BOOK FOURTH.

CHAPTER I. GOOD SOULS.

Sixteen years previous to the epoch when this story takes place, one fine morning, on Quasimodo Sunday, a living creature had been deposited, after mass, in the church of Notre-Dame, on the wooden bed securely fixed in the vestibule on the left, opposite that great image of Saint Christopher, which the figure of Messire Antoine des Essarts, chevalier, carved in stone, had been gazing at on his knees since 1413, when they took it into their heads to overthrow the saint and the faithful follower. Upon this bed of wood it was customary to expose foundlings for public charity. Whoever cared to take them did so. In front of the wooden bed was a copper basin for alms.

The sort of living being which lay upon that plank on the morning of Quasimodo, in the year of the Lord, 1467, appeared to excite to a high degree, the curiosity of the numerous group which had congregated about the wooden bed. The group was formed for the most part of the fair sex.

Hardly any one was there except old women.

In the first row, and among those who were most bent over the bed, four were noticeable, who, from their gray cagoule, a sort of cassock, were recognizable as attached to some devout sisterhood. I do not see why history has not transmitted to posterity the names of these four discreet and venerable damsels. They were Agnes la Herme, Jehanne de la Tarme, Henriette la Gaultière, Gauchère la Violette, all four widows, all four dames of the Chapel Etienne Haudry, who had quitted their house with the permission of their mistress, and in conformity with the statutes of Pierre d'Ailly, in order to come and hear the sermon.

However, if these good Haudriettes were, for the moment, complying with the statutes of Pierre d'Ailly, they certainly violated with joy those of Michel de Brache, and the Cardinal of Pisa, which so inhumanly enjoined silence upon them.

"What is this, sister?" said Agnes to Gauchère, gazing at the little creature exposed, which was screaming and writhing on the wooden bed, terrified by so many glances.

"What is to become of us," said Jehanne, "if that is the way children are made now?"

"I'm not learned in the matter of children," resumed Agnes, "but it must be a sin to look at this one."

"'Tis not a child, Agnes."

"'Tis an abortion of a monkey," remarked Gauchère.

"'Tis a miracle," interposed Henriette la Gaultière.

"Then," remarked Agnes, "it is the third since the Sunday of the Loetare: for, in less than a week, we had the miracle of the mocker of pilgrims divinely punished by Notre-Dame d'Aubervilliers, and that was the second miracle within a month."

"This pretended foundling is a real monster of abomination," resumed Jehanne.

"He yells loud enough to deafen a chanter," continued Gauchère. "Hold your tongue, you little howler!"

"To think that Monsieur of Reims sent this enormity to Monsieur of Paris," added la Gaultière, clasping her hands.

"I imagine," said Agnes la Herme, "that it is a beast, an animal,--the fruit of--a Jew and a sow; something not Christian, in short, which ought to be thrown into the fire or into the water."

"I really hope," resumed la Gaultière, "that nobody will apply for it."

"Ah, good heavens!" exclaimed Agnes; "those poor nurses yonder in the

foundling asylum, which forms the lower end of the lane as you go to the river, just beside Monseigneur the bishop! what if this little monster were to be carried to them to suckle? I'd rather give suck to a vampire."

"How innocent that poor la Herme is!" resumed Jehanne; "don't you see, sister, that this little monster is at least four years old, and that he would have less appetite for your breast than for a turnspit."

The "little monster" we should find it difficult ourselves to describe him otherwise, was, in fact, not a new-born child. It was a very angular and very lively little mass, imprisoned in its linen sack, stamped with the cipher of Messire Guillaume Chartier, then bishop of Paris, with a head projecting. That head was deformed enough; one beheld only a forest of red hair, one eye, a mouth, and teeth. The eye wept, the mouth cried, and the teeth seemed to ask only to be allowed to bite. The whole struggled in the sack, to the great consternation of the crowd, which increased and was renewed incessantly around it.

Dame Aloise de Gondelaurier, a rich and noble woman, who held by the hand a pretty girl about five or six years of age, and dragged a long veil about, suspended to the golden horn of her headdress, halted as she passed the wooden bed, and gazed for a moment at the wretched creature, while her charming little daughter, Fleur-de-Lys de Gondelaurier, spelled out with her tiny, pretty finger, the permanent inscription attached to the wooden bed: "Foundlings."

"Really," said the dame, turning away in disgust, "I thought that they only exposed children here."

She turned her back, throwing into the basin a silver florin, which rang among the liards, and made the poor goodwives of the chapel of Etienne Haudry open their eyes.

A moment later, the grave and learned Robert Mistricolle, the king's protonotary, passed, with an enormous missal under one arm and his wife on the other (Damoiselle Guillemette la Mairesse), having thus by his side his two regulators,--spiritual and temporal.

"Foundling!" he said, after examining the object; "found, apparently, on the banks of the river Phlegethon."

"One can only see one eye," observed Damoiselle Guillemette; "there is a wart on the other."

"It's not a wart," returned Master Robert Mistricolle, "it is an egg which contains another demon exactly similar, who bears another little egg which contains another devil, and so on."

"How do you know that?" asked Guillemette la Mairesse.

"I know it pertinently," replied the protonotary.

"Monsieur le protonotare," asked Gauchère, "what do you prognosticate of

this pretended foundling?"

"The greatest misfortunes," replied Mistricolle.

"Ah! good heavens!" said an old woman among the spectators, "and that besides our having had a considerable pestilence last year, and that they say that the English are going to disembark in a company at Harfleur."

