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NEWS OF FRANCE



WHAT THE BRITISH ELECTIONS MEAN TO FRANCE

The British elections have given rise to many hopes. In particular, they have given fresh confidence to the masses of the democratic countries, and to the French people especially. Certainly, at no time has there been any threat to the agreement of our two countries. But misunderstandings due to the diversity of character of our leaders may have appeared somewhat to darken Franco-British relations. Henceforth, we are certain of complete understanding. British and French democracy have the same aims, whether in regard to the construction of peace, based on freedom and human rights, or whether in regard to the internal economic reforms of both countries. The ideal is the same : to put an end to the supremacy of private interests over the general interest, and to give labour its proper place in the management of the national economy.

By its vote, the British people has shown its maturity, and has demonstrated that it intends to take its share of responsibility in the conduct of national affairs.

These aspirations and this affirmation of political maturity are equally applicable to the French people, and we are certain that the coming elections in France will be based on a similar programme and will result in a large parliamentary majority for these objectives.

It is not for our two countries alone that there are prospects of intimate collaboration. These prospects exist also as far as the problem of the reconstruction of Europe and of the world is concerned.

Certainly, it is not a question of constituting blocks of countries opposed to each other, but, on the contrary, of making regional agreements which will assist the reconstruction of the world. Besides, the San Francisco charter opened the way for regional agreements by stating that they are the basis on which to build peace. The United States immediately started to apply this principle by concluding the Mexico agreements.

Britain, France and Russia must, in their turn, proceed to build along the same lines. If all the countries of Europe cannot yet conclude a general agreement, at least regional agreements can be arranged. These, by regulating economic and cultural exchanges between the various countries by means of appropriate organisms, and by ensuring military co-operation for the security of Europe, will make of it a continent organised so as to participate in guaranteeing world peace on a stable and durable basis. In addition, it will thus be in a position to play its part in assisting the betterment of mankind.

The reform of the economic structure of France and Great Britain will render it possible to couple the two economies so as to make them the basis for the new economic organisation which will be the outcome of the regional agreements. At the same time, it will ensure a sincere and deep understanding with the great Russian socialist republic.

The British elections—clear expression of the will of a people—have given rise to all these hopes and strengthened the faith of the world in the future of social democracy.



Léon Jouhaux.

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During the occupation was a member of the Resistance Council of French writers. Wrote a study of Charles Peguy, which was smuggled out of France and published in Switzerland. A friend and admirer of Charles Morgan, he has devoted several essays to British writers.

FRANCE WILL SOON VOTE AGAIN

by Jacques Kayser

FRENCH statesmen and French public opinion are to-day preoccupied with grave political problems. What will be the political structure of the French democracy of to-morrow ? In other words, France is to-day confronted with two main problems : that of the elections and that of the constitution.

We should stress at the outset the purely transitional character of the present government. Two factors brought this regime into being : the arbitrary assumption of power on the part of Petain, and the need for establishing a form of government for France, with which General de Gaulle and his associates were faced in London, Algiers and, finally, Paris.

This government was established by means of a series of decrees, which fixed its temporary status and gave to the executive branch the restricted title of " Provisional Government."

The time has come to do away with the provisional form of government, and to give France a government which, shall be permanent and based on a constitution.

* * *

To do this, we must first of all settle the following questions :

Why not perpetuate the present system ? Because the exceptional conditions which brought it into being, precluded the methods and institutions to which France, as a democracy, is profoundly attached. For example, the present regime has no system of representation.

Why not return to the former system, the pre-Vichy regime, the regime of the Third Republic ? We might discuss interminably whether the pre-war regime was or was not brought to an end when the National Assembly, meeting at Vichy in July, 1940, delegated its constituent powers to Petain. However we decide the question, we cannot but admit that the pre-war regime was in fact suspended. To return to it

again would give the old system fresh lustre, together with the institutions which it fostered—even though to-day a strong current in public opinion tends towards the reform of those very institutions. The programme of the National Council of Resistance stressed the necessity of such reform.

Why revise the basic laws of the Third Republic ? Because they are not adapted to present needs. Because they do not express the democratic aspirations of the French people. We must not forget that the French Republic has never possessed a veritable constitution. It is paradoxical indeed that the land of Descartes, the land of great historic constitutions, should have no real constitution of its own ! The French Republic functioned for 65 years, having as its basis three constitutional statutes, formulated in 1875. These statutes had to do with practical means and methods of government; they contained no statement of general principles which give meaning and direction to constitutions.

In addition, we must not forget that these statutes were adopted by a conservative and monarchist assembly. The Republican regime was carried by a single vote—a majority of one. The statutes as they stand may be considered as a compromise between the monarchist idea and the republican conception, timidly expressed. Theirs, the Chief Executive, declared at the time : " The Republic will be conservative or there will be no Republic."

In view of this, it was quite normal that republicans in France should have long desired a thorough revision of the constitution. This was the case until 1900. At that time, owing to matters of internal policy, the republican parties were inclined to preserve the existing statutes, while the parties of the Right demanded their revision.

The bitter experience of war and defeat has led Frenchmen to ponder the events which characterized twenty years of precarious peace—so that to-day the problem of constitutional revision is again in the foreground. Few Frenchmen to-day are prepared to defend in their entirety the statutes of 1875.

Opinions differ as to the method of revision. One point of view may be expressed as follows : " Let the statutes of 1875 come into force again. We may revise them, making use of the means to that end which the law provides." In other words—elect a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate, convoke a joint meeting of the two assemblies, and this National Assembly will propose amendments to the statutes of 1875.

Another point of view is held by a greater number of Frenchmen : members of the principal Resistance Movements, members of the *Mouvement Républicain Populaire* (a new party of Christian Socialists), members of the Socialist and Communist parties, and members of the French T.U.C.

These Frenchmen insist that the new constitution—if it is to be essentially democratic—cannot be derived from the statutes of 1875. It must be entirely new. They also point out that much time would be lost in the time-honoured procedure of electing two assemblies. The election of a single constituent assembly would obviate such delay.

A decision concerning the choice of assemblies (whether a single constituent assembly or a Chamber and Senate according to the 1875 statutes) will by no means settle all problems. That of the transition from the present arbitrary and provisional regime, to a regime of representative government, will still remain to be solved.

If we decide on a return to the 1875 statutes, the two assemblies, when elected, will choose the President of the Republic. Meeting together, as a National Assembly, the two houses will have authority to amend the constitution. As separate bodies, they will exercise legislative power and control the existing government. The government as such will be responsible to both houses.

If, however, we decide on the choice of

a single Constituent Assembly, the powers of this Assembly must be clearly specified. Many jurists maintain that such an assembly would be empowered solely to frame a constitution. In that case, the government would be responsible not to the Constituent Assembly but to the assembly—or assemblies—which this body would vote to create. This would postpone for a long period of time the exercise of democratic control—the control of the government by the people's representatives. For this reason, many Frenchmen are of the opinion that the assembly for which they are to vote before the end of the year should be invested with legislative as well as constituent powers.

From all the discussions and controversy now taking place, several facts emerge:

First of all, a profound and widespread desire among Frenchmen for democratic reforms. Such reforms, their partisans insist, should ensure: (1) respect for the decisions of universal suffrage, and (2) the stability of the executive branch of power.

Second, the desire—equally widespread and profound—for the return as soon as possible to a normal regime with popular control of the government in office.

