

der that the balance swings temporarily to the side of superstition.

THE MUSEUM OF ST. GERMAIN.

PARIS, November 7, 1902.

St. Germain is famous, as every one knows, for the Pavillon Henri IV. and for the Castle behind it, built by François I.; it is also famous for the Museum in the Castle. No doubt the building strikes you first. Its remarkable state of preservation is due to the fact that, since Napoleon III. to this time of writing, it has been reërected, as money allowed; and the few crumbling stones here and there date from his time. Why he conceived this ruinous passion for St. Germain becomes evident on the ground floor, where his staff of wise men got together everything they needed to write his work on *Cæsar's Commentaries* on Gaul. Going from there to the top of the palace, you leave Napoleon and plunge into prehistoric Gaul—by which is frequently meant Gaul long after Cæsar, but lost to his refined and historic influence. Walk through these rooms to the last of them and you find what I went to see: a new collection, just presented and soon to be opened, of bits of bone and ivory, carved by beings whom it would be unscientific to speak of as having done anything but exist.

It should be said the collection isn't new. Prehistorians had long known of a gentleman, living in the south of France, who had excavated on his own responsibility, and, as luck would have it, dug close to the roots of the human species. The man himself, M. Piette, was there, in the company of the Curator, when an official friend and I arrived. He was old, somewhat round-shouldered, but full and ruddy in the face, with eager blue eyes. He has published a few pages, rather against his wish, for private circulation; he has written a large book, finished long ago, to which the illustrations were ready years since. But mistrust and love of truth have kept the pages at home, and it is doubtless with regret that he is about to publish, for private circulation, an edition so small as to seem already rare. Let me add, he is one of a class. The French provinces are full of men, without great means and with little education, who suddenly surprise the museums by having long followed, and sometimes, as in this case, with method and keen intelligence, some scientific whim. Here, then, were M. Piette's fruits, and by them will he be judged: flakes and sticks of ivory and bone, scrawled over with designs or carved into various shapes.

They were found in geological strata different from ours. On learning this first, I closed my eyes a moment, being dazed. These are not mastodons and behemoths, which a skilful set of wires and iron poles puts on their legs once more; nor an ichthyosaurus which presumably swam in deep seas where we now live comfortably with an address. This is human work of a high order. Down one stick of ivory were carved several horses' forelegs in fairly high relief, the fetlock and hair being rendered to perfection. There were many bone needles, and plaques about as large as a dollar piece, with quaint designs cut in. A few nude figures, male and female, were more primitive, but not more so than some old French and Italian pieces I have seen. All

this dates back—reckon yourself. It was altogether bewildering.

The collector took up one piece, which in his slow but enthusiastic speech he described as an arm, with a cape over the shoulder. My friend, who is an authority and somewhat slower in discerning such things, had rashly described it as a leg, but was converted. One of the nudes wore some sort of suspensory. I confess the dress of this prehistoric generation seemed to me as insufficient as it was hypothetical, and I shall not believe the next writer on these subjects when he describes it as consisting of the things I doubtfully have mentioned.

As I was leaving, some one remarked this was no longer a palace, but the people's palace. A note of Socialism in such surroundings rang out strangely. It is characteristic, however. Old manors, old castles, old buildings of every sort all over France are being turned more and more into museums. The vaulting is repaired to hang curiosities from; and the walls that not so long ago were covered with brocade or painted wainscoting, disappear behind the works of some obscure school of painting. Does the old palace thereby become the people's palace? Is science really humane and social, and is the scholar so much more modest and affable than the courtier or the aristocrat? I should not like to give my opinion on a subject so modern and so obscure.

