TYPES OF WAITERS AND WAITRESSES.

CHARACTERISTIC PARISIAN CAFÉS.

BY THEODORE CHILD.

IN Paris, public-houses where liquid refreshments are sold take many names, of which "café" is the most general and comprehensive. "Brasserie" is a café where beer is made a specialty; "cabaret" is the old-fashioned, but still used, word meaning a place where both drink and food are sold. Then there are the popular names not recognized by the standard dictionaries, such as "caboulot," "boussingot," or "bouchon," meaning a little low café; "bouisbouis," meaning a low café with the attraction of music and singing; and "mannezingue," "mastroquet," and "troquet," which are equivalent to the "marchand de vin"—the man who sells liquor over a polished zinc counter, and who varies in worthiness from a respectable tradesman and prominent elector down to the keeper of a "tapis franc," or thieves' den. Such establishments of different kinds are to be found in Paris by tens of thousands; furthermore, the number of them is increasing, and, according to statisticians, alcoholism is increasing too, especially amongst the lower classes. Far be it from me to distrust the

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figures of the statisticians, or even to quote them, for statisticians, I have remarked, are willingly foreboders of evil, and their conclusions full of menace. My own experience during many years of peripatetic observation has been that it is a very rare thing to see a drunken man in the streets of Paris; and when, on two or three occasions within as many years, I have seen a man lying helpless on the sidewalk, I have always attributed the accident to the slipperiness of the pavement, or to the sleepiness of the man, or to his having thought that there was an earthquake.

The Frenchman does not get drunk; he becomes lively—or, as he says, *ému*—under the influence of liquor, and in such circumstances he is expansive, persuasive, and singularly eloquent. Frédérick Lemaître and Gambetta achieved their most brilliant successes, the one as an actor, the other as an orator, when they were exceedingly *ému*. In his younger days, I have heard, the Duc d'Aumale, passing at the head of his regiment the Clos Vougeot, halted his men, and made them salute the famous vineyard, as being one of the great nursing mothers of French wit. But, strange to say, the Parisian does not drink wine at a café: he drinks deleterious distilled liquors, such as vermouth, absinthe, various bitters supposed to have merits as "appetizers," or harmless syrups made from fruits or aromatic plants. On the other hand, he drinks but small quantities of these liquids, and that, too, so slowly that he is capable of sitting for two hours in a café before a single thimbleful of liqueur brandy, having thus paid for a pretext for lounging, talking, and reading the newspapers. In fact, the café and the newspaper came into vogue almost simultaneously about a century ago, when Louis XVI. was King. As the times became more interesting, the gazettes became more numerous, and the calm topics of art, the drama, and the scandals of the court gave way to hot discussions about the rights of man, in which the women also took part. At the Café Corazza the Jacobins gathered round Chabot and Collot d'Herbois, while the Royalists held their own as well as they could at the Café de Foy. Then, the summer of 1789 happening to be persistently rainy, and the gossips being more eager than ever for news, the politicians and their orators sought shelter in various other cafés, where they formed sympathetic groups, and so prepared the way for the clubs of the period of the Revolution. In those critical times, when the formidable subject of the rights of man was being argued and settled for all time, the politicians established clearly and by example that it was the right of the French citizen to read the gazettes, to talk loudly, and to enjoy all the other advantages of a café, during the space of at least six hours, on the condition of ordering one cup of coffee or a single thimbleful of brandy. And this right has been maintained by succeeding generations up to the present day. Thus we have one important point settled, namely, the Frenchman does not go to a café for the sake of drinking, nor does he drink at the café for the sake of drinking, much less because he is thirsty: he drinks simply because he wants to go to the café.

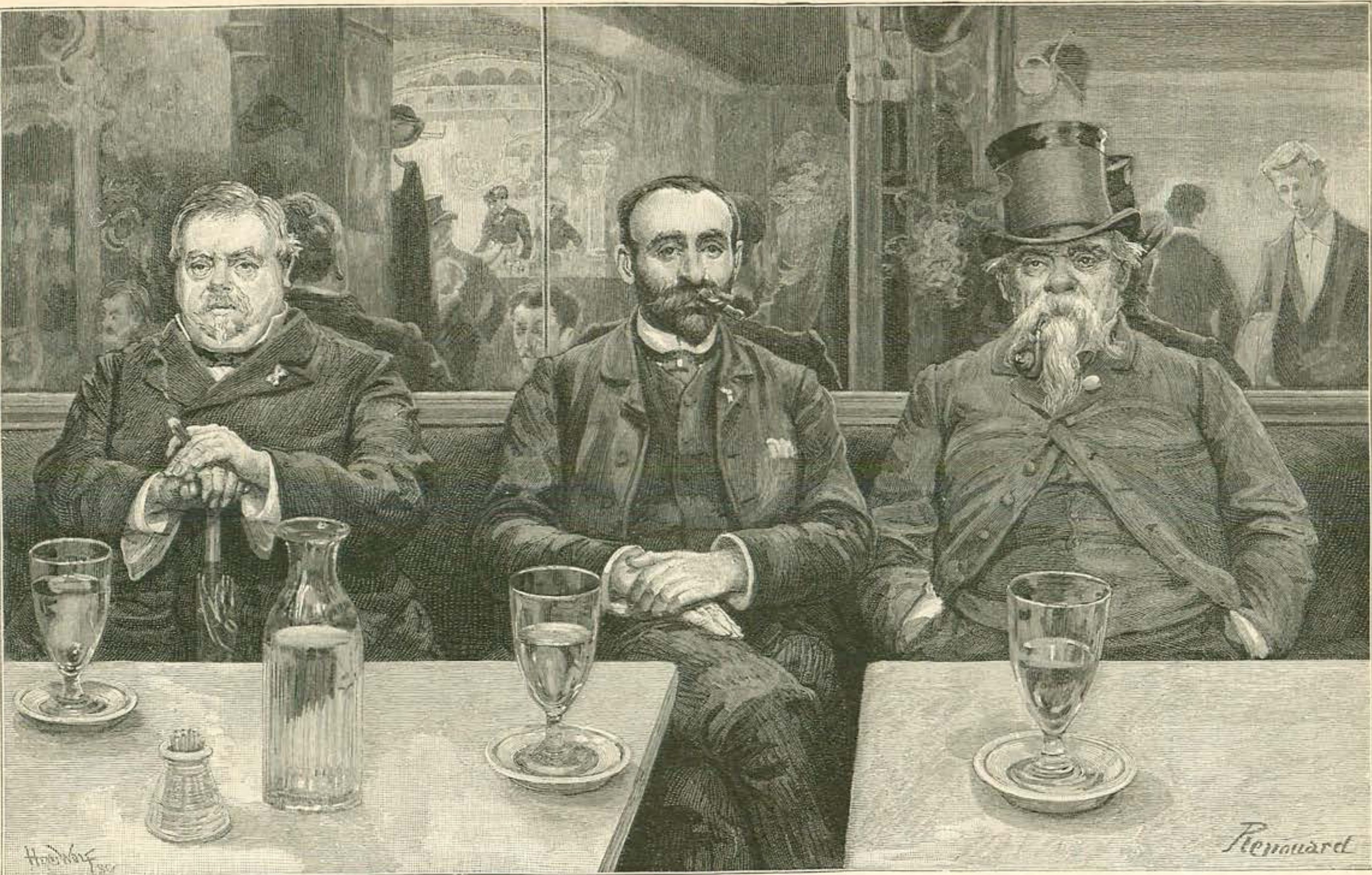
Why the Frenchman wants to go to a café is a complex question which can be answered only roughly and incompletely by noting the triple attraction which the café exercises. First of all, it satisfies the need of public life and life in public which the Latin nations in particular have felt since the Revolution of 1789; secondly, it takes the place of family life, which the conditions of modern existence have profoundly undermined; finally, it flatters a certain taste for degradation and lowness which is peculiar to male humanity, and which the wisest legislator will never be able to suppress. All men, it seems, feel the need of escaping occasionally from the gentle influence of their women-folk, and of enjoying masculine society and masculine talk; hence the café and hence the club, which is an outcome and modification of the café, and the most exclusively masculine of all the institutions of modern civilization. In itself the café is tiresome and full of ennui, like everything which is not natural, and the pleasure which it gives cannot be formulated.

