

BY EDOUARD CHARLES.



A CEMETERY for dogs, cats, and domestic pets generally, from a canary to a monkey. Outrageous! Splendid! Of course, as the matter strikes you so you fit the exclamation. Different persons see it in different lights. Lovers of the truest friend of man will disagree with the opinions of those to whom a dog is always a dog and never anything else, fit only for more kicks than crusts during life and the river or the gutter in death. And those interested in the public health will disagree with them likewise.

From the hygienic point, at least in the case of the more substantial and domestic animals, such a cemetery is necessary; but whether or not it is sensible, or in good taste, to go so far as to erect monuments, more or less costly, inscribed with affectionate epitaphs, is a moot point; apart from the fact that it is the outcome of sentiment and a well-stocked purse. London has its burial-ground for the pet dogs and cats of the wealthy close to Hyde Park; in Brussels there is a cemetery for this purpose in the Laeken Park; but it is in Paris, where nothing is done by halves that is worth doing at all, that will be found the finest of all

animal graveyards, and this notwithstanding that it is the newest.

La Nécropole Zoologique, as the spot is named, is situated some short distance outside the capital itself, at Asnières, in the centre of the River Seine. The notorious *Ile des Ravageurs* would, undoubtedly, always have been kept fresh in the memories of Parisians by the terrible tales of Eugene Sue concerning Parisian suburban life. It was a frightful place in the days of which the noted author wrote—a social cancer; its inhabitants were beasts in human form—thieves and murderers of both sexes in whose hands the lives of honest men were not worth a moment's purchase.

Time and a determined police, however, have changed all that, and to-day no more peaceful spot than this *Ile des Chiens*, as it has been rechristened, could be imagined. Far from the madding crowd, away from the noise and bustle of the busy world, surrounded by tall trees which cast a welcome shade over the ground when the sun shines warmly and tempers the breeze to the sweet-smelling flowers when the wind blows across the river, it is an ideal nook for the purpose to which it has been devoted.

