

HISTORIC PALACES OF PARIS

HÔTEL MONACO

BY COUNT LOUIS DE PÉRIGORD AND
CAMILLE GRONKOWSKI

THE VANISHING PALACES

PARIS can still show within the aristocratic and somewhat mournful quarter called the Faubourg Saint Germain a few seigniorial residences which, through force of habit, are called *hôtels*. In fact, however, they are true palaces, with courts of honor, lordly galleries of great size, and parks green with trees centuries old.

Residences of the kind form almost a paradox in the center of a city on the threshold of the twentieth century.

Alas! the growing value of the land, partitions of estates, the loss of fortunes, and the craze for dangerous speculation, constitute the explosive forces which some day will level these relics to the ground; and then will come in their stead a lot of modern hideousities—cold and symmetrical façades, great cubes of stone without beauty or style, symbols, it may be, of our contemporary life, restless, nomadic, and involved.

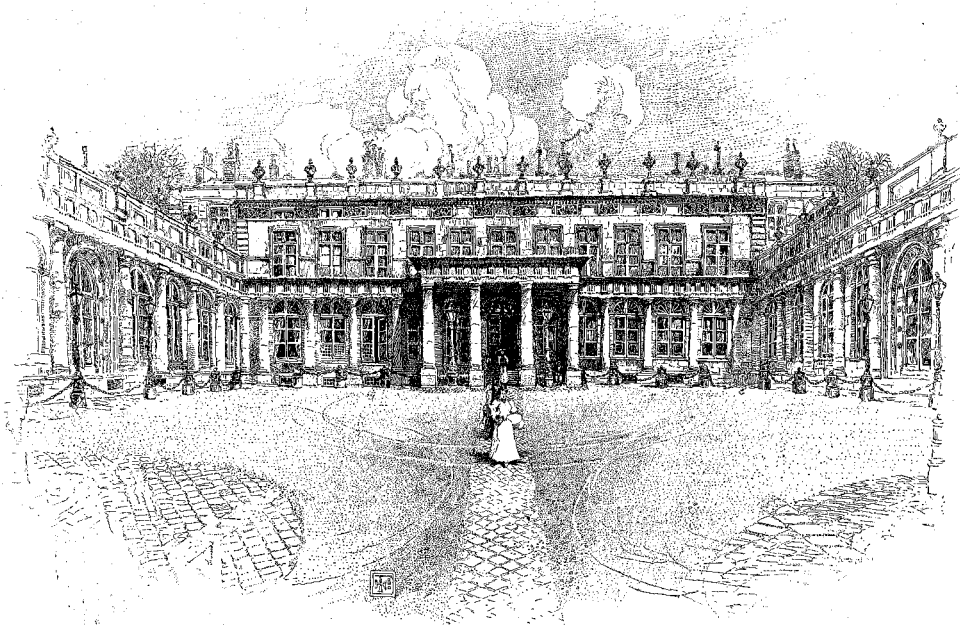
So, in this quarter the future is full of threatening signs. Most of these marvelous *hôtels* are destined to vanish at a more or less distant date, just as recently disappeared the Hôtel de Luynes, so much regretted by art-lovers.

Being certain beforehand of a particularly kindly reception, we have been able to enter without any special effort certain doors which up to the present have never opened to art critics or those learned in the lore of the past. We have even been allowed to reproduce for the readers of THE CENTURY certain inner chambers, intimate corners which have never before known a photographer's camera.

AN EXAMPLE OF LOUIS SEIZE

THOSE who are wont to pass along the rue Saint Dominique, coming from the crowded district of Grenelle or the École Militaire, and reaching the confines of the noble faubourg, are probably quite unaware of the splendid domain which is jealously hidden behind the dark and lofty gateway of Number 57. They may pass many times a day, but they will learn nothing concerning the Hôtel Monaco and its park.

This palace was built in 1783 for the Princess of Monaco by Brongniart, on the very spot where, in the reign of Louis XV, stood the house of Arnauld de Pomponne. We may regard it, along with the Place de la Concorde, the Hôtel de la Monnaie, and the École Militaire, as one of the most typical specimens of French architecture belonging to the second half of the eighteenth century. That was the time when the prettinesses of the Pompadour or "Rocaille" style had been repudiated—a style for which Slodtz and Meissonnier were representative architects. A graver, more thoughtful, and more majestic style had made its way under the manifest influence of the antique architecture and art which had become the fashion owing to the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum and to the publications of Winckelmann. Certain very talented architects, such as Blondel, Gabriel, Servandoni, and Louis (who was the architect of the Palais Royal and the Théâtre Français), placed themselves at the head of the movement and pushed the fashion. Later on the craze for the classic—a false classic, by the way—was



Drawn by Harry Fenn from a photograph

FAÇADE OF THE COURT OF HONOR, HÔTEL MONACO

destined to bring architecture to wreck in bad taste and heaviness of line in the work of Chalgrin, Percier, and Fontaine. The Hôtel Monaco, which, according to its date, was as far removed from the hesitations that are part of a transition era as from the excesses of a period of decadence, offers us a harmonious example of the pure Louis Seize style.

Under this king no remarkable event fixed attention on this palace. Besides, the end of the reign offered few occasions for festivals in Paris, disturbed as it was by the hidden agitations of the Revolution. The king resided at Versailles, with little desire to mix in the life of the capital, and naturally the grand seigneurs stuck to their old ruts; so that one may say that never before had Paris been more deserted, more void of animation.

The Revolution passed like a hurricane. Then with the Directory began a period of unbending of nerves, a protest against the recent terror and mourning and suffering. It showed itself in a kind of explosion of delight in life, as of a rebirth. Perhaps no period in history was freer, more unbridled, more naughtily, childishly voluptuous and mad.

