

## French Humorous Artists.

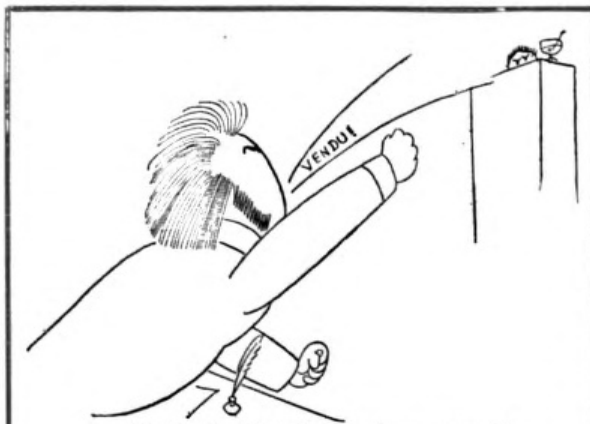
BY MARIE A. BELLOC.



NE of the peculiarities of a great caricaturist is that his humour resembles that of no one else, for in the province of humorous drawing imitation is by no means the sincerest form of flattery. No artist who sets out to enliven rather than to depress his patrons has much chance of success unless he can prove himself, whilst appealing to a wide public, original in the strictest sense of the word. To give an example: the work of the man

who is, perhaps, the greatest caricaturist now living, Caran D'Ache, could never for a moment be mistaken for that of one of his friends. It matters little whether he is translating the humorous side of the life led by

the soldier, the politician, the actor, or even the dog — in each and every case he contrives to present the ludicrous aspect of any given situation in a way that is entirely his own. To his honour be it said, in the majority of cases his sense of humour is aroused by incidents



1.—The Insult: "You have sold your party!"



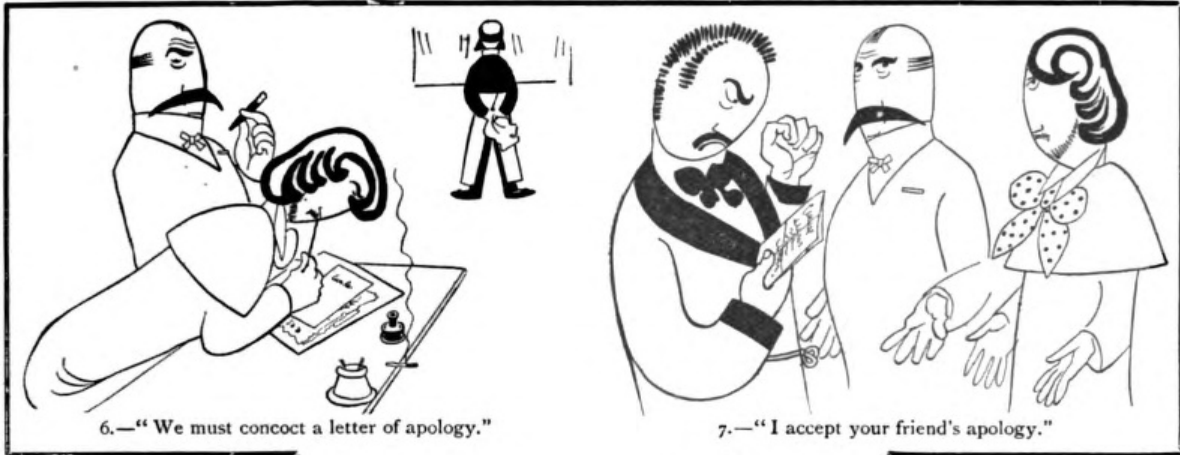
2.—"Two friends of mine will wait on you to-morrow."

3.—The two friends undertake to carry the challenge.

4.—"What is your weapon, Monsieur?"  
"The deadliest to be obtained."

5.—"This man means mischief. We had better have a glass of wine and consider what to do."

HOW BEST TO SETTLE A DUEL. BY CARAN D'ACHE.



