

ment here. We wish that America could see her way to ratify it as soon as possible, with the addition of whatever interpretative reservations may be thought necessary — these might be valuable to us all — and then work the League of Nations for all it is worth. The whole settlement is but a framework. Under the League of Nations it is capable of indefinite alteration. By

The Spectator

means of the League of Nations every cause of suspicion against Great Britain, just or unjust, could be removed. We trust that our American readers will not think we have written too plainly. We have written exactly what was in our mind, in the strong belief that as between America and ourselves it is despicable and silly to avoid the truth.

## THACKERAY IN FRANCE

BY LEWIS MELVILLE

THACKERAY once asked a friend if he loved the play, and the friend answered that he enjoyed a good play, whereupon the great man retorted: 'Oh, get out. You don't even understand what I mean. I said "the play."' This was Thackeray's attitude toward France, and especially toward Paris. He loved France as much as any English author, not Sterne more. He loved it, not for any of its parts, but as a whole, and he loved it all his life long. Even though on occasions he worked hard, there was pleasure in his heart whenever he was in the French capital. He always went there in holiday mood. He loved the people and the place and the language. To the end he delighted in interlarding his letters with French phrases, and when in high spirits he wrote humorous letters in French to his intimates. The astonishing thing is that he never wrote, or even attempted to write, a book in French, as did Beckford and Oscar Wilde: he contented himself with translating a few of Béranger's

verses — *Le Roy d'Yvetot*, *Le Grenier*, *Roger Bontemps*, and *Le Bon Ange*. He did, however, write much about France, especially in his young days, for *Fraser's Magazine* and other periodicals, taking for his subject French novels, plays, and pictures, and the artistic world of the Quartier Latin.

Thackeray first made acquaintance with France at the age of eighteen, when he was at Cambridge, and ran over to Paris on a visit to his lifelong friend, Edward FitzGerald. As he went there surreptitiously, there is no record of the visit in his letters; but more than thirty years later he recalled the incident in that charming 'Roundabout Paper,' bearing the title 'Dessein's.' He traveled by way of Calais, and put up at the 'charming old Hôtel Dessein, with its court, its garden, its lordly kitchen, its princely waiter — a gentleman of the old school who has welcomed the finest company in Europe.' There he conjured up, as all the reading world well remembers, the meeting of the ghosts of Sterne, Brum-

pell, and 'old Mr. Eustace, Master of St. Peter's.' Of this visit he wrote:

I remember as a boy, at the Ship at Dover (*imperante Carolo Decimo*), when, my place to London being paid, I had but 12s. left after a certain little Paris excursion (about which my benighted parents never knew anything), ordering for dinner a whiting, a beefsteak, and a glass of negus, and the bill was: dinner, 7s., glass of negus, 2s., waiter, 6d., and only half a crown left, as I was a sinner, for the guard and coachman to London! And I *was* a sinner. I had gone without leave. What a long, dreary, guilty forty hours' journey it was from Paris to Calais, I remember! How did I come to think of this escapade, which occurred in the Easter vacation of 1830? I always think of it when I am traveling to Calais. Guilt, sir, guilt remains stamped on the memory, and I feel easier in my mind now that it is liberated of this old peccadillo. I met my college tutor only yesterday. We were traveling, and stopped at the same hotel. He had the very next room to mine. After he had gone into his apartment, having shaken me quite kindly by the hand, I felt inclined to knock at his door, and say, 'Dr. Bertley, I beg your pardon, but do you remember, when I was going down at the Easter vacation in 1830, you asked me where I was going to spend my vacation? And I said, with my friend Slingsby, in Huntingdonshire. Well, sir, I grieve to have to confess that I told you a fib. I had got £20 and was going for a lark to Paris, where my friend Edward was staying.' There, it is out. The Doctor will read it, for I did not wake him up after all to make my confession, but protest he shall have a copy of this Roundabout sent to him when he returns to his lodge.

Thackeray was again in Paris in 1831, this time openly and unashamed, on his way to Weimar, and again on his way home. When he came of age and abandoned all pretense of reading for the Bar, he stayed there for a while, learning to speak the language fluently, studying drawing, and visiting the theatres. He studied painting, first under Brine, the well-known impressionist artist, and then under that favorite pupil of David, Gros, who committed suicide in January 1833.

He wrote home that he was satisfied with his progress, and hoped in a year, if he worked hard, to paint something worth looking at; but he naively told his mother that it would require at least that time to gain any readiness with his brush. Abraham Hayward has recorded that he used to see Thackeray day after day engaged in copying pictures in the Louvre, in order to qualify himself for his intended profession.