Meanwhile, my friend and I had emerged on to the roof of the palace. This, and others of course, are each and all the finest views of the country about Paris. The forest on one side, russet and green; the valley of the Seine toward Montmorency, and Paris on the other; the dip and then the hill crowned with the arches of Louis XIV.'s aqueduct over Marly; and round over the slopes and hills west again—this, all in blue hazes and rich autumn lights, made one swear that the French landscape was the only one. Looking down into the courtyard, you saw the wonderful Renaissance building, crowned with the royal coping; a salamander with an F, on which in one case, without great effort, had been hewn an R—I forget if the salamander was there also. A last contrast awaited me on the ground floor. We entered the chapel built by Louis XIII., of which, by the destiny presiding over restorations, only the stone vaulted roof remains. I was lost in making out some old medallions and body-color on it when Science pulled me by the sleeve. The chapel is devoted to a collection of casts of "prehistoric" Gallic tombs, piously disposed, and looking much older than the glass and tracery and stonework—all being of to-day.

Which is the best of all these periods? The most bewildering certainly is M. Piette's. Even if one's interests and studies do not lead one back, or rather down, so far, the Museum of St. Germain is a great school for historic modesty. Nowhere else do you see so clearly what an orderly pandemonium it has been down here ever since the sun first rose, and how preposterous it would be to expect much of the art of ivory-carving when the very tusks they worked on then came from God knows where.

TRUMBULL STICKNEY.

FERSEN AND MARIE ANTOINETTE.

PARIS, November 1, 1902.

I have had occasion at various times to speak of the historical studies of M. G. Lenôtre on the time of the French Revolution; they are all marked by a very impartial spirit, by almost passionate research for the truth, and by a total independence of any partisanship. In every sense, M. Lenôtre has all the qualifications of a true historian. None of his studies has impressed me more than what he has recently written on a personage whose name will be for ever connected with that of the unfortunate Queen Marie Antoinette. The very name of Marie Antoinette ought to be a remorse to France. Whatever may have been her faults—and in reality they were very trifling—the treatment she received from a country where she arrived almost as a child, and where she became for years a Queen; the terrible martyrdom she had to suffer in punishment of faults which she had not committed, and which were those of generations; and in the end her cruel execution, must fill every Frenchman having any feelings of humanity with pain and shame. I pass almost every day the so-called Expiatory Chapel which was built by order of Louis XVIII. in order to receive the remains of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, and I never do so without thinking of these victims of the Revolution.

Marie Antoinette had a real friend, who did all it was possible to do to save her. —I mean Count Axel von Fersen. Fersen belonged to an old Swedish family. In his youth he travelled for three years all over Europe, with a governor. He stayed some time in Brunswick, at a military school; at Turin, where he took lessons in philosophy; at Strasbourg, where he attended lectures on many subjects. After this preparation, in the winter of 1773 he made his début in French society, and was presented at court by his ambassador. He was tall and handsome, with fine manners—"the immense advantage," says M. Lenôtre, "of being a Scandinavian, which gave him an irresistible prestige." Marie Antoinette was only Dauphiness at the time. It was the fashion for the greatest ladies to go to the masked balls at the Opéra. The Dauphiness *intrigued* Fersen (to use the customary expression) at one of those balls; and, after a long conversation, condescended to lift her mask and to make herself known to him. The crowd which surrounded them obliged the Queen to retire to a box. Fersen received on that occasion what the French call the "*coup de foudre*." This incident decided the whole tenor of his life.

He often saw the Queen again at Versailles; she invariably was very civil to him. He was discreet, respectful, almost timid. Nothing authorizes the comments which were sometimes made on the favor shown to Fersen. The Swedish Ambassador, Count von Creutz, wrote to his King, Gustavus III., at the time when the Dauphiness became Queen (Louis XV. died on May 10, 1774), that "it is not possible to have a wiser and more decent behavior" (speaking of Marie Antoinette). Fersen, however, judged it necessary to leave Paris after Marie Antoinette's accession to the throne. His absence lasted four years; when he returned to Versailles, in August,

1778, he was received by the Queen as an old acquaintance. In the letters which Fersen wrote to his father, we read: "The Queen, who is the prettiest and most amiable princess I know, has had the kindness to ask after me frequently. She asked Creutz why I did not come to her *jeu* on Sundays." In another letter he writes: "The Queen always treats me with kindness, and I often go and pay court to her at her *jeu*, and she addresses some kind word to me every time. As people had spoken to her of my Swedish uniform, and she expressed a desire to see me in this costume, I shall go in it next Tuesday, not to the Court, but to the Queen. She is the most amiable princess I know."

