

**THE GREAT SCHOOLS OF THE PARIS
LATIN QUARTER AND THE NEED OF
A SOCIAL AND CHRISTIAN UNION
FOR AMERICAN STUDENTS IN THE
FRENCH METROPOLIS**

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The Great Schools of the Paris Latin Quarter and the Need of a Social and Christian Union for American students in the french metropolis by Narcisse Cyr

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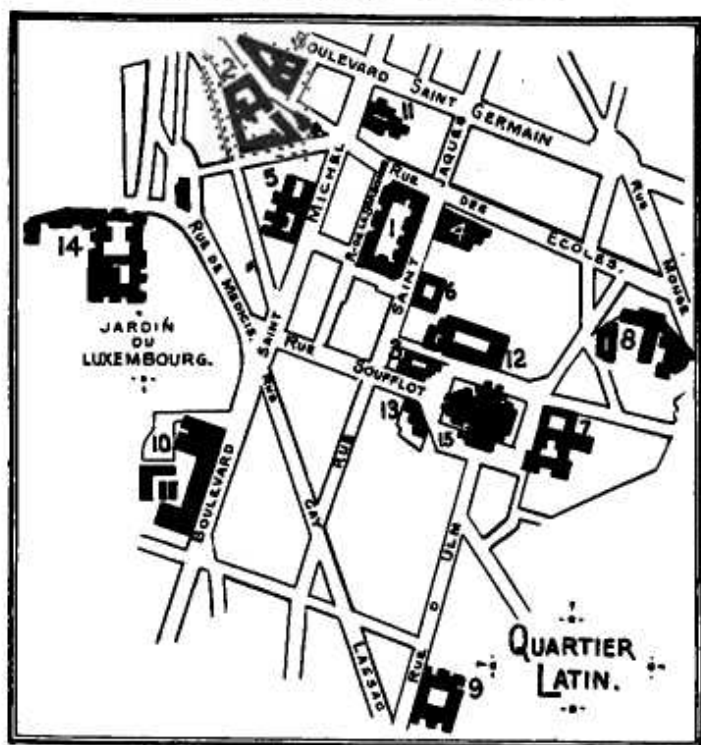
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FRENCH METROPOLIS.

BY NARCISSE CYR,
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PROTESTANT INSTITUTE FOR YOUNG LADIES OF
MONTREAL, AND LATE INSTRUCTOR IN
BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

BOSTON:
1891.

LATIN QUARTER OF PARIS.



1. Sorbonne. 2. School of Medicine. 3. Law School. 4. College of France. 5, 6, 7. Lycees St. Louis, Louis le-Grand, and Henry IV. 8. Ecole Polytechnique. 9. Superior Normal School. 10. School of Mines. 11. Cluny Museum. 12. Stc. Genevieve Library and College Ste. Barbe. 13. Mairie of the 5th Arrondissement. 14. Luxembourg Palace. 15. Pantheon.

THE GREAT SCHOOLS
OF
THE PARIS LATIN QUARTER
AND
THE NEED OF A CHRISTIAN UNION FOR
AMERICAN STUDENTS.

I.

THE portion of Paris which, from time immemorial, has been called the *Quartier Latin*, is situated on the left bank of the Seine, directly opposite the island called *La Cite*, where are found the renowned cathedral of Notre Dame, the Hotel Dieu, the Palais de Justice, and other great monuments. Bordered by the river, which divides Paris in almost two equal parts, it is about a mile wide and extends up the same distance, to and over the heights which were known, in the Middle Ages, as the *Montagne Sainte Genevieve*. On this elevation now stands the *Pantheon*, the national monument dedicated to the great men of France.

The Latin Quarter, as far back as the 11th century, was celebrated for its great schools and learned teachers, who attracted students from all parts of the world, eager to receive instructions from such men as Guillaume de Champeaux, Pierre Lombard and Abelard, a professor of romantic as well as literary fame. The reputation of this learned district was greatly increased after the foundation of the University of Paris, in 1250.

