

Mysterious Gargoyles of Notre Dame

FRENCH IN EVERY WAR DISTORT THESE
STONE FIGURES INTO CARICATURES
OF THEIR ENEMY.



Le Kronprinz.



Von Kluck.

The Penseur
Converted
Into The
Kaiser.

Francis Joseph.



Von Bulow.



Von Moltke.

BY STERLING HELLIG.

PARIS, June 13.—"It is the Kaiser!" say Parisians. The post card circulates. It is the Penseur ("the thinker") of Notre Dame, with just the Kaiser's moustache and casque added. He remains at once the Penseur and the Kaiser, as elusive, profound, unexplained and unexplainable as in 1593, when they added a goatee to make him a dead ringer for the Duke of Ferial. The Spaniards held Paris against the Bearnaise. They put a beard upon the Hairy Breast. They had no post cards, but they drew good pictures. "He is looking toward the Porte Neuve!" said the common people. And, precisely, it was by the Porte Neuve that Henry IV entered!

Today a short moustache upon the Hairy Breast makes him Von Kluck. A moustache added to the Snerer gives disquieting likeness to Von Bulow. In 1814 a similar touch revealed him Blucher. Wellington was the Biter of Rats, the Tsar Alexander the Incubus.

They are the Gargoyles of Notre Dame, the most mysterious objects in all Paris. Whenever Paris is at war the greater and more human Gargoyles are seen to bear strange resemblances to the leaders of the enemy. The Penseur is their chief. He leans and looks and thinks and thinks. Each, at his corner, stares, immobile, on a section of the landscape. It gets on the nerves of Paris.

Climb the towers of the cathedral. High up you come to this Gallery of the Roofs, whence, amid a population of gigantic beasts and birds and demons, you have Victor Hugo's famous birdseye view of Paris. Tourists are more struck by the strange creatures

carved in stone than by the shining city. "What are they?" ask tourists. "What have such monstrosities to do on a cathedral? George, look at that whiskered goat, five times as big as you!"

There are gigantic bulls and bears, a contemplative elephant on his hind legs, a vicious panther, owls and eagles 50 times as big as life. In vain, for centuries, have visitors inquired the meaning of the nightmare menagerie. In particular the "human" figures worry—demons, geni, Cyclops, Titans, of stern thought, sad dignity, unyielding purpose.

Calling them gargoyles explains nothing. They are not gargoyles. Regularly Gothic churches have their decorative roofscapes carved in similar grotesque shapes, known as gargoyles, just to spout off the rain water. Notre Dame has gargoyles also, but they pass unnoticed amid these vast creatures, simply named "chimeras." With their purpose unknown, their common attitude, in itself so peculiar, has led folks in all ages to ask finally:

"What are they looking at?"

And the populace of Paris answered always, in all ages: "They are looking at the mystery!" That there is an extraordinary something hidden about Notre Dame Cathedral has been known by the common folks of Paris for 600 years past.

Once I asked a butcher on the Parvis. "It is subterranean," he told me, "where astronomers made gold. In the revolution my grandfather helped hunt it; but it was too well hid."

"It's a secret closet, high up in the wall, filled with the jewels of kings," said an old woman selling cabbages.

"Once there was a stone crow, inside, pointing toward it." Victor Hugo knew about the crow. Four hundred years ago he made the shopkeepers of the Parvis whisper how Claude Frolo spent hours "calculating the angle at which the raven looked from the west porch to an unknown point inside the church where the philosophers' stone is certainly hidden, if it be not Nicolas Flamel's cellar."

A sad bird, immense, whose battlelike wings drape her like a mourning veil, is popularly called "The Widow." Her eyes seem to be fixed painfully on the east gallery of the Louvre. "John Bull," who, in his day, was identified with King George III, gazes with ruminating content on the Central Markets.