"Perhaps that will prevent the queen from coming to Paris in the month of September," interposed another; "trade is so bad already."

"My opinion is," exclaimed Jehanne de la Tarme, "that it would be better for the louts of Paris, if this little magician were put to bed on a fagot than on a plank."

"A fine, flaming fagot," added the old woman.

"It would be more prudent," said Mistricolle.

For several minutes, a young priest had been listening to the reasoning of the Haudriettes and the sentences of the notary. He had a severe face, with a large brow, a profound glance. He thrust the crowd silently aside, scrutinized the "little magician," and stretched out his hand upon him. It was high time, for all the devotees were already licking their chops over the "fine, flaming fagot."

"I adopt this child," said the priest.

He took it in his cassock and carried it off. The spectators followed him with frightened glances. A moment later, he had disappeared through the "Red Door," which then led from the church to the cloister.

When the first surprise was over, Jehanne de la Tarme bent down to the ear of la Gaultière,--

"I told you so, sister,--that young clerk, Monsieur Claude Frollo, is a sorcerer."

CHAPTER II. CLAUDE FROLLO.

In fact, Claude Frollo was no common person.

He belonged to one of those middle-class families which were called indifferently, in the impertinent language of the last century, the high bourgeoise or the petty nobility. This family had inherited from the brothers Paclet the fief of Tirechappe, which was dependent upon the Bishop of Paris, and whose twenty-one houses had been in the thirteenth century the object of so many suits before the official. As possessor of this fief, Claude Frollo was one of the twenty-seven seigneurs keeping claim to a manor in fee in Paris and its suburbs; and for a long time, his name was to be seen inscribed in this quality, between the Hôtel de Tancarville, belonging to Master François Le Rez, and the college of Tours, in the records deposited at Saint Martin des Champs.

Claude Frollo had been destined from infancy, by his parents, to the ecclesiastical profession. He had been taught to read in Latin; he had been trained to keep his eyes on the ground and to speak low. While still a child, his father had cloistered him in the college of Torchi in the University. There it was that he had grown up, on the missal and the lexicon.

Moreover, he was a sad, grave, serious child, who studied ardently, and

learned quickly; he never uttered a loud cry in recreation hour, mixed but little in the bacchanals of the Rue du Fouarre, did not know what it was to dare alapas et capillos laniare, and had cut no figure in that revolt of 1463, which the annalists register gravely, under the title of "The sixth trouble of the University." He seldom rallied the poor students of Montaigu on the cappettes from which they derived their name, or the bursars of the college of Dormans on their shaved tonsure, and their surtout parti-colored of bluish-green, blue, and violet cloth, azurini coloris et bruni, as says the charter of the Cardinal des Quatre-Couronnes.

On the other hand, he was assiduous at the great and the small schools of the Rue Saint Jean de Beauvais. The first pupil whom the Abbé de Saint Pierre de Val, at the moment of beginning his reading on canon law, always perceived, glued to a pillar of the school Saint-Vendregesile, opposite his rostrum, was Claude Frollo, armed with his horn ink-bottle, biting his pen, scribbling on his threadbare knee, and, in winter, blowing on his fingers. The first auditor whom Messire Miles d'Isliers, doctor in decretals, saw arrive every Monday morning, all breathless, at the opening of the gates of the school of the Chef-Saint-Denis, was Claude Frollo. Thus, at sixteen years of age, the young clerk might have held his own, in mystical theology, against a father of the church; in canonical theology, against a father of the councils; in scholastic theology, against a doctor of Sorbonne.

Theology conquered, he had plunged into decretals. From the "Master of Sentences," he had passed to the "Capitularies of Charlemagne;" and he

had devoured in succession, in his appetite for science, decretals upon decretals, those of Theodore, Bishop of Hispalus; those of Bouchard, Bishop of Worms; those of Yves, Bishop of Chartres; next the decretal of Gratian, which succeeded the capitularies of Charlemagne; then the collection of Gregory IX.; then the Epistle of Superspecula, of Honorius III. He rendered clear and familiar to himself that vast and tumultuous period of civil law and canon law in conflict and at strife with each other, in the chaos of the Middle Ages,--a period which Bishop Theodore opens in 618, and which Pope Gregory closes in 1227.

Decretals digested, he flung himself upon medicine, on the liberal arts. He studied the science of herbs, the science of unguents; he became an expert in fevers and in contusions, in sprains and abcesses. Jacques d' Espars would have received him as a physician; Richard Hellain, as a surgeon. He also passed through all the degrees of licentiate, master, and doctor of arts. He studied the languages, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, a triple sanctuary then very little frequented. His was a veritable fever for acquiring and hoarding, in the matter of science. At the age of eighteen, he had made his way through the four faculties; it seemed to the young man that life had but one sole object: learning.

It was towards this epoch, that the excessive heat of the summer of 1466 caused that grand outburst of the plague which carried off more than forty thousand souls in the vicomty of Paris, and among others, as Jean de Troyes states, "Master Arnoul, astrologer to the king, who was a very fine man, both wise and pleasant." The rumor spread in the University that the Rue Tirechappe was especially devastated by the malady. It was

there that Claude's parents resided, in the midst of their fief. The young scholar rushed in great alarm to the paternal mansion. When he entered it, he found that both father and mother had died on the preceding day. A very young brother of his, who was in swaddling clothes, was still alive and crying abandoned in his cradle. This was all that remained to Claude of his family; the young man took the child under his arm and went off in a pensive mood. Up to that moment, he had lived only in science; he now began to live in life.

