



"Tying them with wisps of straw"

He plays from ear and changes popular ditties to suit his morbid fancy, but *que voulez vous?* It is surely a great misfortune to be blind! So the children crowd around him while their elders part with carefully-hoarded pennies and the girls receive in exchange, from the old hag who leads him, a brightly-coloured paper whereon they see the picture of their "future" and plainly read their fortune.

The crowd that the piper attracts is only equalled by the one which gathers when the town crier beats his drum. The children cry:

"V'la l' appariteur!" and we throw open our windows or run to

the street to hear what he may have to say. Yesterday he hurried the slothful from their beds—but it was only to remind us to get our bread tickets! Sometimes his announcements are more personal: a cow having strayed into a field of lucerne and eaten not wisely but too well became swollen to such an extent that she had to be killed, so her owner informs the public that he has beef for sale. This advertisement costs him one franc, fifty centimes and when there are two announcements to be made in one day the *appariteur*, who is already in receipt of a salary of thirty dollars a year paid by the township for official notices, grows wealthy.