A HOME FOR THE TURKISH EMBASSY

THEN it was that the Hôtel Monaco began its career. The offices of the Minis-

try of the Interior had been arranged in it only a few months, when one fine day hurried orders were issued to vacate. While the bureaucrats, disturbed in their peaceful ways, departed with their files and papers, an army of paper-hangers and decorators took possession of the palace, and in great haste nailed down carpets, hung up hangings, and suspended tapestries. And the reason for this sudden change? It was the approaching visit of his Excellency Esseid Ali Effendi, the first permanent ambassador of Turkey to France.

Up to the time of the Revolution the envoys and ambassadors plenipotentiary alone had been lodged at the expense of the state. But by installing the envoy of the Sultan in the Hôtel Monaco the Directory showed able diplomacy. It was an adroit flattery of the despot, who for his part made an alliance in no doubtful fashion with the new régime in France; moreover, it was a quiet method of strictly overseeing the ways and deeds of the ambassador.

He arrived in Paris July 13, 1797, accompanied by Caulaincourt, his aide-de-camp; Citizen Venture, interpreter of the French embassy at Constantinople; General Aubert du Barget, and Codrica, a Greek dragoman. Besides these, there was a suite of eighteen persons.

This little court was easily accommo-

dated in the Hôtel Monaco. Its happy arrangement, its distinguished appearance, and the charms of its park had determined the Directory to make of it the Turkish embassy. Twelve thousand francs—not a large sum—was appropriated by the Ministry of Finance for the first cost of installation. The administration found an amusing excuse for not placing at once in the building a fine lot of silver, porcelain, and linen. "Perhaps," the cautious ones remarked, "the ambassador has much more simple habits than we imagine, and too great an exhibition of luxury might disgust him. Let us permit him to draw up a list of the objects which may seem to him needful."

This was well calculated. As soon as he arrived, Esseid Ali passed in review the guard of honor of one hundred men which was drawn up in the courtyard; then he examined his new abode from top to bottom. He seemed delighted, was not chary of saying so, and, what was very important, made no demands.

THE EFFENDI'S FORMAL RECEPTION

THE very first hour that he passed in the Hôtel Monaco was marked by one of those amusing scenes which made the residence of the Effendi at Paris a continuous comedy. Hardly had he taken time to arrange the disorder of his toilet when he insisted that he must at once pay his visit to Minister Delacroix. They succeeded in moderating his zeal. But it returned afresh when Citizen Guiraudet arrived, bringing him the complimentary welcome of the government. Then a veritable struggle was necessary to prevent that all too courteous man from proceeding at seven in the evening to present his letters of introduction! The interview was arranged for July 18, and the particulars of the ceremony, fixed by Minister Delacroix, form so typical a document, and one so amusing, that we have no hesitation in quoting it from the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

The Turkish minister, on arriving from the Hôtel Monaco, will be received by Citizen Venture, interpreter for the Republic, and by Citizen Guiraudet, Secretary-General of the Department of the Boulevard, who will await him at the entrance to the vestibule and con-

duct him to the drawing-room, which he will enter.

I will come to meet him as far as three quarters the length of the drawing-room. Two arm-chairs will be placed facing each other at the end of the room. The ambassador will seat himself on the chair on one side of the hearth, and I on that opposite. Coffee will be served to him and also to me at the same moment by two lackeys. He will then present to me the copy of his letters of credence, and after the conversation currant preserves will be offered to him as well as to me. Rose-water will be poured over his hands and perfume will be offered him. I will reconduct him to a short distance from the door of the drawing-room.

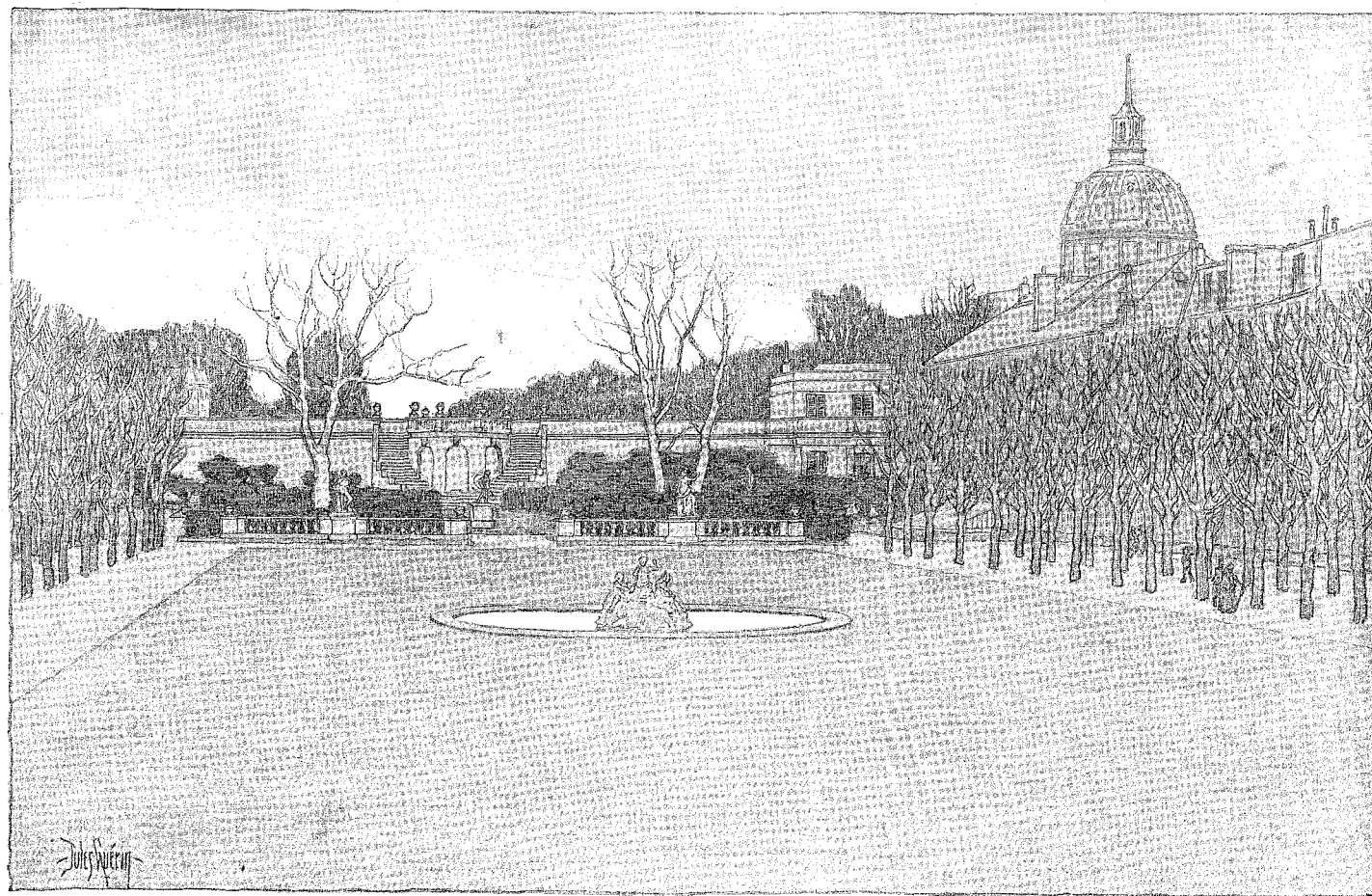
This masterpiece in the way of protocols elaborated by Delacroix was his last ministerial act. A few hours earlier he had been replaced by Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord.