This catastrophe was a crisis in Claude's existence. Orphaned, the eldest, head of the family at the age of nineteen, he felt himself rudely recalled from the reveries of school to the realities of this world. Then, moved with pity, he was seized with passion and devotion towards that child, his brother; a sweet and strange thing was a human affection to him, who had hitherto loved his books alone.

This affection developed to a singular point; in a soul so new, it was like a first love. Separated since infancy from his parents, whom he had hardly known; cloistered and immured, as it were, in his books; eager above all things to study and to learn; exclusively attentive up to that time, to his intelligence which broadened in science, to his imagination, which expanded in letters,--the poor scholar had not yet had time to feel the place of his heart.

This young brother, without mother or father, this little child which had fallen abruptly from heaven into his arms, made a new man of him. He perceived that there was something else in the world besides the

speculations of the Sorbonne, and the verses of Homer; that man needed affections; that life without tenderness and without love was only a set of dry, shrieking, and rending wheels. Only, he imagined, for he was at the age when illusions are as yet replaced only by illusions, that the affections of blood and family were the sole ones necessary, and that a little brother to love sufficed to fill an entire existence.

He threw himself, therefore, into the love for his little Jehan with the passion of a character already profound, ardent, concentrated; that poor frail creature, pretty, fair-haired, rosy, and curly,--that orphan with another orphan for his only support, touched him to the bottom of his heart; and grave thinker as he was, he set to meditating upon Jehan with an infinite compassion. He kept watch and ward over him as over something very fragile, and very worthy of care. He was more than a brother to the child; he became a mother to him.

Little Jehan had lost his mother while he was still at the breast; Claude gave him to a nurse. Besides the fief of Tirechappe, he had inherited from his father the fief of Moulin, which was a dependency of the square tower of Gentilly; it was a mill on a hill, near the château of Winchestre (Bicêtre). There was a miller's wife there who was nursing a fine child; it was not far from the university, and Claude carried the little Jehan to her in his own arms.

From that time forth, feeling that he had a burden to bear, he took life very seriously. The thought of his little brother became not only his recreation, but the object of his studies. He resolved to consecrate

himself entirely to a future for which he was responsible in the sight of God, and never to have any other wife, any other child than the happiness and fortune of his brother. Therefore, he attached himself more closely than ever to the clerical profession. His merits, his learning, his quality of immediate vassal of the Bishop of Paris, threw the doors of the church wide open to him. At the age of twenty, by special dispensation of the Holy See, he was a priest, and served as the youngest of the chaplains of Notre-Dame the altar which is called, because of the late mass which is said there, altare pigrorum.

There, plunged more deeply than ever in his dear books, which he quitted only to run for an hour to the fief of Moulin, this mixture of learning and austerity, so rare at his age, had promptly acquired for him the respect and admiration of the monastery. From the cloister, his reputation as a learned man had passed to the people, among whom it had changed a little, a frequent occurrence at that time, into reputation as a sorcerer.

It was at the moment when he was returning, on Quasimodo day, from saying his mass at the Altar of the Lazy, which was by the side of the door leading to the nave on the right, near the image of the Virgin, that his attention had been attracted by the group of old women chattering around the bed for foundlings.

Then it was that he approached the unhappy little creature, which was so hated and so menaced. That distress, that deformity, that abandonment, the thought of his young brother, the idea which suddenly occurred to

him, that if he were to die, his dear little Jehan might also be flung miserably on the plank for foundlings,--all this had gone to his heart simultaneously; a great pity had moved in him, and he had carried off the child.

When he removed the child from the sack, he found it greatly deformed, in very sooth. The poor little wretch had a wart on his left eye, his head placed directly on his shoulders, his spinal column was crooked, his breast bone prominent, and his legs bowed; but he appeared to be lively; and although it was impossible to say in what language he lisped, his cry indicated considerable force and health. Claude's compassion increased at the sight of this ugliness; and he made a vow in his heart to rear the child for the love of his brother, in order that, whatever might be the future faults of the little Jehan, he should have beside him that charity done for his sake. It was a sort of investment of good works, which he was effecting in the name of his young brother; it was a stock of good works which he wished to amass in advance for him, in case the little rogue should some day find himself short of that coin, the only sort which is received at the toll-bar of paradise.

He baptized his adopted child, and gave him the name of Quasimodo, either because he desired thereby to mark the day, when he had found him, or because he wished to designate by that name to what a degree the poor little creature was incomplete, and hardly sketched out. In fact, Quasimodo, blind, hunchbacked, knock-kneed, was only an "almost."

CHAPTER III. IMMANIS PECORIS CUSTOS, IMMANIOR IPSE.

Now, in 1482, Quasimodo had grown up. He had become a few years previously the bellringer of Notre-Dame, thanks to his father by adoption, Claude Frollo,--who had become archdeacon of Josas, thanks to his suzerain, Messire Louis de Beaumont,--who had become Bishop of Paris, at the death of Guillaume Chartier in 1472, thanks to his patron, Olivier Le Daim, barber to Louis XI., king by the grace of God.

So Quasimodo was the ringer of the chimes of Notre-Dame.

In the course of time there had been formed a certain peculiarly intimate bond which united the ringer to the church. Separated forever from the world, by the double fatality of his unknown birth and his natural deformity, imprisoned from his infancy in that impassable double circle, the poor wretch had grown used to seeing nothing in this world beyond the religious walls which had received him under their shadow. Notre-Dame had been to him successively, as he grew up and developed, the egg, the nest, the house, the country, the universe.

