FRANÇOIS VILLON IN FRENCH AND ENGLISH

DRAMA AND FICTION SINCE 1877

by

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INTRODUCTION

François Villon, the vagabond poet of fifteenth century France, has long been a popular figure in literature. He has appeared as the central character in numerous novels, short stories and plays, his life has been used as the theme of operas and musical farces; and, at the present time, we see and hear him in the talking picture.

As early as 1500 there appeared a collection of verse called Le Recueil des repues franches de maistre François Villon et ses compaignons, the author of which, it is generally believed, is unknown. The Repues Franches along with two short anecdotes about Villon published by Rabelais in 1552, represent in written form a body of legend which grew up around François Villon.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries slight attention was paid to the works of Villon, but in the nineteenth century with the study of his poetry, there also developed an appreciation of his value as literary material. He, rather than Pierre Gringoire, is supposed to have been the prototype of the Gringoire in Hugo's Notre-Dame de Paris and in Banville's play, Pierre Gringoire. Royannez et Boulmier published a play in five acts under the title of François Villon (1865).
Edmond Membée in 1857 furnished the music for an opera about Villon written by M. Got, and in 1872 Th. Lajarte also presented Villon in an opera.

With the publication in 1877 of Longnon's *Étude Biographique sur François Villon*, writers had an opportunity that they had theretofore lacked of founding their characterization of the poet on something more than legend and his verse. This study concerns itself only with the works published since that date in French and English.

In France there have been since that time only two works of pure literature dealing with the life of François Villon. These are Pierre d'Alheim's *La Passion de Maître François Villon* (1900), and Francis Carco's *Le Roman de François Villon* (1926). Both are historical novels in which biographical facts are exactly portrayed. Alheim had the opportunity to profit by Schwob's study of the poet in his *Spicilège* (1896), as well as by Longnon's biography, and Carco was, moreover, able to consult Pierre Champion's *François Villon, sa vie et son temps* (1913).

English writers have usually given Villon's life and character a more imaginative treatment. Robert Louis Stevenson in *A Lodging for the Night* (1877), Justin Huntly McCarthy in *If I Were King* (1901), and its sequel,
Needles and Pins (1907), and D. B. Wyndham Lewis in Noel (1928) intermingle the romantic with the historical, and are, in this respect, like many of our American writers. The Glorious Rascal which McCarthy wrote in 1915, shows more seriousness of purpose than his two earlier works.

In American literature James Branch Cabell's In Necessity's Mortar (1904) and Robert Gordon Anderson's For Love of a Sinner (1924) interpret Villon's life and character with an appreciation of historical facts.

In spite of the labors of Villon's biographers which have shed light on most periods of his life, others are still obscure, and this is, no doubt, one reason why he has been made the central figure in so many works of imagination.

It is the purpose of this study to compare the François Villon of French and English drama and fiction, with the Villon revealed by his biography and his poems. The facts of his life and character will first be set forth as established in the Étude Biographique sur François Villon, by Auguste Longnon, in "François Villon" by Marcel Schwob (1), and in François Villon, sa vie et

(1) Schwob, Marcel, "François Villon", Spicilège, 1921.
son temps by Pierre Champion, and then compared with the François Villon presented in various novels, short stories, and plays published in French and English since 1877.
CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORICAL AND LEGENDARY FRANÇOIS VILLON

Part I. The Life of François Villon

François de Montcorbier, generally known as François Villon, was born in Paris in 1431. The date of his birth was long a subject of debate.

"Il y a peu de temps encore", says Auguste Longnon, in his Étude Biographique sur François Villon, "le seul indice avec lequel on put essayer de fixer cette date était contenu dans le premier vers du Grand Testament, écrit après le 2 octobre 1461 et dans lequel Villon déclare qu'il était alors dans sa trentième année; (1) aussi plaçait-on sa naissance en 1431, et l'on était même en droit d'ajouter qu'il était né entre le mois d'octobre 1431 et celui d'octobre 1432. Mais on possède maintenant une lettre de rémission datée de janvier 1456 (n. st. ) et qui, reproduisant évidemment les termes mêmes de la supplique de maître François, le disent 'sagifié de vingt-six ans ou environ.' Quel est le sens précis de cette expression à demi dubitative: 'ou environ?' Elle ne peut indiquer que deux choses, à savoir que le supplicant n'était pas certain de son âge à une année près, ou bien qu'il n'avait pas encore
vingt-six ans révolus; en un mot qu'il était alors dans sa vingt-sixième année; dans ce dernier cas, la lettre de grâce accordée à 'maître François des Loges, autrement de Villon,' permettrait de placer sa naissance entre le mois de janvier 1430 et celui de janvier 1431 (n. st.). Cependant, la prudence commande de n'user qu'avec une extrême réserve d'une indication aussi approximative que celle de ces 'vingt-six ans ou environ,' et nous attaehons une importance bien plus grande à la date de la récepción de François de Montcorbier comme maître ès-arts (mai-aôut 1452), date qui prouve que cet écolier, alors âgé pour le moins de vingt-et-un ans, était né dans l'été de 1431 au plus tard."(2)

The name of the poet has likewise been the matter of much discussion. Marcel Schwob agrees with other authorities in accepting François de Montcorbier. "C'est ainsi qu'il figure sur les registres de l'Université de Paris." However, "une lettre de rémission lui donne le nom de François des Loges, et il devint connu sous celui de François Villon."(3)

According to the most trustworthy biographers of François Villon the name of Montcorbier would seem to indicate that his father came originally from the province of the Bourbonnais. About this name Montcorbier,
Pierre Champion in François Villon, sa vie et son temps writes, "Tout au plus peut-on affirmer que le village de Montcorbier(4) encore habité au XVIe siècle, et sur lequel on voit aujourd'hui les vestiges d'une motte féodale, fut le lieu d'origine de ses aïeux paternels. Un grand nombre de Bourbonnais durent venir à Paris à la suite du mariage de Charles V avec Jeanne de Bourbon; nous verrons que la mère de François habita le quartier des Celestins très aristocratique alors, et où se trouvait l'hôtel Saint-Pol, résidence royale. Peut-être Montcorbier descendait-il d'un domestique de la reine? Ce qu'on ne saurait manquer du moins de faire remarquer ici, ce sont les relations qui s'établiront plus tard entre François Villon et le bon duc de Bourbon, qu'il nommera 'le mien seigneur'.(5)

As for his other names, "Il est possible", says Schwob, "qu'en acceptant le nom des Loges, au temps où il résidait à Paris, François de Montcorbier ne fit que suivre l'exemple de ces clercs qui, venant étudier à l'Université, abandonnaient leur surnom héréditaire et se laissaient désigner par le nom de leur lieu d'origine. Et si l'on remarque, avec nous, que tous ces clercs tiraient leurs noms d'un chef-lieu de paroisse et non d'un simple hameau, on n'hésitera pas à préférer,—en ce qui concerne le nom des Loges, attribué à Villon,—la paroisse des Loges-en-Josas,(6)du diocèse de Paris, à
toute autre localité parisienne de même nom, comme par exemple aux Loges, près de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, localité qui ne peut guère entrer ici en ligne de compte, puisqu'elle était seulement à cette époque une résidence royale. Ce n'est là qu'une hypothèse, mais cette hypothèse se vérifierait si l'on arrivait à constater l'existence d'une famille dite de Montcorbier dans la paroisse des Loges-en-Josas.

"Cependant, bien que la qualification de "parisiensis", donnée par le registre de la Faculté des arts à François de Montcorbier, puisse s'entendre d'une personne née dans le diocèse de Paris, notre conjecture peut être battue en brèche à l'aide des vers mêmes de Villon; car, par deux fois, le poète dit être 'né de Paris", ce qui concorde avec la mention 'de Parisius" que Maître Jean de Conflans a inscrite par trois fois à la suite du nom de François de Montcorbier, sur le registre des étudiants de la nation de France. Aussi, serait-il plus prudent, croyons-nous, de voir dans le nom des Loges un surnom que le père de Villon aurait légué à celui-ci en même temps que son nom patronymique."(7)

"L'origine du nom de Villon a été l'objet de plusieurs conjectures. Selon le président Fauchet, le poète aurait été ainsi surnommé 'pour les tromperies
qu'il fit en sa vie'; mais cette explication ne saurait être admise en face de la forme 'de Villon' (8) que donnent plusieurs textes, forme qui permet de classer cette appellation parmi les surnoms empruntés au lieu d'origine: du reste, il paraît à peu près certain que le mot villon, au sens de trompeur, ne remonte pas au Moyen-Age et qu'il est précisément dû à la mauvaise réputation dont jouissait François de Montcorbier. Quoi qu'il en soit, l'assertion de Fauchet a presque été généralement admise jusqu'à nos jours. Cependant quelques auteurs, ... mais ceux-là étant simplement des géographes, n'ont vu leur sentiment reproduit par aucun des commentateurs du poète, ... ont prétendu que maître François était né dans un village du diocèse de Langres du nom de Villon, situé à un peu plus de quatre lieues à l'est-nord-est de Tonnerre.