HIS HOME LIFE

THE former residence of the Princess of Monaco was for several years witness to strange ceremonies which did not smack in any way of the eighteenth century. For instance, in the fine garden laid out in the French style, which is one of the ornaments of this palace, a singular ceremony took place every day—one that followed an unchangeable ritual. At the moment that the sun reached the western horizon the ambassador descended the granite stairs, stepped on the lawn, where beforehand a cloak embroidered in gold had been spread, and there, turned toward the east, he went through long prayers and four times prostrated himself and kissed the ground.

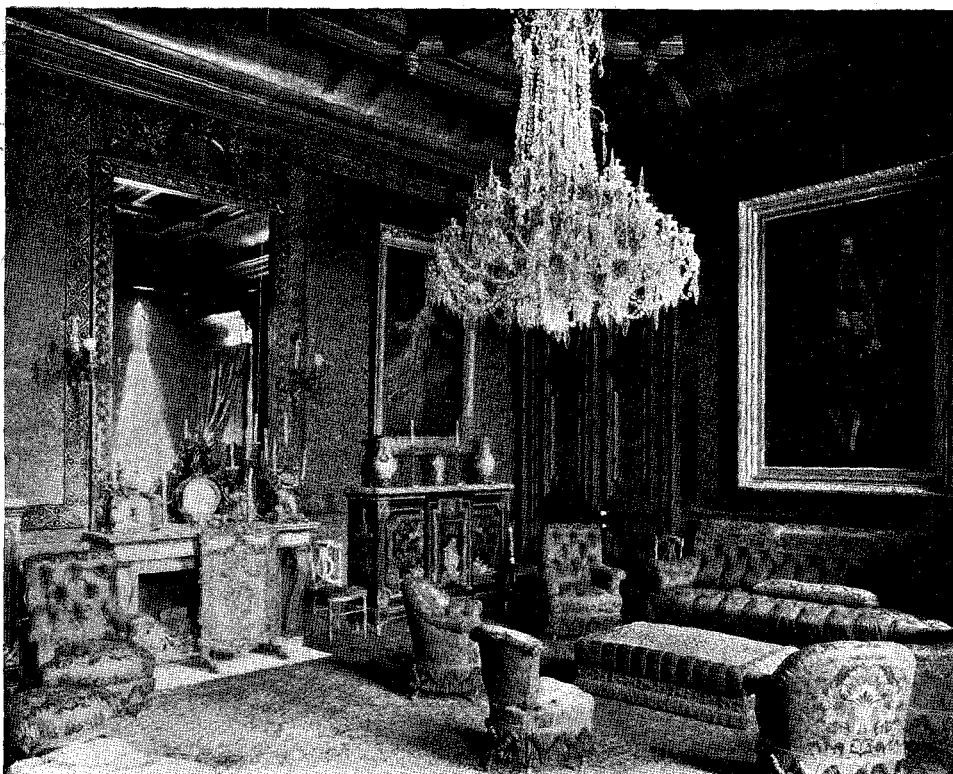
The delicate woodwork of white lacquer and gold grew dark with smoke, for the Effendi rarely dropped the mouthpiece of a three-foot pipe which reached the floor; and his entire suite followed his example. When in gallant humor he would offer his own pipe to be smoked by the ladies who came to see him. For all the beauties of the period begged the honor of being presented to the king of the fashion, the hero of the hour. They flocked in crowds, with languorous airs, wearing on their spangled fans the portrait of the lucky Esseid printed on an oval bit of satin.

Alas! everything must have an end—especially whatever is the fashion. Soon



Drawn by Jules Guérin. Half-tone plate engraved by Robert Varley

THE PARK OF THE HÔTEL MONACO (THE DOME OF THE INVALIDES ON THE RIGHT)



From a photograph

THE OAK ROOM, HÔTEL MONACO, WITH THE PORTRAIT OF TALLEYRAND BY PRUD'HON

did Esseid the Effendi know the heart-burning and disillusion which the fickleness of these faithless ones occasioned. Turkomania ceased to amuse at the very instant that the ambassador ceased to be a power. The expedition of Bonaparte to Egypt broke the former traditions of friendship which had long existed between France and the Sublime Porte. The Effendi had to stand by powerless while that rupture took place. Under surveillance in the Hôtel Monaco he dragged out a pretty wretched existence—somewhat better, however, than that of Raffin, the French chargé d'affaires at Constantinople, who, for his part, was shut up in the Castle of the Seven Towers. The flattering visits of the fair *merveilleuses* ceased; the Turkish portraits framed in crescents of pearls were torn; the court of honor of the palace was empty. The wretched man had to swallow a final humiliation: trying to get back some little of his prestige, he had conducted negotiations as well as he could with Talleyrand in order to restore peace between France and Turkey (1802); but his government disavowed these pre-

liminaries, and gave to his successor the satisfaction of conducting the definitive arrangements.