There was certainly a sort of mysterious and pre-existing harmony between this creature and this church. When, still a little fellow, he had dragged himself tortuously and by jerks beneath the shadows of

its vaults, he seemed, with his human face and his bestial limbs, the natural reptile of that humid and sombre pavement, upon which the shadow of the Romanesque capitals cast so many strange forms.

Later on, the first time that he caught hold, mechanically, of the ropes to the towers, and hung suspended from them, and set the bell to clanging, it produced upon his adopted father, Claude, the effect of a child whose tongue is unloosed and who begins to speak.

It is thus that, little by little, developing always in sympathy with the cathedral, living there, sleeping there, hardly ever leaving it, subject every hour to the mysterious impress, he came to resemble it, he incrusted himself in it, so to speak, and became an integral part of it. His salient angles fitted into the retreating angles of the cathedral (if we may be allowed this figure of speech), and he seemed not only its inhabitant but more than that, its natural tenant. One might almost say that he had assumed its form, as the snail takes on the form of its shell. It was his dwelling, his hole, his envelope. There existed between him and the old church so profound an instinctive sympathy, so many magnetic affinities, so many material affinities, that he adhered to it somewhat as a tortoise adheres to its shell. The rough and wrinkled cathedral was his shell.

It is useless to warn the reader not to take literally all the similes which we are obliged to employ here to express the singular, symmetrical, direct, almost consubstantial union of a man and an edifice. It is equally unnecessary to state to what a degree that

whole cathedral was familiar to him, after so long and so intimate a cohabitation. That dwelling was peculiar to him. It had no depths to which Quasimodo had not penetrated, no height which he had not scaled. He often climbed many stones up the front, aided solely by the uneven points of the carving. The towers, on whose exterior surface he was frequently seen clambering, like a lizard gliding along a perpendicular wall, those two gigantic twins, so lofty, so menacing, so formidable, possessed for him neither vertigo, nor terror, nor shocks of amazement.

To see them so gentle under his hand, so easy to scale, one would have said that he had tamed them. By dint of leaping, climbing, gambolling amid the abysses of the gigantic cathedral he had become, in some sort, a monkey and a goat, like the Calabrian child who swims before he walks, and plays with the sea while still a babe.

Moreover, it was not his body alone which seemed fashioned after the Cathedral, but his mind also. In what condition was that mind? What bent had it contracted, what form had it assumed beneath that knotted envelope, in that savage life? This it would be hard to determine. Quasimodo had been born one-eyed, hunchbacked, lame. It was with great difficulty, and by dint of great patience that Claude Frollo had succeeded in teaching him to talk. But a fatality was attached to the poor foundling. Bellringer of Notre-Dame at the age of fourteen, a new infirmity had come to complete his misfortunes: the bells had broken the drums of his ears; he had become deaf. The only gate which nature had left wide open for him had been abruptly closed, and forever.

In closing, it had cut off the only ray of joy and of light which still made its way into the soul of Quasimodo. His soul fell into profound night. The wretched being's misery became as incurable and as complete as his deformity. Let us add that his deafness rendered him to some extent dumb. For, in order not to make others laugh, the very moment that he found himself to be deaf, he resolved upon a silence which he only broke when he was alone. He voluntarily tied that tongue which Claude Frollo had taken so much pains to unloose. Hence, it came about, that when necessity constrained him to speak, his tongue was torpid, awkward, and like a door whose hinges have grown rusty.

If now we were to try to penetrate to the soul of Quasimodo through that thick, hard rind; if we could sound the depths of that badly constructed organism; if it were granted to us to look with a torch behind those non-transparent organs to explore the shadowy interior of that opaque creature, to elucidate his obscure corners, his absurd no-thoroughfares, and suddenly to cast a vivid light upon the soul enchained at the extremity of that cave, we should, no doubt, find the unhappy Psyche in some poor, cramped, and ricketty attitude, like those prisoners beneath the Leads of Venice, who grew old bent double in a stone box which was both too low and too short for them.

It is certain that the mind becomes atrophied in a defective body. Quasimodo was barely conscious of a soul cast in his own image, moving blindly within him. The impressions of objects underwent a considerable refraction before reaching his mind. His brain was a peculiar medium; the ideas which passed through it issued forth completely distorted.

The reflection which resulted from this refraction was, necessarily, divergent and perverted.

Hence a thousand optical illusions, a thousand aberrations of judgment, a thousand deviations, in which his thought strayed, now mad, now idiotic.

The first effect of this fatal organization was to trouble the glance which he cast upon things. He received hardly any immediate perception of them. The external world seemed much farther away to him than it does to us.

The second effect of his misfortune was to render him malicious.

He was malicious, in fact, because he was savage; he was savage because he was ugly. There was logic in his nature, as there is in ours.

His strength, so extraordinarily developed, was a cause of still greater malevolence: "Malus puer robustus," says Hobbes.

This justice must, however be rendered to him. Malevolence was not, perhaps, innate in him. From his very first steps among men, he had felt himself, later on he had seen himself, spewed out, blasted, rejected. Human words were, for him, always a raillery or a malediction. As he grew up, he had found nothing but hatred around him. He had caught the general malevolence. He had picked up the weapon with which he had been wounded.