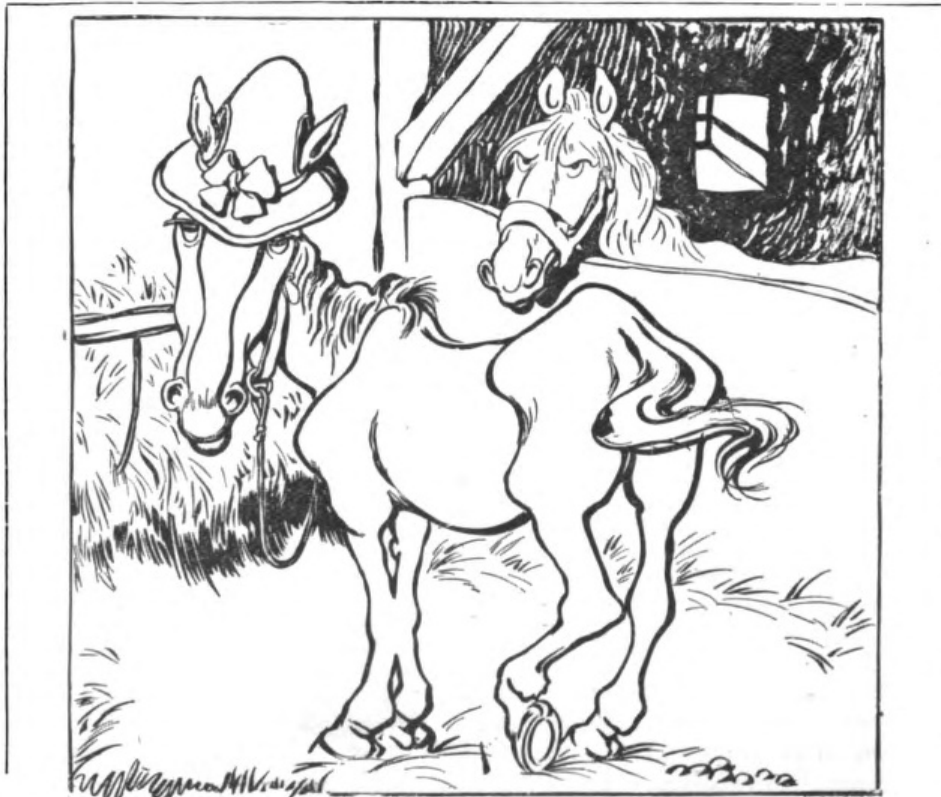
which furnish innocent and wholesome amusement to people belonging to every age and to both sexes.

M. Poiré, for his pen-name, Caran D'Ache, is only the Russian for “lead pencil,” really sees life entirely from the humorous standpoint. His friends complain that even when he is making a serious sketch por-



trait he produces something dangerously like a caricature of his sitter. He is a man of enthusiasms: his hero is Napoleon I., his heroine Marie Antoinette; and his delightful studio contains a wonderful collection of First Empire cartoons

and a complete set of busts and portraits of the last Queen of France. Caran D'Ache



“My Paris hat makes them all jealous!”—BY CARAN D'ACHE.



AT THE DOG-TAILOR'S.—"No, that won't do at all. I don't want my little pet to look like a giddy little actress."—BY H. GERBAULT.

