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## EXTRACTS

Of letters from an American Gentleman travelling in Europe, to the Editor of this Gazette.

[CONTINUED.]

THE Palais Royal is one of the most public places in the city of Paris. It encloses an oblong square of about one thousand two hundred feet in length, and four hundred & fifty in breadth. An open piazza fronts on three sides of the square, under which there is a continual multitude of fashionables promenading. Here are a vast number of restaurateurs and coffee-houses, intermixed with shops displaying the most brilliant and costly assortment of goods. All the upper part of the palace extends over the piazza to the line forming the interior square. The building is finished in a superb style of architecture. The second story contains a vast number of brilliant apartments, which are occupied as licenced gaming rooms, and exhibition rooms of various descriptions: the third story by the most fashionable courtizans. This place altogether is one of the most bustling scenes of the city, and exhibits a scene of dissipation in gaming, prostitution, and voluptuous indulgence of every kind, unequalled, I believe, in any other part of the world. In the evening, the shops below and the second and third stories being lighted up, present a most brilliant show, giving the whole building the appearance of a grand illumination. The whole of this property formerly belonged to the duke of Orleans, and judging from the rents now paid by the occupants, the revenue must have netted at least forty thousand pounds sterling per annum. It is now held as national domain, and as such rented out. The palace of the Luxemburg is also a noble building; the gardens little inferior to those of the Tuilleries, and richly decorated with the statuary of the finest sculpture. This palace is occupied by the fittings of the conservative senate, and likewise formerly belonged to the duke of Orleans.

The national hospital of invalids is a magnificent fabric. It was erected by Louis XIV. In size and decorations, it is not exceeded by palais royal. There is a library, and every other thing attached to it, which can contribute to the comfort and happiness of the wounded and disabled soldier. In the temple of Mars, which is a grand saloon, with a lofty and highly finished dome, are suspended the ensigns of victory which the French acquired during the late war, amounting to nearly nine hundred, arranged under the names of the places where achieved, as thus, Rome, Naples, Egypt, Lodi, Marengo, Mentz, &c. The floor of tessellated marble, is incomparably beautiful, as is also the whole interior of the temple. On two marble tablets, each about thirty feet high, and 8 feet wide, fixed on the entrance of the temple, are now inscribing the names of all those warriors in the late conflict, who received the public vote of thanks for their services.

The palace Bourbon is finely situated on the south bank of the Seine. It is a very spacious structure, covering a prodigious superficies of ground. It was built by the prince of Bourbon, in 1722. This is appropriated to the fittings of the legislative body. In the hall, there are niches on each side of the president's chair, in which are placed the statues of three Greek and three Roman legislators, viz. Lycurgus, Solon, Demosthenes, Brutus, Cato, and Cicero. All the interior is superbly fitted up, and affords accommodations for all the various offices connected with the legislature.

The Pantheon is so superlatively grand an edifice, that I ought to shrink from an attempt to describe it. It consists of four naves, of equal size, with a magnificent dome rising in the centre, the dome having the form of a temple supported by fifty two columns, each of which is fifty four feet high, resting on an octagon base on the square of an elevation of the four naves. The base of the temple being surrounded by a gallery, with a stone balustrade, at the height of one hundred and sixty feet above the level of the ground. Nothing can ex-

ceed the grandeur of the Corinthian columns of the portico, and the richness of the interior ornaments through every part of this stupendous building. The vaulting under the whole superstructure is of the most exquisite workmanship, ingroined arch work, executed with a light coloured stone, faced with the greatest neatness. In these vaults are deposited the ashes of Voltaire and Rousseau, in separate tombs. The government appear determined, in their continual additions to its embellishments, to make it the object of general admiration.

The national library is a noble institution. It is contained in a building composed of four spacious courts. The library itself consists of three hundred thousand volumes, comprising every thing valuable in ancient and modern literature. The reading saloon is on the second story, where there is a continued range of eight hundred feet in length, entirely filled with books. Adjoining this range is a large room, appropriated for the exhibition of the antique curiosities brought from Egypt, during the late war, which of themselves would afford entertainment for three or four days. There are also to be seen here a pair of globes, whose diameter is twelve feet. The library is opened to the public two days in the week, when every body is permitted to go in and read, and inspect the contents of this valuable repository. Nothing can exceed the order that is observed in every thing relative to this institution.