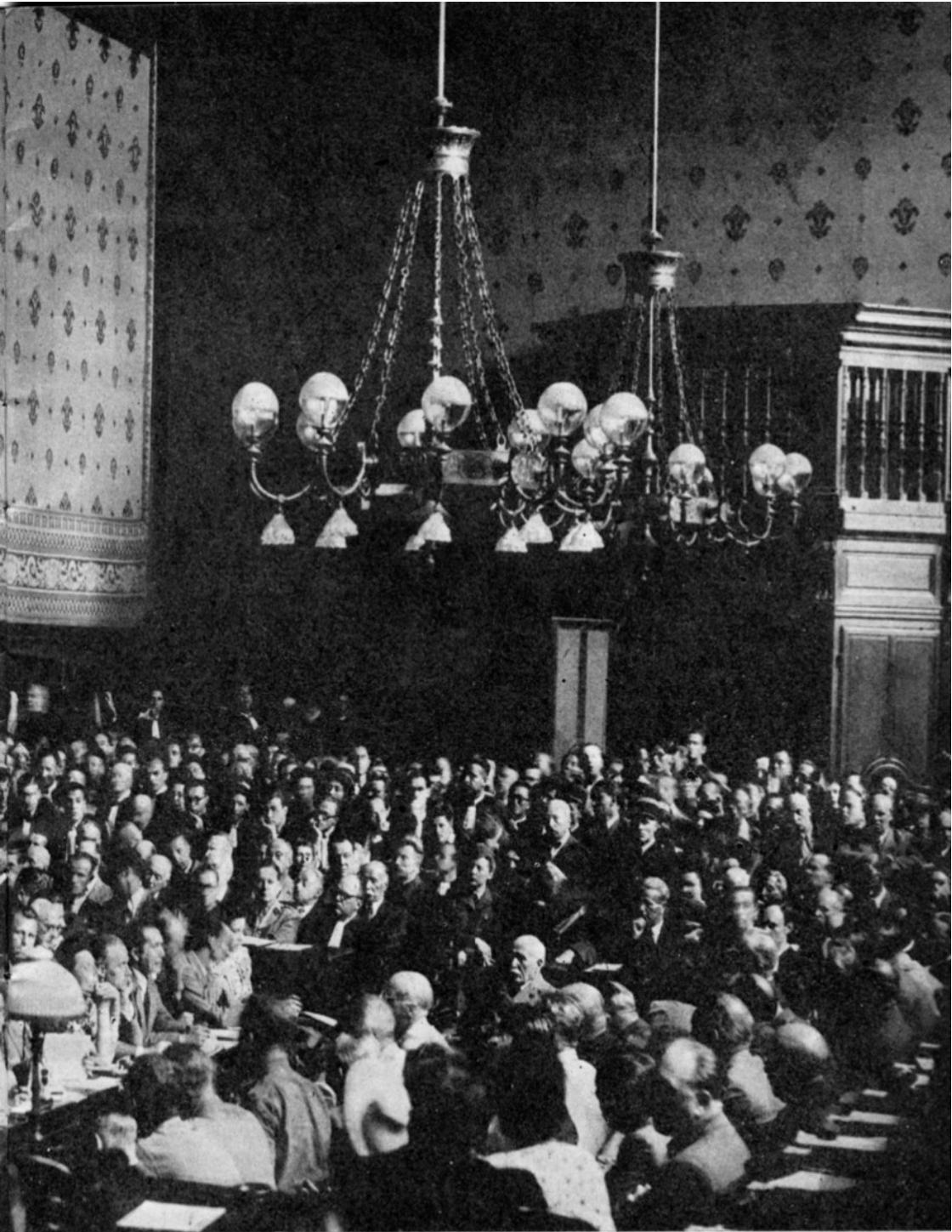
In their fight against Fascism in all its forms, Frenchmen are convinced that a return to representative government and the orderly functioning of democratic institutions will be the surest means of maintaining and intensifying victory.

To the vast majority of Frenchmen this conviction is so explicit and so deeply rooted that it admits of no discussion.

At times the discussions of doctrine and procedure may appear obscure. This may give rise to certain confusions and misunderstandings. No doubt the elections will be hotly contested. But the democratic regime is not at stake. It is comforting, on the eve of the elections, to be able to state that they will take place within a democratic framework already determined, and on the basis of rights and liberties already accepted.



A HISTORIC TRIAL at the Palais de Justice



*Philippe-Bénoni-Omer Pétain, Marshal of France—seen in the centre of the right-hand picture—
as he faced the accusation of treason against his country.*

ELSA TRIOLET, PRIX GONCOURT

by Claude Roy

THE recording apparatus of the radio-cars gives off a patient humming. News-reel and camera-men, reporters and onlookers stand about in a confusion of wires, telephones and spot-lights. The little waiting-room of the famous restaurant is jammed with newspaper men. A door swings open. André Billy adjusts his spectacles—while cameras and micros get to work in the splutter and flare of magnesium—and reads from the little paper in his hand :

" By second ballot, the Goncourt Prize for 1945 has been awarded to Mme. Elsa Triolet, for her book '*Le premier accroc coute deux cents francs.*' Two of the seven votes cast went 'to M. Roger Peyrefitte for his novel '*Les Amitiés Particulières.*' "

There is a rush towards the cars waiting in the street outside the restaurant. Indoors, the members of the *Academie Goncourt*—Roland Dorgelès, Francis Carco, Mme. Colette, Lucien Descaves, Léo Larguier, André Billy, J.-H. Rosny—sit down to their hors d'oeuvres. The newspaper men are off to interview the laureate whose book will be on display in all the book stores of France this afternoon, its cover bearing a paper band with the words *Prix Goncourt, 1945*. The journalists have many questions to ask Mme. Elsa Triolet. Three years ago, the Vichy police and the agents of the Gestapo would have been only too glad to know the answers....

* * *

Four years ago, three years ago, there were no newspaper men, no photographers at the home of Elsa Triolet. Indeed, there was no Mme. Triolet at that address, nor even a Mme. Aragon (everyone knows that the Goncourt laureate is married to the author of "*Crève-Coeur* "). The only inhabitants of the little two rooms in Nice were two quiet and unassuming folk,

Monsieur and Madame Meyzargues, whom you might have seen any morning attending to their marketing, together with the housewives of the Old City. Monsieur Meyzargues carried a net bag which he tried vainly to fill with half a pound of ground maize and a pound of tomatoes. Madame Meyzargues called for the bread at the baker's, and afterwards cooked their frugal meal on a little charcoal stove. Their identity cards and food cards were perfectly in order. Only the cards were false. As false as those of the visitors who, every day came from Lyons, Paris, Toulouse and sometimes London, to knock at the little door on the Quai des Ponchettes.

To-day the journalists ring noisily at the flat of Aragon and Elsa Triolet, in the rue de la Sourdière near the Faubourg-Saint Honoré. They are not afraid of attracting the attention of the neighbours, or the concierge, or the policemen in the street. They are not afraid of making trouble for Elsa Triolet. They intend to photograph the laureate from every angle. To-morrow her photograph will appear in all the newspapers, a photograph which the police would have been delighted to acquire four years ago.

* * *

There is not much furniture left in the flat. The collection of native African art which Aragon and Elsa Triolet set such store by, has disappeared—carried off by the Germans, heaven knows where ! That is what it meant to be away from Paris for the past five years. The absent were always in the wrong—particularly where the Gestapo was concerned. But in this case, the absent owners of the flat were lucky. They are here to-day, in 1945, alive and well. And one of them has just received the Goncourt Prize.

Four years ago, between two clandestine appointments, Aragon and Elsa Triolet sat



Elsa Triolet, wife of Louis Aragon.

in their little flat in Nice. On the whitewashed walls were photographs of Paris— Paris, so far away, occupied Paris, the martyred city. Aragon was writing ; Elsa likewise. To write was their holiday, their respite, their breath of freedom. These " holiday" writings have since become famous : Aragon's " *Crève-Coeur*" and " *Les Yeux d'Elsa* " ; Elsa Triolet's " *Mille Regrets* " and " *Le Cheval Blanc* " ; as well as the two books which appeared recently together : Aragon's novel " *Aurélien* " and Elsa Triolet's " *Le premier accroc coute deux cents francs,*" which has just won the Goncourt Prize.

From time to time, a poem or a few pages of prose appeared in one of the brave publications that helped to keep alive French freedom and hope : *Poésie* 45, or *Confluences*, published in the unoccupied zone ; *Fontaine*, in Algiers, the *Lettres Françaises* of Buenos Aires, or *France Libre* in London. Sometimes a manuscript was smuggled by night into occupied France, to be published in Paris at the clandestine *Editions de Minuit*—by a printer of death-notices, or a brave typesetter who worked in the small hours of the morning at his camouflaged print-shop. Some of the printed copies were sent out of France, much as one tosses a bottle into the sea. When one of them reached London, Algiers, New York or Buenos Aires, it was immediately reprinted, translated, and distributed throughout the world. People abroad learned that French writers had not given up the battle, that they had not capitulated, and that they did not despair of the future.

* * *

During all those years, Elsa Triolet and her husband went back and forth—from Nice to Carcassonne, from Lyons to Toulouse, from Paris to Montpellier. They helped to group writers and intellectuals, to organise the resistance movement among painters, professors, doctors, and men of science. Once Elsa Triolet was arrested, but as the police were unaware of her true identity, they released her ten days later.

Once, in the train from Paris, the Gestapo searched the passengers' baggage. Aragon and Elsa had with them a bag full of clandestine pamphlets and anti-German tracts. The Gestapo agent opened one bag after another. At last he came to the valise belonging to Aragon and Elsa. Just then a second agent called his colleague into the corridor.

" I'll be back in a minute— " said the man who was searching the baggage.

