BOOK THIRD.

CHAPTER I. NOTRE-DAME.

The church of Notre-Dame de Paris is still no doubt, a majestic and sublime edifice. But, beautiful as it has been preserved in growing old, it is difficult not to sigh, not to wax indignant, before the numberless degradations and mutilations which time and men have both caused the venerable monument to suffer, without respect for Charlemagne, who laid its first stone, or for Philip Augustus, who laid the last.

On the face of this aged queen of our cathedrals, by the side of a wrinkle, one always finds a scar. Tempus edax, homo edacior*; which I should be glad to translate thus: time is blind, man is stupid.

* Time is a devourer; man, more so.

If we had leisure to examine with the reader, one by one, the diverse traces of destruction imprinted upon the old church, time's share would be the least, the share of men the most, especially the men of art, since there have been individuals who assumed the title of architects during the last two centuries.

And, in the first place, to cite only a few leading examples, there certainly are few finer architectural pages than this façade, where, successively and at once, the three portals hollowed out in an arch; the broidered and dentated cordon of the eight and twenty royal niches; the immense central rose window, flanked by its two lateral windows, like a priest by his deacon and subdeacon; the frail and lofty gallery of trefoil arcades, which supports a heavy platform above its fine, slender columns; and lastly, the two black and massive towers with their slate penthouses, harmonious parts of a magnificent whole, superposed in five gigantic stories;--develop themselves before the eye, in a mass and without confusion, with their innumerable details of statuary, carving, and sculpture, joined powerfully to the tranquil grandeur of the whole; a vast symphony in stone, so to speak; the colossal work of one man and one people, all together one and complex, like the Iliads and the Romanceros, whose sister it is; prodigious product of the grouping together of all the forces of an epoch, where, upon each stone, one sees the fancy of the workman disciplined by the genius of the artist start forth in a hundred fashions; a sort of human creation, in a word, powerful and fecund as the divine creation of which it seems to have stolen the double character,--variety, eternity.

And what we here say of the façade must be said of the entire church; and what we say of the cathedral church of Paris, must be said of all the churches of Christendom in the Middle Ages. All things are in place in that art, self-created, logical, and well proportioned. To measure the great toe of the foot is to measure the giant.

Let us return to the façade of Notre-Dame, as it still appears to us, when we go piously to admire the grave and puissant cathedral, which inspires terror, so its chronicles assert: quoe mole sua terrorem incutit spectantibus.

Three important things are to-day lacking in that façade: in the first place, the staircase of eleven steps which formerly raised it above the soil; next, the lower series of statues which occupied the niches of the three portals; and lastly the upper series, of the twenty-eight most ancient kings of France, which garnished the gallery of the first story, beginning with Childebert, and ending with Phillip Augustus, holding in his hand "the imperial apple."

Time has caused the staircase to disappear, by raising the soil of the city with a slow and irresistible progress; but, while thus causing the eleven steps which added to the majestic height of the edifice, to be devoured, one by one, by the rising tide of the pavements of Paris,--time has bestowed upon the church perhaps more than it has taken away, for it is time which has spread over the façade that sombre hue of the centuries which makes the old age of monuments the period of their beauty.

But who has thrown down the two rows of statues? who has left the niches empty? who has cut, in the very middle of the central portal, that new and bastard arch? who has dared to frame therein that commonplace and heavy door of carved wood, à la Louis XV., beside the arabesques of Biscornette? The men, the architects, the artists of our day.

And if we enter the interior of the edifice, who has overthrown that colossus of Saint Christopher, proverbial for magnitude among statues, as the grand hall of the Palais de Justice was among halls, as the spire of Strasbourg among spires? And those myriads of statues, which peopled all the spaces between the columns of the nave and the choir, kneeling, standing, equestrian, men, women, children, kings, bishops, gendarmes, in stone, in marble, in gold, in silver, in copper, in wax even,--who has brutally swept them away? It is not time.

And who substituted for the ancient gothic altar, splendidly encumbered with shrines and reliquaries, that heavy marble sarcophagus, with angels' heads and clouds, which seems a specimen pillaged from the Val-de-Grâce or the Invalides? Who stupidly sealed that heavy anachronism of stone in the Carlovingian pavement of Hercandus? Was it not Louis XIV., fulfilling the request of Louis XIII.?

And who put the cold, white panes in the place of those windows, "high in color," which caused the astonished eyes of our fathers to hesitate between the rose of the grand portal and the arches of the apse? And what would a sub-chanter of the sixteenth century say, on beholding

the beautiful yellow wash, with which our archiepiscopal vandals have desmeared their cathedral? He would remember that it was the color with which the hangman smeared "accursed" edifices; he would recall the Hôtel du Petit-Bourbon, all smeared thus, on account of the constable's treason. "Yellow, after all, of so good a quality," said Sauval, "and so well recommended, that more than a century has not yet caused it to lose its color." He would think that the sacred place had become infamous, and would flee.

And if we ascend the cathedral, without mentioning a thousand barbarisms of every sort,--what has become of that charming little bell tower, which rested upon the point of intersection of the cross-roofs, and which, no less frail and no less bold than its neighbor (also destroyed), the spire of the Sainte-Chapelle, buried itself in the sky, farther forward than the towers, slender, pointed, sonorous, carved in open work. An architect of good taste amputated it (1787), and considered it sufficient to mask the wound with that large, leaden plaster, which resembles a pot cover.

'Tis thus that the marvellous art of the Middle Ages has been treated in nearly every country, especially in France. One can distinguish on its ruins three sorts of lesions, all three of which cut into it at different depths; first, time, which has insensibly notched its surface here and there, and gnawed it everywhere; next, political and religious revolution, which, blind and wrathful by nature, have flung themselves tumultuously upon it, torn its rich garment of carving and sculpture, burst its rose windows, broken its necklace of arabesques and tiny

figures, torn out its statues, sometimes because of their mitres, sometimes because of their crowns; lastly, fashions, even more grotesque and foolish, which, since the anarchical and splendid deviations of the Renaissance, have followed each other in the necessary decadence of architecture. Fashions have wrought more harm than revolutions. They have cut to the quick; they have attacked the very bone and framework of art; they have cut, slashed, disorganized, killed the edifice, in form as in the symbol, in its consistency as well as in its beauty. And then they have made it over; a presumption of which neither time nor revolutions at least have been guilty. They have audaciously adjusted, in the name of "good taste," upon the wounds of gothic architecture, their miserable gewgaws of a day, their ribbons of marble, their pompons of metal, a veritable leprosy of egg-shaped ornaments, volutes, whorls, draperies, garlands, fringes, stone flames, bronze clouds, pudgy cupids, chubby-cheeked cherubim, which begin to devour the face of art in the oratory of Catherine de Medicis, and cause it to expire, two centuries later, tortured and grimacing, in the boudoir of the Dubarry.

Thus, to sum up the points which we have just indicated, three sorts of ravages to-day disfigure Gothic architecture. Wrinkles and warts on the epidermis; this is the work of time. Deeds of violence, brutalities, contusions, fractures; this is the work of the revolutions from Luther to Mirabeau. Mutilations, amputations, dislocation of the joints, "restorations"; this is the Greek, Roman, and barbarian work of professors according to Vitruvius and Vignole. This magnificent art produced by the Vandals has been slain by the academies. The centuries, the revolutions, which at least devastate with impartiality and

grandeur, have been joined by a cloud of school architects, licensed, sworn, and bound by oath; defacing with the discernment and choice of bad taste, substituting the chicorées of Louis XV. for the Gothic lace, for the greater glory of the Parthenon. It is the kick of the ass at the dying lion. It is the old oak crowning itself, and which, to heap the measure full, is stung, bitten, and gnawed by caterpillars.