If I were to proceed with my attempts to describe the various objects of attention and admiration, which in Paris delight and fascinate the traveller, I should, I fear, not only fatigue myself with writing, but tire you with reading.

There are the Palace of Justice, which has been the residence of many of the kings; the Military School at the Champ de Mars—the temple where the late royal family were confined—the Lyceum of arts—the Exchange—the Mint—the school of Surgery—the College Mazarin—the Royal College of Medicine, the maison de ville, and the great church of Notre Dame, all of which are important buildings. The gates of St. Dennis and St. Martin are fine specimens of architecture and sculpture in stone. The first is a grand arch of 72 feet in height, the latter 54 feet.

The National Museum of French Monuments, in an Augustinian convent, resembling the cloisters of a Gothic Cathedral, is an extremely interesting object amongst the curiosities of Paris—those curious relics of ancient times, and of ancient art, are so arranged and distributed, that the progressive state of sculpture in France from the earliest period to the present time may be traced through each succeeding century. The monument of Eloisa and Ebelard, removed from the Abbey of Paraclete, is placed in the garden of the convent—the antiquarian & admirer of monumental sculpture will be amply gratified in visiting such rare samples of rich conception, combined with the most exquisite execution. The collection is so numerous and superlatively grand, that it requires several hours to do justice to the inspection.

The Gobelins National manufactory of Tapestry is well worthy the attention of every stranger. The subjects now on the looms are extremely grand, and the workmanship exquisitely fine. All that are now in hand are for the government, to decorate the palace of St. Cloud—some of the pieces have been three years under the workmen's hands, and will take as much longer to finish, and though the highest wages given at the manufactory is not more than three livres per day (2s. 6d. sterling) yet the work will cost from twenty to twenty-five guineas per square ell.

The plate glass manufactory is a valuable acquisition to the nation. I have had an opportunity of seeing the whole process from the rough state of casting, to the polishing and silvering. The grand manufactory is in the suburbs of Paris—the building is immense large, consisting of a lower and a second story, each in one room, in which eight hundred and fifty men and women are employed—admitting the same set of hands to go

through the whole process, it would take above eight weeks for them to finish a single plate. The quantity of wrought glass in the magazine of this manufactory, is worth some millions of livres. The largest plates I saw were ten feet by six—these sell for nine thousand livres each, (about 375l. sterling) without silvering. This manufactory has been established about 160 years; formerly it was the property of the crown, it is now in the hands of a private company, and its concerns are under the direction of nine stock-holders. It is impossible for a stranger to get to know any thing of the extent of the manufactory, warehouses, and rich shops of goods in Paris, by a transient passing through the streets—they make no show, being generally situate in enclosed court yards, and in upper stories—but he is surpris'd to find the number and extensive scale on which they are conducted, when he sets about to enquire for them.

Amongst the national institutions, that of the public school under the charge of the Abbé Sicard for teaching the deaf and dumb to read, write, the mathematics and other branches of literature ought to be seen. It was at a public examination of this institution, which evidenced a wonderful deal of ingenuity on the part of the Abbe in teaching, and acuteness of perception in his pupils—questions however abstruse, being asked promiscuously by the audience in writing, were answered with the greatest promptness by the pupil in writing, and supported by the most profound philosophical reasoning.