Let us take a walk along the boulevard between five and seven o'clock, the "green hours," when the Parisians are wont to drink absinthe, read the evening papers, and gossip in the cafés. The boulevards extend for miles until they reach the Bastile Column, where they connect with other boulevards which surround the city. But the real boulevard —*the* boulevard—is a short stretch bounded at one end by the Madeleine and at the

CAFÉ TORTONI.

other by the Rue Montmartre, and the centre and quintessence of it is the Café Tortoni. The history of Tortoni is the history of the boulevard, and of that superior kind of Bohemian who bears the generic name of *boulevardier*. Under the First Empire the wits assembled there to comment upon the bulletins of the Grand Army, or to criticise the last tragedy of Luce de Lancival. In the little room at the back, Talleyrand was wont to sit, and through the window watch the gay movement of the Boulevard de Gand, which we now call the Boulevard des Italiens. Later, M. Thiers, aged thirty, elegant, ambitious, and determined to succeed, used to ride up to Tortoni's on a white horse, stay just long enough to eat an ice, and then quick to the saddle again, and *en route* for fortune. Throughout the Restoration and the Second Empire Tortoni was a centre of fashion, wit, and elegance, and the little café at the corner of the Rue Taitbout still remains, a monument, an institution, a tradition, the sanctum of the *chroniqueurs* of the Parisian newspapers of the *Figaro* type, the head-quarters of the wits, the gossips, and the scandalmongers of the capital. At the Café Américain, novelists, poets, other *chroniqueurs*, literary men, and painters indulge regularly in "apéritifs," cigarettes, and piquant talk. At the Café Riche, the financiers and stock-brokers outnumber the literary men, who used to predominate in former days, when Offenbach, Clément Laurier, Wolff, About, and Saint-Victor were the habitués of a particular round table. On the other side of the boulevard, the Café du Helder is the rendezvous of military and naval officers, who on their brief visits to Paris are sure to find some friend there with whom to discuss the latest promotions and the newest reforms invented by their hierarchic chief the Minister of War, and in case of need they can appeal for information to the habitués, who are not all army men, but who have a particular affection for all that is military, and who sit at the little marble tables, drink absinthe, and are invariably decorated. One may be a retired captain with a rubicund nose, long shaggy mustaches, a goatee beard, and in his button-hole the rosette of the Legion of Honor, won perhaps by good service in Africa. With his hands in his pockets, he sits heavily on the red velvet divan, propping his gross body against the back, and never removing his rather rakish hat from his denuded skull. Another may be a horse-dealer or an army contractor, whose sympathies and interests make him prefer to drink his green poison in a military café. A third, corpulent, apoplectic, faded, and sulky, smokes stolidly, with a cross expression on his countenance, his temper having been irremediably soured by long years of sedentary ennui in the bureaux of the War Department.

Then there is the Café de la Paix, the rendezvous of the gilded youth of Paris, and of the rich strangers, who sit at the little round tables placed on the sidewalk, and marvel at the animation and variety of the boulevard. At the Café de la Paix you can see any day and at almost any hour specimens of all the nationalities of the earth — Brazilians scintillating with diamonds, Englishmen conspicuous by their strange head-gear and light-colored clothes, Chinese clad in radiant silks, Arab sheiks who mar the majesty of their turban and burnoose by wearing yellow kid French gloves stitched with black. And in the midst of this cosmopolitan company the young French "dude" sucks the handle of his cane, cramped and angular in his tight-fitting garments, dull-eyed, stolid, and proud of the weary emptiness of his existence. At the Café de Madrid may be seen the members of the radical newspaper press, intermingled with business men and miscellaneous idlers, for the café is no longer the almost exclusively political rendezvous which it was in the later years of the Empire, when Ranc, Spuller, Gambetta, and Vallès were the chief orators in this sort of forum, where most of the prominent politicians and journalists of the present day took their first lessons in Republican arms. This was about 1886, when on the other side of the river the future chiefs of the Commune, Raoul, Rigault, Tridon, Dacosta, and Landowski, began to frequent the Café de la Renaissance on the Boulevard Saint-Michel. In 1871, when these gentlemen came into power at the Hôtel de Ville, they and their parasites, with their long boots, clanking spurs, and brilliant uniforms, transferred their custom to the Café de Madrid; but as they paid only when they pleased, and were pleased to pay never, the café soon closed through the ruin of the proprietor. The Café de Madrid is now a noisy and pestiferous cavern,