"Ces diverses opinions pouvaient être facilement réfutées à l'aide d'une lecture quelque peu attentive des écrits de Villon. Ceux-ci ne laissent en effet aucun doute sur la véritable origine du nom que François de Montcorbier illusra. Il fut certainement donné au malheureux écolier en raison de ses relations avec un protecteur de sa jeunesse, qu'il a soin de nommer dans chacun de ses Testaments avant tous autres légataires. En 1456, ce personnage est appelé d'abord, à cause de
la mesure du vers 'maistre Guillaume Villon';(9) puis plus tard, en 1461, 'maistre Guillaume de Villon.'(10)

François's father was poor. That is "à peu près la seule chose qu’on en connaisse: il n’existait plus en 1461 et, sans doute, il était mort depuis longtemps déjà."(11)

Si ne suis, bien le considere,  
Filz d’ange, portant dyademe  
D’estoille ne d’autre syderer.  
Mon pere est mort, Dieu en ayt l’ame.(12)

François Villon's mother was a good woman, "pieuse et illettrée". Auguste Longnon says that "elle était "paroissienne" d’une église . . . qu’on serait tente tout d’abord de reconnaître dans l’église des Célestins, . . . si l’on oubliait que celle-ci ne peut être confondue avec une église paroissiale."(13) To which Champion retorts: "elle était en effet paroissienne, non pas d’une église, mais d’un monastère, d’un moûtier . . . La mere de François Villon était donc certainement paroissienne de cette "notable" église des Célestins".(14)

She was still living in 1461 when Villon wrote for her the "Ballade pour prier Nostre-Dame". We may surmise that she was a native of Anjou, since her brother, the uncle of François, was a "religieux dans une abbaye située à Angers".(15)
"Elle se montrait dévote à la Vierge, craintive
de l'Enfer, désireuse des joies du Paradis: elle vécut,l'humble chrétienne, dans l'espérance de bien mourir en
sa foi."(16)

La joye avoir me fay, haute Deesse,
A qui pecheurs doivent tous recourir,
Comblez de foy, sans fainte ne paresse;
En ceste foy je veuil vivre et mourir.(17)

"La pauvre femme, que de chagrins son fils lui
réserva par la suite! Mais aussi avec quelle ardeur
il se retourna maintes fois vers elle. Il lui a donné'
ce beau nom de 'château'. C'est vrai que voilà un
puissant abri, la douce poitrine et les deux faibles
bras d'une mère"(18)

Qui pour moy eut douleur amere,
Dieu le sçait, et mainte tristesse ... (Autre chastel ou forteresse
N'ay ou retraire corps et ame,
Quand sur moy court male destresse,
Ne ma mere, la povre femme)! (19)

In 1435 and perhaps even earlier, "comme elle
se sentait pauvre et délaissée, elle prit un jour par
la main son petit garçon qui se nommait François. Elle
traversa la Seine et vint le présenter au chapelain de
Saint-Benoît.

"Aventure pleine d'inconnu qu'un si jeune enfant
tombant dans la maison d'un ecclésiastique ordonné, de
Maître Guillaume de Villon was a native of the village of Villon, "à cinq lieues de Tonnerre, au diocèse de Langres. Il était né au plus tard en 1400 et avait étudié le droit, entre 1421 et 1425, dans les écoles supérieures de la rue Saint-Jean-de-Beauvais, à l'enseigne des Connins. Dès 1425 il est dit maître ès arts et reçu bachelier. Il reviendra bientôt dans ces mêmes écoles enseigner le décret comme professeur."(23) "En 1423, Maître Guillaume de Villon fut pourvu de la chapellenie de Notre-Dame, dans l'église paroissiale de Gentilly, près Paris, vacante par suite du décès de
maître Guillaume de Marle, le dernier titulaire: bénéfice modique puisque le revenu de cette chapellenie consistait en une redevance de blé mouture sur le moulin de Gentilly."(24)

"Mais déjà depuis plus d'un an, on voit que Guillaume de Villon était en rapport avec la communauté de Saint-Benoît-le-Bétourne(25) dont il faisait sans doute partie. Il demeurait au cloître Saint-Benoît dès 1431, dans une maison aboutissant à la Heuze(26) de la rue Saint-Jacques; le logis de Mª Guillaume devait donc tenir aux charniers de l'église. En 1443, le 2 septembre, il était cité devant l'official; cette année-là, on le voit qualifié de chapelain de la chapelle de saint Jean, et il recevait de la communauté de Saint-Benoît, à charge d'une rente perpétuelle de 8 livres parisins, la maison de la Porte Rouge qui faisait le coin de la ruelle aboutissant à la rue de Sorbonne et regardait le grand portail de l'église. Maître Guillaume possédait en outre, dans la partie orientale du cloître, une petite maison ruinée, à l'enseigne de la Guiller."(27)

Maître Guillaume de Villon enjoyed the friendship of many influential "gens de robe et de finance". He frequently dined at the home of Jacques Seguin, Prior of Saint-Martin des Champs, "un religieux tenant bonne table
et recevant tout le Paris ecclésiastique et parlementaire d'alors."(28) "Mais ce qui frappe d'abord, c'est le nombre de procureurs et d'avocats au Châtelet. Il y a là maîtres Jacques Charmolue, Germain Rapine, Guillaume de Bosco, Jean Tillart, examinateur à la chambre criminelle, Raoul Crochetel, Jean Chouart, Jean Douxsire et d'autres encore, jusqu'à Jean Truquan, lieutenant criminel du prévôt de Paris. Voilà quelle était la société habituelle du chapelain de Saint-Benoît-le-Bétourné. On comprend dès lors que François Villon ait connu nombre de gens du Châtelet, outre ceux avec qui il eut relation par force, et qu'il ait entretenu commerce d'amitié avec le prévôt Robert d'Estouteville. On est moins surpris que le chapelain de Saint-Benoît ait pu tirer son fils adoptif 'de maint bouillon': on apprend par quelles influences François Villon put se faire accorder deux lettres de rémission pour le même crime, sollicitées sous deux noms différents, et comment il obtint gain de cause par un appel au parlement, dans un temps où l'appel était d'institution si récente et où les appelants réussissaient si rarement. Il est possible que Jean de Bourbon, Ambroise de Loré, peut-être même Charles d'Orléans aient intercédé pour lui; mais sans doute, le plus souvent, il eut recours aux amis de Guillaume de Villon parmi lesquels il fut élevé."(29)
Such was the environment into which François's protector introduced him, and with which he remained familiar, until in the year 1463 he left Paris forever. Mgr Guillaume did more for the boy than to bring him friends among the law courts; he cared for him and, contrary to custom in those days, gave him his early education at Saint-Benoît. (30)

"Sans doute le savant Mgr Guillaume lui donna sans effort cette instruction première que l'on trouvait dans les pédagogies: il lui enseigna le "Donat," et le "Dontrinal" d'Alexandre de Villedieu, c'est-à-dire la grammaire et la syntaxe latines. Mais, ce dont on ne saurait douter, c'est que le chapelain lui fit apprendre les belles histoires de la Bible, son Évangile, et qu'il lui conta les légendes des saints vénérés à Paris. Car Villon, qui se dira plus tard si paresseux de lire, témoigne ici d'une connaissance singulière." (31)

At the age of twelve he was eligible to enter the University of Paris. This he probably did. At least, several years later he received degrees.

We know by the poet's admission that he was not a diligent student.

