrying a dagger in Paris, in the teeth of the ordinances and prohibitions of M. the Provost. Nevertheless, you are not ignorant of the fact that Noel Lescrivain was condemned, a week ago, to pay ten Parisian sous, for having carried a cutlass. But this is no affair of mine, and I will come to the point. I swear to you, upon my share of Paradise, not to approach you without your leave and permission, but do give me some supper."

The truth is, Gringoire was, like M. Despreaux, "not very voluptuous." He did not belong to that chevalier and musketeer species, who take young girls by assault. In the matter of love, as in all other affairs, he willingly assented to temporizing and adjusting terms; and a good supper, and an amiable tête-a-tête appeared to him, especially when he was hungry, an excellent interlude between the prologue and the catastrophe of a love adventure.

The gypsy did not reply. She made her disdainful little grimace, drew

up her head like a bird, then burst out laughing, and the tiny poniard disappeared as it had come, without Gringoire being able to see where the wasp concealed its sting.

A moment later, there stood upon the table a loaf of rye bread, a slice of bacon, some wrinkled apples and a jug of beer. Gringoire began to eat eagerly. One would have said, to hear the furious clashing of his iron fork and his earthenware plate, that all his love had turned to appetite.

The young girl seated opposite him, watched him in silence, visibly preoccupied with another thought, at which she smiled from time to time, while her soft hand caressed the intelligent head of the goat, gently pressed between her knees.

A candle of yellow wax illuminated this scene of voracity and revery.

Meanwhile, the first cravings of his stomach having been stilled, Gringoire felt some false shame at perceiving that nothing remained but one apple.

"You do not eat, Mademoiselle Esmeralda?"

She replied by a negative sign of the head, and her pensive glance fixed itself upon the vault of the ceiling.

"What the deuce is she thinking of?" thought Gringoire, staring at what

she was gazing at; "'tis impossible that it can be that stone dwarf carved in the keystone of that arch, which thus absorbs her attention. What the deuce! I can bear the comparison!"

He raised his voice, "Mademoiselle!"

She seemed not to hear him.

He repeated, still more loudly, "Mademoiselle Esmeralda!"

Trouble wasted. The young girl's mind was elsewhere, and Gringoire's voice had not the power to recall it. Fortunately, the goat interfered. She began to pull her mistress gently by the sleeve.

"What dost thou want, Djali?" said the gypsy, hastily, as though suddenly awakened.

"She is hungry," said Gringoire, charmed to enter into conversation. Esmeralda began to crumble some bread, which Djali ate gracefully from the hollow of her hand.

Moreover, Gringoire did not give her time to resume her revery. He hazarded a delicate question.

"So you don't want me for your husband?"

The young girl looked at him intently, and said, "No."

"For your lover?" went on Gringoire.

She pouted, and replied, "No."

"For your friend?" pursued Gringoire.

She gazed fixedly at him again, and said, after a momentary reflection, "Perhaps."

This "perhaps," so dear to philosophers, emboldened Gringoire.

"Do you know what friendship is?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the gypsy; "it is to be brother and sister; two souls which touch without mingling, two fingers on one hand."

"And love?" pursued Gringoire.

"Oh! love!" said she, and her voice trembled, and her eye beamed. "That is to be two and to be but one. A man and a woman mingled into one angel. It is heaven."

The street dancer had a beauty as she spoke thus, that struck Gringoire singularly, and seemed to him in perfect keeping with the almost oriental exaltation of her words. Her pure, red lips half smiled; her serene and candid brow became troubled, at intervals, under her

thoughts, like a mirror under the breath; and from beneath her long, drooping, black eyelashes, there escaped a sort of ineffable light, which gave to her profile that ideal serenity which Raphael found at the mystic point of intersection of virginity, maternity, and divinity.

Nevertheless, Gringoire continued,--

"What must one be then, in order to please you?"

"A man."

"And I--" said he, "what, then, am I?"

"A man has a hemlet on his head, a sword in his hand, and golden spurs on his heels."