This part of Paris is very different now from what it used to be, even forty years ago. I recall it to my mind as it was then, with its narrow and poorly paved streets, its miserable sidewalks, and its old damp houses. Prefect Haussmann has

changed all that. More than a thousand buildings were demolished during the Second Empire in that section of the French capital, and two fine boulevards, as well as beautiful streets, were opened. On both sides of these new thoroughfares, fine houses, seven stories high, were built under the direction and supervision of government architects, who have no mercy for unsightly structures.

In the midst of this extensive work of demolition and reconstruction, the great educational institutions which constitute the main feature of the University district, in Paris, have had their share. Great improvements have been made in their buildings, thanks to generous grants from Parliament, especially since the establishment of the Republic. The *Lycee Saint Louis* was the first of the great colleges to be rebuilt and modernized. The *Lycee Louis-le-Grand* is also renewing its youth, and bids fair to be much more beautiful than it was in its early days. The old Sorbonne itself is undergoing a transformation which is to be complete. The *Nouvelle Sorbonne*, a splendid edifice opened last year, gives us an idea of the palace which is destined to take the place of the present building, erected in the 17th century by Cardinal Richelieu, and rather worse for wear.

But the most extensive of the new structures are those of the School of Medicine, which, covering two acres of ground, are destined to meet the present needs of that famous institution. The amphitheatres for the lectures, the laboratories and the dissecting rooms prove that France is determined to maintain the honorable place she has so long occupied in medical science and surgery. It is no wonder that thousands of students now repair to Paris from all parts of the world to attend the courses of that great School.

Now, these outward signs of progress are only indicative of the still greater improvements in the departments of secondary and superior instruction in the French Metropolis. A brief account of the six departments of the *Academie de Paris*, and of some of the other great schools in which Americans are par-

ticularly interested, will show how earnestly the various Cabinets which have governed France these last twelve years have attended to their duties with regard to public education. They have all had the same patriotic aim, viz.: enlarging and improving public instruction, from the primary to the highest schools, under the general and thorough supervision of the Ministry of Public Instruction, which is as important, in the eyes of Frenchmen, as the Ministry of War, or any other departments of the general government of the French Republic.

II.

My object in this *brochure* is to give an idea of the great schools of Paris which are of a particular, I may say of a practical, interest to Americans; I consequently omit *l'Ecole Polytechnique*, which trains engineers and superior officers for the army; and *l'Ecole Normale*, in which young men already bachelors in letters or science are prepared to be professors in the *Lycees* and *Faculties* (the superior departments) of the University of France. These are not only Government schools but national institutions, as West Point and Annapolis in this country. The School of Medicine, the Courses at the Sorbonne and the College of France, the Law School and the School of Fine Arts are the great educational establishments to which Americans are now attracted by the superior advantages offered gratuitously to students of every country, without distinction of sex, race, religion or color.

Let us commence with the Faculties or Departments of the Academy of Paris, which comprise:

1. The Faculty of Theology;
2. The School of Medicine;
3. The Faculty of Letters;
4. The Faculty of Sciences;
5. The Law School;
6. The School of Pharmacy.

Three-fourths of the lectures of these different departments of this Academy are opened without any charge to students of all nations, as above stated. The other courses are reserved for students who intend to present themselves for examinations with the view of obtaining diplomas. These have to pay fees, as is usual in other Universities.

THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY.

As the Faculty of Theology connected with the Academy of Paris is Protestant—a fact which will doubtless surprise most of my readers—American students having the Gospel ministry in view would do well to attend the courses of this institution a year or two. It has ten learned professors, representing both branches of Protestantism in France, the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.

As it is a Government institution, no creed is imposed upon the professors, who are thus allowed perfect liberty of investigation and belief, without the slightest fear of intruding *visitors*, presbyteries, or general assemblies. I am not aware that these teachers have abused the liberty granted to them.

A year or two spent in Paris would enable students to acquire, besides theology, the French language; to study French oratory, while hearing most eloquent preachers, both Catholic and Protestant. They would also receive a certain culture, and gather a stock of varied knowledge which would be exceedingly useful to them in the pursuit of their calling.

It may be added that excellent accommodations for board and lodging are furnished in the *Seminary* of this School for a thousand francs a year.

THE SORBONNE.

American graduates and others desirous of pursuing studies in Philology, Philosophy, Literature, History and any branch of Science, will find superior courses on all these subjects at the Sorbonne and College of France.