

iron bolts and bars; and when the doorways had been made fast in like manner, the artisan's workshop was as good as a fortress.

For the first twenty years of this present century the Limousins had been accustomed to see the interior filled up with old iron and brass, cart-springs, tires, bells, and every sort of metal from the demolition of houses; but the curious in the *débris* of the old town discovered, on a closer inspection, the traces of a forge in the place and a long streak of soot, signs which confirmed the guesses of archæologists as to the original purpose of the dwelling. On the first floor there was a living room and a kitchen, two more rooms on the second, and an attic in the roof, which was used as a warehouse for goods more fragile than the hardware tumbled down pell-mell in the shop.

The house had been first let and then sold to one Sauviat, a hawker, who from 1792 till 1796 traveled in Auvergne for a distance of fifty leagues round, bartering pots, plates, dishes, and glasses, all the gear, in fact, needed by the poorest cottagers, for old iron, brass, lead, and metal of every sort and description. The Auvergnat would give a brown earthen pipkin worth a couple of sous for a pound weight of lead or a couple of pounds of iron, a broken spade or hoe, or an old cracked saucepan; and was always judge in his own cause, and gave his own weights. In three years' time Sauviat took another trade in addition, and became a tinman.

In 1793 he was able to buy a château put up for sale by the nation. This he pulled down; and doubtless repeated a profitable experiment at more than one point in his sphere of operations. After a while these first essays of his gave him an idea; he suggested a piece of business on a large scale to a fellow-countryman in Paris; and so it befell that the *Black Band*, so notorious for the havoc which it wrought among old buildings, was a sprout of old Sauviat's brain, the invention of the hawker whom all Limoges had seen for seven-and-twenty years in his tumbledown shop among his broken bells, flails, chains, brackets, twisted leaden gutters, and