How far it is from the epoch when Robert Cenalis, comparing Notre-Dame de Paris to the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, *so much lauded by the ancient pagans*, which Erostatus *has* immortalized, found the Gallic temple "more excellent in length, breadth, height, and structure."*

* Histoire Gallicane, liv. II. Periode III. fo. 130, p. 1.

Notre-Dame is not, moreover, what can be called a complete, definite, classified monument. It is no longer a Romanesque church; nor is it a Gothic church. This edifice is not a type. Notre-Dame de Paris has not, like the Abbey of Tournus, the grave and massive frame, the large and round vault, the glacial bareness, the majestic simplicity of the edifices which have the rounded arch for their progenitor. It is not, like the Cathedral of Bourges, the magnificent, light, multiform, tufted, bristling efflorescent product of the pointed arch. Impossible to class it in that ancient family of sombre, mysterious churches, low and crushed as it were by the round arch, almost Egyptian, with the

exception of the ceiling; all hieroglyphics, all sacerdotal, all symbolical, more loaded in their ornaments, with lozenges and zigzags, than with flowers, with flowers than with animals, with animals than with men; the work of the architect less than of the bishop; first transformation of art, all impressed with theocratic and military discipline, taking root in the Lower Empire, and stopping with the time of William the Conqueror. Impossible to place our Cathedral in that other family of lofty, aerial churches, rich in painted windows and sculpture; pointed in form, bold in attitude; communal and bourgeois as political symbols; free, capricious, lawless, as a work of art; second transformation of architecture, no longer hieroglyphic, immovable and sacerdotal, but artistic, progressive, and popular, which begins at the return from the crusades, and ends with Louis IX. Notre-Dame de Paris is not of pure Romanesque, like the first; nor of pure Arabian race, like the second.

It is an edifice of the transition period. The Saxon architect completed the erection of the first pillars of the nave, when the pointed arch, which dates from the Crusade, arrived and placed itself as a conqueror upon the large Romanesque capitals which should support only round arches. The pointed arch, mistress since that time, constructed the rest of the church. Nevertheless, timid and inexperienced at the start, it sweeps out, grows larger, restrains itself, and dares no longer dart upwards in spires and lancet windows, as it did later on, in so many marvellous cathedrals. One would say that it were conscious of the vicinity of the heavy Romanesque pillars.

However, these edifices of the transition from the Romanesque to the Gothic, are no less precious for study than the pure types. They express a shade of the art which would be lost without them. It is the graft of the pointed upon the round arch.

Notre-Dame de Paris is, in particular, a curious specimen of this variety. Each face, each stone of the venerable monument, is a page not only of the history of the country, but of the history of science and art as well. Thus, in order to indicate here only the principal details, while the little Red Door almost attains to the limits of the Gothic delicacy of the fifteenth century, the pillars of the nave, by their size and weight, go back to the Carlovingian Abbey of Saint-Germain des Prés. One would suppose that six centuries separated these pillars from that door. There is no one, not even the hermetics, who does not find in the symbols of the grand portal a satisfactory compendium of their science, of which the Church of Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie was so complete a hieroglyph. Thus, the Roman abbey, the philosophers' church, the Gothic art, Saxon art, the heavy, round pillar, which recalls Gregory VII., the hermetic symbolism, with which Nicolas Flamel played the prelude to Luther, papal unity, schism, Saint-Germain des Prés, Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie,--all are mingled, combined, amalgamated in Notre-Dame. This central mother church is, among the ancient churches of Paris, a sort of chimera; it has the head of one, the limbs of another, the haunches of another, something of all.

We repeat it, these hybrid constructions are not the least interesting for the artist, for the antiquarian, for the historian. They make

one feel to what a degree architecture is a primitive thing, by demonstrating (what is also demonstrated by the cyclopean vestiges, the pyramids of Egypt, the gigantic Hindoo pagodas) that the greatest products of architecture are less the works of individuals than of society; rather the offspring of a nation's effort, than the inspired flash of a man of genius; the deposit left by a whole people; the heaps accumulated by centuries; the residue of successive evaporations of human society,--in a word, species of formations. Each wave of time contributes its alluvium, each race deposits its layer on the monument, each individual brings his stone. Thus do the beavers, thus do the bees, thus do men. The great symbol of architecture, Babel, is a hive.

Great edifices, like great mountains, are the work of centuries. Art often undergoes a transformation while they are pending, pendent opera interrupta; they proceed quietly in accordance with the transformed art. The new art takes the monument where it finds it, incrusts itself there, assimilates it to itself, develops it according to its fancy, and finishes it if it can. The thing is accomplished without trouble, without effort, without reaction,--following a natural and tranquil law. It is a graft which shoots up, a sap which circulates, a vegetation which starts forth anew. Certainly there is matter here for many large volumes, and often the universal history of humanity in the successive engrafting of many arts at many levels, upon the same monument. The man, the artist, the individual, is effaced in these great masses, which lack the name of their author; human intelligence is there summed up and totalized. Time is the architect, the nation is the builder.

Not to consider here anything except the Christian architecture of Europe, that younger sister of the great masonries of the Orient, it appears to the eyes as an immense formation divided into three well-defined zones, which are superposed, the one upon the other: the Romanesque zone*, the Gothic zone, the zone of the Renaissance, which we would gladly call the Greco-Roman zone. The Roman layer, which is the most ancient and deepest, is occupied by the round arch, which reappears, supported by the Greek column, in the modern and upper layer of the Renaissance. The pointed arch is found between the two. The edifices which belong exclusively to any one of these three layers are perfectly distinct, uniform, and complete. There is the Abbey of Jumiéges, there is the Cathedral of Reims, there is the Sainte-Croix of Orleans. But the three zones mingle and amalgamate along the edges, like the colors in the solar spectrum. Hence, complex monuments, edifices of gradation and transition. One is Roman at the base, Gothic in the middle, Greco-Roman at the top. It is because it was six hundred years in building. This variety is rare. The donjon keep of d'Etampes is a specimen of it. But monuments of two formations are more frequent. There is Notre-Dame de Paris, a pointed-arch edifice, which is imbedded by its pillars in that Roman zone, in which are plunged the portal of Saint-Denis, and the nave of Saint-Germain des Prés. There is the charming, half-Gothic chapter-house of Bocherville, where the Roman layer extends half way up. There is the cathedral of Rouen, which would be entirely Gothic if it did not bathe the tip of its central spire in the zone of the Renaissance.**

* This is the same which is called, according to locality, climate, and races, Lombard, Saxon, or Byzantine. There are four sister and parallel architectures, each having its special character, but derived from the same origin, the round arch.

Facies non omnibus una,
No diversa tamen, qualem, etc.

Their faces not all alike, nor yet different, but such as the faces of sisters ought to be.

** This portion of the spire, which was of woodwork, is precisely that which was consumed by lightning, in 1823.

However, all these shades, all these differences, do not affect the surfaces of edifices only. It is art which has changed its skin. The very constitution of the Christian church is not attacked by it. There is always the same internal woodwork, the same logical arrangement of parts. Whatever may be the carved and embroidered envelope of a cathedral, one always finds beneath it--in the state of a germ, and of a rudiment at the least--the Roman basilica. It is eternally developed upon the soil according to the same law. There are, invariably, two naves, which intersect in a cross, and whose upper portion, rounded into an apse, forms the choir; there are always the side aisles, for interior processions, for chapels,--a sort of lateral walks or promenades where the principal nave discharges itself through the spaces between the

pillars. That settled, the number of chapels, doors, bell towers, and pinnacles are modified to infinity, according to the fancy of the century, the people, and art. The service of religion once assured and provided for, architecture does what she pleases. Statues, stained glass, rose windows, arabesques, denticulations, capitals, bas-reliefs,--she combines all these imaginings according to the arrangement which best suits her. Hence, the prodigious exterior variety of these edifices, at whose foundation dwells so much order and unity. The trunk of a tree is immovable; the foliage is capricious.

CHAPTER II. A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PARIS.