Ho Dieu! se j'eusse estudie,
Au temps de ma jeunesse folle,
Et a bonnes meurs dedie,
J'eusse maison et couche molle;
Mais quoi? je fuyoye l'Escole,
Comme fait le mauvais enfant,
En escrivant ceste parolle,
A peu que le coeur ne me fend. (32)
His wisdom did not come from books. Rather, "il fut, comme il l'a dit dans des vers difficiles, l'écolier de la misère et de la douleur:"(33)

Or est vray qu'après plainotsz et pleurs
Et angoisseux gemissements,
Après triestesses et douleurs,
Labeurs et griefz cheminemens,
Trouve mes lubres sentemens,
Ezguisez comme une pelote,
Mouvoir plus que tous les Commens
D'Averroys sur Aristote.(34)

It is apparent, from later details of his biography, that his work as a student hindered him in no way from leading an adventurous life. Student life at the University of Paris in François Villon's day was anything but peaceful. "L'Université en 1452 était dans un désordre très grand, et François Villon y entra au moment où les écoliers y devenaient rebelles et tumultueux. Les troubles duraient depuis l'année 1444. Le recteur, sous prétexte qu'il avait été insulté pour son refus de payer une imposition, fit cesser les prédications du 4 septembre 1444 au 14 mars 1445, dimanche de la Passion. Il y avait des précédents, et dans une affaire de ce genre l'Université avait eu gain de cause en 1408. Cependant la justice laïque devint sévère; quelques écoliers furent emprisonnés, et malgré les réclamations de l'Université, le roi Charles VII fit juger le procès au parlement et menaça de poursuites les
auteurs de la cessation des leçons et sermons. Le cardinal Guillaume d'Estouteville fut délégué par le pape Nicolas V, afin de rédiger un acte de réformation (1er juin 1452). Mais les écoliers n'acceptèrent pas les nouveaux règlements. Ils s'étaient habitués à la licence."

(35) The following account of an affair which took place in 1451 will reveal the nature of many other like escapades.

"La première pierre, ils l'avaient rapportée sur le Mont-Saint-Hilaire; ils placèrent dessus une autre pierre longue. Tous les dimanches et les jours de fêtes, ils la couvaient d'un chapeau fleuri, parfois de romarin." (36)

Did François take part in this and like affairs? We have no positive proof, but here is the opinion of Pierre Champion. After discussing at great length the misdeeds wrought by students between the years 1451 and 1453, he continues, "Telle fut la période de troubles pendant laquelle Villon étudia en l'Université de Paris, et où l'on peut bien croire qu'il eut une part active." (37)

On the other hand, Longnon, when treating these years of Villon's life, attributes to him something quite different. "Cependant, à partir de 1452, Villon paraît avoir eu à son tour des élèves auxquels il put rendre quelques-uns des services qu'il avait jadis reçus de son maître. Ces élèves, du moins ceux qui étudiaient sous lui quatre ans plus tard, figurent dans ses poésies; et Villon, après son départ de Paris, les appelle ses 'jeunes orphelins'. Ils se nommaient Colin Laurens, Girard Gossouin, Jean Marceau, et les érudits ne les ont considérés jusqu'ici que comme de
jeunes malfaiteurs dressés au crime par Villon.\(^{(38)}\)

L'un d'eux figure en 1454 sous le nom de 'Girart Gossouyn le jeune, escolier à Paris', et il pouvait être le fils de 'Girart Gossouyn l'ainsné', alors notaire au Châtelet. Villon comptait donc parmi ses écoliers au moins un jeune homme appartenant à une honorable famille parisienne, et ce fait peut être invoqué comme la preuve d'une conduite assez régulière pendant cette période de sa vie."\(^{(39)}\) To support this opinion Longnon reminds us that "lettres de rémission" granted by Charles VII to Villon in January 1456 state that "jusqu'alors il n'avait 'esté attaint, reprins, ne convaincu d'aucun autre villain cas, blâme ou reproche'\(^{(40)}\)

In any case Villon was inspired by the events of his student years to write his first poem, the *Romruant du Pet-au-Diable*, a work "qui ne nous est pas parvenu, et qui devait être une œuvre héroï-comique où Villon racontait la vie joyeuse des écoliers et leur déconvenue."\(^{(41)}\)

Notwithstanding the turmoil and the many distractions of this "vie joyeuse", Villon succeeded in obtaining his degrees. "Il était reçu au baccalauréat en mars 1450 (n. s.), et dans l'été de 1452 il devenait licencié et maître ès arts."\(^{(42)}\)
The nature of these degrees received by François Villon at the University of Paris has been the cause of much discussion on the part of his biographers. Pierre Champion judges that there is no possibility of doubt as to their ecclesiastical character. "Mais ce qu'on peut tenir aujourd'hui pour démontré, c'est la qualité autant ecclésiastique que laïque de notre poète, en dépit du genre de vie qu'il adoptera. Villon, comme suppôt de l'Université, pouvait jouir d'une chapellenie; très vraisemblablement, ainsi que beaucoup d'autres clercs, il portait la "simple tonsure". A ceux qui douteraient encore du caractère mi-laïc, mi-ecclésiastique de M François, je demanderais pourquoi au huitain 172 de son Testament il a fait intervenir le maître des testaments? C'était un juge ecclésiastique, attaché à l'Évêché de Paris, et qui avait seulement connaissance des testaments des religieux de ce diocèse; mais, de même, Villon nommera Jean de Calais, notaire au Châtelet, qui connaissait des testaments des laïcs."(43)

The same year that François Villon became a Master of Arts it is supposed that he was received at the "hôtel" of the provost, Robert d'Estouteville. His wife was Ambroise de Loré, a very charming, intelligent woman, in whose honor many poets of the
time wrote verses. "François Villon adressa aussi à Robert D'Estouteville une ballade qui porte en acrostiche le nom d'Ambroise de Loré. On a cru jadis que c'était à l'occasion de son mariage. Mais il y a une allusion très claire à l'enfant, qui ressemble à Robert d'Estouteville. La ballade fut donc écrite probablement dans cette année 1452, où un autre poète chantait aussi Ambroise de Loré."(44)

Marcel Schwob says that after Villon left the University of Paris it is probable that "il continuait de fréquenter à l'hôtel d'Ambroise de Loré, en même temps qu'il nouait de plus étroites relations avec les mauvais compagnons qui l'entraînèrent dans les aventures."(45) His encounter with Philippe Sermonoise, "un prêtre amoureux et colérique", gives an idea of Villon's acquaintances at that time.

"C'était le soir de la Fête-Dieu, le 5 juin de l'an 1455. Aux vêpres, suivant la coutume, on avait porté en procession, à travers la quartier Saint-Benoît, le corps de Notre-Seigneur sous le dais, couronné d'un chapeau de roses vermeilles et enrubanné d'or... Le soir fraîchissait. M. François, qui avait dû suivre la procession, était assis sur un banc de pierre sous l'horloge de Saint-

"Or tout à coup débouchent Philippe Sermoise,(46) un autre prêtre, et maître Jean le Mardi. Dès qu'il a aperçu Villon, Philippe, s'écrie:

- Je renie Dieu! Maître François, je vous ai trouvé: croyez que je vous courroucerai!

-Vous tiens-je tort? Que me voulez-vous? Je ne crois en rien vous avoir méfait. Beau frère, de quoi vous courroucez-vous?

"Et François Villon de se lever pour céder la place au prêtre irrité. Philippe le repousse, déclinant cette politesse; François se rassied. Mais Philippe, furieux, tire alors la dague qu'il portait sous sa robe et frappe Villon en plein visage, fendant et ensanglantant sa lèvre, douloureusement.

"Cette rencontre s'annonçait décidément mal: prudemment Gilles et Isabeau leur faussent compagnie. Restés seuls, François et le prêtre descendent jusqu'à la porte du cloître. François bat en retraite, tenant une pierre dans sa main droite, et dans l'autre
la dague qu'il a tirée de dessous son petit manteau: sa blessure est cruelle. Me Jean le Mardi fait mine d'intervenir et tenté de désarmer François de son arme: pour éviter la fureur du prêtre qui le poursuit toujours, l'injure et la menace à la bouche, Villon lui plante profondément dans l'aïne. Sermoise roule à terre, et François lui lance en outre au visage la pierre qu'il tenait à la main.

"Sur quoi Villon laissa là son prêtre et se rendit chez un barbier, nommé Fouquet, pour se faire panser. Suivant les ordonnances de police, le barbier lui demanda son nom, et celui de sa victime. François répondit se nommer Michel Mouton et dénonça Philippe Sermoise pour le faire arrêter le lendemain.