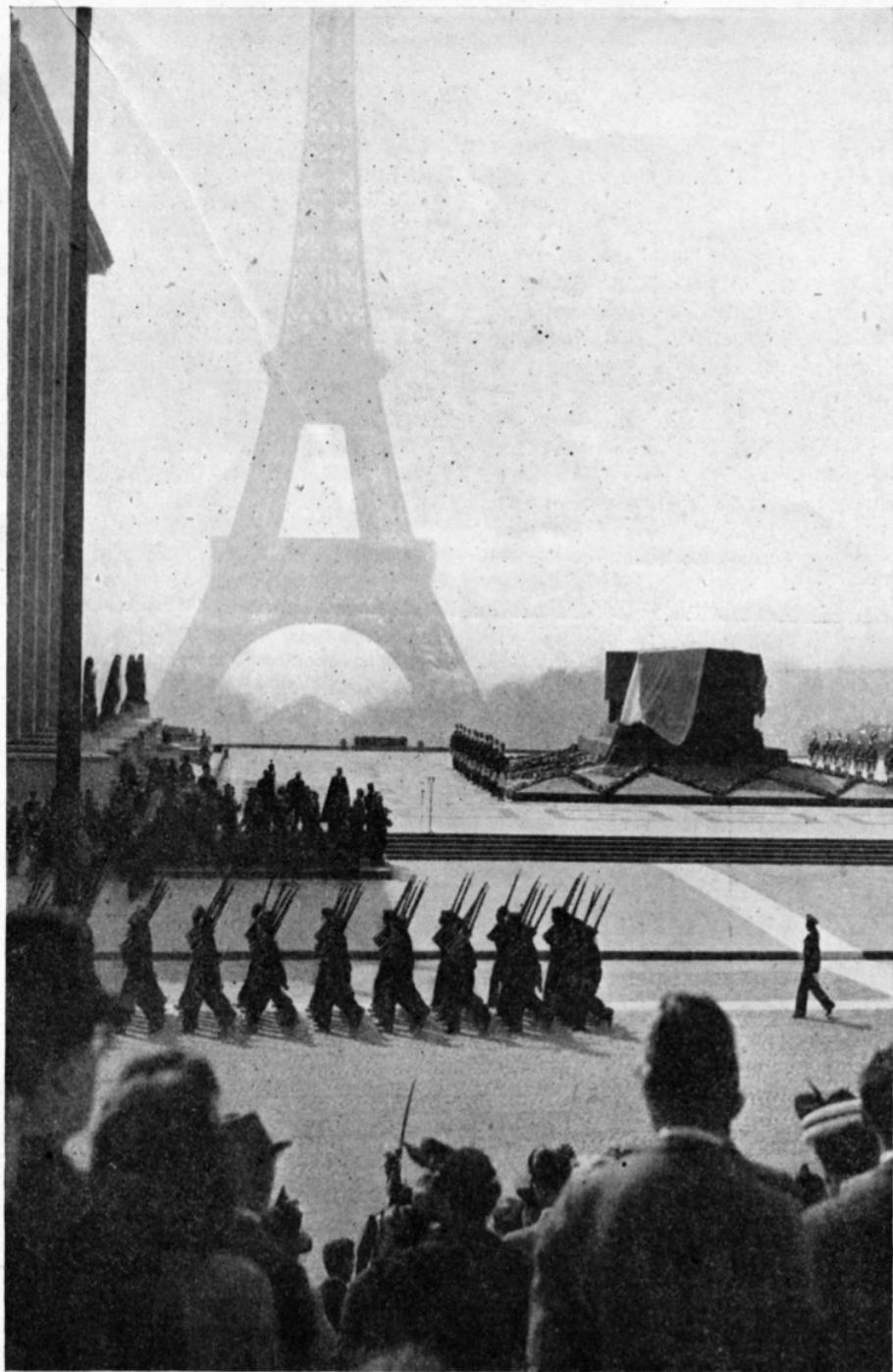
He never came back. As the train pulled out of the station, Elsa burst out laughing. She laughed and laughed. She couldn't help it. It was sheer nerves.

Elsa Triolet and her husband lived in Carcassonne, in Nice, in the house of Pierre Seghers, the editor of *Poésie* 45, at Villeneuve-les-Avignon, and finally in a little village of the Drôme. There they helped publish the maquis newspaper, *La Drôme en Armes*. When an S.S. division came into the region to wipe out the maquis troops, Elsa and Aragon escaped to the hills. The Nazis burned their house. Luckily Elsa carried the precious manuscripts away with them. Otherwise, it is quite probable that another writer would have received the 1945 Goncourt Prize.

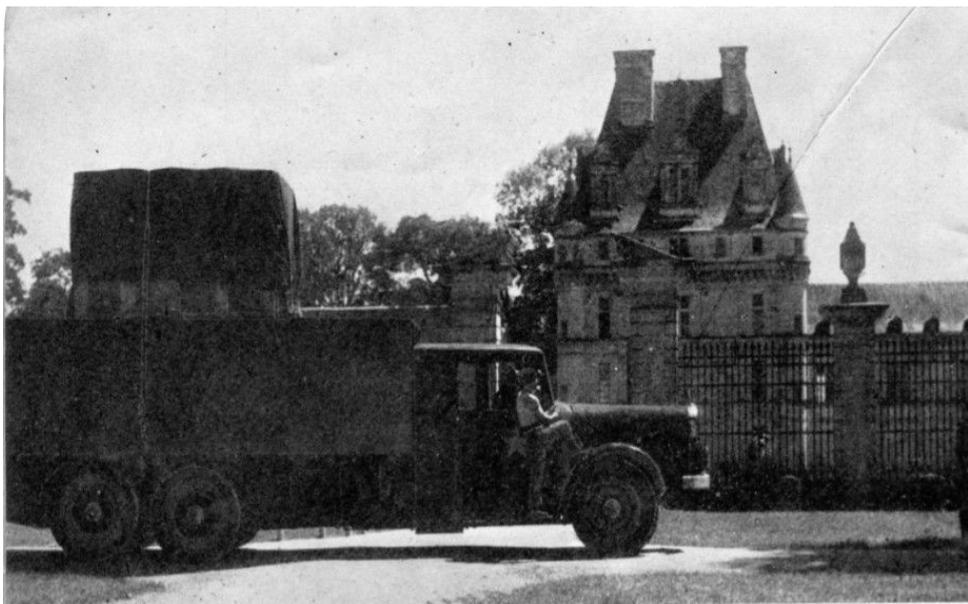
Many friends of Elsa Triolet and Aragon lost their lives, during the occupation. Jacques Decour, who was with them on the National Committee of Writers, was shot; as were the deputy Gabriel Péri, the ethnologists Jacques Solomon and Politzer, and many others. But Elsa and Aragon kept at their task, regardless of the danger. They served as a living link among the scattered intellectuals. To Francois Mauriac, Paul Eluard, Duhamel and Giraudoux in Paris, they brought news of Roger Martin du Gard from Nice, of Julien Benda from Carcassonne, of Jean Prévest (killed in the maquis) from Lyons—of all those who, in all the provinces of France, were carrying on the same fight.

During all their activity Elsa Triolet kept on writing. Her short stories and novels reflect with rare intensity the atmosphere

(Continued on page 255)



*"Fin"—Paul Valéry's choice for his own epitaph.
Last honours are paid as his body lies in the forecourt of the Palais de Chaillot.*



Louvre treasures leaving their war-time hiding-place in the Château of Valençay.

THE MONA LISA IS HOME AGAIN

by Georges Ravon

AFTER four years' absence, two well-known stars are again drawing great crowds in Paris to-day: the Venus de Milo and the Mona Lisa. Flocks of visitors again press about them, speaking their admiration in every known tongue - except German. One national group after another : the speeches of their guides overlap and mingle. Only this time the tourists wear khaki ; and it is not Thomas Cook who arranges their trip to the Continent.

The Louvre has opened its doors again.

The doors are not wide open ; only just ajar. Of its 4,000 works of art, only 83 have as yet returned to the fold. This is not a large figure, as figures go, but it is,

nonetheless, important. For how many art-lovers in Paris, London or New York can sustain with impunity the shock of beauty 83 times in succession?

In this case the quality of the exhibits compensates abundantly for their lack in quantity. The richest treasures of the greatest of French museums are on view in the Louvre today.

Someone has said that a painting "overhears more stupid remarks than any other thing in existence. This is often true. Yet it may also hear words that are naive and touching—and that are fully as worth while as the pretentious commentary of critics.

If the Mona Lisa could speak, what curious things she might relate !

Obviously, the pilgrims to the Louvre worship first of all at her shrine. When one of the guardians sees a tall Scot or a Russian officer trying to ask a question in sign-language, he replies without hesitation:

"The main staircase, straight ahead. At the top, turn to the right. . . ' -That's where you will find her. . . the Mona Lisa, *la Joconde*"

"*Joconde*, yes, yes," says the Scot.

"*Joconde, da, da*" nods the Russian.

Whether it be a woman or a painting, all men feel deep and redoubled affection for the thing they have come near losing.

The Mona Lisa has a panel all to herself, set aside from the rows of paintings on the red walls of the four galleries now open to the public.

" She hasn't changed," remarks one of the visitors—a middle-aged gentleman, pushing his companion, a slim school-boy, through the crowd. " They hid her in the Chateau of Martel, in the Lot *département*, when the works of art were sent away from the Louvre, first in 1939 and again in 1942. To avoid bombings, the Allies were sent the list of hiding-places. One night the B.B.C. broadcast a message which indicated that the instructions had been received : ' The Mona Lisa is still smiling.' I heard it myself."