We have just attempted to restore, for the reader's benefit, that admirable church of Notre-Dame de Paris. We have briefly pointed out the greater part of the beauties which it possessed in the fifteenth century, and which it lacks to-day; but we have omitted the principal thing,--the view of Paris which was then to be obtained from the summits of its towers.

That was, in fact,--when, after having long groped one's way up the dark spiral which perpendicularly pierces the thick wall of the belfries, one emerged, at last abruptly, upon one of the lofty platforms inundated with light and air,--that was, in fact, a fine picture which spread out, on all sides at once, before the eye; a spectacle sui generis, of which those of our readers who have had the good fortune to see a Gothic city entire, complete, homogeneous,--a few of which still remain, Nuremberg in Bavaria and Vittoria in Spain,--can readily form an idea; or even smaller specimens, provided that they are well preserved,--Vitré in Brittany, Nordhausen in Prussia.

The Paris of three hundred and fifty years ago--the Paris of the fifteenth century--was already a gigantic city. We Parisians generally make a mistake as to the ground which we think that we have gained, since Paris has not increased much over one-third since the time of

Louis XI. It has certainly lost more in beauty than it has gained in size.

Paris had its birth, as the reader knows, in that old island of the City which has the form of a cradle. The strand of that island was its first boundary wall, the Seine its first moat. Paris remained for many centuries in its island state, with two bridges, one on the north, the other on the south; and two bridge heads, which were at the same time its gates and its fortresses,--the Grand-Châtelet on the right bank, the Petit-Châtelet on the left. Then, from the date of the kings of the first race, Paris, being too cribbed and confined in its island, and unable to return thither, crossed the water. Then, beyond the Grand, beyond the Petit-Châtelet, a first circle of walls and towers began to infringe upon the country on the two sides of the Seine. Some vestiges of this ancient enclosure still remained in the last century; to-day, only the memory of it is left, and here and there a tradition, the Baudets or Baudoyer gate, "Porte Bagauda".

Little by little, the tide of houses, always thrust from the heart of the city outwards, overflows, devours, wears away, and effaces this wall. Philip Augustus makes a new dike for it. He imprisons Paris in a circular chain of great towers, both lofty and solid. For the period of more than a century, the houses press upon each other, accumulate, and raise their level in this basin, like water in a reservoir. They begin to deepen; they pile story upon story; they mount upon each other; they gush forth at the top, like all laterally compressed growth, and there is a rivalry as to which shall thrust its head above its neighbors, for

the sake of getting a little air. The street glows narrower and deeper, every space is overwhelmed and disappears. The houses finally leap the wall of Philip Augustus, and scatter joyfully over the plain, without order, and all askew, like runaways. There they plant themselves squarely, cut themselves gardens from the fields, and take their ease. Beginning with 1367, the city spreads to such an extent into the suburbs, that a new wall becomes necessary, particularly on the right bank; Charles V. builds it. But a city like Paris is perpetually growing. It is only such cities that become capitals. They are funnels, into which all the geographical, political, moral, and intellectual water-sheds of a country, all the natural slopes of a people, pour; wells of civilization, so to speak, and also sewers, where commerce, industry, intelligence, population,--all that is sap, all that is life, all that is the soul of a nation, filters and amasses unceasingly, drop by drop, century by century.

So Charles V.'s wall suffered the fate of that of Philip Augustus. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Faubourg strides across it, passes beyond it, and runs farther. In the sixteenth, it seems to retreat visibly, and to bury itself deeper and deeper in the old city, so thick had the new city already become outside of it. Thus, beginning with the fifteenth century, where our story finds us, Paris had already outgrown the three concentric circles of walls which, from the time of Julian the Apostate, existed, so to speak, in germ in the Grand-Châtelet and the Petit-Châtelet. The mighty city had cracked, in succession, its four enclosures of walls, like a child grown too large for his garments of

last year. Under Louis XI., this sea of houses was seen to be pierced at intervals by several groups of ruined towers, from the ancient wall, like the summits of hills in an inundation,--like archipelagos of the old Paris submerged beneath the new. Since that time Paris has undergone yet another transformation, unfortunately for our eyes; but it has passed only one more wall, that of Louis XV., that miserable wall of mud and spittle, worthy of the king who built it, worthy of the poet who sung it,--

Le mur murant Paris rend Paris murmurant.*

* The wall walling Paris makes Paris murmur.

In the fifteenth century, Paris was still divided into three wholly distinct and separate towns, each having its own physiognomy, its own specialty, its manners, customs, privileges, and history: the City, the University, the Town. The City, which occupied the island, was the most ancient, the smallest, and the mother of the other two, crowded in between them like (may we be pardoned the comparison) a little old woman between two large and handsome maidens. The University covered the left bank of the Seine, from the Tournelle to the Tour de Nesle, points which correspond in the Paris of to-day, the one to the wine market, the other to the mint. Its wall included a large part of that plain where Julian had built his hot baths. The hill of Sainte-Geneviève was enclosed in it. The culminating point of this sweep of walls was the Papal gate,

that is to say, near the present site of the Pantheon. The Town, which was the largest of the three fragments of Paris, held the right bank. Its quay, broken or interrupted in many places, ran along the Seine, from the Tour de Billy to the Tour du Bois; that is to say, from the place where the granary stands to-day, to the present site of the Tuileries. These four points, where the Seine intersected the wall of the capital, the Tournelle and the Tour de Nesle on the right, the Tour de Billy and the Tour du Bois on the left, were called pre-eminently, "the four towers of Paris." The Town encroached still more extensively upon the fields than the University. The culminating point of the Town wall (that of Charles V.) was at the gates of Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin, whose situation has not been changed.

As we have just said, each of these three great divisions of Paris was a town, but too special a town to be complete, a city which could not get along without the other two. Hence three entirely distinct aspects: churches abounded in the City; palaces, in the Town; and colleges, in the University. Neglecting here the originalities, of secondary importance in old Paris, and the capricious regulations regarding the public highways, we will say, from a general point of view, taking only masses and the whole group, in this chaos of communal jurisdictions, that the island belonged to the bishop, the right bank to the provost of the merchants, the left bank to the Rector; over all ruled the provost of Paris, a royal not a municipal official. The City had Notre-Dame; the Town, the Louvre and the Hôtel de Ville; the University, the Sorbonne. The Town had the markets (Halles); the city, the Hospital; the University, the Pré-aux-Clercs. Offences committed by the scholars

on the left bank were tried in the law courts on the island, and were punished on the right bank at Montfauçon; unless the rector, feeling the university to be strong and the king weak, intervened; for it was the students' privilege to be hanged on their own grounds.

The greater part of these privileges, it may be noted in passing, and there were some even better than the above, had been extorted from the kings by revolts and mutinies. It is the course of things from time immemorial; the king only lets go when the people tear away. There is an old charter which puts the matter naively: apropos of fidelity: Civibus fidelitas in reges, quoe tamen aliquoties seditionibus interrypta, multa peperit privileyia.

In the fifteenth century, the Seine bathed five islands within the walls of Paris: Louviers island, where there were then trees, and where there is no longer anything but wood; l'ile aux Vaches, and l'ile Notre-Dame, both deserted, with the exception of one house, both fiefs of the bishop--in the seventeenth century, a single island was formed out of these two, which was built upon and named l'ile Saint-Louis--, lastly the City, and at its point, the little islet of the cow tender, which was afterwards engulfed beneath the platform of the Pont-Neuf. The City then had five bridges: three on the right, the Pont Notre-Dame, and the Pont au Change, of stone, the Pont aux Meuniers, of wood; two on the left, the Petit Pont, of stone, the Pont Saint-Michel, of wood; all loaded with houses.