"Ce n'était guère la peine. Des voisins avaient ramassé Sermoise dans le cloître Saint-Benoît, portant toujours sa dague dans l'aïne. On le coucha dans cette maison du cloître qui servait de prison, non loin de la porte ouvrant sur la rue Saint-Jacques. On le soigna et un examinateur du Châtelet vint l'interroger. Et là cet homme, naguère furieux, aurait déclaré... qu'il pardonnait à son meurtrier, 'pour certaines causes qui à ce le mouvaient'. Mais, ce qui est certain, c'est que le lendemain on transportait Sermoise à l'Hôtel-Dieu, où il trépassa le samedi suivant."(47)
Pierre Champion comments here that apparently Villon was justified in defending himself, but that there is no certainty as to the offence which he may have given to Sermoise. All that is known is that Villon hastened to put himself beyond the reach of the law.

"Il quitta aussitôt Paris et se cacha pendant sept mois . . . Que devint-il dans ce premier exil volontaire? Nous l'ignorons. Mais il y a lieu de croire que Villon se terra non loin de la ville. Bourg-la-Reine, le gros village que l'on rencontrait au sortir du Paris universitaire, sur la route d'Orléans, paraît assez désigné pour avoir été ce premier exil à moins qu'on ne lui préfère le vallon broussailleux et les eaux dormantes de Port-Royal." (48)

"Au mois de janvier 1456 (n.st.) une lettre de rémission était accordée personnellement, comme cela avait lieu pour les fugitifs. Mais, ce n'est pas à l'honneur des usages de la chancellerie, pour le meurtre de Philippe Sermoise, elle lui faisait tenir, presque dans les mêmes termes, deux lettres de pardon: l'une au nom de François des Loges, dit de Villon, l'autre à celui de François de Monterbier (lisez Montcorbier). (49) Ses amis avaient dû arranger
quelque peu le récit du meurtre de Sermoise; peut-être l’avait-il fait lui-même? Car le pardon du blessé à mort demeure toujours très singulier . . . "Doublement protégé par ces lettres enregistrées à la chancellerie, François ne tarda pas à rentrer dans Paris; il y retrouva sa petite chambre de Saint-Benoît, et ses protecteurs." (50)

The next incident in which it is recorded that François Villon took an active part is the robbery of the College of Navarre. (51) "À la Noël de 1456 François Villon avait rencontré l’ami Tabary et l’avait chargé d’aller chercher ce qu’il fallait pour dîner à la taverne de la Mule, devant Saint-Mathurin. Là ils souphèrent en compagnie de Colin de Cayeux, de daim Nicolas et de Petit Jehan. Or, après le repas, M. François, Colin et daim Nicolas demandèrent à Tabary de les suivre, sans rien révéler de ce qu’il pourrait voir et entendre. Ils gagnent tous la maison où demeure M. Robert de Saint-Simon: l’un après l’autre, ils y pénètrent en franchissant un petit mur. Là ils quittent leurs vêtements de dessus et leurs robes. Ils se dirigent ensuite vers le collège de Navarre. En appliquant contre le mur un râtelier qu’ils avaient pris dans
la maison où ils s'étaient dévêts, ils franchis-
SENT LE GRAND MUR DOMNANT SUR LA COUR DU COLLEGE.
Tabary était resté dans la maison pour garder les
vêtements et faire le guet.

"Il pouvait être dix heures du soir quand les
voleurs s'introduisirent dans le collège; ils
firent retour dans la maison de Saint-Simon sur
les minuit seulement. Tabary les vit rentrer; ils
lui montrèrent un petit sac de grosse toile conte-
nant les cinq cents écus d'or qu'ils avaient dérobés.
Mais ils lui dirent avoir gagné cent écus seulement,
le menaçant de le tuer s'il révélait jamais ce vol.
Et afin qu'il tînt la chose plus secrète, ils lui
donnèrent 10 écus d'or. Les complices l'accomp-
pagnèrent alors, lui annonçant que deux bons écus
étaient mis de côté pour dîner le lendemain. Après
quoi les voleurs se partagèrent leur butin, et chacun
reçut 100 écus. Leur méfait resta ignoré un peu plus
de deux mois."(52)

It was Guy Tabary's talkativeness that led to the
discovery of the robbery. He hadn't intended to
betray François Villon and his accomplices. "Le 17
mai 1457, Pierre Marchand, curé-prieur de Paray, au
diocèse de Chartres, se présentait en effet au
Châtelet. Là il déclarait à l'examineur que, le samedi avant la Quasimodo, il était arrivé à Paris. Le dimanche ou le lundi suivant, il avait déjeuné à la taverne de la Chaise, au Petit-Pont, avec un nommé maître Guy, dont il ignorait le nom, et un autre qui se disait prêtre. Le bavard Tabary se prit à lui demander le récit de ses aventures et lui raconta ensuite les siennes, dont il n'avait pas lieu de se vanter . . .

"Le lendemain, Pierre Marchand rencontra encore M. Guy: il le mena boire à la Pomme de Pin, en la rue de la Juiverie, se donnant toujours comme un complice éventuel afin de lui arracher ses secrets. Après boire, M. Guy le conduisit à Notre-Dame où quatre ou cinq jeunes compagnons qui s'étaient échappés des prisons de l'Officierlité se tenaient en franchise . . ."(53)

"Et M. Guy lui confia encore qu'il y avait peu de temps lui et ses complices avaient pris dans un coffre du collège de Navarre cinq à six cents écus . . ."(54)

"Et cet incorrigible bavard révéla à Pierre Marchand qu'ils avaient encore un autre complice, nommé M. François Villon; que ce dernier s'était rendu à Angers dans une abbaye où il avait un sien oncle,
religieux. Il allait là pour savoir des nouvelles d'un autre vieux religieux d'Angers qui pouvait posséder de cinq à six cents écus. A son retour, selon le rapport que François Villon ferait à ses compagnons, ils se mettraient tous en route vers cette région pour le 'desbourser', en sorte qu'un beau matin les complices se partageraient tout son avoir . . .

"Cette déclaration était des plus graves. Elle signalait à la justice l'existence à Paris d'une bande de crocheteurs que François Villon orientait, dans ce quartier universitaire qu'il connaissait si bien. Elle dénonçait les voleurs du collège de Navarre qui ne pouvaient manquer d'être arrêtés maintenant. Elle révérait le véritable motif du départ de François Villon: un vol à organiser à Angers."

Villon, in *Le Petit Testament*, gives other motives for going to Angers. His love affair with Catherine de Vausselles had turned out badly for him, and it seemed best to leave Paris.

En ce temps que j'ay dit devant,
Sur le Noël, morte saison,
Lorsque les loups vivent de vent,
Et qu'on se tient en sa maison,
Pour de frimas, prés du tison,
Me vint le vouloir de briser
La tres-amoureuse prison
Qui souloit mon cœur désbriser.

Le regard de Celle m'a prins,
Qui m'a esté felonne et dure;
Sans ce qu'en riens aye mesprins,
Veult et ordonne que j'endure
La mort, et que plus je ne dure:
Si n'y voy secours, que fuir.
Rompre veult la vive souldure,
Sans mes piteux regrets ouir!

Pour obvier à ces dangiers,
Mon mieulx est, je croy, de partir.
Adieu! Je m'en voyès à Angiers,
Puisqu'ell' ne me veult impartir,
Sa grace, il convient despartir.
Par elle meurs, les membres sains!
Au fort, je meurs amant martir,
Du nombre des amoureux saints!(56)

Qu'était-il arrivé? L'amant de Catherine ne le dit
pas ouvertement: celle, écrit-il quelque part,

Qui si durement m'a chassé.