Jealousy and spite are necessary ingredients of court life—one might say, of worldly life. Creutz writes to Gustave III. this letter, which is kept in the archives of Upsala:

"I must confide to your Majesty that young Count Fersen has been so favorably regarded by the Queen that some persons have felt annoyed by it. I confess I cannot help thinking she has a leaning towards him; I have seen some marks of it which admit of no doubt. The young Count on this occasion showed admirable conduct by his modesty, his reserve, and especially by the resolution he took to go to America. By going away, he removed all possible dangers; but it required a firmness beyond his years to surmount this sensation. The Queen could not take her eyes from him during the last days; when looking at him, her eyes were full of tears. I beg your Majesty to keep this secret to yourself and to Senator Fersen. When the departure of the Count was known, all the courtiers were delighted. The Duchess of Fitzjames said to him: 'What, Sir, you abandon your conquest?' 'If I had made one,' said he, 'I would not abandon it; I go away free, and unhappily without leaving any regrets behind me.' Your Majesty will acknowledge that this answer was marked by a wisdom and a prudence beyond his years."

Fersen came back from America in June, 1783. He accompanied his King in a journey through Germany, Italy, and France. Louis XVI. gave him the colonelcy of the Royal-Swedish regiment; as he was also Colonel in Sweden, he divided his time between Paris and Stockholm. In 1790 he established himself completely in Paris; he had gained the entire confidence of Marie Antoinette, who was in reality friendless.

"We can affirm," justly says M. Lenôtre, "from her letters and those of Mercy [the Austrian Ambassador] that she tried all she could to love her husband, without succeeding completely. Her society at Versailles was composed only of vain men, accustomed to easy successes. Her light-headed brother-in-law, of whom she fears the *polissoneries*; the *mauvais sujet* Tilly, who is her page; the bold Besenval, who attributes the excesses of his language to the license of a soldier; Vaudreuil, skeptical, languishing, full of mannerism; Lauzun, whom she is obliged to dismiss from her presence—all paid their court to her, and it is a wonder that we can affirm, notwithstanding their half-confidences and their mysterious reticence, that none of these puppets tarnished 'the white soul of the Queen.'"

In 1791, when she was abandoned, when the Court had become a prison, Fersen reappears. She knows that he has always loved her; she knows that he is worthy of confidence. We have fortunately some documents which throw a little light on the relations that began at that time. After the flight to Varennes, many papers were seized at the Tuileries and at the houses of the persons who were suspected of hav-

ing favored this flight; but all of them were not used. After some time, many were kept in the upper part of the Palais de Justice and forgotten for half a century. M. Bimbenet, a lawyer of Orléans, classified them about sixty years ago. M. Lenôtre does not tell us who had the chance of finding among these documents seven letters addressed to Fersen by a lady whose name remains unknown, and which were opened during the inquest that followed the flight to Versailles. The letters had been addressed to him after he had himself left Paris. They were written by a lady who had emigrated to England. Had she been a mistress of Fersen? M. Lenôtre thinks so; at any rate, she loved Fersen passionately, but she had discovered that he had himself a passion for the Queen. "He loved her respectfully, with an irresistible and profound love, all the more since she was isolated and unhappy and he had sworn to save her." The unknown lady had sacrificed her own passion. "I desire," she says, "to see you soon in Stockholm as a brother whom I cherish; I have no other sentiment left for you; I have made this difficult effort to obey you." And in another letter: "You ought to be satisfied with me; I am now at the point which you have desired. I shall feel only friendship for you; I ought never to have had another sentiment, or at least I ought to have concealed it in the bottom of my heart. It is the greatest sacrifice I can make for you." The unknown lady who had received Fersen's dangerous confidence never names the Queen; she calls her "a certain person," or "the person to whom you are attached."