The University had six gates, built by Philip Augustus; there were,

beginning with la Tournelle, the Porte Saint-Victor, the Porte Bordelle, the Porte Papale, the Porte Saint-Jacques, the Porte Saint-Michel, the Porte Saint-Germain. The Town had six gates, built by Charles V.; beginning with the Tour de Billy they were: the Porte Saint-Antoine, the Porte du Temple, the Porte Saint-Martin, the Porte Saint-Denis, the Porte Montmartre, the Porte Saint-Honoré. All these gates were strong, and also handsome, which does not detract from strength. A large, deep moat, with a brisk current during the high water of winter, bathed the base of the wall round Paris; the Seine furnished the water. At night, the gates were shut, the river was barred at both ends of the city with huge iron chains, and Paris slept tranquilly.

From a bird's-eye view, these three burgs, the City, the Town, and the University, each presented to the eye an inextricable skein of eccentrically tangled streets. Nevertheless, at first sight, one recognized the fact that these three fragments formed but one body. One immediately perceived three long parallel streets, unbroken, undisturbed, traversing, almost in a straight line, all three cities, from one end to the other; from North to South, perpendicularly, to the Seine, which bound them together, mingled them, infused them in each other, poured and transfused the people incessantly, from one to the other, and made one out of the three. The first of these streets ran from the Porte Saint-Martin: it was called the Rue Saint-Jacques in the University, Rue de la Juiverie in the City, Rue Saint-Martin in the Town; it crossed the water twice, under the name of the Petit Pont and the Pont Notre-Dame. The second, which was called the Rue de la Harpe on the left bank, Rue de la Barillerié in the island, Rue Saint-Denis

on the right bank, Pont Saint-Michel on one arm of the Seine, Pont au Change on the other, ran from the Porte Saint-Michel in the University, to the Porte Saint-Denis in the Town. However, under all these names, there were but two streets, parent streets, generating streets,--the two arteries of Paris. All the other veins of the triple city either derived their supply from them or emptied into them.

Independently of these two principal streets, piercing Paris diametrically in its whole breadth, from side to side, common to the entire capital, the City and the University had also each its own great special street, which ran lengthwise by them, parallel to the Seine, cutting, as it passed, at right angles, the two arterial thoroughfares. Thus, in the Town, one descended in a straight line from the Porte Saint-Antoine to the Porte Saint-Honoré; in the University from the Porte Saint-Victor to the Porte Saint-Germain. These two great thoroughfares intersected by the two first, formed the canvas upon which reposed, knotted and crowded together on every hand, the labyrinthine network of the streets of Paris. In the incomprehensible plan of these streets, one distinguished likewise, on looking attentively, two clusters of great streets, like magnified sheaves of grain, one in the University, the other in the Town, which spread out gradually from the bridges to the gates.

Some traces of this geometrical plan still exist to-day.

Now, what aspect did this whole present, when, as viewed from the summit of the towers of Notre-Dame, in 1482? That we shall try to describe.

For the spectator who arrived, panting, upon that pinnacle, it was first a dazzling confusing view of roofs, chimneys, streets, bridges, places, spires, bell towers. Everything struck your eye at once: the carved gable, the pointed roof, the turrets suspended at the angles of the walls; the stone pyramids of the eleventh century, the slate obelisks of the fifteenth; the round, bare tower of the donjon keep; the square and fretted tower of the church; the great and the little, the massive and the aerial. The eye was, for a long time, wholly lost in this labyrinth, where there was nothing which did not possess its originality, its reason, its genius, its beauty,--nothing which did not proceed from art; beginning with the smallest house, with its painted and carved front, with external beams, elliptical door, with projecting stories, to the royal Louvre, which then had a colonnade of towers. But these are the principal masses which were then to be distinguished when the eye began to accustom itself to this tumult of edifices.

In the first place, the City.--"The island of the City," as Sauval says, who, in spite of his confused medley, sometimes has such happy turns of expression,--"the island of the city is made like a great ship, stuck in the mud and run aground in the current, near the centre of the Seine."

We have just explained that, in the fifteenth century, this ship was anchored to the two banks of the river by five bridges. This form of a ship had also struck the heraldic scribes; for it is from that, and not from the siege by the Normans, that the ship which blazons the old shield of Paris, comes, according to Favyn and Pasquier. For him

who understands how to decipher them, armorial bearings are algebra, armorial bearings have a tongue. The whole history of the second half of the Middle Ages is written in armorial bearings,--the first half is in the symbolism of the Roman churches. They are the hieroglyphics of feudalism, succeeding those of theocracy.

Thus the City first presented itself to the eye, with its stern to the east, and its prow to the west. Turning towards the prow, one had before one an innumerable flock of ancient roofs, over which arched broadly the lead-covered apse of the Sainte-Chapelle, like an elephant's haunches loaded with its tower. Only here, this tower was the most audacious, the most open, the most ornamented spire of cabinet-maker's work that ever let the sky peep through its cone of lace. In front of Notre-Dame, and very near at hand, three streets opened into the cathedral square,--a fine square, lined with ancient houses. Over the south side of this place bent the wrinkled and sullen façade of the Hôtel Dieu, and its roof, which seemed covered with warts and pustules. Then, on the right and the left, to east and west, within that wall of the City, which was yet so contracted, rose the bell towers of its one and twenty churches, of every date, of every form, of every size, from the low and wormeaten belfry of Saint-Denis du Pas (Carcer Glaueini) to the slender needles of Saint-Pierre aux Boeufs and Saint-Landry.

Behind Notre-Dame, the cloister and its Gothic galleries spread out towards the north; on the south, the half-Roman palace of the bishop; on the east, the desert point of the Terrain. In this throng of houses the eye also distinguished, by the lofty open-work mitres of stone which

then crowned the roof itself, even the most elevated windows of the palace, the Hôtel given by the city, under Charles VI., to Juvénal des Ursins; a little farther on, the pitch-covered sheds of the Palus Market; in still another quarter the new apse of Saint-Germain le Vieux, lengthened in 1458, with a bit of the Rue aux Febves; and then, in places, a square crowded with people; a pillory, erected at the corner of a street; a fine fragment of the pavement of Philip Augustus, a magnificent flagging, grooved for the horses' feet, in the middle of the road, and so badly replaced in the sixteenth century by the miserable cobblestones, called the "pavement of the League;" a deserted back courtyard, with one of those diaphanous staircase turrets, such as were erected in the fifteenth century, one of which is still to be seen in the Rue des Bourdonnais. Lastly, at the right of the Sainte-Chapelle, towards the west, the Palais de Justice rested its group of towers at the edge of the water. The thickets of the king's gardens, which covered the western point of the City, masked the Island du Passeur. As for the water, from the summit of the towers of Notre-Dame one hardly saw it, on either side of the City; the Seine was hidden by bridges, the bridges by houses.

And when the glance passed these bridges, whose roofs were visibly green, rendered mouldy before their time by the vapors from the water, if it was directed to the left, towards the University, the first edifice which struck it was a large, low sheaf of towers, the Petit-Châtelet, whose yawning gate devoured the end of the Petit-Pont. Then, if your view ran along the bank, from east to west, from the Tournelle to the Tour de Nesle, there was a long cordon of houses, with

carved beams, stained-glass windows, each story projecting over that beneath it, an interminable zigzag of bourgeois gables, frequently interrupted by the mouth of a street, and from time to time also by the front or angle of a huge stone mansion, planted at its ease, with courts and gardens, wings and detached buildings, amid this populace of crowded and narrow houses, like a grand gentleman among a throng of rustics. There were five or six of these mansions on the quay, from the house of Lorraine, which shared with the Bernardins the grand enclosure adjoining the Tournelle, to the Hôtel de Nesle, whose principal tower ended Paris, and whose pointed roofs were in a position, during three months of the year, to encroach, with their black triangles, upon the scarlet disk of the setting sun.