In those early days Thackeray stayed at first with his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Butler, and with other relations and friends, until he rented a room for himself in the Rue des Beaux Arts. He was a welcome visitor at the house of Eyre Evans Crowe, the Paris correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*, the father of Joseph and Eyre.

Once a week, on Saturday, my mother received guests in the evening [Sir Joseph Crowe has written]. My mother at her evenings made everyone laugh by playing Irish jigs or Scotch reels, or accompanying on the piano Methfessel's students' songs and choruses, the supreme enjoyment being a song from Thackeray.

In a book called *The Stones of Paris* there is a reference to the future novelist:

This Hugo home in Rue des Petits-Augustins, rising right in front of all who came along Rue des Beaux Arts, was a familiar sight to a young Englishman. . . . His name was William Makepeace Thackeray, and he was lodging in this latter street among other students of the Latin Quarter, and trying to make a passable artist with the material given him by nature for the making of an unsurpassable author. His way lay in front of the old 'Abbaye,' each time he went to or fro from the school or his modest restaurant. Théron was the host of this cheap feeding place, esteemed by art students, on the northern side of the old Rue des Boucheries, of which this side and some of its buildings have been saved, while the street itself has been carried away in the wider stream of the Boulevard Saint-Germain. There at

No. 160, you will find the same restaurant, under the same name on the sign, and the same room, swarming with students as during 'Thackeray's days in Paris.'

Thackeray moved with delight in the Bohemian circles of the young artists, and in *The Paris Sketch Book* wrote pleasantly of his companions:

The life of the young artist is the easiest, merriest, dirtiest existence possible [he wrote]. He comes to Paris probably at sixteen, from his province; his parents settle forty pounds a year on him, and pay his master; he establishes himself in the Pays Latin, or in the quarter of Notre Dame de Lorette (which is quite peopled with painters); he arrives at his *atelier* at a tolerably early hour, and labors among a score of companions as merry and as poor as himself. Each gentleman has his favorite tobacco pipe; and the pictures are painted in the midst of a cloud of smoke, and a din of puns and choice French slang, and a roar of choruses, of which no one can form an idea who has not been present at such an assembly. How he passes his evenings, at what theatres, at what guinguettes, in company with what seducing little milliner, there is no need to say. . . . These young men (together with the students of sciences) comported themselves toward the sober citizen pretty much as the German bursch toward the *philister*, or as the military man, during the Empire, did to the pekin: from the height of their poverty they looked down upon him with the greatest scorn — a scorn, I think, by which the citizen is dazzled, for his respect for the Arts is intense.

When, within a few years of attaining his majority, Thackeray had squandered or been swindled out of the greater part of his patrimony, art offering him no immediate prospect of earning a living, he began to look to his pen to acquire the necessary pennies. Henry Mayhew saw him at Paris in 1835, and noted that he 'is just dividing his time between studying figure-drawing over at Passy, and scribbling *feuilletons* in the *London and Paris Courier*, the best of these pen sketches to be afterwards collected in

a volume under the title of *The Paris Sketch Book*. For the *London and Paris Courier* must be read the *New York Corsair*. Thackeray was then writing for that paper and for *Fraser's Magazine*; he acted for a short time as London correspondent of the *Constitutional and Public Ledger* (a venture in which was lost his stepfather's money and the remnant of his own fortune); and he and Longueville Jones worked very cheerfully on *Galignani's Messenger* for ten francs a day. In March, 1836, he published, through Rittner and Goupil in the Boulevard Montmartre and Mitchell's Library in Old Bond Street, a little volume of satirical sketches, entitled *Flore et Zéphyr*, the original edition of which fetches more than its weight in gold.

While at Paris in 1836 he met Isabella Getkin Creagh Shawe and married her at the British Embassy there on August 20. From the financial point of view it was a rash proceeding, but natural enough for the man who all his life long preached that 'Love is the crown of all.'

I married with £400 a year paid by a newspaper which failed six months afterwards, and always love to hear of a young fellow testing his future in that way [he wrote years after to William Webb Follett Synge]. Though my marriage was a wreck, as you know, I would do it again, for behold Love is the crown and completion of all earthly good. A man who is afraid of his fortune never deserved one.