After all, he turned his face towards men only with reluctance; his cathedral was sufficient for him. It was peopled with marble figures,--kings, saints, bishops,--who at least did not burst out laughing in his face, and who gazed upon him only with tranquillity and kindliness. The other statues, those of the monsters and demons, cherished no hatred for him, Quasimodo. He resembled them too much for that. They seemed rather, to be scoffing at other men. The saints were his friends, and blessed him; the monsters were his friends and guarded him. So he held long communion with them. He sometimes passed whole hours crouching before one of these statues, in solitary conversation with it. If any one came, he fled like a lover surprised in his serenade.

And the cathedral was not only society for him, but the universe, and all nature beside. He dreamed of no other hedgerows than the painted windows, always in flower; no other shade than that of the foliage of stone which spread out, loaded with birds, in the tufts of the Saxon capitals; of no other mountains than the colossal towers of the church; of no other ocean than Paris, roaring at their bases.

What he loved above all else in the maternal edifice, that which aroused his soul, and made it open its poor wings, which it kept so miserably folded in its cavern, that which sometimes rendered him even happy, was the bells. He loved them, fondled them, talked to them, understood them. From the chime in the spire, over the intersection of the aisles and nave, to the great bell of the front, he cherished a tenderness for them

all. The central spire and the two towers were to him as three great cages, whose birds, reared by himself, sang for him alone. Yet it was these very bells which had made him deaf; but mothers often love best that child which has caused them the most suffering.

It is true that their voice was the only one which he could still hear. On this score, the big bell was his beloved. It was she whom he preferred out of all that family of noisy girls which bustled above him, on festival days. This bell was named Marie. She was alone in the southern tower, with her sister Jacqueline, a bell of lesser size, shut up in a smaller cage beside hers. This Jacqueline was so called from the name of the wife of Jean Montagu, who had given it to the church, which had not prevented his going and figuring without his head at Montfauçon. In the second tower there were six other bells, and, finally, six smaller ones inhabited the belfry over the crossing, with the wooden bell, which rang only between after dinner on Good Friday and the morning of the day before Easter. So Quasimodo had fifteen bells in his seraglio; but big Marie was his favorite.

No idea can be formed of his delight on days when the grand peal was sounded. At the moment when the archdeacon dismissed him, and said, "Go!" he mounted the spiral staircase of the clock tower faster than any one else could have descended it. He entered perfectly breathless into the aerial chamber of the great bell; he gazed at her a moment, devoutly and lovingly; then he gently addressed her and patted her with his hand, like a good horse, which is about to set out on a long journey. He pitied her for the trouble that she was about to suffer. After these

first caresses, he shouted to his assistants, placed in the lower story of the tower, to begin. They grasped the ropes, the wheel creaked, the enormous capsule of metal started slowly into motion. Quasimodo followed it with his glance and trembled. The first shock of the clapper and the brazen wall made the framework upon which it was mounted quiver. Quasimodo vibrated with the bell.

"Vah!" he cried, with a senseless burst of laughter. However, the movement of the bass was accelerated, and, in proportion as it described a wider angle, Quasimodo's eye opened also more and more widely, phosphoric and flaming. At length the grand peal began; the whole tower trembled; woodwork, leads, cut stones, all groaned at once, from the piles of the foundation to the trefoils of its summit. Then Quasimodo boiled and frothed; he went and came; he trembled from head to foot with the tower. The bell, furious, running riot, presented to the two walls of the tower alternately its brazen throat, whence escaped that tempestuous breath, which is audible leagues away. Quasimodo stationed himself in front of this open throat; he crouched and rose with the oscillations of the bell, breathed in this overwhelming breath, gazed by turns at the deep place, which swarmed with people, two hundred feet below him, and at that enormous, brazen tongue which came, second after second, to howl in his ear.

It was the only speech which he understood, the only sound which broke for him the universal silence. He swelled out in it as a bird does in the sun. All of a sudden, the frenzy of the bell seized upon him; his look became extraordinary; he lay in wait for the great bell as it

passed, as a spider lies in wait for a fly, and flung himself abruptly upon it, with might and main. Then, suspended above the abyss, borne to and fro by the formidable swinging of the bell, he seized the brazen monster by the ear-laps, pressed it between both knees, spurred it on with his heels, and redoubled the fury of the peal with the whole shock and weight of his body. Meanwhile, the tower trembled; he shrieked and gnashed his teeth, his red hair rose erect, his breast heaving like a bellows, his eye flashed flames, the monstrous bell neighed, panting, beneath him; and then it was no longer the great bell of Notre-Dame nor Quasimodo: it was a dream, a whirlwind, a tempest, dizziness mounted astride of noise; a spirit clinging to a flying crupper, a strange centaur, half man, half bell; a sort of horrible Astolphus, borne away upon a prodigious hippogriff of living bronze.

The presence of this extraordinary being caused, as it were, a breath of life to circulate throughout the entire cathedral. It seemed as though there escaped from him, at least according to the growing superstitions of the crowd, a mysterious emanation which animated all the stones of Notre-Dame, and made the deep bowels of the ancient church to palpitate. It sufficed for people to know that he was there, to make them believe that they beheld the thousand statues of the galleries and the fronts in motion. And the cathedral did indeed seem a docile and obedient creature beneath his hand; it waited on his will to raise its great voice; it was possessed and filled with Quasimodo, as with a familiar spirit. One would have said that he made the immense edifice breathe. He was everywhere about it; in fact, he multiplied himself on all points of the structure. Now one perceived with affright at the very top of one of