"Good," said Gringoire, "without a horse, no man. Do you love any one?"

"As a lover?--"

"Yes."

She remained thoughtful for a moment, then said with a peculiar expression: "That I shall know soon."

"Why not this evening?" resumed the poet tenderly. "Why not me?"

She cast a grave glance upon him and said,--

"I can never love a man who cannot protect me."

Gringoire colored, and took the hint. It was evident that the young girl was alluding to the slight assistance which he had rendered her in the critical situation in which she had found herself two hours previously. This memory, effaced by his own adventures of the evening, now recurred to him. He smote his brow.

"By the way, mademoiselle, I ought to have begun there. Pardon my foolish absence of mind. How did you contrive to escape from the claws of Quasimodo?"

This question made the gypsy shudder.

"Oh! the horrible hunchback," said she, hiding her face in her hands. And she shuddered as though with violent cold.

"Horrible, in truth," said Gringoire, who clung to his idea; "but how did you manage to escape him?"

La Esmeralda smiled, sighed, and remained silent.

"Do you know why he followed you?" began Gringoire again, seeking to return to his question by a circuitous route.

"I don't know," said the young girl, and she added hastily, "but you were following me also, why were you following me?"

"In good faith," responded Gringoire, "I don't know either."

Silence ensued. Gringoire slashed the table with his knife. The young girl smiled and seemed to be gazing through the wall at something. All at once she began to sing in a barely articulate voice,--

Quando las pintadas aves,
Mudas estan, y la tierra--*

* When the gay-plumaged birds grow weary, and the earth--

She broke off abruptly, and began to caress Djali.

"That's a pretty animal of yours," said Gringoire.

"She is my sister," she answered.

"Why are you called 'la Esmeralda?'" asked the poet.

"I do not know."

"But why?"

She drew from her bosom a sort of little oblong bag, suspended from her neck by a string of adrézarach beads. This bag exhaled a strong odor of camphor. It was covered with green silk, and bore in its centre a large piece of green glass, in imitation of an emerald.

"Perhaps it is because of this," said she.

Gringoire was on the point of taking the bag in his hand. She drew back.

"Don't touch it! It is an amulet. You would injure the charm or the charm would injure you."

The poet's curiosity was more and more aroused.

"Who gave it to you?"

She laid one finger on her mouth and concealed the amulet in her bosom. He tried a few more questions, but she hardly replied.

"What is the meaning of the words, 'la Esmeralda?'"

"I don't know," said she.

"To what language do they belong?"

"They are Egyptian, I think."

"I suspected as much," said Gringoire, "you are not a native of France?"

"I don't know."

"Are your parents alive?"

She began to sing, to an ancient air,--

Mon père est oiseau,
Ma mère est oiselle.
Je passe l'eau sans nacelle,
Je passe l'eau sans bateau,
Ma mère est oiselle,
Mon père est oiseau.*

* My father is a bird, my mother is a bird. I cross the water without a barque, I cross the water without a boat. My mother is a bird, my father is a bird.

"Good," said Gringoire. "At what age did you come to France?"

"When I was very young."

"And when to Paris?"

"Last year. At the moment when we were entering the papal gate I saw a reed warbler flit through the air, that was at the end of August; I said, it will be a hard winter."

"So it was," said Gringoire, delighted at this beginning of a conversation. "I passed it in blowing my fingers. So you have the gift of prophecy?"

She retired into her laconics again.

"Is that man whom you call the Duke of Egypt, the chief of your tribe?"

"Yes."

"But it was he who married us," remarked the poet timidly.

She made her customary pretty grimace.

"I don't even know your name."

"My name? If you want it, here it is,--Pierre Gringoire."

"I know a prettier one," said she.