The national school for educating the blind, and teaching them to support themselves by useful labor, is a most excellent institution. This school has been established about 14 years, and is grafted on the hospital founded by St. Louis in 1260, for maintaining seven hundred indigent blind. They are educated in reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, the mathematics and music. The women and girls are taught to spin and knit—the boys are taught to spin wool in the large wheel—the men to manufacture tobacco and flax. There is one woman who makes silk purses and other articles of silk—a man has made an organ which another plays on—one of the men is a whip-maker, and a very good workman—several of the girls read before us out of a French grammar, which we opened promiscuously for them; this must appear a mystery to you—I will try to explain it: They are taught their letters by feeling on the face of an alphabet set up in a large sized Italic type—after they are well acquainted with the shapes of the letters by feeling, they are then taught in the grammar I have mentioned—this grammar is of thick paper, printed with a dry large Italic type, with so strong an impression, that the whole shape of the letters are forced out and project above the surface of the paper on the reverse side—these blind girls having become well acquainted with the shape of the letters on the face of the type, can now trace the impression of them on the paper by their acute sense of feeling, and are thus enabled to read. More is taught by note in the same way. I have furnished myself with a specimen of the printing. We examined a boy in geography—maps of the four quarters were handed to us, we gave them to the boy one at a time, he instantly told us what quarter it was; we asked him to fix on a particular kingdom or island, he did so with great facility. I will try to explain the mode that enabled him to do so—take a piece of pasteboard the size of the map, lay the map upon it, and trace all the lines of division of the kingdoms and empires, and outlines of the islands, with a blunt pointed instrument, sufficiently strong to leave the impression on the pasteboard, then take wire about the size of a thin knitting needle, bend it exactly to the shape of the tracing, and glue it down on the pasteboard on the lines of tracing, then pass the map on the pasteboard, taking care to let the lines of division on the map fall on the wire, which of course will then make a projection on the face of the map—by being taught the shapes of the outline of each kingdom and island on such a map, these poor children can immediately designate them by feel-

ing, and can comprehend the relative connection of kingdoms and states on each continent or division of the earth.

Children are not admitted into the school under seven years of age.

None are permitted to remain in the school more than eight years.

To some questions that I asked for information, the answers informed me as follows.

That the men and boys appeared more cheerful and happy than the women and girls.

Both sexes are much more irritable than those who have their sight.

Many of both sexes show great conception of mind, and many remarkable instances of retentive memory.

The product of their spinning is wrought up into coarse linen, blankets and rags.

This school produces many excellent musicians.

When we reflect on the advantages which this valuable institution offers to these our poor benighted fellow creatures, it will readily occur that it is not only the benefit of being taught the means to obtain a livelihood for themselves, and thereby making themselves less burthenome to their friends, but the employment also furnishes a subject for the mind to rest upon, and relieve them, in a great measure, from the burden of indolence.

The river Seine runs nearly through the centre of Paris, and there are six good stone bridges crossing it, the two lower ones are modern and very handsome; there is a seventh now building, opposite to the entrance of the Louvre on the Seine, the water piers are already up.

The Grand Opera and the Theatre Francais are considered as the two leading places of fashion and public amusement in Paris. The opera house is extremely large, and allowed to exceed every other place of the kind in the world, for the splendor of its scenery, the music, and the watchless dancing, the elegant forms and delicate limbs of the numerous dancing graces, moving with magic lightness of fairy step in half transparent drapery to the inspiring music of the ballet, cannot fail to charm every admirer of female beauty—the charge of indelicate exposure, which I had so often heard of, is entirely unfounded, as they are protected from it by an appropriate under dress of nankeen—I his opera is under the immediate patronage of government, who spare no expence to keep up its celebrity. It is said to bring the government in debt from forty to fifty thousand francs per month; the disbursements being so much more than the receipts, although numerously attended, at six shillings and three pence sterling per ticket.

There are six thousand hackney carriages in Paris, under the names of chaises, fiacres, and cabriolets—and the rapid manner in which they drive along the streets where there are no foot pavement for the protection of the walking passenger, would lead a stranger on the first or second day of his being in Paris, to suppose there would be a number of lives lost daily by being run over; my feelings were under the influence of this fear for several days till I got accustomed to it, and found that the horses were so well broke, and the drivers so skillful, as to have them under a moment's command—all those carriages are under a strict regulation of the police, and the owners are made answerable for all damage or accident occasioned by them. The streets of Paris exhibit a great number of extremely fine horses of the Norman breed, equal in size and figure to any I have seen.

The gardens of the Tuilleries and Luxemburg, the Champ de Elysees, and Champ de Mars, and the Bouvelards which surround the city, are all planted with trees, & afford delightful promenades for the citizens of Paris, besides which there are gardens and public places of amusement innumerable all round the city.

All the public buildings, exhibitions, the institutions, the gardens and works of every description appear to be under the most systematical regulations, are kept in the neatest order, and attended to with the most scrupulous care—the