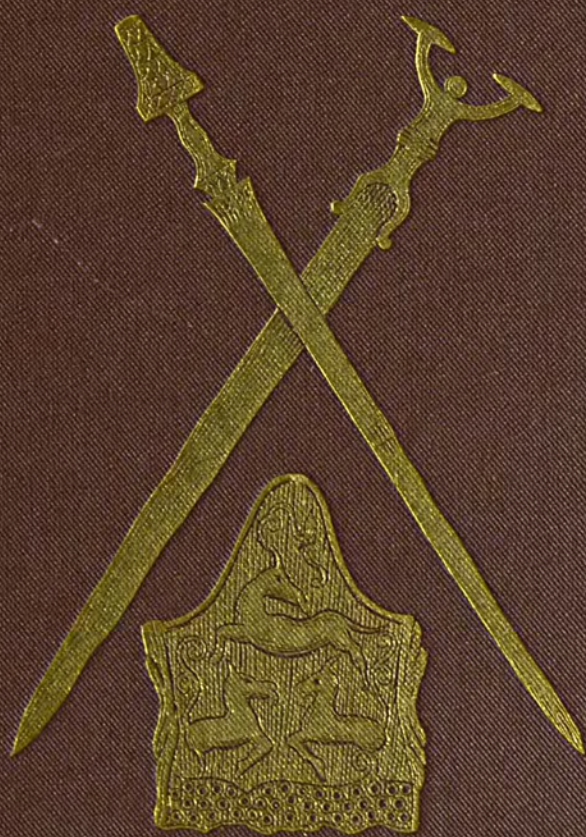
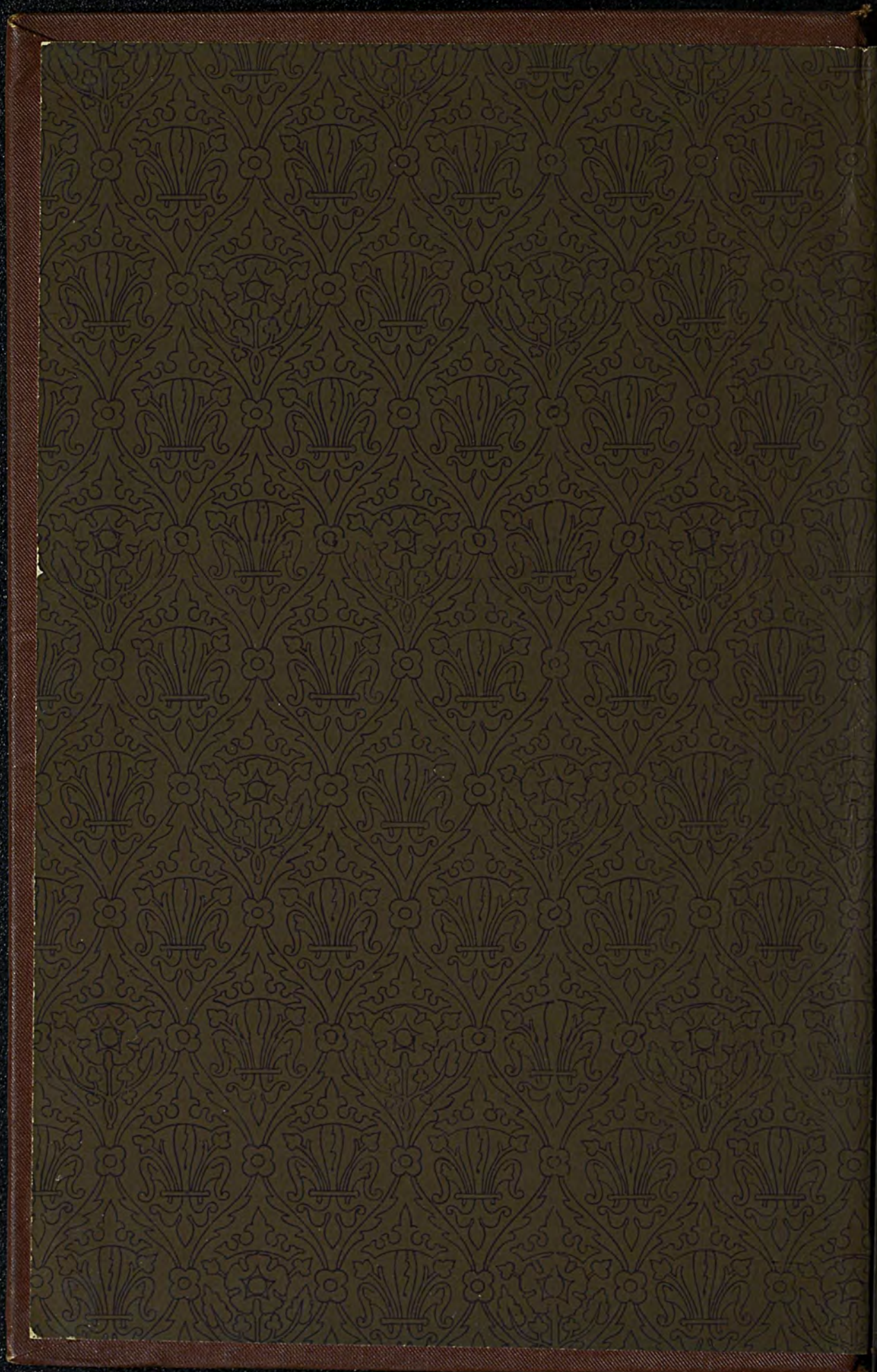
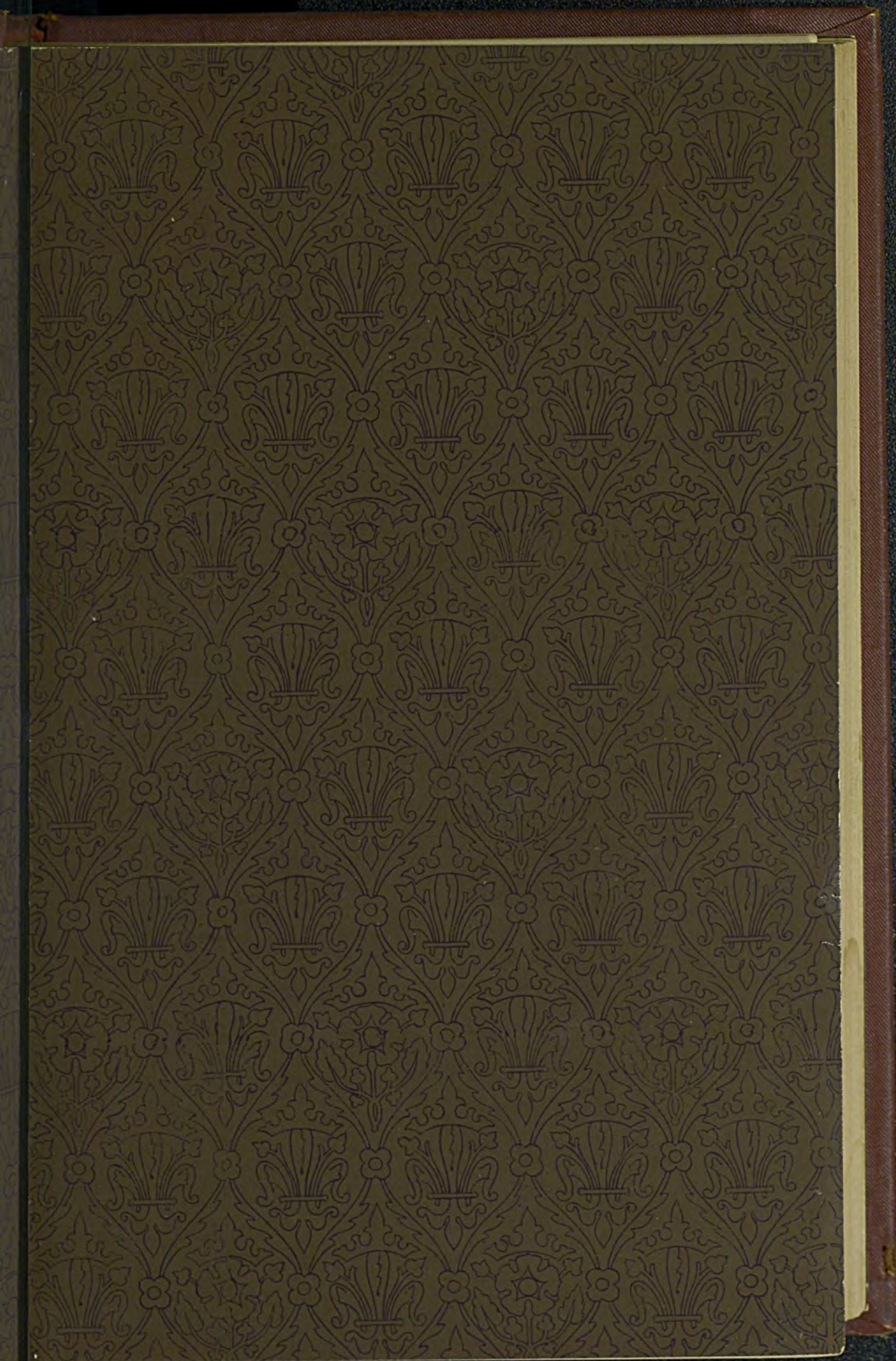








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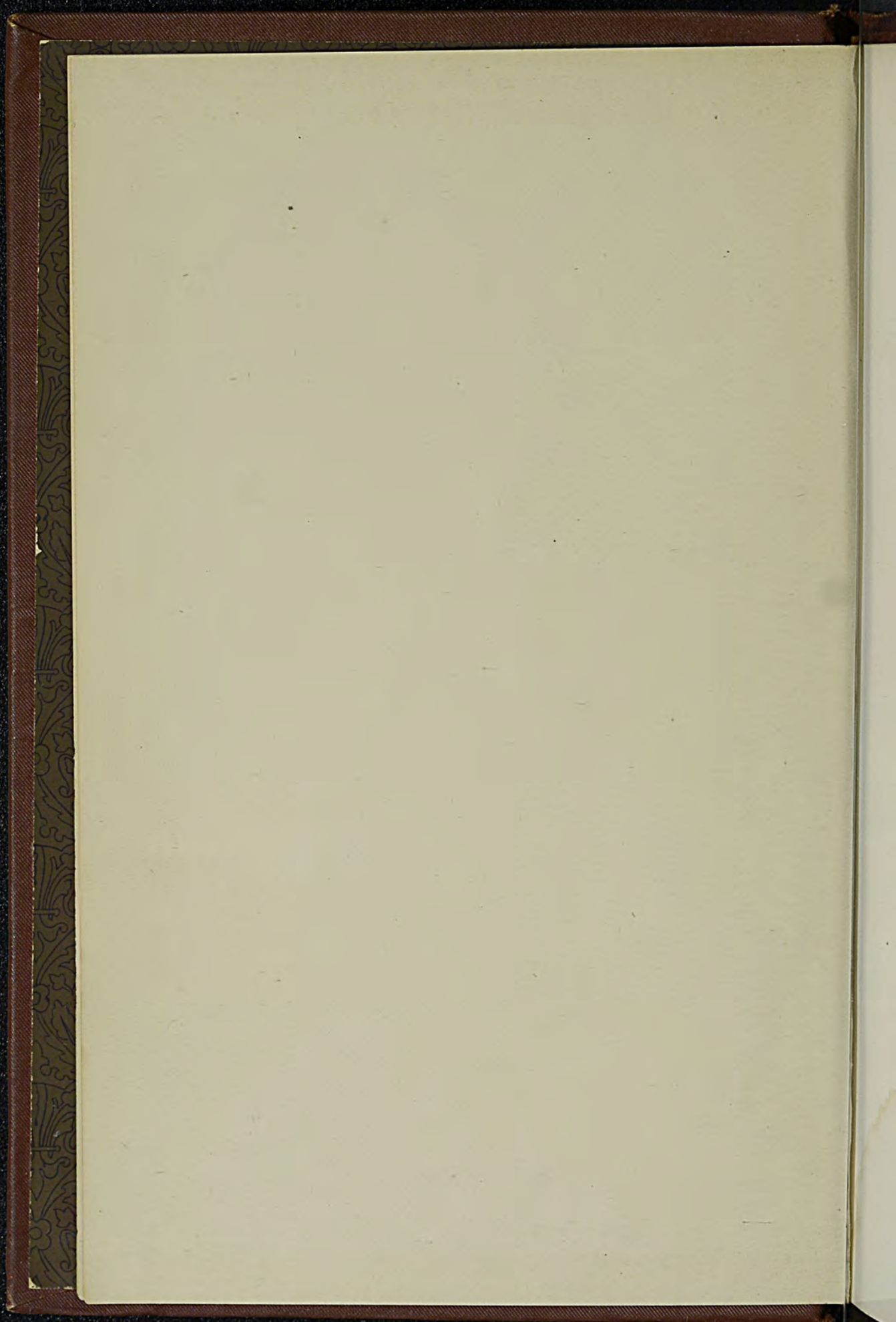
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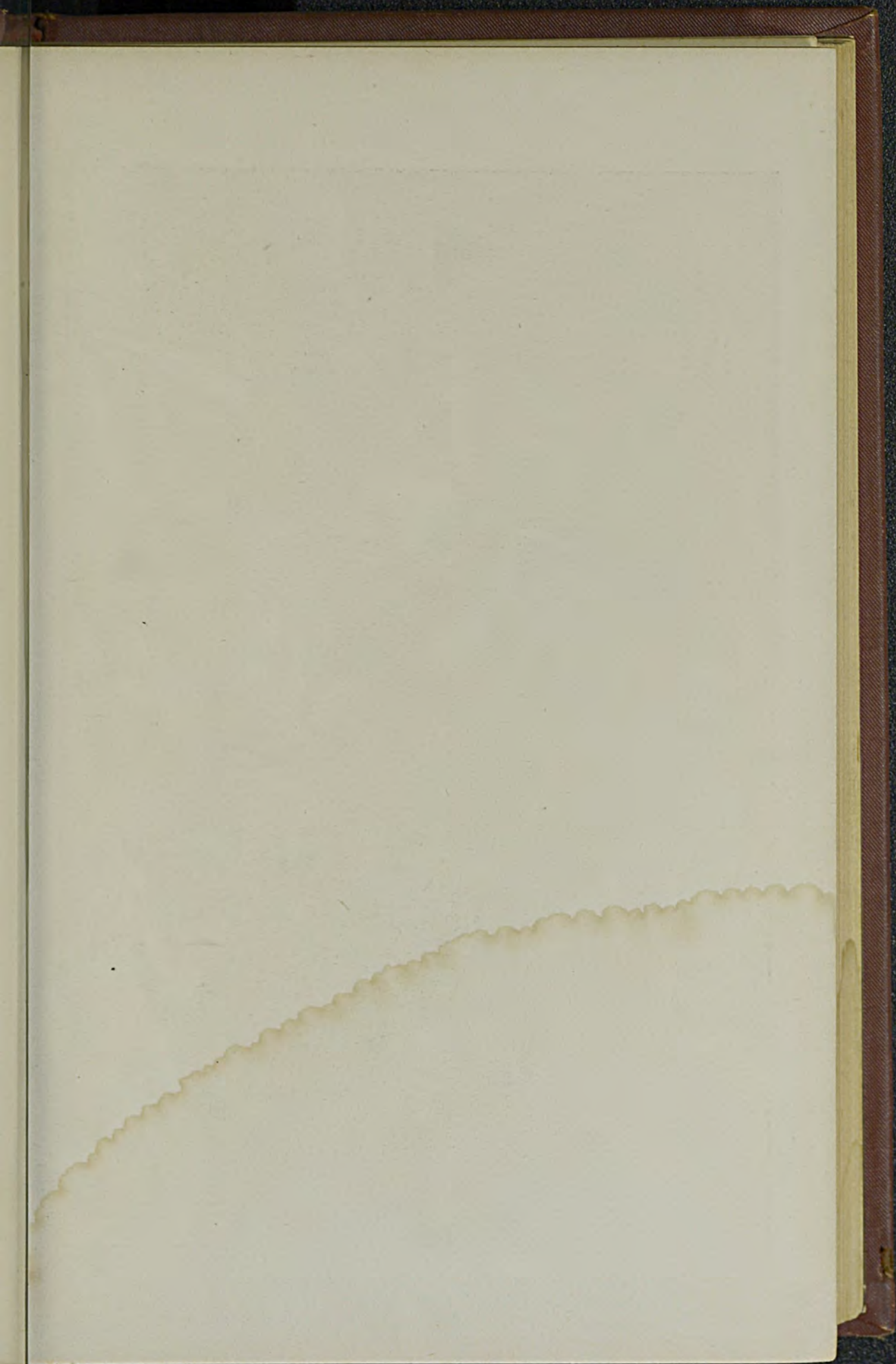
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SCENE IN THE GREAT BEAR AND MAMMOTH EPOCH.

THE
PRE-HISTORIC WORLD

BY
ÉLIE BERTHET.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY
MARY J. SAFFORD.



PORTER & COATES,
PHILADELPHIA.



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PREFACE.

THERE is an epoch in the life of humanity which, as its name indicates, could have no history; it is that long period of ages which elapsed between the moment when man first appeared on earth and the time when oral tradition and writing began to establish the acts of his existence.

This unknown period then seemed to belong solely to the domain of poesy and romance; but if poesy lives by brilliant fictions, romance—which, as has been said of Walter Scott's masterpieces, is often "truer than history"—requires, in order to interest, to rest upon fact. Now, romances of the ages which preceded historic times have long been impossible; all the elements were lacking. The immortal Cuvier, the inventor of Palæontology, would not even admit that man existed in that remote antiquity. European scientists refused to believe that the flint objects found in the Quaternary rock by the illustrious Boucher de Perthes might be the products of human industry. It is only within a few years that new, incontestable, startling discoveries have liberated this period from the mysterious clouds that veiled it.

Science has now obtained the most exact and positive results. It not only knows that man existed myriads of years before historic times, but determines to what race he belonged, amid what surroundings he lived; and from them deduces his character, manners, and customs. It has found his weapons, his barbaric ornaments, the utensils of his rustic dwelling, and even the remains of his coarse food. Day by day discoveries multiply in all quarters of the globe, and at the present time, by means of analogy, a perfectly clear idea of pre-historic man may be formed.

Thus the romance of those remote epochs has become

possible, and we have ventured to undertake it, scrupulously following step by step the indications of science. We have endeavored to sum up in *three* tales the discoveries of the scientists of all countries, among whom Cuvier, Boucher de Perthes, Le Hon, Lartet, Lyell, and G. de Mortillet are the most eminent. The first of these tales, *THE PARISIANS OF THE STONE AGE*, is a study of the inhabitants of Parisian soil, who were the contemporaries of the mammoth and cave-bear. These inhabitants, who seem to have belonged to the Mongol race, are considered as having lived by families and in caves, given up to the fiercest passions, the most brutal instincts. In *THE LACUSTRIAN CITY*, whose action takes place several thousand years later, man, who belongs to the race called the *dolmen nation*, lives by tribes in clusters of terrestrial or lacustrine habitations; it is the intermediate Age of Polished Stone and the commencement of the Bronze Age. Finally, in the third tale, *THE FOUNDATION OF PARIS*, we have studied the Age of Metals, and the mode of life of the Gallic nations several centuries before Cæsar's arrival in Gaul. There, although touching upon the most ancient historical traditions, we have depended especially upon the monuments Archæology has recently revealed.

It will be understood how many difficulties this totally novel work presented. We have been obliged to frame in a fiction—which we have endeavored to render interesting—numerous details whose sole interest consists in exactness. We have striven to reconstruct, to revive, this unknown world, and, if we had not feared to fatigue the reader, might have cited some scientist as authority at every sentence, almost every line. But in a popular work we have thought it our duty to confine ourselves to the most indispensable quotations.

The reader shall decide whether we have attained our purpose. To-morrow, perhaps other discoveries will modify the knowledge already gained, open a wider field to the imagination; but whatever may be the fate of this work, we shall be glad to have been the literary pioneer who first penetrated regions so long unknown, and applaud whoever shall desire to attempt the task again.

ÉLIE BERTHET.

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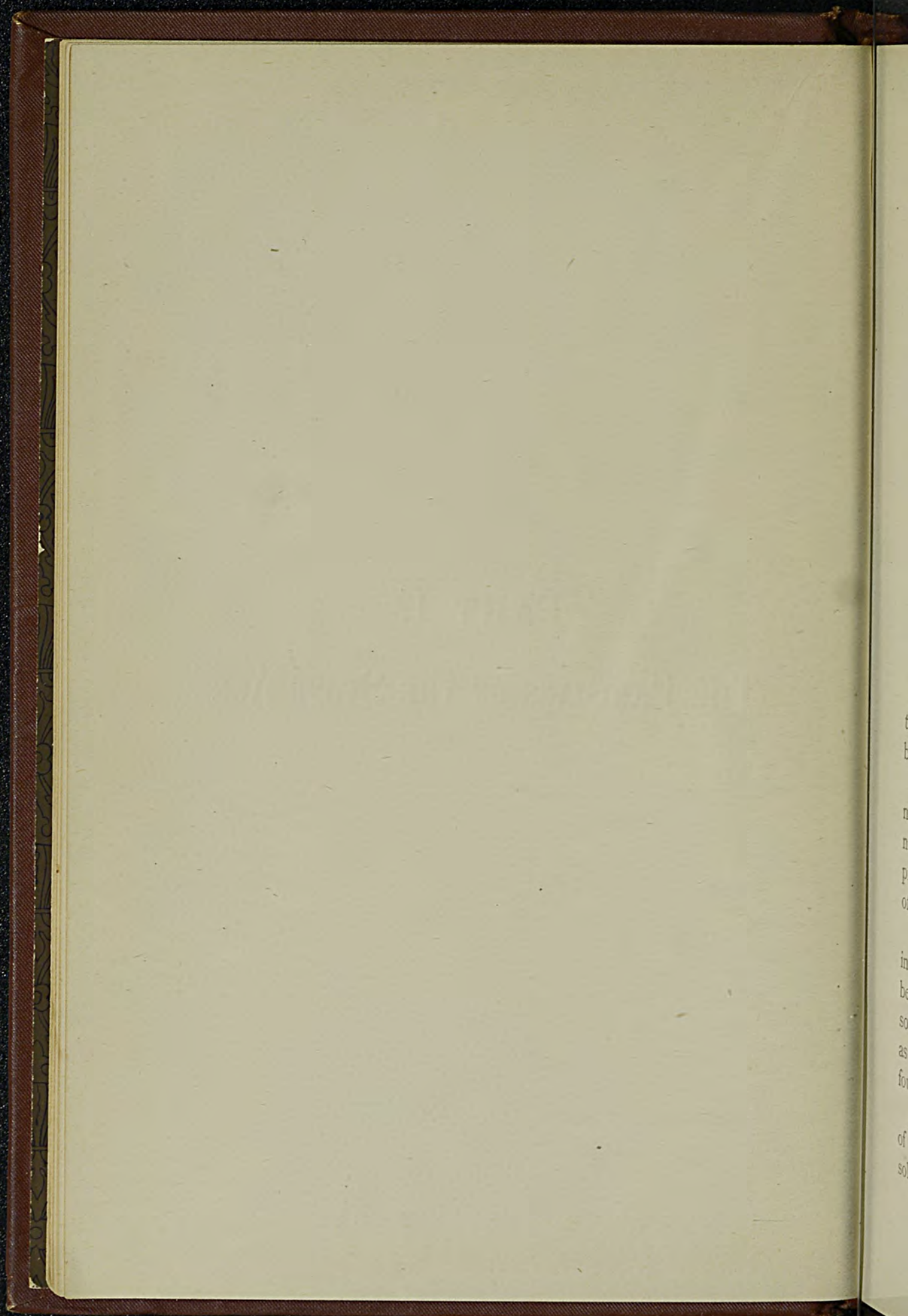
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PART I.

THE PARISIANS OF THE STONE AGE.



THE
PRE-HISTORIC WORLD.

I.

THE LANDSCAPE.

LET us go back through the ages ; let us pass several thousand years beyond the forty centuries common tradition assigns as the date of the creation of the world before the birth of Jesus Christ.

We are in the geological epoch called by scientific men the "Quaternary" period. Humanity is still very near its origin. It extends through the period which preceded the age of metals, and has received the name of the *Age of Polished Stone*.

This epoch, which but a short time ago was shrouded in mysterious obscurity, has within the past few years been revealed by monuments so numerous, so authentic, so indisputable, that it is possible to describe it exactly, as Cuvier described antediluvian monsters from the bones found in the geological strata.

In the place where, so many centuries after, the city of Paris was to be built, extended a strange and savage solitude. If we climb one of the hills that overlook it—

for instance, that which in historic times was to be called Montmartre—see what a scene we behold.

As far as the eye can reach there is nothing but trees, foliage, and water. On all the hills, now called Ménilmontant, Chaumont, Sainte-Genève, Mont Valérien, tower oaks, pines, beeches, immense masses of foliage that extend to the verge of the horizon, perhaps to the limits of the future Gaul. Swamps, however, appeared here and there. One, formed by a brook that flowed from Ménilmontant, covered the space which was afterward to be occupied by the farm of La Grange-Batelière, then the two opera-houses, and extended to the site of the Hôtel-de-Ville. A second, at the bottom of Mont Lucotitius, marked the mouth of the Bièvre. But the place where the swamps were most extensive was on the banks of the Seine, which had not yet completely hollowed out the valley whose centre it now occupies.

The Seine did not then resemble the peaceful, civilized, sleepy river that, confined by majestic wharves, now flows beneath magnificent bridges. It wound between the cliffs that in many places bordered its course, and its bed frequently changed. It had the width, swiftness, and impetuosity of the great American rivers. Its yellow, muddy waves and rapid current swept away whole trees, like the Orinoco and Amazon. On the surface of this tawny sheet of water appeared the three or four islands that were to contain the Lutèce of the Gauls, but these islands were bare and sandy. Only the principal one, destined to become the "city" of Paris, was covered with brushwood, whose highest branches held clods of earth and clumps of dry moss, as if the ancient *Sequana*, in its frequent inundations, submerged them.

The whole of this vast basin displayed to the eye neither structures of wood or stone, boats, roads, nor anything that showed the labor of man. Everywhere appeared high grass, trees overgrown with tangled vines, stagnant or flowing water; in short, a desert, which, however, swarmed with living creatures.

Above the river appeared the hideous heads of hippopotami emerging from its depths. These monsters, whose congeners now exist only in the rivers and great lakes of Africa, came in herds on sunny days to sleep on the island where now stand Notre Dame and the Palais de Justice. Sometimes, too, a loud noise was heard in the swamps; the reeds and rushes shook violently; water and slime were spouted into the air. This whirlwind of mud was caused by the gambols of the rhinoceroses with chambered nostrils; and these formidable animals, with massive limbs and a double horn on the nose, soon gained the shore, shaking their thick hides and uttering loud roars.

In the glades of the forest and on the pasture-land were numerous animals of various kinds, principally belonging to the herbivorous order. There were herds of the wild oxen, called aurochs and uri, which were still so numerous in Gaul at the time of the invasion of the Franks; reindeer and the common deer, grazing side by side with the gigantic antlered megatherium, a species now extinct. Troops of wild horses, far smaller than our domestic animal, but full of strength and spirit, were also visible. The king of this herbivorous population was the mammoth, that huge elephant with curved tusks, body covered with hair, and long black mane, whose size was twice that of our modern elephant. The mammoth usually

grazed alone or with a small number of animals of the same species, and then neither reindeer, wild horses, nor aurochs feared the proximity of these colossal creatures. But when any cause—a migration, an alarm—united the mammoths in a vast herd and hurled them through the forests, what a magnificent spectacle they must have afforded! The earth shook under their heavy tread; the grass and bushes were trampled, crushed in an instant as if by the passage of a thousand chariots; and the oldest trees, torn up by the roots or broken, left wide avenues, like those opened by waterspouts in tropical forests.

Yet, we repeat, the mammoth was not usually feared by the inoffensive ruminants, and, except for a few quarrels between different species, their days were sufficiently peaceful; but as soon as the sun set the scene suddenly changed.

Then arose the screams of the hyena, the howls of innumerable wolves, with which sometimes mingled the growls of the cave-bear. At this ominous signal the herbivorous animals, which were already seeking shelter for the night, pressed trembling against each other. The herds of aurochs and reindeer presented to their cowardly enemies a row of threatening horns, as the bison and deer of America do in similar circumstances; the horses prepared to defend themselves by violent kicks. Usually, these demonstrations were sufficient to keep off the wolves and hyenas, which, in spite of their numbers, only ventured to attack single animals. But often a terrible tumult arose in the darkness; thousands of animals, wild with terror, fled through the forests and over the plains in every direction, while a loud roar echoed from

the depths of the waste. The cave-lion, that formidable feline which partook of the characteristics of both lion and tiger, and, according to the bones found in Parisian soil, was nearly fourteen feet long and taller than our largest bulls, was the cause of this alarm, and had just seized a victim. No resistance was possible against such an enemy; all the creatures of this antediluvian world were filled with terror; even the mammoths, infected by the general fright, fled at full speed like the reindeer.

Such were the quadrupeds that inhabited the banks of the Seine in the Quaternary period. What conflicts, struggles, scenes of carnage, incessantly occurred amid these innumerable animals, powerful or weak, crafty or cruel! The most feeble became the prey of the strongest; the large devoured the small, according to the primordial law of Nature. Cries of pain and death arose every hour. Everywhere blood flowed in streams, and fierce mouths were always at hand to eagerly drink it. The immense masses of bones found in the earth prove the exuberance of life at that period and the grand scale on which extermination was practised to correct its excess.

But man, it will be asked, man, cast helpless and naked into the midst of these carnivorous animals, amid these huge mammoths, hyenas, bears, and lions the size of bulls, where was he and how did he live?

Man! Let us see.

II.

THE CAVE.

THE sun was setting at the close of a foggy day. Although it was in the month of August, the air was cold; the foliage of the forest had the rusty hues that now appear only at the end of autumn. The Parisian climate then resembled that of Sweden and Norway, for the time was very near the geological epoch called the *Glacial Period*, during which the fate of the human race becomes so enigmatical. At this time, in fact, the earth grew cold without any known cause; Europe was covered with immense glaciers, to which we owe the transportation of isolated rocks now called "erratic blocks." Moss,* which at the present day grows only in Greenland, is found in the strata of the Quaternary period in the latitude of Paris, and we have seen that among the animals living on Parisian soil were the reindeer, the rhinoceros with chambered nostrils, and the mammoth. Now the reindeer inhabits Lapland, and the last region occupied by the other two species before their disappearance from the surface of the globe was the snowy waste near the North Pole.

At the time of which we are now speaking there was

* *Hypnum grænlandicum* and *Hypnum sarmentosum*, Musée de Saint-Germain.

halfway down the hill of Montmartre a large grotto, whose entrance was protected by enormous stones forming a cyclopean structure and leaving only a narrow passage. No trace of agriculture was visible around. The hill, like the plain, was covered by the virgin forest. Only a few paths, opened by wild beasts, enabled one to move through the almost impenetrable thickets.

The approaches to this grotto were piled with broken bones of all sizes. Yet, if it had first been hollowed out by some large burrowing animal, the cave could not now be inhabited by it: the structure that protected the entrance, in spite of its rudeness, was the work of human hands; and, besides, smoke, an infallible sign of the presence of man, rose through the stones placed one above another.

In fact, if we enter the cave we shall find ourselves in the presence of a Parisian family of that remote period.

Only a dim light came through the opening, and the fire on the hearth did not blaze. Still, we could see that the family consisted of five persons—the father, mother, a daughter seventeen or eighteen years old, and two boys, one twelve, the other nearly ten. These people did not represent the elegant type of the Caucasian race which at the present day is predominant in Europe; they belonged, on the contrary, to a race similar to the Esquimaux and Lapps. They were short and sturdy in figure. It would have been difficult to distinguish the exact hue of their sun-burnt and dirty complexions, but their skulls were of the elongated form naturalists call dolichocephalic (long-headed), and which shows a low degree of intelligence. Their long, straight hair grew very low on the forehead. Their eyes were small, fierce in expression,

and had extremely prominent brows. Their jaws were also very prominent, their noses flat, and in their shapeless garments of reindeer or bear skin they presented the appearance of actual savages.

The father, a man fifty-five or sixty years old, was sitting near the entrance of the cave; he seemed ill, and his left arm was bound to his body by a strip of undressed leather. On one of his hunting expeditions, a few days before, this arm had been torn by the claws of a wild beast, and doubtless the painful wound diminished his usual activity.

His limbs, like those of his family, were thin and slender, while his hands and feet were immensely large. His gray beard mingled with long hair of the same color, which, full of impurities, floated over his shoulders. He was clad in a sort of tunic of auroch-skins, which left his arms and legs bare. Although no danger threatened at the moment, one of the axes of hewn flint which have been found in such immense quantities in the strata of rock of that period lay within his reach. To make use of his leisure-time, he held in his uninjured hand a sort of hammer made of stone pierced in the middle, with which he was sharpening the point of a stone arrow. But perhaps his wound made him unusually awkward, for ever and anon he ground his teeth and uttered an angry growl.

The mother and daughter were seated on the ground a few paces off, and while the older woman was cleaning a fresh skin with a flint scraper, the young girl was sewing, by means of a bone needle and the sinew of an animal, a garment intended for one of her brothers. The shape of their garments differed very slightly from those

of the husband and boys; they wore tunics of skins, and the mother, with her hair hanging over her wrinkled face, her eyes reddened by the smoke, flabby neck and auroch-skin garment soiled with grease and dried blood, was a most repulsive specimen of the feminine sex in those ancient times.

On the other hand, the daughter, thanks to her youth, had a sort of relative beauty. True, her features preserved the indelible signs of her race, the prominent jaws, thick lips, flat nose, small eyes, and low forehead; but she did not lack freshness, and her person revealed the first dawning of that coquetry which was afterward to be so prodigiously developed in her descendants, the Parisians. Thus, her long black hair, fastened by a leather thong, formed a queue in the Chinese fashion. She had not had sufficient skill to twist it or arrange it on her head like a crown, but the long braid, falling now over the right shoulder and now the left, was by no means ungraceful. Besides, this cave-coquette wore two necklaces—one of wolves' teeth polished by rubbing, the other of shells. Around her arms were several bracelets made of shells, and even scarlet berries recently gathered in the neighboring thickets. But the special charm in this odd face was the air of mischievous merriment that characterized it, and the tendency of the thick lips to smile and show the superb white teeth.

Let us finish the description of this family of savages. The two boys, squatting near the fire, were watching the cooking of a dozen small animals broiling on the hot coals for supper. Half naked in their short garments, they showed remarkable activity and agility. With

uncombed hair and dirty faces, their task did not occupy their attention so completely as to prevent them from occasionally indulging in noisy gambols. They tumbled over each other, half screaming, half laughing, or rolled about on the ground like monkeys. The younger lad had a whistle made of a bone,* from which he occasionally drew sharp sounds of the most ear-splitting character; then the parents interfered to restore order. The father and mother uttered a low growl, the young girl raised her arm as if to strike them; and, though the two little satyrs did not seem to be much alarmed by these threatening demonstrations, they remained silent and motionless a moment, to begin again a little later.

The dwelling seemed perfectly suited to its rude occupants. The grotto was rough and irregular, and the faint light coming from without could not illumine the whole interior. It contained no article of furniture. The bed consisted of a heap of moss and dry leaves, on which father, mother, and children slept pell-mell without undressing. The seats were blocks of stone. Not a dish, not a piece of earthenware, was to be seen. Yet the family appeared to be very wealthy for those times. From pegs of wood and bone, fastened into the chinks of the cave, hung axes and knives of flint, a bow and arrows, together with mammoths' tusks and reindeers' antlers, intended for the manufacture of articles indispensable in the household.† It might be supposed that the bones scattered over the floor of the grotto, and

* See a whistle of this kind, made of a reindeer-bone, in the Musée de Saint-Germain.

† Musée de Saint-Germain.

which rolled under the feet every instant, were destined for the same purpose. These bones exhaled an infectious odor, which, blended with that of the food broiling on the coals and the acrid smoke filling the subterranean habitation, formed a repulsive atmosphere, unendurable to any one who had not been long accustomed to it.

The conversation did not appear to be very active. Language at that period, like the dialects of certain Indian tribes of the present day, must have consisted of only a few hundred words, for there were no complex ideas to express. Most of the time they talked in monosyllables, or even by signs, yet they understood each other sufficiently well for the very simple acts to be executed in common.

At the moment when, the sun having set, the cave began to grow darker, the father, who was called Lynx (he had either given himself the title or received it from his neighbors, for there were no family names in those days), rose from his seat and uttered a short exclamation. This was the signal to close the cave; already howls began to echo from the woods as usual, and there was cause to fear the attack of some wild beast.

Instantly every one was on the move. The object to be accomplished was to push before the entrance a huge stone that rested against the side of the cave, and fasten it in its place by means of a piece of unhewn timber. Lynx could usually perform the task alone, but, as his wound lessened his strength, he now required the assistance of the family. The two women, stronger than many of the men of our times, came to help him. The children also wanted to aid, but, as they were in the way, received sev-

eral antediluvian cuffs, strikingly like modern ones; only they were perhaps more vigorous and brutal.

A few minutes were sufficient to barricade the cave. The interior was now lighted only by the fire, on which the children from time to time threw pieces of dry wood. But the daughter of the house, who was called Deer on account of her swiftness of foot, hastily lighted a resinous larch-bough to serve as a torch, while the old mother, named, in consequence of a natural infirmity, Deaf, busied herself in making preparations for supper. This supper, alas! was by no means an abundant meal. There was no agriculture in those days; the people lived entirely by the products of the chase. So, when the head of a family found himself, as under the present circumstances, unable to hunt, the fare was meagre enough. On this day the supper consisted of the little animals cooked on the embers, and which were water-rats. Rats seem to have played an important part in the food of primitive man;* these had been procured by the older boy, who from his skill was called Rat-Catcher, while the younger lad, the boy with the whistle, had been named Whistler. Deaf, for her share, brought from a corner several handfuls of acorns and chestnuts picked up under the trees, and added them to the repast.

They were sitting on the ground around the fire, and the master of the house was already stretching out his huge hand, with its hooked nails, to seize a broiled rat, when a harsh, guttural cry, that seemed to be a call, came from without. The cry was so harsh in its intonations that it might have been uttered by some animal in the forest, but the inhabitants of the cave started; they had

* Louis Figuier, *Primitive Man*.

recognized a human voice. The call being repeated, Lynx answered by a similar exclamation. Then some one said,

"I'm Red, who lives on the Green Mountain, on the other side of the river. The wolves and hyenas are already prowling about, and the lion is beginning to roar. Let me in; I've killed a reindeer, and we'll eat it together."

The name of the hunter who asked hospitality was perhaps no recommendation to the master of the house, who was distrustful by character and necessity; but to turn a man from the door during the night was to doom him to almost inevitable death. Besides, the famished family had heard the hunter's proposal, and between the rocks piled one above another that protected the entrance of the cavern saw that Red really bore on his shoulders a fine animal of most appetizing appearance.

"A reindeer!" Deer and the children exclaimed joyously.

"A reindeer!" repeated Deaf.

Lynx, in his turn, seemed to comprehend that a meal of venison was preferable to the lean water-rats and acorns that formed the bill of fare that evening. This consideration conquered the prudential motives that had at first made him hesitate to admit a stranger. So he resolved to remove, with the aid of his family, the rock that served as a door, and when the hunter had entered the entrance of the cave was barricaded again.

III.

THE GUEST.

THE new-comer looked still more fierce and brutal than the master of the house. He was stout and in the prime of life ; his special distinction was thick red hair floating over his shoulders, and a beard of the same color that completely concealed his mouth : from this he derived his name. His bear-skin tunic, as usual, left bare his limbs, which were covered with red hair like those of Esau in the Bible. He too wore bracelets and necklaces made of shells and the teeth of wild animals. His accoutrements were remarkable : besides the flint knife and axe and the arrows with stone heads thrust into his belt, he carried in one hand a bow whose string was made of the entrails of some animal. The other hand held a sort of club, formed of the lower jaw of a large beast with its sharp canine teeth. A long bone served as a handle for this weapon, which was very heavy and must have been formidable.*

* This sort of club, made of a bear's jaw, seems to have been frequently used in the Stone Age. According to a German paper of recent date, a weapon of this description has just been discovered in the grotto of Hohenfels in Wurtemberg. Everything we say here about the man of the caves on Parisian soil is confirmed by the discoveries made in the Grotto of Hohenfels. (See *Gazette de Cologne*, November, 1871.)

Red made no sign of greeting on entering the cave; courtesy was unknown among these rude beings, who did not even live in tribes, only in families. He contented himself with throwing down the reindeer, at which the women and children instantly rushed like dogs on a quarry. Without paying the slightest attention to them, the hunter sat down wearily on a stone, and seemed to notice no one except the master of the habitation. He still held in his hand his terrible club, to be used at the slightest warning.

Lynx, on his part, had made no sign of welcome to his guest, but seized his axe. Both gazed intently at each other without exchanging a word.

Nevertheless, this was not their first meeting. Red, as he had said, lived with his family in a cave on the side of Mont Saint Geneviève, afterward called by the Romans Mont Lucotitius, on the opposite bank of the Seine. Now, as there were neither boats nor bridges to cross the river, and the stream with its swift current, vast swamps, hippopotami, and rhinoceroses with chambered nostrils, was not easy to pass either by fording or on a log guided by a pole, intercourse was not very frequent between the scattered inhabitants of Montmartre and those of the Quartier Latin. It was only when a hunter from one or the other bank was on his rounds that, as in the present case, transient relations existed between them.

Lynx and Red, who were not on the best of terms, continued to watch each other with glittering eyes. But the hunter at last seemed to perceive that he ought to show some signs of interest in the master of the habitation where he was receiving hospitality, and pointing to

Lynx's arm, swathed in an offensive skin, "Hurt?" he asked in his guttural voice.

"Yes—hyena. Base, cowardly beast!" replied Lynx, grinding his teeth.

The memory of his accident appeared to rouse his anger and change the course of his thoughts. He went up to the fleshless head of an animal that lay in the corner of the cave, and dealt it a blow with his axe that shattered it in fragments. It was the skull of the hyena that had wounded him, and which had been eaten by the family during the preceding days. This puerile revenge accomplished, he resumed his seat near his guest, who no longer thought of anything but watching the new preparations for supper, for he was almost famishing.

The family were not inactive. With the skill given by habit, the two women, assisted by the children, had set to work to skin and cut up the reindeer. The hide having been quickly removed, large venison steaks replaced the wretched water-rats, which were contemptuously thrust aside, to the dismay of Rat-Catcher. Besides, the company, while waiting for the more solid portion of the repast, regaled themselves with another kind of dainty.

The prevailing taste of this race seems to have been for the marrow of the bones of animals. This is the explanation given for the immense quantity of bones split lengthwise found in the geological strata of the Quaternary period. These exquisite side-dishes had not been forgotten; the large bones of the reindeer had been cracked with stones, and, to give the steaks time to cook to a nicety, guest, father, mother, and children

began to suck the marrow, still raw and warm, of the ruminant.

But Red was not entirely absorbed in this sensual gratification. His tawny eyes attentively followed every movement of Deer, who was helping her mother prepare the venison. She performed this sufficiently repulsive task with a heavy grace, an artless sprightliness, that seemed to delight the rude hunter. Thus, while the clothes, hands, and even the face, of Deaf were stained with blood, the daughter had found means to avoid these hideous splashes and preserve her neatness. Armed with her flint knife—a marvel of art for the times, for the deer-horn handle was adorned with carving—she delicately detached the sinews, which when dried were to serve many household uses. While performing her task she sometimes addressed a merry word to the young brothers gambolling around her, or uttered a shrill laugh, which, though perhaps somewhat vacant, was full of mirth.

Red, in a sort of rapture, forgot to suck the marrow of a huge bone he had seized. But when supper was ready he no longer thought of anything except doing honor to the repast, for the satisfaction of the appetite in these rude natures was the first and most imperious necessity.

They took their places round the fire, and each snatched a steak from the embers. Yet there was a sort of hierarchy among the table-companions. The men helped themselves first, then came the women, and then the boys. All tore their food to pieces. Not a word was exchanged, but by way of compensation their jaws made a horrible noise. This noise was caused by

the peculiar shape of the mouth among the individuals of this primitive race. Instead of having the upper jaw project considerably above the lower one, like ours, their jaws fitted exactly, which produced a singular snapping sound when they took food. Thus the teeth of Lynx and Deaf, who were advanced in years, were half worn down,* and this arrangement of the jaws caused an indistinctness of pronunciation in speaking.

The appearance of the grotto at this moment can easily be imagined. It was filled with a dense, nauseous, suffocating smoke. The fire no longer blazed; the resinous branch used as a torch looked like a red spot in the hot mist; and the perspiration was streaming down the faces of the company.

But nothing disheartened the party, an example of whose voracity could now be furnished only by certain tribes of Indians. The first supply of steaks having disappeared, a second was prepared, then a third, until the reindeer was entirely devoured. Then the company, thoroughly gorged, seemed to think of nothing but sleep. The children were the first to reach the back of the cave, where there was a heap of moss, on which they threw themselves and fell asleep without further ceremony. Deaf was not slow in following their example, and only Lynx, his daughter, and the hunter remained.

The pain of his wound, or perhaps some secret anxiety, had prevented the head of the family from extend-

* This peculiarity is especially noticeable in the *fossil man* now in the Museum of the Jardin des Plantes. Though the skeleton is that of a young, strong individual, the teeth both in the upper and lower jaw are half worn off.

ing his gluttony to the last extreme, and Deer had shown herself sufficiently temperate, though she had played a brilliant part in the festival. But Red had devoured for his share what would now be enough to surfeit six strong men. Stupefied by this excess of food, he had scarcely strength to rise. Yet he began to look at the young girl, who, having finished her supper, seemed disposed to amuse herself by a little coquetry. She laughed from time to time and rattled her necklaces.

So, although Lynx had pointed with his finger to a hollow in the ground at some distance from the family couch where his guest might sleep, Red did not seem to notice it.

He did not remove his eyes from Deer, and suddenly said in his harsh voice,

"Lynx, I'll take your daughter, and kill an auroch to give you in exchange."

On hearing this very delicate proposal, Deer burst into a mocking laugh. Her father grasped his axe and answered,

"No, no. You already have a wife and children on the Green Mountain."

Red made a hideous face.

"The woman is too old," he replied, "and the children are grown up. Listen, there is a bear near here. I'll kill him, and take Deer to live in his cave with me. I'm a good hunter. Deer shall never want reindeer or horse meat."

This attractive prospect only excited the merriment of the little flirt.

"I'm promised to Fair-Hair," she said saucily.

Red doubtless knew the person called Fair-Hair, for

the repulsive features of the inhabitant of Lucotitius assumed a contemptuous expression.

"Fair-Hair bad hunter," he answered; "Deer will starve to death. He won't know how to defend her against the wild beasts."

"He has already killed a mammoth and given his tusks to my father," cried the young girl, proudly. "Look!" At the same time she pointed to two colossal tusks hanging on the wall of the cave.

"Fair-Hair will make beautiful things out of the ivory, like these," she continued. She held before Red's eyes her flint knife, whose handle, it will be remembered, was carefully carved, then several little articles of bone ornamented with drawings of animals—things which, in spite of the coarseness of the work, showed that their maker must be an artist of the first rank for the times.

Red did not look at them; he snarled with rage and jealousy, while Lynx, whose mind was very dull, seemed proud of his daughter's eloquence and ready wit. Deer, seeing her rude admirer baffled, added in a jeering tone,

"Fair-Hair wants me; I want nobody else. He likes to laugh, and we laugh together. He's coming for me to-morrow, and my father will let me go. Let Red hunt the wolf and hyena."

Then, still laughing, she ran to the end of the cave, where she lay down between her mother and little brothers.

Red uttered a furious exclamation and rose to follow her; her father, axe in hand, barred his way. Then he seemed about to turn his rage upon Lynx, but as soon as he stood up the effect of the immense quantity of meat he had eaten made itself felt; he tottered, yawned

horribly, and sank heavily on the ground. He stirred a few minutes longer, but soon, like Polyphemus under similar circumstances, remained motionless and fell into a deep sleep on the rough earth.

Lynx knew by experience that this slumber would not be broken until the next day, and therefore stretched himself on the heap of moss, where he too soon fell asleep.

IV.

THE ABDUCTION.

THE night passed quietly to the inhabitants of the Montmartre grotto, and nothing disturbed their repose. At the approach of dawn the infernal concert of wild beasts gradually ceased, and at last a ray of light, falling through the chinks in the rocks, entered the subterranean habitation.

Every one was instantly in motion. The duties of the toilet were not long; it was only necessary to leave the bed and shake one's self. Deer was the first to arise, not because she had to attend to household cares, for there were no domestic duties; she merely obeyed the laws of her active temperament, and perhaps the thought of her lover, who was to come that day, occupied her mind.

However this might be, at the moment she was bounding toward the entrance of the cave she heard a loud yawn, and saw her father's guest, who, drawing up his huge figure to its full height, was stretching himself. Deer was passing him when she felt herself seized by an iron hand, and Red said,

"Will Deer come with me? I'll give her bear-skins to wear; she shall have all the marrow in my game."

But Deer, by a sudden movement, released herself, and answered with her perpetual laugh,

"No, no ; Fair-Hair will come this morning. He's going to bring me more bracelets and necklaces."

"I'll kill Fair-Hair," growled the hunter, clenching his hands.

He was perhaps going to try to seize the young savage again, but, as we know, the troglodyte family had just risen. Lynx, with the help of his wife and children, had removed the wooden bars and pushed aside the rock that served for a door. At the same instant that a flood of light streamed into the cave the master of the dwelling said to the stranger, in a by no means courteous tone,

"It is day. The wild beasts have gone back to their dens. The uri and aurochs are grazing in the plains. It's time for the hunter to go."

This was a formal dismissal, and Red had no cause to be offended, for hospitality was not exercised in a very chivalrous fashion in those days. He picked up his bow and arrows, which he thrust into his belt, then, seizing the jaw he used as a club, seemed about to retire without resistance.

But before leaving he cast a last glance at Deer. The young girl uttered a still more mocking shout of laughter, as if to insult the disappointment of her unlucky admirer.

Instantly Red's eyes flashed and a roar of fury escaped his lips. He rushed forward, seized the coquettish beauty by the waist, raised her from the ground, and began to carry her away.

The whole family, excited by the cries of the strug-

gling Deer, fell upon the ravisher. Deaf clung to her daughter; the boys seized the legs of the treacherous guest to throw him down. The father threw himself before Red and dealt him a blow on the head with his axe that seemed enough to fell an auroch.

But the blow was doubtless deadened by the hunter's thick hair, or else Lynx, weakened by his wound, did not have his usual strength; for Red still stood erect. Without releasing his prey, he brandished his formidable club in the hand still at liberty, and in his turn dealt Lynx a blow on the head which stretched him lifeless with a broken skull.

Deaf, seeing him on the ground, redoubled her yells and buried her nails in the hunter's flesh. The latter did not seem to notice it; raising his club again, he struck the unfortunate woman on the forehead, and she fell bleeding and senseless at her husband's side.

The two children remained, and vainly endeavored to throw down the murderer, but they were by no means formidable adversaries to this Hercules. By a mere movement of the arm he hurled one to the right and the other to the left against the walls of the cave, where they lay, if not killed, at least stunned, by the violence of the shock.

All this was accomplished in a few seconds, and, the conflict being over, Red thought only of flying with his prey. So he left the grotto without even looking behind him, and turned toward the forest, carrying Deer as a wolf carries a sheep.

But the young girl did not remain impassive. She struggled convulsively against the strong arm that held her, scratched and bit, uttering the most terrible shrieks;

but the ravisher continued his way without fear or remorse. The poor child's despairing cries for aid were heard an instant longer, then the majestic silence of the Parisian solitudes again returned.

Several hours passed. A pale, dull sunlight illuminated the country. Groans issued from the cave, whose mouth remained open. They were uttered by Deaf, who survived her frightful wound. The two little boys, although terribly bruised, had risen. They seemed bewildered, stupefied, and, though they went to look at their dead father and dying mother, were too stupid to give the slightest assistance to the injured woman moaning at their feet, or take any action whatever. Pressed against each other, they dared not stir, expecting some event whose nature they could not have clearly described. This terror had still another cause. One of the huge hyenas that made such terrible concerts at night had been warned by its peculiar instinct of the presence of a corpse, and, though this animal usually ventures forth only after dark, had glided through the thickets to the entrance of the grotto, where it paced steadily to and fro. Its sense of smell told it that there were living creatures with the dead, and its cowardice prevented it from going farther. Yet, pressed by hunger, it would not go away, and thus moved incessantly to and fro before the cave.