Waik round. The Carrion Crow and the Speaker look at two points along the same line. The eyes of the Elephant and Panther have stared for centuries along two other lines. The Goat and his side partner are fixed on the Parvis. The Wandering Jew leans, startled, looking straight into the river. The Two-Headed Dog has a double objective.

Men have actually carried theodolite and logarithm tables up there to measure exactly: "What are they looking at?" What could they hope to find on the spot? The ground of Paris has been dug and rebuilt a hundred times. The spot? The spot? Pan (identified with the Kronprinz) gazes intently into the back yard. The Goat, around the corner, looks down on a spot quite opposite. It is more complicated than that. A curious character, "The man of the cathedral," actually lived up here two months in 1913. He claims to have grouped the lines of vision. A pair always look upon the same spot, "probably to mislead the seeker," he

says. In two cases three gaze on the same spot. This was more interesting. But what about damaged gargoyles, who have lost their heads by weather, accident or purpose? Perhaps a bunch, originally, looked on the true spot.

Once there was a man who found it, unless, indeed, he were its originator. This was the famous Nicolas Flamel, reputed by Paris of his days to have accomplished "the great work." He appears first as a poor clerk of the Sorbonne, around 1355. Then suddenly, in 1382, Nicolas Flamel quit his poor student's room for a house built on his own plans, in which he gave free accommodations to a band of chosen disciples; and the secret luxury in which they lived for years was a marvel to the neighbors.

Time passed. Nicolas Flamel outlived his students. In his extreme

old age he made the extravagant liberalities to Paris churches which connected his name with the mystery of Notre Dame and confirmed his reputation as a repentant transmutter of metals and "Jewel moulder." Did he really? It is curious to note that the Renaissance came right after him, with its inexplicable increase of the world's treasure. Was it he who pointed the gargoyles? Victor Hugo tells, certainly, how half the alchemists of Europe dug vainly in Nicolas Flamel's cellar up to 50 years after his death. And his munificence to Notre Dame was notorious. Some say that the Penseur is his portrait.

So argue the dreamers of hidden treasure. The common people of Paris, however, do not make this error. They say, merely, that the gargoyles are "looking at the mystery!" And their mind connects hazily with a more por-

tentous figure and an older, grander reputation, more mysteriously bound up with the ancient cathedral. I refer to the Wandering Jew, who leans, so anxious, so intent, and yet so honest and benevolent, beyond the parapet! Some say Nicolas Flamel was his agent.

Time embroiders old traditions. Who knows what elements of a prophetic and persecuted race originated the popular figure of the Wandering Jew as a benefactor of the cathedral of Paris? Did he—banker, prophet, physician, kabbalist or poet-dreamer—point his gargoyles on greater than gold and jewels? It may be a library of lost learning, Greek and Roman classics, the secrets of kings or the relics of antique culture.

He is up there, amid his gargoyles—Isaac Laquedem, friend of Paris! Is it not curious that, every time

Paris is threatened, the greater figures of the gargoyles are seen to bear strange resemblances to the leaders of the enemy?

"Give them whiskers or a shave," runs the proverb of the common people. True enough, white sideburns starting from the nose transforms the Biter of Rats (who in 1814 was Wellington) to Francis Joseph, "who, having gobbled Bosnia, Herzegovina, Trieste and Trentino, is now trying to eat Serbia, too busy to keep a look-out!"

The Penseur (Kaiser), leaning, chin on palm, his elbows on the parapet, stares intent past the Plain of St. Denis toward Amiens and Calais, absorbed in his meditation, pondering his problem.

The Laugher (Von Moltke) watches the Champs Elysees, the River Seine, the Rouen road, where come the English armies. A smooth shave and the German casque complete the likeness of Von Moltke. Versailles is in his line of vision, where his father helped to crown the King of Prussia Kaiser. The confidence of his father's son is still upon the smiling face.