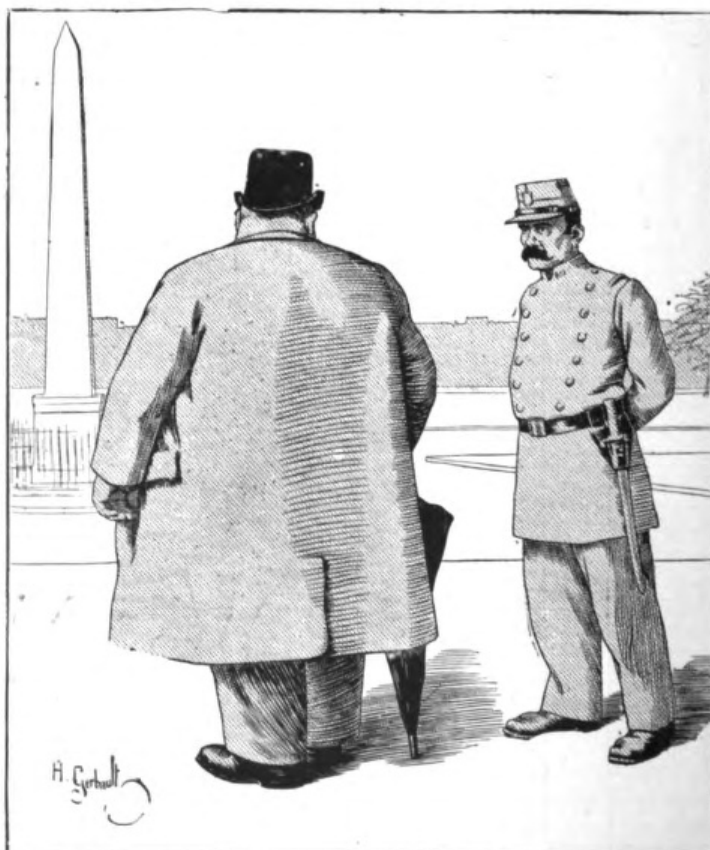
delights in the society of animals; he considers them quite as intelligent and quite as full of fine feeling as are most human beings. A noble dog, for instance, will often inspire him to do a dozen studies under different aspects and from different points of view.

As a rule the French pictorial humorist does not much trouble his head about the animal half of creation. To him the perfect study of mankind is Man, or perhaps one should say Woman; and accordingly the dog or cat which often appears with such excellent effect in the work of M. Gerbault is nearly always seen acting as an accessory to its mistress.

M. Gerbault, though still quite a young man, has attained a foremost place in the more important group of French caricaturists. The son of a well-known states-

man, his parents would naturally have preferred for him a more serious career than that of adding to the gaiety of nations. Even as a child, however, he drew humorous pictures, but it was not until after some years of real hard study that he became a frequent contributor to the French comic papers, and even now he finds time to exhibit work of a very different type from that by which he is most known.

M. Gerbault possesses the true French humour—that which has perhaps its highest exponent in Molière; thus, while quick to seize the absurd side of an incident, he does not seek, as do one or two other artists of his generation, to paint the grotesque and humorously horrible. His work is human and sane in feeling and expression, and he is equally at home in describing the humours of town and country; indeed, some of his most successful cartoons have been done during his holidays and away from Paris.



"Move on here. No crowd permitted!"—BY H. GERBAULT.

M. Abel Faivre is also a two-sided artist; that is to say, he is almost as well known for his portraits and serious work as he is for his grimly mordant cartoon satires. It has always been said that pathos and humour are closely allied; M. Faivre goes a step farther, and declares that the grotesque and the terrible are generally found side by side. A glance at his work makes this more clear than pages of explanation could make it.

The name of M. Albert Guillaume is well known outside France, for he has more than once contributed excellent drawings and caricatures to English and American periodicals, and in 1899 his little exhibition entitled "Bonshommes Guillaume" was one of the big successes of the Great Exposition.

M. Guillaume comes of a family of artists, and his sister, Mme. Lami, is almost as well known in France as he is himself; indeed,



AT THE SEASIDE.—*Darby to Joan*: "Cheer up, old woman. You're doing better than last year, and you will be able to swim quite well by the time we celebrate our golden wedding."—BY A. FAIVRE.

Although the French character is supposed to be so remarkably gay and cheerful, there is in France a large public which appreciates the striking and peculiar individual talent of this young artist. "To my eyes," he observes, half apologetically, "the absurd and the horrible walk as it were hand in hand. I see life thus, and I often find that what amuses other people simply seems to me stupid. To me, I can but repeat it, life is either wholly ideal or wholly grotesque." M. Faivre is not yet five-and-thirty; he has been devoted to art from earliest youth, and has studied really hard. He is a painter first, a caricaturist afterwards, but no sketch, however slight, of French humorous art could be considered adequate without some allusion to the very peculiar satirical talent of this young artist.

she may claim to be the only woman caricaturist of our day, though she does not give herself up entirely to humorous work.