Suddenly the brute stopped, as if it had heard a sound which had not yet reached the ears of the besieged children; then it re-entered the brushwood and vanished. Whistler and Rat-Catcher were beginning to breathe more freely, when the rustling of dry leaves and the rolling of pebbles under the foot of a pedestrian were

heard outside; a human figure appeared at some distance.

The children fancied that Red, after having killed their father, their mother, and perhaps their sister, was returning to massacre them too. Overwhelmed with terror, they rushed into the farthest recesses of the cave, where they crouched in silence.

But they were mistaken; it was not Red who approached the cave, but a tall youth of twenty, clad in furs, with his head and feet bare. We will not say that he was handsome according to our particular type of beauty, but he would have afforded a proof of the fact recognized by modern scientists,* that in those remote ages two different races of men inhabited the banks of the Seine. Fair-Hair—for it was Deer's lover—was far from presenting the physical characteristics of the race now predominant in Europe. Thus, his head was still somewhat elongated in form, although he belonged to the brachycephalic† type (pardon the word), and his nose was flat, his eyebrows were more prominent and his lips thicker than those of the men of the present day. But, to make amends, his eyes were bright and clear, and his irregular features expressed craft and good-humor, if not intelligence. His fair hair—to which he owed his name—was long and silky, and his complexion, though sun-burnt, fair as that of the Celtic race from which we have descended.

His accoutrements consisted of a deer-skin pouch suspended across his hips by a thong, and a flint axe

* Quaternary fauna of Paris, according to the most recent works of MM. Lartet, D'Archiac, Gaudry, De Mortillet, etc.

† Short-head.

thrust into his belt. He held in his hand a sort of spear, whose point was made of the horn of a reindeer.

Perhaps these weapons were insufficient at a time when a man could go only a few steps from his home without being exposed to various perils, but Fair-Hair had a lover's boldness. Besides, he had not come a long distance; his family lived on the other side of the hill of Montmartre, in a cave like that occupied by Lynx. This family consisted, besides the father and mother, of six stalwart brothers and sisters, several of whom were already married. Fair-Hair had seen Deer while hunting near the cave, fallen in love with her, and become engaged with the consent of the parents. He intended to take her away as soon as he had a cave to serve as a home for the new household: the one occupied by his own family could accommodate no more inhabitants. Meantime, he often visited the young girl, always bringing her as gifts carvings of bone or ivory, in whose execution he excelled, and which gave him the reputation of an artist of the first rank among the human beings scattered through the valley of the Seine.

This day also he was coming to offer the coquettish young girl the products of his art, and walked with a rapid step, a smile upon his lips. When he reached the entrance of the cave he paused and cast an eager glance within, but his eyes, dazzled by the broad light of day, could distinguish nothing. Deaf, either from exhaustion or because she was quite dead, had ceased to moan; the grotto seemed deserted.

"Deer!" called the young man.

No one answered, but Fair-Hair heard a rustling in the dry leaves forming the bed, and concluded that the

habitation was not empty, as he had at first supposed. Still smiling, he advanced a short distance, and felt something cold and wet under his bare feet. He stooped, and perceived that he had been walking through a pool of blood.

But this circumstance gave no cause for alarm in a hunter's abode; so he continued loudly:

"Deer is hiding! Deer wants to laugh at me! So she sha'n't have the pretty things I've brought."

He drew from his deer-skin pouch bracelets of teeth, pieces of ivory and horn, on which he had sketched in his rude way figures of men and animals, then held them aloft to arouse the envy of his *fiancée*, whom he supposed to be lurking in the gloom.

Although Deer had not heard him, this time he received an answer. Besides the poor old woman, who began to moan again, children's voices cried from the recesses of the cave,

"It's Fair-Hair! it's Fair-Hair!"

At the same moment Whistler and Rat-Catcher ran toward the family friend.

Fair-Hair at first took no notice of them. He was becoming accustomed to the gloom, and beginning to distinguish certain objects. Bending toward Deaf, he saw the terrible wound in the poor woman's skull, at the same time that he perceived the body of Lynx lying a few paces off.

This scene of carnage did not move Fair-Hair as it would have done a man of our times. The rude generation of those days, habituated to live in the midst of dangers of every kind, full of savage instincts, were familiar with such sights. Yet the young savage's face

expressed astonishment. Having once more examined the dead man and the wounded wife, he asked the children,

"Who did this?"

"Red," replied the oldest.

"Red, who lives on the Green Mountain?"

"Yes."

Fair-Hair tried to obtain some information from the little boys, who, too terrified or too bewildered to answer plainly, contented themselves with repeating incessantly,

"It was Red, who lives on the Green Mountain."

Suddenly a thought entered Fair-Hair's mind.

"And Deer?" he asked.

"Red has carried her off."

"Did he kill her too?"

"No, she fought, and she didn't want to go."

Fair-Hair uttered a furious exclamation, which proved that if he were not a very affectionate friend to the parents of his betrothed bride, he was at least an ardent and jealous lover. It now required no great effort of the imagination to understand the horrible drama that had just been enacted. Red, whose cruel ferocity was known throughout the whole neighborhood, had tried to seize the young girl, and, as the father and mother opposed the abduction, killed them both.

Having gained this certainty, Fair-Hair thought only of pursuing the ravisher. He was already walking toward the entrance of the cave, when the two children clung to him.

"Take me," said the older boy.

"And me too," cried the other.

However unknown to the young hunter the refinements of humanity might be, he felt how terrible was the orphans' situation. The cave being open, wild beasts, attracted by the odor of the corpse and the blood, would not fail to enter it even in broad daylight. Besides, Deaf was still alive and needed help. So Deer's lover, notwithstanding his anxiety to get away, made a few arrangements for the benefit of the unfortunate family.

His first care was to drag the body of Lynx into a corner and cover it with leaves, until it could be buried according to the rites then in use. Next he raised Deaf, who redoubled her groans, and carried her to the common bed. To dress the wound he took a handful of very fine moss, dipped it in water, and laid it on the injured part. This was all his surgical knowledge allowed him to do, and the patient really seemed relieved, for her moans grew less audible.

He still had to provide for the two children, who must remain alone for a time whose duration it was impossible for him to fix. Fair-Hair filled at a neighboring pond a skin vessel and several urus' horns, intended to hold the supply of water. Moreover, he ascertained that the cave still contained a small stock of chestnuts, beechnuts, and acorns, which would serve as food for the children, and, if necessary, the mother also. The fire was out, and it would have been too long a task to relight it by rubbing two pieces of dry wood together, according to the method practised even in our times among certain savage tribes. Fair-Hair did not think of doing so, but it was important to bar the cave against the entrance of wild beasts.

The young man, with his natural ingenuity, instantly

thought of a means of closing the entrance which would be amply sufficient for the necessities of the moment. The rock that usually served for a door was pushed across the mouth of the cave, and as there was still an empty space between the stone block and the roof, Fair-Hair showed the children how to place, after he had gone out, the wooden cross-pieces intended to complete the barricade. Thanks to this arrangement, the air and light could enter the cave, but the space between the bars was not large enough to permit the passage of any dangerous carnivorous animal.

These preparations being finished, he said to the children,

"I'm going to look for Deer; if I meet Red, I'll kill him. You must not stir out until to-morrow. If you do, the wild beasts will eat you. I'll come back with Deer or die."

He explained to them that they would have occasionally to dip in water the moss which covered their mother's wound, and prepared to depart.

As his spear might be in his way on the expedition he was planning, he left it in the cave, and to supply its place took possession of the dead Lynx's bow and arrows; and after ascertaining that the bow-string was in good order and the points of the arrows sharp enough, he strode over the rock at the entrance.

By his directions and with his aid, Rat-Catcher and Whistler skilfully adjusted the wooden crossbars within. Then Fair-Hair, convinced that he had done everything for his friends' safety which the circumstances required, walked rapidly away.

The fate of the unfortunate children whom he was

leaving for an indefinite time in the dark, noisome cave with their father's corpse and their dying mother might have caused him some anxiety, but the thought of his beloved Deer completely absorbed his mind. Besides, the little savages themselves did not seem to take their situation very tragically. They remained quiet and silent a few moments after the singular events which had just occurred, but soon resumed their usual noisy sports, without troubling themselves about the groans Deaf uttered from time to time. The younger boy began to nibble chestnuts and draw shrill sounds from his bone whistle, while the older lad, no longer fearing any control, played with his father's spears.

V.

VENGEANCE.

FAIR-HAIR, on leaving Lynx's cave, walked very rapidly, but ere long slackened his pace to examine the ground and direct his search in the most efficient manner.

The trees, which were very numerous and very tall, bounded the view in every direction. Like those of our day, these trees were oaks, beeches, birches, and elms, although perhaps several species now extinct might have been discovered among them. From time to time glades appeared in which grazed herds of herbivorous animals—reindeer, horses, aurochs—which swarmed everywhere; but there were no means of communication except the roads, or rather paths, these wild beasts made through the woods when they went to the water or changed their pasturage-grounds, Nature being still untouched by the labor of man.

Fair-Hair had scarcely left the vicinity of Montmartre when he found in the virgin forest an avenue broad and straight, though still encumbered here and there by fallen trees. The soil was trodden down and trampled as if chariots and horsemen had passed over it daily. This was the path through which the mammoths went night and morning to the river, and in their continual

trips they had worn this wide road, which was used by the other animals in the neighborhood. Although these colossal creatures were not dangerous to man, it would not be prudent to be found in their avenue; but at such an hour Fair-Hair only ran the risk of meeting a few isolated ones, and they doubtless would not think of molesting him if he did not disturb them. So he boldly entered the road, and the following are the reasons that induced him to take this direction:

"Red," he thought, "must have been in haste to reach the river, and has doubtless chosen the mammoths' road, which is the most direct and easy. Besides, he is carrying poor Deer, who would not follow him willingly, and he has not ventured into the thickets and bogs with such a burden. Red is apparently ignorant that the Seine has risen very much during the night, and he can no longer cross it either by fording or on a log, as usual. So he will be obliged to remain on this bank of the river, and I cannot fail to meet him soon, in spite of the start he has obtained."

We dare not assert that these reflections presented themselves with so much distinctness to the young man's mind, but they were very nearly his impressions, and, full of the hope of success, he continued his way.

Every instant neighs, growls, roars, strange sounds, uttered by animals that for the greater part of the time remained invisible, were heard from the forest. Sometimes, here and there herds of deer were seen amidst the tall grass, but they did not show much fear at the sight of a passer-by, for human beings were then too few in number, and not sufficiently formidable, for ani-

mals to recognize their power. It would have been easy for Fair-Hair to send an arrow at some buck or reindeer fawn, but he did not think of doing so, and contented himself with picking some wild berries while continuing to walk on with watchful eyes and weapons ready for instant use.

He thus reached a spot where a brook crossed the road, and according to the custom of hunters attentively examined the marks impressed on the damp soil. They consisted principally of the round, deep footprints of mammoths, amid which appeared a few human footsteps. He had recognized the large flat foot of the terrible Red, when he suddenly uttered an exclamation of rage. Beside the first marks he had just discovered others much smaller and lighter, though they bore no resemblance to those of Atalanta—the footprints of his beloved Deer.

“So she’s walking?” he muttered; “she is going with him of her own free will? I’ll kill them both!”

This discovery proved that Fair-Hair was really on the track of the fugitives. So, after having made certain examinations which were to be useful to him afterward, he continued his way, and soon found himself at the end of the avenue on the banks of the Seine.

We have already given an idea of the scene the river presented; at this moment, in particular, it had the majestic and imposing appearance of a real arm of the sea. Swollen by some storm, it had overflowed its banks, submerging the islands where Paris was to be built, and inundating its vast marshes. It would have been impossible to cross it even if boats had existed. Its muddy waves rose to a great height; its current seemed irre-

sistible; and the trees it swept away, with their roots and branches, would have crushed any one who attempted to cross it by swimming. Thus it was very evident that Red had not reached the other shore with his prisoner, and Fair-Hair's eyes wandered eagerly over the vast landscape outspread before him.

The fog common to the Parisian climate overspread the country, while white clouds floated at intervals across the sun. Several large mammals were gambolling in the swampy plains that bordered the Seine. There were, in the first place, three or four belated mammoths, which had gone into the water up to their knees to drink or bathe. They rose like living mountains above the surface of the river, whose impetuous current was ruffled by their movements. The male had formidable tusks curved in a half circle, and while the young ones amused themselves by hurling huge jets of water into the air with their trunks, he raised his aloft, trumpeting loudly. The rhinoceroses with chambered nostrils were indulging in their usual gambols among the reeds. These animals, whose bones have been found while digging the canal of the Ourcq, were, as we have said, covered with hair like the mammoths, but their skins did not form folds like those of the African rhinoceros. Fierce and stupid, they fought among themselves, hurling vast quantities of mud into the air, and did not seem at all disturbed by the neighborhood of the hippopotami, who sometimes sported on the surface of the water.

And all this was not far from the place where now stands the Pont-Neuf!

These scenes of antediluvian Nature possessed no interest for Fair-Hair; he was longing to catch a glimpse

of the hunter and his beloved Deer. But human beings must have seemed, as it were, thrown into the shade by the vast expanse of country, and formed only imperceptible points on this stage peopled with colossal shapes.

By means of searching with his piercing eyes each curve in the shore, he at last distinguished, in the direction where the Hôtel de Ville was to rise, two persons who appeared to be going up the bank of the river. He thought he recognized those whom he sought, and, to convince himself of the fact, began to run with an agility of which few men of our days would be capable, but which was one of the necessities of savage life. The pedestrians having no motives for going at the same rate of speed, he gained rapidly upon them, and soon recognized Deer and her conqueror.

Red seemed disconcerted by the freset, which he had not expected, and his gait showed extreme irresolution. He moved with an uncertain step, and evidently did not know what to do.

Deer, who was walking by his side, frequently turned her head. Though the poor girl did not lack strength, she seemed wearied by her long journey through woods and marshes. Her feet and the edge of her tunic were soiled with mire; her whole person expressed deep despondency. Yet Fair-Hair was still wondering that she did not attempt to make her escape, when he had an explanation of this docility.

Red, despairing of finding any means to cross the Seine, at last seemed to take a new resolution, and with an imperious gesture pointed toward the forest.

Lynx's daughter, either because she expected to be seen and rescued amid the open plains, or feared to

enter the woods in such company, showed some signs of resistance; instantly, Red, springing upon her, struck her with unheard-of brutality with the handle of his club.

This was not the first time the lover had employed this method of making the object of his affection follow him, and more than one bloody bruise might already have been seen on the arms and shoulders of the unfortunate Deer.

Respect for woman did not exist at that period, and the dominion of the stronger over the weaker sex was exercised without limit. Nevertheless, Fair-Hair, on seeing the girl he loved thus abused, could not restrain himself, and uttered a cry of anger.

Scarcely had the exclamation, so different from the sounds usually heard in these solitary wastes, echoed on the air, than Fair-Hair perceived his imprudence. He could succeed in his pursuit only by surprising his adversary, for Red, well armed, of herculean strength, extraordinary agility, and brutal courage, would not allow his prey to be snatched from him so long as a breath of life remained. It was only by surprise that it was possible to conquer him, and it was madness to put him on his guard.

Fair-Hair recollected this in time. As soon as the chivalric protest escaped his lips he threw himself face downward in the tall grass and remained motionless.

He had been heard. Red stopped beating the poor woman, and looked around him. Deer herself seemed to forget her sufferings; she had turned again with a sudden start. Perhaps she had recognized her lover's voice, perhaps the hope of deliverance again awoke. However this might be, Fair-Hair, distrusting the sav-

age's piercing gaze, and knowing that the slightest sign, the slightest movement, was liable to betray him, remained cowering among the reeds, without daring to raise his head. It was only after a long time that he cautiously lifted it. As the shout was not repeated, Red and Deer had doubtless finally believed that it did not issue from human lips, and continued their walk toward the forest, where they soon disappeared.

Fair-Hair then left his hiding-place and continued his rapid walk, crouching under the brushwood. He thus reached the part of the forest where Red and Deer had just entered; but here he encountered a new difficulty. The thicket was intersected in every direction by the narrow paths made by the wild beasts in going to the river. Which of these paths had the hunter and his companion chosen? The earth, either too dry or too wet, retained no footprints. Besides, there was no time to patiently follow a trail. If Fair-Hair had known how to swear, he would have made the woods echo with his oaths; as it was, he began to wander about, growling and beating his breast with rage.

We will leave him to his wrath and anxiety, to rejoin Deer and her companion.

Lynx's daughter, as we have said, did not yield without resistance to the orders of her parent's assassin; but, conquered by violence, she had seemed to resign herself to her fate. During the journey, as may be supposed, the conversation had not been very animated; in those days action took the place of words and thoughts. The poor creature walked silently by the side of Red, who watched her craftily, with an expression of as much anger and hatred as love.

Deer could not expect to be rescued unless her lover should interfere in her behalf. There was no protecting authority. A small number of families lived scattered over vast extents of country, and each of them depended entirely upon the father. The oppressed had no means of defence against the oppressor; although there must have been certain notions of justice, religion, and morality, they were so vague that they could not be a serious check upon the gross instincts and fierce passions of this ignorant race.

Deer understood that even if they encountered by accident some other hunter from the neighborhood, he would not dare to try to rescue her. We know what hope she had felt when in the cry uttered behind her she fancied that she had recognized her lover's voice. Unfortunately, this hope had been but a flash of lightning, and when the poor girl re-entered the forest large tears filled her eyes.

The persecutor troubled himself very little about her tears, perhaps did not notice them. But as they plunged farther and farther into the woods his attitude toward the prisoner changed, and his glance visibly softened. Soon something like a smile appeared on his hideous face, and once he put his huge hand on Deer's shoulder, uttering a sort of joyous growl, which would have reminded one of a bear.

Deer seemed more alarmed by his good-humor than by the anger he had just shown. She kept as far away as possible, and as he still drew nearer, repeating his ominous growl, she tried to change the course of his ideas.

"I'm hungry," she said abruptly; "is Red so bad a hunter that he can give me nothing to eat?"

The young girl had really been inspired, and Red seemed touched by such a reproach. Besides, perhaps the remark reminded him that he had eaten nothing himself since the night before, that it was almost noon, and his ogreish hunger was gnawing at his stomach. He started, and said in his guttural voice, "Deer shall eat."

Just at that moment they entered a glade where herds of deer had cropped the turf. Nothing was visible on the shorn and trampled grass except a young horse with a small body and immense head, a species then very numerous. The primitive man did not yet think of riding, but the horse was excellent game and formed his principal article of food.* The young animal of which we are speaking, although less than twenty paces distant from the pedestrians, was not disturbed by their presence, and while browsing on the foliage of a shrub watched them with its gentle but inquisitive eyes. Red seized his bow, and with inconceivable quickness discharged an arrow that passed through its throat. The poor creature neighed loudly with pain and turned to fly, but, its strength failing, fell upon its knees. Quick as thought, Red sprang forward and put an end to its suffering by breaking its skull.

Then the hunter turned triumphantly toward his companion, who thought it advisable to reward him for his skill by an approving nod.

The game being secured, it was only necessary to prepare it. Now, it will be remembered that fire was obtained by a slow and difficult process, which consisted of rubbing two pieces of dry wood against each other; and although the Parisians of the ancient world usually

* Lartet and Christy.

ate meat broiled, they were not so fastidious when hunting; they then managed very well with raw meat. So Red never thought of lighting a fire. He signed to Deer to sit down, and hastened to cut up the horse, whose smoking flesh still quivered.

He dexterously removed the bones containing the marrow, cracked them lengthwise by means of his axe, and gallantly offered them to Deer. For himself he cut from the animal's fillet a huge piece, which he tore to pieces with his teeth and nails, and then devoured with his usual gluttony, not seeming to notice the absence of seasoning.

We should like to be able to say that Fair-Hair's betrothed bride showed some tokens of horror or disgust at this cannibal repast, but truth compels us to confess that custom on the one hand and hunger on the other prevented her from manifesting the slightest repugnance. Forgetting her annoyances, her fatigue, her terrible anxiety, she began to suck the marrow from the bones with all the satisfaction of a pretty glutton of our own day eating cakes at a confectioner's in the Boulevard Italien.

The wide glade was surrounded by tall trees, and while beneath their shade a partial obscurity reigned, the two companions were in the broad daylight in the centre of the open space. Red had chosen this place to prevent any surprise—not that he remembered the alarm caused by the cry Fair-Hair had uttered a few moments before, but it behooved him to be on his guard, for they were continually surrounded by danger.

Nevertheless, Deer, now that the first wants of hunger were appeased, relapsed into her sorrowful thoughts.

She stopped eating, and refused even the horse's brain, which the hunter pointed out as a dainty worthy of her. Red, while swallowing the bleeding flesh, continued to watch his companion.

His eyes sparkled with pleasure under their lashes, and it was doubtful whether this satisfaction was caused by the present good cheer or the thought of having in his power a creature who seemed to him so beautiful.

Deer noticed these things, but hoped that her persecutor, by dint of gorging himself with meat, would at last fall into the state of torpor and stupefaction that usually accompanied his digestion. This hope soon vanished. Red stopped devouring the raw flesh, and contented himself with nibbling, by way of dessert, what the young girl had rejected. But his ardent glances did not cease; he still uttered his gleeful growl, and several times stretched out his hand to give her a friendly pat.

Deer drew herself as far as possible out of the reach of these rude caresses, and listened for the sound of some deliverer approaching amid the silence of the woods. Nothing stirred except a wolf, which scented the feast and was waiting among the bushes for the opportunity to get his share.

Red noticed the young girl's agitation, and his mirth increased. Still chewing, laughing, and muttering, he tried to reach her with his huge black hand. At last Deer lost patience, and pushing it away said in a tone of horror,

"Red killed Deaf and Lynx."

This reproach did not seem to be at all understood by the savage. On the contrary, he thought it a compliment, for he answered, laughing,

"Red was the strongest."

What answer could be made to this logic? Yet poor Deer appealed to all the religion and morality she knew to try to soften the hunter.

"When the strong have been wicked during their lives," she said, "the Great Spirit punishes them after death."

This thought was too lofty for Red's intelligence. Yet he had listened attentively, and seemed trying to understand. At the end of a moment he burst into another shout of laughter, and replied,

"Red is alive."

The unfortunate girl, whose arguments were exhausted, was silent. Red ceased to eat. His laughter and mutterings became louder and more continuous. Suddenly he stretched out both hands to seize Deer, who by a sudden movement escaped, and fled toward the thicket with the lightness of the animal whose name she bore.

But if she was agile, the hunter was no less so. He nimbly rose in his turn, picked up his club, and pursued her, grumbling loudly, not with love, but fury.

Thanks to his impetuous bounds, he soon overtook her and brandished his formidable weapon to strike. Deer uttered a cry of agony, which was answered from the depths of the forest by the voice she had already heard. At the same moment an arrow, discharged by an invisible hand, grazed her face and pierced the hunter's throat, as Red's arrow had cut the horse's a few instants before.

Streams of blood deluged the bear-skin tunic worn by Deer's persecutor, but so great was the vigor of this race

that he remained standing, and, though he could neither cry out nor walk, angrily tried to draw out the arrow that had wounded him. As he could not succeed, he wished at least to avenge himself, and convulsively shook his club. Deer, who had paused to see whence this unexpected help came, was in danger of being killed, when another arrow whizzed by and buried itself in the hunter's breast.

This time Red's limbs bent; he turned, then sank upon the ground, which he tore with his nails and bit, uttering inarticulate sounds.

At the same instant a man emerged from the underbrush and appeared on the edge of the forest. Bow in hand, he stood ready to discharge a third arrow in case of necessity. This youth, though he bore no resemblance to the Pythian Apollo, seemed to Deer handsomer than the god "of the silver bow."

"Fair-Hair!" she cried in delight.

Fair-Hair, for it was he, at first remained motionless, with his eyes fixed upon his enemy. As there was nothing more to be feared from that quarter, he lowered his bow and sprang toward his betrothed bride, crying in an ecstasy of joy,

"Deer!"

And they fell into each other's arms. There were no long speeches between them, but the young girl's eyes expressed the most ardent gratitude, while the youth's sparkled with pride and the joy of success.

They soon approached the wounded man, who was writhing on the ground in the convulsions of agony. Fair-Hair wanted to regain his arrows, and at the same time seize the necklaces and weapons of the conquered

man, the slightest products of human industry possessing infinite value in those days.

He leaned over the dying man and pulled out his arrows, without troubling himself any more about his sufferings than an Indian of the present time heeds the torture of the man he scalps. Although superior to his enemy in certain respects, he felt no scruple about treating Red in the same way that Red, under similar circumstances, would have treated him.

The unfortunate hunter could not speak, but, stretched on his back with clenched fists, still retained his consciousness. Certain Russians of the Mongolian race, surviving in our wars terrible wounds which would have instantly killed a European, might even at the present time furnish instances of similar vitality.

Deer, however, had the courage to look at the assassin of her family, and, yielding to a feeling of indignation, struck him in the face with her bare foot. Red tried to bite it, but failed.

Fair-Hair, who had just taken possession of the wounded man's equipments, seemed amused by this mutual hatred. Nevertheless, he put his arm around Deer's waist and tried to draw her away.

The revengeful girl resisted. "Red is still alive," she said.

"Pshaw!" replied Fair-Hair quietly, "the wolves will finish him."

And he led her gently toward the spot where lay the remnants of the horse. The lover remembered that he too was famishing, and had every right to the vanquished hunter's game.

They sat down, and the meal began again. But how

little it resembled the first one! The young people's delight seemed equal. Deer did not eat, but enjoyed watching her companion, who, however, did not show the hideous gluttony of the other hunter. They talked little, as usual, but to make amends looked at each other incessantly, laughed, and played all sorts of merry pranks. After the repast was over Fair-Hair offered his betrothed bride the necklaces and bracelets he had made for her, and the coquette hastened to adorn herself with them. Absorbed in the joy of seeing each other again after having endured trials so severe, they did not trouble themselves about the miserable Red, who was gasping a few paces away, and whose eyes, already glazed by approaching death, rested upon them with an expression of jealousy and powerless rage.

The hours slipped away unnoticed by the lovers; Fair-Hair and Deer did not think how time was passing. The sun was about to set; to be overtaken by the darkness in these woods, which swarmed with so many formidable animals, was, they were aware, to expose themselves to a terrible death.

Fortunately, Fair-Hair perceived the danger. He suddenly rose. "Let us go," said he.

He took his weapons, and loaded Deer with Red's arms. Lynx's daughter, however, was perfectly capable of performing the task of carrying them. As they were preparing to set out, she asked, "Where is Fair-Hair going to take me?"

The young hunter seemed to be reflecting.

"Lynx has been killed," he said at last, "and his cave no longer has a master. I'll go there with Deer; I will be the head of the family. I will carry Lynx to

the cave of the dead; then I'll support the women and children by hunting."

"Very well," replied Deer.

And they began to walk toward home.

When, on their way to the edge of the woods, they passed Red, the dying man made visible efforts to speak, and waved his arms. His dilated eyes seemed to implore the young couple not to leave him helpless and unarmed in this solitude. Deer could not restrain an emotion of pity, and wanted to stop, but Fair-Hair shrugged his shoulders and forced her to continue her way.

The wounded man had been right in fearing their departure. Scarcely had the two lovers left the glade when it was invaded by an immense number of gray, tawny, speckled animals, which, concealed in the neighboring thickets, had been awaiting this moment. They rushed forward open-mouthed, uttering greedy howls. Some dashed toward the horse, whose bloody fragments they eagerly seized, while others fell upon Red, covering him completely.

Deer and her companion heard behind them the cracking of bones, fierce cries, the sound of an obstinate struggle between the foul animals fighting over their prey, but took no heed, and walked rapidly away. Then, as the impressions of these savages were very transient, they were soon laughing with the utmost gayety.

VI.

SCENES OF THE PRIMITIVE WORLD.

DEER and Fair-Hair, absorbed in the pleasure of being in each other's society again, had really lingered too long. It was quite dark under the shadow of the trees, and the paths traced by the herbivorous animals without any fixed direction might easily be mistaken. It thus seemed doubtful whether the hunter and young girl could succeed in reaching the cave of Montmartre before nightfall. The beasts of prey, almost inoffensive when the sun was above the horizon, were assembling as usual to go in quest of food. Already they were calling each other by ominous howls in every direction, and the terrible concert would last until the following morning. Yet between the Seine and Montmartre there was not a single habitation, not a refuge: everywhere stretched the swamps and the virgin forest.

The young hunter did not forget these alarming truths, and, after wandering several minutes through the tangled paths that constantly turned back, paused to examine the surroundings. At last, extending his arm toward the setting sun, he suddenly exclaimed,

"Quick! the mammoths' road!"

He hastily took the direction indicated, and Deer fol-

lowed, notwithstanding the roughness of the way. At last she said timidly,

"It's late. The mammoths are in motion; they'll crush us."

"Quick! quick!" replied Fair-Hair laconically.

They reached the long avenue the antediluvian elephants had made in the forest, and which extended almost all the way from the river to Montmartre; but, as Deer had foreseen, it was no longer deserted as in the morning. The mammoths were going in groups to the water, and while moving snatched a tuft of grass with their trunks or absently broke off a large bough. Thanks to the luminous strip of sky above the double row of trees, these enormous animals were seen carelessly advancing toward the Seine, and ever and anon one, in the exuberance of his good-humor, uttered the resonant sounds that echoed through the vast forests like the notes of a trumpet.

As we have said, Fair-Hair and his companion had only this way of reaching the cave speedily, and they advanced, gliding along the sides of the avenue. Yet they had nothing to fear except being inadvertently trampled under foot. The peaceful monsters, covered with their long black hair, trusting in their irresistible strength, did not appear to notice the human beings passing them, or, if they perceived them, did not condescend to attack the frail pigmies they could have annihilated with a breath.

The audacity of the two young people therefore seemed destined to remain unpunished, and they had performed part of the journey unmolested when they became witnesses of one of those majestic scenes so

frequent in the primitive world, but of which nothing in our day can afford any idea.

Fair-Hair and his companion had reached the place which so many centuries after was to be the Boulevard Montmartre. On their left extended the swamps of the future Grange Batelière. As they were crossing this vast open space to regain the elephants' avenue, which continued for some distance on the other side, they suddenly heard before them a terrible uproar which constantly increased.

One would have said that it was a tempest suddenly unchained. The darkness did not allow the cause to be seen, but the earth trembled as if under the gallop of ten thousand horses. The dust and leaves formed a cloud whence issued strange, thundering sounds. There was no living creature that would not have been seized with terror at the approach of this tumult, whose source was still unknown.

Deer and Fair-Hair, though their nerves were not easily shaken, had paused in terror on the side of the road, and were gazing in the direction whence the danger might come. The mammoths, just now grazing so quietly, had faced about and pricked up their huge ears. But they were doubtless not ignorant of the cause of this alarm, for they answered with shrill screams the screams that now reached them, and which must have been a call; then, turning back, set out at full speed with their trunks in the air.

Deer and Fair-Hair anxiously tried to discover from what this terrible fright proceeded. The mammoths, threatened by some sudden danger, had assembled in an immense herd, and were rushing forward, rallying by

their cries all the animals of their species. They soon poured out of the avenue, leaping on each other in their frantic course, stumbling, covered with dust, slime, and the branches of trees, noisily clashing their long tusks, but advancing with the speed of the hurricane.

The enemy that produced this panic among the colossal animals was not slow in revealing itself. Above the tumult caused by the flying mammoths was heard a horrible roar that might be compared to the rolling of thunder. When this terrible sound was heard everything else relapsed into silence; it seemed as if the king—or rather tyrant—of creation at that remote period had just raised his sovereign voice.

Fair-Hair and Deer remained motionless with terror. The youth seized his companion's hand.

"The lion!" said he.

"The lion!" repeated Deer in dismay.

And both rushed toward the marsh to get out of the way of the elephants.

The marsh offered no shelter; only at some distance from the avenue appeared an isolated rock, brought there by some cataclysm, and which rose about ten feet above the plain. The two poor fugitives ran in that direction, and fortunately were marvellously swift-footed, for the living hurricane was already bursting upon them. At last they reached the rock, and, panting for breath, bathed in perspiration, trembling with terror, succeeded in climbing upon its summit.

But was this a safe asylum? They soon perceived that they could not have chosen their place of refuge more unfortunately.

The mammoths, instead of continuing their way along

the avenue which led to the river, rushed impetuously into the marshes. Pursued through the forest by their formidable enemy, they could not move freely and prepare for mutual defence, as their congeners, the African elephants, now do when attacked by a lion. But the open space on their path offering them a sort of tilt-yard, they vied with each other in rushing into it to accept the battle.

In an instant the plain was covered; bushes and reeds disappeared under their huge feet. They moved anxiously about, looking frequently in the same direction. Numerous as they already were, new-comers still arrived, and the last, more and more excited by the lion's roars, ran with a lightness of which one would not have believed such masses of flesh capable.

Besides, this apparent confusion did not last long. The mammoths, obeying a plan that seemed to have been arranged beforehand, formed into a compact, regular troop. The females and young ones were placed in the centre; on the outside stood the old males, who expected to bear the principal shock and held their huge trunks in readiness. Soon, all, with bristling manes, trunks in the air, eyes and ears on the watch, stood motionless, and their order of battle was such that the nearest was only twenty paces from the rock where Deer and Fair-Hair had taken refuge.

Silence ensued. The mammoths, doubtless reassured by the strong position they had just assumed, and which enabled them to give each other mutual aid, no longer uttered the trumpet-like sounds that expressed their fear or anger. They were ready for resistance and awaited the enemy.

This enemy at last appeared. The two lovers in the dim twilight saw it spring with mighty bounds into the open space; and certainly a single glance was sufficient to understand the terror it inspired.

The cave-lion* was, as we have said, three or four times larger than the largest African lion. According to the bones often found in the earth, it was about fourteen feet long, and united the characteristics of the lion and tiger. Its color was a reddish-gray, striped with brown; its long tail was ringed with black and fawn-color. The throat and under part of the body were snow-white.† This huge animal, whose teeth were five inches long, and whose paws were armed with retractile nails six and a half inches long, paused a moment on the edge of the forest to examine the mammoths' position; its round eyes glowed in the darkness like balls of fire. Motionless, with open jaws, it stood, waving its sinewy tail as if ready to spring.

The African lion never ventures to attack a herd of elephants when they have had time to put themselves on their guard, as the Parisian mammoths were now. But the cave-lion did not seem willing to draw back, and again uttered its terrible roar in token of defiance.

The mammoths, on their part, answered by the trumpet-like sounds of which we have spoken, as if to announce that they accepted the combat; but the intelligent animals took care to make no change in their order of battle, and continued to form a solid mass, presenting in every direction menacing tusks and trunks.

Seeing that its demonstration had not produced the

* *Felis spelæa*.

† Boitard.

expected effect, the lion was seized with fury. Its roars and the waving of its tail did not cease, its eyes continued to blaze. At last it began to creep along, circling around the watchful mammoths as if seeking a weak point in their battalion.

Now, while thus prowling, roaring, tearing the earth with its claws and throwing it into the air, Fair-Hair and his companion noticed that it was approaching nearer and nearer to them, and already almost touched the low rock they had climbed.

Imagine their terror! True, the lion, engaged in a stupendous conflict with adversaries worthy of it, doubtless would not condescend to notice the presence of two poor human creatures; but was it not to be feared that it might leap on the rock, and then what would become of the unfortunate lovers? Brushed aside by a single movement of its huge paw, they would be in a few instants mere shapeless masses cast out on the plain for the wolves and hyenas of the forest.

It might be supposed, in fact, that the fierce animal intended to take up its position on the rock, for it turned its glowing eyeballs in that direction. If Deer had been a woman of our day, she would not have failed to faint, and thus complicate a situation already so critical; but she contented herself with clinging convulsively to her companion, and the latter, although habituated for a long period to all kinds of dangers, was on the point of springing with her to the bottom of the rock to avoid an encounter that seemed inevitable.

Fortunately, there was no occasion to resort to this extreme measure. The lion stopped looking toward them, and at last decided to make the attack. It

uttered another roar, bounded thirty or forty feet, and, clearing one of the huge males that formed the outer row, seized a young mammoth, whose tender, delicate flesh seemed to deserve its preference.

Then the tumult became frightful. The line of battle was broken, and each mammoth rushed to the assistance of the wounded one. A hundred trunks fell upon the lion, which was clinging to its victim's back and devouring it alive. A horrible conflict took place. All these colossal animals were crowding against each other, crushing and struggling to deal a blow at the common enemy. There was no longer anything but a mountain of flesh—a moving, changing mountain, whence issued abrupt sounds, the noise of tusks striking against each other and shattering—sounds that suggested the trumpets of the last judgment.

It was difficult to foresee what would be the result of this conflict of monsters. A dense smoke rose from the huge heated bodies; stones, dry leaves, tufts of hair flew through the air. Neither lion nor mammoths could be distinguished, but, as we have said, a moving, roaring mass, whose every change made the earth tremble.

Deer, in terror, covered her eyes, pressing closer to her lover. Fair-Hair alone coolly estimated the extent of the peril. The combat was taking place only a few paces from them. They might be crushed by the slightest shock, without even having time to utter a cry. Once they felt the rock that served them as a refuge violently shaken, and almost lost their balance; a mammoth had grazed it with his huge foot in passing. Yet Fair-Hair understood that there was more chance of safety by remaining where they were than to risk

being crushed on the plain when these formidable animals separated.

Although the conflict had not lasted more than two or three minutes, the young people were beginning to find the time very long, when suddenly something like the roc in the *Arabian Nights* flew over their heads and alighted noiselessly behind them. At first they did not know what it could be, but soon recognized the lion, which, vanquished, gave up the conflict and was regaining the forest, making tremendous bounds.

The formidable feline, as if ashamed of its defeat, no longer roared. On the other hand, the mammoths celebrated their victory by trumpeting noisily, and several huge males, either through bravado or revenge, set out in pursuit of the fugitive.

The others began to disperse. The attention of Deer and Fair-Hair was particularly fixed upon the young mammoth which had been attacked by the lion. In spite of the promptness of the rescue, the poor animal was cruelly lacerated; the earth over which it moved was drenched with blood. It tottered as it walked, and several of its protectors seemed to be caressing it with their trunks. The touching solicitude manifested by a female was particularly noticeable; she was doubtless a tender mother, though tall enough to reach to the second story of a house. She supported and guided it, and the whole family moved slowly toward the avenue, where they soon disappeared.

VII.

A NIGHT IN THE WOODS.

NIGHT had closed in; the marsh which had served for the battle-field was becoming again deserted. The few mammoths moving here and there like dark masses were scarcely visible; the trumpeting and roars had ceased. But as the large animals grew silent, the smaller ones once more commenced their noise. Hyenas and wolves, collected in troops, uttered their mournful howls and advanced toward the swamp, doubtless in the hope of devouring some victim of the battle.

It now seemed impossible for Deer and Fair-Hair to reach the cave of Montmartre that night. There was more than a quarter of a league to be traversed through the thickets in total darkness, and all the savage denizens of the woods were issuing from their lairs. Yet the danger of remaining on the isolated rock, where they were exposed to attacks of every kind, was no less great. Fair-Hair therefore warned his companion that it was time to continue their way, and they advanced toward Montmartre.

When they entered the shadow of the trees they moved with the utmost caution. The howls increased,

and now seemed so near that the animals must be only a few paces away. Before, behind, among the bushes, in the tall grass, fiery eyes glowed like so many will-o'-the-wisps. Sometimes some of these nocturnal beasts stopped in the lovers' path, and seemed about to dispute their way, but when they approached sprang quickly aside and joined the constantly-increasing troop.

At the end of a few instants this troop was so numerous, so noisy, that Deer, in spite of her familiarity with such encounters, in spite of the confidence her lover's presence must have inspired, showed fresh signs of terror. While walking on she constantly shook the flint axe taken from Red. But these useless demonstrations only served to render the pack more eager, more furious, in the pursuit.

The hunter only laughed at his companion's fright. When the hyenas and wolves pressed upon them too closely, he contented himself with turning and uttering a sharp cry that put the cowardly animals to flight. Nevertheless, he was not ignorant that certain casualties might suddenly change the face of affairs; so he said to Deer,

"There's nothing to fear so long as we keep on our feet. But we mustn't fall."

In fact, the slightest fall would be fatal, and yet nothing was easier than to stumble. The mammoths' avenue, encumbered with branches and tree-trunks in consequence of the recent panic, was constantly growing narrower and made numerous turns. Every instant the lovers were stopped by obstacles over which they were obliged to climb, in spite of the eager oppo-

sition of the noisy pack at their heels, whose boldness became greater and greater, and the young couple were hemmed in on all sides. They could not see the animals that harassed them, but their glittering eyes and loud howls betrayed the large number of their enemies. They seemed to look upon them as their certain prey, and were evidently only waiting for a favorable opportunity to attack—an opportunity that could not fail to occur.

Fair-Hair resolved to make some demonstrations to render the wild beasts more cautious. A wolf, having approached too near, received a violent blow with the club that hurled him almost lifeless among the pack; then seizing his bow, the hunter shot an arrow haphazard into the moving crowd a few paces from him. The arrow doubtless struck, for plaintive cries instantly arose. But the lesson produced no important result; the lovers having continued their way, the pack followed, no less numerous, no less noisy, than before.

They were still in the utmost danger, and Fair-Hair was trying to think of some stratagem to escape the fierce animals, when a marvellous change occurred. The howls ceased, the beasts dispersed as if seized with a sudden fear. Nothing was audible in this portion of the forest except the rustling of the leaves and bushes through which the fugitives were dashing. The lovers found themselves entirely at liberty.

Deer was already rejoicing in this inexplicable circumstance, but Fair-Hair, far less reassured, looked around him to discover the cause. A sort of loud sniffing, repeated at regular intervals, fell upon his ear, and he perceived in the gloom, scarcely thirty paces

away, two glowing eyes which, judging from their huge dimensions, could not be those of a hyena or wolf.

The young hunter now knew why the beasts of prey had beat a retreat so hastily.

"The great bear of the caves!" he said in a low tone to his companion.

What was to be done with this new enemy, against which the weapons of those days were almost powerless? Fair-Hair was not slow in forming his resolution. Seeing above his head a large branch that seemed to belong to an ancient tree, he raised Deer in his arms as high as possible, murmuring,

"Quick! quick!"

Deer, who, as we have often said, was no fine lady, swung herself nimbly on the bough. Scarcely had she reached it when Fair-Hair, springing upward with incredible agility, seized the branch in his turn, raised himself by the strength of his wrists, and was soon beside his companion, eight or ten feet above the ground.

It was quite time. The cave-bear, which had stopped to sniff and discover the wanderers, whose scent was borne to it by the wind, moved forward again at a trot toward the spot where the two lovers had just been. On reaching it, it sniffed again, then rising on its hind paws, cast a cunning glance at the young couple, and such was its height that it seemed almost able to reach them.

In fact, the cave-bear was greatly superior in size to the bears of our day, the whole creation peculiar to that strange period having colossal proportions. Its forehead

was bulging, and it was covered with thick fur. Its habits and ferocity could only be compared with those of its congener, the "grizzly bear" of North America, the terrible animal whose astonishing feats are related by travelers. Its strength equalled its ferocity, and, next to the cave-lion, it was the most formidable destroyer of the pre-historic world.

Deer, on feeling the warmth of its noisome breath, could not restrain a cry of terror. Fair-Hair hastened to reassure her. Although the brute's muzzle was not more than a foot from the branch, the animal was too heavy to be able to leap; besides, like the grizzly bear, it could not climb trees. So the lovers had no cause to fear that it would try to dislodge them from their temporary asylum, and Deer, with the changefulness of mind that seems to be characteristic of children and savages, philosophically resigned herself to the situation.

The cave-bear, after having sniffed a moment, and convinced itself that it could do nothing against these human beings, fell back on all-fours. But either from natural ferocity, or simply on account of the curiosity of which certain animals often give examples, it did not stir from the spot.

Deer and Fair-Hair took no further trouble about it, and settled themselves comfortably in a fork of the tree to spend the night. They had perceived the impossibility of reaching the cave of Montmartre at this late hour, and their only means of safety was to take refuge in some tree until sunrise. This would do as well as any other, and they could wait patiently until the bear, weary of useless watching, should think proper to beat a retreat.

Yet Lynx's daughter showed a certain excitement,

laughing nervously, as if she were not so calm as she would have liked to appear.

The bear, hearing the foliage rustle above its head, remained on the watch, sometimes standing on two feet, sometimes on four; sniffing and panting by turns, it did not leave its post.

Deer, irritated by this obstinacy, resolved to avenge herself. She had kept Red's bow and thrown it over her shoulder, while carrying in her belt the flint arrows and axe. Through mischief, rather than the hope of driving the importunate besieger away, she fitted an arrow to the bow and discharged it.

She had a certain skill in the use of weapons, for in those days, when human life was constantly threatened, women often found themselves compelled to aid or defend their relatives. Besides, the bear was very near, and even a child could not have missed the huge mass, especially as two glittering eyes showed exactly where to aim.

Deer hit her mark, and a frightful howl instantly echoed on the air. The wounded bear rolled on the ground, trying to draw out the arrow that had struck it, biting itself with rage because it could not succeed. Soon it rose and directed its fury against the tree which served for a fortress to its adversaries. In the twinkling of an eye the old oak was stripped of its bark to a great height by the strong, sharp claws of the animal.

At the moment the arrow was discharged Fair-Hair could not repress an exclamation of anger. The young girl, terrified by what she had done, threw her arms around his neck, imploring pardon. The hunter's wrath could not resist her caresses; he returned Deer's embrace and answered gently,

"Imprudent! Now the bear won't lose sight of us so long as it has a breath of life."

These anticipations were correct. The animal, after vainly using its claws and teeth upon the trunk of the tree, resumed its position under the bough where the lovers were encamped, and began to watch them askance. When the pain of its wound became too severe, it renewed its growls and again tore long strips from the oak tree, but returned to its post, and nothing seemed to conquer its obstinacy.

But the lovers were confident that they had no peril to fear, at least for the moment. Ignorant of the refinements of civilized life, they felt little anxiety at the necessity of spending a whole night in a tree besieged by this formidable brute. As a keen wind began to make itself felt, and they wore clothing that protected them very insufficiently against the severity of the climate, they continued to cling closely to each other. Soon Deer, exhausted by fatigue, fell asleep with her head resting on her companion's shoulder.

He, on the contrary, took care not to yield to slumber. It was his duty to be ready for any event, and save the young girl from a fall which would inevitably have been fatal. So he remained with his eyes wide open, carefully supporting his beloved Deer, who had perfect confidence in his watchfulness and strength. She was often awakened with a start by the growling of the bear, but instantly fell asleep again, making a little plaintive murmur, like that of a child in its mother's arms.

This state of affairs remained unchanged until the first light of dawn began to color the sky. Deer awoke

in gay spirits, refreshed by the few hours' repose. But when she cast her eyes toward the foot of the tree she saw the huge bear, which, with bristling hair stained with blood and eyes fiercer than ever, remained at its post. They at first hoped that the daylight would put it to flight, like the rest of the nocturnal animals, whose distant clamor had just died away. In vain. The sun appeared, casting its golden rays through the mist and foliage. The bear did not raise the siege; its restless movements, its howls, showed that its fury was not diminished.

Fair-Hair looked at the fierce brute, and suddenly said to Deer,

"We must kill the bear or stay here through another night."

The young girl answered timidly,

"Arrows won't pierce it, and stone axes slip over its fur or are blunted and broken."

"I will kill it," said Fair-Hair firmly. "We will bear Lynx to the cave of the dead to-day. I'll summon my family, and we will eat the funeral feast. We'll eat the bear at Lynx's funeral."

Perhaps there was a great deal of bravado in this promise. The lovers had only five or six arrows, and arrows, unless by some extraordinary chance, could not seriously injure an animal of that size. Besides, a hand-to-hand conflict was not to be thought of. No man, if he had been a giant, would have ventured to cope with the iron frame of the cave-bear. Yet Fair-Hair, after pointing out to Deer her share in the conflict, prepared everything for the attack. Soon the growls became incessant; all the denizens of the forest were seized with terror at the noise of this battle.

VIII.

THE FAMILY.

LET us now return to Lynx's cave, where since the morning of the preceding day the two children and their mother had been shut up with the corpse of the head of the family.

During the first few hours Whistler and Rat-Catcher had endured the solitude with a tolerable degree of philosophy. A few rays of light streamed through the timbers Fair-Hair had skilfully arranged, and enabled them to continue their sports while nibbling acorns and chestnuts.

With the ignorance natural to their years, and the heedlessness peculiar to their rude natures, they gave no thought to their dead father and dying mother, but profited by the perfect liberty they possessed. Yet, mechanically obeying Fair-Hair's direction, one or the other had not neglected to occasionally dip in water the moss laid on Deaf's wound as a dressing. This primitive remedy, which accident had doubtless revealed to this ancient generation, was not slow in producing a marvellous effect.

Toward the end of the day, Deaf, though she had a fracture in her forehead which would have instantly

killed a woman of our race, gradually recovered her consciousness. Accustomed to expect no assistance, the unfortunate woman dragged herself on her hands and knees toward the horn that contained the supply of water, put her lips to it, and drank eagerly.

Rat-Catcher and Whistler did not trouble themselves about her. Wearied by the confinement, which had been greatly prolonged, they had just climbed on the rock placed across the entrance, and were trying to remove the timbers to go and play outside. It was a great piece of imprudence, for night was closing in, and the striped hyena that had been prowling around the cave since the morning (perhaps a former owner of the habitation) was lurking in the neighboring bushes. Yet they were on the point of executing their dangerous project when a harsh cry, half sad, half threatening, rose behind them and made them turn their heads.

At the sight of their mother they paused in their task. They remembered sundry manual corrections Deaf had often administered, and were not very certain she might not deal new ones.

So they jumped down from the rock, and approaching the injured woman looked at her with more curiosity than tenderness. As the damp moss that served as a dressing for the wound had fallen off, the oldest boy took a fresh handful, dipped it in water, and laid it on Deaf's forehead. The old woman, who was at first exhausted by her painful exertions, raised herself again and asked,

"Lynx?"

"Killed," replied Rat-Catcher carelessly, pointing to the place where the corpse lay.

Deaf groaned, but continued,

"Deer?"

"Red carried her off."

Rat-Catcher added almost instantly,

"I'm hungry."

"I'm hungry," repeated his brother, who to show his impatience was drawing the shrillest sounds from his bone whistle.

The little savages, accustomed to gorge themselves on half-raw meat, really felt as if their stomachs were empty. Deaf, in spite of her wound, in spite of the grief caused by her husband's death and her daughter's disappearance, also felt the want of something to eat, for this dull race seemed to possess insatiable rapacity. Yet the mother did not think of herself. On hearing her children's cry, "I'm hungry," she summoned up a little strength and crept toward the place where the acorns and beechnuts reserved for the wants of the family were stored. Alas! the young gluttons, for want of occupation, had devoured everything; there was nothing in the cave which could serve for food.

This circumstance capped the climax of the unfortunate woman's despair, and she sank upon the earth. The children, without troubling themselves any more about her, began to cry, pushed each other, and at last fought without listening to Deaf's remonstrances.

Meantime, night closed in. Rat-Catcher and Whistler, whose desire for sleep was even more imperious than that for food, threw themselves on the dry leaves and fell into a heavy slumber. Deaf, exhausted by her exertions and worn out by her terrible suffering, remained in the place to which she had crawled.

It was a terrible night, and human beings at that period must have frequently spent similar ones. The fire, it will be remembered, had gone out long before, and the cold soon chilled the occupants of the cave. Besides, as soon as daylight had vanished the usual howling was heard without, and this time rose incessantly at the very mouth of the grotto. The obstinate hyena of which we have spoken, perceiving the apparent insecurity of the barricade, tried to break through it, and called its companions by its screams. A large band assembled, and during the whole night these hideous animals attacked Lynx's abode. Some persistently scratched the stones to separate them and slip through the interstices. Others assailed the timbers with teeth and claws. When one was weary, another succeeded it, and they disputed with each other for the best places. Every instant there was reason to fear that the beams might give way; a hyena often thrust its head between them and filled the cavern with its yells.

Several times poor Deaf thought that the barricade had yielded, that the monsters had entered her abode. Even the children were roused by the horrible tumult, but sleep soon conquered terror.

The mother of the family did not give way to despair. Inured to hardships, accustomed to suffering, habituated to danger, she was not a woman to remain inactive so long as a breath of life lingered. Still dragging herself along on her hands and knees, she took from a corner a spear with a flint head, and lay down near the mouth of the cave. When a hyena became too bold or too noisy Deaf dealt it a blow through the bars;

the beast instantly fled howling away, while another took its place.