the towers, a fantastic dwarf climbing, writhing, crawling on all fours, descending outside above the abyss, leaping from projection to projection, and going to ransack the belly of some sculptured gorgon; it was Quasimodo dislodging the crows. Again, in some obscure corner of the church one came in contact with a sort of living chimera, crouching and scowling; it was Quasimodo engaged in thought. Sometimes one caught sight, upon a bell tower, of an enormous head and a bundle of disordered limbs swinging furiously at the end of a rope; it was Quasimodo ringing vespers or the Angelus. Often at night a hideous form was seen wandering along the frail balustrade of carved lacework, which crowns the towers and borders the circumference of the apse; again it was the hunchback of Notre-Dame. Then, said the women of the neighborhood, the whole church took on something fantastic, supernatural, horrible; eyes and mouths were opened, here and there; one heard the dogs, the monsters, and the gargoyles of stone, which keep watch night and day, with outstretched neck and open jaws, around the monstrous cathedral, barking. And, if it was a Christmas Eve, while the great bell, which seemed to emit the death rattle, summoned the faithful to the midnight mass, such an air was spread over the sombre façade that one would have declared that the grand portal was devouring the throng, and that the rose window was watching it. And all this came from Quasimodo. Egypt would have taken him for the god of this temple; the Middle Ages believed him to be its demon: he was in fact its soul.

To such an extent was this disease that for those who know that Quasimodo has existed, Notre-Dame is to-day deserted, inanimate, dead. One feels that something has disappeared from it. That immense body is

empty; it is a skeleton; the spirit has quitted it, one sees its place and that is all. It is like a skull which still has holes for the eyes, but no longer sight.

CHAPTER IV. THE DOG AND HIS MASTER.

Nevertheless, there was one human creature whom Quasimodo excepted from
his malice and from his hatred for others, and whom he loved even more, perhaps, than his cathedral: this was Claude Frollo.

The matter was simple; Claude Frollo had taken him in, had adopted him, had nourished him, had reared him. When a little lad, it was between Claude Frollo's legs that he was accustomed to seek refuge, when the dogs and the children barked after him. Claude Frollo had taught him to talk, to read, to write. Claude Frollo had finally made him the bellringer. Now, to give the big bell in marriage to Quasimodo was to give Juliet to Romeo.

Hence Quasimodo's gratitude was profound, passionate, boundless; and although the visage of his adopted father was often clouded or severe, although his speech was habitually curt, harsh, imperious, that gratitude never wavered for a single moment. The archdeacon had in Quasimodo the most submissive slave, the most docile lackey, the most vigilant of dogs. When the poor bellringer became deaf, there had been established between him and Claude Frollo, a language of signs, mysterious and understood by themselves alone. In this manner the archdeacon was the sole human being with whom Quasimodo had preserved

communication. He was in sympathy with but two things in this world: Notre-Dame and Claude Frollo.

There is nothing which can be compared with the empire of the archdeacon over the bellringer; with the attachment of the bellringer for the archdeacon. A sign from Claude and the idea of giving him pleasure would have sufficed to make Quasimodo hurl himself headlong from the summit of Notre-Dame. It was a remarkable thing--all that physical strength which had reached in Quasimodo such an extraordinary development, and which was placed by him blindly at the disposition of another. There was in it, no doubt, filial devotion, domestic attachment; there was also the fascination of one spirit by another spirit. It was a poor, awkward, and clumsy organization, which stood with lowered head and supplicating eyes before a lofty and profound, a powerful and superior intellect. Lastly, and above all, it was gratitude. Gratitude so pushed to its extremest limit, that we do not know to what to compare it. This virtue is not one of those of which the finest examples are to be met with among men. We will say then, that Quasimodo loved the archdeacon as never a dog, never a horse, never an elephant loved his master.

CHAPTER V. MORE ABOUT CLAUDE FROLLO.

In 1482, Quasimodo was about twenty years of age; Claude Frollo, about thirty-six. One had grown up, the other had grown old.

Claude Frollo was no longer the simple scholar of the college of Torch, the tender protector of a little child, the young and dreamy philosopher who knew many things and was ignorant of many. He was a priest, austere, grave, morose; one charged with souls; monsieur the archdeacon of Josas, the bishop's second acolyte, having charge of the two deaneries of Montlhéry, and Châteaufort, and one hundred and seventy-four country curacies. He was an imposing and sombre personage, before whom the choir boys in alb and in jacket trembled, as well as the machicots*, and the brothers of Saint-Augustine and the matutinal clerks of Notre-Dame, when he passed slowly beneath the lofty arches of the choir, majestic, thoughtful, with arms folded and his head so bent upon his breast that all one saw of his face was his large, bald brow.

* An official of Notre-Dame, lower than a beneficed clergyman, higher than simple paid chanters.

Dom Claude Frollo had, however, abandoned neither science nor the

education of his young brother, those two occupations of his life. But as time went on, some bitterness had been mingled with these things which were so sweet. In the long run, says Paul Diacre, the best lard turns rancid. Little Jehan Frollo, surnamed (du Moulin) "of the Mill" because of the place where he had been reared, had not grown up in the direction which Claude would have liked to impose upon him. The big brother counted upon a pious, docile, learned, and honorable pupil. But the little brother, like those young trees which deceive the gardener's hopes and turn obstinately to the quarter whence they receive sun and air, the little brother did not grow and did not multiply, but only put forth fine bushy and luxuriant branches on the side of laziness, ignorance, and debauchery. He was a regular devil, and a very disorderly one, who made Dom Claude scowl; but very droll and very subtle, which made the big brother smile.

