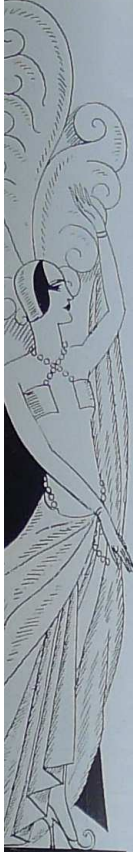


Called Paris madge by macbeth



one walks through canyons of pictures, exhibited on the pavement...

Place Vendome her most part "she"—going expensively for it goes once to the one of the most of the continent. It is her gilded period of the popping scarcely picture the would a gentleman this funereal when the marble d, black hats surge head bob above of the women, thin the building! red. It is quite this bar without

rowism has been transient fetches a or a bit of life." ally often "he"— occasional cafe. rmer, I think, lie s are situated all

ing opera hat

over Paris. A cursory reading of Mr. Arlen will give you a fair estimate of the clubs (which are the same in any city) and a glance at Mr. Hemingway's productions will furnish an erroneously picturesque idea of the cafes... principally the Rotonde and the Dome which lie *en face* in the *Boulevard Montparnasse*.

I state, without fear of contradiction, that the average transient would be bored beyond the telling in either of these places. Also, in the majority of the Parisian *revues* at which Gallic wisecracks keep the natives in an uproar, but which are too idiomatic for foreign comprehension. The spectacle at the *Casino de Paris* is beautiful; vast areas of uncovered humanity beneath towering heights of swaying plumes, intricate designs of charming *jeunesse* forming and re-forming on the stage. But after a few visits, a sense of irritation sets in, caused possibly by an inferiority complex at sitting like a gump, unable to appreciate the swirling fun.

THE expatriates make a Paris of their own. Do not picture them as being only white and English; they are drawn from all quarters of the globe. It is no uncommon sight to see a French girl hanging on a Chinese student's arm, or dining with a huge black Bermudian, or shopping—

The Quarter was the Olympus for artists...

buying intimate household things—with a native of Algiers. To the *Quartier Latin*, in other days, swarmed hundreds of exiles, eager to taste the gay sinfulness of Paris. The *Boule Mich'* and famous thoroughfares in the world. "A little flat in the Latin Quarter," suggested a whirl of unconventional delights which, in that environment, were quite permissible. People drifted from one cafe to another, alert to bask in the argot of the intellectuals, and at the same time—in winter—to keep warm. *Chauffage Centrale* so suavely advertised, often proves to be a glowless fiction!

In those days, the Quarter was the Olympus for artists, and for persons who were merely artistic.

It has changed. Much of the same flavor remains; it is still a rich ground for the thinker, for one who sincerely seeks that elusive quality called atmosphere. But the nose of the Latin Quarter has been put out of joint, for a few years ago a group of temperamental artists decided they must boheme in other spheres. Laden with screens and easels, with spirit-lamps and sofa cushions, they deserted *Montparnasse* in a body and settled in *Montmartre*. Intense rivalry exists between the restless artist-groups. Each boosts his section with the jealous professionalism of a Florida realtor. Each claims the true Paris as his own. Both are right.

IF AS I often think, the distinguishing feature of a race may be said to be its stomach, then the martyr's mount is as thoroughly Parisian as the Latin Quarter. Its cafes and restaurants flatter the taste with superlatively delectable dishes. Although each item on the menu is faultless, dinner is chosen with utmost care and deliberation. I have seen a host smear wine from a cob-webbed bottle in the palm of his hand and sniff it, before offering the ancient and aromatic beverage to his guests. Then, time is forgotten and easy conversation flows out into the blue dark street.

SPEAKING of conversation reminds me of still another Paris—the Paris of the boulevards, which welcome native-born and foreigners alike. The latter miss much that the former enjoy. I have heard more than one tourist complain that the particular section he happened to be patronizing (please note 'patronizing') was dead. Actually, it was his own senility that he deplored. In too many instances the foreigner is accustomed to buy entertainment. He expects it to be furnished by others. The true boulevardier makes his own pleasure; and here you have all the difference between boredom and *joie de vivre*.

In the old days the boulevard was a kingdom without a king, but with a number of pretenders to the throne. It made and ruined savants. It cleansed and muddied reputations, for its pavements, strewn with an orderly disarray of chairs, attracted all the brilliant gossips of the city—both sexes—and they measure up the topics of the day. Now, although altered, the boulevards survive because they are essential to Paris. *Bien*, boulevards are the throat and palate of the French city. On them will be found the best food for the soul (a diet that too many people appear to find insufficient, by the way). Let me explain.

You must not picture the boulevards merely as traffic channels, arteries, bordered by shops and houses. They are more; much more. They are parks, whose benches are rarely vacant in fine weather. They are a sort of urban *plage*, a *rendez-vous*, where all and sundry *fast* the *promenade*. They are dining halls. It is said that some of them invite the patronage of a thousand people at a sitting—on the sidewalk, you understand. They are *salons* of Art, (which provoked my reference to food for the soul), where one walks through canyons of pictures, exhibited on the pavement; they are shifting galleries, opened in the spring and continuing through the summer, moving each Sunday (the exhibition day) along their length from *Boulevard St. Germain* tight into *Montmartre*!

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