This side of the Seine was, however, the least mercantile of the two. Students furnished more of a crowd and more noise there than artisans, and there was not, properly speaking, any quay, except from the Pont Saint-Michel to the Tour de Nesle. The rest of the bank of the Seine was now a naked strand, the same as beyond the Bernardins; again, a throng of houses, standing with their feet in the water, as between the two bridges.

There was a great uproar of laundresses; they screamed, and talked, and sang from morning till night along the beach, and beat a great deal of linen there, just as in our day. This is not the least of the gayeties of Paris.

The University presented a dense mass to the eye. From one end to

the other, it was homogeneous and compact. The thousand roofs, dense, angular, clinging to each other, composed, nearly all, of the same geometrical element, offered, when viewed from above, the aspect of a crystallization of the same substance.

The capricious ravine of streets did not cut this block of houses into too disproportionate slices. The forty-two colleges were scattered about in a fairly equal manner, and there were some everywhere. The amusingly varied crests of these beautiful edifices were the product of the same art as the simple roofs which they overshot, and were, actually, only a multiplication of the square or the cube of the same geometrical figure. Hence they complicated the whole effect, without disturbing it; completed, without overloading it. Geometry is harmony. Some fine mansions here and there made magnificent outlines against the picturesque attics of the left bank. The house of Nevers, the house of Rome, the house of Reims, which have disappeared; the Hôtel de Cluny, which still exists, for the consolation of the artist, and whose tower was so stupidly deprived of its crown a few years ago. Close to Cluny, that Roman palace, with fine round arches, were once the hot baths of Julian. There were a great many abbeys, of a beauty more devout, of a grandeur more solemn than the mansions, but not less beautiful, not less grand. Those which first caught the eye were the Bernardins, with their three bell towers; Sainte-Geneviève, whose square tower, which still exists, makes us regret the rest; the Sorbonne, half college, half monastery, of which so admirable a nave survives; the fine quadrilateral cloister of the Mathurins; its neighbor, the cloister of Saint-Benoit, within whose walls they have had time to cobble up a theatre, between

the seventh and eighth editions of this book; the Cordeliers, with their three enormous adjacent gables; the Augustins, whose graceful spire formed, after the Tour de Nesle, the second denticulation on this side of Paris, starting from the west. The colleges, which are, in fact, the intermediate ring between the cloister and the world, hold the middle position in the monumental series between the Hôtels and the abbeys, with a severity full of elegance, sculpture less giddy than the palaces, an architecture less severe than the convents. Unfortunately, hardly anything remains of these monuments, where Gothic art combined with so just a balance, richness and economy. The churches (and they were numerous and splendid in the University, and they were graded there also in all the ages of architecture, from the round arches of Saint-Julian to the pointed arches of Saint-Séverin), the churches dominated the whole; and, like one harmony more in this mass of harmonies, they pierced in quick succession the multiple open work of the gables with slashed spires, with open-work bell towers, with slender pinnacles, whose line was also only a magnificent exaggeration of the acute angle of the roofs.

The ground of the University was hilly; Mount Sainte-Geneviève formed an enormous mound to the south; and it was a sight to see from the summit of Notre-Dame how that throng of narrow and tortuous streets (to-day the Latin Quarter), those bunches of houses which, spread out in every direction from the top of this eminence, precipitated themselves in disorder, and almost perpendicularly down its flanks, nearly to the water's edge, having the air, some of falling, others of clambering up again, and all of holding to one another. A continual flux of a thousand

black points which passed each other on the pavements made everything move before the eyes; it was the populace seen thus from aloft and afar.

Lastly, in the intervals of these roofs, of these spires, of these accidents of numberless edifices, which bent and writhed, and jagged in so eccentric a manner the extreme line of the University, one caught a glimpse, here and there, of a great expanse of moss-grown wall, a thick, round tower, a crenellated city gate, shadowing forth the fortress; it was the wall of Philip Augustus. Beyond, the fields gleamed green; beyond, fled the roads, along which were scattered a few more suburban houses, which became more infrequent as they became more distant. Some of these faubourgs were important: there were, first, starting from la Tournelle, the Bourg Saint-Victor, with its one arch bridge over the Bièvre, its abbey where one could read the epitaph of Louis le Gros, epitaphium Ludovici Grossi, and its church with an octagonal spire, flanked with four little bell towers of the eleventh century (a similar one can be seen at Etampes; it is not yet destroyed); next, the Bourg Saint-Marceau, which already had three churches and one convent; then, leaving the mill of the Gobelins and its four white walls on the left, there was the Faubourg Saint-Jacques with the beautiful carved cross in its square; the church of Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas, which was then Gothic, pointed, charming; Saint-Magloire, a fine nave of the fourteenth century, which Napoleon turned into a hayloft; Notre-Dame des Champs, where there were Byzantine mosaics; lastly, after having left behind, full in the country, the Monastery des Chartreux, a rich edifice contemporary with the Palais de Justice, with its little garden divided into compartments, and the haunted ruins of Vauvert, the eye fell, to

the west, upon the three Roman spires of Saint-Germain des Prés. The Bourg Saint-Germain, already a large community, formed fifteen or twenty streets in the rear; the pointed bell tower of Saint-Sulpice marked one corner of the town. Close beside it one descried the quadrilateral enclosure of the fair of Saint-Germain, where the market is situated to-day; then the abbot's pillory, a pretty little round tower, well capped with a leaden cone; the brickyard was further on, and the Rue du Four, which led to the common bakehouse, and the mill on its hillock, and the lazar house, a tiny house, isolated and half seen.

But that which attracted the eye most of all, and fixed it for a long time on that point, was the abbey itself. It is certain that this monastery, which had a grand air, both as a church and as a seignory; that abbatial palace, where the bishops of Paris counted themselves happy if they could pass the night; that refectory, upon which the architect had bestowed the air, the beauty, and the rose window of a cathedral; that elegant chapel of the Virgin; that monumental dormitory; those vast gardens; that portcullis; that drawbridge; that envelope of battlements which notched to the eye the verdure of the surrounding meadows; those courtyards, where gleamed men at arms, intermingled with golden copes;--the whole grouped and clustered about three lofty spires, with round arches, well planted upon a Gothic apse, made a magnificent figure against the horizon.

When, at length, after having contemplated the University for a long time, you turned towards the right bank, towards the Town, the character of the spectacle was abruptly altered. The Town, in fact much larger

than the University, was also less of a unit. At the first glance, one saw that it was divided into many masses, singularly distinct. First, to the eastward, in that part of the town which still takes its name from the marsh where Camulogènes entangled Caesar, was a pile of palaces. The block extended to the very water's edge. Four almost contiguous Hôtels, Jouy, Sens, Barbeau, the house of the Queen, mirrored their slate peaks, broken with slender turrets, in the Seine.

These four edifices filled the space from the Rue des Nonaindières, to the abbey of the Celestins, whose spire gracefully relieved their line of gables and battlements. A few miserable, greenish hovels, hanging over the water in front of these sumptuous Hôtels, did not prevent one from seeing the fine angles of their façades, their large, square windows with stone mullions, their pointed porches overloaded with statues, the vivid outlines of their walls, always clear cut, and all those charming accidents of architecture, which cause Gothic art to have the air of beginning its combinations afresh with every monument.

Behind these palaces, extended in all directions, now broken, fenced in, battlemented like a citadel, now veiled by great trees like a Carthusian convent, the immense and multiform enclosure of that miraculous Hôtel de Saint-Pol, where the King of France possessed the means of lodging superbly two and twenty princes of the rank of the dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy, with their domestics and their suites, without counting the great lords, and the emperor when he came to view Paris, and the lions, who had their separate Hôtel at the royal Hôtel. Let us say here that a prince's apartment was then composed of never less than eleven large

rooms, from the chamber of state to the oratory, not to mention the galleries, baths, vapor-baths, and other "superfluous places," with which each apartment was provided; not to mention the private gardens for each of the king's guests; not to mention the kitchens, the cellars, the domestic offices, the general refectories of the house, the poultry-yards, where there were twenty-two general laboratories, from the bakehouses to the wine-cellars; games of a thousand sorts, malls, tennis, and riding at the ring; aviaries, fishponds, menageries, stables, barns, libraries, arsenals and foundries. This was what a king's palace, a Louvre, a Hôtel de Saint-Pol was then. A city within a city.