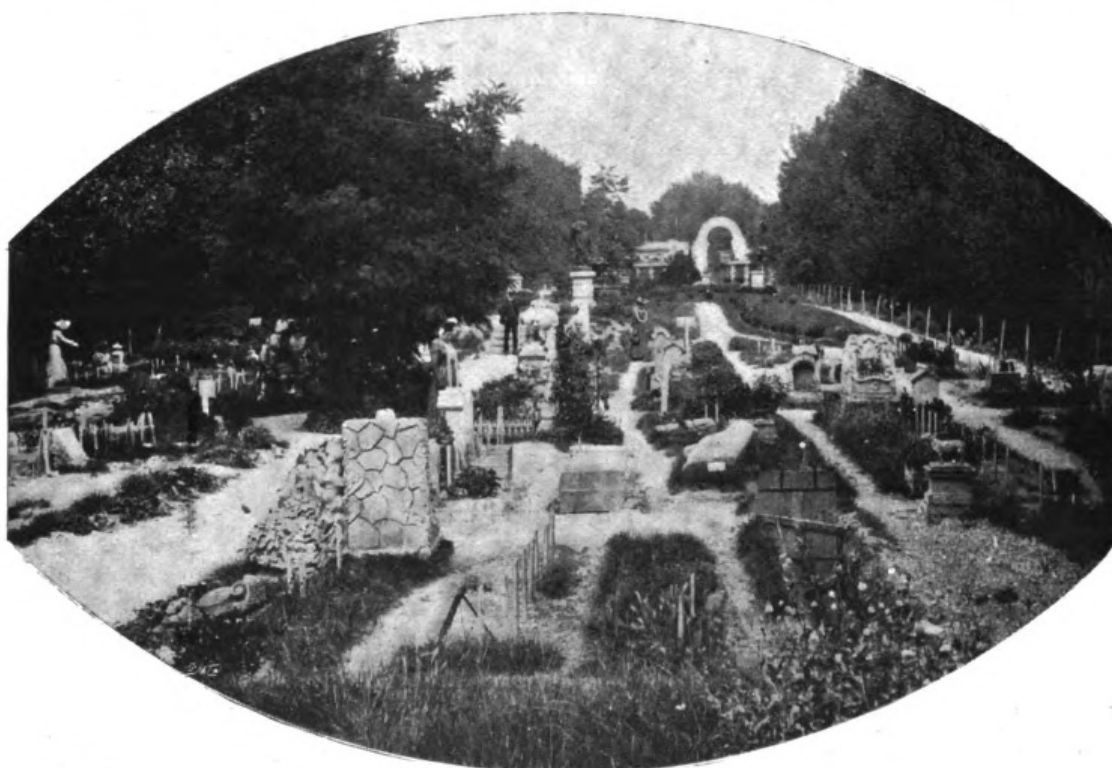
Whatever can be said on sentimental

grounds against the innovation, its success manifests beyond doubt that it fills a long-felt want; for, although the *Société Française Anonyme du Cimetière pour Chiens et autres Animaux Domestiques* was only founded a couple of years since and the cemetery itself only opened last year, some hundreds of persons have already displayed in a very material manner their devotion to and remembrance of deceased pets.

When its founder mooted the scheme abroad he had excellent data to go upon, and he appealed both to sense and sentiment, and we must not omit gratitude, of which sentiment was the outcome. The canine population of Paris runs into 150,000. The average life of

the waters of the Seine became polluted, and in the gutters of the city itself and outside the fortifications the dead were deposited by night. It is a difficulty the municipal authorities have done nothing to cope with even to-day, but they pay annually a sum of no less than 4,000 francs for the recovery of dogs' bodies.

With a view to ameliorating this sad condition of affairs and providing for those whose sentiments prompted them to give animals that had perhaps been their life-long companions decent interment, Mr. Georges Harmois, a well-known French littérateur, philanthropist, and lover of animals, proposed *la Nécropole*



From a

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CEMETERY.

[Photo.

a dog is eight years, and the death-rate is 12 per cent., or 18,000 yearly. By law they should each be interred; an Act of Parliament passed in 1850 rendered it a punishable offence to dispose of a dead dog other than by burial. But it did not provide a public burial-ground. Persons who had private gardens and a regard for their deceased pets, if not for the law, buried them therein, but the life of Paris did not and does not provide a garden for every house, so even those who would have liked to prove themselves law-abiding citizens had perforce to tip the *concierge* to see that the body was judiciously disposed of. As a consequence

Zoologique. The suggestion received moral and financial support from many prominent persons, both in literary and sporting circles; Emile Zola expressed himself as particularly in favour of the proposition, while Madame Durand, proprietress and editress of the only daily newspaper in the world run by women for women, interested the ladies of France in the scheme. So the "Dogs' Burial Company" was formed with a quarter of a million of francs capital, divided into shares of 100 francs each, and the first step was the purchase from the city authorities of the *Ile des Ravageurs*.

To-day it is quite a beautiful little park,

decorated with innumerable tombs and grave-stones, and resplendent with beautiful blooms, and as an object of curiosity certainly well repays a visit. The photograph which forms the heading of this article shows the handsome stone façade and gateways which strike the eye on approaching the place. The gates are kept closed, for admission is not free to the general public. A source of revenue to the company is the entrance fee of ten sous. To the right on entering is the picturesque lodge of the caretaker, where visitors purchase their tickets, and for an extra thirty centimes a copy of the company's journal, *L'Ami des Chiens*, which is published periodically and serves as a history of the cemetery and guide thereto. To the left is the office where are kept the archives of the company; portraits of celebrated dogs adorn the walls, and there is also a library consisting almost entirely of works and publications on dogs and their doings.

