

ing to my guide, MM. Le Prêtre, Seigneurs of the Company of Notre Dame de Montreal, which had been formed in Paris some thirty-one years before with a view to establishing affairs in Montreal on essentially religious principles, presented the new church with an image of the Virgin, wonderfully carved, and standing in a bejewelled niche. To hold this statue, far too beautiful for any wooden edifice, they built the first stone church erected on the island, where the chapel had stood till then. Notre Dame de Bon Secours became a shrine to which numbers of pilgrims directed their steps, and a refuge for the weak-hearted generally. Owing, it is believed, to subsequent lukewarmness on the part of the faithful, a fire destroyed the church in 1754, and it was not rebuilt till 1773. Too thorough renovations have deprived the present edifice of much interest; though the walls are old, some ghastly modern decorations disfigure them. The precious little statue, too, which had been venerated for a hundred and sixty years, was stolen in 1831. The sexton told me the Virgin which now replaces it is partly solid gold, and, while being comparatively new, seems to possess all the marvellous power of the former one. A little silver ship suspended in the centre of the church, Mr. Sexton said, had been presented by the Zouaves who went over, thirteen years ago, to help the Pope, and on their return were almost wrecked.

It would indeed have been a sorry affair if the Archbishop had not interfered to prevent the erecting of the projected statue upon our mountain. Some persons propose that if the Virgin is not to be honoured, Champlain, or Maisonneuve, or Jacques Cartier we might glorify instead. But why think of statues at all when we can't keep our streets clean? There is another point people are apt to forget, viz.: That our city we call no longer Ville-Marie, but Montreal.

LOUIS LLOYD.

PARIS LETTER.

THOUGH winter and Lent are now over, Paris, looked at from a social point of view, is as dull as ever; no balls, receptions, or dinners of any importance. No, we are *tout à la politique*, even the great personages who come for a few days on amusement intent are suspected of sinister designs. Thus Princess Clementine, mother of Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, is said to have spent a week here trying to negotiate a large loan for her son; and Queen Isabella of Spain, who has come back to the Palais de Castille, her Paris house, for the spring, is affirmed to have been sent there as a place of honourable semi-captivity, where her proceedings can be watched by her daughter-in-law's, Queen Christina, political spies.

Then again, Boulanger's name is in all men's mouths. Will he be Dictator? when? and if so, will he precipitate France into a disastrous war in order to make his own place more secure? The *peuple* would certainly welcome him on the principle of "anything for a change," but the *bourgeoisie* and old *noblesse* intensely despise and dislike him, principally on account of the Duc d'Aumale affair, in which he certainly played a shabby and ungentlemanly part. I heard lately the following version given as the only correct one. As far as I know, it has never yet appeared in print:

In the same way that every Frenchman and woman's *dossier* (personal account of the individual, including profession, habits, friends, etc.) is said, with more or less truth, to be kept at the Prefecture de Police, so every officer's *dossier* is really kept at the Ministère de la Guerre. These *dossiers* are compiled from the personal, very personal reports, which every superior officer has to send, once in a way, of his subs. These *dossiers* are kept in pigeon-holes to which the Minister has alone access, when a court martial, etc., demands that the record of an officer's past life should be known. As soon as General Boulanger became Minister of War he naturally went to the pigeon-hole where his own record was kept. On the whole he had cause to be satisfied; all agreed as to his bravery and intelligence, but among the reports was one signed "D'Aumale," and thus worded, "Bon officier, mais bien mal élevé." A month after, the famous decree of expulsion was sent to Chantilly from the Elysée.

Among the most interesting sights of Paris must be classed the sales at the Hotel Drouot; and curious it is to reflect on the instinct which makes men collect treasures, of which they must foresee the ultimate dispersion. To buy pictures, etc., for the adornment of the ancestral hall, or for the eyes to rest upon in daily life, seems a natural and pardonable manner of laying up treasures, even though metals rust and moths and dust corrupt; but to purchase a mass of beautiful objects which cannot, in the nature of things, be kept together beyond one lifetime, is a regular phase of modern life. This did M. Albert Goupil, who died about five years ago. His father, himself a great collector, who founded years ago the well-known art firm of that name, is still living; his son spent many years and a large fortune in travelling through the East, buying as he went rare and splendid carpets, Arabian glass, curios in copper, and any good specimen of Oriental art he came across. One copper basin, adorned with arabesques, is signed by the maker, "Daoud ben Salamek de Mossoul," and dated 1252. Four years earlier this same man, a noted copper worker, made some candlebrasses, which also appear at this sale.

M. Albert Goupil dwelt so familiarly with so many centuries and nations embodied in his marvellous collection that one wonders he was not overwhelmed with the incongruity of the associations. A white silk doublet with Oriental embroidery belonged to Charles de Blois, killed at the Battle of Auray, in thirteen hundred and odd; a wonderfully well preserved costume of red satin was worn on several occasions by the Earl of Essex at Queen Elizabeth's court, and perhaps—as she was certainly fond of fine clothes—may have contributed to the affection she at one time entertained for him. A century later comes a delicately painted miniature

of a seigneur who lived, loved, and died at the court of the Grand Monarque.