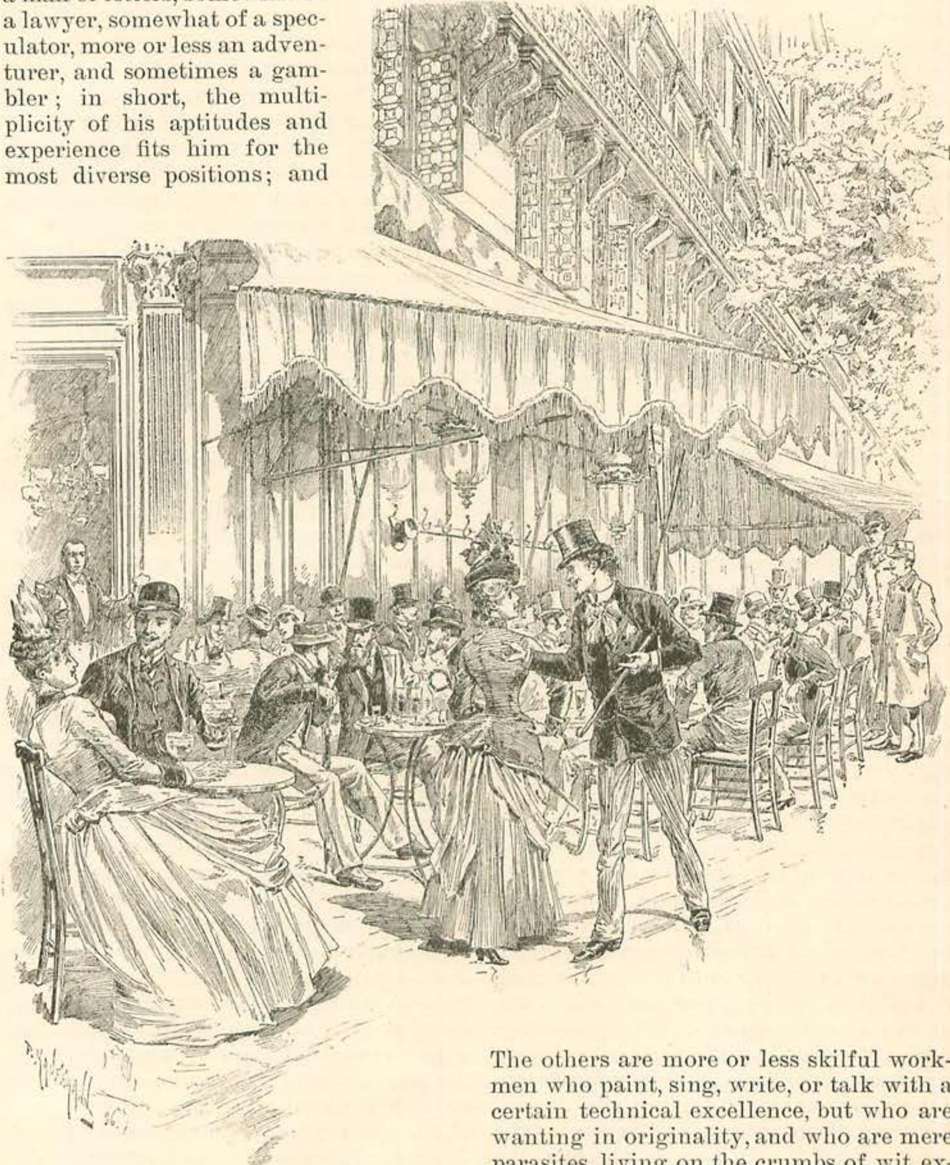


"WHO SIT AT THE LITTLE MARBLE TABLES, DRINK ABSINTHE, AND ARE INVARIABLY DECORATED."

where the voice of the talkers rises with difficulty above the clatter of the dominoes incessantly shaken up on the marble tables, and the rattling of dice on innumerable backgammon boards. Opposite, at the Café de Suède, the habitués are lyric and dramatic artists, and in the room on the first floor the diamond merchants meet to do business and to play dominoes. Next door, the Café des Variétés used to be the favorite resort of Rochefort, Murger, Barrière, and other vaudevillists and playwrights, and it was there, at the table where Théodore de Bauville and Baudelaire presided, that Catulle Mendès founded the Parnassian school of poetry which has flourished since, and is now represented in the French Academy by Coppée and Sully Prudhomme. But gradually puffed up by the glory of his customers, the proprietor grew proud and insolent, and one day the literary men left in a body, and since then the Café des Variétés has remained nondescript and unrenowned. Further east, along the boulevard, the cafés become less and less elegant, and more and more crowded and noisy, while the German beer-houses, with their baskets of "pretzel," are more frequent as we approach the commercial quarters of the Boulevards de Sebastopol and Strasbourg, where there is much billiard-playing, domino-playing, and card-playing, and where the habitués sit round the tables in strident and vulgar groups, smoking, sipping absinthe, and talking all at once at the top of their voices, in an atmosphere thick with tobacco smoke, and heavy with the fumes of alcohol, boots, kitchen grease, and the natural exhalations of crowded humanity. As for the life of the Parisian café, it is much the same all over the city. In the morning a few homeless beings come there to take their coffee and milk; before lunch some customers arrive to take the morning *apéritif* and to read the papers; toward five o'clock the tables begin to fill, and until seven the crowd thickens; during the dinner hour there is a lull, and then toward nine o'clock the tables fill once more, and the activity continues until one or two o'clock in the morning, when the cafés are closed in accordance with the police regulations.

