

the whole length of the new and magnificent Boulevard de Sebastopol, and from that in a further direct line to the station of the Strasbourg railway. A branch of this magnificent and chief artery of the city life, nearly as vast in its dimensions, extends along the centre of the Rue de Rivoli. Both of these terminate at the Seine, near the Place du Chatelet. At this point visitors are generally admitted, and descend by a spiral stairway of iron to a level slightly above that of the river. Here we find ourselves in a lofty and spacious gallery about fifteen feet high, into which several main lines debouched. The shape of all the sewers is a symmetrical oval. They are made of the sand-stone so commonly used in Paris for building purposes, and the axis of the largest of them, by which, of course, I mean the longest diameter, is that which I have just given as the height of the gallery. From a line about one-third of the way from the bottom projects on either side a stone walk two feet in width, which is ordinarily several inches higher than the surface of the sewerage. The walls and railing are nicely whitewashed, and at intervals are inserted white porcelain plates bearing in gilt letters the names of the streets under which the diverging sewers run. The map of the underground city, it will thus appear, corresponds exactly with that of the more brilliant Paris above, and it is quite as easy with the aid of a lantern to find one's way through it. Directly under the arch of this vault run the water-pipes, painted a clear black, and of enormous size, as might be imagined from the huge supplies needed for the fountains and other uses of the city. Opposite them are long and slender tubes of lead, side by side in a single cluster, each of which contains a telegraph wire. These are thus isolated from every weakening attraction, and moreover concealed from any other injury. The city itself is also thus preserved from the disfigurement of unsightly poles and loose iron-twines dangling from chimney to chimney. At long intervals are large reservoirs into which the contents of the drains can be drawn off at once, and emptied in case of necessity. These are partly for possible military needs, as in some events it might be desirable to send troops underground, in order to make a sudden and unforeseen attack upon a mob in insurrection. This would, certainly, be a somewhat novel piece of strategy, even in the present complicated manoeuvres of modern warfare. It might, however, very probably, have saved Charles X., or Louis Philippe, if either of these royal birds, when entangled in the meshes of their own nets, had possessed such a method of communicating with their distant troops, or despatching them to points of importance. As it was, when ordered out from the Tuilleries, the soldiery had no means either of finding their way back, or of forwarding information of their peril to headquarters.

In each of the sidewalks that line the larger sewers is an iron rail. Upon these cars are run for various purposes. Sometimes to convey away the more solid part of the city garbage, sometimes to carry vegetables and the carcasses of cattle and sheep to the markets, and again they are employed in clearing out the drains. On this occasion they served a more obviously useful and agreeable end, in forming the track of a line of six neat little carriages that bore the invited guests on their tour of inspection. Each of these was fitted for the accommodation of fourteen persons. Four faced the engine—if that term may be properly applied to the biped power that drew us—four ride with their faces to the less attractive point of view, while between these extended two benches with the same back on a line with the rails on which sat six persons, three fronting one wall and three the other. It was altogether a neat economical and comfortable arrangement. The cars were handsomely painted and tastefully fitted up, and bore at each corner an elegant brass lamp with a large glass globe. These were filled with kerosene, and shone as brightly as the full moon. They looked much more stylish on their pedestals than those which many families are wont to read by in New England. One after another the little wagons for which we were waiting were drawn forward like a perambulating firework—a *feu de joie*—from the long cavern in which it was hidden and the passengers rapidly seated themselves. It was then drawn forward to join those that awaited it to

complete the train. Each was pulled by two men, attached to ropes, while the same number propelled it from behind. A conductor in official badge went before and off we started. The track was rather rusty and the men perspired profusely with their labors, though perhaps the hope of *backsheesh* opened the pores somewhat more easily than usual. At first our progress was slow, but soon a little impetus was gained, and on we went stemming the turbid and sluggish current, thicker and fouler than that of the Ganges, that flowed beneath us; the Lethe of a great city bearing slowly to the sea the cast off slough of its daily renewed life. For a short distance we followed the main line leading under the Boulevard de Sebastopol.