UNDER THE HAMMER

DURING the reign of Napoleon I the Hôtel Monaco was inhabited by Berthier, Prince of Wagram; then it passed to Baron Hope, the famous financier, who changed almost entirely the decorations of the interior and spent on it seven and a half millions of francs. In place of the delicate Louis XVI woodwork, few traces of which can be found to-day, this banker had the idea of introducing a profusion of ornamentation, too heavy and rich—columns glittering with gold, involved arabesques, vaguely in the Louis XV style, but designed and executed under Louis Philippe.

On the death of Baron Hope, the palace was put up for sale at an upset price of three million francs. The offer was reduced to one million eight hundred thousand without finding a buyer. A third attempt at a start of one million two hundred thousand brought a raise of fifty

francs, and the hôtel was knocked down to Baron Seillière. Among the papers were found the note-books of the contractors, and the bill of the plumber alone amounted to the modest sum of one million seven hundred thousand francs!

THE TALLEYRAND-PÉRIGORDS

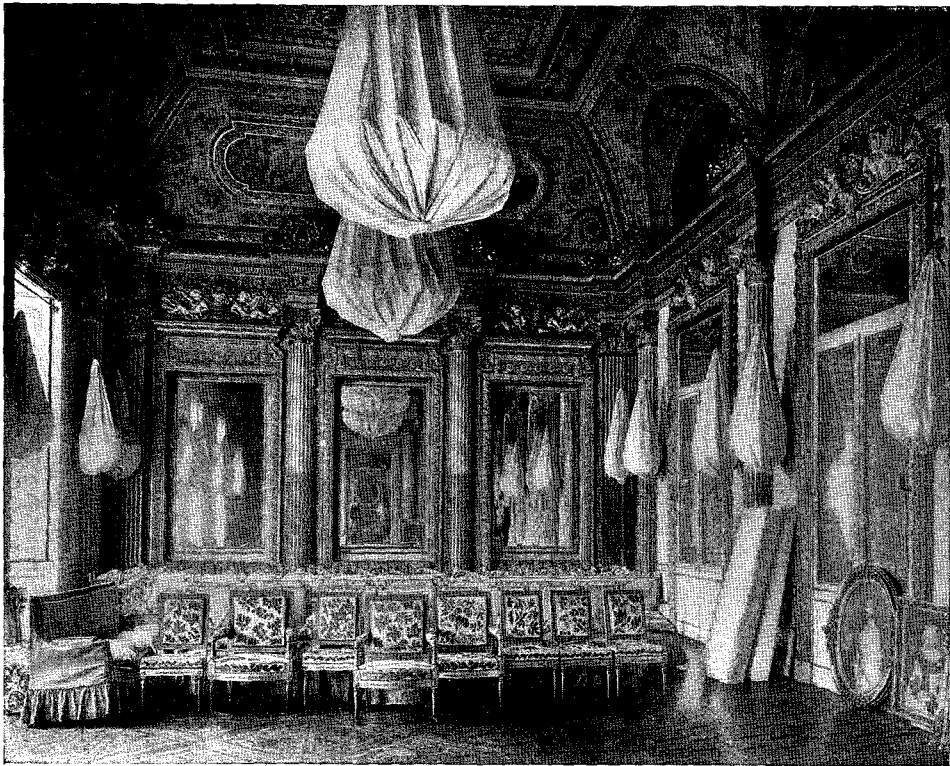
THE new proprietor was also a baron of finance, but he had vastly better taste than his predecessor. He knew how to bring together in his fine residence a great number of art objects which adorn it to-day. His daughter Jeanne, a very beautiful woman, married a Parisian very widely known, who for a long time bore the epithet of arbiter of elegances, namely, Boson de Talleyrand-Périgord, titular Prince of Sagan, eldest son of Louis Napoléon de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duke of Talleyrand and Valençay, and reigning Prince of Sagan by right of his maternal grandfather, Pierre, Duke of Courland, Semgallen, and Sagan.

The Talleyrand-Périgord family is one

of the most ancient and illustrious in France. It dates back to Wulgrin I, who was dubbed sovereign Count of Périgord and Angoulême by Charles the Bald, his relative, who died in 886. Hélie V succeeded Boson III in the countship of Périgord in 1186. He was a valorous warrior, which the name he received from his sovereign sufficiently proves: "Taille les rangs, Périgord!" ("Carve the ranks, Périgord!"), whence "Talleyrand."

Nevertheless the famous motto of the Talleyrand-Périgords, "Ré que Diou," has a different origin, and one which it is worth while to relate. Adalbert, Count of Périgord, having rebelled against the authority of the king, who was Hugues Capet, the latter sent him a messenger with these words: "Forgetful one, who made thee count?" "Who made thee king?" retorted Adalbert; "I know of no king but God" (*Je ne connais de roi que Dieu*), whence, in the old French, "Ré que Diou."

In all epochs the members of this family of warriors showed, besides, an intelligent love of the arts and literature. Thus Car-



From a photograph

A CORNER OF THE SALLE DES FÊTES, HÔTEL MONACO



From a photograph

THE BLUE ROOM OR BOUDOIR OF THE PRINCESS, HÔTEL MONACO

dinal Hélié de Talleyrand¹ was the friend and protector of Petrarch, who often besought his aid. Another, Adrien Blaise de Talleyrand, wedded in 1659 Anne de la Trémoille, who later on was destined to make the name of Princesse des Ursins famous.