" Papa, why hasn't she any eyebrows ? " asks the schoolboy.

" Er . . . oh . . . some illness, I suppose."

Poor Mona Lisa. Her lovely eyebrows were lost long ago because of a faulty layer of varnish ; yet for centuries, critics, like the boy's father, laid their absence to a physiological mishap !

* * *

If Mona Lisa has not " changed," many other paintings, on the contrary, appear marvellously rejuvenated. During the years they spent hidden away underground they were carefully and patiently restored.

For years specialists have discussed the problem. Should the patina of the ancient varnish, however opaque, be respected ; or should the painting be stripped of the layers of varnish added by the artist him-

self, or by restorers—throughout the centuries (some canvases have received as many as 80 coats !)

French specialists adopted an intermediate solution. With infinite care and infinite precautions they have done no more than thin the golden veil that covers the masterpieces. So that certain visitors—from countries where they scour old paintings like saucepans—find the Louvre treasures still somewhat " dirty " in appearance ; while other visitors on the contrary exclaim :

" Look at that one : it looks like new ! "

The " new " painting is Titian's " Virgin with rabbit"—only four hundred years old, but formerly so thickly varnished over that the Virgin's hand appeared as grey as the rabbit's fur.

Another innovation : the exhibits are grouped not by schools or epochs, but according to their perceptible and plastic affinities. Canvases formerly separated from each other by centuries—and interminable galleries of the great, museum—now hang side by side. Rembrandt and Delacroix, Fra Angelico and Manet. . . No one objects ; what is more, no one appears astonished. In other days, whenever a modern painting found its way into the Louvre, it caused considerable excitement and sometimes even created a scandal. Time in its wisdom has reconciled the opponents—covering their ancient controversies with its varnish of tolerance and forbearance.

The families who view Manet's *Olympe* are no longer upset by her disturbing nudity. I heard one old lady ask a guardian :

" Please, sir, where are the Picasso paintings ? "

Picasso is not yet at the Louvre—and none of us would go so far as to wish for another world war, so that his canvases might hang beside those of Tintoretto ! All this seems to prove that we do not fight *for* a given art form ; we simply fight *about* it—it serves as a pretext for our obscure and inherent penchant for conflicts.

The canvases that depict food in any form are much appreciated by the public. Standing before Rembrandt's " Flayed Ox" one visitor said wistfully :

"Ah, the folk of those days never lacked for beefsteak. . . "

The sight of Degas' " Absinthe " may make some Parisians sigh for the " green hours" of other days. An American studied the canvas intently.

" Cognac ? " he asked.

There has been an attempt to give each painting a frame of the same period as the canvas—a frame which is also in keeping with the general atmosphere of the picture. Glass (and with it, the annoying gleams of reflected light) has almost completely disappeared. Roland Dorgeles could no longer shave, using the glass of a Watteau for a mirror—as he once did as a wager. (That was before he became a well-known writer, with a scat at the Goncourt lunch table.)

In addition to the paintings, many a world-renowned statue has returned to the Louvre. You can see them to-day, back on their old pedestals, where they had been replaced, during their absence, by plaster

casts. It took an impressive array of winches, blocks and tackle to hoist the Victory of Samothrace to her place at the top of the main staircase. At the same time, the Venus de Milo took her old place again at the far end of the long hallway.

Before the mutilated statues of anti-quity, sometimes the visitors in khaki query :

" Was it due to bombing ? "

While they admire and wonder, they take up the old question that has puzzled so many generations of visitors : did the Venus originally hold a harp, a mirror, or a lamp ? Before the statues of Greek heroes, gods—and particularly goddesses—the camera shutters click repeatedly. A wise and understanding administration has waived, so far as soldiers are concerned, the rule that forbids visitors to take photographs.

What better " souvenir" of Europe could these young men take home with them to the New World'—what tokens better fitted to maintain the spiritual bond between the Old World and the New—than these " souvenirs" of the old Louvre ?

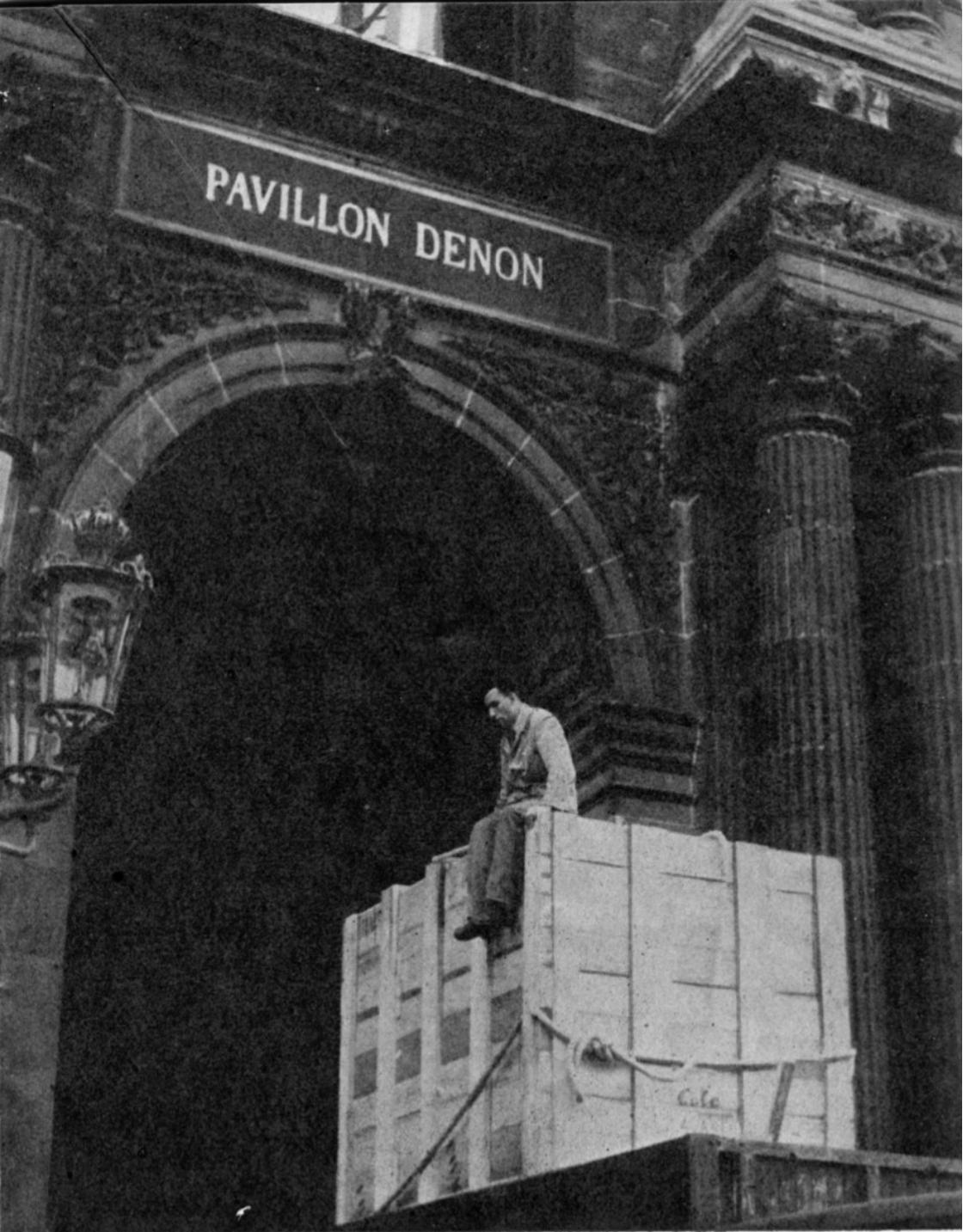
New Acquisitions for the Louvre

The Directors of the Louvre have, during the past five years, in spite of the occupation, succeeded in adding to the Museum's collection.