M. Guillaume began exhibiting when only seventeen, and then he became a soldier for close on ten years. Even during this long period he remained in touch with his old friends and published some amusing albums, one of his most successful being entitled "Lawn Tennis Throughout the Ages." M. Guillaume is, perhaps, the most hard-working of modern French artists. His fertility is amazing, and he never goes out without bringing back half-a-dozen good ideas for cartoons and posters. At one time he made his studio literally out of a large cellar of his own and his brother's delightful house, which, though situated within a stone's throw of the



THE COUNTRY IN PARIS.—BY GUILLAUME.

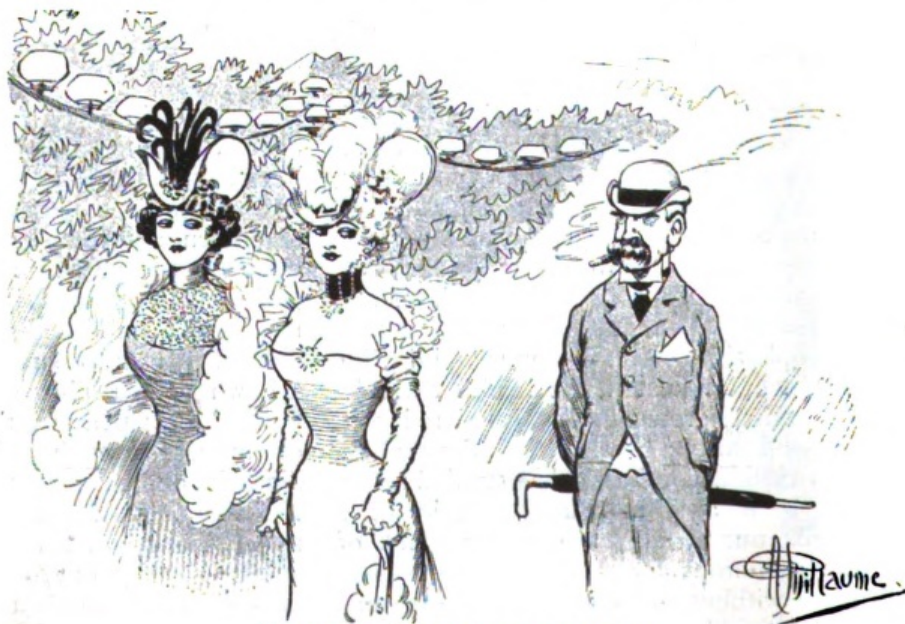
Luxembourg Garden, might be a hundred miles from the centre of a great capital. In this curious workroom, lined with valuable tiles, on which were gummed many of his drawings and those of his friends, M. Guillaume worked night and day. Now, to the joy of his family, who did not approve of his thus trying his eyes—for electric light was naturally the only illuminant of this peculiar studio—he has arranged for himself an airy *atelier*, from the windows of which he overlooks the leafy gardens of those Parisians who have the good fortune to dwell in the most picturesque quarter of the town.

Mme. Lami shares her brother's strong sense of humour. She is a delightful and accomplished artist, and during years of her life, when a painter of delicate, miniature-like portraits, it never entered into her mind to turn her pencil to a humorous use. Since her first essay of the kind she has found herself

obliged, almost against her will, to go on with this kind of work, for, as we are all only too well aware, the world asks for nothing better than to be perpetually amused, and Mme. Lami's quaint, humorous studies in femininity have an ever-increasing public.

"As far as is possible," she said to me, "I am inspired by actual facts and incidents, and doubtless that is why I have been so successful. To give you three examples, one of my most successful drawings, that in

which one woman says to another, 'How little I thought I should ever become fond of you! Why, my husband told me you were so very beautiful!' was actually said to me by one of my best friends. Again, another very successful cartoon representing a little boy, just home from the exhibition, Darkest Africa, running up to his mother, who is nursing the baby, with the words, 'Oh, mamma, do let our next baby be a black one,' was taken from life, for the hero of that episode was a little lad well known to me.