During the seventeenth century they are found at open war with Richelieu; thus Henri de Talleyrand et de Chalais, Grand Master of the Guard of Nobles of the King, was beheaded at Nantes, August 19, 1629, by order of the cardinal.

Finally, all the world knows the name of the famous Abbé de Périgord who became celebrated under the name of Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Prince-duke of Talleyrand, Prince of Benevento, Duke of Dino, Vice-Grand Elector of the Empire, Grand Chamberlain, etc.

THE PRESENT OWNERS

THE present Duke of Talleyrand and Sagan, owner of the Hôtel Monaco, is the

grandnephew of the Bishop of Autun. People are agreed to mention him as one who has realized the perfected type of the Parisian *élégant*. And he has known how to be at one and the same time extremely "modern style" and yet excessively *tailon rouge* ("red-heel," a nickname for courtiers). Continuing the traditions of the seigneurs of the past, the prince has long maintained a residence separate from that of his wife. He entertained his friends in his tasteful apartment in the Club of the Rue Royale, and did not consider himself obliged to appear at the Hôtel Monaco even when the princess received at her table kings or grand dukes, the Prince of Wales, or the Orléans princes. Now he is sick, aged, struck by paralysis; and at the earnest demand of his family he has installed himself on the ground floor of the palace, in a little suite.

The princess, who was extremely beautiful, has known how to keep her tall and elegant figure and her proud mien. She has lost none of her delicate wit, her aris-

¹ He it was whom people called the "Pope-maker."

tocratic grace, and she recalls the charm of the *grandes dames* of the nineteenth century—for there were still such at that time—who knew how to hold as their own for a long time all admiration and all hearts—such as the Duchesse de Duras, the Marquise de Montcalm, Madame Delphine de Girardin, the Comtesse d'Haussonville, and the Princesse de Liéven.

THE BEAUTIFUL EXTERIOR

No sooner is the heavy gate of the portal passed than one sees from afar among the leafage the court of honor, to which one comes along an alley decorated uniformly with upright square shafts like classic *terme* in stone and bronze, and with clipped trees. Here is the courtyard properly so called, and we see the imposing sweep of the buildings by Brongniart. The impression of the antique lines is striking: it springs at once to the eyes, at first in this portico with columns and a heavy entablature, but lacking a pediment. The portico interrupts the general monotony and indicates the entrance to the private apartments. This close reminiscence of classic periods is found again in the somewhat cold but majestic regularity of the entire façade, composed solely of a ground floor and a great first story with thirteen windows, the *piano nobile* as the old masters called it. Plainly it is this story on which the architect desired to concentrate attention. But observe the facts: on this ground-floor front the openings are dwarfed, heavily arched, separated by engaged half-columns, and surmounted by a light frieze, all of which are things that catch the eye, without speaking of the heavy portico which breaks the line of the front. On the contrary, the first story shows an intentional simplicity, very happily calculated and truly grandiose—no ornaments to speak of, nothing but the fine proportions of the enormous windows, over which runs a double entablature on which one perceives in the intervals over the metopes, done in fine style, a row of fine decorative vases with garlands carved about them.

Two wings of less elevation turn back along the court of honor. That to the right includes first the vestibule which leads to the grand marble stairway and then to the grand galleries of the first floor.

A TREASURE OF ART

IN the center of the building, under the peristyle, is the entrance to the apartments on the ground floor where the Duchess of Talleyrand and Sagan usually stays, the immense first story being opened only for grand receptions. This entrance, all of stone, has had a sober decorative treatment. In the center—a marble statue of the eighteenth century—is Ceres, the blonde goddess; and on each side, on tall porphyry columns, are distinguished heads of Roman emperors, their dark faces, made of onyx and carnelian, emerging from splendid togas made of gilded bronze. On the walls light-toned medallions in pottery by Luca della Robbia send their note of blue through the green of the palms. Along the wainscot are some beautiful, severe-lined pieces of furniture, among them a marriage-chest of the sixteenth century.

We enter to the left into a Renaissance antechamber of a somber but harmonious tone, where greens and old reds dominate. The eyes are caught at once by a portrait of Machiavelli, thin, yellow, bald, with a high and pointed cranium. The author of "The Prince" seems mournful, disdainful, and has a sidelong look. Right in front, Louis XIII on horseback does not show any gayer visage. A very realistic "Crucifixion" by Govaert Flinck is surrounded by plaques from Faenza. Beneath these canvases there are more busts of emperors, but these are in white marble on pedestal columns of red marble. Red also are the tall Italian Renaissance arm-chairs, the woodwork heightened with gold, bringing out the somberness of that heavily built Burgundian piece of the sixteenth century which we attribute without hesitation to Hugues Sambin, the what-not opposite which is covered with bric-à-brac of great value—golden bumpers, German tankards in ivory, chased boxes, all marvelous in their jewelry work.

A large bay permits one to catch a glimpse of the Salon Rouge, which looks out on the park, just as do all the others to follow. It would be hard to enumerate even approximately the riches here inclosed. Still, one may remark that the dominant note in the furniture and objects is the style of Louis XVI and that of the Empire, harmoniously mingled.

Let us try, if possible, to examine the paintings without seeing the ceiling too much—for this ceiling, in caissons, dating from the restorations of the hôtel by Baron Hope, is truly afflicting. Noisily blue against a white ground, it belongs to the real Louis-Philippe style. Murillo, painted by himself, hangs opposite a painting of Colbert, to the right of the chimney-piece. This fine picture was brought from Spain by Marshal Soult.

The portrait of Ferdinand VII of Spain recalls an interesting page of history, and will explain its presence here.

In 1808 three Spanish princes were held in durance at the Château de Valençay by order of Napoleon I. They were Ferdinand VII, his brother Don Carlos, and Don Antonio, their uncle.

