

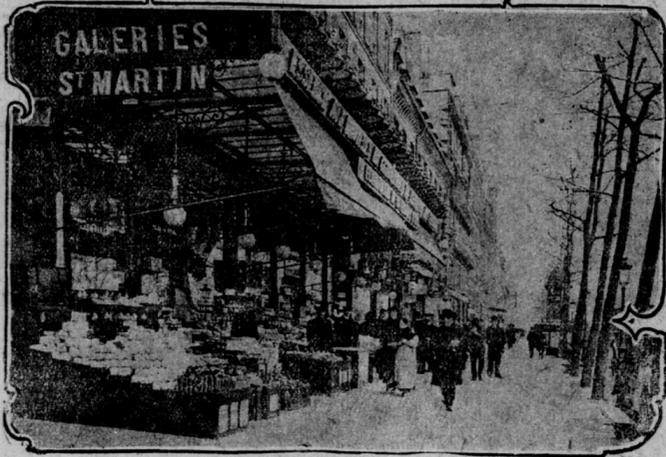
SOME QUEER STREET SIGHTS OF PARIS

Theatrical Advertising Column



AT FREQUENT intervals on the important streets of Paris there are placed at the edge of the sidewalk cylindrical columns in which street-cleaners keep their tools. The outside of the columns which are, of course, the property of the city, is utilized for the advertisement of the plays. All the theaters, from the most pretentious to the most obscure, aim to be represented on these columns, for there are crowds of Parisians whose knowledge of current theatricals is derived almost exclusively from this source.

Stores on the Sidewalk



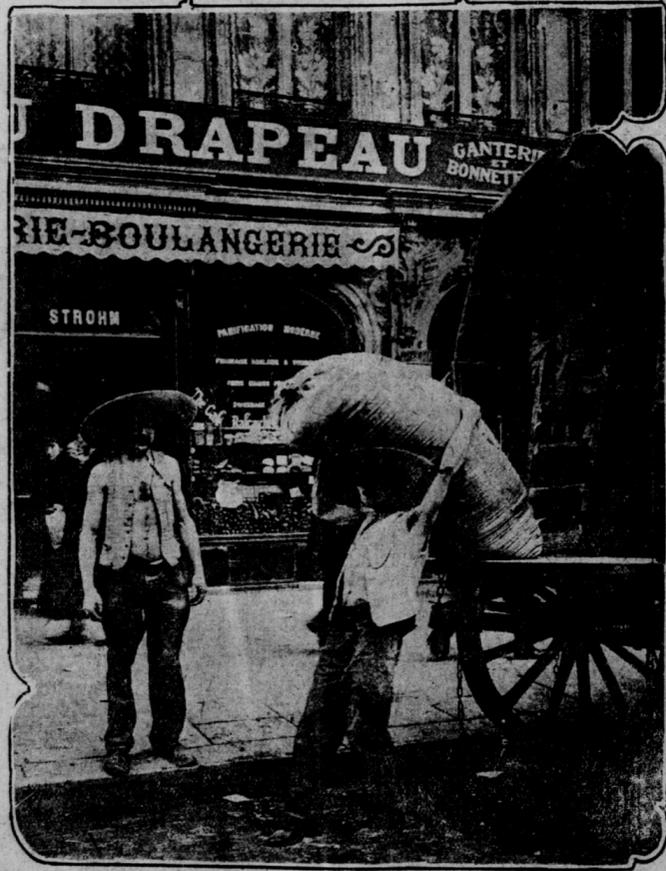
SUPPOSE a merchant on Market-street should use half the sidewalk for the display of his goods; suppose a grocer should pile cans of tomatoes and sacks of potatoes in front of his store, giving to the passers-by just room enough to squeeze past each other on the sidewalk, or forcing them to use the street. That is what happens in Paris, and no one complains, not even the officious policeman. It is all very well on the wide boulevards, but walk down the narrow streets and you will see people standing almost under the wheels of passing cabs, selecting a pair of slippers or a bolt of ribbon from the huge trays which stand on the sawbucks and extend over the sidewalk into the street. Even on the boulevards the sidewalks are blocked in front of large groceries between 8 and 10 o'clock in the morning. It is at this time that every thrifty housewife sets out with her net market-bag to make the purchases for the day.