We see that the night spent by the inhabitants of the grotto was even more terrible than the one passed by Deer and Fair-Hair, besieged in a tree by a cave-bear. Toward morning Deaf no longer had strength even to brandish the spear. She remained unconscious at her post, and if the eager brutes had succeeded in forcing their way into the cave, they would have easily conquered its only defender. Fortunately, thanks to Fair-Hair's wise precautions, the bars were firmly fastened, and the hyenas were forced to retire at the first dawn of day.

Deaf remained motionless for nearly an hour longer; she seemed dead, but was only asleep, overpowered by fatigue and sorrow. Perhaps she would have remained in this condition still longer, but the slumber that might have been so beneficial was not respected. Her children rose and began to utter their usual cry, "I'm hungry."

Deaf opened her eyes, and, again becoming conscious of her misery, also felt more imperiously than ever the need of food. Besides, the stock of water was exhausted; thirst was growing as pressing as hunger. It was useless to hesitate; they must leave the grotto.

The old woman at last yielded to necessity. After having convinced herself, by looking through the bars, that everything was quiet outside, she helped the children remove the barricade. A gust of fresh air suddenly entered the noisome cave, full of half-dried bones and all kinds of impurities. Rat-Catcher and Whistler were eagerly climbing the rock to spring out of doors,

when their mother again held them back. She had just perceived some one gliding along the sort of path, choked with bushes, that led to the cave. Now, of all the enemies which at that period threatened man, the most dangerous was man himself.

"Somebody is coming!" exclaimed Deaf in terror.

The children crouched behind the rock. Deaf had no time to replace the bars, but she seized her spear, stood on the threshold of her subterranean abode, and prepared to repel a new attack.

She did not wait long; a human figure appeared among the rocks.

"Deer!" cried the old woman in a transport of joy.

"Deer! Deer!" exclaimed the children in their turn.

It was really Deer. In one hand she held a bow, in the other a flint axe. She seemed overwhelmed with fatigue. At the sight of her mother alive and standing before her, she uttered an exclamation of joy and sprang lightly into the cave.

Both seemed happy in seeing each other again, but they did not resort to any of the caresses and embraces by which a mother and daughter of our day would mutually show their affection. They confined themselves to looking at each other, laughing stupidly, and uttering disconnected words. The children, on seeing their elder sister, who had often provided for their wants, could think of nothing except to repeat their tiresome refrain, "I'm hungry."

Yet Deaf wanted some information.

"Where is Red?" she asked.

"Red? Dead," replied Deer.

"Good! good!" cried the old woman, clapping her

hands with revengeful satisfaction. "And Fair-Hair?" she continued.

"Fair-Hair," replied Deer, raising her head proudly, "shot Red with his arrows, and he shall be my husband. He has killed a cave-bear. He's coming with his whole family to carry Lynx to the cave of the dead, and we'll eat the bear at the funeral feast. Then Fair-Hair will be master here."

"Good!" repeated Deaf, delighted with the long story her daughter related.

The boys only understood that there was going to be a feast, and jumped for joy, exclaiming,

"A bear! I'll have something to eat."

A few moments after the persons whose coming Deer had announced reached the grotto. Fair-Hair and several of his relatives, men and women, appeared to bury the body of Lynx according to the rites then in use.

We can guess what had occurred. The bear, weakened by numerous wounds and loss of blood, had at last succumbed to the blows of Fair-Hair and his companion; then both, by great efforts, had raised the animal into a tree to preserve it from the wolves and hyenas, which would have devoured it a few instants after the departure of the conquerors. Having taken this precaution, Fair-Hair sent Deer alone to Lynx's cave, which he could do without much danger to her, as it was only a short distance. He himself had gone to the abode of his own family, on the other side of the mountain, to make arrangements for his father-in-law's funeral.

Besides the persons who accompanied him, several others were to be present at the ceremony, but they had gone to find the bear in the woods. The whole

number was not more than twenty, though almost the whole population of the neighborhood; for, we repeat, the human race was then by no means numerous, and was scattered over the earth in families. To find other inhabitants of Parisian soil it would have been necessary to go up the right bank of the Seine to Chaumont, or ascend the left to Mont Lucotitius and Grenelle.

Moreover, the ceremonies of a funeral were the only occasions on which these rude hunters met, and the custom of assembling all the invited guests at a banquet had perhaps contributed to the establishment of such a usage.

Fair-Hair's relatives were of the same type as himself, though they had not his frank and almost intelligent face. The shape of their skin garments varied according to the convenience of each individual; fashion did not appear to be very tyrannical. The women, like the men, were armed with bows, lances, or clubs.

Fair-Hair's father, still a strong, vigorous man, exerted a certain degree of authority over all the members of his family. He held in his hand one of those singular insignia of office several specimens of which have been found in the strata of the Quaternary period, and which, from their resemblance to those savage chiefs still carry, have been recognized as "rulers' batons." This one, the work of Fair-Hair, was a piece of reindeer's horn pierced with two holes, on which the hunter had carved the figures of animals.* Still, it may be doubted whether these batons gave the head of a family or tribe undisputed power when age had deprived him of the strength necessary to make himself respected: veneration for the old is a virtue of later times.

* Musée de Saint-Germain.

The new-comers, on entering Lynx's grotto, addressed no courteous greeting, no word of consolation, to the afflicted family. Two men made a sort of litter of branches; others went to look at the body of the former master of the habitation. All examined in turn the terrible wound in the dead man's head, but said nothing; and if they had any thought, it was doubtless that the man who had dealt the fearful blow must be a great champion.

The remains of Lynx were placed on the improvised bier, and they set out. Every one followed the bearers; even the widow, who in spite of her weakness wished to join the procession, especially as the place of burial was only a few hundred paces distant.

As soon as the body was borne across the threshold of the cave, first Deaf, then Deer, and then the other women present, uttered mournful cries. We must confess that these lamentations, like those at Irish burials, seemed rather prescribed by an invariable etiquette than the result of real sorrow. They ceased when the party had proceeded a certain distance from the dead man's former abode, but burst forth afresh at the sight of the place where the corpse was to be interred.

Halfway down the hill between Lynx's cave and that occupied by Fair-Hair's family was a large, low grotto, usually closed by a stone, which by great exertions had just been removed. Before this cavern, whence exhaled a nauseating odor, extended a sort of terrace, on which seven or eight persons were busily occupied.

A fire had been lighted in the centre of the terrace, and while one of the bystanders constantly threw on wood, others were cutting up the bear, which they had





FUNERAL FEAST.

had great difficulty in conveying to the spot. The monstrous animal had been stripped of its skin, and they were detaching the long bones with flint knives and axes, while large steaks, placed on the embers, already poured forth a thick, black smoke.

On perceiving the funeral train the women on the terrace united their wails to those their dear and her mother were already uttering; but this was a mere ceremony, and silence soon returned. Then the bearers placed the body at the entrance of the grotto, at the back of which several squatting figures were visible, and before long during the darkness they disappeared in the interior of the cave.

The grotto was one of the primitive period, when man had not yet reached the point at which many of which are found in Sweden and Norway. In later years men were to build the tumuli and covered avenues—rude monuments which were only artificial grottos. Afterward human pride invented the megalithic monuments and pyramids.

The feast began, and the sight of the hideous corpse stretched on the threshold of its last abode did not seem to occupy the attention of the guests. They sat on the ground around the fire, and ate with their usual gluttony. They began by breaking the bear's bones—an operation that presented many difficulties, on account of their metallic hardness, and for which heavy stones were used. The precious marrow having been devoured, the guests attacked the steaks, and each gorged himself with meat without troubling himself about his neighbors.

They talked little, as usual. But Fair-Hair, the king of the festival, said a few words about his conflict with



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Humanity, we see, was at the primitive period when it buried its dead in grottos, so many of which are found in Sweden and Norway. In later years men were to build the tumuli and covered avenues—rude monuments which were only artificial grottos. Afterward human pride invented the megalithic monuments and pyramids.

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They talked little, as usual. But Fair-Hair, the king of the festival, said a few words about his conflict with

the great bear of the caves, as well as the manner in which he had despatched Red, the abductor of his beloved Deer. These remarks were perhaps not very clever, but the guests, with their mouths full, uttered a hearty laugh, which according to our ideas was scarcely appropriate to the occasion.

Deer and her mother took part in the festival, and the poor widow, with her fractured skull and bloody hair, did not seem less eager for food. As to the children, they gave themselves up to the indulgence of their appetites with great delight, and doubtless forgot that the generous repast was given on the occasion of their father's funeral.

At last the noise of the jaws ceased; the guests, stupefied by food, seemed to understand that it was time to finish the ceremony. They rose, and everybody proceeded toward the grotto.

The women's wails again arose, and continued while Fair-Hair and another hunter were arranging the body of Lynx in a squatting posture, according to the traditional mode. These arrangements being completed, several pieces of bear's meat, which had been reserved during the banquet, were placed in the grotto, together with the dead man's weapons—his bow, club, and spear.

This was not all; each of Lynx's relatives, each of the guests, offered a gift to the corpse. The widow approached first, and placed beside her husband a flint scraper and a bone needle, emblems of the tasks she performed in the household. Deer took from her arm a bracelet made of the teeth of wolves and offered it to her father. The boys, roused by the example, brought, perhaps not without regret, one his sling

of auroch's sinews, the other his whistle of reindeer bone. Fair-Hair laid beside the body an axe, whose bone handle, representing a mammoth, was one of his finest carvings. Each of the guests added to these pious gifts a weapon or utensil which he thought worthy to serve for a present to the dead.

It is owing to this custom that we find in these ancient burial-places so many incongruous objects, relics of a world very different from ours. It also proved, let us hasten to say, that these savages, in spite of their brutishness, believed in a second life. This food, these weapons, and utensils of every description, placed in the grotto of the dead, were, according to their ideas, supplies for a new life, whose needs were to be analogous to those of this existence; and, though there are no decisive proofs of it, everything leads to the supposition that they also believed in the existence of a Creator, the sovereign Master of all things.

After these ceremonies they left the grotto, and while the men were replacing the stone the women uttered a last salvo of wails and lamentations. At last, the work being completed, several of the guests returned to the fire to gather up the remnants of the banquet, while others prepared to accompany Fair-Hair to Lynx's cave, of which he was going to take possession.

They began their march with a certain solemnity; it was a nuptial ceremony succeeding the funeral one.

First came the head of the family, holding his ruler's baton, and beside him Fair-Hair himself, armed with his lance with a flint head. Then followed two sturdy young men, carrying the skin of the cave-bear; this skin, the principal wealth of the household, was to

serve as a bed for the newly-wedded pair. Next walked the invited guests and the dead man's sons, holding as nuptial torches two glowing firebrands to relight the fire in the cave. The women came last, in the humble attitude the weaker sex occupied toward the stronger in barbarous times.

They followed the almost invisible path that wound through the woods and thickets, but no one spoke, no joyful exclamations were heard. The nuptial march greatly resembled the funeral procession. No sounds were audible except the groans of poor Deaf, who was suffering from her wound, and to whom no one offered consolation or support.

Thus they reached the cave, which everybody entered to install the young couple, but there were neither prayers, speeches, nor ceremonies of any description. They merely relighted the fire, and when the wood began to crackle and the smoke rose in clouds, Fair-Hair, standing erect, lance in hand, said with marked emphasis,

"I am Deer's husband, and I have avenged Lynx. Now I will feed the family by the products of my hunting. Let each be careful to obey me!"

Such, according to the ideas of modern science, were the humble predecessors of the Parisian population, which was to exert so great an influence over the whole world. The few savages who inhabited the caves of Montmartre, Grenelle, Levallois, Pecq, and probably other localities, now impossible to recognize, disappeared with the mammoth and cave-bear at the end of the Quaternary period. Did they perish in the terrible cataclysms that ensued, or emigrate with the rein-

deer and other animals of species still living that have left their bones in our geological strata? No one can say; a more intelligent, if not less ferocious, race succeeded them in future Gaul, and this race we shall study to the threshold of history.

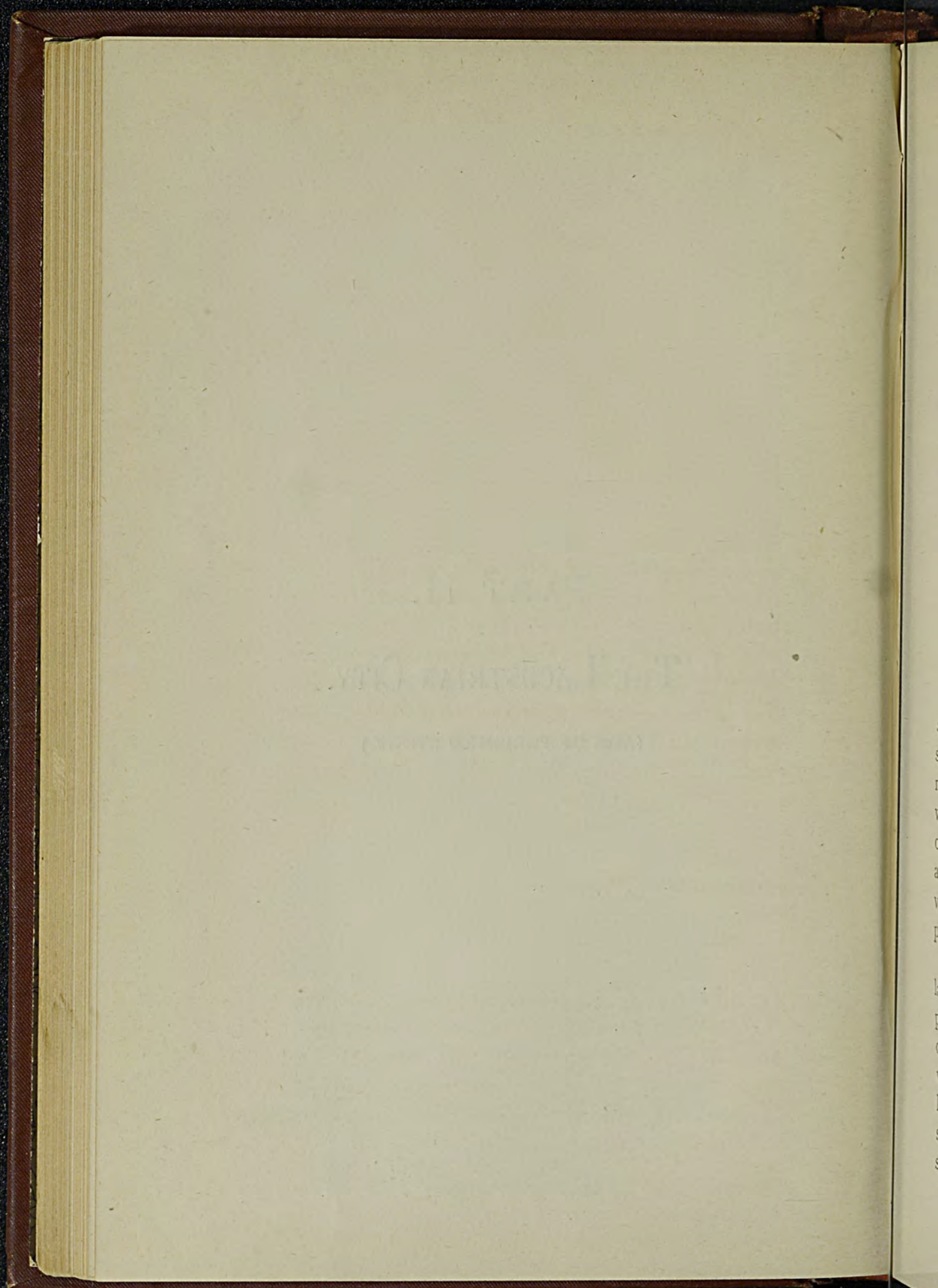
THE LARVAE

These are the larvae of species still living that have
been found in the geological strata. No one can
say how many millions of years have elapsed since the
first of them is found, and this is a small study
to the present day.

PART II.

THE LACUSTRIAN CITY.

(AGE OF POLISHED STONE.)



I.

THE RETURN.

THE northern part of that country which so many centuries later was to be called "Gaul" comprised a vast hilly region, covered with dense forests which stretched far beyond the bounds of the horizon.

In the centre of a valley surrounded by verdant hills, on the shores of a lake that peacefully mirrored the sky, appeared groves of fruit-trees, whose regularity showed that they had been planted by the hand of man, while a few scanty crops of flax and cereals waved here and there amid the brambles. But the object that would particularly attract the attention was a collection of singular structures emerging from the very bosom of the waters—structures which we shall proceed to describe in detail.

At forty or fifty paces from the shore, at a bend in the lake, was a large number of piles, which supported a platform of beams covered with earth. On this species of floor were a hundred huts, some conical like the wigwams of savages, others of a quadrangular shape with low flat roofs. They were arranged to form streets and squares; the smoke escaping from the top of several showed that they were occupied.

This aquatic city was connected with the shore by a bridge of boards, which could be readily removed in time of danger. The cultivated fields and fruit-trees evidently belonged to this settlement, many of which existed in that remote period, and which are now called *Lacustrian cities*. Several pirogues, clumsy and shapeless in form, were moving over the glittering surface of the lake.

Owing to the vast extent of the landscape, its details when viewed from a distance blended into each other, and little could be distinguished except water and foliage. If men were moving over the wide space, they were almost invisible to the spectator standing on one of the hills which surrounded the valley.

Now, on a warm, sunny day a young man who had paused a moment on the summit of a rock was gazing with interest at the scene we have just described. Tall and sturdy in figure, his only garment was a short robe of auroch-skin; his head and limbs were bare; his thick hair mingled with a beard which, though somewhat coarse, harmonized admirably with the manly expression of his countenance. He carried on his back a skin bag that apparently contained heavy articles. Leaning on a spear, he held in his hand a large yew bow, while his quiver, filled with arrows, hung over his left shoulder.

The traveller—for, judging from his weary air, he had arrived in the country after a long journey—did not belong to the human race of the primitive ages. We are now approaching the end of the period of *Polished Stone*, and the race that had inhabited Gaul in the age of *Hewn Stone* had disappeared or migrated toward the

North Pole with the reindeer and mammoth. The young traveller was of the purest type of the Aryan race, from which our ancestors, the Celts, seem to have descended. His figure was admirably proportioned, while his oval face, blue eye, aquiline nose, fair hair and beard would have made him in any age and in any country a model of manly beauty.

Standing in an attitude full of natural dignity and pride, he was gazing with delight mingled with tender emotion at the aquatic city outspread before him, when the sound of a horn was heard. He glanced anxiously around, suddenly fixed his spear in the rock, seized an arrow, fitted it to the bow, and prepared to shoot.

At the foot of the rock a young hunter had just appeared, who had also bent his bow and prepared to discharge an arrow. The two strangers continued to aim at each other a moment; then the hunter lowered his weapon, though without putting it aside, and uttered a guttural exclamation; the traveller responded by a similar cry.

After a little hesitation they approached each other. They had not yet banished all distrust, but watched each other with an expression of more curiosity than enmity.

The hunter, as has been said, was young, and both costume and equipments resembled those of the first-comer—the same tunic of skin, the same weapons; but he also had a flint axe suspended at his side. He too was not wanting in a certain bold, manly beauty, but his hair and beard were black as ebony, and the expression of his flashing eyes sometimes bordered on ferocity.

When the two young men were within ten steps of each other they stopped by a simultaneous movement.

The hunter, in a language whose tones were by no means harmonious, said:

"My name is Hurricane; I belong to the tribe of *Wolves*, that live on yonder hill. I am on the hunting-grounds of my tribe, watching for uri and wild boars. Who are you?"

"My name is Light-Foot; I belong to the tribe of *Cormorants*, whose dwellings you see on the lake. I left my people ten moons ago to follow some strangers who were journeying toward the setting sun. But I have returned from my long wanderings, and am impatient to see my home and friends."

These explanations did not seem to satisfy Hurricane, who frowned and ground his teeth, making a gesture as if he were about to discharge an arrow at the traveller's breast. The latter, who was still on the alert, repeated the threatening manœuvre, but said quietly,

"When I left my tribe there was peace between the *Wolves* and *Cormorants*. Has war broken out during my absence?"

"No, your tribe and mine are friendly. It's you I hate."

"Why, I never saw you—have scarcely heard your name!"

"Yet I am famed as a skilful hunter—have shot many aurochs and bears. I want to kill you, because you love *Water-Chestnut*, the oldest daughter of the chief of the *Cormorants*, whom I too love."

He bent his bow again; Light-Foot bent his.

"I do not fear you," said he, "yet it is not *Water-Chestnut*, the chief's oldest daughter, whom I want to win for my wife, but *Strawberry-Blossom*, the younger."

Hurricane could not restrain a gesture of delight.

"Are you not deceiving me?" he asked; "is it really Strawberry-Blossom you want to win?"

"Yes, and I'm bringing gifts to induce Sea-Eagle to bestow her upon me. Can you tell me, Hurricane, whether my beloved Strawberry-Blossom is still in the Lacustrian city, or if any evil has befallen her?"

There was a tone in the lover's voice which no other lover could misunderstand. Hurricane was visibly softened.

"Strawberry-Blossom is well," he replied; "she will not listen to the young men of the Wolves or Cormorants who come to woo her. But as you don't love Water-Chestnut, why should there be war between us when our tribes are at peace?"

"Let us have peace, then," replied Light-Foot.

He replaced his arrow in the quiver, while Hurricane did the same.

The ice being broken between the two young men, the hunter added,

"I'm a friend of Sea-Eagle, and am going to his hut; may I accompany you?"

"You may," replied Light-Foot.

And they began to walk on side by side.

When they entered the woods to reach the Lacustrian city, Hurricane went into a thicket to get a roe he had killed a short time before and concealed amid the foliage on seeing a stranger. He threw his game over his shoulders, and, without troubling himself about the bloody trail he was leaving behind him, walked forward with a light step, leaning on his spear.

Ever and anon the notes of a horn, which had already

attracted Light-Foot's attention, were heard from the depths of the forest, and Hurricane told his companion that several men belonging to his tribe were hunting in the neighborhood. But no baying of hounds mingled with the harsh notes of this primitive instrument, and Hurricane was followed by none of the intelligent quadrupeds which in our day are the indispensable assistants of every hunter.

In fact, in the Lacustrian period the domestication of the dog was far from being complete. The animal still seemed too wild, too like its congener the wolf, to be the friend and servant of man, and if its bones have been found amid the remains of the ancient world, they are there for the same reason as those of the stag and auroch; that is, because the men who lived in the age of Polished Stone ate the dog, as they did the other animals that fell under their blows.

The young men advanced through the thickets, constantly turning aside to avoid impenetrable undergrowth, and Light-Foot overwhelmed his new friend with questions about the events which had occurred in the Lacustrian city during his absence. Hurricane answered curtly; he seemed much more inclined to talk about the beautiful Water-Chestnut than Strawberry-Blossom, to whom Light-Foot constantly returned. At last the traveller asked his companion:

"So Sea-Eagle, the chief of my tribe, is on the point of giving you his oldest daughter, Water-Chestnut."

"Not yet; like all old people, he is avaricious. I'm constantly offering him presents, but they never seem handsome enough. I'm going to give him this roe, but Water-Chestnut is worth more than a roe."

The hunter sighed heavily. At the end of a moment he continued:

"Do you hope to obtain Strawberry-Blossom, Light-Foot?"

"I don't know. Before I went away I was a fisherman, and whenever I caught a large fish I brought it to the chief, who accepted it carelessly; but Strawberry-Blossom secretly smiled upon me. Now I have such gifts for the chief that perhaps he will no longer refuse me my beloved."

"What have you?"

"Sea-Eagle shall see," replied Light-Foot.

They walked on a few moments in silence. Hurricane's attention was fixed upon the weapon his companion carried in his hand.

"What is that?" he asked curiously.

Light-Foot's only reply was to hold out his spear, whose point was not, like those of the country, made of stone or serpentine, but formed of a greenish metal, long, sharp, and glittering on the edges. Hurricane, greatly astonished, returned it.

"What is it?" he repeated.

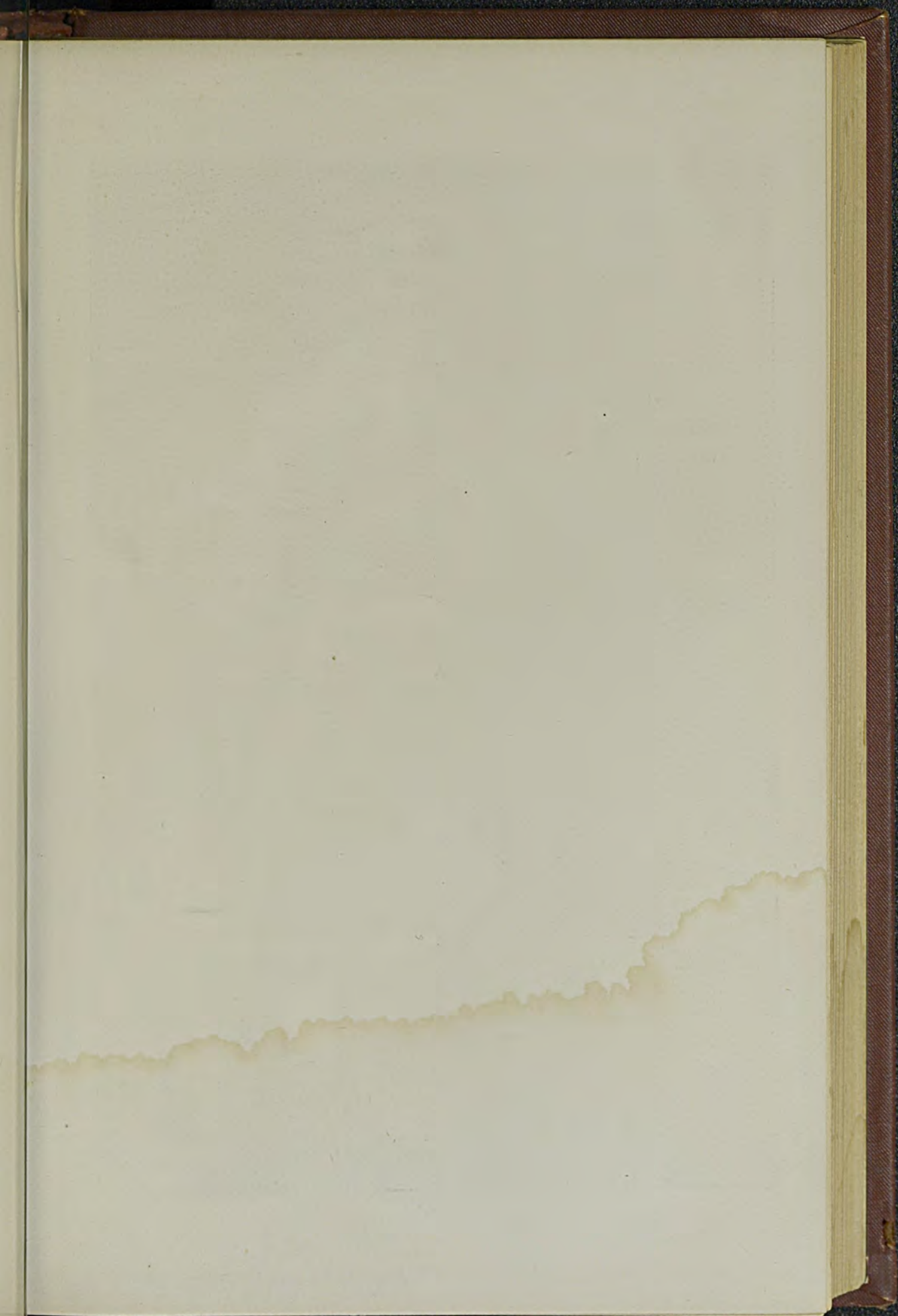
"Bronze," replied Light-Foot.

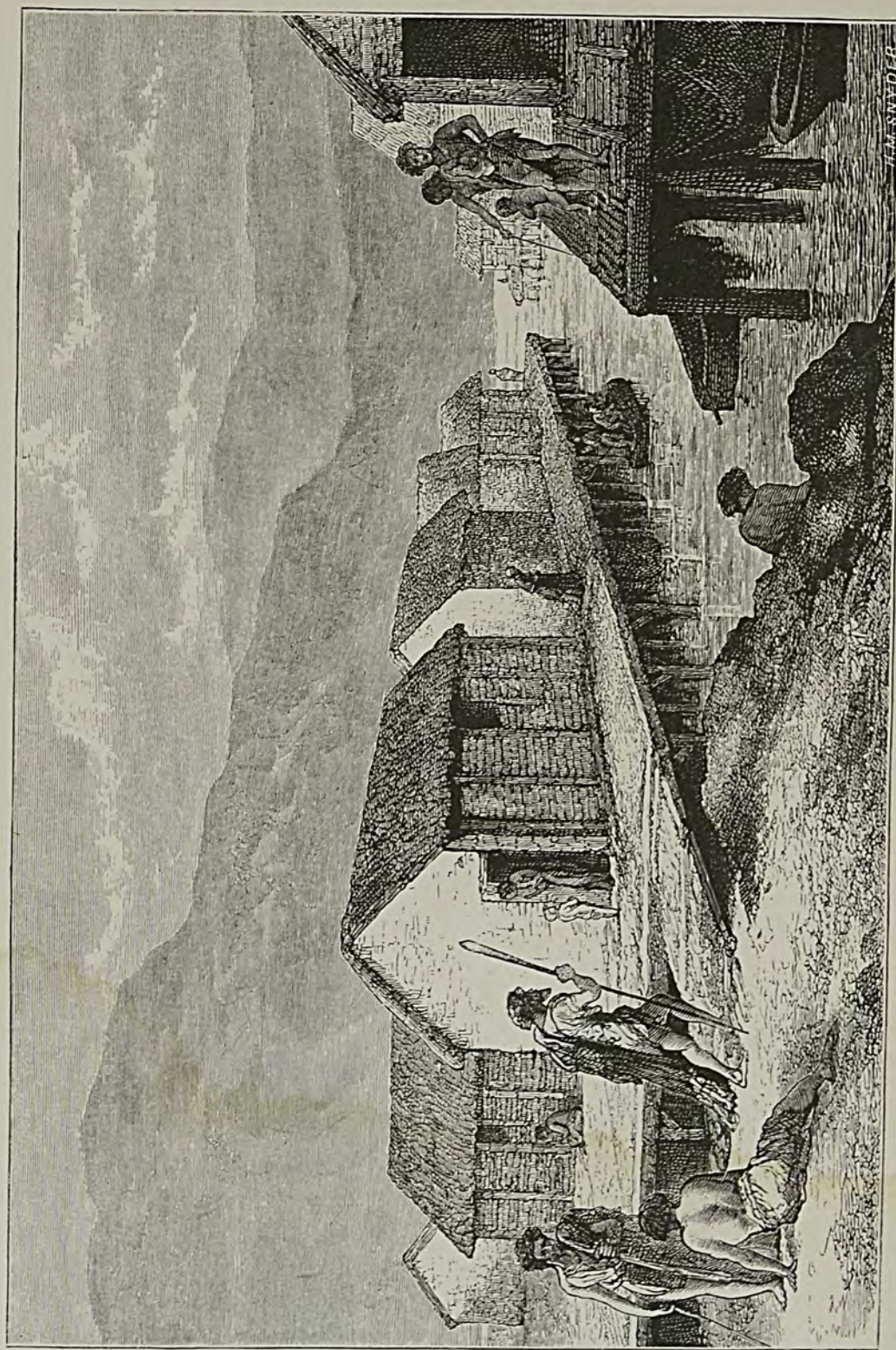
This word "bronze" was not unknown to Hurricane and the tribes living near the Lacustrian city. Certain nations already possessed a few weapons—axes, lance-heads, knives—made of a substance which bore this name, and which was a thousand times superior to the hewn or polished flint used from time immemorial among preceding generations. But this substance, which was extremely rare, appeared more precious to the men of that period than diamonds and rubies would be to those of our day.

"So that's what is called bronze?" said the hunter. "Now I can guess what present you are going to make Sea-Eagle—a present that will rouse the envy of all the chiefs who live on the lake, fields, and mountains."

"This spear is for my own use," replied the traveller, taking the weapon, which Hurricane did not seem very ready to restore. "I shall use it for fishing, hunting, or against my enemies; as for Sea-Eagle, I intend to offer him other gifts."

The hunter said nothing, but again cast a jealous glance at the companion who possessed such wealth. He became gloomy and thoughtful, while his frowning brows bore witness to the ungovernable passions aroused within him.





A SWISS LAKE VILLAGE OF THE BRONZE EPOCH.



A SWISS LAKE VILLAGE OF THE BRONZE EPOCH.

II.

THE CHIEF'S DAUGHTERS.

THE two young men, having left the shelter of the forest, turned toward the cultivated region seen on the shore of the lake. As has been stated, there were a few fields of irregular shape, which had been freed from parasitical plants by means of fire, and lightly scratched on the surface with wooden implements, for the plough had not yet been invented. In these fields, so imperfectly prepared, the seeds then in use—various kinds of wheat and barley—had been sown; several pieces of ground were covered with the beautiful blue flowers of the flax. Along the rough, narrow public roads stood the fruit-trees of which we have spoken; among them were apple, cherry, pear, and plum. But these trees were far from producing fruit like that which now appears on our tables. Grafting was then unknown; there was only the wild stock, whose fruit was small and bitter. Besides, these fruits were only eaten when dried, and doubtless in winter in times of scarcity, as may be supposed by the stores of pears and apples, dried in the fire, found among the remains of the Lacustrian period.

Besides these productions, which promised the members of the tribe vegetable diet, there were several en-

closures formed of stout palisades, and intended for the domestic animals—oxen, sheep, and goats—which also served for food. But these animals did not yet appear to be numerous, judging from the small size of the enclosures, which, moreover, were now empty, the cattle having been sent to pasture; probably fishing and hunting offered the people of that remote period more resources for food than the products of their herds.

Light-Foot and his companion scarcely cast a glance at this primitive agriculture, but turned into a path that led to the foot-bridge connecting the shore with the aquatic city. They were beginning to distinguish here and there men, women, and children busied in tilling the fields; a larger number were passing to and fro on the platform which supported the village, while the fishermen were moving over the lake in their pirogues. All these people—who in spite of the heat were dressed in garments of skin, with their heads and feet bare—wore a grave, severe expression, which augured little in favor of the gentleness of their manners.

The arrival of the young men at first seemed to excite no great curiosity, but when they reached the bridge leading to the city there was a change.

A boy of fifteen, as scantily clothed as possible—that is, he had no other garment than a short goat-skin tunic—was sitting on a beam of the bridge and acting as sentinel. He pushed aside the tangled hair that concealed part of his face, and looked distrustfully at the strangers, but soon arose, clapped his hands, and began to run, shouting,

“Light-Foot! Light-Foot has come back! Here’s Light-Foot!”

And he continued to jump and clap his hands, without listening to the traveller, who said,

"Yes, yes, it's I, Greedy Pike; did you suppose I was never coming back?"

At Greedy Pike's cries unkempt heads and frightened faces appeared at the doors of the huts. On recognizing the youth, who had doubtless been supposed dead, men and women rushed out and surrounded him, but their pleasure was expressed only by clapping their hands and by exclamations, affectionate demonstrations being still in a very rudimentary state.

The two young men, escorted by the constantly-increasing crowd, advanced toward the dwelling of the chief. This house did not possess the circular form of some of the other huts, which strongly resembled beehives. It was built of logs covered with rushes, had a flat roof, one or two small windows without shutters, and a door so low that one was obliged to stoop to cross the threshold. In the centre of the roof a hole had been made, through which the smoke could escape when the wind permitted.

The chief was absent; there was no one in the hut except his two daughters, Water-Chestnut and Strawberry-Blossom. But before speaking of Sea-Eagle's daughters we will describe the interior of this singular habitation, which, except in size and shape, resembled all the others in the city.

It contained only one apartment, whose walls were covered with clay. With the exception of a few rudely-hewn blocks of wood, there were none of the articles of furniture which in our day are seen in the dwellings of the poorest peasant. There were neither tables,

stools, nor beds, the metal tools for shaping wood not being known. As in former ages, the people slept on heaps of moss, with the skins of bears, wolves, or sheep for coverings. To make amends, a quantity of heterogeneous articles were scattered over the floor or hung on the walls by bone pegs. There were a few earthen vessels of the rudest workmanship and without any kind of ornament; large baskets of rushes containing dried fruits or seeds; nets and harpoons for fishing; bows, flint axes, hunters' spears; and lastly the antlers of stags and horns of wild oxen, intended to be carved. All these objects, which in those days constituted wealth, were in great quantities, as beseemed the dwelling of a chief, the most important person in the tribe.

We have said that one or two narrow windows had been made in the walls, but air and light were admitted principally through the door and the large opening in the roof. The fireplace consisted of a stone imbedded in clay; around it were ranged the wooden blocks already described; here the family met and took their meals.

Let us mention a characteristic particular. In a corner of the apartment there was a trap-door overhanging the lake, and at the bottom of this hole the waves were heard plashing against the piles that supported the village. Herodotus, the father of history, tells us that in his day similar trap-doors existed in the Lacustrian cities on Lake Prasias, where the children were always tied by one foot with a rope of rushes, lest they should fall into the water. Through these openings—whether they served to rid the household of useless rubbish or enabled the occupants to keep alive in osier weirs the

fish intended for food—a quantity of articles must have been lost which now reveal to us the customs of these amphibious tribes; and as such articles are found only in the neighborhood of the piles, it is to them especially that we owe the discovery of this ancient world.*

The room was pervaded by an unpleasant odor of sour milk, ill-prepared skins, and imperfectly-dried bones and horns; besides, the smoke seemed unwilling to escape through the hole in the roof. The chief's two daughters, however, were in this heavy, offensive atmosphere. Water-Chestnut, kneeling before a hollow stone, was busied in crushing grain to make coarse cakes; Strawberry-Blossom, the younger, seated before a stake filled with flax, was spinning by means of a distaff.

Both the sisters were really beautiful, though in a somewhat barbarous style. Their regular features had a masculine expression, like those of young peasant-girls accustomed to work in the fields, and their complexions were bronzed by the open air. Their dress consisted of a sort of waist of brown cloth woven by their own hands, and which, in spite of its coarseness, seemed to be a great luxury for the times. This waist, which left the arms and part of the shoulders uncovered, was fastened under a skirt of deer-skin very carefully dressed; their limbs and feet remained bare, according to the fashion of the times. Water-Chestnut was a brunette, with bright eyes and a vivacious expression; Strawberry-Blossom, who was more delicate in her proportions, had luxuriant fair hair, which harmonized admirably with her mirthful blue eyes.

Sea-Eagle's daughters seemed by no means destitute

* Le Hon, *Fossil Man*.

of coquetry. They wore numerous necklaces on their necks and bracelets on their arms and legs. These necklaces and bracelets were made of yellow amber procured in barter, rudely-fashioned glass beads, and even the teeth of wolves and wild boars, like those in the Age of Hewn Stone. Water-Chestnut, whose hair was fastened at the back of her neck, kept it in place, according to the Chinese fashion, by means of long pins of bone or horn. It was to this circumstance that the eldest daughter of the Cormorant chief owed her name of Water-Chestnut, for these pins gave her head a resemblance to the brown fruits with thorny lobes so common even now in certain ponds, and which then served for food. Strawberry-Blossom, who had received her name from the shrinking timidity of her manner, used only a small number of the ornaments of which her sister was so lavish, and her hair fell in braids on her shoulders.

The two sisters, on seeing the young men enter, uttered an exclamation of surprise. Strawberry-Blossom, blushing deeply, dropped her distaff, while her sister, leaving the pestle, rose to her full height, displaying her majestic figure. Then they clapped their hands as children do, which seemed to be the manner of bidding welcome among this tribe.

The travellers, after leaning their bows and spears against the wall, advanced toward the chief's daughters.

Hurricane laid his game at Water-Chestnut's feet. "I have killed a deer on the hunting-ground of my tribe," said he, "and brought it to Sea-Eagle to make a feast. On my way home I met this young man, who belongs to the tribe of the Cormorants, and we came together."

"He is a friend of my father also," said Water-Chestnut.

"Yes, yes, a friend," added Strawberry-Blossom with a still deeper flush.

"The chief's daughters have not forgotten me," said Light-Foot modestly. "I have been absent a long time, endured many fatigues, braved many dangers. Now I have returned to my tribe, and want to see Sea-Eagle."

Water-Chestnut answered: "Sea-Eagle is the master of his house; he receives whatever guests he chooses. He is now on the lake. I'll call him; he will decide what to say and do."

She seized a urus horn, went to the threshold of the door, and, putting the trumpet to her mouth, drew from it discordant intonations, strange to hear from such lovely lips. These sounds echoed far over the water, and when they ceased another horn answered faintly from a distance. Water-Chestnut re-entered the hut, and putting back the horn said, "Father is coming."

She eagerly resumed her work, either because she was afraid of being scolded if her task were not finished on the return of the head of the family, or because she felt the necessity of crushing a larger quantity of wheat for the feast which was doubtless about to take place. Perhaps the same thought occurred to her sister, for, leaving her distaff, she went to Water-Chestnut's assistance. Both hastened to make the imperfectly-bruised grain into cakes, which, cooked on the hot stone of the fireplace, were to serve the guests for bread.*

The new-comers, seated on the blocks of wood, fol-

* Le Hon, *Fossil Man*. Fragments of this primitive bread have been found at Robenhausen.

lowed with their eyes the movements of the two beautiful housekeepers. The conversation did not languish while awaiting the arrival of the chief. Hurricane continued to maintain a jealous silence, but Water-Chestnut, and even Strawberry-Blossom, who now displayed an artless loquacity, overwhelmed Light-Foot with questions about the incidents of his journey. Light-Foot answered simply and with a certain degree of reserve, yet his story made a strong impression upon the young girls, who stopped their work every moment to listen.

Here, in a few words, is the traveller's history.

He was born, as we know, in the Lacustrian city of the tribe of Cormorants, and was scarcely more than ten years old when he became an orphan, but this situation presented fewer inconveniences than it would offer in a civilized community. Education was nothing at a period when neither writing, art, nor science of any kind existed; the little knowledge mankind possessed was easily transmitted by tradition and practice. Besides, life among these savages presented no real difficulties. There were numerous fish in the lake, the woods teemed with game, there was fruit on the trees, berries on the bushes, roots in the earth, and the first who came could take possession of them. Moreover, with the exception of the small portion of cultivated land any one was at liberty to build a hut of boughs in the forest or hollow out a grotto in the hillside. Light-Foot, in spite of his youth, therefore found no great difficulty in procuring food and shelter. Without a teacher he learned to bend the bow, manage oars, drive piles, and build huts, hunt, and fish; after which

his education was as complete as that of the sons of any of the families in the neighborhood.

But an age had come when Light-Foot, in spite of his accomplishments, had felt a real inferiority in regard to certain persons in the Lacustrian city. He had fallen in love with Strawberry-Blossom. Now, at this period, as is the custom at the present day among certain savage nations, fathers gave their daughters in marriage only on the reception of a gift proportioned to their wealth, and Lightfoot was unable to offer one suitable for the chief of the tribe. He had vainly served Sea-Eagle to obtain his daughter, as Jacob entered Laban's service to win Rachel. In return for his good offices he had gained Strawberry-Blossom's affection, but so long as the father had not given his sanction to their mutual love this advantage was very trifling.

Matters were in this state when a band of the wandering traders who then went from tribe to tribe to make exchanges passed through the Lacustrian city. This commerce, the only one possible in those days, presented many difficulties and dangers, for there were neither highways, wagons, nor beasts of burden. The goods were carried on men's backs through countries covered with forests and infested with wild beasts; besides, they often encountered tribes who gladly killed the traders to get possession of their goods. Nevertheless, Lightfoot, who was full of courage, strength, and enterprise, determined to join the strangers. The bargain had not been difficult to make. The services of a clever, strong, and resolute youth were not to be despised. So with Sea-Eagle's consent the arrangement was soon completed, and Light-Foot set out with the merchants,

after secretly promising Strawberry-Blossom to return speedily, rich and worthy of her.

It was the story of his adventures on this long journey that Light-Foot now related to the sisters, but even with them he showed a certain degree of reserve in regard to the result of his wanderings. Had he or had he not attained the object of his desires? Nothing was guessed on this subject, when Sea-Eagle, holding in his hand a magnificent fish, and followed by two stout lads carrying nets, entered the hut.

The chief of the tribe of Cormorants was a man about sixty years old, but who as yet seemed to feel none of the weakness of age. His clothing was a sort of robe of wolf-skin, which revealed his chest with its prominent muscles and his black, hairy, sinewy limbs. His long, tangled gray beard reminded one of the beard of Polyphemus. His reddened eyes, sun-burnt cheeks, and aquiline nose formed a by no means genial countenance, which betrayed cunning and greed of gain. A flint axe in a deer-horn handle hung at his belt, and he leaned on a harpoon of barbed bone as if it were a cane.

No one rose when he entered, but all eyes turned eagerly toward him. Without taking any notice of his guests, he gave orders to the young men who accompanied him, and who seemed to be in his special service. Then, while they were arranging the fishing-gear in one corner of the hut, he threw his fish on the floor and advanced toward the strangers.

"I have come back, chief," said Light-Foot modestly.

"Oh! is it you?" replied Sea-Eagle calmly. "I thought you were dead, for people don't return from such distant lands."

And he carefully scrutinized the traveller, as if to ascertain whether he had grown rich in his wanderings; but as Light-Foot's scanty baggage did not seem to announce wealth, a scornful smile curled his lips.

"Chief," said Hurricane in his turn, "I've been hunting, and have brought you my game."

"Very well," replied Sea-Eagle; "let us eat it. Light-Foot shall stay to the feast, for he probably has had no opportunity to treat himself during his journey.—Come," he added, raising his voice, "daughters and lads, to work. Fishing on the lake has made me hungry."

Instantly all present, even the guests, set to work to prepare the meal. While the two sisters were hurrying the baking of the cakes, one of the young men threw dry wood on the fireplace to make embers; the others busied themselves in skinning and cutting up the roe.

These various operations were quickly finished, and as the cooking did not admit of many refinements, the feast was not long in commencing. Several persons, men and women, who had chanced to enter the hut, were invited to join it; and others, without being asked, artlessly took their places among the guests.

All were seated around the fireplace, some on blocks of wood, others on the ground. The bones and skull of the roe were first broken to extract the marrow and brains, for this generation had inherited the taste of preceding ones for this kind of dainty. Sea-Eagle, his daughters, and the principal guests alone shared this aristocratic food; the others were obliged to content themselves with less delicate portions of the venison.

When the meat, already divided into fragments, was taken from the fire, half raw and scorched, it was put

in an earthen dish, and the chief, after helping himself, passed it to the others. There were neither plates, forks, nor spoons; each tore his share with nails and teeth. The only drink was water, and the vessel containing it passed from hand to hand and mouth to mouth. An idea of the revolting spectacle presented by a feast in those days may easily be formed. The greediness and want of neatness of the guests, the noise of their powerful jaws, the crackling of the meat on the fire, the offensive smoke that spread everywhere, would doubtless have excited the disgust of a modern epicurean.*

But Sea-Eagle and his guests did not possess these prejudices; the banquet was enjoyable because it was abundant. The roe having been devoured to the bones, they attacked the fish, which had been stretched on the embers in its turn, and was served half raw, as usual. The fish was succeeded by fresh or dried fruits, which the young housekeepers produced from their stores, together with a little hard cheese covered with mould from the dampness of the lake, and the dinner was considered one of the most elegant ever remembered in the Lacustrian city of the Cormorants.

During the meal, to the great delight of the guests, Light-Foot had continued the story of his adventures. Hurricane alone remained gloomy, and his eyes softened only when they fell on Water-Chestnut.

The dinner over, the majority of those present withdrew as they had come, without addressing any word of courtesy to the master of the house, and the young ladies occupied themselves in restoring the hut to order. It was no long task; the fragments of bones and rem-

* Le Hon, *Fossil Man*.

nants of food scattered over the floor were pushed through the open trap-door into the lake. As to the earthen vessels intended to contain food, no one ever thought it necessary to wash them.

The chief had not left his place, and seemed to feel the heavy stupor which among people of a certain age follows an abundant meal, when an exclamation of surprise was heard behind him. He turned his head, and saw one of his "young men" gazing at an object leaning against the wall.

"What is it?" asked Sea-Eagle.

The youth's only reply was to hold out the spear which had already attracted Hurricane's attention, and Sea-Eagle, in his turn, was seized with admiration.

"Bronze!" he murmured in a voice trembling with greed—"bronze!"

Guests and young girls came to look at the unknown metal, of which people were just beginning to talk, and whose discovery was to inaugurate a new era in civilization. All hands were outstretched to hold the precious spear, but Sea-Eagle still clutched it in his fingers, as if he could not release his grasp.

At last he said slowly, fixing an eagle look upon the traveller, who was smiling,

"Do you know, Light-Foot, that your spear alone is worth a hut in the Lacustrian city, a boat with all its nets, a young and pretty girl for a wife?"

Sea-Eagle enumerated one by one the objects which seemed to him equal in value to the bronze weapon, as if he desired to propose an exchange.

Light-Foot exclaimed,

"You are right, chief; but if I could hope to obtain

the girl I love, I would offer her father something still more precious than the spear."

"What can be more precious than a bronze spear?"

"You shall see."

He opened the skin pouch, which he had not laid aside a moment, and drew from it a bronze axe similar to those found in such great quantities on the site of certain Lacustrian cities and in the ancient Scandinavian tombs. It had no handle, but Light-Foot took from the fireplace a half-burnt bough and thrust it into the socket; then raising the improvised weapon, he dealt a wooden block near him a violent blow that cleft it to the heart.

This blow would have shattered, or at least severely notched, a flint hatchet, but Light-Foot, drawing with great difficulty the bronze axe from the cut it had made, showed that it was uninjured and its edge as sharp as before.

This time admiration knew no bounds, and became an actual frenzy. Sea-Eagle, having dropped the spear, seized the axe, like a child who gives up an old plaything for a prettier one. In an instant the hut was filled with curious spectators of all ages and both sexes, who wanted to gaze at the inestimable riches brought to the city by the great traveller. They were proud that he belonged to the Cormorants, and each seemed to think the importance of the tribe would be increased in the eyes of the whole world. Water-Chestnut was amazed, and Strawberry-Blossom alternately flushed and turned pale, trembling perhaps lest a lover who possessed such treasures might be capable of disdaining her.

"A bronze axe! a bronze axe!" repeated Sea-Eagle in delight.

Light-Foot said gravely, "Chief, give me Strawberry-Blossom and this axe shall be your daughter's price."

Sea-Eagle started and opened his lips as if to accept the bargain, but the demon of avarice restrained the eager assent he was about to utter. He pressed the axe to his breast.

"Will you give me your spear too?" he asked.

"It is yours," replied Light-Foot with a lover's generosity.

Sea-Eagle put the spear and axe together, and was about to give his consent when he perceived that Light-Foot's pouch was still well filled.

"Have you nothing more to offer?" he replied. "Strawberry-Blossom is beautiful, and has not her equal in spinning flax."

A disapproving murmur ran through the assembly at this new exaction. The people thought that Light-Foot had given enough to obtain not only Strawberry-Blossom, but all the girls in the tribe.

"What I have left is not worthy of a chief," answered Light-Foot.

Sea-Eagle at last felt somewhat ashamed of his avarice.

"Then take my daughter," said he.

Light-Foot uttered an exclamation of joy, and, springing impetuously toward Strawberry-Blossom, raised her in his arms with an air of triumph.

The marriage was arranged; nothing remained except to consecrate it by a banquet at which the whole tribe would assemble. No one seemed to think it would be necessary to consult the bride in such an affair, but Light-Foot had long known her feelings on this point,

and the pretty blonde smiled in a way that showed she had no dislike to the intended union.

But Light-Foot had not yet exhausted his bribes. Returning to the wonderful pouch, which, like the inexhaustible purse in the fairy-tales, was a real fountain of treasures, he took out two bronze bracelets of barbaric workmanship and without any kind of ornament, which he placed on the arms of his future wife. Fortunately, these arms were strong, though well formed, for this kind of bracelets seemed very heavy.* The young girl, on finding herself thus adorned, burst into transports of delight.

The admiration of the company was then transferred to the new treasures the Cræsus of the Lacustrian city had just produced. The women could not restrain their exclamations and demonstrations of joy. Each wanted to try these solid gems; there was not one who did not consider Strawberry-Blossom the richest and most enviable of creatures.

Amid the tumult two persons remained dull and silent. Water-Chestnut listened jealously to the eager congratulations addressed to her sister, and Hurricane, on seeing Light-Foot so easily obtain the object of his wishes, was filled with secret fury. Nevertheless, the hunter thought this a favorable opportunity to present his request to Sea-Eagle.

"Chief," he said gently, "you have given Strawberry-Blossom to Light-Foot; will you grant me Water-Chestnut?"