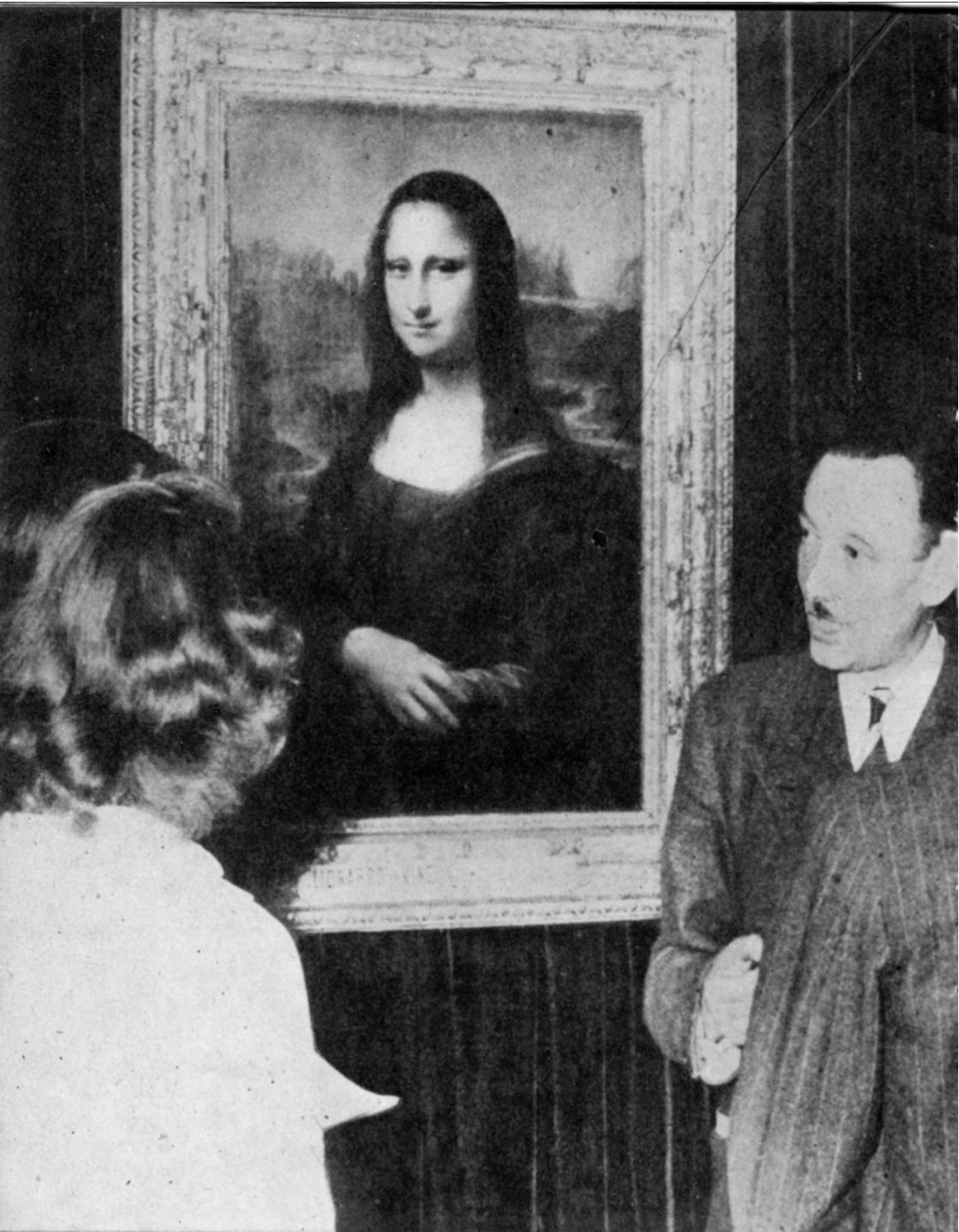
In a short time, three more rooms will be opened to the public, and visitors will be able to inspect the war-time acquisitions, numbering 98 in all, of which 43 are purchases and the rest gifts. With the exception of a small number of pictures which were shown at the Orangerie des Tuileries in 1941, they are all unknown to the general public. The Princess of Polignac, Armand Dorville, Gabriel Thomas and the poet Boch are among the donors. M. Carlos de Beistegui, a Mexican of Basque origin, is

responsible for some of the most important gifts, which include a Rubens, a David and a Goya.

As for the purchases, the Directors of the Museum have endeavoured to complete the collection of the early Dutch, German and Spanish schools, and, as is natural, have given special attention to the French masters. Amongst the latter, the most noteworthy additions are a portrait by Lebrun, a nude by Delacroix, painted round about 1820, an exquisite study entitled " *Femme se coiffant*" by the woman-hater Degas, an Algerian landscape by Renoir, and a small canvas by Gauguin which has excited much admiration.



THE LOUVRE *gates open to receive their treasures. Out of the 4,000 works of art, 83 are now back on show.*





MASTER-BUILDERS OF THE NEW FRANCE

by André Rousseaux

RECONSTRUCTION is one of the most urgent questions facing France at the present time. The country's future will, in a large measure, depend on the manner in which this problem is handled. Fortunately, the Ministry of Reconstruction is under the leadership of M. Raoul Dautry, a man who is indeed likely to be most capable of finding and applying the necessary solution. We will attempt to outline here the principal points of the problem, and the main lines of the government's programme of action as it stands to-day.

* * *

The first fact which stands out is that it is impossible to draw a comparison between France's position at the end of the last war and her position at the end of the war of 1939-1945. To begin with, the damage inflicted during the first World War, though widespread, affected only a limited—if rich and thickly populated—area of our country. Furthermore, in the rest of Europe, to the west of Russia, the destruction had not spread beyond the Baltic and a section of the Balkans. To-day, on the contrary, the ruins of war extend over the whole of France (there is only one *département* which does not appear on the official statistics), from Britain to the Caspian Sea and from Norway to Sicily.

Two consequences arise from this fundamental difference. On the one hand, the concentration of effort—affecting materials, capital and man power—which, in 1919, it was possible to bring about in the ten devastated departments of France, will have to give place, this time, to an immense effort widely spread over the entire French territory.

On the other hand, France's own effort will be in competition with that of nearly all the other countries of Europe. This

means that each country will have to rely on itself alone. Accordingly, our task is not heavier only because the damage is so much greater; it is more difficult by reason of the poorness of the means available to deal with it. It is a huge task which requires from the whole people a grim will to work, sacrifice and devotion to the common cause.

* * *

There is another great difference between 1919 and 1945. In 1919, the legislation covering compensation for war damage was based on the assumption that the victims had the right to demand from the State the return of their property in its original condition. The rights of such claimants were comparable to those of the victims of a flood, of a plague of locusts or of any other natural disaster. The position is no longer the same to-day.

However grievous and tragic the individual misfortune of the many millions of victims may be, it is overshadowed by the fact that France is ruined, and that the whole French people have been wounded to the quick. The rebuilding of the homes of millions of Frenchmen will mean that the people of France will be able to return to work and to normal activities. From the start, therefore, the plan of reconstruction will be different. As stated by M. Dautry, "there are two conceptions: one individualistic, conservative and static, as in 1919; the other based on collective social action, such as befits 1945." France's position to-day does not make it possible for individuals to think of their comforts, before the country has been brought back to normal. It is in this spirit that the government will embark upon the work of reconstruction, so that it may be worthy of the strength and greatness of France.

It is worth quoting a few figures to illustrate our country's tragic plight.

Over 1,500,000 houses have been destroyed. There is not a trace left of some of our towns, there are villages of which only the memory remains or of which only the nameplate is left. We have lost 40,000 farms, 150,000 factories. Many of our ports have been systematically wrecked. At Marseilles 19 out of 23 kilometres of docks have been destroyed. On the Seine, between Rouen and Paris, 75 per cent, of the bridges, viaducts and tunnels have been destroyed ; in the Oise department the proportion is 70 per cent., and in the Rhone 100 per cent. Our railway system is one vast ruin; 115 main stations have been heavily damaged, 24 marshalling yards out of a total of 40 have been destroyed, 300,000 square yards of installations, 1,900 viaducts, tunnels have been wrecked, and two-thirds of our rolling stock has been either removed or rendered useless.

We could go on for ever detailing this tale of woe. If we have given a brief picture of it here, it is not that we wish to lament over our distress. Once again, France has had the costly honour of providing a battleground for the struggle to liberate Europe. Frenchmen, of the Forces of the Interior as well as of the Free French Forces, were not the last to fight there bravely, and many of them gave their lives in the battle. And France's soil had the honour of being the last resting place of the brave who strove and died for liberation.

Our soil is scorched, scarred and ruined. To the wrecked buildings must be added the land ravaged by the mines which the Germans planted before leaving. These mines infest the Normandy pastures, the beaches of Brittany, the vineyards of Languedoc, and the forests of the Vosges. They deprive France of dairy produce, of fish, wine and wood. Of the *hundred million* mines which had to be detected after the Liberation, it has been possible to remove only a few million so far. German

labour will be used to hasten the carrying out of this long and dangerous job. The removal of these mines is one of the consequences of the war which must be borne by those responsible for it.