The choice of the place was odd; for Talleyrand, the castellan of Valençay, was known to disapprove in the highest degree the imperial policy with respect to Spanish affairs. From the first he took great interest in these three mournful exiles; and he expressed himself thus on their arrival in his domain: "The princes were young, and over them, about them, in their clothes and their carriages, in their liveries, everything displayed an image of past centuries. The coach from which I saw them descend might have been taken for one under Philip V [1700]. This air of antiquity, while recalling their grandeur, added still more interest to their position."

It was a sorrowful visit, which lasted six years. Fearing that his captives might escape, and badly informed by his spies, the Emperor gave severe orders with regard to the princes; and their existence would have been wretched indeed had it not been for the humane intervention of Talleyrand, who one day dared to write as follows in a report:

I took the tone of master toward Colonel Henri of the police, in order to make him understand that Napoleon does not reign either in their apartments or in the park of Valençay.

And again on another occasion:

I shall surround the princes with respect, esteem, and thoughtful care.

It was by way of thanks for this attitude, so firm and courageous, that Ferdi-

nand VII, on his return to Spain as king, offered his portrait to Talleyrand: that very portrait we can still admire in the Red Salon of the duchess.

The Oak Salon continues the series of apartments. One may say that it is the Talleyrand Salon, for the Prince of Benevento dominates it from the height of his frame. Clothed in a costume of ceremony of light blue and dark blue, with grave, pensive features, hair entirely white, and wearing the grand eagle and the grand cross of the Legion of Honor, the statesman rests his clenched hand on his hip and fronts the spectator in a proud attitude. Moreover it is a masterpiece by the great Prud'hon.

Four other pictures adorn this salon. One is a portrait of the Princesse de Conti as Diana the Huntress, with a landscape background, in the somewhat pretentious fashion of Mignard. Another, a portrait of the King of Saxony, which acts as a pendant, was given by him to Prince de Talleyrand after the interview at Erfurt. It is an official figure, the sovereign in white coat and yellow breeches, behung with orders, powdered, the plumed hat under his arm. Farther on, two pictures by Bronzino offer their dark yet warm coloring to the view—a thoughtful youth and a Venetian woman in a red gown.

The wall candelabra are supported by dragons in old Chinese porcelain, the blue tone of which is repeated by the fire-screen of Gobelin tapestry, splendidly set in a frame of carved wood.

But the physiognomy of this salon would not be told if one forgot the superb partition screens of antique stuffs which form private corners in the big apartment. One of them, yellow and gold silk embroidered on a ground of velvet, recalls the unwearying patience of the women of the past, when the weaver's art had not yet turned to fabrication and transformed our objects of furniture into heavy industrial products.

Here at last is the Blue Salon, which serves as the boudoir of the duchess and recalls to her mind the time when, a diligent young girl, she herself made the designs and then embroidered the panels which ornament the hangings of this salon, the Chinese decoration of which is very curious and elegant.

In the present room the chairs condone

those of the last apartment. All are of the time of Louis XV or Louis XVI. There is even a corner sofa in ancient Chinese red and old-rose embroidery; also, a little child's chair on which perhaps a dauphin once sat. Then there is an adorable little niche in Louis XV carved wood, with the stuff of the period. Just as we reach it the head of a poodle waked from sleep pops out of this hiding-place; let us not deplore the fate of Toutou!

After the princess's boudoir comes her chamber. One might think that one was entering a Byzantine church. Roman arcades, oak and gold with a ground of mosaic, run along the frieze, and the ceiling, like the doors, offers an example of the rich and heavy decoration which flourished during the reigns of the emperors of Constantinople. It must be confessed that the general look of this room is a little wanting in harmony.

The park is one of the marvels of Paris. It is designed in the French style and ends, after the English garden, in a "perspective" representing a Louis XVI rotunda, surmounted by a long terrace to which one attains by a double stairway of marble decorated with statues and designs. No indiscreet look can penetrate that wide expanse. Far off behind the "perspective" the trees on the Boulevard des Invalides add to the illusion, with the golden dome of the Invalides recalling vaguely the *tapis vert* at Versailles.

THE GRAND RECEPTION APARTMENTS

ONE rises to the grand reception apartments on the first floor by a suite of two vestibules placed on the right of the court of honor. Let us go quickly past the columns of the ancient statues, the vases decorated with mythological scenes, and ascend the thirty-five steps of the splendid marble stair, all of one piece. This stair is the triumph of the noble Louis XVI style, with its ceiling decked with rose-shaped ornaments, its pillars supporting a sculptured lintel,—a veritable lacework,—and the two galleries with balustrades which fence the stair-well, itself adorned with designs from the hunt and of music, with marble statuettes, immense supports for candelabra, children bearing torch-holders, and busts of Roman emperors perched on their tall porphyry stands. Seven uncom-

monly large windows throw a flood of light on this truly regal interior.

There begins the suite of five large salons for receptions, in white and gold, the overpowering decoration of which, too rich and too heavy, was designed by Baron Hope. He considered the delicate moldings of Louis XVI, the time of the Princess of Monaco, too meager, and spent several millions of francs in this work of vandalism. Luckily two precious medallions by Largillière, princesses with charming faces, were preserved during these changes: they are let into the wall and surmount two chimneypieces. Beautiful tapestries ornament the panels: one of them, a "Judgment of Solomon," is a Gobelins admirably designed and in fine condition. On the floor are rugs from the old royal looms at the Savonnerie.

Two galleries of colossal size occupy the ends of the palace. To the right is the Salle des Fêtes, overspread with gold, having Ionic pilasters and big chandeliers of rock-crystal. One may see in a corner the superb desk of Ferdinand VII, in walnut, decorated with bronzes, chimeras, and vases, and surmounted by a clock which is a part of it. It comes from Valençay. To the left is the dining-room reserved for gala dinners. About the massive walnut table one hundred and fifty banqueters can seat themselves at ease. The walls are clothed with red and yellow marbles inlaid with black, which harmonize with an immense East Indian tapestry and a severe chimneypiece in Empire style. But the marvelous thing here is the magnificent series of medallions by Oudry, alternately oval and rectangular, which make a frieze along the ceiling. The great painter of animals of the eighteenth century is found here in his full force—his *élan*, his profound feeling for decoration, and his warm coloring.