Among the collection of modern painters are many fine examples of Ingres and his pupils' work; this painter was evidently much admired by M. Goupil; for in addition to the above-mentioned works there is also a fine portrait of Ingres by David, and another of the same painter by himself. Edouard Detaille is represented by a Military Charge which can vie with his best known works, and the well known Spanish painter, Fortuny—whose early death was such a loss to Spanish art—by numberless sketches and pictures presented by the artist "à mon ami Albert Goupil."

A sale will also be held in the late collector's own house, some of the statues, wrought-iron screens, lamps, etc., being too heavy and large to be well shown and placed in the Hotel Drouot sale rooms.

As they came from the ends of the earth, so they will now be scattered again, and the mere long list touches one with a feeling of melancholy for these nomad things of beauty.

Some years ago an enterprising person proposed to the French Government the removal of the Golden Horse of Nîmes to the Champs Elysées! He wanted to remove the exquisite little Roman temple—the one perfect Roman building in Europe—stone by stone, and set it up where more people could enjoy it! It seems to me that for a thing of beauty to be a joy for ever it must be seen in its own home, amid the original surroundings for which it was created.

The personal reminiscences of Alphonse Daudet which have appeared under the title of *Trente Ans de Paris*, have aroused great interest in French literary circles. By this last work M. Daudet has shown us that his power is not merely that of a novelist, for this volume shows the keenest insight into the realities of contemporary life. Not only does he give vivid sketches of the eminent men and women whom he has known—Villemessant, Madeline and Augustine Brohan, Henri Rochefort, Tourgueniev, and Gambetta—but he portrays with wonderful vividness the seamy side of life in the Quartier Latin, to which poverty condemned himself and his brother Ernest in their early youth; although Alphonse was exceptionally fortunate in finding a publisher for his first volume, *Les Amoureuses*, which was brought out in 1858, and attracted the attention of Villemessant, who was just then looking out for young clever writers for his newest literary venture, *Le Figaro* newspaper. Daudet was then only seventeen. This start in life as a journalist probably gave him the habit of which he speaks, namely, that of classifying his experiences, reading, etc., for future use; as did two of his cleverest contemporaries, the de Goncourts, who may be truly said to have created the realistic school of fiction before Emile Zola was even heard of, and whose historical books, *La Femme au 18ième Siècle*, etc., show a wonderful power of realizing the pathos and quaintness of bygone days.

M. Daudet's description of his *modus operandi* might prove a useful lesson to literary aspirants, by teaching them to describe life as they themselves have found it, instead of trying to invent unlikely adventures, which, never having happened to themselves or others, arouse less interest than the simplest story of real life eloquently told—the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin. M. Daudet pays a touching tribute to his wife, who is herself a delicate and charming writer. To her, he says, he owes his great success, her sympathy, criticism, and enthusiasm having enabled him to persevere through periods of great mental fatigue and discouragement.

In Parisian Art the new departure is that of the Société des Artistes Indépendants. It is true that they first opened a small annual exhibition four years ago, composed of pictures which had been refused by the Salon—this caused them to be nicknamed *Les Refusés*—but this year they have changed their tactics, and have opened five weeks before the Salon. The point in which this differs from other exhibitions of an independent character consists in the total suppression of the principle of the jury. Any artist of any nationality is entitled, on the payment of twenty francs, to hang ten pictures in the gallery hired by the committee for the purpose. This year they occupy a corner of the Pavillon de Paris in the Champs Elysées. A more extraordinary collection has probably never been presented to human eyes. Most prominent are a large group of pictures, similar in treatment to those exhibited by the well-known Vingt, of Brussels. This treatment consists in the "decomposition of the solar prism," of which the practical outcome is the crude use of the three primary colours. The uncompromising devotees of this ideal, after carefully painting in the object they wish to represent, stipple their work all over with small spots of bright red, blue, and yellow. They do not admit flesh tints, so their studies from the nude are a delicate mixture of yellow and purple. One artist, in a vain attempt to produce a contrast, has seen fit to decorate his model with a pair of bright green stockings. Other pictures savour of the ultra-impressionist type, recalling Mr. Frith's anecdote of the lunatic who brought him a large canvas covered with three blotches, which he carefully explained to be Moses holding the Tables of the Law. But at the Indépendants, the lunatics are not present to explain the meaning of their work. This is notably true of a series of pictures, supposed to represent the life of a young lady in the *beau monde*. What can be seen of her resembles the phantom of some keepsake beauty of forty years ago, whilst all the shadows round her recall the modern frequenters of the Bal Mabille.

The historical Chateau de Vaux, where Louis the Fourteenth first saw Mademoiselle de la Vallière, at a great *fête* given by his Surintendant, Fouquet, has just changed hands, the Duc de Choiseul Praslin having sold it to a M. Soumier, who is restoring the Chateau to its original condition, and trying to reinstate the old gardens as they were in Fouquet's day, when Le Nostre had been specially bribed away from Versailles to lay them out.

Apropos of Versailles, the Chateau and gardens are falling into a sad state. For want of a few hundreds of francs judiciously spent many of the finest pic-