Il semble cependant qu'il ait fini par obtenir un
rendezvous nocturne, qui n'était en réalité qu'un
guet-apens préparé sans doute à l'instigation d'un
rival, - ou peut-être du gardien naturel de la jeune
fille, - et dans lequel il fut battu 'comme à ru
telles', c'est-à-dire 'comme on bat les toiles au
ruisseau'." (57)

Qui me fait mascher ces groiselles,
Fors Katherine de Vauselles?
Noé le tiers ot, qui fut là,
Mitaines à ces no.pces telles ..
Bien heureux est qui rien n'y a! "(58)
"Ce Noël, 'le tiers' ou le traître confident de ses amours, celui-là qui jouit si pleinement de la honte du pauvre Villon corrigé de verges, nul doute que ce soit Noël Jolis. (59) Aussi le poète chargera-t-il le bourreau de Paris, maître Henri Cousin, de le venger:"

Item, à Noël le Jolys,
Autre chose je ne luy donne,
Fors plein poing d'orieres frez, cueilliz
En mon jardin: je l'abandonne. (61)

Whatever reason François had for leaving Paris where he had loved and suffered so much, he could not tear himself away until he had said farewell to his friends and enemies. This he did in a satirical poem of three hundred and twenty lines, to which he gave the title, "Lais" or "Lega". The poem became known as the "Testament", a title that Villon denounced in

**Le Grand Testament**

Il me souvient bien, Dieu mercis!
Que je feis, a mon partement,
Certains Jays, l'an cinquante six,
Qu'aucuns, sans mon consentement,
Voulurent monner Testament,
Leur vouloir fut, mais non le mien,
Mais quoy! on dit communement
Qu'ung chacun n'est maistre du sien. (62)

Despite the poet's protest, the poem has come down to us as the **Petit Testament**. "François Villon n'y parla guère que des amis de son âge, et il avait vingt-cinq ans! Œuvre pleine du souvenir de ses
promenades dans Paris, du jeu des enseignes que jadis les étudiants de la ville mariaient, et dont maintenant François Villon fait de plaisants legs équivoques. Elle a la jeunesse des amours de son François et de ses amis. Proche de ses études, elle fait une fine satire du jargon scolastique et abonde en calomniers d'ecolier . . . Ces huitains de Villon ont un accent de réalité, une impertinence juvénile, une rapidité qui fait contraste avec la prolixité naïve et courante de son temps: l'allégresse de leurs rimes nous surprend. On y entend vraiment parler le poète gouailleur, avec ses sous-entendus, ses incidences graves et comiques. Vers pleins de promesses, ils annoncent l'œuvre admirable que les épreuves de la vie, la misère et le mal mûriront épreuves. "(63)

We read in the last verse of the Petit Testament Villon's word picture of himself. He is, as he says, "sec et noir comme escouvillon". (64) Five years later he had not changed. He says,

"Il fut rez, chef, barbe, sourcil,
Comme ung navet qu'on ret et pelle." (65)

The ugly scar he bore where Philippe Sermoise had slashed at his lip did not make him more handsome.

To appreciate fully the miserable existence which Villon had endured in his banishment from Paris,
it is necessary to understand the type of vagabonds infesting the country at that time. "Le traité d'Arras de 1435, la trêve anglaise de 1444, l'organisation des Compagnies d'ordonnance, n'avaient pas fait l'affaire des hommes d'armes qui, cassés aux gages, devinrent aussitôt larrons. Décimés en Alsace, en Bourgogne, les écorcheurs, les bandes de mercenaires étrangers, Espagnols, Lombards et Écossais, avaient laissé un peu partout des enfants perdus. Des gens d'armes, qui savaient ne pouvoir être admis dans les Compagnies régulières, se firent voleurs et épieurs de chemin. De mauvais ouvriers qui n'aimaient pas à travailler, des désespérés lièrent connaissance avec eux. Des paresseux qui vivaient dans des maisons de fillettes, passaient leur temps à jouer, à faire de la dépense, et se montraient dans de riches habits; de faux pèlerins de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle arborant à leurs larges chapeaux des coquilles pour attester leur voyage supposé; de faux quêteurs qui promenaient à travers les campagnes et les villes des reliques truquées, parfois des indulgences, ces porteurs de "rogatons"; des merciers qui allaient de foire en foire, vendant des denrées suspectes et des jeux de cartes usagées; des clercs vagabonds en mal d'argent, tels furent les éléments douteux de la société de ce temps qui lièrent spontanément...
partie pour l'exploitation des simples." (66) The most widely known band of vagabonds was that which bore the name "Compagnons de la Coquille". The Compagnons de la Coquille ravaged the provinces of Bourgogne and Champagne, the environs of Paris and of Orléans. There is little doubt but that Villon was connected in some way with them. The robbery of the college of Navarre and the plan to "desbourser" the rich ecclesiastic of Angers, show signs of the influence of the Coquille, and moreover, Villon is known to have associated with certain members of this organization. Colin de Cayeux, Villon's accomplice in the robbery of the college of Navarre, and Regnier de Montigny, "ce fils de bonne famille, un peu plus âgé que Villon qui partagea avec lui les distractions de sa turbulente... jeunesse," were both hanged as members of the Coquille. (67) Furthermore, Villon used the secret jargon known only to the Coquillards. (68) In 1489 Pierre Levet (69) published six poems of Villon's which are considered the oldest monuments of French argot. They contain the very jargon revealed by Perrenet le Fournier to the judge who in 1435 investigated at Dijon the doings of the Coquille. (70) This was the "milieu" in which Villon lived from 1456 to 1461. As Champion asks, how was he able to preserve "dans son corps minable une âme
Where did Villon's wanderings take him? The question cannot be answered definitely nor in detail. The little that is known is given in his writings. "Le pays où il erra s'étendait depuis Angers, les marches de Bretagne et du Poitou, jusqu'en Dauphiné vraisemblablement. Et il résulte de ses confidences qu'il parcourut surtout la France centrale, en particulier le bassin de la Loire."(72)

Champion, Schwob and Longnon have followed Villon as closely as possible. As he went wherever his fancy led him, the task was difficult, but their accounts agree in practically every respect.

"Parti de Paris, les derniers jours de l'année 1456, Villon avait dirigé ses pas sur Angers; dans les jours froids et courts de janvier, il dut arriver en cette bonne ville assise sur la Maine ... Le désir de voir un oncle, moine dans l'un des couvents de cette ville sonnante, servait de prétexte à ce voyage: mais en réalité, on l'a vu, M^e François entendait obtenir de lui des renseignements sur un autre religieux, très riche, que ses associés pourraient dévaliser un jour."(73)
We do not know whether or not Villon accomplished the intended robbery at Angers. In fact, his sojourn in that city, and his relations with king René of Naples, are mere assumptions for which there is no documentary proof. The banishment that Villon imposed on himself in 1456 became compulsory in 1457, after Pierre Marchand discovered the perpetrators of the robbery at the College of Navarre.

Longnon, Champion and Schwob agree that he was for a time in Poitou, at Saint-Géneroux, and that there he became acquainted with two women who taught him to speak Poitevin, and of whom he wrote in the Testament:

Filles sont tres belles et gentes,
Demourantes a Saint-Genou,
Pres Saint-Julian des Voventes,
Marches de Bretaigne ou Poictou,
Mais je ne dy proprement ou,
Par qu'elles passent tous les jours . . .,
M'arme! ne seray pas si fou,
Car je veull celer mes amours(74)

After leaving Saint-Géneroux Villon "passa par Saint-Julien-de-Vouventes, dans la Loire-Inférieure. Sans doute remontant le cours de la Loire, il arriva vers la fin de l'année 1457 dans un des châteaux du duc d'Orléans."(75) There are in the poems of Villon various references which tell us that Charles received his fellow-poet kindly. When the Duke's daughter was born on the 14th of December 1457, "Villon composa pour
elle un Dit. Ce n'est pas un de ses bons poèmes, mais il y demande à la petite princesse de donner au monde la paix. Le Problème ou ballade au nom de la Fortune fut écrit sous l'influence de Charles d'Orléans et composé probablement à la cour de Blois. Enfin il y eut un concours de ballades entre plusieurs poètes de l'entourage du duc. Le premier vers proposé était :

Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine.
Robertet, Simonet Caillau et Charles d'Orléans composèrent leurs ballades. Villon fit aussi la sienne. Elle est incontestablement supérieure. A travers la contradiction qu'on lui imposait dans chaque vers, il a montré le malheur de sa nature. "Je riz en pleurs," dit-il. Deux vers de cette ballade font croire que le poète fut pensionné par Charles d'Orléans.

Que fais-je plus? Quoy? Les gaiges raygir, Bien recueully, debouté de chasoun."(76)

Champion uses these lines of Villon's as a basis for his belief that François made two visits to the court of Charles d'Orléans, and that this ballad dates from his second sojourn there.(77)

In his wanderings after he left Blois Villon evidently passed through Saint-Satur "parce qu'il y releva une inscription tombale très naïve qu'il replaça
dans le Grand Testament. (78) L'indication topographique, ainsi que l'a montré M. Longnon, (79) est rigoureusement exacte, puisque Saint-Satur est au pied de la montagne où s'élève Sancerre. Puis il vint au duc Jean II de Bourbon, qui aimait les poètes, puisqu'il correspondait avec Charles d'Orléans." (80)

The ballade addressed to Monseigneur de Bourbon, written in the form of a request, shows that Villon was in the habit of receiving benefits from him.