But what attracts the visitor more than either lodge or office is the enormous stone monument depicted in the accompanying photograph. It is the largest and most imposing example of the

sculptor's art to be found in the grounds, standing as it does some 30ft. in height, and it may, in fact, be described as the chief object in this exhibition. It was erected shortly after the opening of the cemetery to Barry, a great St. Bernard, the most celebrated of all the rescue dogs that have worked in the hospice on Mount Bernard. This noble animal saved in his time the lives of no fewer than forty persons who had been caught in storms on the mountain, and to the great regret of the monks sacrificed his own life in attempt-

ing to save the forty-first. His intelligence was almost human, and the story of his achievements during his twelve years' service would make a very interesting volume. One day whilst out with one of the brothers he obstinately refused to follow the monk along a certain route, but insisted upon making a détour of some distance to reach the desired goal. The good man gave in to the whim of the dog and had reason to be thankful for so doing, for even as they made the long détour an avalanche came down the mountain right across the path the monk would have taken.

In the photograph it will be seen that the dog has been sculptured with a child on his back, and thereby hangs a story—the story of what is regarded as being the most remarkable accomplishment

of this sagacious animal. While out on the mountains one day he found, partially buried in the snow, already deep in that slumber which runs silently into death, a child of very tender years that, losing its way, had fallen down in sheer fatigue. Already the child was half-frozen, and must surely have added another to the mountain's toll of victims had not Barry licked it and warmed it back

to consciousness and action. This done, the dog, by its actions, made it clear to the infant that it was to mount its back and clasp its neck, and in this position the animal carried its burden to the hospice.

How eventually Barry met his death is, indeed, sad reading. On a tempestuous evening a traveller, struggling up the treacherous rocky path, saw approaching him in the waning light, with jaws gaping apart, what he took to be a ferocious beast bent upon assault. He was quick to act, striking the unfortunate dog on the head with his iron



THE MONUMENT TO BARRY, THE ST. BERNARD WHO SAVED FORTY LIVES.
From a Photo.



From a

A VIEW OF SOME OF THE MONUMENTS.

[Photo.

Barry fell with a terrible wound in his head, his life's blood staining crimson the snows from which he had rescued so many unfortunate wanderers, and in the hospice a few hours later, to the unutterable grief of the monks and the keenest regret of the man who had dealt the fatal blow, drew his last breath.

But though Barry has been dead near on a century past his memory is cherished by the French, who have shown their gratitude for his services and admiration for his bravery in erecting this monument, than which none was ever more deserving. Round its base runs a small garden of

geraniums, red and white, and tall marguerites, while some climbing plant covers the back of the stone to its top.

Passing here one enters on to a broad, long terrace, beautifully laid out with flowers, at the end of which is the burial-ground itself. A general view of this will be gained from the above photograph, and a very quaint and pathetic sight it presents with its miniature tombs and tiny grave-stones, unnamed graves, and graves but newly made to order. As the full title of the company indicates, it is not only dogs that are here interred but also other domestic animals, and to meet requirements. the ground has been



THE MONUMENT TO EMMA.

From a Photo.

divided into four plots: there are the dogs' quarter, the cats' quarter, the birds' quarter, and a quarter for various animals. Amongst the latter is to be seen a stone which covers the grave of a monkey: "*Vendredi, le plus beau singe du monde.*"

The tombs are of many shapes, descriptions, and sizes; some very plain, a few very elaborate, the majority out of the common in appearance; and in most instances the attendant is paid to keep the graves in good condition by attending to the foliage and watering the flowers. They are either carved out or built up of stone, not marble, and in some cases support statues in bronze or stone, while others are adorned with photographs of the animals laid beneath. Generally the name and date of birth and death are given, more often than



JAPPY.
From a Photo.

dogs have fared better than any of the other animals, a particularly striking one being shown at the bottom of the previous page. The capital of a column supports a canopy, surmounted by a crown, beneath which a dog reposes at full length on a cushion. How beautifully this is carved will be readily seen from the photograph, which also shows the flower-covered grave at the base, railed round. Beneath the canopy a tablet at the back bears this inscription:

"*À la mémoire de ma chère Emma, du 12 Avril, 1889, au Août, 1900, fidèle compagne et seule amie de ma vie errante et desolée.*" This imposing erection was made to the order

of Princess de Cerchiara Picnatelli, who further informs all readers: "*Elle me sauvé la vie en Mai, 1891.*"



From a] A DOG-KENNEL GRAVE. [Photo.

not accompanied by some phrase or remark, cut out in the stone, conveying in what high esteem the animal dead and buried had been held by its master or mistress.