Such are the principal cafés of the boulevard *par excellence*, and it is at these cafés, and along the bitumen pavement between the Madeleine and Brébant's, that the *boulevardier* flourishes, exerting his powers of glittering more especially in the late afternoon at the absinthe hours. Then the trees between the endless lines of houses spread their bare branches or their sickly verdure in a perspective of luminous newspaper kiosques, green benches, and tall advertising columns crowned by a ring of gas jets, which light up the many-colored patchwork of play-bills announcing the amusements of the evening. The cabs and private carriages glide over the wooden pavement, dotting the scene with yellow and black patches; the monster omnibuses plough their way brutally through the surging current of wheels and hoofs; at intervals a refuge in the middle of the roadway is marked by a gas lamp surmounted by the blue dial of a pneumatic clock; the shops are all brilliantly lighted; the cafés fill rapidly, and the waiters hurry to and fro with strange cries: "Un Turin terrasse," "Boum!" "Absinthe anisette à l'as," and other cabalistic words, intelligible only to the initiated. At this hour of the day the aspect of the boulevard changes entirely; a curious tribe of men descends from all quarters to this central hunting-ground. Some come in search of wit; some in search of news; some in search of relations and influence; some to be seen, to prove that they are still living, and to make themselves and others believe that they occupy a place in Paris. Many again come simply to see and enjoy that unique spectacle of varied movement, life, and color, which the streets and boulevards of Paris alone can offer. And this is why it is difficult to define the *boulevardier*, for amongst those to whom this appellation is given you find men of all ages, all characters, all professions, and all reputations; the only bonds of union are certain daily habits, a special language, a love of gossip and scandal, a peculiar turn of wit, and a tendency to gyrate in the neighborhood of Tortoni's. The pure *boulevardier* is always indifferent and generally selfish, which is not strange when we reflect that he is an isolated unit struggling for life in the midst of the selfishness and indifference of Paris, where he daily shakes hands with a hundred of his fellows, and cherishes no illusions as to the incontestable insignificance of that ungraceful form of salutation. The typical *boulevardier* is a superior species of Bohemian, but generally a Bohemian with expensive tastes,

whose existence is a perpetual problem which occupies himself and sometimes others; whereas the existence of the ordinary Bohemian is a matter to which he does not deign to give thought. The *boulevardier* is somewhat of a man of letters, somewhat of a lawyer, somewhat of a speculator, more or less an adventurer, and sometimes a gambler; in short, the multiplicity of his aptitudes and experience fits him for the most diverse positions; and



CAFÉ VACHETTE.

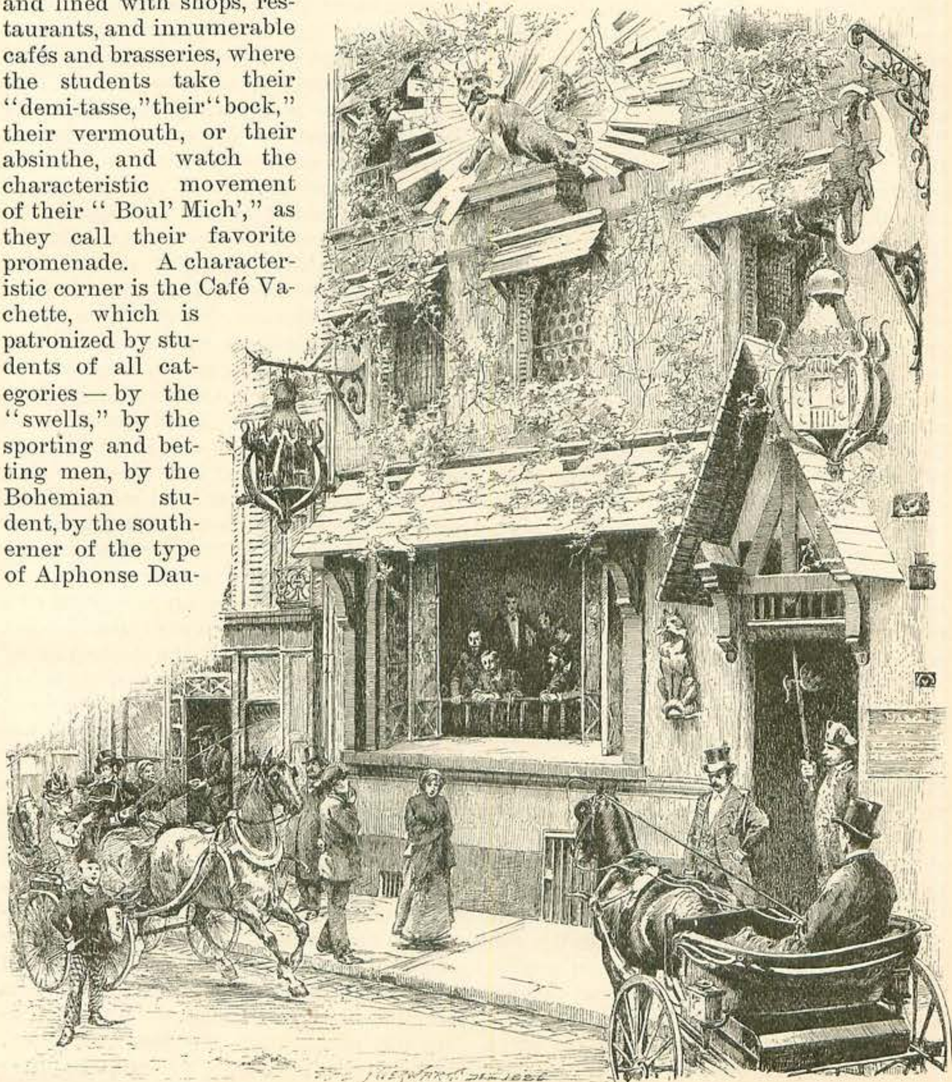
so, in Paris, we find *boulevardiers* everywhere—in the clubs, in the newspaper offices, in the directing boards of financial administrations, in the Chamber of Deputies, and in official situations of all kinds. Amongst the *boulevardiers* whom one sees every night taking their absinthe or their bitter and gossiping on the sidewalk, there are twenty men of rare wit. The others are more or less skilful workmen who paint, sing, write, or talk with a certain technical excellence, but who are wanting in originality, and who are mere parasites, living on the crumbs of wit, experience, and practical cynicism that the leaders let fall from their table.