Le mien seigneur et prince redouté,
Fleuron de Lys, royale geniture,
François Villon, que travail a dompte,
A coups orbès, par forces de batture,
Vous supplie, par cette humble escripture,
Que luy faciez quelque gracieux prest.

A prince n'a ung denier emprunte,
Fors à vous seul, vostre humble creature.
Des six escus que luy avez prest;
Cela pièça, il mist en nourriture. (81)

Villon probably received what he asked for, but he did not remain long with Jean de Bourbon. "Il alla ... jusque dans le Dauphiné, ... en dehors du royaume de France." (82) The furthest point to which Villon wandered was Roussillon (Isère, arr. de Vienne); (83)

Tant que, d'icy à Roussillon,
Brosse n'y a ne bressillon
Qui n'eust, ce dit-il sans mentir,
Ung lambeau de son cotillon,
Quand de ce monde voult partir. (84)

Champion finds Villon in the summer of 1460 in the prisons of Orléans; Longnon and Schwob do not allude
to this imprisonment. What does Champion record as Villon's offense at this time? He says, "Tout ce que nous pouvons savoir, c'est que l'affaire de Villon était fort grave et qu'elle devait déterminer une sentence de mort." (85) This statement is founded on a few lines of the Double Ballade addressed to Mademoiselle Marie, daughter of Charles d'Orléans. This ballad was written several years after the Dit de sa naissance composed in honor of the same princess.

Princesse, ce loz je vous porte,
Que sans vous je ne fussese rien.
A vous et a vous n'en rapportez:
On doit dire du bien le bien. (85)

"La petite princesse avait trois ans et faisait sa première et joyeuse entrée en la ville ... quelqu'un qui eut lieu de se réjouir de cette venue, ce fut François Villon, tiré miraculeusement de la prison et de la mort." (87) He expressed his joy in the ballad addressed to the princess. His liberty was enjoyed for only a short time. "Dans l'été de 1461, il était prisonnier depuis de longs mois à Meung-sur-Loire, dans les prisons de l'évêque d'Orléans, Thibault d'Aussigny." (83) Why he was there we do not know for certain. Champion (89) records a tradition that Villon robbed a church at Baccon. (90) But the biographer goes on to say that
perhaps the tradition "fut simplement une conséquence du vol commis à Montpipeau par Colin de Cayeux, dont Villon aurait été l'associé: car Montpipeau, à trois lieues d'Orléans, dépendait en partie de Meung, ou les évêques avaient justice et seigneurie." (91)

Whatever Villon's crime was his imprisonment at Meung was hard. He endured such suffering and privation that he would have died had he not been released. (92)

We find, throughout the Grand Testament and in the Ballade à ses amis, (93) Villon's opinion of the prison. "Jamais il ne pardonna à l'évêque d'Orléans. Il lui parut qu'on l'avait traité d'horrible façon. Il prétendit avoir subi dans ce cachot de Meung toutes les peines de sa vie. Il s'attendait à la prison perpétuelle, et il maudissait Thibault d'Aussigny." (94) The first six huitains of the Grand Testament deal solely with this arch-enemy, Thibault d'Aussigny, whom Villon paints as the blackest figure imaginable, a portrait which is not true to life. (95)

Tel luy soit Dieu, qu'il m'a este;
S'il m'a este dur et cruel
Trop plus que je ne le raconte,
Je vosil que le Dieu eternel
Luy soit donc semblable, a ce compte. (96)

During this imprisonment at Meung Villon is sup-
posed to have written the Débat du Cœur et du Corps, "suivant un thème que l'on rencontre développé par d'autres poètes avant lui"(97). It is really an examination of conscience.

Imagine Villon's joy when, on September 30, 1461, Louis XI passed through Meung on his way to Orléans. All prisoners were set at liberty, and Villon, after an absence of five years could now return to Paris. It was a changed Villon who came back to the "maison de la Porte Rouge". "Le séjour en prison l'avait fait réfléchir. Et nous devons connaître cet état d'âme d'un prisonnier, si nous voulons comprendre les méditations qui s'imposèrent à son esprit: elles demeurent très visibles dans le Testament."(98)

When François Villon composed the Grand Testament he was thirty years old, and, it may well be said, had been "un écolier de la misère et de la douleur". We find mirrored in this work the poet's soul, at a time when he began to look back over a life that had not been well spent. Remorse, sincere repentance, filial tenderness and a trust in the mercy of God are all there, surely, but also, there is a strain of bitterness, despair, and unquestionable vindictiveness toward his enemies. The first huitains are spent in cursing the bishop of Orléans,
Thibault d'Aussigny. In the will proper Villon makes his legacies as if he were a rich man, whereas, in reality he had nothing. The comical nature of the bequests adds a kind of pathetic laughter to the otherwise sad poem. Throughout the Testament are ballades treating subjects of all kinds, probably written long before the will itself, which are interwoven among the verses of the poem proper, and add a great deal to the literary value of the whole. "Dans tous ces morceaux intercalaires, l'art de Villon n'a jamais été surpassé. Un instinct, d'une merveilleuse sûreté, lui a toujours suggéré le mot rare et juste que rien ne peut remplacer.

Il a excellé à trouver un refrain plein de sens et sonore, à user des rimes les plus riches et dans un juste rapport musical avec ce qu'il veut évoquer en nous."(99) In them and throughout the Grand Testament, we find the moving expression of Villon's love and hatred, his tenderness and bitterness, his remorse and confidence, faith and despair.

The poem as a whole was completed before François Villon re-entered Paris.(100)

Although Villon in the first two lines of the Grand Testament had written:

En l'an de mon trentiesme age
Que toutes mes hontes j'eus beues,(101)
there is little doubt but that on his return to Paris he took up again his old habits. "Nous retrouvons François Villon prisonnier au Châtelet pour un certain vol dont il était chargé, le 2 novembre 1462. Sans doute l'affaire n'était pas grave, puisqu'il est question immédiatement de sa mise en liberté." (102) But François was not to escape so easily. "Au moment où il allait être élargi, la Faculté de Théologie fit opposition à la délivrance du voleur de son argent; elle déléguait M. Laurens Poutrel pour négocier avec le prisonnier qui fut interrogé au sujet de cette vieille affaire (celle du vol du collège de Navarre). François Villon dut faire alors des aveux complets. . . Ce qui est certain, c'est qu'avant le 7 novembre 1462, Laurens Poutrel obtint de François Villon la promesse que celui-ci rendrait les 120 éous d'or dans le délai de trois ans; moyennant quoi il fut élargi." (103) From this time until 1463 Villon's life is not on record, but in that year we find him again in the hands of the law.

"François Villon vint visiter un soir, vers six heures, Robin Dogis, à un hôtel où pendait l'enseigne du Chariot, dans la rue des Parcheminiers. Il demanda à Robin Dogis de lui donner à souper. Avec eux mangèrent Rogier Pichart et Hutin du Moustier, qui fut plus tard sergent à verge au Châtelet. Pendant le souper, ils convinrent tous qu'ils iraient passer la soirée dans la chambre de maître François Villon. Vers sept ou huit
heures donc, ils quittèrent l'hôtel du Chariot, et s'en allèrent à Saint-Benoît, par la rue Saint-Jacques. On ne sait si François Villon conseilla à ses compagnons une mauvaise plaisanterie, mais il y a tout lieu de le croire. Car ils s'arrêtèrent devant la fenêtre de l'écritoire de maître François Ferrebourg (qui est le même que le François Ferrebourg, licencié en droit canon, examinateur dans l'affaire du collège de Navarre), Là, Rogier Pichart se mit à railler les clercs de François Ferrebourg, les insulta et cracha dans leur écrtoire par la fenêtre. Les clercs sortirent, la chandelier allumée au poing, criant:

Plus tard, Dogis, étant sujet savoyard, obtint rémission pour l'entrée à Paris du duc de Savoie. On voit bien que, dans cette affaire, Rogier Pichart fut l'agresseur, et que François Villon disparut aussitôt qu'on se battit. Dogis appela Pichart 'paillard' pour l'avoir laissé seul aux prises avec les clercs après avoir été la cause du tumulte. Mais le véritable instigateur de l'injure dut être François Villon. Il avait de la rancune contre François Ferrebourg, comme il en avait contre François de la Vacquerie."(104) Champion deals a little more kindly with Villon in this affair and looks on him as unjustly punished. "Pour avoir été le témoin d'une rixe où Ferrebourg requit une blessure légère, François Villon fut condamné à mort, à être étranglé et pendu au gibet de Paris' ... C'était là une injustice, 'une tricherie"."(105) The sentence was later modified and "François Villon devait être banni pour dix ans de la ville et prévôté de Paris."(106) The incidents of these ten years, and in fact, of all the remaining years of his life, are a mystery.
Part II. Early Legends

Along with the biography as established by his writings and by law documents, there exists legendary material on the life of the poet which forms the basis for many tales. A collection of verses called the Recueil des hystoires de Repues Franches, (107) or Le Recueil des repues franches de maistre Françoys Villon et ses compagnons, appeared about the year 1500. These verses have been attributed to François Villon and to maistre Baude, (107a) but it is generally believed that the author is not known. Certain novelists have used these anecdotes with scarcely any modification. The separate "repues franches" will be discussed along with the novels in which they appear.