The *émigrés* in London must have known something of Fersen's passion; some of them blamed Fersen for endangering the reputation of the Queen. The unknown lady writes to him: "I have had a quarrel on this subject with my husband; I don't see things as he does, and I think that at this moment you could not do enough to prove your attachment, by not leaving her, and by giving all the proofs of it which depend on you. What others blame, I find sublime, and I cannot but esteem you the more."

Fersen wrote a number of letters, sometimes in cipher, to the Queen; his style, even in cipher, is very guarded; the short answers of the Queen are very affectionate. Some of them, in their brevity, are very touching: "Don't be uneasy. . . . Don't torment yourself too much on my account. . . . When shall we meet again quietly? . . . Adieu, I am wholly yours. . . . Adieu, my dear Rignon [it is one of the names she gives him in her letters]. I embrace you very tenderly." Fersen had not the courage to destroy all these notes, but he defaced with ink the most intimate parts of them. "We can follow the phases," M. Lenôtre says, "of this reciprocal affection, which was like the last ray of sunshine in the life of the Queen." We must remember that she was a prisoner, that Fersen had but one thought—to take her out of her prison. He was the chief agent of the flight of the royal family. He arranged all the details with Bouillé and Choiseul. He marked the places where the King would find protection. He studied the road, and the relays of the post; he procured false passports, with the help of

two foreigners, Quentin Crawford, an Englishman, and the Baroness de Korf, a Russian lady. He procured a travelling chaise, provided money, corresponded with the courts of Austria, Sweden, and Spain. He carried under his arm, day after day, the linen which the Queen needed on the journey; he found maids, he saw to every detail. The postchaise was kept in his stables; he placed in it all the necessaries for the journey. When the night of the flight came, he himself received in an old hackney-coach, in the court of the Tuileries, the King and Queen; he was dressed as a coachman. He took them to the barrier where the postchaise was in waiting, and conducted them himself as far as Bondy. There he parted with them, and a rendezvous was arranged at the Château de Thonnalle, near Montmédy. Two days afterwards, he learned the news of the arrest of Louis XVI.

As soon as she was back in the Tuileries, the Queen writes a word to him: "I exist. . . . How uneasy I have been about you! . . . Don't write to me. . . . Be easy. The Assembly will treat us mildly. . . . Adieu. I shan't be able to write to you any more." Several letters, however, were still exchanged, with many precautions. On the day of her execution, Marie-Antoinette wrote these lines on a page which still preserves the marks of her tears: "I had friends; the idea of being separated from them forever, and their pain, are one of the greatest regrets I have in dying. Let them know at least that to the last moment I thought of them."

Correspondence.

HISTORY IN WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: As several persons seem to be striving in the public prints to acquire for certain colleges the honor of being the first to encourage the study of history, I desire to present the claims of William and Mary. I think that there is no doubt that she was the pioneer college in this interesting field, just as she was the pioneer in the fields of modern languages and of Constitutional and municipal law. Now as early as 1723 the Rev. Hugh Jones, professor of mathematics at William and Mary, suggested the establishment of a chair of history. While the chair was not established until many years after that time, he illustrated the subject in a very intelligent and original manner by writing the 'Present State of Virginia,' the first historical production in America to proceed from the hands and brain of a professor in a college. Thirty years later, William Stith, a graduate of Oxford University, and an historian whose work on Virginia entitles him probably to the first place among American historical writers of the eighteenth century, was President of the College, a circumstance also which may have had its influence in shaping the work of the College in after years. At length, in 1779, Mr. Jefferson, who was himself a great student of history, in connection with Dr. James Madison, President of the College, reformed the College curriculum by introducing the study of the modern languages,