Sea-Eagle blinked like a miser who, having just

* The Museum of Saint-Germain contains several bracelets of this description.

received money, sees a possibility of getting more. He passed his hand over his rough beard and said in a crafty tone, "What will you give me?"

"I have never left my tribe to seek rare objects at a distance. I use the flint axe, spears, and arrows our fathers used, but I kill much game. I have already brought you fawns, wild goats, and foxes.* I'll bring more; I will kill a bear with splendid fur, and a large auroch, whose lairs I know. Besides, I have a pen where I'm feeding two young uri.† I will bring them to you to win Water-Chestnut."

Sea-Eagle listened to the hunter's proposals with a certain degree of approval, and no one knows what he might have answered, when Water-Chestnut, with flushed cheeks and flashing eyes, cried,

"What! bears and uri for me, when bronze is given for my sister? Am I not worth as much as Strawberry-Blossom? Is my father tired of me, to give me in exchange for such pitiful presents?"

At that time woman was not a slave, as in the East at the present day, or considered an inferior creature, as among savage tribes, but she was not yet granted the authority she afterward acquired among the Gauls. Water-Chestnut's boldness therefore excited a certain degree of surprise in the assembly. But the young girl was her father's favorite, and perhaps this pride secretly harmonized with some design of Sea-Eagle. He answered with his crafty smile,

* It is certain that the fox, in spite of its unpleasant odor, was one of the favorite meats of the Lacustrians.

† A kind of wild ox of a species now extinct, but which was still common in Gaul at the time of the arrival of the Franks.

"You hear, Hurricane? Water-Chestnut values herself higher than uri and bears. Besides, if I let my oldest daughter go, who would make my bread and prepare my fish when Strawberry-Blossom has departed?"

These reasons seemed final; besides, the guests were not sorry to witness this discomfiture inflicted on a man whose tribe often made war on the Cormorants, and several of the spectators did not have the charity to conceal an insulting laugh at the lover's defeat.

On seeing his last hope fail Hurricane lost patience. Everything contributed to exasperate him—the joy of the two betrothed lovers, the ill-concealed scorn of the father, the jeers of the guests, and, above all, the disdain of Water-Chestnut, by whom he had hitherto believed himself beloved. With flashing eyes and clenched teeth he seized his weapons. It was supposed that he was about to commit some deed of violence, and Sea-Eagle, who still held the spear, put himself upon the defensive. But the young hunter turned toward the door; as he reached the threshold he paused and said haughtily,

"Sea-Eagle, to be welcome to you a man must possess bronze weapons; I will have them. Meantime, chief, women, and warriors of the Cormorants, beware of arms of stone!"

He made a threatening gesture, and, leaving the Lacustrian city, was soon lost in the surrounding woods.

Sea-Eagle shrugged his shoulders.

"Youth is prompt in anger and uttering bold words," said he. "To-morrow, Hurricane will doubtless come to implore pardon."

But the witnesses of the scene did not appear to be of the same opinion.

"The Wolves are bad neighbors," said one of the oldest warriors, "and Hurricane is the friend of Gnarled Oak, the chief of his tribe. He will rouse the whole people against us by telling them of Sea-Eagle's wealth. Let us distrust the Wolves, Gnarled Oak, and Hurricane."

"I fear no man," replied the chief, who, in spite of his peaceful occupation of fishing, did not lack courage.

Light-Foot said in his turn,

"If the Wolves attack us, we will defend ourselves. As for me, I shall always find a stone or bronze axe to protect my wife and sister."

"Do I need protection?" replied Water-Chestnut angrily.

Light-Foot did not seem to hear this remark, and continued,

"Chief, what day will you name for the marriage feast?"

Sea-Eagle reflected.

"Day after to-morrow," he replied. "To-morrow the fishermen will catch the fish, the hunters kill the game, the women crush the grain and gather berries in the wood. We must have a splendid wedding."

No one made any objection to the father's wish, and as the guests withdrew to spread the news, Sea-Eagle continued thoughtfully:

"They are right; these Wolves are dangerous neighbors, and it will be prudent to watch them. Night is coming on; I will sound the horn to recall all the boats on the lake, and the foot-bridge shall be carefully guarded. Who knows whether these wicked people will not try to rob me of my bronze weapons?"

III.

THE PRIESTESS.

THE tribe of Wolves occupied a "terrestrial station," or village on the land, about a league from the Lacustrian city of the Cormorants; so Hurricane, who was obliged to pass through the forests, needed to quicken his pace to reach home before nightfall. Although the wild beasts were neither so numerous nor so formidable as during the preceding ages, a man might be exposed to many dangerous encounters in the darkness amid the interminable woods.

The young hunter, still under the influence of the emotions he had just experienced, did not think of this peril. Holding his bow in one hand and his spear in the other, he followed a path through the forest. A faint light still came from the setting sun, and at intervals the notes of a horn, echoing from the distance, announced that the hunters were assembling to return to their dwellings.

Hurricane walked a long time under an arch of foliage, when the trees suddenly disappeared, and he entered a region covered with ferns and broom. In the centre of the clearing rose one of the artificial mounds so common in certain provinces in France,

called *tumuli* or *tumuli-dolmen*. For a long time it was believed that these ancient monuments, like the *cromlechs* and *menhirs*, belonged to the epoch of the Gauls, but it is now certain that the majority date from the Age of Polished Stone, and the Gauls found them such as we ourselves found them on our native soil.* However this may be, the tumulus in question did not present a smooth surface of turf. A cleft, cut in the base, formed a passage, at the end of which appeared a large stone; it was the door of a subterranean cavity where the dead bodies of the tribe were placed. The natural caves of former ages had been succeeded by caverns built by the hand of man to serve as sepulchres.

The place seemed very lonely, especially at this hour, when twilight was beginning to close in. Yet Hurricane, raising his eyes toward the summit of the tumulus, thought he saw a human form relieved against the sky. He did not know who could be there at this late hour, and was going to stop, when a noise in the grass at his feet attracted his attention. A fox had just left a tuft of heather and was trying to steal away, running at full speed. We have mentioned the singular taste the people of those days had for this offensive game. Hurricane discharged an arrow, which struck the animal in the loins. The latter, though wounded, continued its flight, and the hunter, not wishing to lose the stone head of his arrow, rushed after to pierce it with his spear. He soon succeeded, and as he cautiously drew the shaft from the beast's quivering flesh, the human figure he had seen on the top of the tumulus suddenly appeared at his side.

* Le Hon, *Fossil Man*.

Hurricane made an impatient movement, and if the devil had been known in those days would doubtless have sent to that personage the individual who now disturbed his solitude. But scarcely had he glanced at her when his countenance changed, and an eager smile replaced the dissatisfied expression of his face.

This person was an old woman, whose scanty garments of skin displayed her decrepitude and ugliness. Her white hair fell in rough locks upon her thin shoulders. Her yellow face, furrowed with wrinkles, was both sneering and sinister. She held in one hand a bunch of wild herbs, which she had just gathered, and in the other a sort of crescent, several specimens of which have been found amid the ruins of the Lacustrian cities, and which seem to have been a religious emblem among these primitive tribes. This crescent, made of baked clay, was of the shape and size of two ox-horns fastened at the base. On the half circle were traced several sketches, or rather several straight and oblique lines that crossed each other like ornaments. The old woman carried it reverently like an object of worship.

At the sight of this person Hurricane assumed a deferential attitude, and, putting his foot on the dead fox, said humbly,

"Holly-Branch, your presence here brings me good fortune. I offer you the fox I have just killed."

The old woman smiled.

"Put it in my hut when you reach the village," she replied. "I am looking for herbs to cure Gnarled Oak, the chief of the Wolves, of the fever that is preying upon him. This is the sixth day of the moon, the

time when the plants possess most virtue. Go in peace, Hurricane ; deference from the young to the aged is good ; it makes them succeed in their enterprises."

"Ah, mother ! I greatly need your aid to succeed in my enterprises, for I received a bloody affront to-day, and wish for vengeance."

"Whence do you come ? What has happened ?" asked Holly-Branch curiously. "You may speak ; my ears are open."

Hurricane in a few words related how Sea-Eagle had refused him his oldest daughter, Water-Chestnut, while he gave the youngest to Light-Foot in exchange for some weapons of the precious new material called bronze.

Holly-Branch was the priestess of the tribe, though religion then was a mere medley of strange, superstitious, puerile, monstrous, and often cruel rites. The only survivor of her family in consequence of a battle in which her husband and two sons had perished, the old woman, thanks to certain traditional knowledge, had performed the functions of doctor, midwife, and sorceress. She did not exactly plume herself on possessing supernatural power, but used mysterious ceremonies and words adapted to impress untutored imaginations. Besides, she lacked neither experience nor intelligence ; and could give good counsel in time of need. Thus she enjoyed much influence among the Wolves, and Gnarled Oak, whom she was nursing for intermittent fever, willingly listened to her advice.

Hurricane therefore had an interest in taking Holly-Branch into his confidence, and, to his great satisfaction, the priestess seemed impressed by the tale. She

remained silent a moment, with her eyes fixed on vacancy, as if reflecting or seeing some vision. At last she raised the hand which held the talismanic crescent, and said solemnly,

"I see a red light in the sky; it is blood. I hear the ravens croaking in the tops of the pine trees; they scent corpses. Something mutters sullenly in the woods like a fierce wind; it is the distant roar of the conflagration. Young man, your affront shall be avenged. Come with me to Gnarled Oak."

This proposal harmonized with the young hunter's secret wishes, so he quickly threw the dead fox over his shoulder and followed Holly-Branch, who had turned toward the village. On their way the priestess said angrily,

"The Cormorants are proud and hard-hearted. They would give no game or fish to a widow who no longer has children to support her by their hunting and fishing. I have seen these daughters of Sea-Eagle; they are vain girls, constantly laughing—"

"Spare Sea-Eagle's daughters, Holly-Branch," replied the young hunter, sighing; "I could not forget Water-Chestnut in spite of her scorn."

"You shall be free to bear her away as a wolf seizes his prey," replied the priestess, smiling, "and make no presents to a greedy father."

Hurricane became thoughtful, and they continued to walk on in silence.

In a few minutes they came in sight of the Wolves' village, which was scarcely less singular than the Lacustrian city of the Cormorants.

At the end of a wooded valley rose a promontory of

rocks, connected, by means of a narrow isthmus, with the neighboring mountain. This promontory formed an extensive plateau which overlooked the whole country, and was only accessible by the tongue of land already mentioned. Here the tribe had settled.

Although this place might seem naturally very secure, the inhabitants had toiled to render it still more so. The summit of the rock was crowned by a lofty parapet of cyclopean construction; that is, formed of huge unhewn stones placed one above another, without being united by mortar or cement. On the side where the promontory joined the mountain a moat had been dug, which isolated the plateau and was crossed by a wooden bridge. The ground thus defined contained the city; it was composed of several hundred round huts, some built of logs, others of branches, and others simply of osiers, like many Gallic huts of a later date.

Places similar to the terrestrial station of the Wolves are not rare in France, and especially in Belgium, where they are called *intrenched quarters*. They may be known by the great quantity of flint axes and knives and broken earthenware found among the ruins. After having been occupied by pre-historic generations, these abodes became Gallic camps, then Roman encampments, and finally, on the sites of the majority of them, the Middle Ages built feudal castles for the use of the turbulent barons who have left such unpleasant memories in history.*

The fortifications of the Wolves' station not being

* The city of Limes, near Dieppe, built on a high cliff worn by the sea, seems to have been a *terrestrial station* of the Age of Hewn Stone.

completed, one could perceive by the last remnant of daylight what means the men of those days, in the absence of metal, tools, and all kinds of machines, used to move the colossal stones whose weight seems to us so prodigious. These means were simply the strength of arm, the number of laborers, and the slowness and patience of the work. At this moment several half-naked men, furnished with wooden levers, who had either been condemned for their crimes to this public service or constrained by local laws to perform a certain amount of labor, were leaving their work, after having spent the whole day in moving a huge block of granite half a foot.

The tribe of Wolves was not agricultural and peaceful like that of the Cormorants; the members lived almost exclusively by hunting. Therefore, the cultivated fields, enclosures for cattle, and groves of fruit-trees mentioned in the neighborhood of the lake city were not seen. Wild animals, roots, and fruits seemed to be the sole resources of this tribe, which had the reputation of being very turbulent and somewhat given to pillage.

As they approached the terrestrial station they met people who gave a certain animation to the landscape. Noisy groups were moving along the winding path that led to the plateau. Women bearing vessels on their shoulders were returning from drawing water at some neighboring spring. Farther on bands of hunters carried, suspended from poles, the deer, stags, and wild boars they had killed during the day. This spectacle greatly delighted their families, who were thus sure of a good supper, and the hunters themselves celebrated

their exploits by drawing discordant notes from their horns. Lastly came some of the poor laborers of whom we have spoken, who with their crowbars on their shoulders wearily returned to their huts.

All these people seemed disposed to exchange a word with Hurricane in passing, but the hunter's gloomy face, and especially the presence of Holly-Branch, froze the smiles on their lips, and they contented themselves with gazing at them curiously.

Hurricane and his companion thus crossed the wooden bridge and entered the city of the Wolves.

It was disgustingly dirty, and the sense of smell was tortured by the most horrible odors. Here were piles of bones, and farther on skins freshly stripped from the animals were drying on poles before the huts. The majority of these huts had no doors, and it was evident that the interiors presented the same smoky, wretched aspect.

They soon reached the dwelling of the chief, the size of which recalled that of Sea-Eagle's, though it was less amply supplied with provisions and utensils of every description. Women and children were moving about the fire, on which some slices of venison had just been laid to broil. The master of the house himself was suffering from a violent attack of fever, and, stretched on some dry leaves, occasionally uttered low moans.

Gnarled Oak, as far as could be judged by the uncertain light of the fire, was a man of middle size, but stout and with sinewy limbs, as his name indicated. The disease had not yet triumphed over his extraordinary strength, and his bare arms, which he sometimes threw over his bear-skin covering, showed the muscles

of a Hercules. His bearded face, with its flushed cheeks, wore an expression of unusual brutality and harshness.

Thirst was consuming him, and an almost naked lad who acted as nurse had enough to do to bring him every moment a vessel filled with water. Gnarled Oak was in the act of drinking when Holly-Branch entered, followed by Hurricane, who remained in the shade.

At the sight of the priestess the chief raised himself on his elbow, his eyes flashing with fury.

"Is that you, old martlet?" he cried hoarsely; "you promised to cure me, and you go away when I am suffering. Cure me quickly, or I'll kill you and throw your carcass to the wild dogs."

Holly-Branch seemed to be no more moved by these threats than a physician is moved by the powerless rage of a sick child.

"Patience, chief," she replied. "This is the sixth day of the moon, that cures everything, and under its influence, holding in my hand the sacred crescent, I have gathered wonderful herbs. I'm going to make you a drink; you will soon be able to dash through the forest at the head of your hunters."

And she quietly began to heat the water in an earthen vessel. Gnarled Oak was still shivering on his couch, but he answered in a gentler tone,

"You've cheated me a long time with fine promises, and the sickness always returns. Cure me, and I'll give you plenty of skins, stags' horns, and venison."

Suddenly he saw Hurricane, who was standing aside, and his rage rekindled.

"What does Hurricane want?" he cried. "Do I need

to hear the report of the hunters, and know how much game they have killed? Let them leave me alone."

Holly-Branch hastily interposed.

"Chief," she said, "your young man comes to complain of an insult he has received from Sea-Eagle, the chief of the Cormorants, that you may avenge it."

"Hm! Let him avenge it himself," replied Gnarled Oak sulkily.

"Are you ignorant, chief, that the affront is addressed to you? Sea-Eagle has refused Hurricane his daughter through contempt for the tribe of Wolves. His head has been turned ever since he possessed a bronze axe and spear, while his daughter has bracelets of the same precious material. He thinks himself the first chief in the country; he believes his tribe the first of the tribes in the world. That's why he has insulted a brave warrior, a hunter renowned among the Wolves."

Gnarled Oak, but now so feeble, started up.

"What did you say?" he asked; "Sea-Eagle has an axe, spear, and ornaments of bronze? I never saw any."

Holly-Branch signed to Hurricane to approach, and the hunter related the events of the day.

The sick man listened to the tale with deep interest; when the arms given by Light-Foot were described his eyes glittered with avarice, as Sea-Eagle's had sparkled a short time before. At last, clenching his fists and grinding his teeth, he exclaimed,

"Such arms for that old Sea-Eagle, who only knows how to manage boats and harpoons, while I, the chief of the Wolves, have nothing but stone weapons! What a disgrace to me!—Woman," he continued, addressing

himself to Holly-Branch, "make haste and cure me, that I may go and seize Sea-Eagle's spear and axe."

"Listen, chief," replied the priestess, serving smoking hot the beverage she had just prepared, and into which she had plunged by turns the two horns of the mystic crescent; "you must drink this. Perhaps you won't be entirely cured of your fever, for you are so fierce, so impatient, that my remedies cannot act thoroughly upon you; but after to-morrow it will not return for a week. During this time you will be able to avenge your insult."

"A week!" cried Gnarled Oak. "I don't ask so much to crush Sea-Eagle and his tribe. Since you promise, old woman, that I shall be able to wield my bow and spear to-morrow, I will not wait much longer.—Hurricane," he added, "take the horn near the door and sound it to summon all my 'young men.' I'll give them my orders, that they may prepare for battle."

As the hunter was about to execute this command, Holly-Branch interposed:

"What are you doing, chief? If you reveal your plans in advance, Sea-Eagle cannot fail to be warned and on his guard. Isn't it better to attack him unexpectedly? The danger will be less and the advantage greater."

We have spoken of the power the sorceress exercised over the mind of the chief, and this time also her counsels were heard. Gnarled Oak recalled Hurricane.

"She is right," said he; "I don't want Sea-Eagle warned. But, then, what is to be done?"

The old woman began to talk in a low tone, and they

consulted with Hurricane, who was to have an important part in the intended assault.

Gnarled Oak seemed overwhelmed with fatigue.

"Give me the drink, Holly-Branch," said he, "and go away: I want to sleep. To-morrow I shall know whether your remedies have any virtue."

The old woman gave him the drink; then, after drawing the bear-skin covering over the sick man's shoulders, told the women in the hut how to nurse him, and retired with her companion.

While on the way to their respective abodes the hunter was in an ecstasy of delight.

"It is a lucky chance," he said to Holly-Branch, "that placed you in my path. I shall be avenged on that haughty Water-Chestnut, the greedy Sea-Eagle, the crafty Light-Foot—all the tribe I despise and hate. Water-Chestnut would not be my companion; she shall be my slave."

"And you will reward your protectress," replied the priestess, smiling; "generosity suits a man whose wishes are fulfilled."

IV.

THE WEDDING.

THE following day was employed by the Cormorants in making preparations for Strawberry-Blossom's wedding.

Every one, large and small, took part in supplying the provisions, the marriage consisting only of a feast, without civil or religious ceremony of any description.

Thanks to the united efforts of the tribe, fish, game, and fruits abounded in the Lacustrian city, but it had been noticed with surprise that all day long no member of the tribe of Wolves, usually so active, had been met in the forests or the plain. This had made Light-Foot uneasy. Suspecting some plot on the part of Hurricane, he communicated his fears to his future father-in-law, but this time Sea-Eagle did not share them. The reserved attitude of his neighbors seemed to him a mere fit of ill-temper which would not hold out against the temptations of gluttony, and he expected to see them appear to share the banquet with the greed of the animals whose name they bore.

The great day came at last, and as the platform of the Lacustrian city, besides the danger of fire, did not afford sufficient space for a numerous gathering, the

feast was to take place on firm land, on the shore of the lake. Fires had been lighted, and by the side of these fires were heaps of stags, wild boars, and foxes, which hundreds of hands were in the act of cutting up, and which gave the scene of the banquet the appearance of a slaughter-house or field of carnage. Broken bones, skins, raw and bloody flesh, were scattered in every direction. Men, women, and children moved to and fro, engaged in cooking and devouring these mountains of provisions.

This barbarous festival bore no resemblance to the banquets of our civilized period. The guests did not wear any handsomer dresses than usual, for the excellent reason that they had no change of garments, and no one thought of going to the water of the neighboring lake to efface the traces of his hideous occupation. The amusements in fashion on similar occasions were not yet known. Dancing consisted of a few clumsy movements; music was confined to the mournful notes the fishermen and hunters produced with an ox-horn to call each other from a distance. While the feast was being prepared the young men were discharging arrows, hurling javelins, vying with each other in running and leaping; but these exercises seemed to be their usual occupations, and a response to the need of motion natural to youth, rather than to have any special relation to the feast.

Sea-Eagle was walking about among the crowd, showing with artless delight his bronze spear and axe, to which he had fitted a splendid handle made from a stag's antler. These objects never ceased to excite the admiration of the Cormorants, and of the Beavers, an-

other Lacustrian tribe that lived at the end of the lake. The people of this tribe, whose boats were seen sweeping forward impelled by oars, were attracted rather by a desire to see these wonders than to attend the wedding. Sea-Eagle, with inexhaustible good-nature, was obliged every moment to strike his axe into the trunk of a tree or hurl his spear at a mark, to prove the superiority of his weapon to the stone arms exclusively used during so many ages.

The chief's two daughters, especially the bride, after having performed their share of the work, thought it advisable to make some changes in their dress. But this toilet was very quickly performed; they threw over their usual garments a narrow piece of cloth of snowy whiteness, the work of their own hands, which they draped with artistic taste. Strawberry-Blossom braided her beautiful fair hair, in which she did not think of putting a field flower, and adorned herself with the heavy bronze rings that aroused the envy of the whole feminine population. The brunette, Water-Chestnut, contented herself with fastening on her head, with bone hair-pins, the luxuriant tresses that harmonized with the marked character of her beauty.

The two young girls had made these changes in silence, without giving each other any assistance. True, the affectionate attentions and kindly offices exchanged between two sisters of the present day did not usually exist between the Minna and Brenda of the Lacustrian city, but, in spite of the rudeness of manners, Strawberry-Blossom and Water-Chestnut felt a regard for each other that often found expression in mutual good offices. The cause of the sudden coldness was the

older sister's jealousy on seeing the younger loaded with rich gifts. So she had not spoken a word to Strawberry-Blossom since the evening before, but remained sullen, irritable, and gloomy.

Poor Strawberry-Blossom, whose temper was naturally more gentle, keenly felt her sister's ill-humor, and had made several advances to Water-Chestnut, who had repelled them all. At this moment especially she seemed very much hurt; her eyes were dim with tears. She was secretly watching her elder sister, and appeared to wish to make another attempt to be reconciled, but lacked courage. At last, unable to hold out any longer, she burst into tears, snatched the bronze bracelets from her arms, and offered them to Water-Chestnut, saying impetuously,

"Take them! I would rather never adorn myself than see you neither look at me, speak to me, nor—love me."

The older girl, with an impulsive gesture, seized the bracelets, put them on her arms, and made them clink, still without uttering a word. Nevertheless, after admiring herself a moment, she drew them off and returned them.

"They belong to you," she said. "You are beautiful; men offer bronze to win you; I am doubtless ugly, since they give only skins, uri, and game."

"No, no; you are more beautiful than I, Water-Chestnut. Take one of the bracelets at least; we are sisters—our ornaments ought to be alike. Take it, take it, I beseech you, and love me still."

Water-Chestnut's face visibly softened, for her pride had received marked satisfaction. She was turning the

bracelet in her fingers when Light-Foot entered to see if his bride were ready.

He too still wore his simple travelling-dress, and carried the pouch that had contained his treasures. To make amends, his weapons (and weapons comprised all the masculine luxury of the period) showed that he had not exhausted his wealth in favor of his bride and future father-in-law. The axe that hung at his belt was bronze, and scarcely less beautiful than the chief's. The spear which replaced the former one had only a stone point, but the stone was jade, admirably polished and remarkably hard. Thus equipped, Light-Foot could vie in magnificence with Sea-Eagle himself.

He had doubtless heard the discussion between the two sisters, for he said, smiling, "Keep your bracelets, Strawberry-Blossom. While waiting for Water-Chestnut's future husband to bring presents worthy of her, I have reserved a few objects that perhaps she will fancy."

He drew from the famous pouch, from which he had taken so many things, and which, we must admit, now hung lank and nearly empty on his hip, two of the long bronze hair-pins numerous fragments of which have been found amid the ruins of the Lacustrian cities. They were new and sparkling, and the lustre of their faceted heads would have reminded one of gold, if gold had been known at that period.

Water-Chestnut uttered a cry of delight, seized the bronze pins, and thrust them into her thick hair beside the bone ones that already adorned it. Then, for want of a mirror, she ran to the trap-door opening on the lake, and bending forward admired herself in the water.

She soon came bounding back toward her sister and Light-Foot. A deep color flushed her cheeks; her eyes sparkled with pride, pleasure, and gratitude. Her brother-in-law's gifts evidently seemed to her more valuable than Sea-Eagle's envied weapons, or even the bracelets of the bride.

She put one hand on Light-Foot's shoulder, the other on that of Strawberry-Blossom, and stammered,

"Brother! sister!"

This was all. The race, we have said, was not demonstrative, and the simple words were equal to long protestations of gratitude. Strawberry-Blossom so understood them, and, overjoyed at this return of affection, knew no other way of expressing her delight than by an artless laugh, whose silvery tones filled the hut.

Water-Chestnut went to admire herself again in the lake; then said, sighing,

"Ah, if Hurricane could see me, how beautiful he would think me!"

"So," asked Light-Foot, "you still want Hurricane for a husband?"

"Why not? He is a good hunter, a brave warrior. Is it his fault if he has nothing but deer and uri to offer my father? He has gone back to his tribe, but he'll return when he knows I am so rich."

"And I will speak to Sea-Eagle," said Light-Foot, "that he may not refuse his request."

"Oh, how kind you are!" exclaimed Strawberry-Blossom in delight.

"How kind you are!" repeated Water-Chestnut, and almost instantly added, "How did you procure so many treasures? Tell us. Hurricane is brave and strong; he

will follow your example; he will go and return with a pouch full of bronze articles."

Light-Foot smilingly shook his head. "Chance gave me these treasures," said he. "Listen! Strawberry-Blossom and you will remember that I followed the traders who go from tribe to tribe. My condition was hard enough. I was obliged to carry a heavy burden through countries without roads, hunt for my masters, and defend them against wild beasts. We marched on in this way a long time, and it seemed to me that we must have reached the end of the world. At last we stopped, and after remaining in a city some time it was announced that we were to return.

"I had gained no wealth in our traffic, for I lacked articles to barter, and various accidents had deprived me of my modest gains. During the journey I had attached myself to an old merchant who came from a long distance, and was born, it was said, in a country near the rising sun. He did not trade constantly, like the others, and it was not supposed that he possessed many valuable things. But he always carried a pouch which he allowed no one to touch, and at night slept with it for a pillow.

"The trader had taken a fancy to me, and I rendered him every service in my power. On our return he suddenly became so weak that he could scarcely follow the party. I helped him as well as I could, but his sickness rapidly increased, and he soon found himself unable to walk. The leader of the company, however, was unwilling to order a halt, for we were in a desert region infested with wild beasts. To leave the old man in the midst of the woods was to expose him to certain death. I proposed to stay with him and give him every assist-

ance in my power, while the others continued their way. They gave me directions for joining them, and left us, the old man and myself, in this desolate place. It was to this act of compassion that I owe my wealth."

"I understand," interrupted Water-Chestnut; "the old trader had the bronze utensils in his pouch; to secure them you pierced the man with your lance."

The beautiful brunette had expressed this conjecture as a very natural thing, but Strawberry-Blossom asked timidly,

"Did you do that, Light-Foot?"

"It would have been the act of a clever man," added Water-Chestnut.

Light-Foot shook his head. "No," he replied, "I did not do so, for, in the opinion of wise and experienced people, it would have been wrong. On the contrary, I rendered him every possible service. I built him a hut of branches, lighted the fire, watched him as I would have watched a sick friend. But he passed a terrible night; the next morning he motioned to me to approach, and said faintly, 'I feel that I am dying. When I am gone bury me in the earth and return to your country. My pouch contains various bronze articles collected in trading among distant nations. I'll give them to you as a reward for your devotion to me.'

"I asked the old man if he had any message for his tribe or his friends, but he was unable to say more, and did not even seem to hear. He died that evening. I dug a grave, where I laid the body, and rolled a large stone over it to protect it from beasts of prey. Then I opened the old man's pouch, and found all the precious

articles you have seen. They did not cost a single drop of blood. May they not cause any to be shed in the future!

"I set out and tried to join the traders, but could not overtake them; they had either taken another way or gained too long a start. Then, thanks to the directions given me, I turned toward the Lacustrian city of the Cormorants, and soon arrived here, in spite of difficulties and dangers."

Water-Chestnut still seemed to regret that the riches she admired had not been gained at the cost of bloody deeds, but neither of the two sisters expressed any opinion on the subject, for they were in haste to return to the feast, where the guests were awaiting them.

They therefore, draped in their ample linen garments, went out with Light-Foot and approached the shore, where a numerous crowd had assembled. Both were really beautiful, but the attention of the throng, that of the women especially, was instantly attracted by Water-Chestnut's pins and Strawberry-Blossom's bracelets. The men, on their part, went into ecstasies over the magnificent weapons Light-Foot had retained for himself; and Sea-Eagle, discovering his son-in-law's wealth, secretly reproached himself for not having exacted a higher price for his daughter; his axe seemed much less beautiful since Light-Foot owned a similar one.

We will not enter into the sometimes revolting details of the banquet, which soon commenced and was prolonged until the evening. As night approached most of the guests seemed stupefied by the excess of food. A large number had gone to sleep under the trees in

the neighboring woods. The fires were beginning to die out; cooking had ceased for want of provisions.

Sea-Eagle, seated at the foot of an oak, was thinking how he could rob his son-in-law of the treasures he still retained, while Light-Foot, whose place was between his sister-in-law and his wife, was talking in a low tone to Strawberry-Blossom. Suddenly, Greedy Pike, the lad already mentioned, and who was one of the chief's "young men" or servants, came running out of the neighboring forest. Greedy Pike, faithful to his name, had taken a large share of the good cheer, and was one of those who after a hearty meal had found it necessary to sleep several hours under the trees.

He arrived panting for breath, his hair streaming in the wind.

"Chief," he said hurriedly, "the Wolves are close at hand. They are coming. I saw them."

"The Wolves!" repeated Sea-Eagle, misunderstanding, or pretending to misunderstand, the meaning of the word; "well, isn't the forest the place for wolves?"

And he began to laugh.

"No, no, chief," replied Greedy Pike, pointing to the edge of the woods, where groups of men were beginning to appear, "not wild beasts, but the Wolves of Gnarled Oak and Hurricane. They doubtless want to seize your bronze axe."

"My bronze axe!" said the chief, rising and assuring himself that the precious weapon still hung at his side.

Yet he hesitated to give the alarm, and was watching in the twilight the more and more numerous bands of

men coming from the forest, when Light-Foot, who had also risen, cried,

“Beware, chief! the Wolves are about to attack us. Quick! quick! women and children, return to the city. The men will guard the bridge. To the city, I tell you!”

“Yes, yes, to the city!” repeated Sea-Eagle.

V.

THE BATTLE.

FEW persons among the Cormorants were in a condition to obey this summons. Some, as we have said, were sleeping here and there on the grass; the others could scarcely move. The majority had not heard or had not understood the chief's order. Yet several ran toward the bridge that led to the city, and there was hope that they would reach this place of refuge.

But their enemies did not give them time. Gnarled Oak's warriors, seeing themselves discovered, no longer hesitated to act, but rushed forward, uttering fierce yells.

Their object was to cut off the Cormorants and occupy the wooden bridge before them. The Cormorants knew this, and while the women and children doubled their speed to gain the narrow passage, the warriors—among them Sea-Eagle and Light-Foot—went forward to meet the treacherous assailants.

Unfortunately, the forces were unequal. The members of the tribe, surprised in the midst of a banquet, had only their spears and axes for defence. The Wolves, on the contrary, were supplied with bows, quivers filled

with arrows, and javelins which they hurled from a long distance with much skill. Thus they profited by their advantage, by directing a shower of arrows upon their adversaries.

Soon the piteous cries of the wounded mingled with the shouts of menace or terror that rose on all sides. Sea-Eagle, who, as we have said, did not lack courage, wished to march forward with his "young men," and perhaps try his bronze arms upon the enemy. But Light-Foot, after pushing Strawberry-Blossom and Water-Chestnut toward the bridge, thought it his duty to attempt to effect a reconciliation, and, advancing before the others, cried,

"Men of the tribe of Wolves, why do you attack us? What offence have we committed? Why do you wish to shed our blood, when we don't think of shedding yours?"

Light-Foot, as the reader must have perceived, had more intelligence and humanity than would ordinarily be found among these savage tribes. Yet it was not the moderation of his conduct that for a moment awed the enemy, but the boldness with which he advanced toward them; and they stopped. Gnarled Oak, who according to Holly-Branch's promise, though pale and weak, commanded the expedition, said haughtily,

"Sea-Eagle has insulted us by refusing to give his daughter to a hunter of the tribe of Wolves. I am the chief. I must avenge the insult offered one of my young men." And he raised his arm as if to strike.

Light-Foot, without moving, replied,

"Hurricane, the hunter of whom you speak, was too hasty, and took a thoughtless word in earnest. The

proof is that, at my request, Sea-Eagle will give his daughter, Water-Chestnut, to your 'young man.'

"Are you telling the truth?" cried Hurricane, who was standing a few paces away, and now impatiently approached.

"Sea-Eagle will give you his promise, and we will live in peace as before."

All eyes turned toward the chief of the Cormorants, who said to his son-in-law eagerly in a low tone,

"So you're ready to give me your last axe and your spear with the jade point?"

"Yes," replied Light-Foot; "peace between our tribes is preferable to any wealth."

Gnarled Oak brutally interrupted the speakers.

"What is that to me, the chief of the Wolves?" he cried. "I am told Sea-Eagle has a bronze axe and spear; let him give them to me instantly, and I will return home with my warriors. If not, I will kill the men of the Cormorants, carry away all the women, and set fire to the city."

Lightfoot, and Hurricane himself, tried to make the chief of the Wolves withdraw his insolent claim, but they were not heard.

Sea-Eagle had made an angry bound. His face was wrinkled like a lion's.

"My bronze weapons, Gnarled Oak!" he cried; "you want them? Here they are."

And he tried to deal a violent blow at Gnarled Oak with his axe. But the latter was on his guard, and in spite of his weakness avoided the weapon that whizzed vainly through the air. Then drawing back a few paces, he hurled at Sea-Eagle, just as the latter was

regaining his balance, a javelin that sunk deep into the old chief's breast.

"Take this stone weapon in exchange," he said in a sneering tone.

The unfortunate Sea-Eagle shook his arms, rolled his expressionless eyes vacantly, and fell heavily on the ground.

We know that hostilities had been interrupted during the conference between the chiefs. The Wolves were grouped behind Gnarled Oak, while the Cormorants stood ready to support Sea-Eagle. The women and children, hoping that peace would be made, had ceased to flock toward the Lacustrian city, and were watching the progress of events with curious eyes.

Sea-Eagle's murder excited a terrible tumult; the warriors of both tribes furiously attacked each other. Lightfoot and Hurricane, although they had desired, from different motives, to avoid the struggle, did not hesitate to throw themselves into the midst of the fray. In an instant the battle was raging in every direction with inconceivable fury.

Gnarled Oak, seeing his adversary fall, had rushed upon him to snatch the axe and spear, the objects of his greed. As he seized them, waving them in triumph above his head, the Cormorants tried to wrest them from him. Thus the battle centred around the chief of the Wolves, and the two parties crowded together at the feet of poor Sea-Eagle, now a corpse.

One can easily imagine the scene of horror and carnage which the neighborhood of the Lacustrian city now presented. In the faint twilight the terrified pop-

ulation rushed aimlessly to and fro, while the men tried to repel the assailants. The cries of pain, shrieks of terror, shouts of menace or victory formed a tremendous roar that echoed far over the waters of the lake and into the depths of the forest.

The Cormorants, whom the enemy decimated with arrows from a distance, were too ill prepared for the struggle to long endure this furious attack. They soon yielded, and retired toward the bridge, leaving the ground covered with the dead and wounded. The desire to help their wives and children, whose cries of distress they heard behind them, also contributed to diminish the coolness they needed in this terrible moment.

Light-Foot fought in the front rank, and several Wolves had already furnished him an opportunity to prove the superiority of his weapons. He slowly retreated, always keeping his face to the foe. His one idea was to meet Gnarled Oak and snatch the spoils wrested from the old chief. While vainly seeking for him he perceived Hurricane, and, wishing to punish the treachery of this man, the instigator of the war, advanced toward him.

Suddenly, Sea-Eagle's two daughters, still clad in the white draperies they had donned for the banquet, appeared in the midst of the battle. They had just heard of their father's death, and were rushing to put themselves under Lightfoot's protection. Strawberry-Blossom's cheeks were wet with tears, but Water-Chestnut, with dry eyes and compressed lips, brandished a bloody club she had just picked up on the battlefield.

"Sea-Eagle must be avenged," she said to her brother-in-law.

Turning away, she found herself face to face with Hurricane, who was preparing to answer Light-Foot's challenge.

The beautiful girl was neither surprised nor alarmed. On the contrary, her countenance expressed fierce delight.

"I loved you and wished to become your wife," she cried; "you have killed my father. There!" She raised the club and dealt her former lover so terrible a blow that he sank motionless at her feet.

It was not rare at this period for women to take part in battle, but in that case they had neither favor nor generosity to expect from the combatants. Thus, no warrior of the tribe of Wolves hesitated to attack Water-Chestnut, in spite of her youth and beauty and the circumstances that rendered her action so natural. Shouting fiercely, they rushed upon her, and would have killed her if Light-Foot, aided by a party of young warriors, had not forced them to retire. He took advantage of a favorable moment to draw the two sisters out of the conflict.

Water-Chestnut made no resistance. After Hurricane's fall her warlike fury had vanished, and the club dropped from her hand. Light-Foot wanted to accompany Sea-Eagle's daughters to the city, and then return to the battle to help the people of his tribe repel the Wolves. They reached the bridge, already crowded with fugitives, and having succeeded, not without difficulty, in crossing it, entered the hut, where the two sisters sank down exhausted.

Light-Foot took a bow and prepared to go out again, but Strawberry-Blossom hung around his neck and said, sobbing,

"Stay, stay, I beseech you! They have killed my father; they will kill you too."

"Return to the field," said Water-Chestnut; "the man I struck down was not the most guilty. Avenge him, avenge us, by killing Gnarled Oak! Gnarled Oak has done everything."

Light-Foot was trying to disengage himself from the embraces of his young wife, when a fresh tumult attracted his attention.

As we have stated, the Cormorants, to protect their property and the shelter of their families, had crowded before the bridge and defended it with the energy of despair. Gnarled Oak and his warriors, irritated by this resistance, hit upon a cruel expedient well worthy of those barbarous times. They took from the fires, which still blazed here and there, several burning brands and threw them into the Lacustrian city.

It will be remembered that the first houses were only forty or fifty paces from the shore—that they were built principally of boughs, and all the roofs were thatched. It had been very dry for some time, and roofs and boughs burst into flame as soon as they found themselves in contact with the burning brands. To cap the climax, a strong wind was blowing and fanned the conflagration.

In those days there was no remedy for such accidents. The Lacustrian tribes had too small a quantity of vessels to be able to bring water enough to extinguish the flames. If the warriors of the Cormorants had been at liberty,

perhaps by tearing down the huts where the fire first appeared they might have succeeded in checking the conflagration; but they were obliged to fight to prevent the enemy from gaining their last retreat, and the fire developed without impediment. In a very few moments it had attained alarming proportions.

The poor people who had already reached the city ran to and fro on the platform, while the huts took fire successively like torches; several of the unfortunate creatures fell into the lake, where they perished. On the shore the terrified throng were flying in every direction. Utterly disheartened, the defenders of the bridge began to give way, and the conquerors were already uttering shouts of victory. Everywhere frantic excitement prevailed, everywhere were dead, wounded, and dying, and the conflagration, increasing every moment, illuminated the horizon with its crimson glare.

Light-Foot quickly perceived that resistance was useless; nothing remained except to save his companions from the consequences of the disaster. The flames were already sweeping above their heads and catching at Sea-Eagle's hut; they would soon be in the midst of a vast brasier. Light-Foot, with the prompt decision and in the curt tone required by the circumstances, said,

"There is a boat at the foot of the little staircase. Strawberry-Blossom, take an oar; Water-Chestnut will carry the other, for I must have both hands free to defend you. Quick! quick! let us go."

The two young girls mechanically obeyed; each seized an oar and followed Light-Foot.

At first they were almost suffocated by the whirling clouds of smoke. But the hunter did not lose his

presence of mind, and they reached the staircase leading to the lake without accident. Here there was a boat made of a log, which several fugitives were already trying to enter. Light-Foot, with the selfishness roused by the consciousness of danger, drove them away; the pirogue was scarcely large enough to hold his companions and himself.

All three took their places in it; Strawberry-Blossom and Water-Chestnut, long accustomed to the exercise, handled the oars skilfully, and the boat moved swiftly away.

Many other pirogues had taken the same direction; loaded with as many persons as they could hold, they moved heavily over the surface of the water, where the fire was reflected in long luminous tracks.

While passing the piles on which the Lacustrian city was built, Light-Foot perceived Gnarled Oak's warriors, who, after having dispersed the last defenders of the tribe of Cormorants, were pursuing them along the shore. He bent forward, and while the young girls continued to row, carefully fitted an arrow to his bow.

The weapon was discharged; the loud tumult that arose on the shore proved that some noted warrior had been wounded. Light-Foot leaned forward again, shading his eyes with his hand, and said in a tone of triumph,

"Water-Chestnut killed Hurricane; I have just slain the chief of the Wolves. Sea-Eagle's death is avenged."

"What!" cried Water-Chestnut, dropping her oar.

"It was Gnarled Oak?"

"Look!"

The glare of the conflagration revealed the most

minute details of the conflict, and they could distinctly see some of the Wolves carefully raising one of their number, whose breast was pierced by an arrow. By his features, as well as certain peculiarities of dress, they recognized Gnarled Oak. Water-Chestnut clapped her hands.

"Good! good!" she said; "Light-Foot is skilful. The dead will be content. But why, in my anger, did I hasten—"

She interrupted herself and remained motionless, her eyes fixed on a point on the shore, as if something singular had attracted her attention. At last she pointed with her finger to a group of warriors who were moving toward the senseless chief.

"There! there!" she continued; "don't I see—"

She could say no more; Light-Foot hastily pushed her back.

"Down! down!" he murmured, "or you'll be killed." And he threw himself into the bottom of the boat.

The warning was timely. The Wolves saw whence the shaft which had just struck their chief had come, and a shower of arrows whizzed above the boat.

Light-Foot did not wait for another discharge; seizing the oars, he made the pirogue skim over the surface of the water with wonderful velocity. Water-Chestnut did not cease to gaze boldly at the shore, as if trying to clear up some doubt that beset her. But the direction of the boat had been changed, and a curtain of flames again spread before her.

When in the middle of the lake Light-Foot stopped to take breath. Water-Chestnut was absorbed in thought; Strawberry-Blossom asked,

"Where are you taking us?"

"To the Lacustrian city of the Beavers. They have long been allies of the Cormorants, and several of their warriors were killed to-day with ours in defending our homes. Our quarrel is theirs. With them we shall find a refuge, perhaps assistance against the Wolves."

VI.

THE ELECTION.

THE following evening a man was seated before the fireplace in a hut in the terrestrial station of the Wolves. The whole tribe seemed to be in mourning; ever and anon wails and lamentations, which echoed mournfully amid the silence of the night, were heard without.

The man of whom we speak was resting his head on his hands. He seemed to be severely wounded, and a handful of healing herbs was bound upon his brow by a bandage made of the skin of some wild animal. But it was not the wound that caused his despondency, and he gave way to the saddest thoughts.

The reader has already guessed that this man was Hurricane, Water-Chestnut's former lover. Strong as the young girl might be, the blow she had dealt did not produce death, and the stone axe glanced from Hurricane's hard skull. He fell, stunned by the shock, but rose soon after Water-Chestnut's departure, and it was really he whom she had seen from the boat at the moment Gnarled Oak was struck by the arrow. On returning to the tribe Holly-Branch had bandaged his

wound, which it was believed would have no dangerous result.

He had been absorbed in his meditations a long time when the priestess appeared, still bearing her mysterious crescent. She threw some dry branches on the fire to rekindle it; then, when a bright flame lighted the interior of the hut, removed the dressing from the wound, replaced it by a new one, also composed of bruised herbs, and carefully fastened the leather bandage.

Hurricane had mechanically submitted to these attentions, almost without noticing them. The task over, the old woman sat down beside him.

"Your wound is nothing," said she; "one would suppose it had been made by the paw of a wild cat. You can go and come as you like. There's no doubt about the cure."

Hurricane did not answer.

Holly-Branch continued: "The matrons of the tribe and I have washed Gnarled Oak's body, and are going to carry it to the dolmen. The articles that belonged to him will be placed beside him, according to custom, especially the bronze axe and spear he wrested from Sea-Eagle. The whole tribe will be present at the ceremony; won't you come too?"

Hurricane rose with difficulty.

"Gnarled Oak was my friend," he said absently; "he was the chief of the Wolves. I will accompany him to the dolmen, and his shade will not come to torment me during the hours of darkness."

"That's right. A huge auroch has been killed for the funeral feast. After the banquet the men will assemble and choose a new chief."

Perhaps Holly-Branch had expected to produce a marked impression upon her hearer by telling him this news, but Hurricane remained impassive, and seemed to have relapsed into his reverie.

She added: "All the warriors of the tribe have confidence in me. They are aware that I know wondrous secrets, and have cured them many a time, as well as Gnarled Oak, of wounds and sickness. So they will choose the man I point out for the chief."

Hurricane still remained silent.

"This chief," continued the priestess, "must be brave and wise, for the Cormorants, they say, have joined the Beavers to make war upon us. He will put himself at the head of the Wolves to avenge the death of Gnarled Oak, punish the girl who wounded you, and gain possession of the bronze articles our enemies still possess."

This time Hurricane started up with the impetuosity that had given him his name. "Isn't Gnarled Oak's death avenged by Sea-Eagle's?" he cried. "If the Cormorants have killed some of our warriors, have we not slain a large number of their people and burned their city? Of what consequence are these bronze articles? They bring misfortune to all who touch them. What do we want of them, when our stone weapons are enough for our needs? As to Water-Chestnut, she was right to try to kill me, since she believed I had killed her father; and I sometimes regret," he added gloomily, "that she did not succeed."

The priestess uttered a little laugh that ended in a cough.

"You still love the black-eyed girl?" she said.

Hurricane made no answer.

"Listen to me," continued Holly-Branch in a confidential tone. "I like you—first, because you have always been kind and respectful to me; secondly, because I lost a beloved son, who would now have been your age, and whom I imagine I see again in you. Do you wish to be the chief of the tribe of Wolves? Thanks to my influence, the choice of the council will fall upon you."

Hurricane's eyes flashed with sudden fire, as if the prospect of the first rank in the tribe had roused his ambition, but the light instantly vanished.

"I don't wish it," he answered.

Holly-Branch showed great surprise.

"What! you refuse to be chief?" she cried. "Consider that you will be able to crush the Cormorants and Beavers, kill Light-Foot, and bear away to your hut the woman you love."

"Light-Foot is a good man," said Hurricane abruptly; "he wanted to give up his bronze axe to induce Sea-Eagle to grant me his daughter; my hand shall not be raised against him. As for Water-Chestnut, brave, beautiful girl! she never seemed to me so desirable as at the moment she tried to deal me a mortal wound. I don't wish to use force against her; it would be more agreeable to soften her anger by submission and kind words."

The priestess's astonishment was changed to bewilderment. As we see, the human race was approaching that period when certain elevated feelings were beginning to be evolved from the ruder instincts of the primitive race. Mankind was ripe for the civilization that was about to be slowly developed by the discovery and use of metals.

Hurricane reflected, perhaps unconsciously to himself, the generosity of which Light-Foot, whether because he naturally possessed a germ of it or had gained it by intercourse with others, had given an example. Thus, an individual quality was to become the trait of a whole tribe.

But Holly-Branch, in spite of her superior intelligence, belonged to the past, and knew nothing of the new ideas and strange motives which influenced the acts of the present generation.

She therefore could not explain the feeling of delicacy, ill-defined at best, which prevented the young hunter from fighting with Light-Foot and gaining Water-Chestnut by violence. She was about to make a fresh attempt to conquer his obstinacy, when the lamentations outside redoubled and continued without cessation.

The priestess took up her crescent again.

"Gnarled Oak's funeral procession is beginning to move," she said; "I must accompany it to see that the body is properly placed and the funeral rites carefully performed. Come with me, Hurricane."

"I am ready."

He rose, took his weapons, and both left the hut.

The funeral train was indeed just commencing its march, and the entire population accompanied it to the tumulus-dolmen we have already seen in the midst of the forest. First came several young men, holding torches of resinous wood to light the way for the procession; then the body, dressed in its usual clothes and borne by warriors on a litter of branches; men, women, and children followed, carrying the dead chief's arms or various articles intended for funeral offerings. The women uttered shrill cries, tore their hair, and beat

their breasts with great demonstrations of despair. When the procession had passed the bridge leading to the city and entered the wood, the long line of torches, moving shadows, and wild cries formed a most gloomy spectacle.

Hurricane and the priestess of the tribe had gone to the head of the train, and the symbol borne by Holly-Branch aroused a reverence mingled with awe. As we have said, the religion of these pre-historic times, of which we possess only vague indications, consisted, according to all appearances, of gross superstitions. It is suspected that the inhabitants of the Lacustrian cities worshipped the sun, the moon, perhaps even fire, judging from the prominent part fire seems to have played in their ceremonies. But the worship of the dead was undoubtedly of extreme importance to them, and this worship equalled, if it did not surpass, that offered to one or several unknown divinities.

Thus, the solemnity with which Gnarled Oak's funeral rites were performed will cause no surprise. Only a few sick people and several who had been wounded in the battle the day before remained in the huts; all the population who were in health formed a part of the long procession that wound over the plain, rousing the echoes with mournful wails.

They reached the spot where the tumulus-dolmen rose; the torch-bearers formed a picturesque group, some on the green slope of the artificial mound, others in the narrow opening at whose end was the burial-vault. Part of the inhabitants of the city had preceded the throng, and fires burning here and there were intended to prepare the funeral feast.

The ceremonies that took place on this occasion recalled in all essential particulars those in use in the Age of Hewn Stone. After an immense quantity of provisions had been consumed by the voracious multitude, the body was placed at the bottom of the dolmen in the squatting posture in which we find all the skeletons of that period. The greatest delicacies of the banquet, together with earthen vessels or horns filled with water, were put beside it; then each individual brought his offering to the dead—bows and arrows, flint knives and axes, bracelets and necklaces, utensils of bone or stags' antlers. The bronze axe and spear Gnarled Oak had possessed a moment, and which had cost him so dear, were not forgotten. Thanks to the reverence felt for the dead, the precious weapons would be safer in this tomb, closed by a rock, than in a fortress guarded by numerous warriors.

The burial being completed, the dead man was called three times by name, and the stone replaced before the entrance of the tumulus, while the mourning women uttered a last outburst of wails and groans. Finally the cries ceased, and the principal personages of the tribe seated themselves around the fire to choose a new chief. There was no necessity for secrecy in these deliberations, which interested the whole population; so the throng eagerly assembled behind the prominent men who were to make the election. Deep silence replaced the tumult; the torches, placed on the slope of the mound between the stones or on trunks of trees, illuminated in a weird but picturesque fashion the groups scattered over the clearing.

Holly-Branch, crescent in hand, appeared very busy,

and went from one member of the council to another, whispering a few words in a low tone. She thus approached Hurricane, who was seated in the second row, a little apart from the rest.

"Do you want to be chief?" she asked.

"No, woman," replied the hunter impatiently. "I will not fight against Water-Chestnut's tribe."

At that moment a loud tumult arose on the edge of the woods. A young man had just been discovered in a neighboring thicket—a young man who seemed to be hiding, and under cover of the darkness trying to mingle in the throng. He was recognized as a member of the tribe of Cormorants, and on account of the enmity now existing between the Wolves and Cormorants it could not be doubted that he had evil designs. The crowd therefore rushed upon him, and the poor fellow, who was no other than Greedy Pike, was dragged forward, beaten and hooted at, toward the main body of the tribe.

Stupefied and bewildered, he did not utter a word. The fact of spying being proved, it was proposed to kill him without any form of trial. But an old man suggested that they should first choose a chief, who would undertake the office of questioning the spy and deciding his fate. This proposal won general approval; the tumult soon subsided, and while Greedy Pike was guarded by two men belonging to the tribe, the others proceeded with the business of the election.