Rabelais tells in his Pantagruel two incidents which deal with Villon. One of these has been used by writers of French novels. For purpose of comparison we shall quote this story here.

"Maistre François Villon, sus ses vixx jours, se retira à Saint-Maixent en Poitou, sous la faveur d'un homme de bien, abbé audit lieu. Là pour donner passe-temps au peuple, entreprit faire jouer la Passion en gestes et langage poitevin. Les rolles distribuées, les joueurs recollés, le théâtre préparé, dist au Maire et eschevins que le mystère pourrait estre prest à l'issue des foires de Mort; restoit seulement trouver habillemens aptes aux personnages. Les Maire et eschevins y donnerent ordre. Il pour un vieil paysant habilier qui jouoit bien le pere, requist frère Etienne Tappécoue, secretain des
Cordeliers du lieu, luy prester une chappe et estolle. Tappecoue le refusa, alléguant que par leurs statutz provinciaux, estoit rigoureusement defendu rien bailler ou prester pour les jouans. Villon reprochait que le statut seulement concernoit farces, mommeries et jeuz dissoluëz; et qu'aussi l'avoit veu pratiquer a Bruxelles et ailleurs. Tappecoue, ce non obstant, luy dist peremptoire qu'ailleurs se pourveust, si bon luy sembloit: rien n'esperast de sa sacristie. Car rien n'en auroit sans faute. Villon fit aux Joueurs le rapport en grande abomination, adjoustant que de Tappecoue Dieu feroit vengeance et punition exemplaire bien tout.

Au samedi subseqwent Villon est advertiissement que Tappecoue, sus la poultre du couvent (ainsi nomment ilz une jument non encore saillie) estoit alle en queste a Saint-Ligaire, et qu'il seroit de retour sus les deux heures apres midy. Adonc fit la monstre de la Diablerie parmy la ville et le marche. Ses diables estoient tous capparassonnés de peaux de loups, de veaux, et de beliers, passemcentes de testes de mouton, de cornes de beufz, et de grands havetz de cuisine: centz de grosses courraies, esquelles pendoient grosses cymbales de vaches, et sonnettes de muletz a bruit horribique. Tenoient en main aucuns bastons noirs pleins de fusées: autres portoient longs tizonz allumés, sus lesquelz a chacun carrefour jettoient pleines poignées de parasine en poudre, dont sortoit feu et fumee terrible. Les avoir ainsi conduicts avec contentement du peuple et en grande frayeur des petits enfans, finalement les mena banqueter en une cassine, hors la porte en laquelle est le chemin de Saint-Ligaire. Arrivans a la cassine, de loing il appecoue Tappecoue qui retournoit de queste, et leurs dist en vers macaroniques:

Hic est de patria, natus de gente belistra,
Qui solet antiquo bribus portare bisacco.

nous pas bien les diables?

La poultre toute effrayée se mit au trot, à petz, à bonds, et au gualot: à ruades, fressurades, doubles pédales, et petarrades: tant qu'elle rúa bas. Tappecoule, quoy qu'il se tint à l'aube du bast de toutes ses forces. Ses estrivieres estoient de cordes: du cousté hors le montouoir son soulier fenestré estoit si fort entortillé qu'il ne le peut oncques tirer. Ainsi estoit traîné à escorcheoul par la poultre, tousjours multipliante en ruades contre luy, et fourvoyante de peur par les hayes, buissons et fossés. De mode qu'elle luy cobbit toute la teste, si que la cervelle en tomba près la croix Osaniere, puis les bras en pieces, l'un qua, l'autre là, les jambes de mesmes, puis des boyaulx fit un long carnaige, en sorte que la poultre au couvent arrivaute de luy ne portoit que le pied droit, et soulier entortillé.

Villon voyant advenu ce qu'il avoit pourpense, dist à ses diables: Vous jouerez bien, messieurs les diables, vous jouerez bien, je vous affie. O que vous jouerez bien. Je despète la Diablerie de Saulmur, de Doué, de Monmorillon, de Langés, de Saint-Espain, de Angiers: voire, par Dieu, de Poictiers, avec leur parlouire, en cas qu'ilz puissent estre à vous parragonnés. O que vous jouerez bien!(108)
Part III. The Character of François Villon

François Villon, gifted with the soul of a poet but depraved by vile passions, unfortunately chose as his companions such cheating rogues as Regnier de Montigny and Colin de Cayeux, and adopted their licentious ways. Twice he was condemned to death, but the sentence was later modified to that of banishment from Paris. During the five years of his vagabond life, he experienced the sting of hunger and cold, and suffered separation from his friends, and at thirty had nothing to call his own but a sick body and a wrecked past. If it were not for his poetry we could say no more about him, but his poems portray the man more completely.

Auguste Longnon says that François Villon possessed four qualities which would merit clemency from the Almighty: "la foi religieuse, le patriotisme, l'amour filial et la reconnaissance."(109) His religious faith is shown particularly in the Ballade à Notre Dame written for his mother, in which he makes her express her love and devotion to the mother of God, the "Refuge of Sinners". Trust in the mercy of God for the penitent sinner is contained in the Grand Testament when Villon says:

Je suis pecheur, je le sçay bien
Pourtant Dieu ne veult pas ma mort,
Mais convertisse et vive en bien,
Mieux tout autre que peché mord.
- Comblen qu'en peché soye mort,
  Dieu voulut, et sa miséricorde,
  Se conscience me remord,
  Par sa grace, pardon m'accorde. (110)

We see his patriotism in one ballade especially where he anathematizes "les mesdisans de la France". (111)

He speaks, too, of "Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine". (112)

Filial tenderness is portrayed where Villon refers to his mother. He calls her his "chastel ou forteresse" (113), and regrets the sorrow that he has brought to her. Maître Guillaume also has a place in his affections and Villon speaks of him as his "plus que père". He is full of gratitude to him for helping him out of "maint bouillon". Moreover, Louis is "le bon roy de France" because he delivered Villon from "la dure prison de Mehun". (114)

What is very certain about the character of Villon is that it is paradoxical in its many-sidedness. This is nowhere more apparent than in his relations with women. With most of those mentioned in the Testaments: with Marion l'Ydolle and Jehanne de Bretagne (115), with "la petite Macé" (116) "Denise" (117),

Jacqueline et Perrette,
Et Isabeau, qui dit: Enné! (118)

and probably with those who appear in the Ballade de la Belle Heaulmière, "Blanche la Savetière", "la gente Sauloissière", "Guillemette la Tapissière", "Jehanneton
la Chaperonnière", "Katherine l'Esperonnière", his relations were of the loosest, but even when he speaks of them, he reveals something better than utter debasement. The Ballade de la Grosse Margot "obviously exhales a sort of despair and echoes a cry out of Hell, contradicting its swagger."(119)

Villon did not content himself with the easily gained favors of Margot and her kind. We see him, too, as the suffering lover, aspiring to gain the affections of women of a better class, how much better, it is hard to say. We have seen that in 1456 he assigns as his reason for leaving Paris the desire to escape from a "très amoureuse prison", and we accepted his biographer's identification of the jailer of this prison with the Katherine de Vausselles who had arranged for a beating for him, as he tells us in the Grand Testament. We have reason to believe too that Katherine is the lady of the following huitaines:

Se celle que jadis servoye
Do si bon cuer et loyaument,
Dont tant de maulx et griefz j'avoye
Et souffroye tant de torment,
Se dit m'eust au commencement,
Sa voulenté (mais nenny, las!)
J'euasse mys peine aucunement
De moy retraire de ses laz.