"Naughty girl!" retorted the poet. "Never mind, you shall not provoke

me. Wait, perhaps you will love me more when you know me better; and then, you have told me your story with so much confidence, that I owe you a little of mine. You must know, then, that my name is Pierre Gringoire, and that I am a son of the farmer of the notary's office of Gonesse. My father was hung by the Burgundians, and my mother disembowelled by the Picards, at the siege of Paris, twenty years ago. At six years of age, therefore, I was an orphan, without a sole to my foot except the pavements of Paris. I do not know how I passed the interval from six to sixteen. A fruit dealer gave me a plum here, a baker flung me a crust there; in the evening I got myself taken up by the watch, who threw me into prison, and there I found a bundle of straw. All this did not prevent my growing up and growing thin, as you see. In the winter I warmed myself in the sun, under the porch of the Hôtel de Sens, and I thought it very ridiculous that the fire on Saint John's Day was reserved for the dog days. At sixteen, I wished to choose a calling. I tried all in succession. I became a soldier; but I was not brave enough. I became a monk; but I was not sufficiently devout; and then I'm a bad hand at drinking. In despair, I became an apprentice of the woodcutters, but I was not strong enough; I had more of an inclination to become a schoolmaster; 'tis true that I did not know how to read, but that's no reason. I perceived at the end of a certain time, that I lacked something in every direction; and seeing that I was good for nothing, of my own free will I became a poet and rhymester. That is a trade which one can always adopt when one is a vagabond, and it's better than stealing, as some young brigands of my acquaintance advised me to do. One day I met by luck, Dom Claude Frollo, the reverend archdeacon of Notre-Dame. He took an interest in me, and it is to him

that I to-day owe it that I am a veritable man of letters, who knows Latin from the de Officiis of Cicero to the mortuology of the Celestine Fathers, and a barbarian neither in scholastics, nor in politics, nor in rhythmics, that sophism of sophisms. I am the author of the Mystery which was presented to-day with great triumph and a great concourse of populace, in the grand hall of the Palais de Justice. I have also made a book which will contain six hundred pages, on the wonderful comet of 1465, which sent one man mad. I have enjoyed still other successes. Being somewhat of an artillery carpenter, I lent a hand to Jean Mangue's great bombard, which burst, as you know, on the day when it was tested, on the Pont de Charenton, and killed four and twenty curious spectators. You see that I am not a bad match in marriage. I know a great many sorts of very engaging tricks, which I will teach your goat; for example, to mimic the Bishop of Paris, that cursed Pharisee whose mill wheels splash passers-by the whole length of the Pont aux Meuniers. And then my mystery will bring me in a great deal of coined money, if they will only pay me. And finally, I am at your orders, I and my wits, and my science and my letters, ready to live with you, damsel, as it shall please you, chastely or joyously; husband and wife, if you see fit; brother and sister, if you think that better."

Gringoire ceased, awaiting the effect of his harangue on the young girl. Her eyes were fixed on the ground.

"'Phoebus,'" she said in a low voice. Then, turning towards the poet, "'Phoebus',--what does that mean?"

Gringoire, without exactly understanding what the connection could be between his address and this question, was not sorry to display his erudition. Assuming an air of importance, he replied,--

"It is a Latin word which means 'sun.'"

"Sun!" she repeated.

"It is the name of a handsome archer, who was a god," added Gringoire.

"A god!" repeated the gypsy, and there was something pensive and passionate in her tone.

At that moment, one of her bracelets became unfastened and fell. Gringoire stooped quickly to pick it up; when he straightened up, the young girl and the goat had disappeared. He heard the sound of a bolt. It was a little door, communicating, no doubt, with a neighboring cell, which was being fastened on the outside.

"Has she left me a bed, at least?" said our philosopher.

He made the tour of his cell. There was no piece of furniture adapted to sleeping purposes, except a tolerably long wooden coffer; and its cover was carved, to boot; which afforded Gringoire, when he stretched himself out upon it, a sensation somewhat similar to that which Micromégas would feel if he were to lie down on the Alps.

"Come!" said he, adjusting himself as well as possible, "I must resign myself. But here's a strange nuptial night. 'Tis a pity. There was something innocent and antediluvian about that broken crock, which quite pleased me."