The Hairy Breast (Von Kluck) is startled, surprised, worried, his gaze fixed upon the Plateau of the Marne, from Lagny on to Ligny. A short, falling moustache over the alert and anxious mouth, a bristling haircut and alarmed eyes make a Von Kluck, young, alert and undismayed, but worrying the problem, as he stares toward Nancy. "What next?"

The Snerer (Von Bulow) has the hump. His watch is south. He looks toward Chartres and Orleans, into the garden of France, which Italy should overrun had she been faithful.

Pan (the Kronprinz) gazes into the back garden. It is beautiful, down there, amid trees, flowers and sculptures. A nice mamma sits beside her playing child. She takes out her gold watch to see the hour.

Around their towers the gargoyles keep their vigil. What they see afar no man may know. It is strange and curious that each one watches round the forts of Paris, some weak spot where an invading army might win through.

Is this the secret, Isaac Laquedem's warning?



The Blind Spinner of Tops

WHEN the new family moved into the house next door little Jack was much interested to find out whether they had any boys; and so from the parlor window he watched the furniture being carried in, also keeping an eye out for the members of the family when they arrived.

Presently he saw a woman, holding a little boy by the hand, come down the street, stop and speak to the moving men and then go into the house. The boy seemed very quiet, for he walked ever so slowly, with his head held very straight and looking neither to the right nor the left.

Jacky set him down for a "sissy boy," though he couldn't have told you exactly why he thought so. And, the whole rest of the afternoon the new little boy next door did not come out of the house.

"Jack," said Mamma a few days later, "you must be very nice to the little boy next door."

"Aw, Mamma, he's a little sissy," objected Jack promptly.

"No, Jack," replied Mamma very gravely, "he's blind."

Jack was silent for a moment. Then he spoke up:

"I'm sorry, but Mamma, how could I play with a blind boy?"

"Well," suggested Mamma, "you could tell him stories—some of the ones you read in your books—and you might describe what you see, a flower, a tree, a horse, a dog, whatever happens to be before you at the time. Just think, Jacky, he doesn't know what any of those things look like! Suppose you were that way, wouldn't you feel dreadful and lonely and wouldn't you be glad if any little boy who could see came to play with you?"

"Yes'm," answered Jack dutifully. "But, Mamma, he can't play baseball, or prisoner's base or marbles or—spin tops—or do any of the things all boys like to do!"

"I know, Jack, but that is just the point—and just the reason why you should be willing to sacrifice some of your time and give him a little pleasure. I'm surprised that my son is so selfish."

"All right, Mamma," Jack assented, "only not this afternoon, please, because the boys are all going to spin tops in the alley with you."

So, with a shake of her head and a look that made Jack feel very uncomfortable, Mamma agreed to postpone his visit until the next afternoon.

Then, the next afternoon, Jack hadn't been with the new boy ten minutes before he found himself very much interested. Richard, for that was his name, seemed to be able to do a surprising number of things that Jack had never even dreamed a blind boy could do.

At first, of course, the meeting between the two lads was very stiff and awkward; or, at least Jack thought it was. But presently he asked Richard if he didn't want him to read to him out of his story book. And Richard surprised him by replying that he had been reading all morning and preferred to be in the open air.

Reading? A blind boy reading? Jack could scarcely believe his ears. "You see," said Richard with a smile, "I'm just learning to read with the blind alphabet. The letters are raised and I understand, quite different from your A-B-C's in shape. I feel them with the tips of my fingers and can tell what they are. I can't read very fast, but I've been trying all morning and I'm tired. Let's go out and play."

"All right," agreed the astonished Jack. And then he added, "What shall we play?"

"Have you a smooth street near here—one with asphalt on it?" asked Richard. "If so, let's spin tops. Do you spin a top?"

Jack gasped. He was never more surprised in his life. A blind boy spin a top? Well, well!

"Yes, oh yes, indeed!" he hastened to reply. "There's an alley right by my house and it's as smooth as glass—all of us boys spin our tops there. I've got two in my pocket—do you want me to lend you one? But I've only one string."