From the tower where we are placed, the Hôtel Saint-Pol, almost half hidden by the four great houses of which we have just spoken, was still very considerable and very marvellous to see. One could there distinguish, very well, though cleverly united with the principal building by long galleries, decked with painted glass and slender columns, the three Hôtels which Charles V. had amalgamated with his palace: the Hôtel du Petit-Muce, with the airy balustrade, which formed a graceful border to its roof; the Hôtel of the Abbe de Saint-Maur, having the vanity of a stronghold, a great tower, machicolations, loopholes, iron gratings, and over the large Saxon door, the armorial bearings of the abbé, between the two mortises of the drawbridge; the Hôtel of the Comte d' Etampes, whose donjon keep, ruined at its summit, was rounded and notched like a cock's comb; here and there, three or four ancient oaks, forming a tuft together like enormous cauliflowers; gambols of swans, in the clear water of the fishponds, all in folds of

light and shade; many courtyards of which one beheld picturesque bits; the Hôtel of the Lions, with its low, pointed arches on short, Saxon pillars, its iron gratings and its perpetual roar; shooting up above the whole, the scale-ornamented spire of the Ave-Maria; on the left, the house of the Provost of Paris, flanked by four small towers, delicately grooved, in the middle; at the extremity, the Hôtel Saint-Pol, properly speaking, with its multiplied façades, its successive enrichments from the time of Charles V., the hybrid excrescences, with which the fancy of the architects had loaded it during the last two centuries, with all the apses of its chapels, all the gables of its galleries, a thousand weathercocks for the four winds, and its two lofty contiguous towers, whose conical roof, surrounded by battlements at its base, looked like those pointed caps which have their edges turned up.

Continuing to mount the stories of this amphitheatre of palaces spread out afar upon the ground, after crossing a deep ravine hollowed out of the roofs in the Town, which marked the passage of the Rue Saint-Antoine, the eye reached the house of Angoulême, a vast construction of many epochs, where there were perfectly new and very white parts, which melted no better into the whole than a red patch on a blue doublet. Nevertheless, the remarkably pointed and lofty roof of the modern palace, bristling with carved eaves, covered with sheets of lead, where coiled a thousand fantastic arabesques of sparkling incrustations of gilded bronze, that roof, so curiously damascened, darted upwards gracefully from the midst of the brown ruins of the ancient edifice; whose huge and ancient towers, rounded by age like casks, sinking together with old age, and rending themselves from top to bottom,

resembled great bellies unbuttoned. Behind rose the forest of spires of the Palais des Tournelles. Not a view in the world, either at Chambord or at the Alhambra, is more magic, more aerial, more enchanting, than that thicket of spires, tiny bell towers, chimneys, weather-vanes, winding staircases, lanterns through which the daylight makes its way, which seem cut out at a blow, pavilions, spindle-shaped turrets, or, as they were then called, "tournelles," all differing in form, in height, and attitude. One would have pronounced it a gigantic stone chess-board.

To the right of the Tournelles, that truss of enormous towers, black as ink, running into each other and tied, as it were, by a circular moat; that donjon keep, much more pierced with loopholes than with windows; that drawbridge, always raised; that portcullis, always lowered,--is the Bastille. Those sorts of black beaks which project from between the battlements, and which you take from a distance to be cave spouts, are cannons.

Beneath them, at the foot of the formidable edifice, behold the Porte Sainte-Antoine, buried between its two towers.

Beyond the Tournelles, as far as the wall of Charles V., spread out, with rich compartments of verdure and of flowers, a velvet carpet of cultivated land and royal parks, in the midst of which one recognized, by its labyrinth of trees and alleys, the famous Daedalus garden which Louis XI. had given to Coictier. The doctor's observatory rose above the labyrinth like a great isolated column, with a tiny house for a capital. Terrible astrologies took place in that laboratory.

There to-day is the Place Royale.

As we have just said, the quarter of the palace, of which we have just endeavored to give the reader some idea by indicating only the chief points, filled the angle which Charles V.'s wall made with the Seine on the east. The centre of the Town was occupied by a pile of houses for the populace. It was there, in fact, that the three bridges disgorged upon the right bank, and bridges lead to the building of houses rather than palaces. That congregation of bourgeois habitations, pressed together like the cells in a hive, had a beauty of its own. It is with the roofs of a capital as with the waves of the sea,--they are grand. First the streets, crossed and entangled, forming a hundred amusing figures in the block; around the market-place, it was like a star with a thousand rays.

The Rues Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin, with their innumerable ramifications, rose one after the other, like trees intertwining their branches; and then the tortuous lines, the Rues de la Plâtrerie, de la Verrerie, de la Tixeranderie, etc., meandered over all. There were also fine edifices which pierced the petrified undulations of that sea of gables. At the head of the Pont aux Changeurs, behind which one beheld the Seine foaming beneath the wheels of the Pont aux Meuniers, there was the Chalelet, no longer a Roman tower, as under Julian the Apostate, but a feudal tower of the thirteenth century, and of a stone so hard that the pickaxe could not break away so much as the thickness of the fist in a space of three hours; there was the rich square bell tower of

Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie, with its angles all frothing with carvings, already admirable, although it was not finished in the fifteenth century. (It lacked, in particular, the four monsters, which, still perched to-day on the corners of its roof, have the air of so many sphinxes who are propounding to new Paris the riddle of the ancient Paris. Rault, the sculptor, only placed them in position in 1526, and received twenty francs for his pains.) There was the Maison-aux-Piliers, the Pillar House, opening upon that Place de Grève of which we have given the reader some idea; there was Saint-Gervais, which a front "in good taste" has since spoiled; Saint-Méry, whose ancient pointed arches were still almost round arches; Saint-Jean, whose magnificent spire was proverbial; there were twenty other monuments, which did not disdain to bury their wonders in that chaos of black, deep, narrow streets. Add the crosses of carved stone, more lavishly scattered through the squares than even the gibbets; the cemetery of the Innocents, whose architectural wall could be seen in the distance above the roofs; the pillory of the Markets, whose top was visible between two chimneys of the Rue de la Cossonnerie; the ladder of the Croix-du-Trahoir, in its square always black with people; the circular buildings of the wheat mart; the fragments of Philip Augustus's ancient wall, which could be made out here and there, drowned among the houses, its towers gnawed by ivy, its gates in ruins, with crumbling and deformed stretches of wall; the quay with its thousand shops, and its bloody knacker's yards; the Seine encumbered with boats, from the Port au Foin to Port-l'Evêque, and you will have a confused picture of what the central trapezium of the Town was like in 1482.

With these two quarters, one of Hôtels, the other of houses, the third feature of aspect presented by the city was a long zone of abbeys, which bordered it in nearly the whole of its circumference, from the rising to the setting sun, and, behind the circle of fortifications which hemmed in Paris, formed a second interior enclosure of convents and chapels. Thus, immediately adjoining the park des Tournelles, between the Rue Saint-Antoine and the Vielle Rue du Temple, there stood Sainte-Catherine, with its immense cultivated lands, which were terminated only by the wall of Paris. Between the old and the new Rue du Temple, there was the Temple, a sinister group of towers, lofty, erect, and isolated in the middle of a vast, battlemented enclosure. Between the Rue Neuve-du-Temple and the Rue Saint-Martin, there was the Abbey of Saint-Martin, in the midst of its gardens, a superb fortified church, whose girdle of towers, whose diadem of bell towers, yielded in force and splendor only to Saint-Germain des Prés. Between the Rue Saint-Martin and the Rue Saint-Denis, spread the enclosure of the Trinité.