* * *

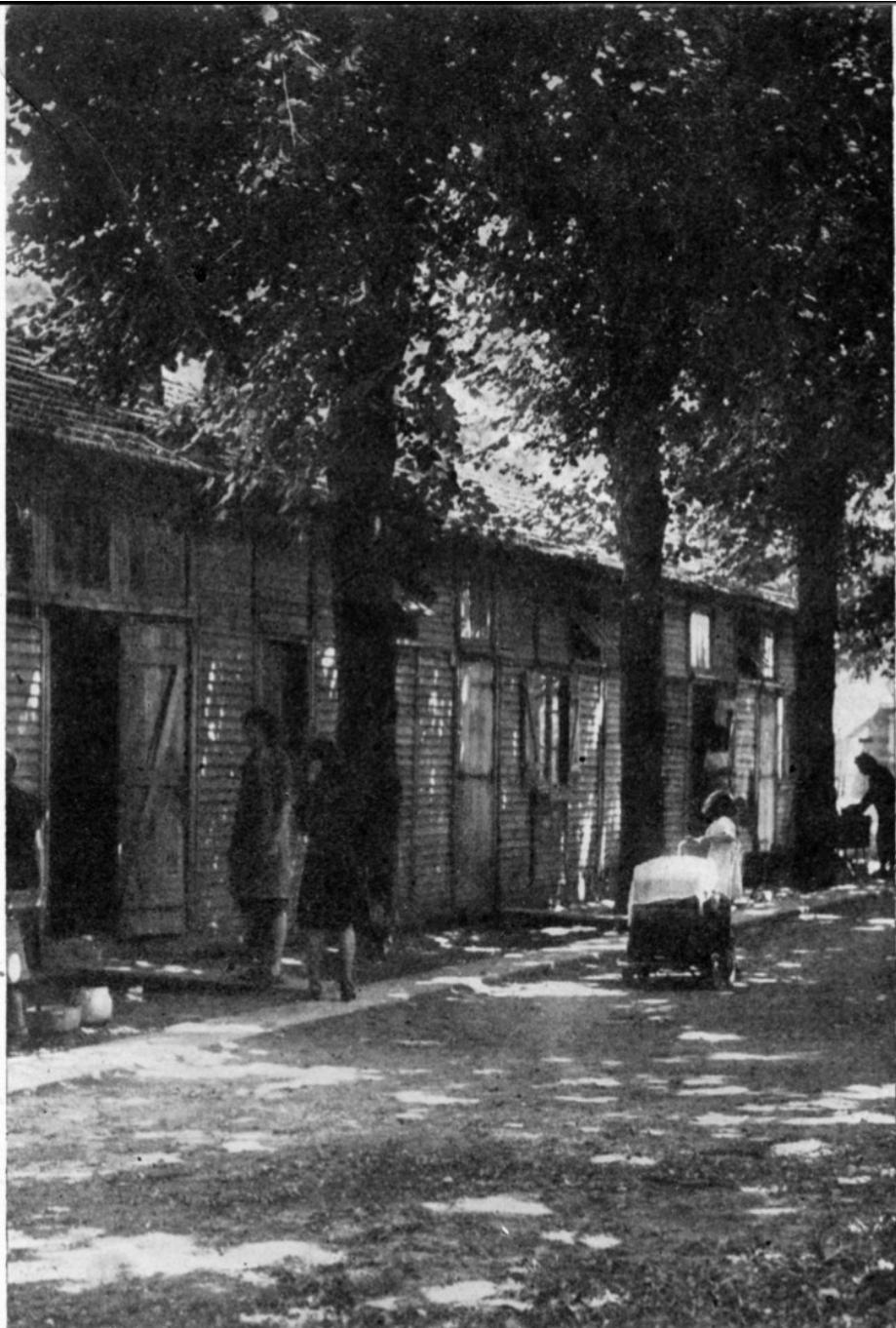
Yet, faced with all these ruins, how will the programme of reconstruction work ?

It comprises two distinct phases : the first calls for immediate action, and the second for a long term policy.

To begin with, the homeless must be given shelter. Last winter the inhabitants of whole towns and villages had to live in cellars, under trees, exposed to the cold and the rain and soaked in the icy mud. We must not see another winter like that. Temporary shelters will have to be erected. The number of timber houses and huts will have to be increased as far as possible. But how can we make enough of them ? How can we transport them, without lorries, tyres or petrol ? The problem of reconstruction is constantly beset with insurmountable difficulties. The only way out is to say : the word " impossible" does not belong to the French language. This is an axiom which M. Dautry has paraphrased in the following terms : " Make your bricks with reeds and a little lime. Collect bricks from bombed sites. We will make 'a little lime' in the local kilns, and will do % without cement for urgent building or repairs. Cement is a modern invention. Fifty years ago there was none, and you will have to manage with lime for a small house. It will not, of course, be very strong. But it need not be, because it is destined to disappear five years hence."

This is what the Minister of Reconstruction said, when stating his determination to protect the homeless from the distress they knew last winter. He has appealed to the unshakable tenacity of the French character, and to our people's capacity for making something out of nothing when there is a shortage of everything.

But, at the same time, the Minister has in mind a general plan of reconstruction



Temporary wooden dwellings built at Vitry-le-François (Marne), a town which was completely destroyed by the Germans. Badly damaged in the last war also, it was General Joffre's headquarters before the battle of the Marne.

for the future. According to him, 1946 will be the first year during which it will be possible to do something in that direction. 1947 will see the large-scale application of these plans. Modern methods, minimising the use of labour and of raw materials, will be employed. In particular, pre-fabricated houses will play a large part in the scheme. The public is already familiar with pre-fabrication : it means that the houses are built in parts-in the factories, and assembled on the sites chosen for them. In Great Britain and the United States pre-fabrication is already well developed. In France also it will be studied with a view to obtaining cheaper and more comfortable houses. French individualism can be counted upon to introduce a note of variety in the monotony of these mass-produced materials. In any case, the aesthetic qualities of these houses will receive as much attention as will their utilitarian value. The village containing some hundreds of them—even if they are all very similar—will, it is felt, be prettier than one in which the villas standing side by side offer a mixture of Mauresque, Basque and other styles, and testify to the bad taste of their respective owners !

Let us repeat, at the present time there cannot be any question of satisfying individual whims. The reconstruction of whole towns is an opportunity to apply the great laws of modern urbanism, such as sunlit buildings facing south, " green belts " and main roads well away from residential quarters. Indeed, everything has not been destroyed in France, and there are still, thank Heaven, many beautiful relics of the past. It is all the more tempting for the talented architect to achieve the harmonious blending of the old and the new—a blending which is seen in Paris itself, where the church of Notre-Dame and the Palais de Chaillot adorn the banks of the same river. Whole regions of France now offer our builders an opportunity for exercising their initiative. M. Dautry has told us how he wishes to make them

become the " master-builders " who will give new life to France's countenance, whilst respecting and even enhancing the beauty of those of her features which are eternal : " I have sought out men with bold minds, like Le Corbusier, and Auguste Perret, and also lovers of the old monuments of the past, so as to have half and half, and to get inspiration from both groups. Above all, I want team work from them, because I feel that their team would be a good one."

* * *

Besides, reconstruction is a matter of urbanism as well as of architecture. It involves problems of hygiene, and problems of a social and economic character. It will not be possible to reconstruct an old town without first reapportioning the land, so that the new town can be built on a more rational plan. The rebuilding of a whole region will not be undertaken without first removing from certain towns and suburbs, factories which can be put up again elsewhere : this brings up the question of industrial decentralisation. It also means greater activity for many small places where local industries, which had to move away some twenty or fifty years ago, will be able to prosper again. The urbanist must be an economist and a sociologist. The re-builders of France will not be handling only timber and plaster; they have in their hands the homes of the future. They will be responsible for houses which will be bright or dismal, workers who will be either enthusiastic or discouraged, children who will be welcome or unwanted—in a word, a whole country in which it will be good to live if the reconstruction is well carried out, but in which nothing will be run properly if the reconstruction is not successful. M. Dautry has to bear all these matters in mind. He is striving to enrol the whole of France in this vast and fruitful crusade. In this sense, France's reconstruction will not only make good her misfortunes, but will be the dawn of a new era of beauty for her.



Two models of pre-fabricated blocks of flats for France. The ten-story building in the top picture can be constructed in three months.

PARIS DIARY

Paris est à nous

On a winter's evening in 1942, a girl sat writing in a Bloomsbury room. Anna Marly was composing her first songs, and that night, in a fit of nostalgia, she wrote her song "Paris est à nous." The men of the Resistance who were parachuted into France hummed it to themselves as their planes flew them to their target. . . . Then Anna Marly went home to France. On the 14th July, with many other well-known French *chansonniers*, she was singing in one of the Paris squares, and the huge crowds joined in the chorus :

" Paris est à nous
De chacun il est l'ancêtre
Chaque mur, chaque toit,
Chaque rue, chaque poteau
Est fait par un Français
Pour la gloire et le bien-etre
De ses fils et son pays,
Mais pas pour l'ennemi."

Mademoiselle Marly's songs are now on everyone's lips. When Field Marshal Montgomery went to Paris he asked to see the girl whose songs were known even by the men of the Libyan battlefields. But today, Mademoiselle Marly is back in a little room, in Paris this time, busy composing the songs of hope. . . .

A french musician speaks of England

Back from a visit to England, M. Francis Poulenc, the well-known French composer, has been telling of the wonderful impression made upon him by the great enthusiasm for music in present-day England. He spoke in particular of the B.B.C.—for which he broad-cast a concert. He greatly admired, he said, the high technical skill and friendly atmosphere of the British radio world . . . and was particularly pleased always to see flowers in the room in which he directed his concerts.