THE BALL OF THE BEASTS

THE Princess of Sagan has an original and inventive mind. It appears in its full vigor in the surprises which she liked to give her guests. Perhaps the one concerning which people still talk most was the famous "Ball of the Beasts."

On the 2d of June, 1885, you are begged to choose from Buffon a Costume or a Head.

This meager notice, in the guise of an invitation, ran beneath a delightful vignette, signed *Détaille*, representing the entrance to a ball at a fair, with the inscriptions:

One animal 1 franc
One animal and his lady 2 francs

The crowd in front of the door was large, and here and there one saw a lot of guests of both sexes—a cock and a stork, an elephant and a cat, etc.

What prodigies of diplomacy, what intrigues and efforts, were made to obtain one of these little paper requests! But also what cries of anger! What indignation, true or false, was not let loose! The socialist papers seized upon the new idea of the princess, and with regard to the costumes made certain remarks and witticisms easy to imagine. The more courteous were in the following style:

We hear from a reliable source that the Prince de X. will sport a calf's head.

Or else:

The Marquise de Z. will appear as a turkey; that will scarcely make much change in her.

But that was not all. Serious persons remarked that the festival would take place the very day after the funeral of Victor Hugo, and people thought they saw in this ball an improper manifestation. But the most curious of all was the attitude of those whom we call "kill-joys"—the papers of the uncompromising legitimists. They reproached the princess bitterly for her taste for grand receptions "beneath the tyranny of the Republic," and especially the choice of such costumes for an entertainment that year. The aristocracy disguised as animals! Was it not the end of the world?

But, in spite of these criticisms, the ball took place, and it was a marvel of originality and dash.

Astonishment began at the foot of the grand stair, which was guarded by sixty footmen bearing the arms of Talleyrand; for from the bottom one could see at the top of the steps, beneath a cluster of electric lights, the Princess of Sagan audaciously costumed as a peacock, entirely haloed about by great gold and silver plumes and aigrets, against a dark-blue and old-rose ground, all gleaming with precious stones

on her hair, her shoulders, her entire gown. As her guests arrived and bowed before her, the bird of Juno spread, by the action of a concealed spring, a grand peacock tail of many colors, which, as it fell again, formed about her a cloud of sparkling stars.

By the side of the mistress of the house, assisting to receive the guests, was Monsieur de Buffon himself (Baron Seilliére), in the classic garb of the castellan of Montbard—embroidered sleeves, frilled front, and round-curved wig. The solemn man was almost out of place in that astonishing zoölogical procession which filed past into the drawing-rooms. Oh, what fairylike birds from the isles were they that chirped and chattered in every corner—humming-birds tinted with emerald hues, birds of paradise with garb of rubies, insects that touch and go, ibises the color of the dawn!

Some costumes less striking were in vivid contrast to these. For there were to be seen a tigress (Baroness de Rothschild), an owl (Comtesse de Chevigné), a bat (Baroness de Salignac-Fénelon), a crow (Marquis de Barbentane), a duck, many ducks, a whole flock of ducks—Counts de St. Pierre, de Béthune, de Gargon. Singular taste! It would be superfluous to enumerate all the cocks which shook their wings at that ball—they could not be counted. There was even one lady dressed as a grouse-cock (Madame Michel Ephrussi). Very original she looked in an orange-tinted tulle gown all sewed over with big, dark wings, and with a charming little grouse-cock in her hair, perched saucily among the gleams of her jewels.

The prize for original costume fell by right to the Comtesse de Gontant, who came as a donkey—yes, actually as a donkey—unless, indeed, the first prize be claimed by the Vicomtesse de Lausac travestied as a lobster, or by Madame Henry Schneider as a serpent, or else by Madame de Moninet as the Ocean—a vision of vaporous blue tulle, over which fell fish-nets full of fish and decorations of seaweed and branches of coral.

Here is a comment on the ball, which we have had the good fortune to discover in an old copy of the "Intransigeant" of 1885



Drawn by A. Castaigne., Half-tone plate engraved by H. Davidson

"THE BALL OF THE BEASTS," HÔTEL MONACO—THE PRINCESS OF SAGAN RECEIVING HER GUESTS AT THE TOP OF THE GRAND STAIRCASE

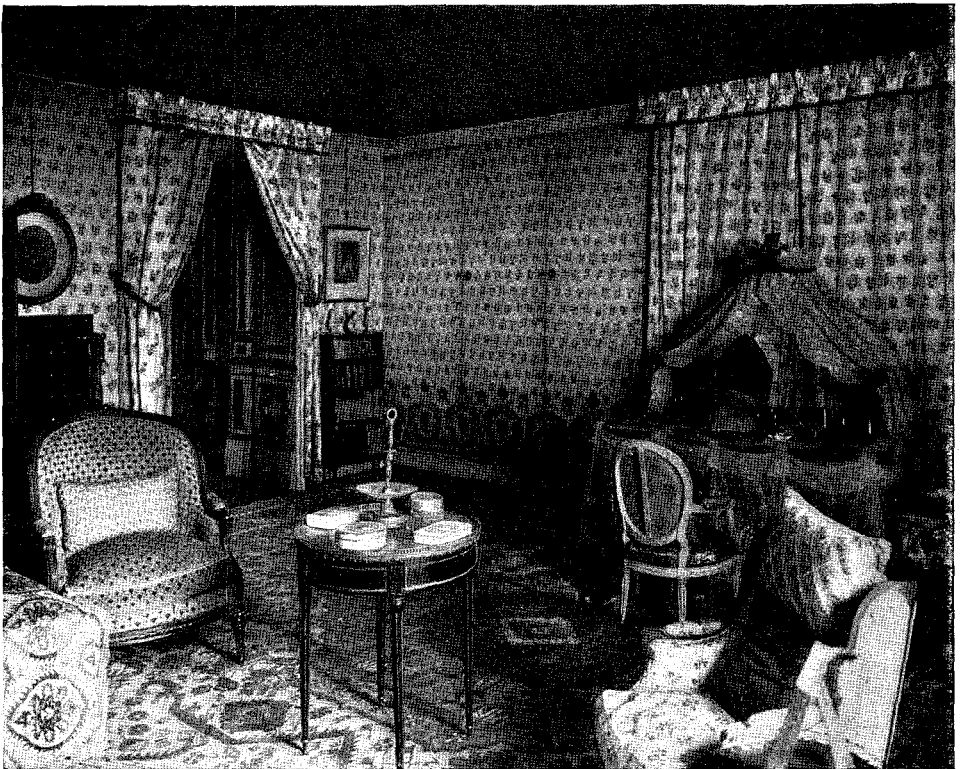
Such an exhibition authorizes the Darwinian theories as to the descent of man. Why should noblemen and noblewomen be angry when they are told that they descend from animals, since, without any necessity for doing so, they themselves return to their origin? As to their more recent ancestors, the knights who won their coats of arms with blows of the sword, what a surprise would have been in store for them if they could have risen from their centuried dust and heard men say, pointing to these insects, these ducks, these donkeys: "There are your descendants!"