The young couple rented apartments in the Rue Neuve St. Augustin, not far from the offices of *Galignani's Messenger*, in the Rue Vivienne. They perforce lived inexpensively, and ate in cheap restaurants. Of his haunts in these days, most have disappeared — the Frères Phillipès, in the Rue Montorgueil, and the Hôtel de la Terrasse, in the Rue de Rivoli, where presently Becky Sharp stopped. Voisins still

exists and the Café de Paris, and the Hôtel Mirabeau, though this has been rebuilt. The Hôtel Bristol stands, but it was not for Thackeray in those days, save on special occasions. One little restaurant Thackeray has immortalized in some verses, 'Bouillabaisse,' which he wrote on a later visit to Paris when Terré jeune had gone the way of all flesh and Gillet reigned in his stead.

A street there is in Paris famous,  
For which no rhyme our language yields,  
Rue Neuve des Petits Champs its name is—  
The New Street of the Little Fields;  
And here's an inn, not rich and splendid,  
But still in comfortable case,  
The which in youth I oft attended,  
To eat a bowl of Bouillabaisse.

This Bouillabaisse a noble dish is —  
A sort of soup, or broth, or brew,  
Or hotchpotch of all sorts of fishes,  
That Greenwich never could outdo;  
Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffron,  
Soles, onions, garlic, roach, and dace:  
All these you eat at Terré's tavern,  
In that one dish of Bouillabaisse.

Ah me! how quick the days are flitting!  
I mind me of a time that's gone,  
When here I'd sit, as now I'm sitting,  
In this same place — but, not alone.  
A fair young form was nestled near me,  
A dear, dear face looked fondly up,  
And sweetly spoke and smiled to cheer me  
— There's no one now to share my cup.

I drink it as the Fates ordain it.  
Come, fill it, and have done with  
rhymes:  
Fill up the lonely glass, and drain it  
In memory of dear old times.  
Welcome the wine, whate'er the seal is;  
And sit you down and say your grace  
With thankful heart, whate'er the meal is.  
— Here comes the smoking Bouillabaisse.

Thackeray was in Paris in December, 1840, and witnessed the ceremony of conveying the remains of Napoleon from St. Helena to their last resting place at the Hôtel des Invalides, which removal had been permitted by the British. He witnessed the procession from a room opening on to a garden in

the Champs Elysées and published his impressions in three letters addressed to Miss Smith of London in the form of a small volume entitled, *The Second Funeral of Napoleon*, in which was included the splendid 'Chronicle of the Drum.'

He captured many thousand guns,  
He wrote 'The Great' before his name,  
And dying, only left his sons  
The recollection of his shame.

Though more than half the world was his,  
He died without a rood his own;  
And borrowed from his enemies  
Six foot of ground to lie upon.

He fought a thousand glorious wars,  
And more than half the world was his,  
And somewhere now, in yonder stars,  
Can tell, mayhap, what greatness is.

Thackeray's mother and stepfather, Major Carmichael Smyth, lived for many years in Paris, and from about 1840, when his wife became ill, until 1847, when he set up house in Young Street, Kensington, his children lived with them. Whenever he could snatch a holiday, he went to see them. In 1849 he went to Paris with Richard Doyle, and wrote some papers for *Punch* called 'Paris Revisited,' which were illustrated by his companion. In a letter to the Brookfields he gave some account of this visit:

What brought me to this place! Well, I am glad I came; it will give me a subject for at least six weeks in *Punch*, of which I was getting so weary that I thought that I must have done with it. . . . I went to Paris to see my old haunts when I came to Paris thirteen years ago, and made believe to be a painter, just after I was ruined, and before I fell in love, and took to marriage and writing. It was a jolly time. I was as poor as Job, and sketched away most abominably, but pretty contented; and we used to meet in each other's rooms, and talk about art, and smoke pipes, and drink bad brandy and water. That awful habit still remains, but where is art, that dear mistress whom I loved; though in a very indolent, capriccio manner, but with a real

sincerity? I see her far, far off. I jilted her. I knew it very well; but you see it was ordained.

Thackeray was there again in 1853, and he noted:

The advance of this place in material splendor is wonderful. They are pulling down and building up as eagerly as in New York, and the Rue de Rivoli is going to be the grandest street in the world — all the houses as tall as St. Nicholas — and the palaces and gardens looking so ancient and noble.