M. Roger Desormière, the director of the Opera Comique, has just returned from London, where he attended a performance of Benjamin Britten's new opera "Peter Grimes." It is rumoured that he may have the intention of producing this opera in Paris.

The Apple-tree

" Good evening, Madame Drue, I have something for you in the apple-tree. . . . He has red hair. . . ." The visitor in the apple-tree was the pilot of a Flying Fortress, who had been shot down, and he was the fifteenth airman to be sheltered and hidden by Madame Drue Tartière, an American lady living in

Barbizon. Madame Drue, who was watched by the Gestapo, was interned twice, but managed to get herself released, and from 1942 to 1944 saved thirty-two airmen in

France. Madame Drue, who went to the United States a short time ago to give a series of lectures, was publicly thanked for her great services by General Patton. She used to accompany her charges to Paris, whence they were secretly got back to England. She had to travel with them by train, and the 'strictest silence was enforced during the journey ; the slightest word or thoughtless action might have betrayed the men she was trying to save. In her work she was greatly helped by Dr. Philardeau, of Fontainebleau, who used to find clothes for the men and, very often, tend them when they were wounded— many were badly burned or hurt when picked up.

Madame Drue is the widow of the young French actor Jacques Terrane, who played the leading part in *La Piste du Nord* ; this was the only film he made. He was killed shortly after in Syria, being awarded the Croix de la Liberation posthumously.

Le 14 Juillet

The Fourteenth of July in France is always a " longish " day. It usually starts on the evening of the 13th and finishes well into the afternoon of the 15th.....This year it was especially long and especially gay. It started on the morning of the 13th and finished on the morning of the 16th. You see, the last Bastille Day France was able to celebrate openly was in 1939—the year that saw one of the most splendid Franco-British parades Paris has known. The citizens of the *Ville Lumière* then gave a rousing welcome to the tall, handsome Guardsmen ; this year they repeated it for the British, Canadian, American and Belgian troops who marched with the French down the great thoroughfares.

After the military march past came a wonderful civilian parade of members of the Resistance and of the various political parties — all in shirt sleeves, in the sweltering heat— down the historic Faubourg St. Antoine, across Paris. Then, last, but certainly not least, the dancing, the little municipal orchestras and the accordeon players on the beflagged bandstands, the *lampions*, and—great delight for the children—the annual fireworks. An-other feature of France's National Day was the traditional free performances at the Opera, the Opera Comique and the Comedie-Française, the latter being given this year by



Laurence Olivier being congratulated by Lady Diana Duff Cooper and a friend after taking part in the traditional free performance at the Comédie Française.

the Old Vic company, who played " Arms and the Man."

One of the many attractions was a nautical display on the Seine, including diving, swimming and sailing competitions, and an exhibition of landing tactics—in which the actual D-day landing craft were used. The weather was perfect and the whole proceedings went off splendidly in an atmosphere of public rejoicing, of which the French people have the secret.

French and American Art

An exhibition devoted to the works of the American woman painter Miss O'Brady, was recently held in Paris. Miss O'Brady, who went to France in 1939 and was interned by the Germans during the occupation, although in extremely poor health, has painted some beautiful landscapes of the French countryside and of the Paris suburbs in particular.

There is news also of the French painter Utrillo, who is living quietly at Le Vésinet. During the occupation he assisted and hid many of the Resistance men, and always refused to sell any of his works to the Germans. He usually works at night, preferring to paint by electric light rather than by daylight. He leads a secluded life with his wife, Lucie Valore, also a painter, and spends several hours in prayer and meditation every day.

Spotlight on the *Prix de Rome* for architecture : the subject for which candidates had to submit plans was a " palace to house the International Court of Justice, designed so as to impress the minds of men with the majesty and greatness of its purpose."

" Gone with the Wind "

A special performance of " Gone with the Wind " was recently given at the Paris Opera, the proceeds of which are being used to assist returned prisoners-of-war.

Georges Auric, the French composer, went to London a short time ago to write the music for Michael Balcon's new film " Dead of Night."

Throughout the occupation, Georges Auric remained loyal to his principles, choosing to earn nothing and live in obscurity rather than work for his country's enemies. He was one of the pioneers of the French revolutionary school of music. One of the first films for which he wrote the music was Rene Clair's " A Nous la Liberte." He is distinguished no less for his services to the theatre than to the film. Among his earlier works he composed a ballet for Diaghilev, and a production of a " Midsummer Night's Dream " with his music was recently presented in Paris. " Dead of Night" is the first British film for which Auric has written music.

René Clair, the great French producer, has just returned to Paris from Hollywood, where

he has been since 1940. In the last five years he has produced four films, " The Flame of New Orleans," " I Married a Witch," " It Happened Tomorrow " and " Ten Little Indians," all well known to the British public..

In the meantime, Paris is seeing a new film " Espoir," based on a book by the well-known French writer André Malraux. The story is about the Spanish Civil War. On the documentary side, a film showing the Fire of London, and produced by the British Information Services, is attracting many crowds.

Jean-Jacques in England

The great event in the literary world is the news concerning the manuscript of a book by Jean-Jacques Rousseau which was to have been sold in one of the London sale rooms this month.

The manuscript is apparently an entirely new one and great controversies are going on as to its authenticity. It will be remembered that Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who went to England in 1767, was for a long time the guest of the philosopher David Hume, and at one time lived in a small room in Chiswick. Rousseau, however, had a very difficult character, and in the end, the two philosophers parted on very bad terms.

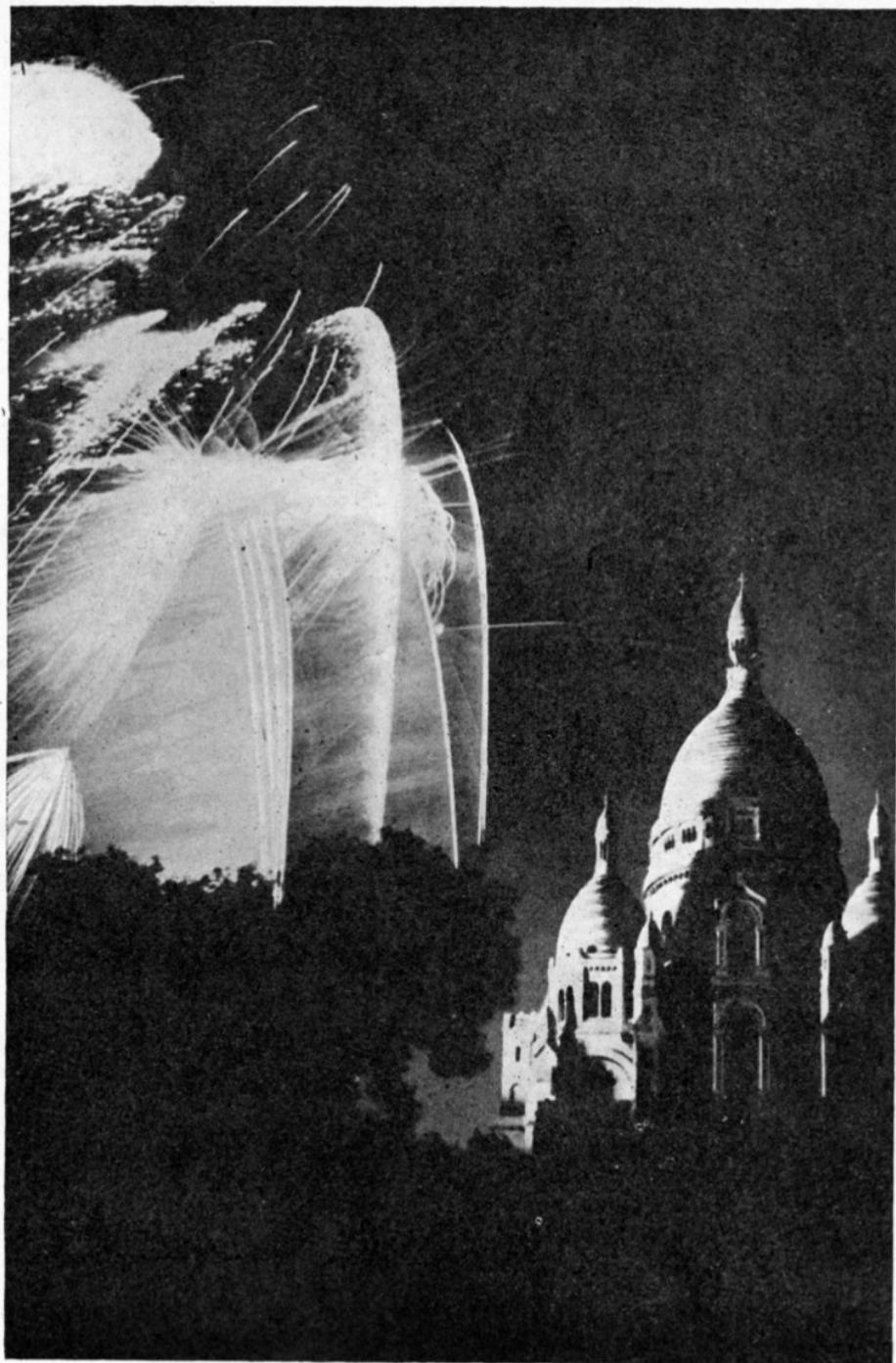
A very distinguished literary visitor to Paris recently was Professor D. W. Brogan, who gave a most interesting lecture on Anglo-American relations.