In the matter of handsome tombs the

Quite a different style of tomb is that of Jappy, who ended his earthly career in 1901 and exists now only in a stone image, sitting alert on a heap of boulders, on one of

which is inscribed—as expressing, no doubt, the sentiments of the animal's owner—a quotation upon Pascall, anything but flattering to mankind. It runs: "The more I see of men the better I like my dog," and gives one the impression that whoever was responsible for the building of this monument to a faithful canine companion had a very small opinion of the male sex.

Several of the monuments are in the style shown on page 718—*i.e.*, in the shape of dog-kennels. This one has been erected to the memory of five dogs, "*en souvenir de nos bons et fideles petits amis,*" and in the entrance to the niches stand the photographs of four of the quintet. A painted tombstone has been erected to "*Petit Mignon,*" who was "nothing but a poor dog, innocent and good, killed in the flower of his youth by



From a] AMIDA ZAWA. [Photo.



From a] PETIT MIGNON. [Photo.

a civilized savage"; while over the grave of Amida Zawa rises a huge monument of boulders, with a carved stone jar in a recess in the centre filled with sweet blossoms, and ivy trails over the whole. Amongst other curious inscriptions appearing may be mentioned "*Leda: Nous l'aimions de trop, elle ne pouvait vivre*"; "*Follette, 4 ans: Pauvre Follette aimée, aujourd'hui tu reposes sous ce parterre fleuri. Sur ton corps le printemps effeuillera des roses; mais tu le méritais, tu possédait un cœur.*"

Concerning the graves of the cats, canaries, parrots, etc., there is little to say, though the felines are represented in goodly number. One grave with tiny bushes round it bears a photograph of the deceased disturber of sweet sleep, and also a small statue, while on another grave reposes a family of cats in china. On one tiny tomb, in the quarter devoted to birds, an empty cage



A CANARY'S MONUMENT.
From a Photo.

tells a pathetic story of the one-time sweet-tongued occupant who will trill no more.

Funerals here vary in price just as with the undertaker who caters for our custom. An animal can be buried as cheaply as 5 francs, or as much as 500 to 1,000 francs can be paid, and this is merely for interment and includes no monument. A simple grave, without any permission to erect any monument, costs the lowest sum just mentioned, but



From a Photo. A CAT'S MONUMENT.

for 15 francs is granted a three years' lease of a piece of ground. In these cases the animals must be taken to the cemetery by their owners. For 25 francs, however, a five years' lease is obtained, while ten years' costs 50 francs, twenty years' 75 francs, thirty years' 100 francs, fifty years' 150 francs, over fifty years' 200 francs, and the high prices of 500 and 1,000 francs are charged for graves in exceptional situations, taken, of course, with the idea of erecting magnificent monuments thereon. From 25 francs upwards the charge also includes the transport of the deceased from the house to the cemetery in the official carrier-tricycle, ridden by a uniformed cyclist. At moderate prices the company also supplies coffins, takes photographs, and disinfects the apartment wherein the animal expired, and knowing that few people care to keep defunct

creatures near them, the company has also provided a place where the corpse can await interment at a charge of 3 francs per day.

Of course, no ceremony of any kind is permitted in connection with the burial at the grave-side, neither are there allowed on the graves any decorations which would be likely to give offence to religious feeling. Consequently it is a cemetery without a single cross, and though the graves are kept green and beautiful with growing flowers,

no wreaths, real or artificial, will be found thereon.