Some observers pretend that the palmy days were those of the Second Empire, when the *boulevardier*, sleek, witty, elegant, and gallant, lived in the midst of the ambient luxury, heedless of politics

and vulgar cares. After 1871 politics invaded all Paris; the habitués of Tortoni's had to choose an opinion; the first tendency of the *boulevardiers* was toward the Comte de Chambord and the white flag; then, veering with success, they turned toward Gambetta, thanks to whom many of the veterans now hold official positions. As for the young generation, say the critics, it includes few genuine *boulevardiers* of the old style; the boulevard is being gradually annexed by Montmartre, and in the bustle and promiscuity of triumphant democracy, the asphalt of the Boulevard des Italiens is losing its stamp of adventurous elegance and intelligent exclusiveness. It is always well to mistrust the praisers of the past, especially in France, where the prestige of the book and of the printed picture is so very strong. The boulevard such as Balzac and Gavarni have depicted probably never existed, any more than the Latin Quarter as Murger described it in his *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, and as Gavarni drew it in his beautiful lithographs. The creations of these great artists doubtless had a certain reflex action on a few of their contemporaries, just as nowadays Grévin's caricatures influence in a reflex manner the costume and bearing of certain frivolous French women. Or, to take another example, Alexandre Dumas's comedies are rarely studied from life, and yet such is the logical consistency of the persons whom his imagination creates, that you find women who have formed themselves after the impossible type of *L'Étrangère*, for instance. Thus, although at the time when it was written the heroine of this comedy was purely a fiction of the author's brain, it would be easy now to point to half a dozen women in Parisian society who have conformed themselves reflexly to this fictitious model, and thus rendered true that which was untrue a few years ago. The characters whom Murger placed in his famous novel were not students, but notorious and scandalous Bohemians. During the Second Empire Bohemianism was *à la mode;* the looseness of the Bohemian's habits, the brutality of his persiflage, the monstrousness of his paradoxes, the picturesqueness of his silhouette, represented a reaction against the affected respectability of a society whose hero was the Duc de Morny, and whose ideal was external correctness, *le chic* or *la tenue*. Democracy, however, does not like these threadbare parasites, with their unkempt locks and greasy hats; in the Bohemian it sees and hates a useless member in a society where all work. The traveller must therefore be prepared to seek in vain for Bohemians of the Murger type in busy modern Paris.

In the Latin Quarter of the present day one rarely observes eccentricity of costume. On the contrary, the students affect rather the dress and bearing of the boulevard "dude," more especially the law students, who do not disdain to cross the Seine, go into society, and lose their money at the races. The real student is the medical student, for whom the eight or ten years which he passes in Paris are the heyday of his existence. After he has obtained his diploma, the medical student will have to leave the capital, settle down in some provincial town, and work up a practice; and so, while he is in Paris, he makes a point of having a happy time, but a happy time in his own fashion. The medical student is not a "dude"; he does not always wear a silk hat and varnished shoes, like the law student; he does not play cards and baccarat in the sporting cafés; nor does he cross the river and go into society, for he must be up early in the morning for the rounds in the hospitals. The medical students live very much together; they monopolize certain restaurants; they smoke and discuss at night in certain cafés, such as La Source, on the Boulevard St.-Michel; they are bound together by a sort of freemasonry, resulting from their special and almost secret studies, which are unknown to the uninitiated. On the other hand, the medical students love to make a noise, and to promenade in Indian file on little or no pretext. Occasionally a new policeman, who is unaccustomed to such manifestations of youthful exuberance, interferes, and then there is great agitation, which invariably ends by a procession to the Prefecture of Police of some hundred or two students, carrying Chinese lanterns, and crying: "Conspuez Gragnon! Conspuez Gragnon!" Gragnon being the name of the Prefect of Police, whom they invite the public thus to treat with contempt. Hearing the noise of tramping feet and seditious cries, the guard marches out of the court-yard of the Prefecture, and the students howl with laughter and return to their Latin Quarter,

happy and contented with the success of their harmless escapade. The population of the Boulevard St.-Michel is accustomed to these noisy ways, but over the water such manners are not appreciated, and the jokes of the medical students have generally led to disturbances when they have ventured to practise them elsewhere than in their own Latin Quarter. Therefore the medical student will tell you that he does not care to cross the river, and that the grand boulevard has no charms for him. His boulevard is that named after St.-Michel, a fine modern thoroughfare, shaded with splendid trees, and lined with shops, restaurants, and innumerable cafés and brasseries, where the students take their "demi-tasse," their "bock," their vermouth, or their absinthe, and watch the characteristic movement of their " Boul' Mich'," as they call their favorite promenade. A characteristic corner is the Café Vachette, which is patronized by students of all categories — by the "swells," by the sporting and betting men, by the Bohemian student, by the southerner of the type of Alphonse Daudet, with long black hair, curly mustache, and forked beard, who wears a flat-brimmed hat tilted on the back of his head, and has a gay word to say to all the impertinent *étudiantes*, who are not all rigorously inscribed on the books of the University. Even the French schoolboy goes to the café, and on Saturday especially you see the pupils of the state lycées, the *potaches* as they are called, airing themselves along the " Boul' Mich'," with their hands in their pockets, and their " semi-rigide" képi pulled well down over their ears, smoking gi-



NEOMEDIÆVAL CAFÉ.

gantic cigars, and looking as stolid and unintelligent as they can, for the ideal of the modern French school-boy of the silly class, as it is also of the modern French "dude," is to look stupid, or *abruti*, as the French term is.