From the point of juncture with the Rue de Rivoli its vast tunnel gradually faded away into the heaviness of thick darkness. At our right disappeared one arm of the latter sewer and no eye could penetrate its dense gloom. Only here and there the faint splash of water distantly falling, but one voice of nature to the silence around us, while overhead the unceasing tide of travel poured full and free with a noise "like thunder heard remote." Here we halted for a minute while car after car slowly turned the corner and proceeded up the Rue de Rivoli, when a new feature lit up the scene. The whole two miles and more of this stately avenue was illuminated at intervals somewhat great by lamps like those borne by our carriages. The eye could follow them till they became like sparks from the anvil in the far perspective and at length seemed merely a burning ray of glittering light. Their effect was increased by the fact that they were not sufficiently numerous to dispel the darkness, but served only as it were to make it visible and abundantly evident to the senses.

Slowly we passed on and on, while the loud rumble of busy traffic overhead became deeper and deeper. Our shining cars pierced the obscurity like great squares of light, lit up the mass of stones for a moment with an unwonted glow, and then glided forward, casting behind them phantoms grim and tall that danced a transient and fantastic reel upon the walls and ceiling, until gradually they mingled with the gloom of which they seemed the fitting offspring. At times we came suddenly upon a brilliant reflector that sent a broad shaft of light athwart our path, and brought on one after another the features of all in startling contrast with the dimness around. We looked at each other, thought of Charon's boat, wondered for an instant whither we might be tending, and then again traversed the gloomy night. Once in a while our limited vision enjoyed a near range and for a few yards we looked into the smaller tunnels, whose Lilliputian dimensions were swallowed up in the great Gulliver through which a world or a gleam of the purest daylight slid down through a distant grating, and we were touched for a moment by the cheerful chatter of human voices. Now and then water, with ceaseless ooze, dripped down narrow stairways, which gave access to the sewer, and cold, sticky and clammy seemed the blood of death, as it clung to the stones, as if loth to part. Leaving viscerous and snail-like traces of its trail on everything it touched, and casting a dank vapor like a shroud around it, it crept towards its grave. And still on we mounted towards the source of the muddy torrent, and silent clove the silence. Only once when the water bed mounted higher than the walks on either hand the heavy tramp of human footsteps were added to the scene, and feet that had descended noiselessly before dashed heavily the water on either hand with a monstrous regularity that at length appeared to make the silence more intense. In abodes like this felony has not unfrequently found a refuge, and red-handed outcasts driven from society and hunted by outraged justice have lived a life of gloom like that of their own souls. Here they have fought, here they have died, and their blood, accursed of all, has vitiated even the cold putrescence into which it fell. But now these Ishmaelites of the sewers have disappeared before the onward march of humanity, and Paris and London, in providing for the health and thrift of their citizens, have deprived crime of one more frequent refuge.

At the corner of the Rue Royal the railway came to an end, and we descended from our seats. The gentle-

men pursued their way on foot along the walk on the right of the tunnel, like wandering souls on the dreary banks of the Styx. For the ladies boats, lighted like the cars, had been provided, and they quietly stowed themselves away. The boatmen rowed off one after another as fast as they received their freight. The rest of the way was but short, and ere long we came to an iron stairway like that at the entrance of the sewer. Up this we mounted, and before us stood the majestic and classic church, or rather temple, of the Medelaine, "bosomed high in tufted" sycamores, and glorious in the evening sun. We had begun our descent in the grove that surrounds the fountain in the Place du Chatelet. Between these two oases, which stand amid the wastes of a vast city, and enliven its arid heartlessness and the profitless struggles for a barren existence, our caravan had quietly glided along in the darkness. Entering at the door of a theatre, we had come out at that of a church. It was no unfit illustration of many and many an existence in the resort of the pleasure, which, lavishing its early years and the vigorous and abundant blood of youth on worldly and sensuous delights, brings its exhausted age to the threshold of the Almighty, and thus seeks to secure a salvation richly forfeited to justice, and invigorate the dregs of a wasted life by offering it at the shrine of religion.

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