"Oh, that's all right," answered Richard. "I have my own top and string, too. Come on, let's go. You don't mind walking slowly, do you, and telling me when I'm apt to run into anything? You see, after I've been there with you several times, I'll be able to locate every object and I won't have to bother you to guide me."

Which was another surprise for Jacky.

But the greatest one came when the boys reached the alley and Richard began spinning his top. He wound the string around it most expertly and a great deal more quickly and tightly than Jack could do. Then he seemed to possess a marvelous knack of making it spin.

Why, he could make his top "go to sleep" better than could any of the boys Jack knew. And he could make it "walk" and "hum" and climb up the string and do all sorts of wonderful things with it.

Indeed there wasn't a boy in the neighborhood who could spin a top as he could. Presently Jack stopped spinning his own and, with his own string hanging limply from his hand, he stood

watching Richard, amazed and fascinated.

And, before he knew it, he forgot all about Richard being blind!

From that day on the boys were firm friends and Jacky took care to introduce Richard to all of his friends, and they, too, liked him as well as he did.

In the Springtime

A PRETTY story is told of a very homely and awkward child, who, knowing she was so, became sullen and unhappy.

One day her teacher, an elderly lady,

heart. The plant was a bright promise of the unfolding of the girl's character. "Handsome is as handsome does," said the teacher, kissing her, "and character is far more important than looks."

A WISH. Papa was sitting by the table reading his evening paper. Generally, when he came across an item of interest he read it aloud to mamma. Little William, a typical "little pitcher with big ears," as a rule was not in the least concerned about the items his father read aloud. But the other evening he was mightily interested.

"I see, ma," said papa, "that the



HE STOOD WATCHING RICHARD, AMAZED AND FASCINATED.

put her arms around the child, and drawing her close to her said: "What ails you, child?"

"I am so ugly and stupid," the girl cried, "that it makes me miserable."

Then the teacher, leading the child into the garden, took a tulip bulb from the ground and placing it in the girl's hand, said: "This is for you. Plant it and tend it carefully."

The girl planted the ugly bulb, watched it and faithfully watered it until one bright, sunny day there came forth a tiny sprout which gradually grew into a lovely flower.

"Now what shall I do?" asked the girl of her teacher.

"Guard yourself as you did the bulb and who knows?"

The teacher's lesson was taken to

fishermen around Cape Cod have gone out of the whaling business and—

Up spoke William promptly: "Gee whiz, papa, but I wish you was a Cape Cod fisherman!"

WHAT'S GOOD IN SUMMER? Oh, Winter has plum-cake and citron and pie.

And spiced-bread and doughnuts—so goodie, oh my! But Summer has something far nicer than spices,

A Bit of American History

NEXT Thursday is the 17th of June and 140 years since the great battle of Bunker Hill was fought. This battle between drilled British soldiers and plain American citizens was a great triumph for the Americans, not because it was eminently successful, but because it proved that they could hold their own against the strong troops sent against them by King George.

Those brave Americans who fought that battle were simple farmers and plain workmen from the neighboring country places. They were men who came to assist the Massachusetts men fight the enemy.

On the 16th of June our brave men learned that King George's soldiers were going to take possession of this hill in Charlestown, which was a very important military position.

The king had made such laws, and the red-coats were carrying them into effect, as would soon deprive the American Colonies of their freedom. At first the Americans did not wish to fight, but when it came to submitting to unjust taxation they felt that they were ready to die for their rights. On the night of June the 16th they hurried to this hill and worked all night fortifying it for themselves. Imagine the surprise of the British next morning when they found themselves ousted.

They at once opened fire, and were still more surprised to find the Americans return their fire with such deadly force that they were compelled to run.

Then, headed by their skilled generals, the British soldiers again rushed on the enemy, and again they were driven down the hill with only one-third of their number destroyed. Still they rallied and came on a third time, and now the Americans, who had used up all their powder, saw they could not hold the hill. Quietly they went away, leaving the British to take possession.