On this visit he was accompanied by his daughters, and writing to the Brookfields, humorously pointed out the difference that this made:

Thackeray as paterfamilias, with a daughter in each hand, I don't like to speak to our country folks, but give myself airs, rather, and keep off them. If I were alone I should make up to everybody. You don't see things as well *à trois* as you do alone, you are an English gentleman; you are shy of queer-looking or queer-speaking people; you are in the coupé; you are an earl, confound your impudence, if you had £5000 a year and were Tompan, Esq., you could not behave yourself more high and mightily. Ah! I recollect years back, a poor devil looking wistfully at the few napoleons in his *gousset* and giving himself no airs at all. He was a better fellow than the one you know, perhaps; not that our characters alter, only they develop, and our minds grow gray and bald, etc. I was a boy ten years ago, breathing out my simple cries in *The Great Hoggarty Diamond*.

One of his last visits was in 1860, after he had successfully launched the *Cornhill Magazine*. He pretended there was something of truth in his pretense — that he was driven from home by

The Anglo-French Review

the persecution of would-be contributors to the periodical.

The darlings demanded that I should re-write, if I could not understand their nonsense, and put their halting lines into proper form [he told S. T. Fields, the American publisher, who was his companion on his jaunt]: I was so appalled when they set upon me with this 'ipies' and 'ipicacas' that you might have knocked me down with a feather, Sir. It was unsupportable and I fled away to France.

They stayed together at a hotel in the Rue de la Paix, and Fields has put on record some account of their doings.

Those days in Paris were simply tremendous. We dined at all possible and impossible places together. We walked round and round the glittering courts of the Palais Royal . . . and all my efforts were necessary to restrain him from rushing in and ordering a pocketful of diamonds and other trifles,' as he called them; 'for,' said he, 'how can I spend the princely income which Smith allows me for editing the *Cornhill* unless I begin instantly somewhere?' If he saw a group of people talking together in an excited way . . . he would whisper to me with immense gesticulation, 'There, there, you see, the news has reached Paris, and perhaps the number has gone up since my last accounts from London.'

Evidence of Thackeray's affection for France could be adduced from his books and his correspondence, and from the French characters he introduced into his stories, but these are too well known to be cited here; and, anyhow, this brief account of Thackeray and France purports only to give some idea of his personal feelings for that country.

# THE FREDRIK VIII AT HALIFAX: THE STORY OF AN EPIC SEARCH

BY REAR-ADMIRAL BOYLE SOMERVILLE, C.M.G., R.N.

WHEN, in the early days of 1917, it was realized that the time had come for Count Bernstorff to retire from the scene of his highly unsuccessful labors, both diplomatic and undiplomatic, in the United States, a steamer had to be found sufficiently large to convey to Europe not only himself and his staff, but also about one hundred and twenty German consuls, of varying degrees, from the different states and cities hitherto favored with their society.

To these *Herren* (not to say 'gentlemen') were attached a large collection of *Frauen* (not to say 'ladies'), with children and nurses, their servants, their maids, and everything that was theirs. Besides these, a large number of neutrals, not necessarily connected with the Germans, decided to take advantage of the occasion; so that altogether there came to be about eight hundred persons to be accommodated for the journey to Europe. The fine Danish steamer *Fredrik VIII* was accordingly chartered for the trip.

It was arranged between the governments concerned that if, on her passage to Europe, the vessel put in at Halifax, Nova Scotia, for search, she should be allowed free passage through the Allied blockade on reaching European waters, and that the 'Right of Visit and Search' on the high seas should be forgone, so that she could proceed direct to Copenhagen, her destination.

It was further arranged that sacks of diplomatic documents from Allied

or neutral Embassies could be carried if they were registered and sealed at the British Embassy at Washington, and if the diplomatic messengers in charge of them received on their passports a special 'visa' from our Ambassador. With the exception of these diplomatic 'sacks,' it was announced that every part of the great ship, every piece of luggage, every article of cargo, and every single person conveyed in her, including the crew, was liable to search.

All, all — except Count Bernstorff himself, that Sacred Ambassador; and he would be immune only if he would give (as he did give) a signed undertaking that he was not carrying on his Sacred Person documents, or indeed anything, either 'within or without It, except the clothes that covered It.

The harbor of Halifax is, in shape, long and narrow, and fairly straight. On approaching from seaward you pass up between gradually narrowing shores, fairly high on both hands, and reach the harbor proper, after making a bend round the tail of a small islet that divides the inner from the outer part. Here, within, are the town wharves, the naval dockyard, the man-of-war anchorage, and the dry dock.

Steaming straight on past them, you come to a Narrows, a couple of hundred yards wide; and on passing through it, you find you are entering on a magnificent sheet of land-locked water, deep and still, bordered with forest, and with only a few signs of human possession — Bedford Basin.