Hurricane had lost no detail of the scene. He was well acquainted with the prisoner, who while being hustled to and fro had cast a beseeching glance at him. Approaching Holly-Branch, who was continuing her

intrigues in the assembly, he said to her in an undertone,

"Mother, I accept. Make me chief, and you shall not regret it."

The election took place without any long speeches, in the simplest manner possible. The electors voted aloud, and each person could count the suffrages. Holly-Branch had manœuvred so well that Hurricane was almost unanimously chosen. There was no ceremony of investiture; the oldest member of the council said, "Be our chief;" that was all. Hurricane, on his part, had no occasion to make a speech of thanks and explain his politics. He answered quietly, "Very well;" and the council was broken up. Hurricane was the lawful chief of the tribe of Wolves.

When the business of his election was over he rose.

"The people of the tribe can return to the village," said he; "I am going to question the spy."

Though the authority of a chief of the tribe was far from being absolute, the majority of those present obeyed, and followed, in a long file, the path leading to the wood. Hurricane had remained standing near the fire, from which still exhaled an odor of fat and burned bones, and ordered the prisoner to be brought before him.

Holly-Branch said insinuatingly, "Chief, will you not permit me to assist you? I have experience; I will unravel the lies and artifices our enemies use. You are strong and brave, but young and easy to deceive."

"Greedy Pike," answered the new chief dryly, "is younger and more easy to deceive than I. Go away, woman; I shall act according to my own will."

The priestess looked at him with mingled anger and astonishment. After having exerted so much influence over Gnarled Oak, perhaps she had hoped to exercise a still greater one over a younger chief who owed his elevation to her; and now, at the very first moment, he showed an independence which boded ill for the future.

But Holly-Branch dared not insist, and moving a little aside began to whisper to the warriors who had been ordered to watch Greedy Pike.

We have not forgotten that the prisoner was one of the "young men" whom the chiefs of tribes retained near their own persons and employed in certain public services or for the common defence. He had performed such duties in the Lacustrian city, and it was not without cause that Hurricane believed himself his superior in intelligence, for Greedy Pike, though devoted to Sea-Eagle and his family, was considered very dull.

"Greedy Pike," he asked sternly, "what are you doing here? I am now chief of the Wolves. You have evil designs against us."

Greedy Pike stammered volubly a few unintelligible words that might have been protestations of innocence.

"Answer me," interrupted Hurricane rudely; "didn't you hide yourself to find out what was being said and done in my tribe?"

"No," replied Greedy Pike.

"Then what do you want, and who sent you?"

"I—I can't tell."

Hurricane seized the axe that hung at his belt and raised it over the head of the unfortunate prisoner, who murmured in terror,

"No, no, don't kill me!"

"Who sent you?"

Greedy Pike racked his brain for some plausible falsehood; finding none, he decided to tell the truth:

"Water-Chestnut, Sea-Eagle's daughter."

Hurricane, in his turn, showed deep emotion and lowered his axe.

"Water-Chestnut!" he repeated; "what message did she give you for me?"

"None. Listen! Over yonder, among the Beavers, some people said she had killed you, others that you were alive. She did not know, and was very anxious to find out. This evening, as I was getting into White Cloud's pirogue, she came to me and said, 'Greedy Pike, when night begins to fall, glide, without letting any one see you, to the city of the Wolves; learn whether Hurricane is alive or dead; then come and tell me.' I always obey Water-Chestnut, and set out. I was trying to get into the city of the Wolves when the whole tribe came this way. I followed Gnarled Oak's funeral procession at a distance, and crouched under a bush to try to find you, but was discovered."

The artless story bore the stamp of truth.

"So," said Hurricane joyously, "Sea-Eagle's daughter is anxious about me? Perhaps she regrets that she wounded me."

Greedy Pike was not able to answer this question, which, moreover, was not addressed to him. Hurricane abruptly continued:

"What is going on in the city of the Beavers?"

The would-be spy did not seem to suspect that he was being asked to reveal the secrets of his own tribe, and answered with his usual frankness:

"Light-Foot has been chosen chief of the Cormorants in the place of Sea-Eagle, and formed an alliance with White Cloud, the chief of the Beavers. Both are preparing to attack the Wolves and burn their city, as the Wolves burned the city of the Cormorants."

"Very well; you are at liberty to go, but on condition that you will take a message to Water-Chestnut."

"What is it?"

Hurricane gave him certain instructions, which he made him repeat several times, to be sure that he would not forget them; then both rose. The chief's young companions and Holly-Branch, perceiving that the interview was over, thought the time to massacre the spy had come, and rushed toward him. Hurricane stopped them by a gesture of command.

"Let him go," said he; "I know all that is necessary to know."

Greedy Pike did not wait for more, but running at full speed quickly vanished in the forest.

The "young men" had obeyed the order given without reflection, but Holly-Branch looked at Hurricane suspiciously and muttered,

"A beautiful girl may confuse a young chief's mind, but if he betrays the Wolves, woe betide him!"

VII.

THE CITY OF THE BEAVERS.

LET us first relate what befell Greedy Pike. Water-Chestnut's unlucky messenger, after leaving Hurricane, rushed into the forest, very well pleased to escape a death he had believed certain. There was no chivalric feeling at this period, and if there had been, Greedy Pike would have been incapable of experiencing it. So he did not blush to run at full speed through the darkness, forcing his way through the thorny bushes to the detriment of his half-naked body, dashing over the quagmires, solely occupied in putting the greatest possible distance between himself and his enemies.

He soon ceased to hear the dull noise made by the people of the tribe on their way back to the village, and, completely reassured, stopped to take breath and look around him. Unfortunately, in his rapid flight he had retraced his steps several times to avoid impassable obstacles, and thus left the winding path that served as a communication between inhabited places. In broad daylight he would not have failed to distinguish a thousand landmarks that would have enabled him to direct his course with certainty; but at this hour of the night, under the dense screen of foliage, it was becoming very

difficult to discover his way. After reflecting a short time, the young man, guided by his keen senses and the instinct peculiar to the savage, chose a direction in which he expected to find the lake, and marched resolutely forward.

He moved on thus for several minutes, and continued to think himself in the right way, when certain incidents attracted his attention. Sinister howls echoed on the right and left before and behind him, while there was a constant rustling in the underbrush, and here and there shining eyes glittered amid the brakes.

The wild animals, we repeat, were neither so numerous nor so terrible as in the anterior period. The cave-lions, mammoths, cave-bears, and hyenas had vanished from the surface of the earth. The bear, which was still very common, did not differ from our ordinary brown bear. The wolves, however, were very numerous in the forests, and at night formed, as before, large packs that might endanger the solitary hunter or traveller.

Greedy Pike therefore could not deceive himself as to the nature and significance of these sounds. His other weapons having been taken from him by Hurricane's warriors, he had nothing with which to defend himself except a flint knife concealed in his belt. Yet he was not alarmed; he thought that if the wild beasts pressed him more closely he could climb a tree to wait for the dawn, at the risk of delaying his message, which, however, was of the most urgent nature.

So he continued to advance fearlessly in the direction where the Lacustrian city of the Beavers ought to be. The pack with the fiery eyes grew bolder. It might

even be supposed that some special motive attracted these cowardly animals to this portion of the forest, for far in advance, at a point where the young man's presence could not yet have been known, a concert of howls betrayed the existence of a band perhaps still more numerous than the one at his heels.

Besides, there was no token that he was approaching the border of the forest. Panting violently, he again paused to take breath, and was so closely pressed that several of his terrible enemies, carried away by their eagerness, grazed his naked limbs. To keep them at a distance he uttered one of the shrill cries which it is said startle the most formidable animals, and then tried to reflect upon his situation.

It was not a cheerful one. The wolves now formed a circle of which he occupied the centre; the eyes that still glittered in the darkness, the impatient howls, showed the necessity of speedily forming some resolution. So Greedy Pike was returning to his first idea, of seeking refuge in a tree, when his sense of smell, keen as that of a modern red-skin, revealed something that would have escaped the organs of a civilized man.

"I smell water and smoke," he murmured; "I'm not far from the lake and the city of the Beavers."

This certainty restored his strength and courage; after again uttering sharp cries to drive away the wolves, he resumed his walk, guided by the odor of marsh-lands and smoke, which became more and more distinct.

His efforts were soon rewarded. He at last reached the borders of the forest, and suddenly emerged into a

plain, beyond which the lake glittered like a silver mirror in the serene light of the stars.

But at the first glance Greedy Pike perceived that he had missed his way. It was really the lake so familiar to his eyes that stretched before him; only, instead of reaching the city of the Beavers, he found himself at the city of the Cormorants, or rather at the spot where it had been. He could not doubt it, for although the houses in this village, so thriving a short time ago, had completely disappeared, the ruins of the platform and piles which emerged from the water were still smoking. It was from them that the smoke pervading the atmosphere for so great a distance exhaled.

Hearts were not tender at this period of humanity, and gentle feelings had little ascendancy over this barbarous generation. Yet when Greedy Pike cast his eyes upon the portion of the lake where he was accustomed to see the dwellings of his forefathers, the hut where he himself had been born, and now beheld only smoking piles, against which the waves were lapping, he was terribly oppressed and on the point of bursting into tears.

The plain presented a no less sorrowful spectacle. The cultivated fields had been devastated, trampled under foot; the fences of the enclosures for cattle beaten down; flint axes had been tried on the fruit-trees. The domestic animals had been slain, and their bodies, left on the ground together with the corpses of the warriors slain in battle, had attracted the throng of wolves whose howls were heard in the distance, and whose forms were dimly seen through the dusk. In that remote period war meant extermination, pillage,

robbery, and murder, and left behind only devastation and ruin.

But this mournful spectacle could not long arrest Greedy Pike's attention. In consequence of his mistake he had a league to traverse to reach the city of the Beavers on the other side of the lake, and he soon resumed his walk along the shore.

As he advanced traces of the slaughter and devastation became more and more visible. The ground was heaped with bloody bones, over which the wild beasts were wrangling. Greedy Pike, having picked up a stick, used it to drive away the wolves. At first they made way for him and left their banquet on the dead bodies, though not without signs of ill-humor. But every moment they appeared more bold and numerous; it was only by uttering loud shouts and shaking his stick that the young man induced them to move out of his path. Still, while he stood erect and faced them he had no cause to fear a serious attack, and continued his way, not without pausing from time to time to watch those behind him.

He thus reached the spot where the battle had taken place, opposite the almost consumed remains of the bridge. Here the wolves formed a black moving mass, from which rose constant howls. Greedy Pike again shook his stick to force them to fly, but as they retired very slowly and with evident reluctance, he looked down to see the cause of this resistance. By the light of the moon, which had just risen, he perceived a human body, already nearly reduced to a skeleton, and whose fragments of flesh were scattered in a pool of blood. The corpse was unrecognizable, but

certain peculiarities of dress, and especially the thick gray hair, left no room for doubt; it was Sea-Eagle.

Greedy Pike could not behold this terrible sight without deep sorrow. Forgetting his own situation, he bent over the body and said mournfully,

"Sea-Eagle! Sea-Eagle!"

Having paid this tribute of grief to his former chief, he attempted to rise and continue his way, but had no time to do so.

A single loud howl was uttered at a short distance like a signal, and an enormous wolf, springing upon him from behind, tried to seize him by the neck. Instantly all the others rushed forward, and Greedy Pike disappeared under a pack of fierce, eager beasts.

He was full of vigor, and the imminence of the danger quadrupled his strength. So, in spite of horrible wounds, in spite of the enormous weight that crushed him, he succeeded in rising, shouted, and shook his stick in the air. But he was again overthrown, and rolled with his tawny adversaries on the ground.

Twice he thus rose to his feet, dragging with him a cluster of wolves, howling and biting like them, and writhing with pain. At the third effort his strength failed, his shouts imperceptibly died away, his movements became mere palpitations, and the pack of hideous quadrupeds at last covered him entirely like a pall. At the end of a few minutes nothing was heard save the cracking of bones mingled with howls of triumph.

The Lacustrian city of the Beavers, which owed its

name to the structure formerly built by beavers,* whose place it had taken, was similar in every respect to that of the Cormorants, which had just been destroyed by the conflagration. Situated in a creek of the same lake, it was also composed of several hundred huts connected with the shore by a bridge.

It was in this city, as we know, that the remnant of the tribe of Cormorants had found a refuge, and the greatest bustle pervaded it the following morning. The people were preparing for war. All the animals owned by the tribe were removed from the pens, and while some were concealed in the woods, others were brought into the city. The huge, clumsy pirogues, hollowed by means of fire, had been fastened to the piles of the platform, out of the reach of the enemy. They had not removed the bridge—a thing that could be done in a few minutes—but a large party of the “young men” of the tribe, bow in hand, guarded its entrance. Finally, active, watchful children, placed as sentinels in the neighboring woods, were ready to give the alarm in case of danger.

In the city itself warlike preparations were continued with the same activity. Before the doors and within the huts warriors were seen engaged in various occupations. Each individual at this remote period was his own armorer. One, holding one of the large stones called “percuteurs,” was cutting sharp edges on a piece of flint intended for his club or javelin. Another, bending over a basin-shaped stone, was polishing by rubbing an axe that had been notched by use.† Still another

* The beaver was common throughout Europe in the Stone Age.

† One of these stones that served for *polishers* was found in 1860 at Varenne-Saint-Hilaire, near Paris, by Monsieur Leguay.

was changing the catgut string of his bow, or putting on his arrows a point of bone or flint fastened by an ox's sinew dipped in bitumen. Finally, several were choosing from among quantities of round polished stones brought by the children those best suited to be hurled from a sling.

While engaged in these occupations a man was pointed out on the edge of the woods opposite to the city. Instantly the defenders of the bridge and the sentinels on the shore were on the alert; lances were seized, bows were bent, all eyes were fixed on the same point. The man, having emerged from the trees, advanced upon the shore.

"It's Wild-Boar's Tusk!" they cried.

The threatening demonstrations ceased, for a friend had been recognized.

Wild-Boar's Tusk was, in fact, a young man belonging to the tribe of Beavers who had been sent that morning to the terrestrial station. When he reached the entrance of the bridge a crowd gathered around him to hear his news.

"What are the Wolves doing?" asked one. "Are they coming to attack us?"

"No," answered Wild-Boar's Tusk; "they are attending to their usual occupations. I stayed a long time in a tree from which I could see everything that was going on in their village; they did not seem to be thinking of making an attack."

"And Greedy Pike?" asked another; "what has become of him?"

"I questioned a shepherd I met near the great dolmen, and who did not know me, about him. He told

me that a young man belonging to the Cormorants had been taken prisoner yesterday evening during Gnarled Oak's funeral, and doubtless killed by Hurricane, the present chief of the tribe."

Cries of grief hailed this report, which was somewhat far from the truth, as we know, though Greedy Pike's death was a fact. But Wild-Boar's Tusk did not think it advisable to make any further reply to the questions with which he was overwhelmed, but ran across the bridge to report to the chiefs the result of his mission.

The dwelling of White Cloud, chief of the Beavers, was composed of several huts built of branches, of a round shape, and open at the top, differing in no respect from the neighboring habitations. Within the space they covered were several persons, toward whom Wild-Boar's Tusk advanced.

Here, besides several old men who played an important part in the council of the Beavers, were White Cloud and his family; Light-Foot, now chief of the Cormorants; and lastly, Strawberry-Blossom and Water-Chestnut, the dead chief's daughters. White Cloud was a man about forty years of age, with a sensual face, who owed his name to his tow-colored hair and beard. Though he had embraced the cause of his neighbors, to whom he had extended hospitality, he was not considered either generous or hospitable; but Light-Foot, perceiving the necessity of gaining allies for the scanty remnant of his tribe, had offered the chief of the Beavers his last bronze axe, and White Cloud, greedy like all men of his stamp, had been profuse in the first moments of his delight in professions

of friendship. By his side was his wife, a stout matron, whose attention was occupied by three or four unruly children, who were creeping around her, while the youngest was still at the breast. Strawberry-Blossom and Water-Chestnut were sewing with bone needles garments of skin intended for their host, and such was the simplicity of manners in those days that they seemed in no wise humiliated by the nature of their task.

Everybody, while working and talking, was nibbling acorns, beechnuts, and hazelnuts contained in a basket that stood in the centre of the circle; for this gluttonous race could not spend two consecutive hours without eating.

Wild-Boar's Tusk told the chief and the assembly that the Wolves seemed very quiet in their fortress, and that Greedy Pike had been killed, it was supposed, by Hurricane, Gnarled Oak's successor. This murder aroused fresh grief and anger.

"You see, chief of the Beavers," said Light-Foot indignantly, "peace with this wicked tribe is impossible. Until now I had hoped— But Hurricane is undoubtedly our mortal enemy."

"We'll make war upon him," replied White Cloud with evident lukewarmness; "give the Beavers and Cormorants time to prepare. We haven't lances, arrows, or javelins enough."

Then he began to noisily munch an acorn.

Water-Chestnut had listened attentively to the spy's story.

"So," she cried impetuously, "*he* is alive! *he* is chief of his tribe! and *he* killed my father's servant!"

She sank into a dull reverie.

While the rest of the company were still discussing the events which had last occurred a pirogue appeared in the distance and approached the Lacustrian city. It was soon easy to perceive that it was guided by two men, who were rowing. At the bottom of the boat, under an ox's hide, was a large object whose nature could not be distinguished, but a swarm of flies buzzed around it. The pirogue glided over the water in the dazzling sunlight, and came alongside of a wooden staircase that served as a wharf to the city.

Its approach seemed to make a deep impression upon the inhabitants, who followed it with looks of mingled curiosity and sadness. It had been sent that morning to the ruined city, and the people knew it was bringing back the remains of those who had perished in the conflict.

When it reached the foot of the steps every one rose and approached that part of the platform; eager spectators issued from every hut. Strawberry-Blossom, pale and trembling, leaned on her husband's shoulder; Water-Chestnut, on the contrary, walked with a quick, firm step.

The pirogue was saluted by a lamentable wail from every one present. This was only a customary ceremonial, a sign of mourning; but when White Cloud, either from curiosity or stupid brutality, drew aside the ox-hide, a cry of horror, this time perfectly unfeigned, escaped every mouth.

Before the eyes of the tribe was a pile of hideous, bloody fragments that preserved no trace of the human form. The wild beasts had done their office;

there were scarcely any scraps of flesh on the bones. Limbs and heads were mingled together; Sea-Eagle's remains could not have been distinguished from those of Greedy Pike or any warrior slain in the battle. A horrible odor exhaled from these half-putrefied bones, and a million flies continued to buzz furiously around.

White Cloud, in spite of his hard heart, averted his eyes from the horrible spectacle; he was going to replace the ox-hide and give orders to have the remains removed to a cave in the neighborhood where the Beavers still interred their dead, according to the ancient custom, when Water-Chestnut advanced to the edge of the platform, and with arms outstretched toward the pirogue, cried in an inspired tone,

"Men of the Beavers and Cormorants! why do you delay to avenge us? Gnarled Oak, after having killed my father and burned our city, was slain in his turn, and has been borne to the dolmen with gifts from his friends and provisions of every kind; beside him are Sea-Eagle's bronze weapons. His soul exults; it will arrive, proud and happy, in the unknown world. During this time the bodies of Sea-Eagle and his friends have been torn and scattered by wild beasts; only a few horrible fragments are left; we cannot bury them according to the rites of our forefathers, bringing them dainty meats and other offerings. Their souls will not reach the mysterious regions; they will wander through the forests, on the lake, and in the mists of the night, to terrify the living until they are avenged. Why do you delay to avenge them?"

We have said that the people of those primitive times possessed little eloquence; so they were only the more easily impressed when any true and warm feeling mani-

fested itself. Water-Chestnut's address before these ghastly human remains, the allusion to certain religious beliefs, and finally the young girl's beauty, her flashing eyes and imposing gesture, all contributed to move these natures, which, though rude, were artless and quick to feel.

A sort of electric thrill ran through the assembly, and a warrior cried,

"I'll go and fight the Wolves; I will avenge Sea-Eagle and the Cormorants."

"Yes, yes," shouted all with one voice, shaking their weapons, "we must fight the Wolves, avenge Sea-Eagle."

The enthusiasm had seized upon even the old men. White Cloud alone remained impassive, and it was evident that notwithstanding his professions he did not wish to attack numerous and formidable neighbors in a stranger's quarrel. Light-Foot, knowing his reluctance, took advantage of the opportunity to remind the chief of the promises which the two tribes seemed so well disposed to second. But the politic White Cloud shook his head and answered evasively,

"There's no hurry. Sea-Eagle and the Cormorants shall be avenged; we must have time to make a great many arrows and lances. Who troubles himself about a woman's words?"

Perhaps the enthusiasm of the crowd would have died away, but aid came from an unexpected quarter.

White Cloud's wife, holding her infant in her arms, had approached, like the others, to watch the arrival of the pirogue. On hearing her husband express himself so scornfully in regard to her sex, she exclaimed harshly,

"The woman is the warrior's companion, but it is the warrior's duty to provide for the wants of the family. We lack everything; there is never any stags' or uri's flesh, marrow, or brains to make a feast. There are no skins for the children to wear; no stags' antlers and ox-horns for household utensils. All these things can be found in plenty among the Wolves, who are skilful hunters."

This feminine audacity seemed to excite some little surprise, for it doubtless was not customary. But White Cloud did not show the indignation that might have been expected.

"Aha!" said he in the tone of a husband who has long been accustomed to the plain speaking of his better half, "we want skins to wear, materials for household utensils?"

"Yes, and the Wolves have them," cried the mother; "so kill them to the last man, pillage their city, and bring me the spoil."

Water-Chestnut, moved by different motives, continued energetically:

"Why do we delay to attack this odious tribe? The moment is favorable; they do not think, in their pride, that we shall be bold enough to assail them. Their axes are not sharpened; their bridge is not guarded. Hurricane, their new chief, is a coward who only knows how to slay old men. Chiefs, and you, warriors, take your bows, slings, and lances. Let us go! let us go at once! for I too will fight the wretched tribe that slew Sea-Eagle."

She snatched a spear with a sharp point from the hands of a "young man" who stood near her, and brandished it above her head.

The act roused the crowd to fierce excitement.

"Sea-Eagle's daughter is right," they shouted; "we will surprise the miserable tribe that destroyed the city of the Cormorants—exterminate them, and bring back auroch-meat, skins, ox-horns, and stags' antlers."

White Cloud still hesitated, but his wife said in a low tone, with an impatient accent, a few words that decided him.

"Let us go, then," he continued, "since we need so many things in the hut."

And he prepared to set out.

Water-Chestnut and Strawberry-Blossom had remained on the edge of the platform, while the funeral pirogue again glided over the water and turned toward the cave, which was a short distance from the lake. Light-Foot wished the two sisters to return to the chief's hut, and the younger obeyed, but the elder pushed him away.

"Don't you know," said she, "that I have promised to take part in the battle? You shall see whether I am afraid of blood."

And as the warriors, Beavers and Cormorants, were already rushing toward the bridge, Water-Chestnut, with dishevelled hair and flashing eyes, sprang forward spear in hand.

VIII.

THE ATTACK.

THE terrestrial station of the Wolves was not far from the Lacustrian city of the Beavers, and could be reached in an hour's walk. Though the little army formed by the union of the two tribes was composed of scarcely a thousand men, it was a formidable force for the times. It advanced without order, and in the forest, which it had entered, there were only narrow paths; one individual was often compelled to walk behind another, in Indian file. Not a cry was uttered, not a word exchanged. The expedition could be successful only by surprising the enemy, who were protected by lofty, solid ramparts. The chiefs had therefore ordered absolute silence to be maintained in the ranks, and the instructions were so rigidly observed that the harsh cry of the jay and the whistling of the black-bird were heard in the depths of the vast woods. Some members of the tribe of Wolves—shepherds watching flocks, women and children gathering wild fruit—being found in the way of the band, were unhesitatingly massacred. A blow from a club felled them ere they could utter a cry of warning, and the bodies were concealed under a heap of dry leaves, which the beasts of prey

would scatter the following night. These murders were committed without shame or regret, for, if the ancient generations affected great reverence for the dead, they set no value on human life.

As the army approached the city of the Wolves the two chiefs thought it prudent to halt on the border of the forest. The order was given in a low tone, and ran from lip to lip to the end of the lines. Each crouched beneath the underbrush while Light-Foot and White Cloud consulted together about the plan to be adopted. In the first place, it was important to ascertain whether the hostile tribe, in spite of the precautions used, had not taken the alarm. War in those days consisted, as we have seen, in ambuscades, surprises; and Light-Foot, trusting no one but himself to make the observations necessary, glided cautiously through the underbrush to inspect the city.

Nothing revealed the slightest suspicion of evil. The young chief of the Cormorants saw before him the cyclopean wall with its huge layers of uncemented stones; no warrior, no sentinel, appeared on the ramparts. Only a few laborers were rolling forward a huge rock that was to be placed in position. The same security reigned in every part of the city. The wooden bridge that led to it was not guarded. The women were going to the spring with their jugs as usual; children were playing noisily; a few men, armed with bows, seemed preparing to hunt. The Wolves evidently feared no attack, and Light-Foot hastened to convey the news to his ally, White Cloud.

To secure the success of the enterprise, they agreed to divide the army into two bands. The unfinished

wall presented numerous rough places by means of which strong, active young men—of whom there were many among the Cormorants and Beavers—might easily scale the massive structure. Half the little army was to make the attack from this side, while the other portion rushed upon the bridge, entered the city, and murdered the inhabitants.

They instantly set about executing this plan. After carefully choosing the young men intended to make the attack, they were placed under the command of an experienced warrior, and glided through the trees to reach the foot of the ramparts. White Cloud, Light-Foot, and Water-Chestnut went with the rest of the army, taking the same precautions, toward the bridge.

While the Wolves were incurring such dangers, let us relate what had taken place in this city, which was apparently so quiet and at ease.

Hurricane, his forehead still covered with a bandage, was seated before his hut. He seemed thoughtful and anxious; his eyes often turned toward the woods, as if he expected some one from that quarter. Around him were several of the prominent men of the tribe, most of them advanced in years, and the aged Holly-Branch, who held in one hand the mystic crescent and in the other a spear.

Every one was plying Hurricane with entreaties and reproaches, to which the chief listened impatiently.

"Why do you wait?" said the priestess; "the Cormorants and Beavers have made an alliance, and are doubtless coming to attack us. You remain inactive; it is not for that the Wolves made you their chief."

"What have we to fear behind these solid walls?"

replied Hurricane, shrugging his shoulders. "I commissioned Greedy Pike to make friendly proposals to Light-Foot. The new chief is a wise man; he will wish, like me, to end this quarrel. I also rely upon the influence of another person, who, I know, will not persist in hating me. So patience! Friendship will yet reign between us. A messenger is to announce it to me; he will come, I am sure. And all the tribes will unite to celebrate, by a great festival, the restoration of peace."

An old man who possessed a certain degree of authority among the Wolves said harshly,

"Chief, peace is an excellent thing, but impossible when men are so deeply enraged. Let us anticipate them by burning the city of the Beavers as we burned the abode of the Cormorants."

"Don't give them time to prepare for defence," continued another warrior; "the Wolves are impatient for the battle."

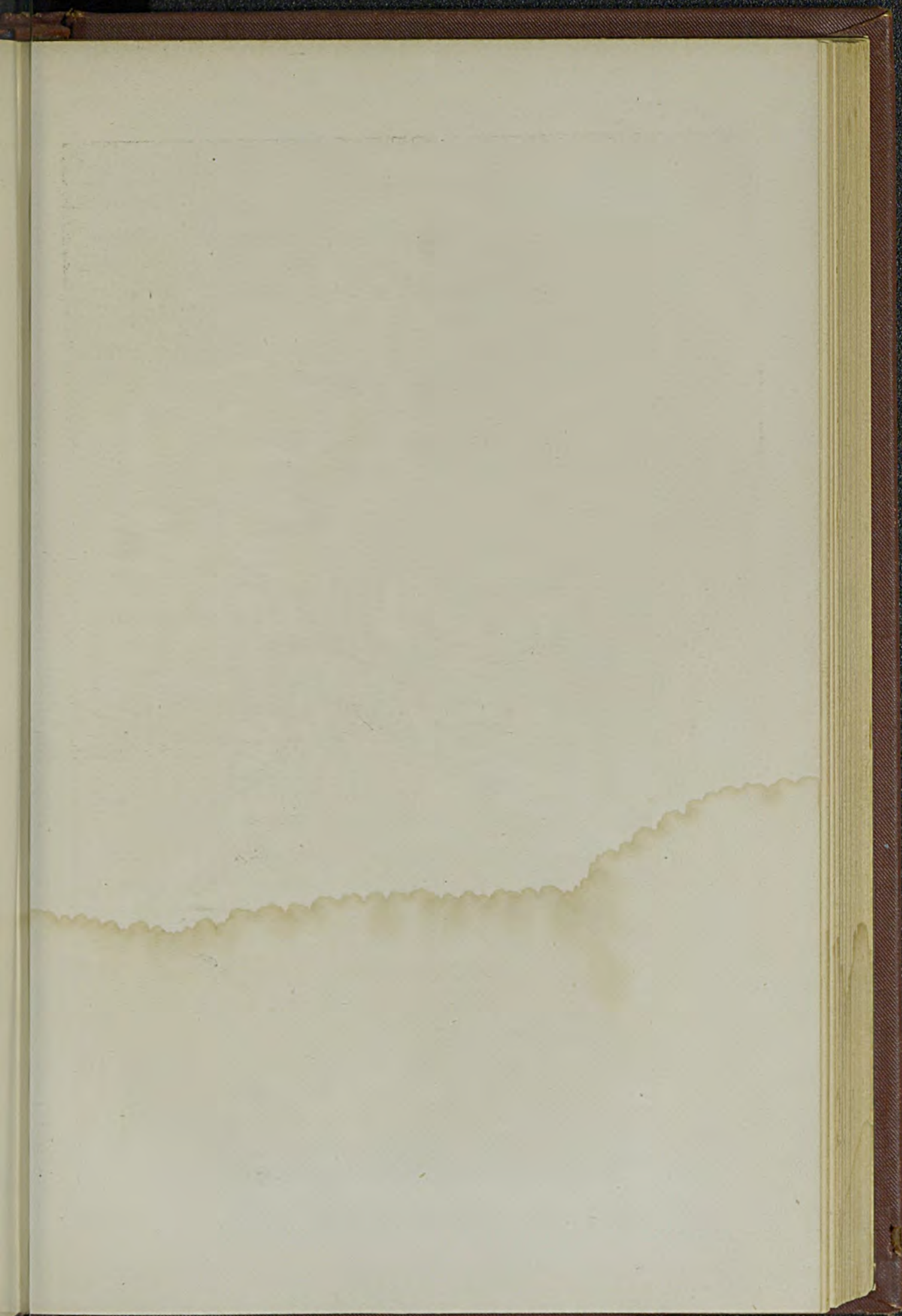
"I shall wait for the messenger's return," replied Hurricane obstinately.

This resistance particularly exasperated the priestess.

"Chief," she cried, "you are neglecting the interests of the tribe for the dark-skinned daughter of Sea-Eagle."

Hurricane made an angry gesture, but kept silence.

Suddenly a terrible tumult arose in the city, mingled with the notes of the horn. Shrieks of pain and terror soon answered, and a frightful panic took place. People of both sexes and all ages rushed out of the huts and dashed through the narrow streets, screaming and jostling each other.





THE ATTACK UPON THE CITY OF THE BEAVERS.

Hurricane had hastily risen, and was trying to ascertain the cause of the alarm.

Holly-Branch and the prominent men of the tribe awaited, like him, an explanation of the tumult—an explanation that was not long delayed.

A young man, panting for breath, his shoulder pierced by an arrow that still remained in the flesh, rushed up to the chief.

"The Crows and Beavers have attacked the village," he said, "and have killed or wounded many of our people."

Hurricane was preparing to rush to the walls, when a woman, who came from the opposite direction, told him that the village was covered with fire.

"The Crows and Beavers have seized the bridge, entered the city and are slaying all whom they meet."

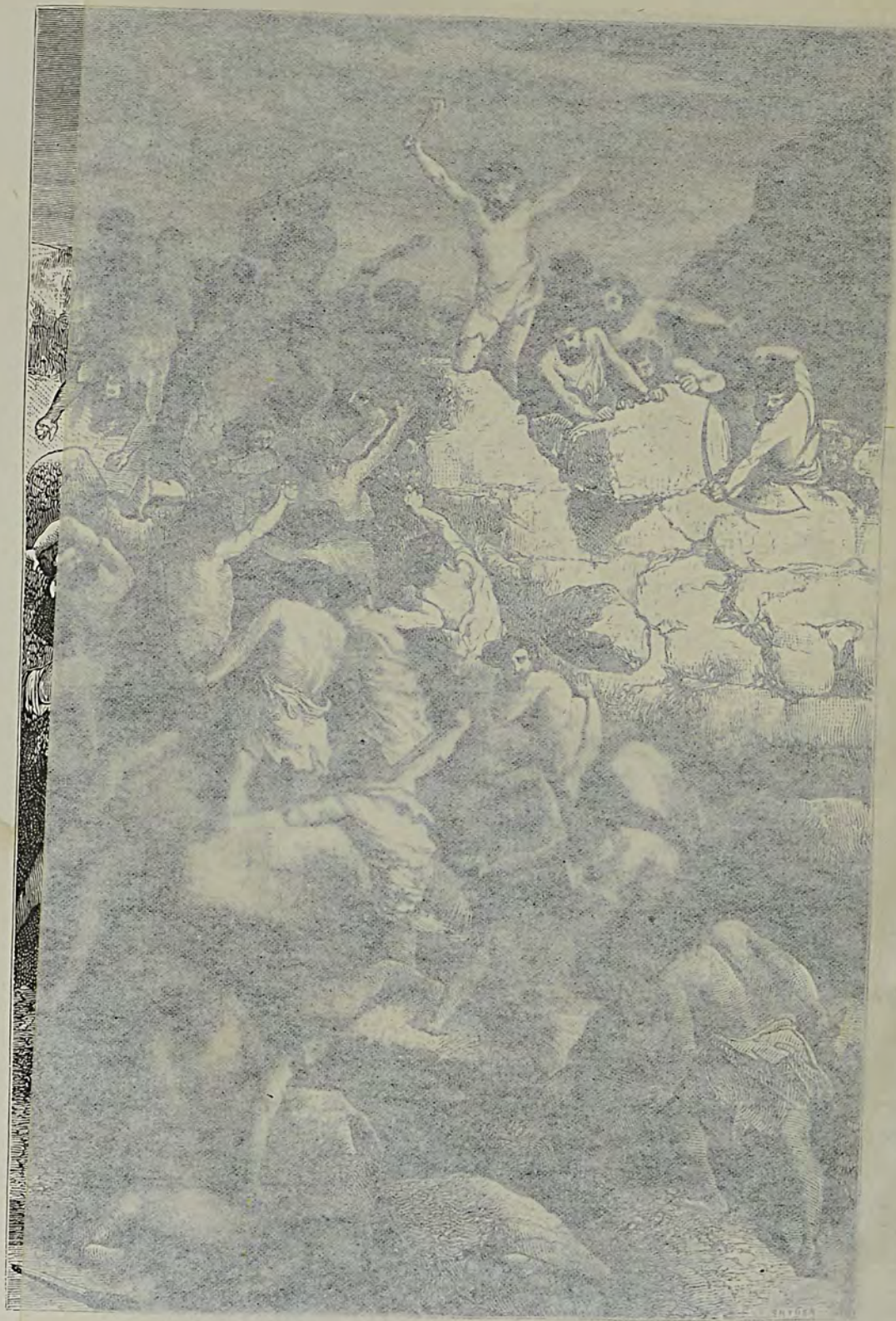
Hurricane uttered a cry of fury, but while hesitating which way to go first, anger and hatred broke loose around him.

"We are lost!" said one of the councillors—"lost by your negligence, folly, and cowardice!"

"Hurricane has betrayed us!" cried another.

"I caused the election of this unworthy chief," said Holly-Branch fiercely; "it is my place to punish him."

Collecting all her strength, she thrust the spear she held in her hand into Hurricane's back, just between the shoulders. The chief, with a convulsive movement, turned, seized the weapon, which had completely transfixed him, raised his flint axe and dealt Holly-Branch a



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A young man, panting for breath, his shoulder pierced by an arrow that still remained in the flesh, rushed up to the group, shouting,

"Chief, the Cormorants and Beavers have attacked the wall at the breach, and already killed or wounded many of our laborers."

Hurricane was preparing to rush to the walls, when a second messenger arrived from the opposite direction. This was an old warrior, whose face was covered with blood.

"Chief," said he, "the Cormorants and Beavers have seized the bridge, entered the city, and are slaying all whom they meet."

Hurricane uttered a cry of fury, but while hesitating which way to go first, anger and hatred broke loose around him.

"We are lost!" said one of the councillors—"lost by your negligence, folly, and cowardice!"

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Collecting all her strength, she thrust the spear she held in her hand into Hurricane's back, just between the shoulders. The chief, with a convulsive movement, turned, seized the weapon, which had completely transfixed him, raised his flint axe and dealt Holly-Branch a

violent blow on the head. The priestess, with a broken skull, fell lifeless.

Hurricane, in spite of his wound, remained standing, still striving to withdraw the spear, but the men who surrounded him simultaneously attacked him, dealing blows with their clubs and lances. He vainly tried to struggle, and at last sank beside his victim.

While this was occurring before the chief's hut the rest of the village was the scene of tears, curses, and slaughter. The young warriors detailed to attack the ramparts had had no difficulty in scaling the unfinished walls. The workmen had tried to defend themselves by rolling down upon the assailants the materials within their reach, but arrows and the stones hurled from slings soon killed or put them to flight. The main body, detailed to take possession of the bridge, had met with no resistance. Issuing suddenly from the woods at a given signal, the warriors had rushed forward and entered the city. Both assaults had been equally successful, and the conquerors advanced from the two different points toward the centre, without any possibility of checking them.

Yet several of the Wolves attempted to do so. Though surprised and isolated, it was not in their nature to allow themselves to be slain without resistance. Each man fought upon the threshold of his hut, surrounded by his wife and children, who wept, stamped their feet, and clung to the legs of the assailants to throw them down. But what availed these individual efforts against enemies so numerous? The unfortunate warriors soon fell lifeless before their homes, often with their whole families. Nevertheless, in the numerous conflicts that simultaneously occurred the Beavers and Cormorants did not always

have the advantage, and many of them purchased victory with their lives.

Thus, White Cloud, urged on by the love of pillage, had entered almost alone a hut whose owner possessed great quantities of the skins, weapons, and stags' antlers which in those days constituted wealth. There were only a few wailing women in the place, and White Cloud, without taking any notice of them, eagerly seized the precious booty. But it brought him evil; while loaded with spoils the master of the house suddenly entered, and hurling a javelin at the robber, who could neither fly nor defend himself, pierced him through the body.

Light-Foot thus found himself sole chief of the two tribes, and his courage, combined with his prudence and moderation, made him worthy of the supreme authority. He advanced with a firm step amid a few chosen warriors, crushing resistance wherever it was becoming formidable, and sparing the conquered. By his side marched Water-Chestnut, whose feverish excitement formed a marked contrast to her brother-in-law's grave, quiet manner. She seemed intoxicated with vengeance; she had killed more than one enemy and her spear was stained with blood. Striking pitilessly and fearlessly, she said ever and anon, in a wild, fierce tone,

"Where is Hurricane? Has he fled?"

They thus reached a part of the city where a group of Wolves were defending themselves desperately: they were the men who a few moments before had surrounded the young chief and accused him of treason. Light-Foot and his escort rushed forward to disperse this band, and, as Water-Chestnut followed, she tripped over a human body. Glancing down, she recognized Hurricane.

A woman is always a woman, even in the moments when her feminine instincts seem stifled. Water-Chestnut, who but now had been seeking her former lover with a deep feeling of hatred, who had almost murdered him herself, turned pale as she saw the rigid, livid face with its closed eyes. Her anger melted, her features softened. Yet she said sullenly,

"So you too are dead, you who killed my father Sea-Eagle?"

This voice, which had once exerted so powerful an influence over the young chief, recalled to the seemingly inanimate body a semblance of life. A sort of tremor ran through Hurricane's limbs; his lips, already purple, grew less stiff; his eyelids quivered, and at last, with great effort, were slowly raised. He looked at the young girl and murmured in almost unintelligible accents, "Ah! Water-Chestnut, why did you not listen to my words of peace?"

Water-Chestnut averted her face and answered,

"How could there be peace between us when you killed my messenger, Greedy Pike?"

"What did you say?" replied the dying man, who suddenly seemed to gain fresh strength. "I sent him away with this message: 'Gnarled Oak's death has avenged Sea-Eagle's. Let Water-Chestnut become the wife of the chief Hurricane, and the Wolves will help the Cormorants rebuild the Lacustrian city. Moreover, they will agree to erect a dolmen in which the Cormorants shall bury Sea-Eagle and the warriors who perished in the conflict.' This is what I told Greedy Pike to repeat to you."

"But Greedy Pike did not return."

"He was doubtless devoured at night by wild beasts while passing through the woods."

Such accidents were very frequent in those days, and this seemed only too probable.

Water-Chestnut uttered a cry of sorrow.

"What have I done?" she said.

Hurricane, exhausted, was struggling against death. But he added, pausing at every word, "I expected your answer to-day. I was sure that you and Light-Foot would accept my offers of peace. I would not permit the tribe to take up arms. When you surprised us the Wolves struck me down as a traitor. No matter. Water-Chestnut, I loved you; I would have liked to live to love you still."

Fresh convulsions shook the powerful frame, from which the soul seemed to find it difficult to escape; then Hurricane lay motionless with parted lips. He had just breathed his last sigh.

Water-Chestnut could not believe that all was over. She knelt beside the young man and said frankly,

"And I love you too. Take me, I belong to you; I will follow you wherever you go."

But the beloved voice, uttering these fond words, worked no new miracle; Hurricane remained mute and lifeless. Then Sea-Eagle's daughter, giving way to her despair, beat her breast and wrung her hands, while her shrill cries blended with the terrible tumult that rose on all sides. At last, panting for breath, exhausted by her transports of grief, she sat down beside her lover, and placing his head on her lap remained listless and silent, enveloped in the long black hair that seemed to form a veil to her grief.

During this time Light-Foot had succeeded in crushing the last efforts at resistance. As the ground was already piled with corpses, he ordered his people to cease the slaughter and confine themselves to making the remnant of the tribe prisoners. The command was executed; the Wolves, perceiving the uselessness of their efforts, threw down their arms and begged for mercy. The conquerors, Cormorants and Beavers, placed them all, men and women, children and old men, in a huge circle, of which they themselves formed the circumference; then closing in upon them, forced the miserable throng toward the young chief.

Light-Foot had rejoined his sister-in-law, and was gazing at her with sympathizing glances. It was not difficult to guess, from Water-Chestnut's attitude, the cause of her grief. When the pitiful remnant of the tribe of Wolves came weeping and groaning to beseech Light-Foot's compassion, he said to them,

"Sea-Eagle's daughter shall decide your fate."

All the tearful eyes, all the imploring hands, were turned toward Water-Chestnut; every voice entreated mercy.

She slowly pushed back her hair and cast her dull eyes around her, as if she did not understand what was wanted. At last she carefully laid the head of the corpse upon the ground, and rose. Her majestic figure, marble features, and statuesque pose stood forth in strong relief against the fierce faces of the warriors and the entreating looks of the despairing throng. She extended her arms to command silence, and said in solemn tones,

"Enough blood has flowed. Let the axes, arrows,

and javelins cease to seek victims. Sea-Eagle's friends must pardon."

A murmur of gratitude ran through the throng. Water-Chestnut continued:

"The conditions of the pardon shall be"—she could not utter Hurricane's name—"shall be those your late chief proposed. The Wolves shall help the Cormorants to rebuild the Lacustrian city."

"We will rebuild it," cried many voices humbly.

"Moreover," continued Water-Chestnut, "you shall raise a dolmen in which shall be placed the bones of Sea-Eagle and those who perished with him."

"We will raise the dolmen," replied the voices.

"Then my brothers, the Cormorants and Beavers, will grant you peace."

And Water-Chestnut sat down, without listening to the thanks and blessings heaped upon her.

A great bustle followed this act of mercy. While the conquerors dispersed through the city to disarm the vanquished and continue the pillage, Light-Foot said to his sister-in-law in an undertone, "Unhappy Water-Chestnut, you still loved Hurricane?"

"Yes," she replied.

"Then what will become of you?"

She made a fierce, reckless gesture, and mechanically casting down her eyes, perceived Holly-Branch, whose corpse had been trampled under foot by the combatants. Beside the ancient priestess of the tribe still lay the mystic crescent, which had fallen from her dying hand and been unseen in the tumult of the battle. Water-Chestnut seized this emblem of supernatural power, and raising it above her head, said,

"I shall never be wife or mother. I will be she who cures the sick and wounded, dries the tears of the afflicted, counsels and encourages the weak; above all, she who mourns the dead!"

The treaty concluded between the victorious and conquered tribes was punctiliously performed. Part of the Wolves helped the Cormorants to rebuild the Lacustrian city, while the remainder were employed in the erection of a dolmen on the shore of the lake precisely opposite. It is in this way, according to all appearances, that the megalithic monuments still extant, and which for a long time were attributed to the Druids, have been constructed. We marvel how these ancient generations—now called the *dolmen nations*—without the aid of any metal tools, any machines, any beasts of burden, could have transported (often from very great distances) and raised immense stones, some as heavy as the obelisk of Luxor. The explanation of these wonders is doubtless very simple: a population of slaves raised the dolmens, cromlechs, and menhirs with which the soil of France bristles. Sometimes also the will of a chief, religious enthusiasm, regret for an illustrious hero, induced our ancestors to undertake these gigantic works; but, we repeat, everything gives us cause to believe that they were executed by slaves, conquered enemies, who as a reward were granted their lives.

For more than a year the wretched survivors of the tribe of Wolves were forced to labor at a herculean task. The object to be accomplished was to place four rocks in the form of a square and surmount them with a colos-

sal slab to make the "funeral chamber," after which the whole monument, with the exception of the entrance, was covered with earth in such a manner as to form an artificial mound called a *tumulus*. How many hardships, how much toil, this represented for a tribe which, including women and children, did not number more than a thousand persons! The transportation of the "table" alone cost terrible fatigue. The block selected was more than a quarter of a league from the place where the dolmen was to be erected; the engines of transportation consisted only of flax ropes (hemp not being known) and wooden rollers. The whole population was compelled to pull at the ropes to drag this granite mass; two whole months were occupied in the work. Then the huge block was placed in position—an act accomplished by dint of sheer strength and perseverance. But how many poor people yielded to exhaustion ere the task, undertaken with such feeble means, was accomplished!

Fortunately, the rebuilding of the Lacustrian city did not present the same difficulties. The strong wind that was blowing on the night of the conflagration, by lashing the lake into waves, had prevented the piles from being burned to the water's edge. Only a few needed to be replaced. The principal labor consisted in rebuilding the platform and bridge; but there was no lack of pirogues to aid the work, and in spite of the difficulty experienced in cutting beams and joists with their flint tools, the reconstruction made rapid progress. The houses, it will be remembered, were frail huts, built of clay and branches; they were rebuilt with wonderful rapidity by those who were to occupy them. So it

will cause no surprise that in a little more than a year after the events of this story the Lacustrian city of the Cormorants should have resumed its former appearance, while two or three hundred paces from the shore of the lake rose the majestic tumulus-dolmen, whose sloping sides were already covered with grass.

On a splendid summer day a festival attended by the three tribes was given to consecrate the monument. A sepulchre could be dedicated only by funeral rites; and, in fact, the bones of Sea-Eagle and the people of his tribe who had been slain in the battle were removed to the new dolmen with the usual ceremonies. According to custom, there was a great banquet on this occasion; an immense quantity of meat, bread, and wild fruit was consumed by the throng.

When the time came for each person to give up his greatest treasure to be placed in the tomb, Light-Foot offered the bronze axe, which had been restored to him after White Cloud's death. A murmur of admiration ran through the throng at the sight of so rich a gift; but the people were no less astonished when Sea-Eagle's daughters offered their bronze bracelets and hair-pins to their father's manes, and every one thought Sea-Eagle had had magnificent obsequies.

Yet when the last rites were performed, and Light-Foot was alone with Strawberry-Blossom and Water-Chestnut, he said, reproachfully,

"Why did you give up the ornaments of which you were so proud, and which I brought you at the cost of so much fatigue and danger?"

"What do I care for ornaments, Light-Foot?" replied

Strawberry-Blossom. "I did not have them when you knew and loved me."

Her husband's only reply was a tender smile.

Water-Chestnut, who, gloomy and sorrowful, never laid aside the mystic crescent, answered, sighing,

"What do I care for ornaments? There is no one now whom I desire to please."

She soon added,

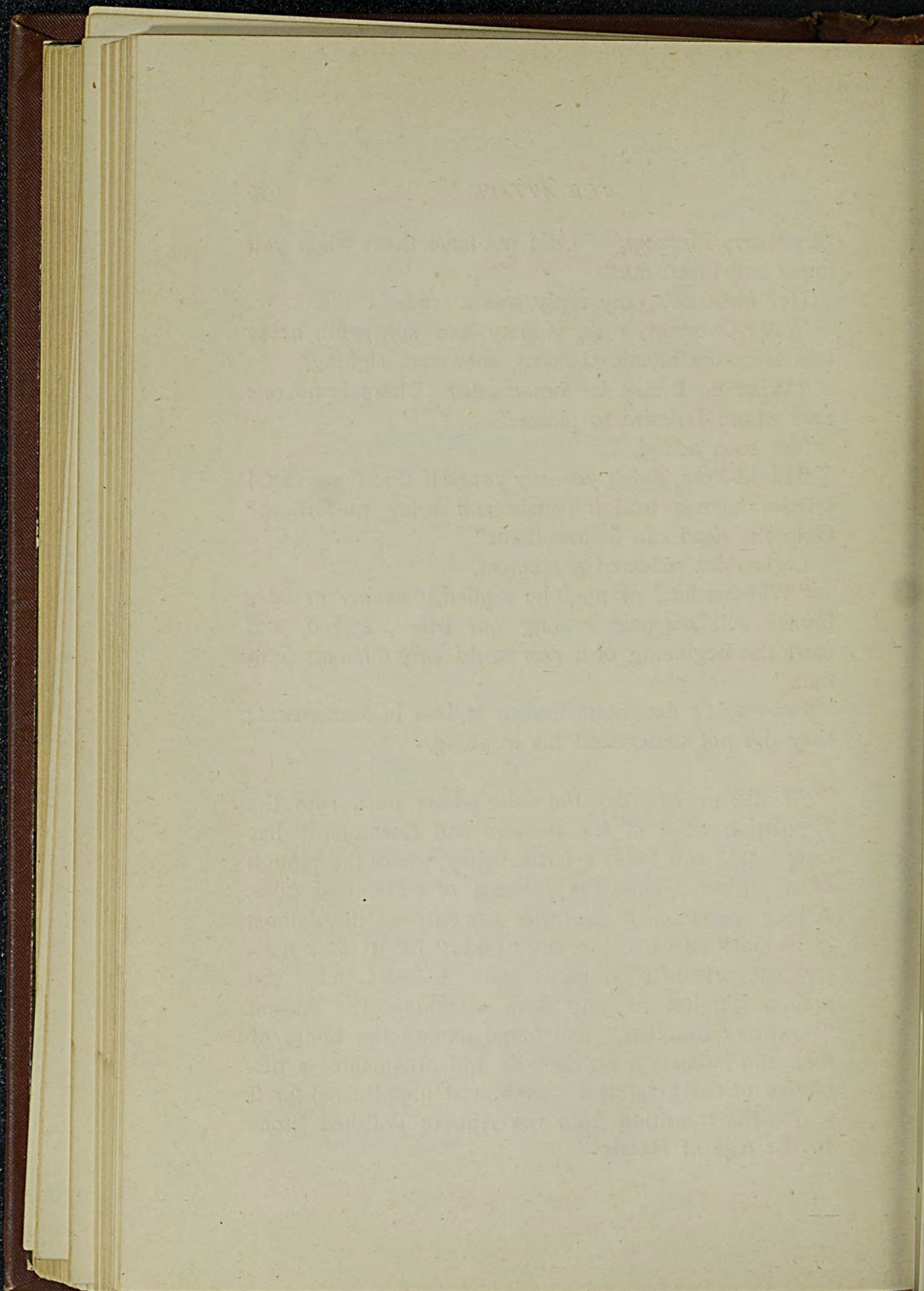
"Light-Foot, didn't you say yourself that these metal articles have a fatal influence and bring misfortune? Only the dead can hallow them."