In the Latin Quarter there are but few cafés of historical interest, and even those that have survived the transformation of the district do not retain even a vestige of their pristine glory. Thus the Café Procope, with its souvenirs of Diderot, d'Alembert, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Holbach, Voltaire, and Mirabeau, exists now with difficulty as a very cheap eating-house. The new Boulevard St.-Germain has swept away Andler's, in the Rue Hautefeuille, where the "realists" used to meet under the artistic chieftainship of Courbet and the literary guidance of Champfleury. From 1850 until 1860 Andler's, also called the "Brasserie des Réalistes," enjoyed great vogue in artistic Paris. It was there that the Parisians first learnt to drink beer; for forty years ago, it must be remembered, the Parisians went to the café to drink coffee: beer was then regarded as a strange drink, almost a gastronomic curiosity, which was always served with the accompaniment of cakes or nougat, while appetizing liqueurs, such as absinthe, vermouth, or bitters, were rarely seen, being looked upon as potions for the use of persons whose constitution had been debilitated by the African climate. In those days, too, the pipe was held in higher honor than the cigarette or the cigar, whereas now the use of the pipe has almost disappeared, in public at least; and in the hundreds of cafés and "brasseries" which now exist in the Latin Quarter the consumption of beer and of appetizing drinks far exceeds the consumption of coffee. Since the exhibition of 1867, when German, Swiss, English, Austrian, and Hungarian bar-maids were first seen in Paris, waitresses have taken the place of waiters in many of the beer saloons of the Latin Quarter, and that strange institution called the "brasserie à femmes" has gradually spread all over Paris, at the same time that it has become the custom to fit up the beer saloons in quaint, fantastic, and pseudo-historical styles, and to costume the waitresses as Opéra Comique nurses, with peaked caps and a doll in their pocket; as barristers, with long blond wigs, black gowns, white bands, and a bouquet of roses to mark the place of their easily won hearts; as almées; as Arlésiennes, and I know not what other disguises, which give to the humblest "caboulot" the suggestion of the coulisses of some ideal and inoffensive theatre, where there is never any acting of unreal comedies or tearful tragedies. The old-fashioned café, with its white walls picked out with simple gold beadings, its neat marble tables, its light chairs, its unpretentious looking-glasses, and its *comptoir*, where sits the waxen-faced lady book-keeper, is becoming more and more rare in modern Paris. The mediæval semi-German tavern is the fashion now, and in every street you find some paltry little establishment with stained-glass windows, heavy wooden tables, imitation tapestry on the walls, and imitation faience mugs, which are filled with Bavarian beer by waiters or waitresses more or less costumed.

The café being in itself a tiresome and unpleasing place, there is no objection to be made to costume or to any fantastic decoration which makes of the whole a spectacle amusing to the eye. In our modern civilization the development of the spirit of dilettanteism and of criticism has extended the museum beyond the public or private collection, and introduced what may be called the museum spirit into the smallest details of furnishing, and thus created the bibelot. And by the bibelot we mean that minute fragment of the work of art which puts something of the East, of the Renaissance, or of the Middle Ages on the corner of a drawing-room table or on the ledge of a dresser. It is this love of the bibelot which has transformed the decoration of our modern homes, and given them an archaic physiognomy so curious and amusing that, as a subtle analyst has said, our nineteenth century, by dint of collecting and verifying the styles of the past, will have forgotten to create a style of its own. This love of bibelot, this research of the quaint, the dainty, and the bizarre, has naturally penetrated from the home to the café; and in the brasseries of the Latin Quarter, the son of the provincial bourgeois who has just arrived in the capital finds himself sitting in a beer saloon at a Renaissance table, drinking out of an imitation Venetian glass, and regretting that the view of the movement of the street is estopped by the painted mediæval windows. And so there

CABARET DU CHAT NOIR.

is no more curious excursion to be made in Paris than a rapid visit to the queer cafés and brasseries of the Latin Quarter. The personnel is a study in itself: the *caissière* who sits at the desk amidst sheaves of spoons, piles of saucers, and battalions of small carafons of cognac, and inscribes in a book every order that the waiters announce as they pass; the maître d'hôtel, corpulent and dignified, whose duty it is to superintend the general service of the café, and to inquire kindly after the health of habitués; the waiter who cries "Boum" in reply to orders, and carries five glasses of beer in one hand while he balances a heavy tray with the other; the "sommelier," or butler, who runs from table to table, laden with bottles, and distributes here and there strange liquids—Absinthe, Amer Picon, Chartreuse, Bitters, Groseille, Madère, Vermouth, Cassis, Guignolet, and a dozen other deleterious distillations; the "verseur," who carries a coffee-pot and a milk-pot, and fills the cups when the waiter bellows out "Versez 10!" thus indicating the number of the table; the waitresses in their innumerable fancy costumes. All these novel types, and all the amusing accessories of a Parisian café—the tables, the newspapers fixed on sticks, the water bottles, the glasses, the foaming bocks, the steaming plates of sauer-kraut—all help to form a curious vision of souvenirs in the brain of the observer, admirably prepared for dreaming by repeated stations in an atmosphere impregnated with the mixed perfumes of tobacco and onion soup, which are the dominant elements in the characteristic odor of a Parisian beer saloon of an evening.

Leaving the noisy brasseries of the Latin Quarter, we will recross the Seine, and direct our steps toward Montmartre, the Bohemia of modern Paris. On our way, however, we will pay a visit to the Café de la Régence, on the Place du Théâtre Français, the great rendezvous of the French chess-players. The present café is not the one where Bonaparte played, or even Alfred de Musset. The historic Café de la Régence was pulled down when the Place du Palais Royal was transformed, and the name and the habitués of the old café were transferred across the street to the present establishment, together with the table on which Napoleon used to play chess before he was Napoleon, or even First Consul. This café, thanks to its proximity, is naturally the resort of the actors of the Comédie Française; it has also its champion domino-player and its champion billiard-players; but its chief glory is chess, in which game the Régence has boasted a long line of champions, beginning a hundred and fifty years ago with Philidor, and continuing through Mouret, Deschapelles, Labourdonnaye, Saint-Arnaud, Kiezeritsky, Neumann, Harwitz, and Rosenthal, who has now abandoned the Régence, and left the chieftainship to Arnous de Rivière.

