

# THE WHITE AND BLUE.

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## The White and Blue

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## LE QUARTIER LATIN.

There are two main streets running through the Latin Quarter, the boulevard St. Germain, parallel with the Seine, and the boulevard St. Michel, at right angles to it. These are arteries of the city itself, and on them a great deal of business is done, and a large traffic accommodated. But, with this exception, the streets of the Quarter are comparatively quiet, and free from business other than what is merely local. Take fifty steps from the boulevards and you find yourself in little narrow quiet rues, inhabited principally by the students.

And now to say something of the way in which the Paris student lives. His first care is to find a room. There is no such thing as a private house, at least not one in which a stranger is likely to be admitted as a member of the family. All the dwellings are built on the apartment system: that is, large houses rented out in rooms or flats, and a concierge or janitor quartered near the door to keep an eye on those who enter, receive letters from the postman, and the like. All the houses in the Quarter are of this kind, and furnished rooms in them, including attendance, are let at from six to ten dollars a month. The furniture always includes a range of book-shelves and a clock. A student considers himself fortunate if he is no higher than the fifth story. Once installed he comes in at any hour he chooses, goes out at any hour he chooses and receives whoever and whenever he likes.

A restaurant is next to be found, and one that is convenient to a particular school or college is selected. The Quarter is full of student restaurants, and perhaps a good idea of them may be conveyed by a description of one of the best patronized, *Mongeon*, in the rue St. Jacques, within two hundred yards of Notre Dame. Four or five hundred students dine here every day. They begin to come in about eleven o'clock for breakfast, and about six for dinner. No one takes more than two meals a day. The bill of fare is pretty much the same for both breakfast and dinner, and consists of roasted and boiled meats, fish, steak, vegetables, bread, cheese and fruit. The price of everything is marked on the card, and one only pays for what he gets. Each one orders a half bottle of wine, most of the students being satisfied with *vin ordinaire* at four cents for the  *demi-bouteille*, while the few whose purses are longer indulge in *Maron* at ten cents, or *Sauterne*, at fifteen cents for the same quantity. The prices are reasonable, considering that everything which enters the city for consumption pays a tax before it can be marketed. The quality is also fair, though the student is well aware that the Swiss

cheese he orders for dessert has never seen a milk-pail, and that in the matter of meat the probability is that what he called for as beef is only horse-flesh—But on this point he is at ease: why should not horse be as good as bullock? He drinks neither tea nor coffee at the restaurant, and never uses butter on his bread. He knows how to make a salad, and this is one of his favorite dishes. At Mongeon's such a breakfast or dinner as I have described costs from twenty to thirty cents, not counting two sous which every guest places on the table for the *garçon*. Instead of the proprietor paying the waiters the waiters pay the proprietor for the privilege of serving.

The French are said to lead the rest of the world in table etiquette, but certainly one sees nothing to bear this out among the students. You never hear those fine phrases with which the average French-English grammar toms, such as *avec la bonte de me passer le fromage*; but *garçon un pain et depechez-vous*. At Mongeon's you hear several languages spoken. There were always eight or ten of what we called the Anglo-American crowd, and, with the exception of myself and another, they spoke German and French as fluently as English. They talked in whichever tongue happened to suit the occasion or the company. Opposite us there was a table of Americans and Greeks who spoke their own tongue among themselves, but they were also well up in French, and two of them, educated in the Roberts' College at Constantinople, were fair English scholars as well. Then there were young fellows from Geneva who spoke French, Italian and German, the three languages of Switzerland. Besides these you might hear Spanish, Italian, Japanese, and several other languages during the progress of a meal. It is the ability of a great many students to speak at least two languages that strikes the Englishman or American when he visits the continental universities.

If he is not extremely hard up, the Paris student has also a *café* whither he resorts after meals. Here he drinks a glass of coffee, always with sugar, but not often with cream, reads the papers, writes his letters, and meets his friends. Some of the best *cafés* in Paris are in the Quarter, and they are always filled with students. Coffee is the common drink, though of late *absinthe*, a dangerous mixture, and *vermouth*, have become popular. Nearly everyone smokes cigarettes. With the *fourboire* to the *garçon*, a glass of good coffee costs nine or ten cents. Unless the students are on the most intimate terms, each man pays his own reckoning; there is no such thing as treating recognized.

The day is filled out something in this way: up about ten, unless you are a medical and have an early clinic or an early lecture; breakfast at from eleven to one o'clock; an hour at the *café*; lectures and study in the afternoon; dinner at six; another hour at the *café*, and the evening at your books or the theatre or the public balls, as it suits your taste, or the necessity of an approaching examination dictates.

All through the Quarter are book stalls and book stores, and at these reprints of modern English works, such as those of Spencer, Huxley, Darwin, of German scientific books, the classics, translations and the other college text books are to be had at one half of English or American prices. You can pick up almost any book second-hand. Paris is noted for its schools of medicine, and the *libraires* of the Quarter for their publications in this department.

If you happen to be well posted, you will often

(Continued on fourth page.)

*He went to Paris  
right after he  
graduated. W.T.*