Lastly, between the Rue Saint-Denis, and the Rue Montorgueil, stood the Filles-Dieu. On one side, the rotting roofs and unpaved enclosure of the Cour des Miracles could be descried. It was the sole profane ring which was linked to that devout chain of convents.

Finally, the fourth compartment, which stretched itself out in the agglomeration of the roofs on the right bank, and which occupied the western angle of the enclosure, and the banks of the river down stream, was a fresh cluster of palaces and Hôtels pressed close about the base

of the Louvre. The old Louvre of Philip Augustus, that immense edifice whose great tower rallied about it three and twenty chief towers, not to reckon the lesser towers, seemed from a distance to be enshrined in the Gothic roofs of the Hôtel d'Alençon, and the Petit-Bourbon. This hydra of towers, giant guardian of Paris, with its four and twenty heads, always erect, with its monstrous haunches, loaded or scaled with slates, and all streaming with metallic reflections, terminated with wonderful effect the configuration of the Town towards the west.

Thus an immense block, which the Romans called iusula, or island, of bourgeois houses, flanked on the right and the left by two blocks of palaces, crowned, the one by the Louvre, the other by the Tournelles, bordered on the north by a long girdle of abbeys and cultivated enclosures, all amalgamated and melted together in one view; upon these thousands of edifices, whose tiled and slated roofs outlined upon each other so many fantastic chains, the bell towers, tattooed, fluted, and ornamented with twisted bands, of the four and forty churches on the right bank; myriads of cross streets; for boundary on one side, an enclosure of lofty walls with square towers (that of the University had round towers); on the other, the Seine, cut by bridges, and bearing on its bosom a multitude of boats; behold the Town of Paris in the fifteenth century.

Beyond the walls, several suburban villages pressed close about the gates, but less numerous and more scattered than those of the University. Behind the Bastille there were twenty hovels clustered round the curious sculptures of the Croix-Faubin and the flying buttresses of

the Abbey of Saint-Antoine des Champs; then Popincourt, lost amid wheat fields; then la Courtille, a merry village of wine-shops; the hamlet of Saint-Laurent with its church whose bell tower, from afar, seemed to add itself to the pointed towers of the Porte Saint-Martin; the Faubourg Saint-Denis, with the vast enclosure of Saint-Ladre; beyond the Montmartre Gate, the Grange-Batelière, encircled with white walls; behind it, with its chalky slopes, Montmartre, which had then almost as many churches as windmills, and which has kept only the windmills, for society no longer demands anything but bread for the body. Lastly, beyond the Louvre, the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, already considerable at that time, could be seen stretching away into the fields, and Petit-Bretagne gleaming green, and the Marché aux Pourceaux spreading abroad, in whose centre swelled the horrible apparatus used for boiling counterfeiters. Between la Courtille and Saint-Laurent, your eye had already noticed, on the summit of an eminence crouching amid desert plains, a sort of edifice which resembled from a distance a ruined colonnade, mounted upon a basement with its foundation laid bare. This was neither a Parthenon, nor a temple of the Olympian Jupiter. It was Montfauçon.

Now, if the enumeration of so many edifices, summary as we have endeavored to make it, has not shattered in the reader's mind the general image of old Paris, as we have constructed it, we will recapitulate it in a few words. In the centre, the island of the City, resembling as to form an enormous tortoise, and throwing out its bridges with tiles for scales; like legs from beneath its gray shell of roofs. On the left, the monolithic trapezium, firm, dense, bristling, of the

University; on the right, the vast semicircle of the Town, much more intermixed with gardens and monuments. The three blocks, city, university, and town, marbled with innumerable streets. Across all, the Seine, "foster-mother Seine," as says Father Du Breul, blocked with islands, bridges, and boats. All about an immense plain, patched with a thousand sorts of cultivated plots, sown with fine villages. On the left, Issy, Vanvres, Vaugirarde, Montrouge, Gentilly, with its round tower and its square tower, etc.; on the right, twenty others, from Conflans to Ville-l'Evêque. On the horizon, a border of hills arranged in a circle like the rim of the basin. Finally, far away to the east, Vincennes, and its seven quadrangular towers to the south, Bicêtre and its pointed turrets; to the north, Saint-Denis and its spire; to the west, Saint Cloud and its donjon keep. Such was the Paris which the ravens, who lived in 1482, beheld from the summits of the towers of Notre-Dame.

Nevertheless, Voltaire said of this city, that "before Louis XIV., it possessed but four fine monuments": the dome of the Sorbonne, the Val-de-Grâce, the modern Louvre, and I know not what the fourth was--the Luxembourg, perhaps. Fortunately, Voltaire was the author of "Candide" in spite of this, and in spite of this, he is, among all the men who have followed each other in the long series of humanity, the one who has best possessed the diabolical laugh. Moreover, this proves that one can be a fine genius, and yet understand nothing of an art to which one does not belong. Did not Moliere imagine that he was doing Raphael and Michael-Angelo a very great honor, by calling them "those Mignards of their age?"

Let us return to Paris and to the fifteenth century.

It was not then merely a handsome city; it was a homogeneous city, an architectural and historical product of the Middle Ages, a chronicle in stone. It was a city formed of two layers only; the Romanesque layer and the Gothic layer; for the Roman layer had disappeared long before, with the exception of the Hot Baths of Julian, where it still pierced through the thick crust of the Middle Ages. As for the Celtic layer, no specimens were any longer to be found, even when sinking wells.

Fifty years later, when the Renaissance began to mingle with this unity which was so severe and yet so varied, the dazzling luxury of its fantasies and systems, its debasements of Roman round arches, Greek columns, and Gothic bases, its sculpture which was so tender and so ideal, its peculiar taste for arabesques and acanthus leaves, its architectural paganism, contemporary with Luther, Paris, was perhaps, still more beautiful, although less harmonious to the eye, and to the thought.

But this splendid moment lasted only for a short time; the Renaissance was not impartial; it did not content itself with building, it wished to destroy; it is true that it required the room. Thus Gothic Paris was complete only for a moment. Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie had barely been completed when the demolition of the old Louvre was begun.

After that, the great city became more disfigured every day. Gothic

Paris, beneath which Roman Paris was effaced, was effaced in its turn; but can any one say what Paris has replaced it?

There is the Paris of Catherine de Medicis at the Tuileries;*--the Paris of Henri II., at the Hôtel de Ville, two edifices still in fine taste;--the Paris of Henri IV., at the Place Royale: façades of brick with stone corners, and slated roofs, tri-colored houses;--the Paris of Louis XIII., at the Val-de-Grace: a crushed and squat architecture, with vaults like basket-handles, and something indescribably pot-bellied in the column, and thickset in the dome;--the Paris of Louis XIV., in the Invalides: grand, rich, gilded, cold;--the Paris of Louis XV., in Saint-Sulpice: volutes, knots of ribbon, clouds, vermicelli and chiccory leaves, all in stone;--the Paris of Louis XVI., in the Pantheon: Saint Peter of Rome, badly copied (the edifice is awkwardly heaped together, which has not amended its lines);--the Paris of the Republic, in the School of Medicine: a poor Greek and Roman taste, which resembles the Coliseum or the Parthenon as the constitution of the year III., resembles the laws of Minos,--it is called in architecture, "the Messidor"** taste;--the Paris of Napoleon in the Place Vendome: this one is sublime, a column of bronze made of cannons;--the Paris of the Restoration, at the Bourse: a very white colonnade supporting a very smooth frieze; the whole is square and cost twenty millions.