Claude had confided him to that same college of Torchi where he had passed his early years in study and meditation; and it was a grief to him that this sanctuary, formerly edified by the name of Frollo, should to-day be scandalized by it. He sometimes preached Jehan very long and severe sermons, which the latter intrepidly endured. After all, the young scapegrace had a good heart, as can be seen in all comedies. But the sermon over, he none the less tranquilly resumed his course of seditions and enormities. Now it was a bejaune or yellow beak (as they called the new arrivals at the university), whom he had been mauling by way of welcome; a precious tradition which has been carefully preserved to our own day. Again, he had set in movement a band of scholars, who had flung themselves upon a wine-shop in classic fashion, quasi

classico excitati, had then beaten the tavern-keeper "with offensive cudgels," and joyously pillaged the tavern, even to smashing in the hogsheads of wine in the cellar. And then it was a fine report in Latin, which the sub-monitor of Torchi carried piteously to Dom Claude with this dolorous marginal comment,--Rixa; prima causa vinum optimum potatum. Finally, it was said, a thing quite horrible in a boy of sixteen, that his debauchery often extended as far as the Rue de Glatigny.

Claude, saddened and discouraged in his human affections, by all this, had flung himself eagerly into the arms of learning, that sister which, at least does not laugh in your face, and which always pays you, though in money that is sometimes a little hollow, for the attention which you have paid to her. Hence, he became more and more learned, and, at the same time, as a natural consequence, more and more rigid as a priest, more and more sad as a man. There are for each of us several parallelisms between our intelligence, our habits, and our character, which develop without a break, and break only in the great disturbances of life.

As Claude Frollo had passed through nearly the entire circle of human learning--positive, exterior, and permissible--since his youth, he was obliged, unless he came to a halt, ubi defuit orbis, to proceed further and seek other aliments for the insatiable activity of his intelligence. The antique symbol of the serpent biting its tail is, above all, applicable to science. It would appear that Claude Frollo had experienced this. Many grave persons affirm that, after having exhausted

the fas of human learning, he had dared to penetrate into the nefas. He had, they said, tasted in succession all the apples of the tree of knowledge, and, whether from hunger or disgust, had ended by tasting the forbidden fruit. He had taken his place by turns, as the reader has seen, in the conferences of the theologians in Sorbonne,--in the assemblies of the doctors of art, after the manner of Saint-Hilaire,--in the disputes of the decretalists, after the manner of Saint-Martin,--in the congregations of physicians at the holy water font of Notre-Dame, ad cupam Nostroe-Dominoe. All the dishes permitted and approved, which those four great kitchens called the four faculties could elaborate and serve to the understanding, he had devoured, and had been satiated with them before his hunger was appeased. Then he had penetrated further, lower, beneath all that finished, material, limited knowledge; he had, perhaps, risked his soul, and had seated himself in the cavern at that mysterious table of the alchemists, of the astrologers, of the hermetics, of which Averroès, Gillaume de Paris, and Nicolas Flamel hold the end in the Middle Ages; and which extends in the East, by the light of the seven-branched candlestick, to Solomon, Pythagoras, and Zoroaster.

That is, at least, what was supposed, whether rightly or not. It is certain that the archdeacon often visited the cemetery of the Saints-Innocents, where, it is true, his father and mother had been buried, with other victims of the plague of 1466; but that he appeared far less devout before the cross of their grave than before the strange figures with which the tomb of Nicolas Flamel and Claude Pernelle, erected just beside it, was loaded.

It is certain that he had frequently been seen to pass along the Rue des Lombards, and furtively enter a little house which formed the corner of the Rue des Ecrivans and the Rue Marivault. It was the house which Nicolas Flamel had built, where he had died about 1417, and which, constantly deserted since that time, had already begun to fall in ruins,--so greatly had the hermetics and the alchemists of all countries wasted away the walls, merely by carving their names upon them. Some neighbors even affirm that they had once seen, through an air-hole, Archdeacon Claude excavating, turning over, digging up the earth in the two cellars, whose supports had been daubed with numberless couplets and hieroglyphics by Nicolas Flamel himself. It was supposed that Flamel had buried the philosopher's stone in the cellar; and the alchemists, for the space of two centuries, from Magistri to Father Pacifique, never ceased to worry the soil until the house, so cruelly ransacked and turned over, ended by falling into dust beneath their feet.

Again, it is certain that the archdeacon had been seized with a singular passion for the symbolical door of Notre-Dame, that page of a conjuring book written in stone, by Bishop Guillaume de Paris, who has, no doubt, been damned for having affixed so infernal a frontispiece to the sacred poem chanted by the rest of the edifice. Archdeacon Claude had the credit also of having fathomed the mystery of the colossus of Saint Christopher, and of that lofty, enigmatical statue which then stood at the entrance of the vestibule, and which the people, in derision, called "Monsieur Legris." But, what every one might have noticed was the interminable hours which he often employed, seated upon the parapet of

the area in front of the church, in contemplating the sculptures of the front; examining now the foolish virgins with their lamps reversed, now the wise virgins with their lamps upright; again, calculating the angle of vision of that raven which belongs to the left front, and which is looking at a mysterious point inside the church, where is concealed the philosopher's stone, if it be not in the cellar of Nicolas Flamel.