Now let us climb the Rue Pigalle or the Rue des Martyrs, and scale the heights of Montmartre. We have just been in the Pays Latin; we are now in the Pays de Bohème, a country inhabited by painters, sculptors, poets, budding novelists, struggling journalists, starving musicians, and even by well-to-do citizens, but essentially a country where all that is conventional is held in supreme abomination, so much so that Montmartre has come to be one of the most congenial camping-grounds in Paris for the modern personifications of those immortal prototypes of moral untidiness, Manon Lescaut and the Chevalier Des Grieux. But at Montmartre at the present day we do not find Bohemians of the Murger species any more than we have found them in the Latin Quarter. There was one generation and one only of grand Bohemians in modern France, and that was the generation of Théophile Gautier, Gérard de Nerval, and the leaders of the romantic movement of 1830—the Bohemians of the Impasse du Doyenné—a generation full of grand fantasy and singularly rich in talent, inasmuch as it produced artists of the rank of Delacroix, of Corot, and of Barye. The spirit of revolt against received ideas and somnolent institutions which animated these men in their youth was doubtless a necessity in the literary and artistic battle. The Bohemianism of Courbet and the realists under the Empire had little or no excuse, for the battle was already won. As for Bohemianism of the militant kind, it has nowadays absolutely no *raison d'être*, and carries with it inevitably an odor of vice and a stigma of impotence, even when it becomes pedantic and loses what talent it might have had in eccentric or tortuously ridiculous theories, such, for instance, as certain exaggerations of Impressionism in art, and certain manifestations of the recently

EDITORIAL BREAKFAST AT THE CHAT NOIR.

hatched literary sects of Symbolists and Decadents. The fact is that Bohemianism, which was originally a purely literary phenomenon and a purely literary conception, has become something else. The primitive province of Bohemia, a small and joyous country, has annexed two larger provinces, political and social Bohemia, which are far from sympathetic. The country of Bohemia is overgrown with thistles and poisonous plants; it is no longer a place for the gentle, the delicate, the dreamers, and the volunteers in the service of the Muses. Bohemian is a title which will soon be as unenviable as communist or anarchist.

Nevertheless, we need some term to express that hatred of ennui and that gay spirit of enormity and exuberant aspiration which characterize the artistic nature in its early developments; and if Murger had not perverted it there would be no objection to be made to Bohemianism, the more so as Saint-Simon and Madame de Sévigné both used it in the sense of exaggeration of the artistic sentiment. And it is only Bohemianism of this kind that we shall venture to glance at in our visit to Montmartre, for an examination of other kinds of Bohemianism and of the cafés where they glory in their depravation might lead us into unsavory details.

The two traditional artistic cafés of Montmartre are the Café de la Rochefoucauld and the Café de la Nouvelle Athènes. The latter used to be the rendezvous of Manet and the Impressionists, and at both these cafés you still see many known and unknown "celebrities," the unknown ones being, of course, in the majority, which is not astonishing when we reflect that in Paris there is not a single man, except the Secretary of the Academy, who knows by heart the names of the forty "immortals." Glory is a vain word. The devil and Sarah Bernhardt are perhaps the only two celebrities universally known. It is useless, therefore, to more *than* barely mention Babou, Duranty, and even Cazin and Zola, who were all in their day frequenters of the Nouvelle Athènes, and founders of schools of literature or painting or criticism. The men of that generation seem to have had a mania for enrolling themselves under some flag and chief. And this craze went so far, as I have heard the engraver Bracquemond relate, that one day Alphonse Legros, now a grave professor at London, calmly proposed, between two pots of beer, "Let us found a school, and I will be the chief."

Nowadays the glory of these two cafés is much diminished, and also the craze for founding schools, though it has not yet quite died out, and the most famous and curious café of Montmartre is at present the "Chat Noir," which is at once the prototype and beau ideal of the fantastic neomediæval tavern, a most amusing place, whose host, by dint of intelligent "cheek" and a keen prevision of the wants of the age, has become one of the celebrities of Paris. Formerly a painter and somewhat of a poet, he concluded one day, after due reflection, that drink was a greater necessity than art, and that he could better tempt the public to give him money in exchange for beer than in exchange for his pictures. But being an artist, he could not sell beer in ordinary and vulgar conditions; he must sell it in an artistic manner and in artistic surroundings. And so he hired a modest shop at Montmartre, and fitted it up with real old wood-work, old tapestry, old faience, and old arms; the fireplace was a vast open chimney, with the traditional chain and pot suspended therein; on the ceiling was fixed an immense "glory," bought at the Hôtel Drouot at a sale of old ecclesiastical accessories, and in the middle of the glory was placed a black cat's head; the windows were of stained glass and adorned with the emblematic cat; and the swinging zinc sign outside the door represented a black cat standing with mountainous back and tortuous tail on that astronomical abstraction, the crescent moon. In the room were rough wooden tables and a piano; gradually curious pictures by painters of talent covered the walls; the inn became a rendezvous for poets, painters, and actors; and in order to affirm its literary character, some of the habitués joined their host in founding a weekly newspaper, *Le Chat Noir*, which is now in the sixth year of its existence, and which has published prose, verse, and drawings of a whole host of young men of talent, who have since worked their way to reputation.

Now the "Chat Noir" has outgrown its modest cradle, and taken up its abode in the Rue de Laval, in a house whose façade is adorned with strange colored glass windows, with the old swinging zinc sign, and with a colossal cat enthroned in the rays of an immense golden sun. At the

A CAFÉ CONCERT.

door stands a messenger, or "chasseur," in radiant livery, and an ornamental janitor, who carries a halberd in sign of his office. Inside, the rooms on the first, second, and third floors are amusingly fitted up with queer bric-à-brac, stained-glass windows, tapestry, and pictures or frescoes by Willette—the painter of Pierrots—by Rivière, by Caran d'Ache, and by other odd geniuses, who have become known chiefly as illustrators and graphic satirists. But before being allowed to penetrate to the upper rooms you must show clean hands, *patte blanche*, or rather a hand stained with ink or with paint; for our host professes a violent hatred of *bourgeois* and philistines, and pretends to be at home and master in his inn, affable, bantering, *fantaisiste* in the highest degree, and making his *fantaisie* serve his interests and his industry of beer-selling. The moment the face of any one known in art or letters appears, our host prostrates himself before the "dear master" who honors the cabaret by his visit, and orders an "immortal" to offer "monseigneur" a cup of foaming ale; for the service is performed by waiters who are dressed literally in the costume of the members of the French Academy, in order, as the facetious host tells us, "to show the young what one may come to in literature by dint of industry and good conduct." Here we have the note of parody and persiflage; but in reality amongst the habitués of the "Chat Noir" I have seen many true men of letters, who scoff at the Academy only because they are not yet ready to knock at its doors. The Academy, as Voltaire said, is always the desired mistress of those who make songs and epigrams against her until they have won her favor. At the "Chat Noir" the epigram is a little heavy, and smells of advertising, and of that theatrical spirit of vanity and show which the French call "cabotinage." However, in reality nothing can be more academic than this café, where the hottest discussions are over a sonnet, and the most furious disagreements over the merits of a new comedy or the charms of a new picture.