Amongst the various literary prizes which are awarded yearly in France is a rather original one : it is the Rabelais prize. Each year the committee—presided this time by Tristan Bernard—holds a meeting in a different wine-growing region, in order to foster relations between the many famous vineyards of France and the literary world. This year the committee is sitting in the Beaujolais district—and is looking forward to much good tasting and judging.

Save for Victory Campaign.

Parisians have recently had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with an aspect of the Allied war effort with which they were not very familiar—the great savings campaigns conducted in Great Britain, the Empire and the United States of America. The *Exposition Interallié de l'Epargne* held at the Palais de Glace, Avenue des Champs Elysées, attracted many interested visitors who, by means of lighted panels, immense graphs, humorous drawings and vivid statistics were able to gauge the financial sacrifices, which as part of the war effort, made possible VE-day and VJ-day. Greatly admired were many of the colourful National Savings posters, familiar to millions in Great Britain.

" Scribe "



Paris celebrates with fireworks. The Sacré-Cœur in Montmartre.

THE INTIMATE SIDE OF VERSAILLES

by Emile Henriot (*of the French Academy*)

TO the casual tourist, Versailles seems dead. As he wanders through the empty château and the deserted gardens, his first impression is that this might well be the abandoned domain of the Sleeping Beauty. Yet the park is well kept—though the tourist may never see a gardener or a woodman—and the noble contours of the palace façades rise above terraces that are raked and swept. A recent stay in the "City of Waters" has given me new insight into the secret life of this great house of the French kings. It is empty only in appearance. True, we are far from the era when the Château of Versailles counted seven to eight thousand inhabitants—courtiers, guards, servants, employees of all kinds in the royal service—not forgetting a goodly number of unauthorised persons who managed to creep in somehow, and who led a tranquil existence in the out-buildings, unknown and undisturbed. The palace still counts a considerable staff—the architect, the conservators, the secretaries, guardians and gardeners—since it is no small matter to supervise and care for a structure which, given its venerable age and size, would rapidly deteriorate were it neglected. Even in the days of its splendour, the Château of Versailles was always in the process of construction. No doubt Louis XIV himself never saw it free of scaffoldings and masons. The *Roi Soleil* had a mania for building; in this respect his successors resembled him. Indeed, Louis XV never ceased rearranging and modifying the vast palace. By dint of alterations, new installations, and new schemes of decorating, he added to the beauty and the comfort of his house—concentrating particularly on his own apartments and those of his family, his favourites, his friends and his mistresses. To-day the visitor sees

only the state suites—the king's bed-chamber, his library and study, and the great halls reserved for banquets or receptions (now utilised as a museum). He is rarely admitted to the labyrinth of little lodgings and apartments hidden away in the palace—though it is precisely here that one senses most vividly the atmosphere of the past, so animated and so charged with activity and life, that these countless little suites and rooms formed a veritable city within the palace walls.

* * *

Not long ago, thanks to Monsieur André Japy, head architect of the Palace, who escorted me through the rooms and passages unknown to the ordinary tourist. I was able to picture for myself the life of those who lived there during the middle years of the 18th century. Strolling from room to room, up secret stairways let into the wall, and from the mezzanine floor to the topmost garret. I learned more of the secret life of the past than may be acquired from books or prints. What impressed me most was the surprising smallness of the suites, so charmingly installed in the heart of the immense Palace. No doubt the fact that many people had to be lodged within the building was partly responsible for their diminutive dimensions—but there was certainly another reason. After the stately ceremonial, and the obligations of court etiquette, the habitual guests of Versailles must have enjoyed retiring to a humbler setting, of more modest dimensions. After the lofty state apartments, the huge stairways, the majestic chapel, all reflecting the grandeur of the *Roi Soleil* and his era—how charming the graceful little Louis XV suites appear in contrast—the shapely boudoirs, the recessed dressing-rooms, the little drawing-rooms so adapted to* cosy conversation



The hamlet of the Petit Trianon, at Versailles, which was built in the Château gardens for Marie-Antoinette.

about the curving chimney-piece ! The graceful stucco-work of the ceilings, and the panelling with its carved flowers, masks, scrolls, garlands and musical instruments ! Nearly all the many-paned windows, opening on inner courts, still bear their original glass, greenish in hue and slightly convex. Beneath the ugly coat of distemper, daubed on walls and woodwork when the château was first restored under Louis-Philippe, skilful workmen are today uncovering the delicate colours of the original lacquer—the *vernis-martin*, seven coats of which lie over the ancient wood. In the apartments of Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry one may see today all the exquisite details of the original decoration. One charming little room long supposed to be the boudoir of Madame du Barry, was in reality her bathroom, as my guide pointed out to me, showing me plans and notes from the Palace archives. Where plaster has been removed from the wall, you can see traces left by the four taps of the favourite's bath and, in the tiled floor, the opening of the drain-pipe. In spite of what has been said to the contrary, the inhabitants of the palace did take baths ! I give this one detail as an illustration of what a careful and critical scrutiny of archives and places can reveal, in a setting such as this, rich in history and memories of the past. The traces of the past are there, waiting to tell their story. We have only to study the ancient stones and listen ' to what they relate. Little, by little, restored in all their delicate beauty, these little apartments will take their place in

the great museum of Versailles. Visitors will be able to see them—and to ponder the melancholy charm of other days. Days which in this setting seem so near that one has only to stretch out a hand to touch the living men of yesterday, who today are only phantoms.

* * *

As for the gardens of Versailles, they have not changed at all. The woodman with his hook, the gardener with his pruning-knife and rake, have only to keep the green perspectives trim, to clip the cypress and box, and maintain the neat borders of the paths—and the noble gardens retain all their original character and plan. But the trees have grown old ; from time to time one must be felled, because it has been struck by lightning or is dying of old age. Another takes its place ; in a year or two the gap is filled again. Water flashes everywhere, filling the ponds and reservoirs, leaping up in fountains, spilling from basin to basin—jets, cascades, mirrors. . . . Here the war seems to have left no trace ; only time has shifted the stones of a fountain lip or burst the old water pipes. All these must be continually repaired and restored. An unending task, never completed—and always well done, even though materials and labour are woefully scarce. In the midst of so many ruins that mar the face of France to-day, Versailles stands, lovely as always. Those of our friends who remember and love Versailles will be happy, I am sure, to learn that this is so.

Versailles Palace Served as Model for Potsdam

Versailles is entirely the creation of Louis XIV, who is said to have become dissatisfied with St. Germain, owing to its view of St. Denis, the last resting place of the French kings. During the baroque and rococo periods Versailles served as a model for numerous princely residences (Potsdam,

Schoenbrunn, the Wren portion of Hampton Court Palace, Herren-Chiemsee), affording, as it does, the most complete and monumental expression of an absolute monarchy.

—*Baedeker's Paris and its Environs.*

ELSA TRIOLET—PRIX GONCOURT.

(Continued from page 234.)

of the terrible years, the life of the French people during the occupation and the fight for freedom. In her pages Frenchmen find a faithful portrait of their cares, their suffering, their joy. The many thousands, hundreds of thousands, who will read "*Le premier accroc coute deux cents francs*" will see, as in a mirror, their life as it was from 1940 to 1945. Not only because Elsa Triolet is a writer of great talent, but because she herself lived the life of the French people

(she who was born in Russia) through disaster to victory, and from black night to daybreak.

Today she and her husband have found their Paris again, their flat, their part of town, their friends. Elsa Triolet has gained, with the Goncourt Prize, widespread renown. But on the day of the award, after the journalists had left, the laureate leaned back in her chair, closed her eyes and remarked to her husband :

" Do you remember, Louis, the face of that Gestapo man, when he said to us : ' In a minute, I'll be back _____ ' ? "

-Cantique a Elsa-

Cette valse	est un vin	qui ressemble	au Saumur
Cette valse	est le vin	que j'ai bu	dans tes bras
Tes cheveux	en sont l'or	et mes vers	s'en émurent
	Valsons-la	comme on saute un mur	
Ton nom s'y murmure		Elsa valse	et valsera
La jeunesse	y pétille	où nos jours	étant courts
A Montmartre	on allait	oublier	qu'on pleura
Notre nuit	a perdu	ce secret	du faux-jour
	Mais a-t-elle	oublie l'amour	
L'amour est si lourd		Elsa valse	et valsera

(Louis Aragon, "*Les Yeux d'Elsa*")

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One year ago Paris celebrated her liberation—crowds outside the Hotel de Ville.