Light-Foot reflected a moment.

"Whether fatal or not," he replied, "sooner or later bronze will reappear among our tribes, spread, and mark the beginning of a new world very different from ours."

Sea-Eagle's daughters looked at him in amazement; they did not understand his meaning.

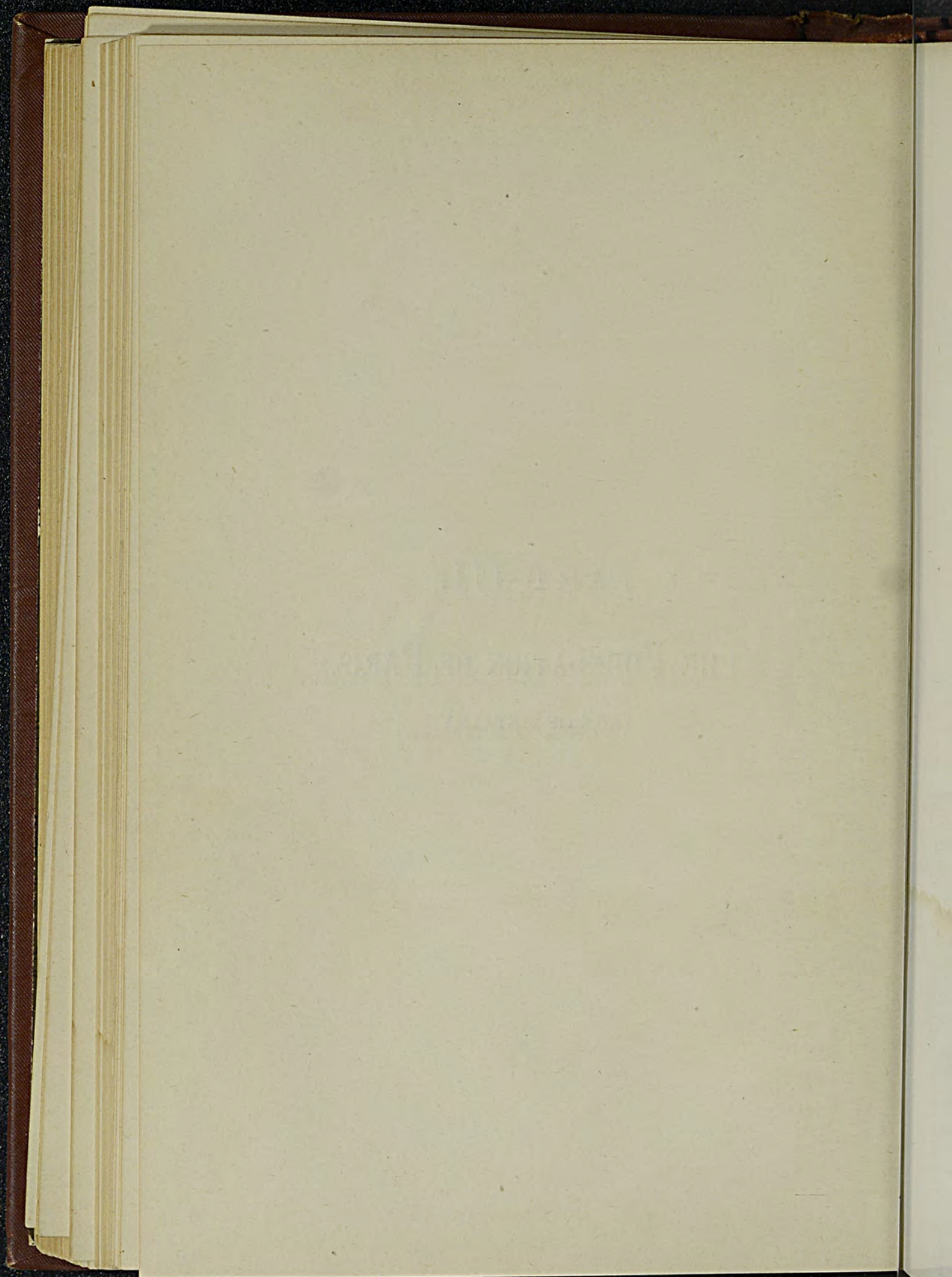
At the present day the lake where once rose the Lacustrian cities of the Beavers and Cormorants has disappeared and forms a fertile valley, where the plough often strikes against the remains of carbonized piles. A long succession of centuries has stripped the dolmen of its cloak of earth, but the "table" on its four massive supports of solid rocks seems indestructible. An antiquarian has recently been searching the ancient "mortuary chamber," and found among the bones of men and animals a bronze axe and ornaments—a discovery of the greatest archæological importance, for it marks the transition from the Age of Polished Stone to the Age of Metals.

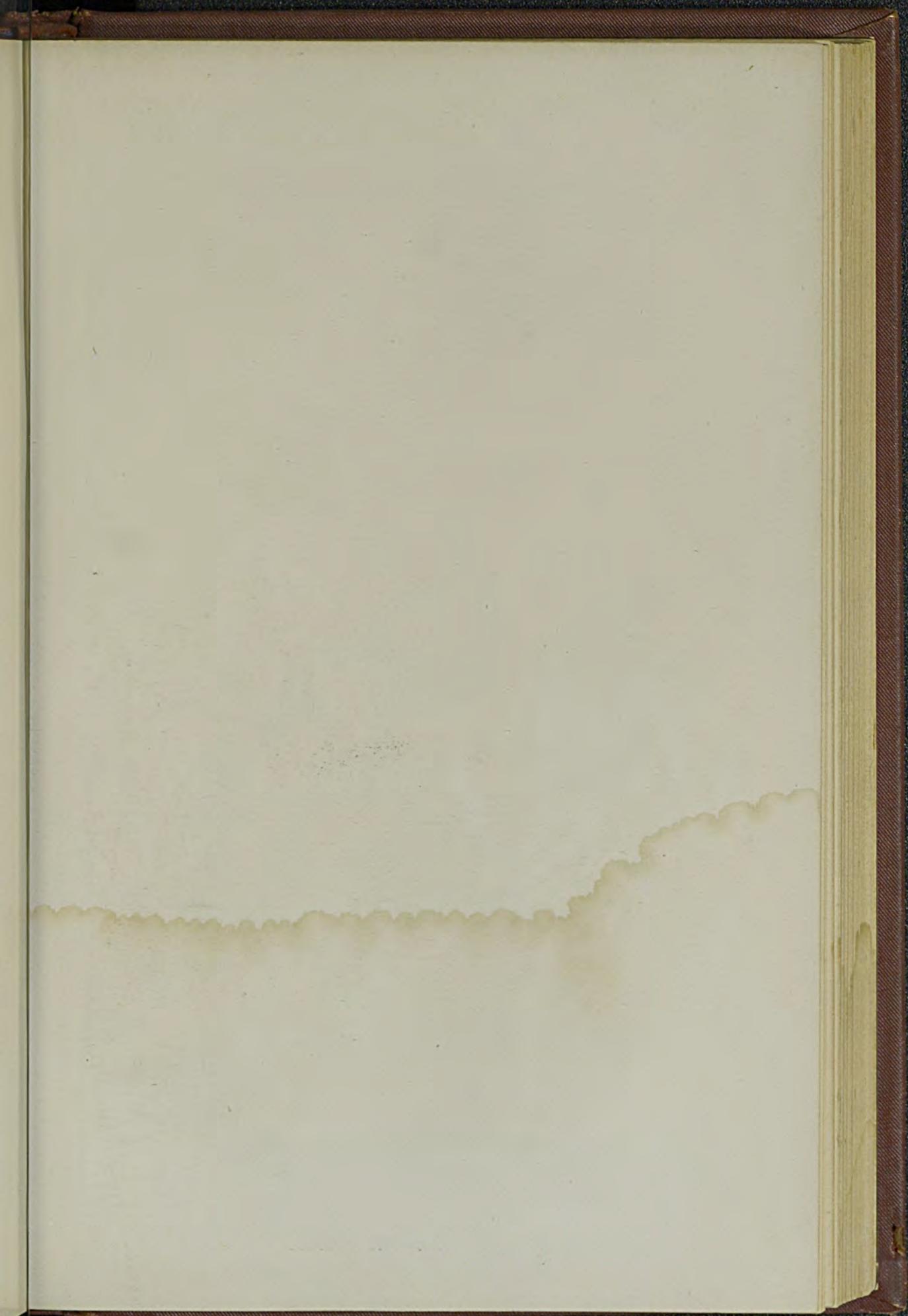


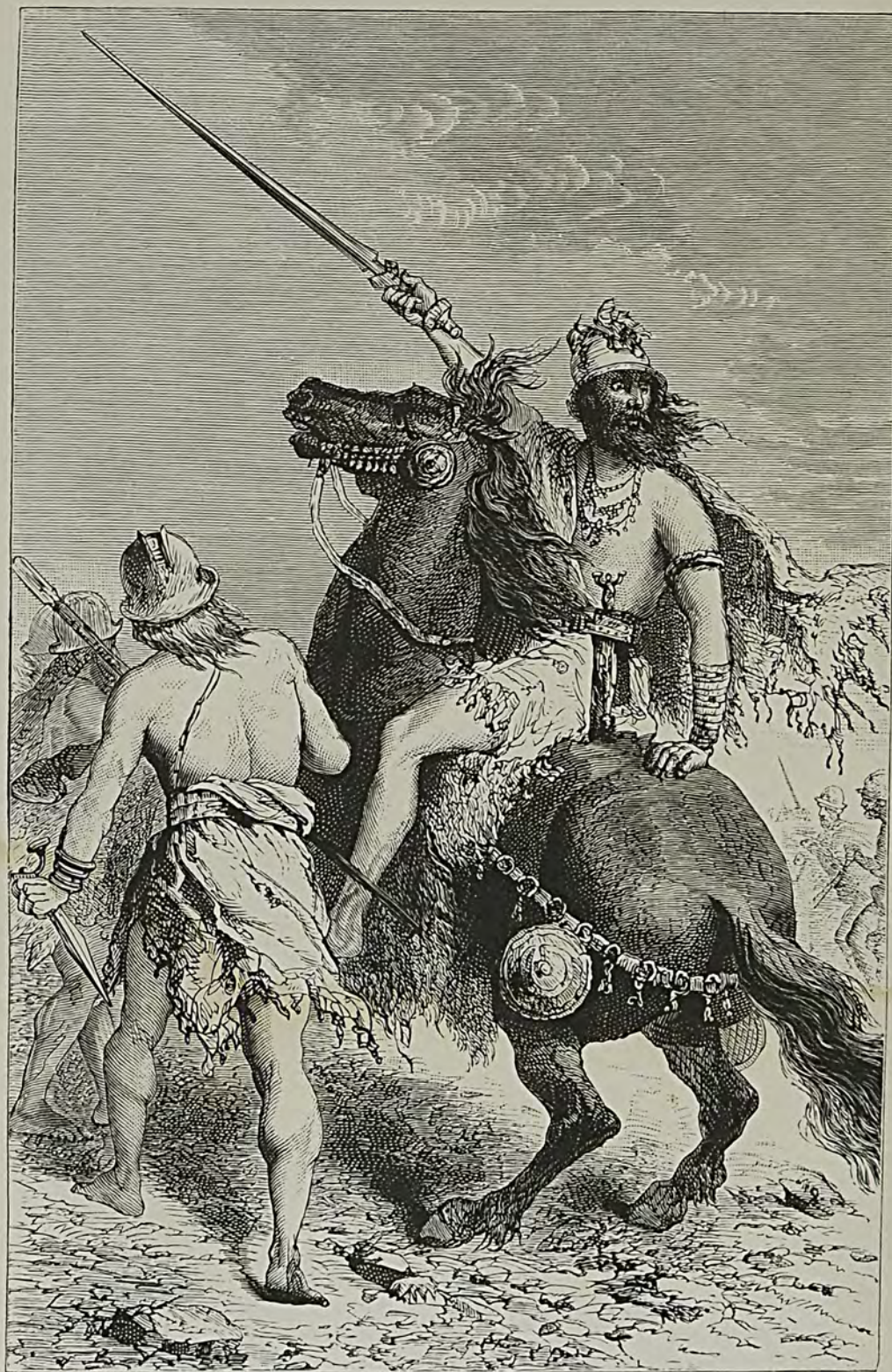
PART III.

THE FOUNDATION OF PARIS.

(AGE OF METALS.)







WARRIORS OF THE IRON EPOCH.

THE GALLIC FESTIVAL.

WE are touching the threshold of history, yet we shall study very carefully one of the traditions in relation to the Gauls, according to Arnold Thierry from the *Chronique des Francs*, and so on. The first thing which we shall be given to see is furnished by the Gauls themselves, and we shall now seek to find their continuation in tradition. The race which occupied Parisian soil at the time of the mammoth and in the Period of Hewn Stone was succeeded after a countless number of ages by a new nation that seems, according to its bones, to have differed very slightly from what is called the Aryan race. These are the people we have already studied in the Lacustrian city. They are also called the *delmen nation*, as we have said, because they built the dolmens and menhirs still so common in France and the rest of Europe.

We shall now study a period characterized by a new method of burial and the immolation of the dead. The tombs are no longer of the stone nature; they no longer contain, as in former times, skeletons in crouching posture with utensils of stone and bone, but bodies either completely or partially buried, together with urns of



WARRIORS OF THE IRON EPOCH.

I.

THE GALLIC FESTIVAL.

WE are touching the threshold of history, yet we shall make very secondary use of the traditions in relation to the Gauls gathered by Amedée Thierry from Herodotus, Posidonius, and Cæsar. The first place shall invariably be given to the facts furnished by archæological science, and we shall merely seek to find their confirmation in tradition. The race which occupied Parisian soil at the time of the mammoth and in the Period of Hewn Stone was succeeded after a countless number of ages by a new nation that seems, according to its bones, to have differed very slightly from what is called the Aryan race. These are the people we have already studied in the Lacustrian city. They are also called the *dolmen nation*, as we have said, because they built the dolmens and menhirs still so common in France and the rest of Europe.

We shall now study a period characterized by a new method of burial and the incineration of the dead. The tombs are no longer of the same nature ; they no longer contain, as in former times, skeletons in crouching postures, with utensils of stone and bone, but bodies either completely or partially burned, together with urns of

glass or clay, weapons and ornaments of bronze, iron, and even gold. This period includes a portion of the Age of Bronze, as well as the Age of Iron; and, thanks to the metals, civilization, whose progress had been so slow during former ages, made rapid strides until it had annals and a history.

We should be unable to say how many years elapsed between the events we are about to relate and Cæsar's arrival in Gaul; but when these events occurred the Gauls were far from possessing the wealth and power they had at the period of the Roman invasion. The tribes which from the plains of Persia, Asia, and the Crimea constantly rushed into Europe, displacing, through decimating, each other by constant conflict, seem to have had a common origin, the Aryan race. Cities were rare; the population lived in families or tribes, devoted to the cultivation of the soil, the raising of cattle, and certain manufactures which were carried on within the households. It was only in case of war or invasion that they concentrated and formed nations. Vast forests, marshes, and moors still covered the greater portion of the country. The roads were few in number and badly made; the Romans constructed the magnificent highways whose indestructible ruins still remain; and but for the navigable rivers the commerce carried on by means of barter—that seems to have been very active even in those remote times—would have met with extreme difficulties.

At the time of which we speak the territory Lutèce or Paris was afterward to occupy belonged to the nation of the Senons,* who lived between the

* People of Sens and its vicinity.

Loire and the Seine, and for a long time were the terror of Italy. The site of the future capital of the civilized world was still a solitude, while not far away, in one of the numberless curves of the river, a locality which to-day is only a humble suburb of the great city seemed to be the centre of a numerous population. We allude to Argenteuil,* situated on the right-hand shore of the Seine, near Orgemont.

Argenteuil did not then, as in our day, owe its importance to the sour wines made from the grapes that grow on its hills. The cultivation of the vine had not yet reached Parisian soil, for this branch of agriculture in Cæsar's time had not extended beyond the provinces near the Mediterranean, and barely reached the Cevennes. Nevertheless, a village of tolerable size existed upon the site of the modern Argenteuil, where there is still a magnificent dolmen. This dolmen, which has recently been opened, and furnished great archaeological wealth, belonged to the Period of Polished Stone.† Besides, it was already old at the time this story begins, and for many ages the turf had grown green every spring on the sides of the artificial mound.

The village, consisting of huts scattered or collected in groups amid the trees, stood at a short distance. These huts looked like huge beehives. Low, round or oval in form, with a conical roof pierced with a hole

* The name of Argenteuil has a Celtic derivation. It proceeds from the Celtic *arg* and *ant*, which signify *high* and *low*.

† It contained axes of polished flint with handles of stags' antlers, a flint lance-head, rude pottery, bracelets, and necklaces of shells and pebbles. All these objects are preserved in Case 33 at Sainte-Germain.

for the passage of the smoke, they were built of beams coated with clay, and their roofs were made of oak shingles, with a layer of thatch. Within, in the centre, was a large stone where the fire was made; beneath the dwelling was a cavity of round or oval shape which took the place of a cellar. These cavities still exist in many parts of France, and are called *curbs*.*

The village of Argenteuil was not protected by any kind of fortifications, but its inhabitants doubtless possessed, either on the knoll of Orgemont or the hill afterward called Mont Valérien, one of the fortified enclosures where the Gauls took refuge with their families and herds in case of invasion. Around were cultivated fields that extended to the Seine; they produced wheat, barley, flax, hemp, and were bordered with fruit-trees. There were also meadows whose verdant carpets intersected the yellow gold of the harvests; but the sheep and oxen, horses and asses, of the hamlet seemed more accustomed to live in the woods under the care of shepherds than in regular pastures. It does not appear that there were any stables at this remote period; the domestic animals were shut up for the night in pens in the open air. The swine, whose flesh was of considerable importance in supplying the Gauls with food, were allowed to roam in the forests, after having doubtless been marked by their owners. There they became wild and formed immense droves, which, according to history, often endangered the lives of solitary travellers.

But we have wandered long enough around the Gallic village of Argenteuil, and will now enter it with the

* Henri Martin.

reader to note more closely the strange manners and barbarous customs of our ancestors.

At the end of this village, in a picturesque situation not far from the river, a group of three or four huts stood beneath the shade of some ancient oaks. They belonged to the widow of a warrior who had been slain in one of the skirmishes then so frequent between the different tribes. This widow was named Bodicea, and had a very beautiful daughter eighteen years old. Besides the huts she occupied with her slaves and servants, she owned fields, pastures, and flocks, which made her only child the richest heiress in the country.

Let us note one characteristic detail. Over the door of each hut were nailed one or more human heads, worn by time and scarcely preserving a few remnants of hair; they were those of the enemies Bodicea's husband had killed in battle. Besides these horrible trophies suspended outside the habitation, the widow possessed several others carefully preserved in chests—heads of chiefs, which, embalmed and coated with cedar oil, were to bear witness to posterity of the dead man's courage. These trophies in those days were like titles of nobility; families would not have consented to give them up at any price. The hideous skulls, blackened by the wind and rain, which decorated Bodicea's door, seemed to inspire no disgust in the guests entertained by the widow on the day when this story begins, and the banquet had been spread directly in front of these repulsive relics.

It was toward the close of a summer day; the sun, like a ball of red-hot iron, had just disappeared behind Mont Valérien. Perhaps the excessive heat had in-

duced the widow to have the feast served in the courtyard formed by the huts, under the shelter of the trees; and this banquet, in spite of the small number of the guests, was magnificent and ceremonious.

The table, which was round in form and very low, was made of roughly-hewn oak planks. The guests had taken their places on bundles of hay or straw, the only seats that seemed to be known at that remote period. The table, as may be supposed, had no cloth, but it was overloaded with bronze or copper dishes that contained smoking meats—quarters of venison, roast mutton, fresh or salt pork. Neither plates, glasses, knives, nor forks were then in use. If a guest found a piece of meat that suited him, he took it from the dish with his hand, tore and bit it as best he could, thus presenting the disgusting details of the banquets in the Stone Age. When the piece was too hard, the men cut it with a small knife suspended from the hilt of their swords. A single cup, passed from hand to hand, served for all. It was filled with the beer called *cervisia* or hydromel. Wine, although known, was procured in this part of Gaul with great difficulty, and Dame Bodicea had doubtless been unable to obtain any. To make amends, the male and female slaves constantly brought new dishes and refilled the common cup, as if they desired to make up for the rudeness of the feast by the abundance of viands and drink.

The guests—at least those who had been really invited to the entertainment—seemed to be important persons in the community, and we will give each a special description after having said a few words of Bodicea, the mistress of the house.

The widow was about fifty years old, and her bronzed, angular features retained no trace of beauty; braids of unkempt gray hair fell on her shoulders. Her dress was a woollen robe, clasped at the waist with a belt ornamented by brass plates. Her arms, limbs, and feet were bare, but loaded with a profusion of metal rings. Several necklaces of yellow amber and shells surrounded her neck, and heavy bronze earrings hung from her ears. Bodicea, at the time of her husband's death, had had great difficulty in evading the law of those times, which condemned the widow of a Gaul to be burned alive or stoned to death on his tomb. Certain arrangements, secretly made with the dead man's relatives, had saved her from this terrible fate; but the success of the negotiation was principally due to a person seated near her at this moment, to whom she paid marked attention.

This was a man about forty years of age, with a long beard and majestic countenance. He wore a green woollen tunic, and had on his head a garland of leaves, half concealed amid his thick hair. On his breast, fastened to a bronze chain, was an ornament of ovoid form which aroused in the spectators the reverence a holy relic would inspire in the faithful Christians of our day. This ornament, called "serpent's egg," and which seems to have been a petrified sea-urchin, was considered a wonderful talisman; it was supposed to have the virtue of making all enterprises successful and gaining access to kings. The person who wore the serpent's egg was the *ovate* of the tribe of Argenteuil.

The ovates, who were a lower order of the Druid

priests, formed the secular clergy, if we may so express it, of this religion, and were the only persons who had direct intercourse with the population, the druids—the supreme priests—living alone in mysterious retreats in the depths of the forests. They were occupied in the material portion of the worship—the celebration of sacrifices. They drew auguries from observing the flight of birds and the entrails of the victims, predicted future events, and practised medicine. Under all circumstances they announced the will of the druids, whose representatives they were, and nothing important could be accomplished without their agency.

Beside the ovate sat a guest who belonged to the third and lowest rank of the Druid priesthood. He was young, and his bright face, with its sparkling eyes, expressed at times the gayety peculiar to the Gauls. He wore a blue woollen robe, and above his head, hanging on the branch of a tree, was a sort of guitar, from which at intervals he drew a few accords. We have guessed that this was one of the bards or poets, who celebrated in their songs the national legends, animated warriors to the fray, extolled their glory after victory, or reproached them in defeat. The bards enjoyed absolute liberty of speech; and besides their sacred character the chiefs and eminent warriors were obliged to conciliate them as the dispensers of fame and glory.

The ovate and bard seated at Bodicea's table belonged to the conquering race of Kimris, who had brought the Druid religion into Gaul; but the third guest was evidently one of the former inhabitants. No more superb specimen of this primitive race could be found. The youth, who was twenty or twenty-five years old, had a

herculean frame and prodigious strength, while his military dress set off to the greatest advantage the manly proportions of his figure. Yet his frank, open face and sparkling blue eyes usually expressed simplicity and gentleness. His long moustache was red, as well as his hair, which fell in heavy curls upon his shoulders; but this artificial color was due either to frequent washing in lime-water or a caustic pomade composed of grease and the ashes of the ash tree. On his arms, his legs, and even his face, might have been detected traces of tattooing, similar to that still practised at the present day among the Arabs. Bracelets of iron and bronze encircled his arms; a necklace of shells jingled on his breast. He wore a kind of breeches, and a *sagum*—a sort of cloak—fastened under the chin by a metal clasp; both garments were striped with red, a color reserved for warriors. On his head was a bronze helmet, surmounted with two bulls' horns, which gave his countenance a barbaric aspect. His weapons consisted of a long sabre without a point and with a single sharp edge, enclosed in a bronze sheath and suspended from a leather belt. Moreover, he had placed against a tree a few paces away his spear made of wood hardened by fire, and a wooden shield covered with badly-tanned leather.

Such were Bodicea's guests. Nevertheless, the ovate, bard, and warrior were not the only persons who took part in the festival. Behind the principal personages stood several rows of sycophants, "drawn by the smoke," who every moment thrust their arms over the others' heads to snatch from the dishes the morsels that best pleased their tastes. These were dependents,

friends of lower rank, or even passers-by, who according to a hospitable custom thus shared the good cheer. They seemed to desire to atone for their familiarity by their silence and respectful attitude, but the ovate with his priestly dignity, and the poet with his somewhat pedantic haughtiness, could scarcely endure it, while the warrior, though himself eating enough for four, was greatly amused by the dependents' voracity.

The widow's only daughter, the beautiful Mona, did not attend the banquet. Her absence had not remained unnoticed by Bodicea's guests; on the contrary, it seemed to be the subject of continual thought, and their eyes frequently turned toward the door of a neighboring hut, through which they expected to see Mona appear.

It will be easy to understand the motive of this pre-occupation when we have told the cause of the feast.

The Gallic women enjoyed certain privileges and a certain degree of independence; among these privileges was the right of choosing a husband for themselves. When a young girl reached the marriageable age, her parents invited all the aspirants to her hand to a grand banquet. At a certain moment the future wife appeared bearing a bronze cup which contained hydromel or wine, and the guest to whom she offered it was the husband of her choice; there was nothing more to be done except fix the dowry and celebrate the marriage. Thus, on the shores of the Mediterranean a Greek traveller named Euxenes had been chosen by Gyptis, the daughter of a Gallic chief, and obtained as her dower the territory where he founded Massilia or Marseilles.

Now, it was for a purpose of this kind that Bodicea

gave the banquet, and the ovate, bard, and warrior all sought Mona's hand. To whom would the Gallic virgin present the cup? No one knew, and that is why their eyes constantly turned toward the door that was to give her egress. The charming virgin did not appear, and the visitors' eager gaze beheld only the hideous, offensive, withered head of a Carnute chief that had been nailed for several years above the door; but they did not lose courage, and each thought he had reason to hope that the beautiful Mona would offer him the cup, unless she should think proper to give it, as was her right, to one of the hungry vagabonds in the last row, or even one of the slaves, who, clad in garments of birch-bark, moved to and fro, serving the guests.

II.

THE CUP.

THANKS to the secret hope each of Mona's suitors cherished, the conversation did not languish. The priest, proud of his knowledge and authority, spoke emphatically, pausing from time to time to make libations to the gods, or to watch the flight of the birds soaring amid the neighboring trees and draw auguries from them. The bard assumed airs of inspiration and affected a flowery, poetical language. Sometimes, as we have said, he played on his guitar a moment and sung a few notes to enliven the banquet. His songs, like the priest's pedantic sentences, were evidently addressed to some invisible person; both doubtless expected that music and words would reach Mona.

Dumorix, the warrior, was far less noisy. He said little and only in curt interjections, and bore with evident impatience the haughty airs of the druid, the loud voice, impassioned gestures, and lyric transports of the poet-musician. Dumorix, from habit and temperament, paid more heed to deeds than words, and, besides, did not profess the Druidism of the Kimris, but remained faithful to the ancient religion, a sort of polytheism which adored the great forces of Nature—the

thunder, called Tarann; the hurricane, called Kirk; the rivers, sun, and stars. So it was not without indignation that he listened to the ovate's oracles, the bard's sonorous words; but he remained passive, and when his patience was exhausted began to eat again with an appetite that seemed difficult to satisfy.

Bodicea, who was a well-bred hostess, tried to show her guests equal attention, and even extended her courtesy to the dependents, who, attracted by curiosity as much as by hunger, became more and more numerous. Nevertheless, in spite of herself, she showed a preference for the ovate, who was the oldest of all her daughter's suitors, but also the richest and most exalted in rank. She gave him the reverence a bigot of our day would render a bishop, and every word that fell from the druid's mouth appeared to her a decree of divine wisdom.

Just as the meal was drawing to a close, and Mona might be expected to appear with her cup according to custom, the widow said to the ovate,

"Priest of Irminsul, I have heard that Hatt, the chief of this village, is seriously ill. Hatt is old, but have the gods decided that he should soon pass to the 'better world'? He is a just man, a brave warrior; could you not restore him to health? Your knowledge is so great, you are so powerful, nothing can resist you."

The ovate drew himself up proudly.

"Bodicea," he replied, "only the power of the gods is boundless, and perhaps Hatt is already condemned. I have consulted the flight of the ravens, the entrails of the victims, but the omens have always been most gloomy. In vain have I placed my serpent's egg upon

the sick chief's lips—in vain given him drink prepared from herbs gathered by myself according to the sacred rites. The disease increases, the omens have become no more propitious, and Hatt cannot fail to soon pass into the better world."

"Make fresh efforts, ovate, I beseech you," replied the widow warmly. "The chief was the friend of Mona's father; my daughter and I will rejoice if your power, which rules the elements, at last restores the vergobret to life and health."

"Enough, Bodicea: I can refuse you and your daughter nothing. To-morrow I will enter my chariot and seek the revered druid of our tribe in the 'holy wood,' where he dwells several leagues from here amid the sacred oaks. I will ask him for a little of the consecrated plant, the mistletoe, which, cut with a gold sickle in the sixth day of the moon, cures all diseases. Thanks to the sacred plant, Hatt will regain his health."

The widow expressed her gratitude for the ovate's somewhat bold promises with an eagerness that roused the jealousy of the other two guests.

"Hatt is a noble chief," cried the poet enthusiastically; "he has ever shown himself generous to the bards; he gave me a gold ring and a bronze cup as guerdon for my songs. My music has an irresistible charm; more than once the nightingale has hushed her notes to listen; the eagle, soaring midst the clouds, stops his imperious cry to hear my melodies. I'll tune my guitar and seat myself by the chieftain's couch. My music, by the aid of the gods, will possess so much virtue that the conquered disease will fly, and Hatt arise younger and stronger than ever."

Dumorix the warrior did not wish to be left behind.

"By Circius!" he said harshly, "Hatt is my patron and friend. I have sworn to follow him to battle, share his dangers, though I should perish. I'll thrust my spear through those who have cast the spell of sickness on him, and give their entrails to the wolves and vultures. If he dies—I am Dumorix son of Caletes—I will seize all the enemies of my patron Hatt, and slay them on the funeral pile."

No words could do justice to the fierce energy with which the young giant uttered this speech. His eyes flashed lightnings, his red moustache bristled like an angry lion's. He had impetuously risen, seized his spear and buckler, and clashed them together with an air of defiance. But the mood passed as swiftly as it came. Dumorix restored his weapons to their former places, returned to the table, and sat there with downcast eyes.

The sympathy of the dependents, servants, and slaves who formed the circle of spectators around the guests seemed to have been won by the warrior's vigorous demonstrations. The ovate feared that Bodicea might share this feeling, and hastily said in his sententious tones,

"Neither the courage of a warrior nor the songs of a bard can restore the chief to health. This power belongs solely to the gods, who communicate it to the druids and ovates. Irminsul has spoken to Bodicea by my voice; to-morrow Hatt will have the mistletoe and be cured."

All present bowed respectfully on hearing this formal promise, and the conversation had begun anew,

when it suddenly ceased. The door of the neighboring hut had opened; in the place of the hideous grinning head of the dead chief appeared the charming face of the young girl who had been so impatiently expected.

Mona had a tall elegant figure, fair complexion, blue eyes, and a quantity of fair hair; she deserved the reputation for beauty then enjoyed by the Gallic women throughout the world. Her dress consisted of a white tunic, which, according to custom, left her arms and legs bare. A linen veil—the virgin's veil—fell upon her shoulders, and the light draperies gave her a graceful, airy appearance. She wore bracelets and necklaces of glass and amber. The clasp that closed her tunic, as well as her earrings, was of gold, for—singular fact!—the use of gold seems at this remote period to have preceded that of silver.

At the sight of the beautiful girl a profound silence fell not only upon the guests, but also on the spectators. Mona held in her hand a bronze cup, on which were several engraved ornaments, for the arts were beginning to develop. She smiled and blushed, but did not raise her eyes.

Perhaps she was well aware to which of her suitors she intended to offer the marriage-cup, but either from modesty or mischief seemed to hesitate. Pausing before the table with an embarrassed air, she at last glanced at her mother's guests.

Each one, in this solemn moment, thought it his duty to say a few words in support of his claims.

The ovate spoke first.

"Daughter of Bodicea," he said with haughty self-importance, "I am the priest of Irminsul, Esus, and

Teutates. At my voice tempests subside; I work miracles; I read the future. Offer me the cup: I will give you rank and power."

"O fairest of the Gallic virgins!" cried the bard in his musical voice, "I alone can perceive and celebrate your peerless beauty. My sweetest songs shall be yours. At the festivals of the chiefs, at public entertainments, I will extol your charms, praise your perfections, and all the tribes shall know the name of Bodicea's daughter. Offer *me* the cup: I will give you fame."

A little pout appeared on the lips of Mona, who remained motionless and silent.

Dumorex, in his turn, said with manly simplicity, "I love you, Mona. Offer me the cup, and I will love and protect you till I fall dead in battle."

This somewhat laconic speech aroused the mirth of the young girl, who uttered a fresh silvery laugh; but almost instantly, trembling from head to foot, and redder than a ripe cherry, she held out the cup to Dumorex, who with a cry of joy seized it, draining its contents at a single draught.

The warrior doubtless had friends among the spectators, for a murmur of approval welcomed Mona's choice. Some went hastily away to be the first to tell the news that the widow's daughter had just offered the cup to Dumorex son of Caletes. Perhaps one was even going to shout the tidings from some hilltop to the shepherds and laborers scattered over the country, that, repeated from mouth to mouth, they might fly swiftly to the extreme limits of the territory owned by the tribe, as was usual when events of public interest occurred among the Gauls

On the other hand, the bard, and especially the ovate, did not accept their defeat philosophically. While Mona sat down to the table, and her betrothed husband, full of pride and love, stammered a few words of gratitude, the bard went to the tree and took down his guitar. Striking the strings, he began to sing some satirical verses about women "who preferred the harsh clash of arms to the sweet sounds of poesy."

The Druid priest did not attempt to conceal his anger and offended pride. His eyebrows contracted, his eyes rolled furiously. The widow having sought to excuse Mona's thoughtless choice, he exclaimed,

"A minister of the all-powerful Irminsul is above the whims of a frivolous child. The offended gods will avenge their priest. Look, woman! the most terrible omens mark this marriage. At the moment your daughter offered the warrior the cup the sun was concealed in a black cloud, its edges red with blood; the owl uttered its first cry, and the bats are now darting over our heads. These signs betoken misery, extermination, ruin to the young couple and their race."

The terrified Bodicea implored the ovate to dispel these gloomy omens; he remained inflexible. His fury was still further roused by the sight of the young lovers, who, seated on the same bundle of hay, were talking in a low tone, without troubling themselves about what was passing around them.

Meantime, twilight had insensibly closed in, night was falling, the laborers were returning from the fields. The ovate and bard were preparing to withdraw, when suddenly a great clamor arose at the other end of the vil-

lage—wails, groans, and lamentations, such as are usually called forth by some public calamity.

This time all present, even the newly-affianced lovers, listened intently. The wails grew louder and nearer. Bodicea signed to a slave to go and make inquiries. She obeyed, and speedily returned.

"The chief has uttered his last sigh," she said; "the women and warriors are mourning for him."

Ceremony required that all the members of the tribe should take part in these demonstrations of grief. So Mona, Bodicea, their guests and servants, hastily mingled their voices in the concert of lamentations. The bard again touched the strings of his guitar and improvised a few verses in the dead chief's honor. Dumorix again struck his spear against his buckler and said with real emotion, "Hatt, my patron, my friend! you have gone to the world of the strong and valiant. May the god Ogmius aid me! I shall join you there some day."

The ovate alone took no share in the mourning prescribed by etiquette. He had risen; a smile of malicious satisfaction curled his lips.

"Children of Irminsul," said he, "the gods are already punishing the insult offered to one of their ministers; their vengeance will fall upon you all. To-morrow I was to take your chief the mistletoe, and he would have been instantly cured; for the mistletoe, gathered on the sixth day of the moon in the first month of the year, is infallible. It was not the will of the gods; they have deprived the chief of life because an ovate's majesty has been offended. Now their wrath will fall upon this bold girl, her imprudent mother, and the ignorant warrior who lives in the heresy of the Gauls."

The group had ceased to mingle in the chorus of lamentations that arose from all parts of the village, and listened to the priest in religious silence.

"Forgive me, ovate," said Mona with tearful eyes, clasping her hands imploringly. "I have obeyed the law of the Druids and my own heart in choosing the husband who pleased me."

"Spare us, ovate," added the mother. "I was not aware—Mona had not told me— Disarm the anger of the terrible gods, I beseech you."

Dumorix interposed. "Do not fear," he said boldly. "By Tarann! I will protect you even against the wrath of the Druids' gods."

"Impious wretch!" cried the ovate angrily, "fear for yourself."

Dumorix answered by the words then on the lips of all Gallic warriors, and which had become a sort of proverb:

"I fear only one thing—that 'the heavens may fall.'"

The ovate wished to reply, but the young warrior's attitude was so threatening that he dared not show his indignation further. He turned away, and, without listening to mother or daughter, hastily retired.

Scarcely had he disappeared when the bard in his turn abruptly left the company, and all the spectators and dependents, fearing the effect of the divine anger announced by the priest, hastily dispersed, as they would have fled from some plague-stricken dwelling.

Left alone with Dumorix, Bodicea and Mona did not cease to give way to their fears. The warrior tried to reassure them, but, gifted with more courage than eloquence, met with little success.

"Mona," he said passionately at last, "you shall never repent having offered the cup to me instead of that proud ovate or insolent singer. If I must die to defend you and your mother, I am ready."

Mona, draped in her ample linen garments, rested her head on the warrior's shoulder and answered sadly,

"I know you love me, brave Dumorix, but what can you do against the wrath of the gods?"

"I say once more, I do not fear the Druids' gods," replied the warrior, raising his clenched hand toward heaven; "and as to the Druids, I defy them!"

The terrified women implored him to be silent.

Custom required that immediately after the betrothal banquet a day should be fixed for the celebration of the marriage, but mother and daughter insisted that the wedding should not take place until after Hatt's funeral. Dumorix, who was bound to the chief by the ties of patronage, dared not oppose this arrangement. Besides, the funeral rites could not be long delayed, and on the following day the augurs would determine the proper day and hour for the solemn ceremony.

III.

THE AUSPICES.

DUMORIX had not been born in the village of Argenteuil, but had come there to settle several years before with an old woman, his mother; and it was said that they alone had escaped from the massacre of their family in a quarrel between two tribes. Already strong and skilful in the use of arms, the young warrior had placed himself under the patronage—or, as it was expressed in those days, made himself the “friend”—of Hatt, the chief of the village. By this compact he promised to follow his patron to battle and assist him under all circumstances. Hatt, on his part, had given his new subject a field whose culture would afford him support, a hut, and a horse, by means of which Dumorix son of Caletes soon played a prominent part in his adopted tribe.

The young man's mother had died a short time before this story begins, and the warrior, thanks to his indefatigable activity, continued to prosper. Gentle and obliging, although he had the fierce passions and rude habits of his race, he was beloved by all who approached him. The courage, strength, and skill displayed on various occasions had won the affection of

the chief, who considered him his bravest warrior. Moreover, he was esteemed an experienced hunter; he excelled in riding, rowing, shooting arrows, and hurling lances. Thus he was an accomplished young man in a period when education did not exist, when the Gauls were scarcely beginning to understand the use of writing, and the Druids themselves gave only verbal instruction; and we can understand how the pretty Mona's choice had fallen upon him to the exclusion of the ovate and bard.

The day after the banquet he went to Bodicea's house to see his future wife. The mother and daughter having gone to a neighboring wood, where the augurs were to be consulted on the subject of the chief's funeral, Dumorix hurried after them.

The sacred—or, according to the Druids' language, the "chaste"—grove stood at some distance from the village, and was reached by a winding path, along which a number of people were already hastening, eager to be present at the auspice. There was no lack of warriors, dependents of the dead chief. Like Dumorix, they wore bronze helmets, surmounted with horns or a kind of metallic wings, and carried heavy sabres, wooden bucklers, and lances with iron heads. The Gallic warriors rarely laid aside their weapons, even when they went to their work in the fields. The throng was silent; the wails of grief, which the night before had re-echoed to the verge of the horizon, and bore a strong resemblance to the *coronach* or funeral dirge of the Scotch clans, were no longer heard; they were deferred until the time when the funeral ceremonies should take place.

The path soon entered the grove of venerable trees, which intercepted the rays of the sun, and permitted only a faint light to penetrate the branches. Either from religious reverence or the influence of the darkness every one ceased talking while passing through these majestic shades, and after making several turns entered a sort of clearing, where the ceremony was to take place.

This spot was a temple for the Druid worship, for the religion of the "men of the oaks" had no other sanctuaries than the green vaults of the groves. In the centre of the clearing stood a dead tree, stripped of its bark, whose leafless boughs inspired a feeling of horror. It was consecrated to Irminsul, the most terrible of the Gallic divinities, and the common people considered it as sacred as Irminsul himself. At the foot of this sinister tree, whose projecting roots and trunk were often sullied with blood, was a large stone table upon which animals and human beings were sacrificed. Some of the ancient oaks bore rude trophies of weapons and human heads—a sort of *ex-voto* offerings presented by the believers in the fierce god of the sanctuary.

A large throng had already assembled when Dumorix arrived. The most prominent persons present—that is, the warriors, priests of every grade, heralds-at-arms clothed in white with wands in their hands, and a few women of the upper classes—formed picturesque groups around Irminsul. The others—that is, the slaves, children, and servants—remained modestly aloof. The deepest silence pervaded the throng.

Dumorix's eyes sought Bodicea and his betrothed bride. The widow was one of a group of matrons with

bronze girdles and dishevelled locks, excited devotees, who looked like Furies. Mona had joined the young girls clothed in white and crowned with ivy, who, like her, wore the long veil of the virgins. Dumorix, standing among the warriors, tried to attract her attention, and succeeded; but Mona looked at him with a glance so sad, so full of terror, that in spite of his firm heart he was greatly dismayed.

The principal ovate, who was to consult the omens, sat on a bronze tripod, which was itself placed upon the stone table at the foot of Irminsul's tree. In a metal chafing-dish before him incense was burning, whose odorous smoke floated under the arcades of the forest. Two ovates of inferior rank were preparing to slaughter a black ram, whose smoking entrails were to reveal the will of the gods.

In the principal ovate Dumorix now recognized his vanquished rival, but the simple, honest fellow saw nothing in this fact to cause his betrothed bride's evident distress, and when the ceremony began tried to approach her.

The bards drew a few notes from their instruments, while all present chanted to a mournful rhythm an invocation to Irminsul; these songs were intended to beseech the god to give favorable omens. Then the two inferior priests led the black ram to the ovate, who was still seated on his tripod, and struck the victim a blow on the throat with a bronze knife. The blood, which flowed in streams, was received in a basin. The priest bent forward to examine it, for the color of this blood, its greater or less density, the direction of the jet, were prophetic signs. Doubtless these signs were unfavor-

able, for, the singers having paused, the ovate turned his head, saying in a melancholy voice,

"Woe! woe! woe!"

Consternation was depicted upon every face, and especially those of the dead chief's relatives. Nevertheless, the most decisive omens would be drawn from the examination of the victim's entrails, and the throng waited until the next auguries should confirm or refute the first ones.

The ovate, with a stroke of his knife, opened the ram's belly, exposing its entrails. He carefully studied the convolutions, color, and form, but again repeated in the same tone,

"Woe! woe! woe!"

The throng waited in silence. As the priest paused, a warrior, the dead man's son, suddenly approached.

"Speak, priest of Irminsul!" said he; "what have you discovered?"

"Woe! woe! woe!" repeated the ovate for the third time.

But Hatt's son was not famous for patience. He struck the ground with the handle of his spear.

"Speak, then!" he cried; "what misfortune do you announce?"

The ovate appeared to be reflecting.

"Hatt's shade is angry," he said at last in a solemn tone, "the victim's entrails inform me that the chief has not yet entered the land of the happy, where he will command invisible warriors, slay stags and aurochs, and find his friends and servants. His shade is still wandering in the barren deserts that surround the country of departed souls."

"It will wander no more when we have given Hatt's body a magnificent funeral," replied the warrior impetuously; "so tell us quickly, priest of Irminsul, when these ceremonies are to take place."

"To-morrow, at midnight, on the moor that stretches behind the dolmen. Hatt, according to custom, shall be buried with his weapons, and his war-horse shall be slain on his tomb, that he may find him again in the upper world."

"These are the usual rites," said the warrior impatiently. "But what victims must be slain? Do you want three white and three black bulls that have never felt the yoke?"

The ovate, with an imposing gesture, extended his arm, and with fixed eye and frowning brow, as if under some supernatural inspiration, said in a low, deep voice, not a single intonation of which was lost,

"Son of Hatt, the blood of neither bulls nor rams will appease the terrible gods. Irminsul has been offended by this tribe; he will avenge himself on the chief's soul. Irminsul loves human blood. He demands a human victim."

All present held their breath to listen.

Hatt's son was not at all moved by the requirement of his savage god.

"If Irminsul demands human blood, he shall have it," he answered rudely. "I'll give you a slave to be sacrificed on Hatt's tomb."

"Irminsul desires no slave for a victim."

"What does he want, then? A warrior? In that case I will offer myself as a sacrifice. If that is not enough to disarm Irminsul's anger, there is more than

one brave man among my father's subjects who will consent to be slain on the chieftain's tomb."

"I! I!" instantly cried all the warriors present, with the profound contempt for death universal among the Gauls.

The ovate at first made no reply, but again bent down to examine the animal's entrails, and after a long silence said,

"Irminsul does not desire a warrior's blood. Warriors are destined to defend their native soil and the revered religion of the Druids. He demands that a young girl—a virgin, beautiful, and of noble birth—should be brought to Hatt's tomb, stoned to death by the assembled tribe, and buried with the chief."

A thrill of terror ran through the party of white-veiled young girls, who formed a timid group in one corner of the glade.

"Explain yourself more clearly, ovate. Point out the virgin who must be stoned to death on my father's tomb."

"The auguries do not state her name," replied the druid with downcast eyes; "but she must be a virgin, of noble birth, the daughter of a widow, and the betrothed bride of a warrior."

Although the ovate had not uttered the name of the chosen victim, the signs were so numerous, so exact, that they could not be mistaken.

"It is Mona!" exclaimed voices on every side.

The unfortunate victim uttered a cry of agony, while Bodicea said,

"My daughter? Irminsul claims my daughter?"

Dumorix came forward into the circle. His eyes

flashed with anger; all the muscles of his face contracted.

"Ovate," said he, "you did not see the ram's entrails aright; it is not Mona, my betrothed bride, that your Irminsul demands. Irminsul loves the blood of brave men; he disdains that of young girls. If your god wants a victim, take me. I have already slain more than one enemy; I am Dumorix son of Caletes, the dead chief's 'friend.' Let Mona go, I tell you, and take me. Stop! shall I save you the trouble of killing me?"

He drew his sabre from its sheath and placed the point at his breast.

The ovate smiled scornfully.

"The signs are infallible," said he. "Once more, Irminsul does not demand the blood of warriors. Retire, and no longer disturb our sacred rites."

"I will not permit my betrothed bride to be slain," cried Dumorix, frantic with rage. "Priest of Irminsul, you are an impostor! You wished to marry Mona, and it is because she did not offer you the cup—"

This sacrilegious insult was an act so monstrous to the fanatical tribe that a terrible tumult arose in the assembly. The warriors crowded around Dumorix, who would have rushed upon the ovate if they had not held him back, but as they were his constant companions, they used no violence and strove to calm him by friendly exhortations.

At the other end of the open space, Mona, overwhelmed with terror, continued to utter piercing shrieks. We have spoken of the matrons with bronze girdles, who formed a numerous group. These women,

of whom Bodicea was one, had certain functions to perform in the religious ceremonies. When they ascertained that Mona was designated by the omens, they wished to seize her to keep her out of sight until the moment of the sacrifice. The poor child clung to her companions, who wept bitterly; she called heaven and earth to aid her, but the matrons rushed upon her.

"Mother! mother!" she cried struggling, "help me! I love Dumorix: I don't want to die!"

This touching appeal did not produce the effect she expected. Bodicea herself was a fanatic, and the interests of her religion were stronger than the feelings of her heart. She answered harshly, though with averted eyes,

"Your choice was fatal; Irminsul disapproved it. Let his will be done."

Such a reply was too much in harmony with the habits and ideas of this barbarous generation not to awaken universal assent; it was applauded even by the mothers.

As the matrons dragged Mona away she shrieked despairingly,

"Save me, Dumorix!"

At this very moment six strong men were trying to conquer and disarm the powerful warrior. They were on the point of succeeding when the accents of the beloved imploring voice fell upon his ear. The young giant suddenly appeared to gain supernatural strength. Releasing himself by a tremendous effort, he rushed toward Mona, who was disappearing in the gloomy shades of the sacred wood, but in his frantic course dashed against the trunk of a tree with so much vio-

lence that but for the bronze helmet that protected his head he would have broken his skull. Stunned by the shock, he staggered back, and his companions profited by the opportunity to seize him again.

Fortunately, as we have said, Dumorix was beloved and esteemed, or in the fierce struggle he would have run great risk of receiving a thrust from a spear or sabre-stroke from one of the angry warriors. They contented themselves with removing his arms and making him powerless until the group of women who were dragging Mona away had vanished. This moderation, then very rare among the Gauls, was especially due to the influence of Hatt's son, who was familiar with Dumorix's noble qualities.

The ceremony of the auguries was over and the crowd dispersed. The ovate had left the place, and doubtless gone to some secluded spot to enjoy the delight of satisfied vengeance. No one remained except the warriors guarding Dumorix.

Hatt's son then said,

"Dumorix, my father loved you because you are brave and faithful. Do not obstinately enter into a sacrilegious struggle against the gods. Take back your weapons; if you dare disturb Hatt's funeral ceremonies you shall die yourself. Go!"

And he went away a few paces with his companions.

Dumorix, whether because he was still bewildered by the terrible shock or absorbed in profound thought, remained silent. Yet he hastily seized his sword, spear, and buckler, and when he found himself armed once more cast a threatening glance around him, and his companions thought he was going to renew the con-

flict. But after a moment's reflection he walked slowly toward a path that led to his hut.

They followed him with their eyes, as if still fearing some desperate attempt on his part, but he did not even turn, and his comrades felt convinced that he had given up all useless resistance.

Nevertheless, Mona's lover, while gliding through the gloomy arcades of the forest, said to himself,

"To-morrow—at midnight—on the moor by the dolmen! I will save her, or there shall be two human victims slain on the chieftain's tomb."

IV.

THE APPARITION.

DURING the remainder of this day and the following one Dumorix seemed to avoid all intercourse with the inhabitants of the village. He occupied a solitary hut on the bank of the Seine, and, accustomed to rely upon himself, had little intercourse with his neighbors. During these two days the people wandering about the country saw him several times in the distance, either in his boat on the river or mounted on a powerful horse which he had trained to obey his voice. He seemed to be loaded with somewhat bulky articles, which could not be distinguished at that distance, and it was asserted that the young warrior continued his occupation even during the night. But as the people could not believe Dumorix had any serious intention of resisting the entire tribe, they troubled themselves no more about him, and each thought only of making his preparations for the funeral ceremony.

This was to take place, it will be remembered, on the moor near the dolmen. Long before midnight, the hour fixed for the commencement of the obsequies, the inhabitants of the village, holding lighted torches in their hands, moved toward the plain. The chief's body, cloth-

ed in his handsomest garments, soon followed the same path, borne, according to ancient custom, on a litter of branches by six warriors chosen from among the bravest of the tribe. Next came the dead man's relatives and friends, uttering at intervals the wails and lamentations which continued to form part of the mortuary rites.

A grave had been dug in the moor not far from a thick wood which was a portion of the Druid forest. This grave had a lining of rough, uncemented stones, and by the side were several large slabs to cover it when the dead man had been placed within, together with a huge pile of small stones collected from the neighboring fields. These were to be thrown on the tomb to form a heap or *cairn*; and we know that they were intended for another and more terrible purpose. Near the sepulchre was a huge funeral pyre adorned with garlands of flowers and foliage, upon which the body of the lamented chief was reverently laid.

The moor was soon thronged with people. The night was very dark, but by the light of the torches numerous groups were speedily formed. On one side were the women, on another the warriors, farther on the grave old men; people of lower rank eagerly rushed wherever there was anything to be seen. At this period funeral banquets had not yet been given up, and in one corner of the moor slaves could be seen crowded around a fire, as if preparing a feast.