The "Commissionaire" or Porter



MUCH of the work which here in America is done by boys, in the older countries falls to the lot of men. For instance, in Paris newspaper boys are almost unknown; mature men gain their livelihood in this way. Boy bootblacks do not exist. True enough there is little need for them, since it is the laudable custom of maids and men servants at private houses and hotels to black the boots of the family and the guests every morning. But if it rains and one must have his shoes shined a second time he is very sure to find at almost any corner a "commissionaire" with the necessary bootblacking equipment. The "commissionaire" derives his money from his usual task of carrying parcels. For this purpose he has a movable rack which he harnesses to his back. The amount of merchandise which he succeeds in carrying thus is astounding. The agreeable part is that he is always at his corner or in the wineshop adjoining, waiting for you to make use of him.

The "Flour Hercules"



NO VISITOR in Paris has understood, at first glance, why certain mighty individuals stalk about, overshadowed by gray felt hats whose brims are over three feet in diameter. These strange beings are usually to be discovered in bands of five and six, and they rarely move many blocks without making a descent on some hospitable cafe. No beer for them! a good big glass of red! Their insignia stands in rows propped upon canes against the wall. They are termed by knowing Parisians "les ports a la farine" (the flour Hercules), for their sole duty in life is to unload trucks of flour in front of the ubiquitous baker.

The Quay Bookstalls



OF ALL the delights of Paris none is greater than the privilege that great city affords of squandering hours and hours of valuable time at the bookstalls on the "quais." For miles along the Seine are spread those enticing cases of books, most of them worthless, but many of them just interesting enough to rally the flagging courage of the searcher. These miles of books on the Paris quais constitute, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the Tantalus of modern times. At night the books remain in the cases. The lids, lined with heavy tin, to keep out the rain, are fastened down by means of a long bar which extends over half a dozen cases. These are storm and burglar proof.

The Ice Cream Wagon



A CORNUCOPIA of ice cream, the delights of which young San Franciscans are just beginning to appreciate, is an old-established institution in Paris, and may be had for just one cent! Moreover, it is to be found at every street corner. But ice cream in another form appeals more strongly to Parisian school children; in the heavy shallow glasses, at one cent, or, if one is overflowing with riches, at two cents. No spoon is necessary. The glass is shallow enough so that even a very small tongue may reach the bottom. No one pays outright for his ice cream. He turns the wheel at the corner of the cart. This costs one cent. If the wheel stops at a lucky number he gets two cents' worth in a big glass. If he loses he gets a small glassful as a consolation prize.

The Newspaper Kiosks



WE benighted San Franciscans must walk blocks, sometimes, to get a newspaper or a magazine. But in Paris every block has from one to four kiosks where it is possible to find any newspaper or magazine one is likely to want. Numberless people gain a complete knowledge of current events and current jokes from a perusal of the periodicals spread out in front of a kiosk. The schoolboys pass the word along when a new number of a comic magazine appears. Some French jokes are more or less racy. Such a paper as the Rire usually prints a particularly laughable masterpiece on the front page, and the schoolboys, eight years old and upward, know just which kiosk displays the Rire first. Some papers publish a page full of "funny" pictures, and at the bottom of the sheet you read "Continued on the other side," and you must buy the paper to see the other side.

"Terrasse" on Boulevard Saint-Martin



EVERY cafe in Paris has what it more or less presumptuously calls its "terrace." The "terrace" is the half of the sidewalk in front of the cafe. No Parisian ever thinks of drinking his glass of beer, his "bock," inside when a seat on the "terrace" is empty. In the morning, naturally enough, few people have time to loiter at a cafe, but toward sundown every "terrace" in Paris is crowded. No good Parisian would think of going to dinner without his appetizer. This is usually a glass of absinthe, and even absinthe itself is insipid unless sipped in the open air. Then after dinner a glass of coffee on the "terrace" of a nearby cafe is an almost necessary aid to digestion. The tables on the sidewalk are never removed, and even in the winter months many good Parisians prefer to eat outside. Imagine eating a five course dinner on the sidewalk of a frequented boulevard with thousands of people streaming by and gazing at you! Yet so it happens.

Nurse Maids and Ribbons



IN Paris the prosperity of a family varies directly as the ribbon which hangs downward from the back of its "nourous" head. The "nourous" is the family nurse, and naturally mothers like to have their babies attended by good-looking and well-bedecked nurses. Hence if a family is rich it can afford to provide the "nourous" with an exquisitely dainty cap and a marvelous plaid ribbon. Along the fashionable avenues and in the parks the "nourous" fairly swarm, and the flowing ribbons, with their brilliant colors, make one think that a rainbow has tripped on something and fallen to earth in a heap.