They were clad in iron: their descendants cover themselves with feathers and hair. Without doubt, some of these disguised nobles descend from the barbarian leaders, who also marched clad in the skins of beasts. But the bears and wolves whose bloody hides were bound about their giant bodies had been killed by them—strangling them to death with their hands, just as Hercules would. To-day, O people, thou art Hercules!

Madame de Sagan of course never made any reply to these sarcasms—or rather yes, she did, by giving that grand kirmess for charity, the recollection of which is still in

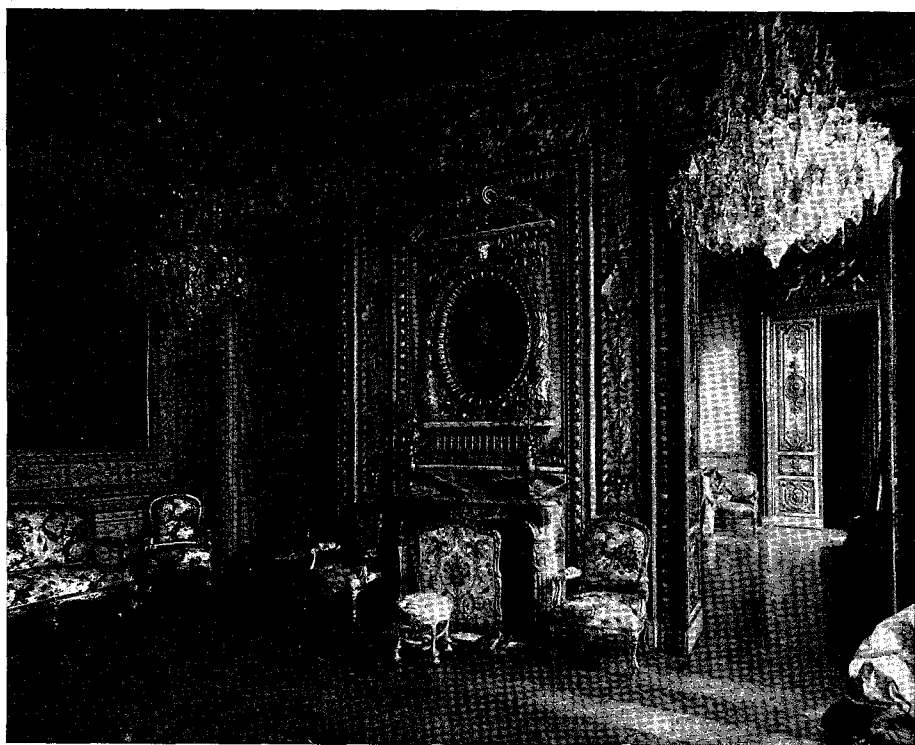
memory of all those privileged ones who amused themselves joyously for several hours at the Hôtel Monaco, and those of the lowly and poor over whom the proceeds from the festival descended in a beneficent rain of gold. In order to bring more money into the cash-box for the poor the princess had imposed upon herself a sacrifice hard for a hostess to make: she had opened wide the doors of her hôtel and said to all her friends, as also to the passers-by in Paris: "Enter, whomever you may be, known or unknown, rich or little in fortune, snobs or the merely curious! Great miseries will be succored by your simple act. Enter! it costs only ten francs!"

Her appeal was heard. The crowd, eager to see the interior, entered the palace in masses. It amused itself, spent money, pushed itself into the theaters established in the open air, and played the lottery and other ingenious games at the booths of the aristocratic saleswomen and the buffets served by noble ladies.



From a photograph

DRESSING-ROOM OF THE PRINCESS, HÔTEL MONACO



From a photograph

ONE OF THE RECEPTION SALONS OF THE HÔTEL MONACO

The next day the princely park was found all ravaged, trod under foot, without one flower; but a great number of hovels and lodgings "flourished" with a little good fortune, and there were many children who dried their tears. It was the last festival at the Hôtel Monaco.

THE WIND

BY JOHN VANCE CHENEY

THE yellow fox
Has his bed in the rocks;
The brown bird, in the tree
Her nest has she;
But the wind, come forth
Of south and north,
Of east and west,
Where shall he rest?

The snake, the eft,
Slips into the cleft;
The marmot sleeps sound
In the underground;
But the wind of the hill
Is wandering still;
And the wind of the sea,
When sleepeth he?

The clouds of the air,
They slumber there;
Flowers droop the head,
And the leaves lie dead;
But the wind, the wind,
What rest shall he find?
When shall he roam
The wild road home?