Of all these groups, the most noisy was that composed of the matrons we already know; they moved to and fro incessantly, shaking the brazen circlets that loaded their arms and limbs, and uttering shrill shrieks that echoed on the silence of the night. It was not

only in obedience to custom that these Megæras made such a tumult; they surrounded poor Mona, whom they had dressed in her finest clothes and most beautiful jewels, and the principal object of their clamor was to prevent her lamentations from being heard.

Mona wailed constantly at the sight of the terrible preparations. Her jailers had forced her to sit down on the moor, and watched her every movement with jealous suspicion. In vain she implored them—in vain she appealed to her mother, who, carried away by superstition, not only remained deaf to her prayers, but gloried in the sacrifice to be made. Mona did not yet seem to have given up all hope of rescue by her lover Dumorix; she sought him with her eyes, called him with all her strength. Dumorix made no reply; he had not even appeared in the throng, and doubtless, convinced of his powerlessness to prevent an inevitable catastrophe, had left the village.

Everything was ready for the ceremony, but it could not commence before the precise hour appointed by the augurs. The ovate, who was present with his subordinates and the bards, studied the starry heavens, waiting until the course of the planets should announce the arrival of midnight; and the extensive knowledge of astronomy possessed by the Druids afforded him the means of determining the moment with precision.

At last the hour came, and the ovate, taking a torch, advanced toward the funeral pyre, on which lay the body of the chief. Deep silence pervaded the throng of spectators, and nothing was heard save Mona's low moans. The druid touched with his torch the combustible materials placed at the foot of the pile. A

little flame flashed up; the dry branches crackled. The fire rapidly increased, and, rising above the corpse, formed a vast sheet that paled the light of the torches and illuminated the crowd, the fields, the forests, the river with a shifting glare almost equal to the broad light of day.

Then the wails began anew with fresh vigor. Blended with this terrible concert was the noise of sabres which the warriors clashed against their bucklers, while the bards, accompanying themselves on their instruments, sang the dead chief's praises and the joys of the happy life upon which he was about to enter.

At the moment the corpse disappeared in the flames, whence there exhaled a fetid black smoke, the throng began to cast their offerings on the pyre. The priests delivered to the fire incense, bread, and wax; the women their bracelets, necklaces, ornaments of bone, glass, or bronze; the warriors their weapons—swords and lances, bows and bucklers. Among these offerings made to death were stone tools and axes, though offensive arms were already fashioned of bronze or iron, with the exception of the arrow-heads, still formed of flint as in former times. Everything, however, was not cast into the flames; a large number of articles were reserved to be thrown at the last moment into the grave with the dead man's ashes or even mingled with the earth that was to cover the tomb.

The flames of the funeral pyre, after having risen to a great height, rapidly fell, and soon nothing but a vast red brazier remained. The corpse was not entirely consumed, and the outline could still be plainly distinguished; but the tombs of that period show that cre-

mation was still very imperfect, and it was considered advisable not to carry combustion further. The priests and servants therefore began to remove the hot coals; the half-calcined body was pushed toward the grave, and the bones that crumbled to dust were collected in earthen vessels. These vessels, together with all the objects not destroyed by fire, were placed in the grave, into which were cast more axes, weapons, and jewels.

According to the usual rites, there would have been nothing more to do except close the tomb, but the terrible sentence pronounced against Dumorix's affianced bride remained to be executed. The hapless young girl was to be stoned to death and buried with the warrior.*

The crowd had become perfectly silent, and all eyes were turned toward the group of women who surrounded Mona. The young girl herself soon appeared; she moved with slow steps, supported by the matrons. As we have said, she was carefully adorned. A garland of vervain, a plant held sacred by the Druids, fastened her virgin's veil, which was not whiter than her face. Mona did not attempt to resist or fly; tottering, bewildered, she no longer had even strength to implore pity. Besides, to whom could she have appealed? One of the matrons who supported her, and whose office seemed rather to guard than aid her, was her own mother.

This circumstance, which according to our modern ideas should have excited universal reprobation, pro-

* Horrible as such a deed may be, we know from the examination of numerous tombs that it frequently occurred at this epoch.

duced no impression upon the assembly. Contempt of death and religious fanaticism were so powerful that, far from blaming Bodicea's unnatural stoicism, all seemed disposed to admire, and if necessary imitate, it.

Mona thus reached the centre of the circle, where a few torches and the last embers of the funeral pyre shed an uncertain light. Everywhere were menacing faces, angry eyes. When she reached the edge of the grave she was obliged to pause; her jailer said a few words in a low tone, and her mother even had the melancholy courage to kiss her on the forehead in sign of farewell. But Mona neither felt the kiss nor heard the words they uttered. The two women hastily retired, and she remained standing, trembling, dismayed, seeming as if she still doubted the terrible reality of her position.

The crowd had rushed to the heap of stones, and each individual seized the nearest one. But ere dealing the innocent victim the first blow all waited for the ovate to give the signal of martyrdom.

The ovate was in no hurry to put an end to the sombre tragedy. He gazed with cruel satisfaction at the poor girl who had rejected him; he gloated over her humiliation, her suffering, her terror. Perhaps he hoped Mona would make an appeal to him, and in this case would have found still further pleasure in scornfully rejecting it. His expectation was vain; Mona did not seem to think of speaking to or even looking at him. She no longer noticed the fanatics of every age and both sexes who with stones in their hands were preparing for her execution. The druid was about to let



THE FRUSTRATED SACRIFICE.

loose this pitiless band, when Mona, her head drooping on her breast, said in a stifled tone,

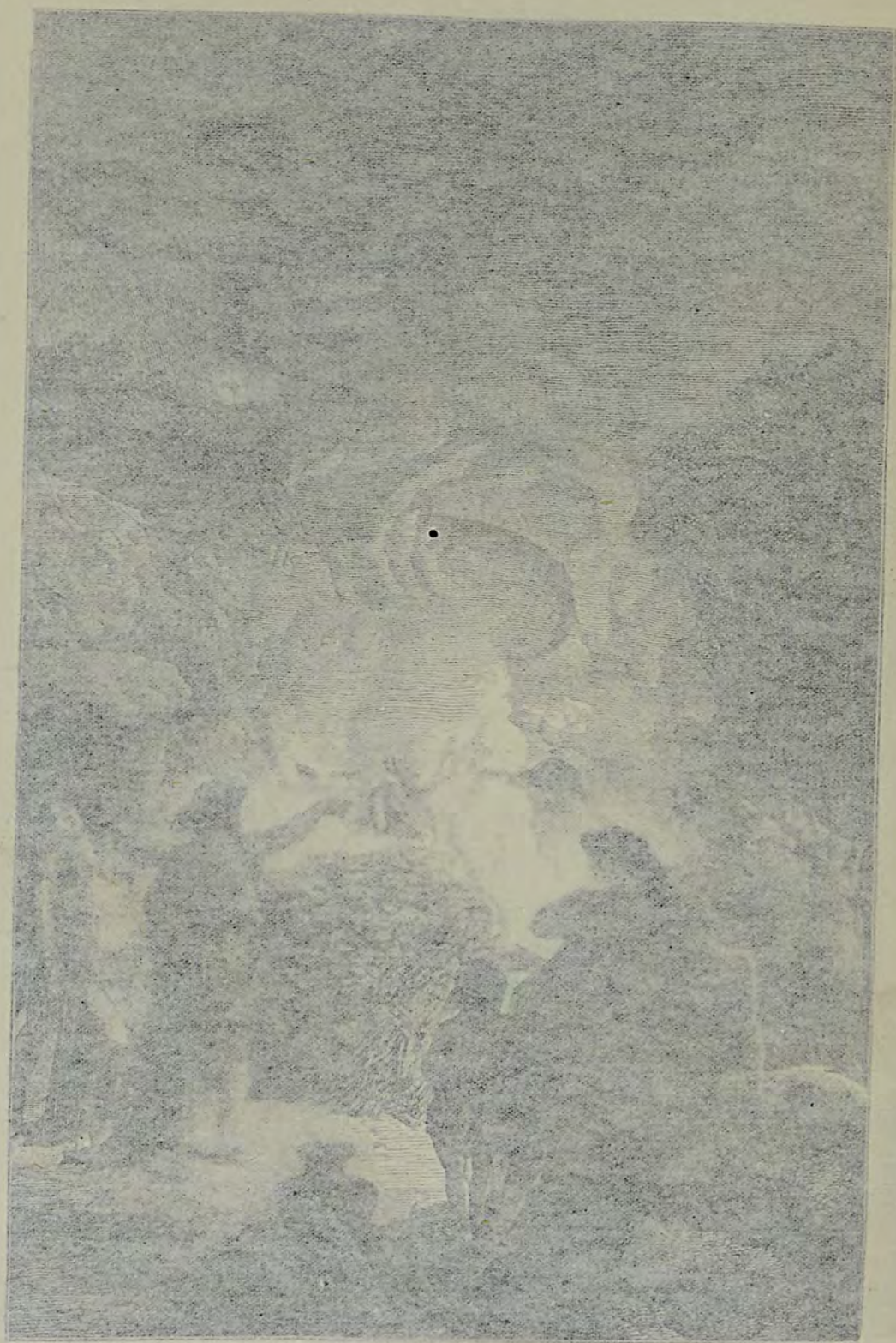
"O Dumorix! for whom I suffer, you too have abandoned me!"

The reproach, though it could have been heard only by those who stood nearest, seemed to produce a wonderful effect. A loud hoarse cry, like the roar of a lion, echoed from the wood of which we have spoken, and which was scarcely fifty paces from the place of scene. The spectators started as they saw a mounted warrior emerge from amid the foliage and dash like a thunder-bolt toward the throng.

The horse moved noiselessly over the moon, and the warrior who rode it could scarcely be distinguished in his swift course through the gloom. This warrior, whose gigantic form and lofty helmet were clearly relieved against the sky, brandished a naked sabre which emitted tawny flashes of light. He guided, apparently by a mere effort of his will, the fiery steed, which had neither saddle nor bridle, and bounded forward with dilated nostrils and mane streaming in the wind.

Besides, the spectators had only a few seconds to notice horse and rider. They were stupefied with astonishment; blind superstition led them to think they beheld some supernatural vision; it was certainly a god who had suddenly appeared under circumstances so extraordinary. Amazement, reverence, and terror prevented them from making a movement, uttering a cry.

Yet the apparition was a reality, and proof of the fact was speedily given. The horse dashed with unprecedented violence upon the motionless crowd, overthrowing and crushing all in its path, while the rider with



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The horse moved noiselessly over the moor, and the warrior who bestrode it could scarcely be distinguished in his headlong course through the gloom. This warrior, whose gigantic form and lofty helmet were clearly relieved against the sky, brandished a naked sabre which emitted tawny flashes of light. He guided, apparently by a mere effort of his will, the fiery steed, which had neither saddle nor bridle, and bounded forward with dilated nostrils and mane streaming in the wind.

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unutterable fury struck down with his sabre every one that opposed him. A wide passage was instantly opened in the crowded ranks. The wounded uttered piteous cries; the ovate himself, overthrown by a blow in the chest, lay struggling and screaming on the ground, without regard for his dignity.

No one thought of resisting, nor even defending himself; religious fear had frozen every heart. The mysterious horseman entered the circle, where, in spite of the darkness, Mona was recognized without difficulty by her white garments. The steed, obeying the pressure of its master's knees, approached the young girl and suddenly stopped. The stranger bent forward and seizing Mona with one hand placed her before him, while with the other he brandished his terrible sabre. Then he urged his horse to a tremendous leap that carried it ten paces away, and again guided it over the moor. Steed and rider were soon lost in the gloom with Mona, who still uttered low moans.

All this had occurred so rapidly that no one, we repeat, had had time to reflect and oppose this sacrilegious violence. The stranger was allowed to fly with his prey without any attempt at pursuit. When he had vanished the throng still remained bewildered for a moment.

One of the spectators said in an agitated tone,

"A god has descended while we were celebrating Hatt's funeral rites. It is undoubtedly Teutates, the inventor of the arts, the god whom the chief adored."

"No, it is Esus himself, the god of war and battles," said another; "his eyes were like two furnaces, his sabre flashed like a fiery sword."

"And why," cried Hatt's son, "should it not be my

father's shade descended from the land of souls to seek the victim he desired? His tall figure, imposing air, and warlike ardor leave no room for mistake. It was Hatt, my brave father."

This artless belief was shared by a number of persons.

"Yes, yes, it was Hatt, our chief," cried several of the throng.

"It was the warrior Dumorix," said a new voice; "may he be accursed!"

At the same moment the ovate, who, wounded and covered with bruises, had just risen, came limping forward.

"Yes, yes, it's Dumorix!" repeated the bard, who had himself received a kick from the horse; "shame and woe to this scorner of the gods, druids, and bards!"

This statement from the two most prominent persons in the assembly gave a new turn to public opinion, and the people looked at each other in bewilderment.

Under any other circumstances the ovate, with the usual craft of his class, would have taken advantage of the opportunity to recognize a divine interposition, a supernatural apparition. But at this moment he was too much irritated by his own mischance, too impatient to avenge himself, to conceal the truth. He energetically continued,

"Children of Irminsul, this time neither the gods nor the souls of the dead have manifested themselves to you; this warrior was a mortal, the impious Dumorix, who, urged on by his love for Bodicea's daughter, wished to snatch her from the chief. Why was he not struck lifeless by a thunderbolt while performing his

sacrilegious deed? Why did not the earth open to swallow the madman who has violated the majesty of the gods, outraged the manes of the dead, assailed the sacred authority of the druids?"

An outburst of furious cries and curses hailed these words. The ovate again commanded silence, and pronounced against the 'guilty man the Druids' excommunication, which was as formidable as the Christian excommunication of the Middle Ages.

"Dumorix son of Caletes," said he in a terrible voice, "is the enemy of gods and men. Let him be accursed in his body and his limbs; let him be accursed in his father, his mother, and all his ancestors; in the children who shall be born to him, and his children's children to the most distant generation. Let him be refused water, fire, and light; let no one lend him aid, approach, or speak to him, save to curse and strike him. After his death let him remain unburied, to be devoured by the dogs and ravens, and his soul, instead of entering the better world, animate for long ages the bodies of the vilest and most unclean animals; let it pass into the clumsy toad, the pig that wallows in the mire, the noisome insect we crush under foot. And let all who love him, aid him, touch him, address any other words to him—save those of insult or menace, be accursed like him—accursed in their persons and families until their lineage is for ever exterminated!"

This anathema had been heard in silence by the spectators. As they remained overwhelmed with horror, the ovate continued:

"Why do you delay to punish this unprecedented crime? The guilty man is flying with his accomplice,

who, like him, is accursed: will you let them escape? Warriors, to your arms, to your horses! Follow these bold profaners of sacred things, seize them, and we shall worthily close the chief's funeral rites by sacrificing both upon his tomb. To your horses, I tell you! Irminsul demands blood; Hatt's manes claim their victims. He who dies for this sacred cause will be covered with immortal glory and triumphantly enter the realm of the blest."

This fierce appeal roused the audience to frenzy. The warriors began to rush to and fro, uttering frantic cries, and dispersed to find traces of Dumorix.

But much time had been lost and the night was very dark; besides, the horses were away in the enclosed parks. A tolerably long period would elapse ere they could engage in the pursuit.

Therefore it will arouse no surprise to learn that the most active and patient search remained unavailing. In vain horsemen and pedestrians rushed to Dumorix's hut, to all the dwellings where he might have found refuge; in vain, holding lighted torches, did they beat the avenues of the forest, the groves, the banks of the Seine: no discovery was made. Dumorix, his bride, and the horse that bore them seemed to have vanished like phantoms. One of the warriors declared that he had heard a distant plashing in the river; but it was considered impossible that a horse loaded with the weight of two persons could have crossed the Seine, which in this place was very deep; and the warrior at last believed he had been mistaken.

When the crowd again assembled on the moor around the chief's open grave the first light of dawn was just

appearing. Now, the rites of the Druid worship were always performed during the night, and it was important to close the funeral ceremony as soon as possible. The priest, deeply enraged by the failure of the pursuit, would have preferred to wait still longer, but Hatt's son, who had arrived covered with perspiration and dust, said rudely,

"Ovate, my father's remains cannot rest exposed to profanation. The stars are beginning to pale, the sky is growing white toward the east. Let us hasten to pay the chief the last honors according to the sacred forms. It is impossible for the present to sacrifice upon his tomb the young virgin designated by the augurs. But I swear by Irminsul, by Teutates, by all the gods whom we revere, that I will not return to my hut until I have slain Dumorix and Mona. I will kill them unless I am slain myself, and then no doubt my soul will join my father's."

These vows were very common among the Gauls. The ovate, knowing the warrior's strength, courage, and obstinacy, said in a tone of satisfaction,

"Son of Hatt, gods and men have heard your oath. You shall keep it, for your father's glory and your own."

Then the obsequies were hastily concluded, the slabs intended to close the grave were placed over it; each of the spectators took a stone and laid it on the mound. These stones formed a pile which when covered with earth were to make a very different kind of tumulus from those left us by the primitive races.

Thanks to the number and activity of the laborers, the work advanced very rapidly. When the mound

reached a certain height two slaves approached, leading with great difficulty a magnificent black horse which had formerly belonged to the chief. The fiery animal reared, raising from the ground the grooms who clung to its mane. Nevertheless, it was brought to the foot of the mound, where a blow, dealt with the skill of the ancient sacrificers, laid it on its master's tomb, watering the earth with its blood.

The still palpitating body was left in this spot to serve as food for the dogs, wolves, and birds of prey; then the throng assembled for the funeral feast, which was the last ceremony.

Everything was concluded at the moment the rays of the rising sun were reflected in the waves of the river, and the throng divided into little groups which silently regained their habitations.

Hatt's son did not think of returning home. He gave his relatives and friends certain directions, after which, alone, without other weapons than his spear, huge Celtic sword, and buckler, he walked toward the river, studying with the sagacity of the red-skin and hunter the horse's hoof-prints, which proceeded in this direction.

He was beginning to fulfil the vow he had made not to cross the threshold of his dwelling until he had slain Dumorix and Mona.

V.

THE PIROGUE.

IT will be remembered that Dumorix, in spite of his youth, had had a very stormy life; so he was accustomed in the most difficult cases to rely entirely upon himself. After the ceremony of the augurs he had arranged a plan for Mona's deliverance which he hastened to put into execution, and had employed the preceding day and night in making certain arrangements whose results we shall soon know. During the funeral rites he had remained concealed in the wood adjoining the burial-place, watching for an opportunity to accomplish his bold design, and we know by what combination of circumstances he had the good fortune to succeed.

When he had snatched Mona from the assembled tribe, the poor child, who was more dead than alive, could not clearly understand what had happened. Borne away at headlong speed, she closed her eyes and gave herself up to her fate, wondering if she were in the power of a man or some supernatural being. Yet, as she felt that she was gently and carefully supported, she gradually gained courage, and at last opened her eyes. It was too dark to recognize the horseman, but a sort of instinct did not allow her to mistake.

"Dumorix," she murmured, "is it really you?"

The warrior stooped until his tawny moustache touched the young girl's pale forehead.

"Mona," he said eagerly, "they shall not have you."

"Very well," she replied. "My mother has renounced me; I have neither relatives, friends, nor nation. Keep me; I was already your wife."

"I *will* keep you. They shall not have you," Dumorix repeated.

At this moment they reached the river, and at a word from its master the horse instantly plunged into the water. Considering the width and depth of the Seine at this point, it seemed impossible, as the Gauls of Argenteuil had thought, for a horse loaded with the weight of two persons to cross it. But Dumorix better appreciated his noble steed; in a moment the powerful animal was swimming, crossing the stream in a straight line to reach the opposite bank.

Mona, suddenly feeling the chill of the water, could not restrain a shriek; a slight pressure from Dumorix's arm warned her that silence was absolutely necessary, and she made no further sound. In fact, numerous lights were flitting along the bank they had just left, and eager voices could be distinctly heard.

In spite of the difficulty of the task, the horse soon reached the other shore, but after having gained the bank, without stopping to take breath, dashed off at a gallop through the country, leaving a wet trail behind.

They were in the plain which extends between the wide curves of the river, and was afterward to be called Gennevilliers. The land was already partially cultivated; lowing and bleating betrayed the presence of

flocks. Dumorix knew the inhabited places, and avoided them. His horse galloped noiselessly across the fields. Although the fugitives had put the Seine between them and the Gauls of Argenteuil, they could not give up all precaution, for they expected to be fiercely pursued.

They crossed the plain obliquely to reach the spot, then a solitude, where thousands of years later the village of Asnières was to stand. There the river again appeared. Mona, who had regained her presence of mind, supposed they were to cross in the same way as before; but Dumorix stopped his horse, placed the young girl, shivering in her dripping garments, on her feet, and sprang to the ground himself.

The horse, relieved of its double burden, stood motionless with dilated eyes and ears erect, as if expecting new orders from its master. The latter patted the half-savage animal, and said in a tone of deep emotion, "Your work is finished; go! We shall never see each other again. But your body is doubtless animated by the soul of a brave and loyal warrior* who has committed some sin. May the gods protect you!"

At the same time he uttered an exclamation whose meaning the animal clearly understood. Neighing joyously, it suddenly wheeled and set out at full gallop, doubtless to reach the pastures where it usually grazed.

"Perhaps we may need the horse again, Dumorix," said Mona timidly. "I am very weak to walk, especially if we are to take a long journey."

* It will be remembered that the Gauls of this period believed in the transmigration of souls.

The warrior raised her in his arms.

"Dear Mona," he replied, "we shall be pursued, and a horse leaves hoof-prints; we must take another way to reach the retreat I have chosen."

"I am yours," murmured the young girl, resting her head on the warrior's shoulder. "It matters little where we go, provided you do not leave me."

The shore of the river was overgrown with reeds, amid which Dumorix walked, undisturbed by the water that reached halfway up his legs. Suddenly a low growl, like that which precedes the baying of a large dog, issued from the moving tufts. Dumorix hastily cried,

"Down, Astor! down! It is I."

At the same time he found, concealed amid the grass, a long, heavy boat, made of a single log like those of former days, and placed Mona in it. The pirogue was filled with provisions and utensils of every description, as well as several bear and auroch skins, which were very precious to the young girl, who was chilled by the cold. The whole was under the charge of Astor, and a sight of the animal's huge head and formidable teeth was enough to convince any one that it would not have been prudent to approach him in his master's absence.

Dumorix carefully placed his betrothed bride upon the soft skins and wrapped her warmly in them; then he took the oars, and after convincing himself that the deepest silence reigned around him, pushed his boat out from among the rushes.

He soon found himself in the centre of the river, and began to ascend the stream. Unfortunately, the current

was strong, and in spite of the rower's strength the pirogue, clumsy and heavily loaded, did not make rapid progress. Besides, Dumorix sometimes forgot to labor at the oars to gaze by moonlight at his charming companion. She was perfectly calm, and thanked him by a look, a smile, or a loving word. Yielding to emotion and fatigue, she at last fell asleep, and Dumorix, well aware of the value of this slumber, thought of nothing but rowing with all his might.

Several hours elapsed, and when the first light of dawn appeared, Dumorix was a long distance from the spot he had chosen for a retreat. He feared nothing for himself, but Mona's presence made him timid, and the boat could have been seen from either shore in a region so near the village. He continued to row up the river as long as the darkness allowed him to glide along unperceived beneath the shadow of the high banks, but as day dawned thought seriously of finding a hiding-place.

Just at that moment they were passing a long narrow island covered with brushwood and bordered with willows. Dumorix noticed a little bay, at one end of which the current had hollowed out the bank. In this natural grotto he concealed his boat and all it contained. As a further precaution he cut branches from the willows and formed an arbor over the pirogue. Thus it could not be seen from the shore, and any one who passed would have noticed nothing but a clump of foliage. This ruse, adopted by the American Indians, protected the young lovers from any surprise, and they could wait in this spot till the return of night should allow them to continue their voyage.

So, having finished their work, they prepared to spend the day quietly. Mona, revived by a few hours' rest, had regained her courage, and even her cheerfulness. Her clothes were dry; the sun's rays, gliding through the leafy screen, warmed her thoroughly. The young couple began to breakfast upon the provisions contained in the pirogue, and seemed to have no further thought of the dangers they had just escaped or those to which they were still exposed.

Suddenly, Astor, lying at his master's feet, uttered the low growl that usually preceded his bark. Dumorix hastily laid his hand on the animal's huge head to silence him, for some one was approaching. While peering through the trees to discover who the troublesome wanderer might be, some one on the opposite bank uttered the peculiar cry the Gauls were in the habit of using when they wished to communicate some piece of news.

We have stated with what rapidity, thanks to this custom, events were transmitted through the country. Tidings flew from lip to lip for more than fifty leagues in a few hours.

But the shepherds could not now have any piece of news to communicate that would interest the neighboring tribes; the matter in question was doubtless some local event which concerned only the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Dumorix soon distinguished the person who had uttered the cry standing on the opposite bank. He was an old shepherd, who had no garments except a pair of goat-skin breeches, and stood leaning on a spear with a flint head. The man with whom he wished to communicate, and who had

answered in the usual manner, was invisible, but doubtless he too was a shepherd.

Dumorix signed to Mona to listen. A voice shouted slowly, with peculiar intonations, which made each word distinctly audible,

"At the chief's funeral Dumorix the warrior carried Mona away, wounded several persons, and overthrew the ovate himself. Hatt's son has set out in pursuit, and sworn not to return to his hut until he has slain Dumorix and Mona."

The first shepherd paused, and the second, after having made a sign to show that the message had been understood, went away to repeat it in another direction.

Dumorix was not all disturbed by tidings that touched him so nearly, but Mona seemed greatly terrified, and as soon as she dared to speak said,

"Did you hear, Dumorix? Hatt's son is a brave warrior, and is seeking us to kill us both."

The young giant smiled, and, passing his hand over Mona's fair tresses, answered with artless sincerity,

"Hatt's son will not find us; and if he does, brave as he may be, I shall kill *him*."

Such was Mona's confidence in her husband's courage, strength, and skill that she did not doubt his word, and appeared entirely reassured.

The day passed far more pleasantly to the two young people than would have been supposed possible in their perilous position. They slept a great deal, for Dumorix was to have a hard task at rowing during the following night, and while they slumbered Astor kept faithful watch.

Nothing else disturbed the quiet of the solitary spot. Certain portions of the country were completely deserted. Here and there was a shepherd watching his flocks or a laborer making furrows with a rude plough. The roads, on which a clumsy wain drawn by oxen sometimes appeared, were scarcely visible. A few boats, it is true, passed near the pirogue, but the rowers' only care was to advance as fast as possible with their load at a period when traffic was carried on entirely by water.

When twilight began to fall Dumorix removed the branches that concealed the boat, and taking the oars rowed vigorously up the stream.

The whole night passed without his reaching the end of the voyage. Hour after hour, Mona, who slept lightly on her couch of skins, raised her head and asked,

"Have we arrived?"

Dumorix always answered,

"Not yet, beloved: sleep in peace."

At last, as darkness was again giving place to dawn, they reached a spot where four or five islands of different sizes interrupted the current of the Seine. The largest, covered with trees and underbrush, was afterward to be the site of the city of Paris, and was shaped, it is said, like a ship.

Toward this Dumorix turned, and ran through the narrow passage, choked with aquatic plants, mud, and slime. Opposite stretched the vast marshes of Bièvre, which we have already mentioned, and which Labienus, Cæsar's lieutenant, could not cross. On the other side of the river were more marshes, scarcely less extensive,

formed by the meeting of several streams. The neighboring country was then uninhabited and almost uninhabitable. With the exception of a few huts built among the chestnut trees on the side of Mont Lucotitius, to find any numerous population one would have been obliged to go to Argenteuil or Varenne Saint-Hilaire, where within a short time traces of a village dating back to the Stone Age have been discovered.

Dumorix rowed his boat into a hollow in the shore among the rushes. Mona, perceiving that they had at last reached the spot where they were to find rest and safety, sprang nimbly to the bank and began to look eagerly around her.

As we have said, the island was covered with large trees and dense thickets; at the first glance it seemed impossible to penetrate this virgin forest. The edge was protected by heaps of dry rushes, brambles, and briars, to which still clung, at a certain height, tufts of grass that had been left by recent inundations. The scene did not appear very attractive, and Bodicea's daughter could not restrain a slight grimace at sight of this inhospitable solitude.

Dumorix did not notice it, and loaded Mona with various articles. He himself took a burden three or four times heavier, without counting his weapons; then, leaving the pirogue and the remainder of its contents under the care of his dog, he invited his companion to follow him.

He soon found in the thicket a winding path that seemed familiar to him, and it had certainly required a special instinct to discover it amid the tall grass. The two young people's clothes were speedily drenched by

the dew showered liberally upon them, but they disturbed themselves very little about so trifling an inconvenience, and continued to penetrate into the heart of the woods, where only the faint warbling of birds disturbed the majestic silence.

VI.

THE SOLITUDE.

AFTER walking several minutes, Dumorix and Mona reached an open space almost in the centre of the island. This clearing was small, but the ground seemed high enough to be above the reach of inundations. Ancient trees with projecting roots surrounded it like a rampart. At the foot of one of these trees was a very ancient, dilapidated Gallic hut, which seemed to have been long since abandoned. The roof, however, had recently been repaired with rushes, but no one had thought of stopping the holes in the wall with clay, and the worm-eaten door was falling to pieces. Near this ruin were traces of a little enclosure or garden, which must have lain waste for many years.

Let us hasten to say that Dumorix, while pursuing a wounded stag across the isle one day, had discovered this hermitage. Who was the solitary misanthrope that had formerly built his dwelling in this desolate spot? Had he died of old age or accident? Had he left his hut with the hope of returning to it? No one knew. But the habitation evidently no longer had a master, and the few articles of furniture it still con-

tained were useless. On learning, two days before, of the danger that threatened his dear Mona, Dumorix thought of taking her, after having rescued her, to this unknown spot. He had come there the night before on his horse to bring certain indispensable articles and begin the repairs most urgently required. The rest of his wealth had been put in his boat and taken to the site of Asnières, to avoid too long a voyage on the Seine. We have seen the success of his plan.

Mona, reared as a fine lady of that period, was accustomed to a degree of comfort which this building, open to all the winds of heaven, did not promise to afford; so on entering her new abode she showed a feeling that did not wholly resemble joy.

"Dumorix," said she, "this hut is very old, and the place is very dreary."

"The whole country is against us, Mona," replied Dumorix with his artless simplicity, "and we shall not be sought on this unknown island. I'll repair the house and build a wall around it; I will support you by hunting and fishing. So rejoice, my beloved; we shall be happy in this solitude."

"I am content," replied Mona, who was suddenly ready to accommodate herself to the situation.

And she instantly began to light a fire on the round stone in the centre of the hut. Having swept the floor, she covered it with auroch-skins, which were to serve for a bed, and placed on beams two or three earthen vessels and the stock of provisions they had brought. While thus performing the duties of an active house-keeper, Dumorix, a happy smile resting on his lips, followed her with loving eyes. But the necessities of

the moment permitted no long reveries, and the warrior roused himself.

"I'm going to the pirogue to get the rest of our property," he said at last.

Mona had not the childish timidity of a young girl of our day, yet she felt a thrill of terror at the thought of staying alone in this gloomy place. Not daring to confess it, she said in an embarrassed tone,

"Come back soon, Dumorix. Perhaps the druid and Hatt's son are watching for you."

Dumorix shrugged his shoulders.

"I have my weapons," he replied, showing his spear and sabre.

"Take your shield too."

The warrior made a slight gesture of impatience, but put his shield on his left arm and went away.

Left alone, Mona, to soothe her fears, pursued her task. She was gradually growing calmer, when the distant baying of a dog was heard, mingled with the sound of human voices. She listened, and, fancying she recognized her husband's tones, suddenly banished her feminine fears, seized a lance, and ran at full speed in the direction of the noise.

Dumorix, in taking his shield, had merely obeyed the caprice of a woman he loved, but did not think of fearing any danger. He was going quietly toward the place where he had left his pirogue, when Astor's barking made him quicken his pace, and he soon emerged from the woods.

A man—a Gallic warrior, judging from his garments striped with red—had just crossed the narrow arm of the Seine, which at this point was very shallow. Al-

though loaded with his weapons, he seemed to have made the passage very easily, and when Dumorix appeared was in the act of wringing his breeches and sagum. It was Hatt's son.

Dumorix's first feeling was one of profound astonishment. By what miracle had the warrior been able to overtake the fugitives after the extreme care used to render pursuit impossible? Yet he instantly recovered his coolness, and uttered a shout of defiance.

Hatt's son, on hearing the sound, put himself on guard and repeated the war-cry in his turn.

When the two were within twenty paces they gazed at each other a moment in silence.

Astor, warned by instinct that the new-comer was his master's enemy, ground his teeth and prepared to spring upon him. Dumorix, obeying the chivalrous feelings of his race, did not desire such an ally.

"Down, Astor!" he said imperiously.

The dog, still growling, went behind him.

The two warriors continued to watch, but it was not only Homer's heroes who defied each other in long speeches; the Gauls, with their natural love of boasting, never failed to insult their foes before engaging in conflict.

"Hatt's son," said Dumorix scornfully, "must have employed some sorcery to reach me so quickly, but no witchcraft will save him from the death that awaits him."

"It was no sorcery," replied the warrior haughtily, "but your own imprudence, that enabled me to follow your trail. While wandering yesterday evening along the river-bank, I saw you ascending the stream in

your boat, and the sound of the oars served to guide me through the darkness. You landed here just now, and I hastily crossed the water to overtake you. I come to avenge my father's manes, which you have outraged by snatching away Mona, the victim that belongs to him; therefore I am going to kill you first, and then Mona."

"Kill Mona!" cried Dumorix, grinding his teeth.

He seized his spear by the leather loop fastened toward the middle of the weapon, and called by the Romans *amentum*, balanced it once or twice, and at last hurled it against his adversary with wonderful strength.

The spear buried itself in the warrior's wooden buckler, shivering it in twain. Hatt's son, in his turn, promptly hurled his own lance, which buried itself in Dumorix's shield, but without penetrating it so deeply.

This new weight did not make the arm of the gigantic warrior tremble, but he threw aside his buckler, while Hatt's son cast down the remains of his, and both drawing their swords rushed furiously upon each other.

The art of fencing was not very much developed in those days, and consisted only of a few feints; owing to which strength usually prevailed over skill. So Dumorix soon dealt his adversary a terrible blow which was to cleave him in twain, as, according to the old poems, was the custom of the paladins of the Middle Ages. Hatt's son instinctively bent his head, and the stroke fell on his bronze helmet. Now, we know that the Gauls' swords were not of the best temper, and the inferior quality of their weapons was often disastrous to them in their battles with the Romans. Dumorix's

sabre, meeting an invincible obstacle, broke, which placed the warrior at a considerable disadvantage.

Hatt's son was at first unable to profit by the accident; stunned by the terrible shock he had just received, he staggered back. Nevertheless, he soon recovered his senses and advanced to the attack. Dumorix, with his half-shattered blade, had considerable difficulty in defending himself, and in spite of his herculean strength the issue of the conflict was doubtful, when he was suddenly aided.

The Gauls accustomed their dogs to fight with them, and more than once the powerful animals who followed them into the conflict aided in obtaining the victory. Perhaps Astor had been trained for this purpose; at any rate, the brave animal, seeing his master in danger, no longer heeded his former commands, and sprang upon Hatt's son, who did not expect the furious assault.

He stood firm as a rock, while the dog buried his terrible teeth in his leg, but Dumorix, forgetting his chivalric generosity in his rage, took advantage of this diversion and plunged his sabre to the hilt in his enemy's breast. The warrior shook his arms convulsively, turned and fell backward, struggling, and inundating the aquatic plants with his blood.

Dumorix did not think of finishing his work. All his rage was now turned against the unfortunate Astor, who had rendered him so great a service, and he pursued him, brandishing his broken sword and swearing by Tarann, by Circius, and all the most formidable divinities of his barbarous religion.

Perhaps the dog would have paid dearly for his dis-

obedience if Mona, lance in hand, had not issued from the woods at that moment. Dumorix, seeing her advance with flushed face and dishevelled hair, animated by warlike ardor, let Astor fly, and going toward her pointed with his finger to the conquered foe, now writhing in the last agony, and said with almost child-like joy,

"See, Mona, I have kept my promise; I've killed the chief's son."

Mona was certainly not so much affected by the spectacle as a woman of our times would have been. Yet she turned her eyes away.

"My Dumorix is a brave warrior," she said; "I have found in him a worthy defender and a noble master."

The praises were welcome to the young man's pride, and he returned to Hatt's son, who was lying on the grass, to strip him of his weapons. He was endeavoring to remove the bracelets and necklaces when the dying man murmured with an accent of inexpressible hatred,

"I have been conquered by two *dogs*." And he expired.

Dumorix, without any sign of emotion, cut off his head, according to the custom of the Gauls. Then with his foot he pushed the body, now clad only in a sagum and breeches, into the river, saying gayly,

"Go back to your accursed village, and teach your friends how Dumorix son of Caletes avenges himself on those who outrage him."

Seizing the head by the hair, he presented it to Mona.

"We'll nail it over the door of our home," said he; "I give it to you, my dearest."

The offering was one warriors frequently made to their wives or the objects of their love; but Mona did not seem to properly appreciate such a compliment.

"No," she replied; "it would constantly remind me of the village I hate, the relatives who deserted, the mother who renounced me. I want to forget everything, and live only for you."

"Very well," replied Dumorix.

He hurled the bloody head far away; it whirled several times in the air, and fell with a heavy plunge into the river.

Dumorix then handed Mona the spoils taken from the dead warrior, while he himself carried the rest of the luggage; then the young couple, laughing and talking merrily, entered the path leading through the wood, followed by Astor, who, conscious of his late misconduct, walked along with drooping ears.

By an accident Dumorix's sarcastic wish was fulfilled. Three days after, some fishers in the village of Argenteuil found caught among the reeds the headless body of Hatt's son. It was not difficult to guess who had committed the murder; but they sought in vain for Dumorix and his companion to avenge upon them the insult done the tribe, and by degrees the tragical event seemed buried in oblivion.

VII.

LOUTOUHEZI.

MORE than twenty years had passed. During this long period no remarkable change seemed to have taken place in the island and its neighborhood. A few new huts appeared here and there on the sides of Mont Lucotitius* and the plain that extended to the Bièvre marshes—a few more clearings in the country. But, generally speaking, the region looked very much as it had done twenty years before, and the island was still covered with dense, apparently impenetrable, woods.

Nevertheless, of late it might have been perceived that the solitude was only apparent. Smoke frequently rose above the foliage that made the isle look like a clump of verdure. Along the wide arm of the river, where the traders' boats passed, the curtain of trees concealed every trace of culture or habitation, but human forms sometimes glided by on the shore of the narrow branch; the blows of an axe might be heard,

* It will be noticed that here, as well as throughout the work, it has been necessary, for the purpose of clearness, to use the Roman names, which were not given to the various localities until several centuries later; but the reader will understand that these anachronisms were almost unavoidable.

and the lowing of cattle. Lastly, a man of gigantic size might often be met, sometimes fishing with nets from a pirogue, sometimes wandering through the marshes, accompanied by a dog, to hunt wild boars. But at this period, when social intercourse was rare and manners rude, people troubled themselves very little about the affairs of others. Besides, the hermit probably did not possess a very communicative disposition, and as it was not deemed prudent to annoy him with intrusive curiosity, he was willingly left to his misanthropy.

But a day came when the events which had occurred in this place were to attract the attention of the neighborhood. For several years loud cries, like those uttered by noisy children, had been heard in the woods, and when the inhabitant of the island went fishing or hunting he was accompanied by one or two young boys, whom he was doubtless training to perform his tasks. Finally, a short time before the period of which we now speak, he had appeared accompanied by five sons, the youngest scarcely fourteen years old, but all strong, alert, and hardened by their savage life. The little colony which had gradually been formed on the island no longer seemed to care to conceal its presence. It now possessed numerous cattle and several pirogues. The lads whom we have mentioned went and came constantly, engaged in fishing or hunting, and their manner, which grew bolder and bolder, showed that they thought they could act with perfect freedom.

Several persons who through curiosity or accident had landed on the island caught glimpses of plantations and clearings of considerable extent. In the midst of

this cultivated region a sort of enclosure, palisaded like a fortress, seemed to contain several dwellings. But they had been unable to make any very close examination. Invariably, while the new-comer was gazing at the farm so carefully concealed, one of the stout lads we have mentioned, and who never went out without their swords or bows, started from some corner, or their father, who was yet stronger and fiercer of aspect; and certain looks or movements made the stranger understand the inconveniences of too long an observation. Thus the stories were not very clear, and often contradictory.

In those days, and for a long time after, there were two sandy islands, situated a little above the one on which Paris was built, that afterward united to form the solid ground of Pont-Neuf. Every winter, during the great floods, they were completely submerged, and nothing was visible except the marsh-grasses, diversifying by their verdure the uniformity of the shore.

Now, on a warm summer day, while the waters of the Seine were very low, a heavily-laden boat entered the narrow passage between the two islands. It was no longer the pirogue hollowed from a log used in primitive times. Owing to the rapid development of commerce, the boats used to convey commodities of various kinds had assumed considerable dimensions, and that in question was one of the largest. It had only two rowers, but as they were going down the stream, and merely needed to direct it according to the channel, the task was not beyond their strength.

In the stern sat a passenger, accommodated tolerably well among the merchandise. He must have been a

person of importance, for care had been taken to secure his comfort; an ox-hide stretched on two poles over his head formed a tent which protected him from the burning rays of the sun. He remained motionless under his shelter, and did not appear to trouble himself about the boatmen's movements.

A circumstance occurred, however, which rendered his aid very necessary. The men, either from carelessness or inexperience, had allowed their boat to enter the narrow passage, where it grounded. In vain they tried to get it off; the current still swept it downward till it became firmly fixed in the sand. It seemed impossible to push forward or backward without nearly unloading it—a task that presented many difficulties.

The poor boatmen, after having exhausted themselves in useless efforts, cast their eyes around to search for assistance. The country and marshes seemed deserted. There was nothing on the river except a pirogue in which sat a young lad twelve or fourteen years old, humming a guttural tune while raising his nets.

The boatmen called, but he did not appear to hear, and, still humming, continued his task. They grew angry and shook their fists at him; he still took no notice except to see that his sling was at his belt and half a dozen round stones in the bottom of the pirogue were within his reach.

Suddenly the leather that hung over the stern of the boat was drawn aside, and the passenger appeared. By his green robe and crown of oak-leaves it was easy to recognize him for one of the ovates so revered among the Gauls. He was still a strong man, though threads of silver were beginning to appear in his thick black

beard. Doubtless, he relied upon the effect his presence ought to produce, for he made an imperious sign to the little savage, sure that he would eagerly obey.

But he did not. The lad contented himself with gazing at the new-comer with dilated eyes, giving no mark of respect or fear. Evidently, he had not the slightest idea who the man in the green robe could be.

The latter, in spite of his dignity, found himself obliged to change his tactics toward a person he needed. He began to smile, took a basket of red wild cherries, doubtless intended solely for his use, and showed it to the lad, intimating by gestures that it was at his disposal.

The boy at first hesitated, but when he understood uttered a cry of delight, while his tawny eyes sparkled with greed. He seized his oars, and, handling his pirogue with great dexterity, brought it alongside of the boat. There he grasped the basket and began to eat the cherries as fast as he could.

While the lad was indulging his appetite the ovate scrutinized him at his leisure. He was little more than a child, and as his whole clothing consisted of a pair of short breeches, the priest had full opportunity to admire the magnificent proportions of his figure, now bronzed by sun and wind. Strong and nimble, the little savage was very decided in his manners, which, however, betrayed the most artless simplicity.

The basket of cherries was nearly exhausted when the ovate, in his most grandiloquent tone, asked,

"Child, what is your name?"

"Clodic son of Dumorix," replied the little fisherman with his mouth full.

"Where do you live?"

"Yonder," said Clodic, stretching his arm toward the site of Paris.

"What is the name of the place?"

"Loutouhezi."*

"With whom do you live in Loutouhezi?"

"With my father, my mother, and my four brothers. My father is a warrior; my brothers are tall and strong. They kill wild boars and aurochs, and could slay men. I shall soon do the same."

"Where are your father and brothers now?"

"Hunting wild oxen: then they'll push on to the great forest where the tribe of the Kimris-Belges is encamped. So my mother Mona is alone at the hut, and I am going to join her."

Clodic dropped the empty basket, and was about to take up his oars again, but the ovate asked,

"So your father is named Dumorix and your mother Mona?"

The fisher-boy made a gesture of assent.

"Listen to me, child," continued the ovate in his majestic tones. "I never speak in vain, and no one can resist me. I am a druid: you doubtless know that a druid must be obeyed, even unto death."

"I know nothing about druids," replied Clodic boldly, "and obey nobody but my father."

The ovate raised his hands toward heaven, as if pitying such utter ignorance.

"The druids," he continued, "are the representatives of the gods. If you offended me, your harvests would

* Loutouhezi, which means in the Celtic language *habitation in the midst of waters*, was the primitive name of Paris. It is the real etymology of the Roman *Lutetia* and French *Lutèce*.

be destroyed, your cattle die of disease, your dwellings would be burned, your island devastated by floods. Your father, your mother, your brothers, and yourself could be destroyed by a mere wish of mine. These men will tell you whether I am deceiving you."

He pointed to the two boatmen, who, despairing of obtaining any assistance, were working busily to float off their boat, and seemed about to succeed. They were the ovate's slaves, and, pausing in their toil, enlarged upon their master's supernatural power.

Clodic listened to all this with open mouth. Credulous, like all children and savages, he at last seemed intimidated, and averting his eyes, said,

"What do you want of me?"

The ovate's countenance softened.

"These are my orders," he replied. "I can't remain exposed to this burning sun while my servants lighten the boat; so I'll get into your pirogue, and go to your house, where your parents will grant me a few moments' hospitality."

Clodic shook his head.

"No stranger has ever crossed our threshold," said he—"except," he instantly added, "the chief of the Kimris-Belges, who recently came to Loutouhezi."

"I am no ordinary man. My presence will bring prosperity to your home. All the members of your family will be exempt from sickness; your sheep will give you lambs every year; your hunting will be successful; your bins will be filled with wheat and your cellars with cerevisia,* for wherever I go I bring good-fortune."

* Beverage made of grain and herbs.

Clodic might have answered that the voyage so disagreeably interrupted did not show so much good-fortune and power on the part of the priest of Irminsul, but the observation was too subtle for his intelligence.

As he still hesitated, the ovate added,

"Child, the hospitality I ask shall not be unrepaid. Accept this in remembrance of a druid."

He drew from a skin pouch a small object and handed it to Clodic, who turned it mechanically between his fingers.

Pieces of money made of bronze, gold, and even silver, were beginning to appear among the Gauls, especially in the provinces adjoining Italy. But these pieces, which the development of commerce already rendered necessary, were very rare and scarcely known in the North. Now, the object the ovate had just given Clodic was one of these bronze coins, fragments of which have been discovered among the ruins of the Lacustrian cities. Clodic, having no idea of its use, continued to turn it in his fingers, when the priest called his attention to the rude marks the bit of metal bore on its surface. On one side was a bearded face with huge ear-rings; on the other the "horned horse," which became the emblem of the Gauls, and is found on so many Gallic medals.

Clodic gazed at these marvels, and no words could do justice to his amazement and delight when he distinguished the shapeless figures that seemed to him the perfection of art. He began to dance, to utter shouts of joy, and at last exclaimed,

"I'm going to show this to my mother. My brothers

will be jealous, but I won't let anybody take it except my father."

Not knowing where to put the piece of money, he slipped it into his mouth and prepared to return to the island, which was only a few paces away. His pre-occupation and eagerness to reach it prevented him from perceiving that the ovate, after having given a few orders to his slaves, had passed from the large boat into the pirogue, and was seated by his side. Besides, how could he have refused to obey this majestic, superior, all-powerful being, who had made him such a gift?

With a few strokes of the oars they reached the island, and the lad leaped ashore without troubling himself about the ovate. The latter, however, did not stay behind, and followed him along the path that led through the thicket.

VIII.

THE VISIT.

THIS path was far smoother and more frequented than in former days. It was also much shorter, for at the end of a hundred paces the two companions entered large cultivated fields. In the centre stood the dwelling, which, as we have said, looked like a fortress. To approach, one was obliged to pass a rampart of trees, whose interlaced branches and mouldering trunks left only a narrow passage that could easily be blocked up in case of attack. The walls of the enclosure were built according to the Gallic plan—that is, in successive layers of stones and beams, so that they could equally resist undermining and fire. Their height almost concealed the conical roofs of several huts, and the door, constructed of huge joists, was flanked by stones that afforded means of instantly walling it up if required.

The ovate did not feel so much surprise at the sight of this well-fortified abode as might have been expected. At that period, when war was continual, not only between nation and nation, but tribe with tribe and family with family, these rustic fortresses were very common. Each Gaul of any note possessed one, which he occupied permanently or only in times of danger. Besides,

these solid walls might also have been built to protect the habitation against the encroachments of the river, which in winter often inundated a portion of the island.

As Clodic approached he quickened his pace, calling his mother, to whom he was impatient to show his treasure. As no one answered, he passed through the massive door, which stood open, the ovate following close behind him.

The fortified enclosure, where several fine trees were growing, was large enough to contain, in case of war, all the flocks and all the wealth of the family. Opposite to the entrance were three or four round huts, covered, as usual, with thatch or rushes. From one, devoted to culinary purposes, issued a monotonous, disagreeable noise which had doubtless prevented Clodic's calls from being heard; it proceeded from a hand-mill formed of stones placed one above another, which two women were turning to crush the grain.

The oldest of these women was a slave, who had fled from a neighboring village to escape being stoned to death or burned on her master's tomb. Dumorix on one of his hunting-excursions had found her in the woods dying of fatigue and hunger, and brought her to Loutouhezi to be a companion and servant to Mona. The slave had shown her gratitude for this good office by her devotion and fidelity. She had helped rear the children, and was considered one of the family.

The other woman has already been divined to be the mistress of the abode, Mona herself.

Mona, as may be supposed, was no longer the slender young girl we saw at the commencement of this story, but a stout and still beautiful matron. Though occupied

at this moment in the humblest household duties, she showed the dignity possessed by the Gallic women, who shared domestic authority with their husbands. The deference of the Celts to their wives and mothers is perhaps the origin of the chivalric devotion of the Middle Ages—a devotion that has been one of the principal elements of modern civilization.

Mona, on seeing the youngest, and consequently the most petted, of her children enter, left her work to meet him. Clodic, panting for breath, had already taken the bronze coin from his mouth, and was showing it to her with artless joy, when the old slave uttered a cry of surprise and terror. Mona turned her head and perceived on the threshold the ovate, a very striking personage in his green robe and crown of oak-leaves.

She gazed steadily at him, and doubtless recognized him even after the lapse of so many years, for she sprang forward like a panther, seized an axe that stood in one corner of the hut, and, magnificent in her wrath, hate, and menace, stood before the priest of Irminsul, saying to her son,

“What have you done, Clodic? It is the ovate of Argenteuil.”

These words had a very clear meaning to the lad; he seized a lance and stood beside his mother, while the slave armed herself with a huge stone, which a moment before had been put to a very different use.

The ovate did not trouble himself about these hostile demonstrations, but sat down on a bundle of rushes in the centre of the hut.

“Mona,” said he, “I am Dumorix’s guest and yours.”

Such was the sacredness of hospitality that Mona in-

stantly ceased to menace her mortal enemy. But her eyes still flashed, and she replied, trembling with indignation,

"What! priest of Irminsul, dare you sit down in the home of a man whom you have declared infamous? You have cursed him as well as his family, his friends, his servants, his flocks and his goods, his roof and his fireside. Why did you enter the hut of the excommunicated outlaw?"

The ovate answered,

"The commands imposed upon the common herd are beneath my notice. A druid is the repository of divine power; he can revoke the maledictions he has uttered. Just now I learned by chance that you were here with your husband, Dumorix, and I wanted to see you. You are the daughter of the venerable Bodicea, who adores the gods and honors the druids. She has often spoken of you, and I know she loves you, in spite of your faults. It is on Bodicea's account I entered your hut."

Mona was deeply moved at hearing her mother's name. Dropping her axe, she burst into tears.

"Ovate," she cried, "is it true that my mother is still alive?"

"What! are you really ignorant of it? She lives, though burdened with the weight of years and growing weaker every hour. But I will restore her strength by telling her that the daughter she lost has not perished under divine malediction."

Mona no longer tried to restrain herself, but gave free course to her tears.