It was, let us remark in passing, a singular fate for the Church of Notre-Dame at that epoch to be so beloved, in two different degrees, and with so much devotion, by two beings so dissimilar as Claude and Quasimodo. Beloved by one, a sort of instinctive and savage half-man, for its beauty, for its stature, for the harmonies which emanated from its magnificent ensemble; beloved by the other, a learned and passionate imagination, for its myth, for the sense which it contains, for the symbolism scattered beneath the sculptures of its front,--like the first text underneath the second in a palimpsest,--in a word, for the enigma which it is eternally propounding to the understanding.

Furthermore, it is certain that the archdeacon had established himself in that one of the two towers which looks upon the Grève, just beside the frame for the bells, a very secret little cell, into which no one, not even the bishop, entered without his leave, it was said. This tiny cell had formerly been made almost at the summit of the tower, among the ravens' nests, by Bishop Hugo de Besançon* who had wrought sorcery there in his day. What that cell contained, no one knew; but from the strand of the Terrain, at night, there was often seen to appear, disappear, and reappear at brief and regular intervals, at a little dormer window

opening upon the back of the tower, a certain red, intermittent, singular light which seemed to follow the panting breaths of a bellows, and to proceed from a flame, rather than from a light. In the darkness, at that height, it produced a singular effect; and the goodwives said: "There's the archdeacon blowing! hell is sparkling up yonder!"

* Hugo II. de Bisuncio, 1326-1332.

There were no great proofs of sorcery in that, after all, but there was still enough smoke to warrant a surmise of fire, and the archdeacon bore a tolerably formidable reputation. We ought to mention however, that the sciences of Egypt, that necromancy and magic, even the whitest, even the most innocent, had no more envenomed enemy, no more pitiless denunciator
before the gentlemen of the officialty of Notre-Dame. Whether this was sincere horror, or the game played by the thief who shouts, "stop thief!" at all events, it did not prevent the archdeacon from being considered by the learned heads of the chapter, as a soul who had ventured into the vestibule of hell, who was lost in the caves of the cabal, groping amid the shadows of the occult sciences. Neither were the people deceived thereby; with any one who possessed any sagacity, Quasimodo passed for the demon; Claude Frollo, for the sorcerer. It was evident that the bellringer was to serve the archdeacon for a given time, at the end of which he would carry away the latter's soul, by way of payment. Thus the archdeacon, in spite of the excessive austerity of

his life, was in bad odor among all pious souls; and there was no devout nose so inexperienced that it could not smell him out to be a magician.

And if, as he grew older, abysses had formed in his science, they had also formed in his heart. That at least, is what one had grounds for believing on scrutinizing that face upon which the soul was only seen to shine through a sombre cloud. Whence that large, bald brow? that head forever bent? that breast always heaving with sighs? What secret thought caused his mouth to smile with so much bitterness, at the same moment that his scowling brows approached each other like two bulls on the point of fighting? Why was what hair he had left already gray? What was that internal fire which sometimes broke forth in his glance, to such a degree that his eye resembled a hole pierced in the wall of a furnace?

These symptoms of a violent moral preoccupation, had acquired an especially high degree of intensity at the epoch when this story takes place. More than once a choir-boy had fled in terror at finding him alone in the church, so strange and dazzling was his look. More than once, in the choir, at the hour of the offices, his neighbor in the stalls had heard him mingle with the plain song, ad omnem tonum, unintelligible parentheses. More than once the laundress of the Terrain charged "with washing the chapter" had observed, not without affright, the marks of nails and clenched fingers on the surplice of monsieur the archdeacon of Josas.

However, he redoubled his severity, and had never been more exemplary. By profession as well as by character, he had always held himself aloof

from women; he seemed to hate them more than ever. The mere rustling of a silken petticoat caused his hood to fall over his eyes. Upon this score he was so jealous of austerity and reserve, that when the Dame de Beaujeu, the king's daughter, came to visit the cloister of Notre-Dame, in the month of December, 1481, he gravely opposed her entrance, reminding the bishop of the statute of the Black Book, dating from the vigil of Saint-Barthélemy, 1334, which interdicts access to the cloister to "any woman whatever, old or young, mistress or maid." Upon which the bishop had been constrained to recite to him the ordinance of Legate Odo, which excepts certain great dames, aliquoe magnates mulieres, quoe sine scandalo vitari non possunt. And again the archdeacon had protested, objecting that the ordinance of the legate, which dated back to 1207, was anterior by a hundred and twenty-seven years to the Black Book, and consequently was abrogated in fact by it. And he had refused to appear before the princess.

It was also noticed that his horror for Bohemian women and gypsies had seemed to redouble for some time past. He had petitioned the bishop for an edict which expressly forbade the Bohemian women to come and dance and beat their tambourines on the place of the Parvis; and for about the same length of time, he had been ransacking the mouldy placards of the officialty, in order to collect the cases of sorcerers and witches condemned to fire or the rope, for complicity in crimes with rams, sows, or goats.

CHAPTER VI. UNPOPULARITY.

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

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

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

Sometimes a mischievous child risked his skin and bones for the ineffable pleasure of driving a pin into Quasimodo's hump. Again, a young girl, more bold and saucy than was fitting, brushed the priest's black robe, singing in his face the sardonic ditty, "niche, niche, the devil is caught." Sometimes a group of squalid old crones, squatting in

a file under the shadow of the steps to a porch, scolded noisily as the archdeacon and the bellringer passed, and tossed them this encouraging welcome, with a curse: "Hum! there's a fellow whose soul is made like the other one's body!" Or a band of schoolboys and street urchins, playing hop-scotch, rose in a body and saluted him classically, with some cry in Latin: "Eia! eia! Claudius cum claudo!"

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