The red-coats and their generals were so amazed by the courage of the American men that they did not think it wise to follow up this sort of victory and the Americans felt victorious in spite of giving up the fight, for it gave them an insight into their personal strength and courage.

When Benjamin Franklin heard of the fight and its results, he exclaimed: "England has lost her Colonies forever!" And so she had, for from the day of the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Colonies stood together, united into a Nation.

A Matter of Thirst. World's Work.

A commission in Russia, appointed by the Duma to study the liquor question in 1913, proposed that the following label should be placed on every bottle of vodka sold—an inscription said to

have been originally written by Count Tolstoy: "Man! Although thou hast bought this spirit, yet know that thou drinkest poison which destroys thee. Before it is too late, never buy another bottle."

Nothing Is Wasted

Pitter patter down the pane Drives the crystal Summer rain; First it waters leaf and bud, Then it makes the flowers bud; Then the sun shines out and my! Everything is crisp and dry.

But the rain has sunk below, For it's always on its way; In the earth, if you could look, It has joined a spring or brook, And the brook so merrily Dances off to meet the sea!

Then as fog all dense and gray Up it rises on its way; And the fog a-sailing high Makes the clouds up in the sky; Then the clouds are turned to rain That pitter patters down the pane!

GROWING. I'm awful tired of playing round Inside the garden wall; But mother says I can't go out Because I am too small.

I wonder how long it will be, And if I'll have to wait Until I'm tall enough to reach The latch upon the gate.

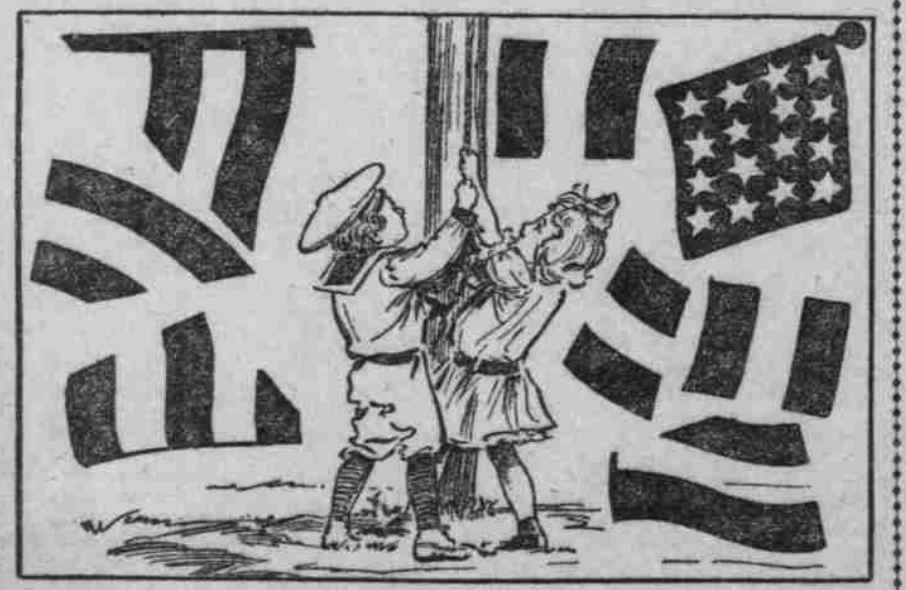
I know there're lots of things outside That I would love to see, Because the grown folks in the house Have read of them to me.

I hope it won't be very long, It's mighty hard to wait Until I'm tall enough to reach The latch upon the gate.

H. B. LEVERIN.

Solution to Flag Day Puzzle.

June 14 is Flag Day. Little Bonnie and little Tommy have made a flag and are raising it. Can you find the flag by putting together the black pieces? Do you know how many stars and stripes our flag really has?



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