"Is it possible?" she murmured; "Bodicea is alive and loves me still? Ovate, I beseech you, when you re-

turn, tell her that I too have never ceased to think of her during our separation. In spite of the curse you called down upon our heads, the gods have given me a good, brave husband, handsome, sturdy children, who respect me and spread joy and abundance around me. Yet in the midst of this prosperity two ideas have constantly occupied my mind: Does my mother still hate me? And, I would like to see Bodicea again, were it only for an instant."

The ovate's eyes sparkled with cruel satisfaction. Yet he made no haste to answer; it was only after a pause that he gently replied,

"Time, Mona, softens many passions, calms many wrathful feelings; perhaps it will also disarm Irminsul's vengeance. Besides, a white heifer was sacrificed on the chieftain's tomb in your place, and his manes were appeased. So, why should you not go to visit Bodicea, who longs for you, calls you, and would fain embrace you for the last time before passing to the better world?"

Mona started and raised her head.

"What do you say, ovate?" she cried. "I could return to the village?"

"Yes, and my protection would secure you from all harm."

"Then I will go," said Mona resolutely; "when Dumorix and my sons return I will tell them my desire to give my mother a last embrace."

"Why delay so long, Mona? I repeat, Bodicea is very old. If you don't hasten you may be too late. Listen: the boat that brought me here must now be afloat again. Will you accompany me? The slaves

and your mother's servants shall bring you back to Loutouhezi."

Mona seemed greatly tempted. Very contradictory feelings divided her heart. At last she said with a strong effort,

"I will go and see Bodicea, but I must be accompanied by Dumorix and two of my sons."

"I could not extend my protection to them, as I am ready to give it to you. The warriors of our tribe suspect that Hatt's son was slain by Dumorix, and Hatt's family still has numerous friends. My authority would be insufficient to restrain the hate your husband's presence might arouse. Now accept or refuse; a druid never speaks in vain." He rose as if to withdraw.

Mona hastily decided.

"I will trust you, ovate," she cried, "and am ready to follow you."

She took a large linen veil, which she wrapped about her from head to foot, threw over her arm a cloak of fine, soft skin, intended to protect her from wind and rain, and then said firmly,

"Lead the way, ovate; I am impatient to see Bodicea."

The same smile of gratified hate appeared on the druid's austere countenance. As they were approaching the door Mona was stopped by Clodic, who clung to her, scarcely able to restrain his tears, sobbing,

"Mother! mother! don't go!"

The old slave also murmured timidly,

"Mona, what will Dumorix, your master and mine, say when he returns home and no longer finds you?"

Mona kissed Clodic's forehead.

"I shall soon come back, my child," she said tenderly; "don't be frightened. You love your mother; do you wonder that I love mine?"

She told the slave what to say to the hunters when they returned home, and, perhaps fearing that her courage might give way, said abruptly,

"Ovate, I am ready."

They turned to leave the hut, but a sudden noise, like the impetuous rush of several persons, made them draw back. Dumorix and his four sons, whose gigantic stature was scarcely inferior to his own, entered like a whirlwind. All were clad in garments of skin cut in a peculiar fashion, and were armed with spears, javelins, bows, and arrows. The father, whose face was convulsed with rage, held in his hand a naked sabre, which, without uttering a word, he raised over the head of the terrified ovate. Mona caught his arm, exclaiming,

"He is your guest, Dumorix!"

This remembrance softened Dumorix, as it had softened Mona herself. The warrior turned to assure himself that his sons, who seemed to share his wrath, did not yield to some impulse of hatred.

"Mona speaks wisely," he said with a violent effort; "although this ovate entered our dwelling with perfidious intentions, we cannot sully our hands with his blood."

The swords and spears sank. A head of a family in those days possessed the power of life and death over his children, and Dumorix's sons were accustomed to implicit obedience. The ovate, who had at first turned pale, soon regained his courage.

"Why this violence, Dumorix son of Caletes?" he

asked. "Forgetting your sacrilegious past, forgetting the anathema that weighs upon your family and yourself, I sat down at your fireside as a traveller and man of peace; why do you approach me with threats in your mouth and arms in your hands?"

"Was it not you, priest of Irminsul," cried Dumorix, "who pronounced the anathema against us? Fortunately," he added sarcastically, "your gods did not fulfil the terrible malediction. Look how beautiful Mona is! see how strong and brave her sons are! We no longer fear you, we no longer fear the hostile tribe that renounced us; but your artifices rouse my distrust. Just now, while my sons and I were returning from the chase, we saw at the point of the island the boat which was delayed here by accident. I questioned your slaves, and they informed me of your presence in my home. Then, knowing what you were and what shameful stratagems you might use against Mona, we rushed hither to protect her. You would have fared ill had you not invoked the rights of hospitality."

The ovate, in spite of his pride, became confused and made no reply.

Mona interposed. "Dumorix," said she, "you were wrong to distrust the ovate. He only wished to gratify my mother, Bodicea, who forgives and longs for me. He had just induced me to go with him when you entered."

She was startled by the effect of these words upon her husband. Dumorix, in a fresh outburst of wrath, again raised his sword over the ovate; Mona, with the courage of a beloved wife, who knows her power, once more seized the warrior's arm.

"Dumorix," she cried, "are you going to shed your guest's blood, in spite of your promises? I voluntarily determined to accompany him to embrace my mother Bodicea."

"And Bodicea has been dead a month!" replied Dumorix.

"What? How do you know? We never speak to any one from that part of the country."

"I gained the information by accident. About a month ago I heard a shepherd shout to one of his companions, who was a short distance from me, 'Old Bodicea is dead, and has left all her property to the ovate.' The other went away to repeat the news, and I said nothing, that you might not grieve."

Mona wept bitterly.

"So my mother is dead?" she murmured. "I shall never see her again." But indignation quickly conquered sorrow. "You knew it, ovate!" she cried; "why did you wish to take me away from here?"

The bewildered druid felt that, surrounded by this half-savage family, so violently and justly irritated, his life hung by a thread. He stammered,

"I did not know of Bodicea's death. I've been travelling a long time; it was doubtless during my absence—"

"It is not more than a week since you left the village," interrupted Dumorix, stamping his foot; "the boatmen told me so just now. You went to Melodunum* to receive the orders of the arch-druid whom you obey, and you were aware of Bodicea's death before your departure."

* Melodunum, *Melun*.

The ovate, convicted of falsehood, tried to take refuge in his pride of caste.

"Can an ignorant man like you," he answered haughtily, "presume to judge the conduct of a priest of Irminsul and Esus?"

But Mona was not to be satisfied with subterfuges.

"Ovate," she repeated, "since my mother is dead, for what object did you wish to take me back to the village?"

"I was obeying the command of the gods."

"And do you know, Mona, what the gods of the Druids desired?" cried Dumorix with fierce sarcasm. "I think I can guess now. The boatmen also told me (for I would have killed them had they not spoken the whole truth) what the ovate went to Melodunum to do. The Kimris of Argenteuil, to show their devotion to Irminsul, demanded a human sacrifice, and prepared the great osier statue in which victims are enclosed to be burned alive. No victim having offered himself, the ovate called on the arch-druid for one of the criminals held in reserve for occasions of this kind. But the arch-druid was unable or unwilling to grant the request; and therefore, Mona, this ovate doubtless chose you—you, the mother of my sons—to take the place of the victim he desired."

Deep silence followed this accusation. They supposed that the ovate was about to protest against designs so monstrous, so cruel, but he possessed more pride than prudence. Relying upon the protection of the mother of the family, he said scornfully,

"Dumorix and his sons do not revere Irminsul and Esus, the gods of the Druids; they worship Kirk, Ta-

rann, Teutates,* and cannot understand the terrible wills I must obey. Mona was designated for a victim more than twenty years ago; is it to be supposed that the gods cannot claim their prey either soon or late?"

This partial confession roused fury to its height. Not only Dumorix, but the young men, who had silently and sullenly watched the scene, uttered cries of rage on hearing of the torture with which Mona had been threatened. All rushed upon the ovate.

"Kill him!" they shouted; "the priest of Irminsul must die!"

For the third time Mona placed herself before the druid, making a rampart of her body.

"Dumorix! my sons!" said she, "spare him for my sake—spare him, I beseech you! Remember that he is our guest, and has been my mother's friend."

The young men obeyed, but while Dumorix hesitated, Colman, the oldest, humbly suggested,

"Father, if Mona doesn't want him to die, at least keep him as a hostage."

"No, no, not even that," cried Mona.—"Dumorix, I earnestly beseech you to let him leave your dwelling as freely as he entered it."

. And she supported her prayer with one of the looks which the son of Caletes, in spite of his apparent rude-

* We must again recall the fact that at the same time with the Druidism professed in Gaul by the Kimris existed a polytheism professed by a still more ancient race. The divinities of this polytheism were afterward assimilated by Augustus with the gods of Greece. Thus, Teutates became Mercury, Tarann Jupiter, etc. The stone bas-reliefs found at Paris in the foundations of Notre Dame positively prove this assimilation.

ness, did not know how to resist. He said to the ovate,

"Go, then, since Mona wishes it. You will doubtless stir up all the Kimris in the country against us, but we are strong enough to defend Mona against you and them; if we don't succeed, we will die."

"Yes, yes, we will die!" repeated the young men, gathering around their mother.

Mona thanked them with a smile of joyful pride. As the ovate, divided between the sense of his dignity and the consciousness of peril, did not stir, Dumorix lost patience.

"Go, man!" he shouted. "Are you weary of life?" The ovate at last decided.

"I shall return," he murmured.

He wrapped himself in his robe and walked slowly out of the hut, without noticing that Clodic hurled after him the coin he had given.

As he crossed the threshold of the fortified enclosure Dumorix signed to two of his sons.

"Acco, and you, Dumnac," said he, "follow him at a distance until you have seen him enter his boat. Above all, resist the temptation of sending an arrow or javelin after him, I command you."

The sturdy young fellows began to laugh, as if their father had made an excellent joke, and hastily followed the ovate.

The head of the family remained absorbed in thought a moment, then—Mona having gently thanked him for his compliance—approached Colman, his confidant and the usual executor of his wishes.

"Son," said he, "courage ought not to exclude pru-

dence. We must expect to be speedily attacked by the warriors of Argenteuil."

"We will fight them."

"By Tarann! I don't doubt it; but the point in question is to defend Mona, and we can't take too many precautions. I have an errand to give you. Are you ready?"

"I await my father's orders," replied Colman, seizing his lance and shield.

"Go," continued Dumorix, "to the forest which begins not far from here on the east, and seek the little tribe of Kimris-Belges who have been driven from their country and forced to encamp in the woods. You doubtless know their chief, Tasget?"

"Yes, yes, father!" cried the young man eagerly.

"You will ask for the chief, and show him this, that he may know you come from me."

He drew from his finger a large iron ring which bore some odd figures rudely engraved, and handed it to his son.

"When you have found Tasget, you will say to him, 'My father, Dumorix son of Caletes, accepts your conditions, and as he is threatened by numerous enemies, send him six of your warriors immediately. Thus relations of friendship which shall never end will commence between your tribe and ours.' Have you understood my words?"

Colman hastened to repeat the message, word for word, to prove that he could deliver it exactly. Then, with downcast eyes and a timidity which, in contrast with his manly face and luxuriant beard, seemed still more singular, he added,

"Father, the maidens of that tribe are very beautiful."

Dumorix smiled.

"Do you want any daughters-in-law, Mona?" he said, glancing at his wife, who was listening deferentially to the conversation between her husband and her oldest son.

Mona smiled also, and Colman walked rapidly away to deliver his message.

IX.

THE ALLIES.

THREE days after, the fortified habitation of Loutouhezi no longer presented its former peaceful, lonely aspect. The herds of oxen, sheep, and goats that usually wandered over the island-pastures had been brought within the enclosure, and their lowing and bleating, mingled with the barking of the half-wild dogs that watched them, produced a deafening tumult day and night. The sheaves of wheat scattered over the country had also been brought in, and it seemed as if every precaution had been taken to leave nothing exposed to the depredations of external enemies.

The fortifications had been thus completed : new bulwarks of trees closed the roads and rendered them impassable for horses. Before the only door of the enclosure a deep ditch was hollowed, over which a few planks were thrown. Sharp stakes and palisades rendered the approach very difficult and dangerous.

The number of the inhabitants of Loutouhezi had greatly increased. Dumorix and his five sons had put on their accoutrements of war ; even little Clodic had donned a huge helmet that covered him almost to the eyes. Armed with his bow and sling, he marched

about with a martial air which greatly amused his poor mother, though at this moment she did not lack cares.

Among the defenders of Loutouhezi were half a dozen young men equipped like the sons of the house, except that their breeches were much wider, which seemed to be the distinctive mark of their tribe. Their chief was a warrior of advanced age, although still vigorous, whom they treated with great respect. This warrior was Tasget, who in response to Dumorix's summons had arrived with these young men, and with several old female slaves who were to assist Mona during the anticipated siege.

These new-comers, as we have said, belonged to the nation of Kimris-Belges, who occupied all the northern part of Gaul to the sea. It was composed of small tribes that carried on an obstinate warfare among themselves; so the conquered party was sometimes obliged to emigrate and make a new settlement at a distance. Such had been the fate of the tribe of Tasget, who, having escaped from the fetters of his enemies, had taken refuge on the borders of the nation of the Senons. This portion of the country not being thickly inhabited, Tasget had applied to the council of the Senons for permission to settle permanently there. Meantime, he had encamped with his followers in the forest, afterward called the forest of Bondy, where Dumorix, while hunting with his sons, had met him. Although Dumorix had no intercourse with the people in the neighborhood, he felt no reluctance about entering into friendly relations with these strangers, whose situation so closely resembled his own. A sort of intimacy had been established between his family and the tribe of

Kimris-Belges, which consisted of about one hundred persons; projects of alliance had been formed by the chiefs, and at the time he believed himself threatened with an attack Dumorix no longer hesitated to conclude the treaty.

Therefore Tasget and some of his warriors had lived at Loutouhezi for three days. Tents had been erected, and in the space between the fortifications the young Kimris-Belges and Dumorix's sons vied with each other in the feats of skill common among the Gauls—leaping, running, the use of the bow, and the management of the sword and javelin. We must add that the chiefs contrived to be present when the impetuous youths were at their games, to prevent the quarrels ever ready to break forth on the slightest pretext.

The third day, toward evening, Tasget and Dumorix, seated on bundles of hay before a hut, were drinking hydromel from a horn while talking together of their plans in an undertone. Tasget was a handsome old man, as calm and cold as Dumorix was eager and impetuous. They had removed their heavy bronze helmets, while Clodic, still loaded with his, to the great detriment of his forehead, roved about near them, spear in hand, as if acting as a guard of honor. At the end of the enclosure was a group of warriors, who were fastening flint heads to their arrows with bitumen, according to the ancient custom.

The harsh notes of a horn were heard outside.

"That is doubtless Colman, whom I sent to reconnoitre," said Dumorix quietly.

In fact, one of the young men stationed to guard the door recognized the person who thus announced him-

self, and brought Colman in exhausted with fatigue. Every one rushed to hear the news of which he was the bearer.

"Father," said Colman, "they are coming: I've seen them."

"They are coming!" cried little Clodic; "so much the better. Where are they?"

Loud laughter hailed the young soldier's warlike exclamation, and Clodic, furious with rage, tried to beat the mockers, which redoubled the general mirth.

Nevertheless, the two chiefs remained very grave.

Colman continued: "They are coming up the Seine in twenty pirogues: the ovate and bard are with them. I swam across the river several times to keep in advance, and as they have a long circuit to make, they can't reach here before to-morrow morning."

"They will be weary from having rowed all night," said the chief of the Kimris-Belges, "and therefore less eager for the battle."

"So," replied Dumorix, "the ovate has kept his word and armed against us the tribe among whose members I once numbered so many friends? But enough, my son Colman; now eat, drink, and rest, that you may be ready for them.—As for you," he added, addressing the other young men, who crowded around them with eager curiosity, "keep a careful watch. A warrior may be conquered, but he should never allow himself to be surprised."

Each returned to his occupations. The certainty of an attack aroused universal joy, and during the remainder of the evening the laughter and jesting never ceased.

Dumorix and Tasget were left alone before a large jug of hydromel, from which they drank from time to time.

"Chief," said Tasget anxiously, "we are now brothers, and whatever may be the cause of your quarrel, I and the remnant of my unfortunate tribe are ready to defend you unto death. Yet, I confess, the present state of affairs disturbs and alarms me."

"Chief," interrupted Dumorix with dignity, "if the peril seems too great, you can still withdraw; my sons and I alone—"

"You insult and have misunderstood me, Dumorix. We have clasped hands, drunk from the same cup; we are brothers, I tell you, and will fight together against your enemies. We will repulse those who come to snatch your Mona from you and devastate your dwelling; but have you considered that they belong to the powerful nation of the Senons, and after the victory the Senons will call you and me to an account for the blood we have shed?"

"You speak truly, and the idea has already presented itself to my mind. Yet I hope that the council of Agendicum* will understand that the ovate's warriors are the aggressors and we are compelled to defend ourselves."

Tasget shook his head.

"Don't rely on that," he answered; "the Senons listen obediently to the druids, and they will doubtless convince them that the sacrifice of Mona would be agreeable to the gods. On the other hand, they will be offended that I, who am soliciting permission for my

* Agendicum, *Sens*.

people to settle on the Senons' territory, should have entered into a conflict against one of the Senon tribes. Therefore hear what I have done: my brother Divitiac has long been studying to become a Druid priest, and, though not yet received into the order, has numerous relations with the members of the Druid college. I have already sent him once to the arch-druid of Melodunum to beseech his protection for my tribe, and hope my request will not be refused. The other day, when I received your message, I again sent Divitiac to Melodunum to represent the injustice of the aggression that threatens you and the obligation to aid you under which I found myself. Divitiac has doubtless not yet returned, but he is clever and insinuating; from his lips, like those of Teutates, issue golden fetters. Why should not my brother's voice be heard?"

"And what do you expect from this message?" asked Dumorix with eager interest.

"Perhaps the arch-druid, forewarned by Divitiac, will send orders to the ovate of Argenteuil that the attack must not take place."

A cloud darkened Dumorix's swarthy brow.

"May your hope prove false, chief!" he said angrily. "I should be sorry not to have an opportunity of fighting with sword and lance against the wicked tribe that persecutes Mona."

Yet when the first impulse of feeling had subsided, Dumorix, whose warlike instincts were beginning to be subordinate to the mature judgment of riper years, adopted wiser views, and the two friends quietly discussed the possibility of the intervention of a superior power in the armed conflict impending.

During this conversation night closed in, and the inhabitants of Loutouhezi, after a substantial repast, neglected no precaution to guard the little fortress from a surprise. Sentries were stationed at the important posts; the hours of relieving the guard were told each warrior; then the two chiefs, instead of retiring to the huts, lay down on heaps of straw in the open air, that they might be ready at the least alarm.

A little after sunrise, Clodic who, still in his helmet, had climbed to the top of one of the trees in the enclosure, announced that a large number of pirogues was approaching the island. The sound of oars and the dashing of waves caused by the advance of a flotilla were distinctly audible. A low murmur of voices and footsteps echoed from the shore; then, as if the new-comers had desired to announce their presence, all uttered in concert the fierce yells that were the war-cry of the Gauls.

The defenders of Loutouhezi rushed to arms. Loop-holes, through which arrows could be discharged, had been cut in the wall at regular distances, and the young warriors stationed themselves before these openings, while Clodic, to his mother's great regret, remained in his lofty perch.

The yells suddenly ceased; the crashing of branches betrayed the march of a large number of men through the woods. At last the notes of a rude guitar were heard, and a bard clad in a blue tunic and crowned with vervain advanced toward the fortified gate. The bards, besides their other official functions, were often bearers of flags of truce, and this man, who was Mona's former lover, stopped on the edge of the ditch, where he drew

a few more notes from his guitar and shouted three times.

Dumorix, in a clear, firm voice, answered through one of the loopholes. The bard, on being sure he was heard, made the following pompous summons :

"In the name of the gods and druids, deliver up to us at once Mona the daughter of Bodicea, or you shall all perish. Your dwellings shall be given to the flames, your bodies shall be the prey of ravens, the divine malediction shall fall upon you and your race."

Dumorix, still invisible, answered coldly,

"Mona is the wife and mother of warriors. By what right do you claim that she should be given up to you?"

"The will of the gods is immutable," said the bard. "Mona has been pointed out by the augurs as a victim dear to the manes of the dead and to Irminsul. Irminsul has spoken in the Druid oak; he demands the blood of Mona."

A shrill voice that seemed to come from the clouds indignantly answered,

"Ah! You want to kill Mona, singer? Take that!"

Clodic whirled his sling from the tree-top where he was perched, and in spite of his cramped position the stone was hurled with so good an aim that it reached the unfortunate herald, and might have killed him had it not encountered the guitar, which with a plaintive sound shivered into a hundred pieces.

Shouts and laughter from within the enclosure hailed the act of the brave child, who had desired to deal the first blow in his mother's defence. The bard stood still a moment in amazement, then turned toward the woods, shouting at the top of his voice,

"Vengeance, children of Irminsul! The majesty of the gods is outraged. The impious wretches have attacked a bard, whose person is sacred. Vengeance!"

Dumorix, and especially Tasget, wished to reprove Clodic for his rudeness, but they had no time to do so. As soon as the bard disappeared amid the foliage the yells commenced anew with redoubled vigor; a warrior seemed to spring from every tree, and the conflict began.

As usual, the combatants were armed with spears, javelins, bows and arrows, but besides their helmets and bucklers some had iron or even bronze coats-of-mail. The use of this defensive armor was beginning to spread among the Gauls, who for a long time had made it a point of honor to appear in battle almost naked. The assailants seemed full of ardor, and their eyes beamed with religious fanaticism inspired by the ovate.

Part of them rained arrows on the fortifications, while others, forming different groups and covering their bodies with their shields, rushed forward to the assault. The besieged party, posted at the loopholes, discharged arrows in their turn, and as they could take aim at their ease, the effect was terrible.

Nevertheless, the assailants continued to advance, and on reaching the foot of the wall skilfully climbed on each other's backs to scale it. Several reached the top, but the defenders fell upon them so impetuously that they were hurled from the ramparts. In vain they rose to return to the charge; the assailants were twice repelled and forced to retire to the forest, carrying their dead and wounded.

The young defenders of Loutouhezi uttered shouts of victory, but Dumorix and Tasget, who had not spared themselves during the conflict, warned them that these demonstrations were made too soon, for, according to appearances, the attack was to be renewed more furiously than ever.

In fact, at the end of a few minutes the assailants again emerged from the forest, no longer divided into skirmishing-parties as before, but forming a compact battalion. Besides their weapons, they bore fagots and beams, with the intention of filling up the ditch and bursting the door. In the centre marched the ovate, who was the soul of this expedition. With an oak-bough in his hand and a haughty, threatening air, he seemed convinced that his priestly character would shield him from every danger.

The ditch was filled in an instant. Then, while the foremost assailants made a "tortoise" of their bucklers to protect their companions, the latter attacked the door with axes and beams, which, used as battering-rams, produced a horrible noise above the frenzied shouts of the two parties.

The besieged warriors bravely defended themselves. From the summit of the ramparts, from every loophole, arrows and javelins were constantly discharged at the enemy. The women of the household, according to the custom of the Gauls under such circumstances, did not remain inactive. They brought huge stones, piled for this purpose in a corner of the enclosure, and hurled them upon the ovate's warriors, undisturbed by the arrows that whizzed around them, the terrible cries echoing on all sides. Mona moved

to and fro incessantly, urging her husband and children to remain steadfast, though perhaps secretly congratulating herself that they were still uninjured.

The solid door resisted the assailants, several of whom were already wounded. Nevertheless, those that remained did not seem inclined to beat a retreat, and were still trying to shatter the stout planks. It was soon evident that they had relied upon other means of success.

X.

THE COMPACT.

WHILE the defenders of Loutouhezi were engaged on the side of the fortress near the door, another troop of warriors issued noiselessly from the woods and glided toward a distant portion of the ramparts. One, climbing on his comrades' shoulders, reached the top of the wall and began to help his companions to join him. A few minutes more and they would all have been within the enclosure, and then, charging from the rear upon Dumorix's followers, who, as we know, were very few in number, could not have failed to get possession of the place.

But a vigilant sentinel—no other than little Clodic—had seen the danger. Still perched in his tree in spite of the arrows that whizzed around him, he had replaced with a bow the sling of which he had made so good a use. Uttering shrill cries to give the alarm, he himself discharged an arrow that struck the shield of one of the assailants.

Dumorix turned, and, seeing what had occurred, made a sign to Tasget to follow him. Both rushed toward the spot where their foes were trying to scale the wall. The women, Mona at their head, followed, armed with anything they could seize.

Two warriors from Argenteuil had already entered the enclosure, while the head of a third appeared above the wall. Dumorix and Tasget, though having no weapons except their heavy swords with a single sharp edge, each chose an enemy and stretched him at their feet. Then Dumorix dealt the head which already rose above the rampart a terrible blow, and the man to whom it belonged suddenly disappeared. At the same instant Mona and her companions sent a shower of huge stones on the other assailants, who were forced to beat a retreat, pursued by the triumphant shouts of the victorious women.

Dumorix's first opponent had been pierced through the breast, and was quite dead, but Tasget's adversary, protected by his helmet and a stout coat-of-mail, was not even severely wounded. He was merely stunned, and when Dumorix descended from the wall he saw Tasget carefully raising him.

"He still breathes, chief," he said quietly; "make haste and cut off his head to finish him."

"No, no, brother Dumorix," replied Tasget; "there is plenty of time for that. This warrior is the chief of the tribe; let us keep him as a prisoner and hostage."

"He belongs to you, brother Tasget," replied Dumorix carelessly.

The conquered warrior was really beginning to recover his consciousness. At Tasget's command a woman brought leather straps, with which the prisoner was bound after having been deprived of his weapons. This done, Tasget was going to question him, when a still louder and more terrible clamor arose without, announcing some new event.

We know that the ovate, trusting in the sacred office which rendered his person inviolable to both parties, stood in the foremost rank of the besiegers, animating them to the conflict. Hitherto, either by accident or in consequence of the respect he inspired, he had braved arrows and javelins with impunity, but no thought had been given to Clodic, who saw in him only his mother's mortal enemy. So the youthful warrior chose his sharpest arrow, fitted it to the bow, and, after taking careful aim, discharged it at the ovate. The latter, mortally wounded in the throat, sank on the ground, uttering cries of pain.

It was this deed, unprecedented among the Gauls, and considered a terrible sacrilege, which had caused such an outcry. A voice rose above the clamor, saying,

"The accursed wretches have slain the priest of Irminsul. They have already killed the chief of the tribe. Vengeance for the ovate! Vengeance for the chief! To the attack! to the attack! Exterminate these impious wretches! exterminate all, men, women, and children! Irminsul demands blood! May whoever takes a step backward be accursed like them!"

"Yes, yes, vengeance!" shouted the warriors, their fury raised to the highest pitch; "to the attack!"

A large number of men whose presence had not been suspected now issued from the woods, and, joining the first body of assailants, formed an almost irresistible force. Rushing upon all sides of the enclosure at once, they began to scale the walls with marvellous impetuosity. In vain the defenders of Loutouhezi strove to repel them; how could they hold their

ground against so numerous an enemy, frenzied by fanaticism and the desire for vengeance? In an instant the warriors from Argenteuil appeared above the rampart, and it seemed as if the fortress could not fail to fall into their possession. But the two chiefs had rapidly exchanged a few words in a low tone. Suddenly, Dumorix seized the captive in his arms and bore him to a terrace that overlooked the wall, and which was visible from all sides. Tasget followed, waving his naked sword.

Dumorix raised the Gaul, and shouted in tones of thunder,

"Warriors, your chief is not dead; he is not even severely wounded; but if you do not instantly leave my dwelling, I swear by Tarann that the chief's head shall be severed from his shoulders."

The attention of all was attracted to the group formed by the chieftain and the two friends. The attitude of each was sufficiently significant. Dumorix held the fettered chief, and Tasget brandished his flashing sword.

The conflict ceased. The assailants, perceiving their chief's danger, consulted each other with their eyes, while the defenders of Loutouhezi remained motionless in the presence of this extraordinary scene.

The chief was greatly beloved by his tribe, and perhaps, to purchase his life, his followers would have retired, but he himself recalled them to their duty.

"Warriors," he shouted, "do not heed me. What does it matter if I die, provided you give me a bloody funeral? Strike the accursed outlaws with spear, lance, and javelin! To the attack! Avenge the gods! avenge the ovate! avenge me!"

A certain number of warriors did not seem to wish to obey this command, but others, yielding to their fiery ardor, prepared to resume the conflict. Tasget, pitiless as Fate, raised his sword to sever the chief's head as Dumorix had threatened.

At this moment sweet music, consisting of singing and stringed instruments, was heard from the woods and slowly approached. Soon through the ramparts of logs, in which large breaches had been made, appeared a majestic procession, the sight of which inspired the combatants with mingled astonishment, reverence, and fear. At the head marched bards clad in blue garments, singing a sacred hymn to the accompaniment of their guitars. Then came the young men who aspired to the dignity of the Druid priesthood, and were called disciples. Among them was a herald attired in white; he wore a hat surmounted with two wings and carried a wand made of a branch of vervain and two serpents. Finally, came the principal personage in the train, a handsome old man in a white robe, crowned with oak-leaves and holding in his hand a branch of mistletoe. At his belt hung a gold sickle, attesting his high rank in the Druidical hierarchy.

A number of priests in green robes and several warriors in garments striped with red formed a guard of honor around the old man with the gold sickle.

All these people had just arrived in boats that touched at the other end of the island, and their appearance, as we have said, was a source of astonishment to besiegers as well as besieged. When the train had reached the door of the fortress it stopped, the songs ceased, and the

herald, having received his orders from the personage in the white robe, cried amid universal silence, .

“Let blood cease to flow; let the warriors lay aside their arms. Here is the illustrious and venerable arch-druid of Melodunum, who will judge your quarrel and make known to you the will of Irminsul, who has spoken to him from the Druid oak.”

This adjuration was so powerful, so sacred, that not one of the Gauls from Argenteuil thought of opposing it. Those already on the ramparts hastily descended; swords were restored to their sheaths, arrows to their quivers. The warriors, suddenly grown humble and timid, approached the arch-druid.

Submission was not so prompt and complete among the defenders of Loutouhezi. The sons of Dumorix and their allies looked at each other, not knowing what to do under circumstances so novel. Dumorix himself seemed greatly embarrassed; but Tasget, who from the terrace had lost no detail of the scene, said hurriedly,

“Dumorix, do not hesitate to accept the arbitration of the high-priest of Melodunum. His intentions, I am sure, are friendly. Among his followers I have just seen my brother Divitiac, who made signs of peace. Open your door to the arch-druid; show him confidence and respect; we shall have no cause to regret it.”

“But if he persists in claiming Mona?”

“We will defend her—I promise you we will defend her unto death—but we need fear nothing of that sort.”

Dumorix had already had many an occasion to perceive the prudence of the old chief of the Kimris-

Belges. So this time also he yielded to the influence Tasget exerted over him.

"I will trust to you," he replied. "You have had a long life, and we will share the same fortune."

They advanced toward the half-shattered door, and after having removed the solid fastenings, threw it wide open. This mark of submission to the venerable dignitary seemed to produce an excellent effect upon the warriors of Argenteuil.

Dumorix approached the druid and said,

"High-priest of Irminsul, my home is closed only against my enemies—those who present themselves with arms in their hands. Enter and judge between these men and me. I will submit to your decision, for you are wise and the gods speak through your lips."

The arch-druid, in his turn, was flattered by this submission from a man who had doubtless been represented to him as ungovernable. He made a sign of assent, walked by Dumorix's side with a dignified step, and, entering the fortified enclosure, sat down on a stone before the huts.

His train, as well as most of the assailants, had followed and formed a circle around him. The escort and the warriors from Argenteuil occupied the space near the door, while Dumorix's sons and the Kimris-Belges remained in the rear of the enclosure. At the end the women, among whom Mona was easily recognized, formed a modest, silent group. Tasget and Dumorix, by virtue of their rank as chiefs, remained alone in the circle. Through the wide-open door appeared a number of warriors of lower rank leaning on their shields or lances.

Deep silence pervaded the assembly. Soon the old arch-druid, whose movements were slow and solemn, said majestically,

"Speak, Dumorix! I will listen."

Dumorix related simply, but not without a certain rude eloquence, Mona's story and his own, from the day Mona had been designated by the augurs to be sacrificed on the tomb of Hatt, the former chief.

The arch-druid, after having listened impassively to the recital of these events, which were already known to him, made no haste to pronounce his judgment. It was only after a long pause that he asked,

"Is the present chief of Argenteuil still alive?"

"Illustrious arch-druid," replied Dumorix, "I might have cut off his head, as is my right when he came to destroy my home and kill my family, but he is still alive."

"Bring him to me."

Dumorix hesitated an instant, but Tasget went in search of the prisoner and led him before the arch-druid.

"Release the chief," said the old man.

Tasget instantly liberated the prisoner. The arch-druid, turning to the assembly, emphatically continued,

"Faithful children of Irminsul, Dumorix snatched a victim from the manes of the chieftain Hatt; he gives your present chief his life when by the laws of war that life belongs to him; justice is satisfied. Besides, perhaps the ovate of Argenteuil did not correctly interpret the will of the gods in designating Mona as an expiatory victim and pronouncing an anathema upon

Mona, Dumorix, and all their descendants. If the gods had ratified this curse, Dumorix and Mona would long ago have perished miserably, crushed by the malediction. On the contrary, we see both loaded with wealth and prosperity. Irminsul therefore did not approve of the sentence pronounced against them, and I remove it for ever."

We perceive that the old druid, with wonderful skill, had found means to reconcile certain facts which his followers might have interpreted against sacerdotal infallibility.

This decision, which closed the war by restoring Dumorix and his family to the privileges enjoyed by all, was followed by a murmur of satisfaction from the adherents of both parties. But the herald, who seemed to include among his prerogatives the duty of guarding ancient rites and customs, advanced into the circle and said respectfully,

"Venerable arch-druid, your wisdom equals your divine knowledge. Yet remember that the ovate of Argenteuil has been slain by one of Dumorix's warriors, and our law is inexorable. He who has slain a druid must die by torture."

Perhaps the arch-druid secretly cherished no love for the ovate, to whom only a few days before he had refused a human victim, and whose interpretation of the will of the gods he had just distinctly disavowed; but the law quoted by the herald existed, and the august dignitary, notwithstanding his almost supreme power, could not refuse to recognize it in the presence of the assembled population. So with his usual majesty of demeanor he replied,

"The murder of a priest of Irminsul is the greatest crime a mortal can commit. Let the sacrilegious wretch be brought before me, and, according to the law, perish in torments."

The greatest agitation pervaded the ranks of the defenders of Loutouhezi. No one knew who had killed the ovate, and each was seeking some person to whom the deed might be imputed. A shrill voice was heard in the air,

"I killed the wicked ovate. Here I am!"

And Clodic, climbing nimbly down the tree which had served as a post during the conflict, fell on his bare feet a few paces from the arch-druid. His face and hands were scratched by the rough bark, his garments were in a pitiable plight, but he still held his bow and sling, and had proudly donned the huge helmet that gave him so grotesque an appearance.

As he approached, drawing up his little figure to its full height, an exclamation of agony issued from the group of women.

"Clodic! my dear Clodic!" cried Mona.

She tried to rush forward to protect her son, but she was held back and dragged away.

At the sight of Clodic an angry murmur ran through the crowd, while fear seized upon the relatives and friends of the little culprit. The arch-druid's snow-white eyebrows contracted in a frown.

The unfortunate child seemed lost, and already threatening hands were raised against him. Tasget, whose presence of mind never failed, seized the boy, snatched off his helmet and revealed to the eyes of all the juvenile, beardless features of the would-be warrior.

Then he burst into a loud laugh, which, though perhaps a little forced, was no less likely to find an echo.

In fact, the incident afforded a fresh proof of the volatility and susceptibility to every new impression which lay at the bottom of the character of the Gauls, and were afterward to mark their descendants. Clodic's startled face and affectation of dignity and stoicism excited a general laugh that extended even to the most remote spectators on the borders of the wood.

This laugh, which exasperated the ovate's murderer, also acquitted him. The arch-druid rose.

"It is a child," he said with contemptuous forbearance; "the anger of the gods, the vengeance of warriors, could not descend to him. Let the child be given to his mother."

And Clodic, in spite of his protestations, was delivered to Mona, elated with joy and pride.

The invaders of Loutouhezi now seemed to have nothing more to do except enter their boats and depart; but the arch-druid, who had just exchanged a few words with Divitiac, Tasget's brother, had not yet accomplished the mission for which he had left his usual residence at Melodunum. He made a sign with his hand; the assembly once more listened intently.

"Children of Irminsul," he said aloud, "hear what the assembly of druids and the council of the Senons, residing at Agendicum, have decided: Dumorix son of Caletes, and Tasget, chief of a tribe of Kimris-Belges, have informed us that they intended to make but one tribe, and have requested permission to settle permanently on the territory where we now are. The druids and council have received the request of the two chiefs

with favor.—Will you, Dumorix, and you, Tasget, take before me and these warriors the vow to be faithful friends and devoted allies to the whole nation of the Senons?"

Deep silence still reigned.

"Venerable arch-druid," replied Dumorix, "I can be in future as faithful a friend to my neighbors as I proved an implacable enemy when they persecuted me. But here is my brother Tasget to answer for me. We are both determined henceforward to make one family. His daughters will offer the cup to my sons; we will live under the same roofs, worship the same gods."

Tasget spoke in his turn.

"High priest of Irminsul," said he, "my beloved brother Divitiac must have shown you how important it is for the nation of the Senons to have on their lonely and desolate frontiers an active and warlike tribe that will oppose a strong barricade against their turbulent neighbors: we will be that tribe. The alliance between our families and the sons of Dumorix will be a fruitful one. He was proscribed, we were exiled; common interests, a common affection, have united us. Both now and in the future we shall be loyal allies to the hospitable nation of the Senons."

"Then the nation adopts you for its children," said the arch-druid solemnly. "Chief of the Kimris-Belges, what name did your tribe bear in the country which the misfortunes of war compelled you to leave."

"Illustrious arch-druid," replied Tasget, "my tribe was powerful until the day innumerable enemies shed its blood like water and the birds with yellow feet came to feed on corpses. But it will raise its head again on

this friendly soil, and its warriors once more become as numerous as the stars in the sky. It was called and still bears the name of the *Parises*."

"Then, in the name of the gods," said the arch-druid solemnly, raising his arms toward heaven, "in the name of the sacred assembly of the druids, in the name of the chief and council of Agendicum, I proclaim as a portion of the confederacy of the Senons the tribe of *Parises* and the city it is to found at *Loutouhezi*, its present place of refuge. May the protection of the gods descend upon the tribe and city!"

Acclamations of joy hailed these words. There was no one who did not feel the importance of the act that had just been accomplished in a political point of view. The warriors struck their shields with their spears and sabres; the women made the air re-echo with shouts of joy; the bards, seizing their instruments, chanted a song of triumph.

At the same instant the sun, which was just setting, cast a fiery ray into the clearing where this scene was transpiring. As the arch-druid with his majestic air, white robe, crown of oak-leaves, and gold sickle raised his arms toward heaven, a flood of dazzling light fell upon the aged high priest, the warriors in their various costumes, the bards with their harmonious songs, the verdant woods; one would have said that Heaven desired to announce by a sign the lofty destiny which awaited the city of the *Parises*.

After *Dumorix*'s family united with the *Parises*, *Loutouhezi* apparently long remained a simple place of refuge for the tribes ere it became a city. In fact, we

know that the Gauls usually lived apart from each other in the country, and it was only in time of war that they shut themselves up in fortified places with their families and herds. When Labienus, Cæsar's lieutenant, came with several legions to attack Loutouhezi, which was defended by the brave and able Camulogenes, no very long time had passed since the Parises had obtained from the Senons permission to settle there. Tradition — *memoria patrum*, says Cæsar — still preserved the story. The city and territory of the Parises could not have had a numerous population, for when the various Gallic nations united against Cæsar the contingent of the Parises was only about two thousand men, while the Ædui and Arverni each sent thirty-five thousand to the Gallic army.

But we must stop here ; we are touching the confines of actual history, and fiction must give place to reality. The Loutouhezi of the Parises became *Lutèce*, *Lutetia*, or *Loutecia Parisiorum*.

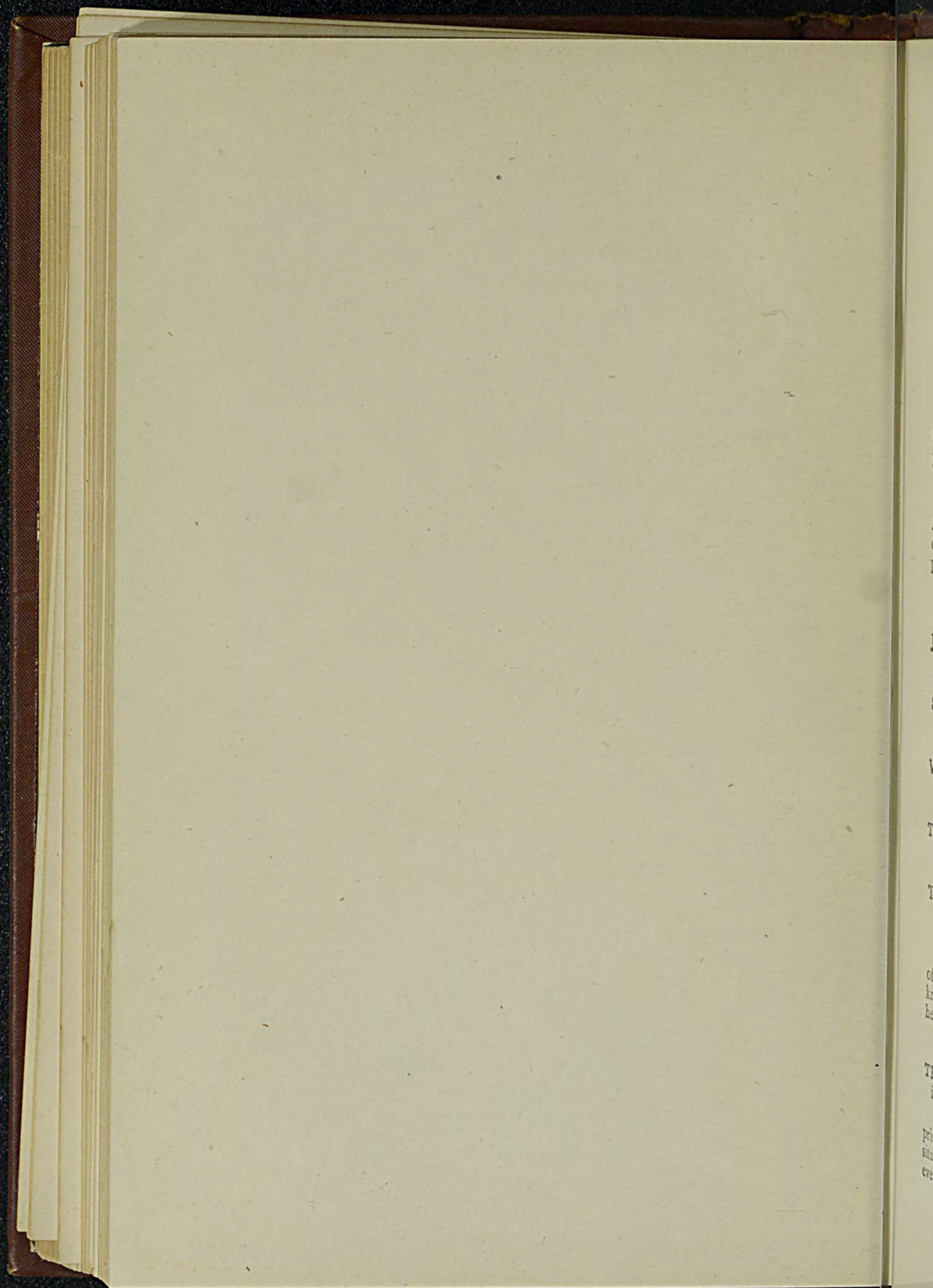
From the period of the occupation of Gaul by the Romans history remains silent for four hundred years in regard to Lutèce and the Parises. Nevertheless, we cannot help mentioning a monument which dates back to this epoch. This monument is the altar of Jupiter, discovered in the excavations under the choir of Notre Dame, and whose stone bas-reliefs and inscriptions* we still possess. It proves that in the time of Tiberius the Parisian boatmen who reared this altar formed a powerful body. The situation of Lutèce, in fact, was wonderfully favorable to the trade, and the corporation existed a long time under the name of *Mercatores aquæ Parisi-*

* Museum of Cluny.

aci—Parisian water-merchants. It was perhaps on account of this circumstance, and not because of the shape of the island where the city stood (said to be the form of a ship), that Paris assumed for its coat-of-arms "a ship under full sail."

Alas! the beautiful, noble vessel that for so many centuries bore the riches of civilization, the inestimable treasures of science and art, the titles of the glory of humanity, almost perished a short time ago in a horrible tempest. But it escaped shipwreck, and once more spreads its "silver sails on an azure field" to the favoring breeze: *Fluctuat nec mergitur*.

THE END.



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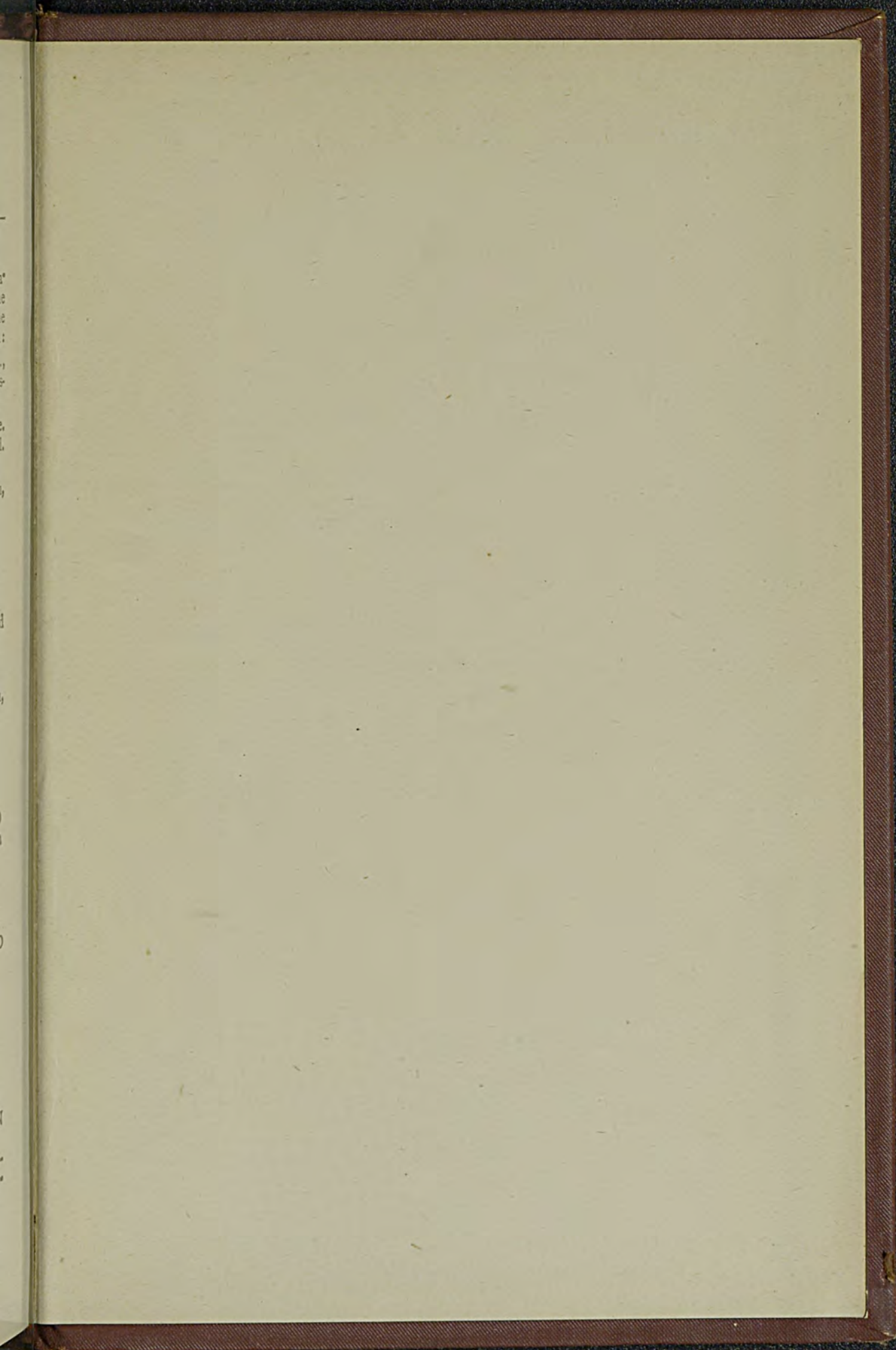
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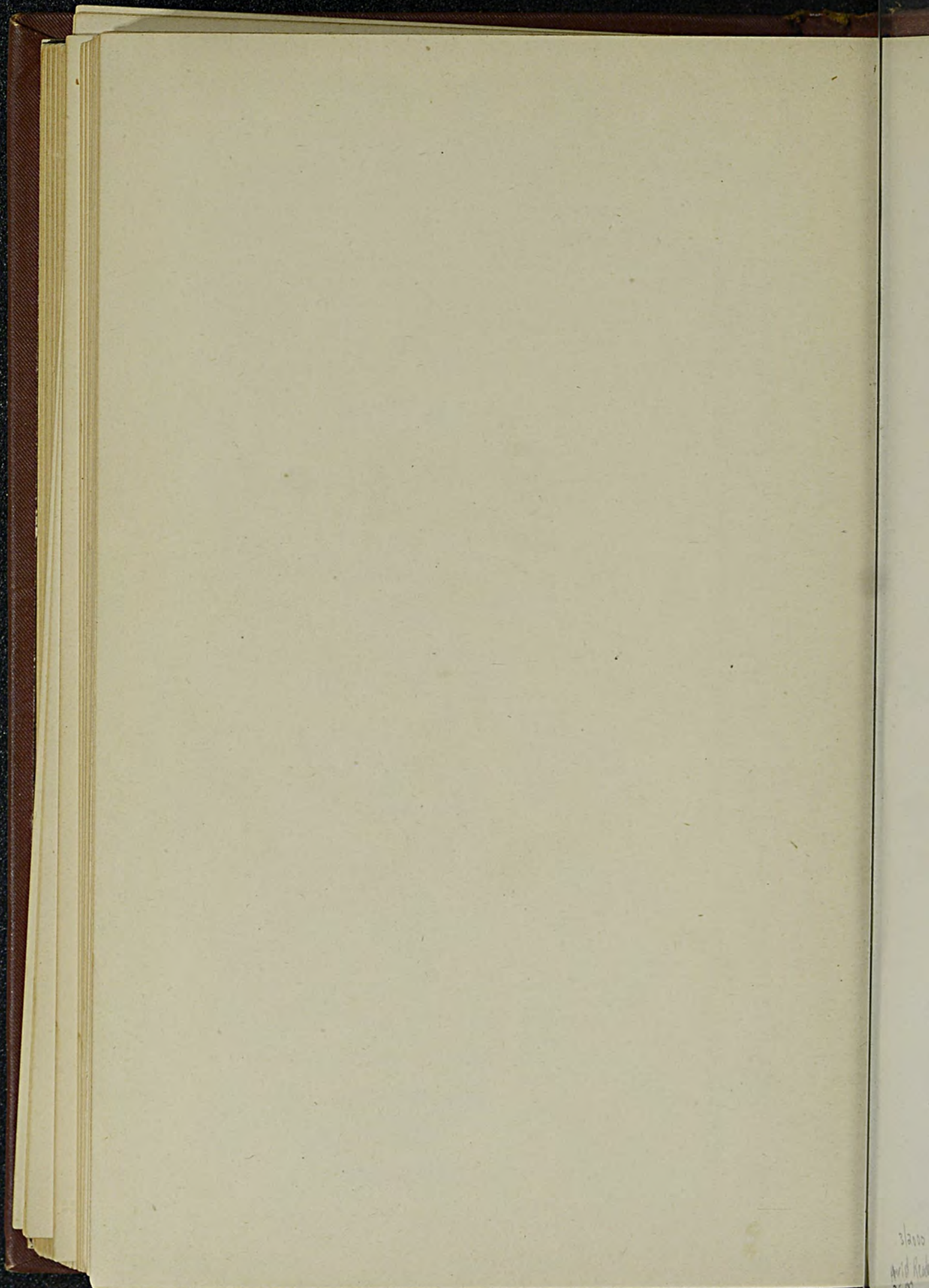
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