But no one better than the "gentilhomme cabaretier," as he styles himself, can describe the merits of his inn. The "Cabaret du Chat Noir," he begins, "is a creation unique in the world. Situated in the centre of Montmartre, the modern capital of intellect, this inn is the rendezvous of the most celebrated poets, painters, and sculptors. It is an absolutely curious place, in the purest Louis XIII. style. You can see there the drinking-glasses which were used by Charlemagne, Villon, Rabelais, Cardinal Richelieu, the Duchesse de Chevreuse, Mme. de Rambouillet, Mlle. de Scudéry, Louis XIV., Mlle. de la Vallière, Voltaire, Diderot, Robespierre, Bonaparte, Mme. de Staël, Mme. Récamier. . . ." Enough! enough! excellent "gentilhomme cabaretier"! The "Chat Noir," we will admit, is unique in the world; it is fitted up most artistically; it is even a marvel of the purest Louis XIII. style, if you will; but, above all, it is an amusing place, where Schopenhauer is held in execration; where people try to amuse themselves, and generally succeed; and where, when they do not succeed, they drink beer in order to deceive themselves into the belief that they are having a good time. From this item of the programme there is no escape, for during the evening, between every song, monologue, or witticism, at least every quarter of an hour, the "gentilhomme cabaretier" cries, with the voice of Stentor:

"Messeigneurs, c'est le moment où les gens bien élevés renouvellent les consommations!" (My lords, this is the moment when people who have been well brought up call for more drinks.)

One of these days some anecdotic historian of Paris will doubtless write a monograph on this fantastic "Chat Noir," on its newspaper, its habitués, and its literary evenings. The newspaper is a comic illustrated sheet, which is invariably put together by the joyous editorial staff around the breakfast-table, under the presidency of the worthy host and hostess; and as some of the smart junior members of the great daily press usually drop in for the sake of auld lang syne on the editorial morning, it generally happens that in this gastronomico-journalistic group the dog is the only serious member. As for the literary evenings of the "Chat Noir," they are of course private, and frequented only by the friends and invited guests of the members of the little cénacle; but amongst these friends and invited guests have figured all who have a name in art and letters in modern Paris—poets, journalists, painters, sculptors, men of fashion, actors, and actresses, and even some great ladies of high social rank, the last of course incognita. The taste of great ladies

for seeing queer haunts is not new. Collé used to take duchesses to the Porcherons, and Mme. de Montarcy escaped occasionally from the court of Louis XIV., and in the guard-room, as Bouilhet tells us, "brûlait sa lèvre rose à la pipe des Suisses." But naturally in the quaintly decorated upper room of the "Chat Noir," with its marionette show, its revolutionary musicians, its droll monologuists, and its canopy of smoke floating in mid-air, you do not expect to find Parisian matrons and their daughters.

There remains only one type of café still to be noticed, namely, the café-concert, which is the French equivalent for the Anglo-Saxon music hall. The type might furnish the material for a long study, of interest from many points of view; for of late years the cafés-concerts have become the most popular form of amusement in Paris, and absorbed a large part of the public which used to support the theatres. And yet anything more inept and stupid than a French music hall it would be difficult to conceive. Why people go to them I cannot explain, unless it be because some mysterious destiny forces mankind in general to seek distraction perpetually, and the Frenchman in particular, to escape from the ennui of his own fireside. And so the cafés-concerts, which abound particularly in the commercial quarters of Paris, are always crowded; the shopkeepers of the neighborhood, their wives and their daughters, their cook-maids and their clerks, patronize them steadily night after night. In serried ranks they sit, packed literally so closely that they cannot move their legs six inches in any direction; in front of the seats is a narrow ledge on which is placed the "consommation" of each visitor—cherries preserved in eau-de-vie, coffee, beer, peppermint, or red currant syrup; with their hats on or off, the men smoke at their ease. As the evening advances the atmosphere of the hall becomes more and more hot and foul, the audience more and more swarming and more and more perspiring; the flaring gas jets become gradually obscured by the thick blue fog of smoke; while on the stage the lean and hoarse-voiced cantatrice, with awkward angular gestures, screams, over the bald heads of the musicians in the orchestra, the senseless refrain of some popular absurdity, or of some sentimental romance.

JUPITER LIGHTS.*

BY CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

XIII.

"I SHALL go, grandpa. To-night. There's a boat, somebody said."

"But, my dear child, listen to reason a moment: Sabrina does not say that he is in danger."

"And she does not say that he is out of it."

The Judge took up the letter again, and putting on his glasses, he read aloud, with a frown of attention: "'For the first two days Dr. Daniels came over twice a day'"—

"You see?—twice a day," said Cicely.

—"'But as he is beginning to feel his age, the crossing so often in the row-boat tired him; so now he sends us his partner, Dr. Knox, a new man here, and a very intelligent person, I should judge. Dr. Knox comes over every afternoon and spends the night—'"

"You see?—spends the night," said Cicely.

—"'Going back early the following morning. He has brought us a nurse, an excellent and skilful young man, and now we can have the satisfaction of feeling that our poor Ferdie has every possible attention. As I write, the fever is going down, and the nurse tells me that by to-morrow, or day after to-morrow, he will probably be able to speak to us, to talk.'"

"I don't know exactly how many days it will take me to get there," said Cicely, beginning to count upon her fingers. "Four days—or is it three?—to Detroit, where I take the train; then how many hours from there to Washington? You will have to make it out for me, grandpa; or rather Paul will. Paul knows everything."

"My poor little girl, you haven't had any rest; even now you have only just come out of a fainting fit. Sabrina will write every day. Wait at least until her next letter comes, to-morrow morning."

* Begun in January number, 1889.