* We have seen with sorrow mingled with indignation, that it is the intention to increase, to recast, to make over, that is to say, to destroy this admirable palace. The architects of our day have too

heavy a hand to touch these delicate works of the Renaissance. We still cherish a hope that they will not dare. Moreover, this demolition of the Tuileries now, would be not only a brutal deed of violence, which would make a drunken vandal blush--it would be an act of treason. The Tuileries is not simply a masterpiece of the art of the sixteenth century, it is a page of the history of the nineteenth. This palace no longer belongs to the king, but to the people. Let us leave it as it is. Our revolution has twice set its seal upon its front. On one of its two façades, there are the cannon-balls of the 10th of August; on the other, the balls of the 29th of July. It is sacred. Paris, April 1, 1831. (Note to the fifth edition.)

** The tenth month of the French republican calendar, from the 19th of June to the 18th of July.

To each of these characteristic monuments there is attached by a similarity of taste, fashion, and attitude, a certain number of houses scattered about in different quarters and which the eyes of the connoisseur easily distinguishes and furnishes with a date. When one knows how to look, one finds the spirit of a century, and the physiognomy of a king, even in the knocker on a door.

The Paris of the present day has then, no general physiognomy. It is a collection of specimens of many centuries, and the finest have disappeared. The capital grows only in houses, and what houses! At the rate at which Paris is now proceeding, it will renew itself every fifty

years.

Thus the historical significance of its architecture is being effaced every day. Monuments are becoming rarer and rarer, and one seems to see them gradually engulfed, by the flood of houses. Our fathers had a Paris of stone; our sons will have one of plaster.

So far as the modern monuments of new Paris are concerned, we would gladly be excused from mentioning them. It is not that we do not admire them as they deserve. The Sainte-Geneviève of M. Soufflot is certainly the finest Savoy cake that has ever been made in stone. The Palace of the Legion of Honor is also a very distinguished bit of pastry. The dome of the wheat market is an English jockey cap, on a grand scale. The towers of Saint-Sulpice are two huge clarinets, and the form is as good as any other; the telegraph, contorted and grimacing, forms an admirable accident upon their roofs. Saint-Roch has a door which, for magnificence, is comparable only to that of Saint-Thomas d'Aquin. It has, also, a crucifixion in high relief, in a cellar, with a sun of gilded wood. These things are fairly marvellous. The lantern of the labyrinth of the Jardin des Plantes is also very ingenious.

As for the Palace of the Bourse, which is Greek as to its colonnade, Roman in the round arches of its doors and windows, of the Renaissance by virtue of its flattened vault, it is indubitably a very correct and very pure monument; the proof is that it is crowned with an attic, such as was never seen in Athens, a beautiful, straight line, gracefully broken here and there by stovepipes. Let us add that if it is according

to rule that the architecture of a building should be adapted to its purpose in such a manner that this purpose shall be immediately apparent from the mere aspect of the building, one cannot be too much amazed at a structure which might be indifferently--the palace of a king, a chamber of communes, a town-hall, a college, a riding-school, an academy, a warehouse, a court-house, a museum, a barracks, a sepulchre, a temple, or a theatre. However, it is an Exchange. An edifice ought to be, moreover, suitable to the climate. This one is evidently constructed expressly for our cold and rainy skies. It has a roof almost as flat as roofs in the East, which involves sweeping the roof in winter, when it snows; and of course roofs are made to be swept. As for its purpose, of which we just spoke, it fulfils it to a marvel; it is a bourse in France as it would have been a temple in Greece. It is true that the architect was at a good deal of trouble to conceal the clock face, which would have destroyed the purity of the fine lines of the façade; but, on the other hand, we have that colonnade which circles round the edifice and under which, on days of high religious ceremony, the theories of the stock-brokers and the courtiers of commerce can be developed so majestically.

These are very superb structures. Let us add a quantity of fine, amusing, and varied streets, like the Rue de Rivoli, and I do not despair of Paris presenting to the eye, when viewed from a balloon, that richness of line, that opulence of detail, that diversity of aspect, that grandiose something in the simple, and unexpected in the beautiful, which characterizes a checker-board.

However, admirable as the Paris of to-day may seem to you, reconstruct the Paris of the fifteenth century, call it up before you in thought; look at the sky athwart that surprising forest of spires, towers, and belfries; spread out in the centre of the city, tear away at the point of the islands, fold at the arches of the bridges, the Seine, with its broad green and yellow expanses, more variable than the skin of a serpent; project clearly against an azure horizon the Gothic profile of this ancient Paris. Make its contour float in a winter's mist which clings to its numerous chimneys; drown it in profound night and watch the odd play of lights and shadows in that sombre labyrinth of edifices; cast upon it a ray of light which shall vaguely outline it and cause to emerge from the fog the great heads of the towers; or take that black silhouette again, enliven with shadow the thousand acute angles of the spires and gables, and make it start out more toothed than a shark's jaw against a copper-colored western sky,--and then compare.

And if you wish to receive of the ancient city an impression with which the modern one can no longer furnish you, climb--on the morning of some grand festival, beneath the rising sun of Easter or of Pentecost--climb upon some elevated point, whence you command the entire capital; and be present at the wakening of the chimes. Behold, at a signal given from heaven, for it is the sun which gives it, all those churches quiver simultaneously. First come scattered strokes, running from one church to another, as when musicians give warning that they are about to begin. Then, all at once, behold!--for it seems at times, as though the ear also possessed a sight of its own,--behold, rising from each bell tower, something like a column of sound, a cloud of harmony. First, the

vibration of each bell mounts straight upwards, pure and, so to speak, isolated from the others, into the splendid morning sky; then, little by little, as they swell they melt together, mingle, are lost in each other, and amalgamate in a magnificent concert. It is no longer anything but a mass of sonorous vibrations incessantly sent forth from the numerous belfries; floats, undulates, bounds, whirls over the city, and prolongs far beyond the horizon the deafening circle of its oscillations.

Nevertheless, this sea of harmony is not a chaos; great and profound as it is, it has not lost its transparency; you behold the windings of each group of notes which escapes from the belfries. You can follow the dialogue, by turns grave and shrill, of the treble and the bass; you can see the octaves leap from one tower to another; you watch them spring forth, winged, light, and whistling, from the silver bell, to fall, broken and limping from the bell of wood; you admire in their midst the rich gamut which incessantly ascends and re-ascends the seven bells of Saint-Eustache; you see light and rapid notes running across it, executing three or four luminous zigzags, and vanishing like flashes of lightning. Yonder is the Abbey of Saint-Martin, a shrill, cracked singer; here the gruff and gloomy voice of the Bastille; at the other end, the great tower of the Louvre, with its bass. The royal chime of the palace scatters on all sides, and without relaxation, resplendent trills, upon which fall, at regular intervals, the heavy strokes from the belfry of Notre-Dame, which makes them sparkle like the anvil under the hammer. At intervals you behold the passage of sounds of all forms which come from the triple peal of Saint-Germaine des Prés. Then, again,

from time to time, this mass of sublime noises opens and gives passage to the beats of the Ave Maria, which bursts forth and sparkles like an aigrette of stars. Below, in the very depths of the concert, you confusedly distinguish the interior chanting of the churches, which exhales through the vibrating pores of their vaulted roofs.

Assuredly, this is an opera which it is worth the trouble of listening to. Ordinarily, the noise which escapes from Paris by day is the city speaking; by night, it is the city breathing; in this case, it is the city singing. Lend an ear, then, to this concert of bell towers; spread over all the murmur of half a million men, the eternal plaint of the river, the infinite breathings of the wind, the grave and distant quartette of the four forests arranged upon the hills, on the horizon, like immense stacks of organ pipes; extinguish, as in a half shade, all that is too hoarse and too shrill about the central chime, and say whether you know anything in the world more rich and joyful, more golden, more dazzling, than this tumult of bells and chimes;--than this furnace of music,--than these ten thousand brazen voices chanting simultaneously in the flutes of stone, three hundred feet high,--than this city which is no longer anything but an orchestra,--than this symphony which produces the noise of a tempest.