PARIS IN THE COUNTRY.—BY GUILLAUME.

Again, the cook who, on hearing her mistress call her any number of hard names, turned round and remarked, coolly: 'Dear me, ma'am, I thought you were talking to yourself,' is also an acquaintance, and a valued one, for she has become quite a domestic type through my drawings.

"From my point of view," she added, "women lend themselves to caricature even more than men do. A woman comes across so many absurd things in her progress through life. I am not often tempted to caricature the men I meet, but I delight in reproducing, if only for my own amusement and that of my brothers, the little humorous incidents which brighten my existence from day to day."

"And do you consider, madam, that the ordinary caricaturist is fair in his delineation of woman?"



THE IDEAL AND THE REAL.—*Lady* (reading): "And when Prince Charming advanced towards the lovely lady of his dreams—"  
*Housemaid*: "Please, miss, they've come for the washing."—BY MME. LAMI.



MISTRESS AND MAID.—*Lady*: "Now you know what I think of you. No name would be too bad for you."  
*Cook*: "Dear me, ma'am, I thought you were talking to yourself all this time."

BY MME. LAMI.

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"Yes and no. The French humorist is too apt to see the stupid and silly side of the woman whose character he attempts to sum up in a few lines and in a few words. Not often are they as happy as was the humorist who, seeing a young couple enjoying a day on the river, luckily for himself overheard the following remark, made by the lady: 'How lovely this is! If you or I were to die I should retire to the country!' That deserved to be immortalized. But too often the man humorist is never happier than when he finds occasion to turn even a pretty woman into ridicule; he does not like to think that she has intelligence as well as beauty. Again, many people are glad to deny a pretty woman a sense of humour."

But when all is said and done Mme. Lami thoroughly appreciates the admirable work done by her brother and his friends, and she enjoys—as, indeed, what woman would not?—her peculiar position as the only woman caricaturist whose work is constantly published side by side with that done by the masters of her craft.

Among the younger artists who may hope to make twentieth century reputations quite as great as those of their predecessors, the Italian caricaturist, Capiello, deserves special mention, for he has struck a really new note, and, though he has only been in Paris three or four years, his cartoons are eagerly asked for and accepted by the leading comic papers.

M. Capiello made his *début* as a designer of pictorial posters, but, even when helping to spread the fame of some light beer or new safety lamp, his sense of humour was always very present, and accordingly he was told to turn his attention to what may be called, although a contradiction in terms, serious caricature. To an English eye his work vaguely recalls, without in any way imitating, the *Vanity Fair* type of cartoon. He seems to possess an instinctive knowledge of the humorous points of any man or woman who becomes, willingly or unknowingly, his sitter for the nonce. This is why his drawings have attracted wide atten-

tion among artists. "A little more, and he might become the modern Velasquez," was said of him by a well-known art critic.

One fine morning, not content with the possibilities offered by pen, pencil, and palette, Capiello turned his attention to sculpture, and his humorous statuettes of well-known people made even more sensation than his cartoons and portrait-albums had done. Though only a few inches high, each of these statuettes gives to those who have known or who have often seen the person whom it is supposed to represent a startlingly vivid idea of the young Italian artist's sitter, particularly those done by him of Yvette Guilbert and Jeanne Granier. Indeed, it would appear as if M. Capiello had really achieved, what at this date of the world's history would almost seem to be impossible—namely, a new medium for the interpretation of humorous art!

As yet his fellow-caricaturists have been content to admire his work, and he may be said to have a monopoly

of the humorous statuette; but, doubtless, soon his invention, for invention it certainly has been, will be adapted, if not copied, and a new terror will be added to the existence of those whose careers make their faces and figures familiar to the man in the street!



RÉJANE.  
BY CAPIELLO.