Quoy que je luy voulsisse dire,
Elle estoit preste d'escouter,
Sans m'accorder ne contredire
Qui plus me souffroit acouter,
Joignant des pieds m'arrierer,
Et ainsi m'alloit amusant,
Et me souffroit tout raconteter,
Mais si n' estoit qu'en m'abusant. (120)

Villon realizes that he has been rebuffed and deceived, and shamefacedly confesses that he has made a fool of himself:

Ainsi m' ont amours abuse,
Et pourmené de l'huys au pesle.
Je croy qu'homme n'est si ruse,
Fust fin comme argent de coupelle,
Qui n'y laissast linge et drapelle,
Mai qu'il fust ainsi manye
Comme moy, qui partout m'appelle:
L'Amant remys et renye. (121)

He resolves to have nothing more to do with love:

Je renye amours et despite,
Et deflie à feu et à sang.
Mort par elles me precipite,
Et ne leur en chault pas d'ung blanc.
Ma vielle ay mys soubz le banc.
Si amans ne suyvray jamais:
Si jadis je fuz de leur ranc,
Je declare que n'en suis mais. (122)

Again we find him referring to his true love in the Testaments, but he does not name her.

He says that she thought only of what money he could give her. What does she want most?

Quoy? Une grant bourse de soye,
Pleine d'escuz, profonde et large. (123)

Next we find the Ballade de Villon à s'amye which he sends to his "damoyeselle au nez tortu". (124)

This ballade contains the names of François and Martine in acrostic and it is probable that the entire ballade
is addressed to a woman by the name of Marthe. It is not improbable that the ballade is written to Katherine, and that Villon inserted the name of Marthe simply to excite her jealousy. Champion is of the opinion that the ballade was addressed to a new mistress of Villon's by the name of Marthe. (125)

Fausse beauté, qui tant me couste cher,
Rude en effet, hypocrite douceur,
Amour dure plus que fer à mascher:
Nommer te puis de ma defagon soeur.
Charme felon, la mort d'ung povre cœur,
Orgueil musse, qui gens met au mourir.
Yeulx sans pitie' Ne veult droit de rigeuer,
Sans emprir, ung povre secourir?

Misulx m'eust valu avoir esté crier
Ailleurs secours, c'est esté mon bonheur;
Rien ne m'eust seco de ce fait arracher.
Trotter m'en fault en fuyte à deshonneur.
Harco, harco, le grant et le mineur.
Et qu'est cécy? Mourray sans coup ferir,
Ou pitie peult, selon ceste teneur
Sans emprir, ung povre secourir. (126)

At any rate in the Ballade pour servir de
Conclusion Villon pictures himself as dying a martyr to love, "but in the Envoi the martyr to Love utters a sudden derisive yawp and executes a gambol". (127)

Prince, gent comme esmerillon,
Saichiez qu'il fist, au departir:
Ung traict but de vin morillon,
Quand de ce monde voult partir. (128)

His momentary lightness is but another indication of the complexity of the man's character, another sample
of the tearful laughter to which he laid claim. (129) Tenderness and vindictiveness, religious feeling and unblushing lust, the pangs of remorse and an irrepressible tendency to self-excape, melancholy and a jester's laughter, appear in the poet's soul, defying complete analysis.
CHAPTER II.

FRANÇOIS VILLON IN FRENCH LITERATURE

1. La Passion de Maître François Villon

Pierre d'Alheim

In 1892 Pierre d'Alheim first showed his knowledge of François Villon and his time by publishing a book called Le Jargon Jobelin, in which certain poems of Villon were discussed. It was not until eight years later that La Passion de Maître François Villon appeared. In that interval Alheim had manifested his varied literary interests by writing two articles on Russian subjects. (130)

La Passion de Maître François Villon, which appeared in 1900, is a sincere appreciation of the life and character of François Villon. As a narrative it is poorly organized, and it lacks a flowing style. There are many unexplained gaps, and great agility of mind is expected of the reader.

The story begins by dealing at some length with the childhood of François Monterbier at the home of Maître Guillaume de Villon. When Maître Guillaume first took François to live with him in 1435 he found the boy "éveillé, parleur et maigre" (131) and, seeing
at once that he was worth educating, he placed him "chez le chantre de l'église, qui tenait pédagogie". (132)

According to Champion, it was not "le chantre de l'église", but maître Guillaume de Villon himself who "donna sans effort cette instruction première qu'on trouvait dans les pédagogies". (133) The spelling Monterbier which Alheim uses instead of Montcorbier we find in a "lettre de rémission" granted to Villon in January 1456. (134)

As a student of the university François was able but lazy and troublesome. One day when debating he lulled the drowsy professor to sleep and then entertained his classmates with his irreverent wit. When not in class, "il estimait surtout les compagnons bien disants et bien faisants, et qu'il faut converser avec eux en société de chopines et fillettes, que les fruits ne sont pas pour demeurer aux arbres, ni les deniers en bourse, que l'homme de sens doit se manier dans la vie comme le rat dans la meule, car Dieu donne le blé, et qui ferme le sac?" (135)

In spite of Villon's great interest in pleasure he made academic progress, and suddenly Alheim presents him to us as a "licencié" and the private teacher of Girard Gossouyn, Jean Marceau, and Colin Laurens. Alheim
understands these "pauvres enfants" of the Testament to be orphans and pupils of Villon's, as did Longnon, and not as rich old men as Champion asserts.

Alheim does not lead us to believe that Villon took his teaching of the three orphans too seriously. In fact he spent much time planning and executing pranks like those of the stealing of the Pet au Diable and the Vesce. The account of these two affairs agrees in the main with the actual fact, though in the novel Villon is made the instigator in removing both stones.

Now Alheim, using as his source the Repuees Franches, relates the story of a feast at Montfaucon, and how Villon, with not a penny in his pocket, provided the food and drink for the entire party.

Villon, dressed as a rich lord, entered a baker's shop and ordered six dozen rolls to be carried to his house. The errand boy hastened to deliver one half of the order and then returned to the shop for the remainder. Villon took advantage of his absence and disappeared with the bread.

He next went to the Poissonnerie, and having made a bargain with the shopkeeper for an order of fish, set out supposedly for his house followed by the heavily laden
errand-boy.

"Comme ils traversaient l'église Notre-Dame, maître François vit un prêtre qui se préparait à confesser homme, ou bien femme.

"-Attends minute, dit-il au porte-painier, et s'avançant vers ce prêtre:

"Monsieur, dit-il de voix claire, je vous prierai de remettre au garçon que voici ... (a mi-voix) ... ses pechés ... (à voix basse) c'est mon neveu, il est pris du malin esprit et ne parle de rien que ... (à haute voix) d'argent.

"-Bien, bien, répliqua l'autre, comptez sur moi. Attendez-moi un moment, mon ami, je vous dépêcherai dès que j'aurai fait." (136)

In the meantime Villon had taken the fish and fled. But he had still to get the wine.

After filling a large jug with clear water Villon entered a tavern and boldly asked the keeper to bring him some good wine, white wine. When the poor fellow came back with good Bagneux wine, Villon cleverly exchanged the jug of water for the jug of wine. Of course in the proprietor’s absence Villon hastened away with the prize.

Alheim also relates how Villon procured the tripe
for the feast. This "repue franche" will be considered in the discussion of Garco's novel *Le Roman de François Villon*.

With all this wild and adventurous life François was not fully satisfied; he could not quench his soul's thirst by the pursuit of pleasure. However, it was not until maître Guillaume drained his coffers to save the rogue from arrest that Villon made good resolutions. He would earn money by turning pedlar. He left the "Porte Rouge", but no one would lend him money to buy himself a pack; so he gave up his plan and drowned his shame for some time at "Grosse Margot's".

When he returned to the Porte Rouge his welcome had not grown cold. Nevertheless he did not change his life. He still frequented his old companions and saw much especially of Colin de Cayeux, the leader of the Coquillards in Paris.

One evening Colin told him that there was to be a meeting of several Coquillards at "la Pomme de Pin", and asked him to come along. (In the *Passion*, and in other works on Villon by various authors, the Pomme de Pin, the "trou de la Pomme de Pin", which figures in the *Testaments* (137), is Villon's favorite tavern.)
Villon went and found assembled Philippe Prunel, Baude le Maistre and two priests, Pierre Marchant de Paray-le-Monial, and Philippe Chemoye. There was a woman present who aroused the jealousy of Chemoye by giving her attentions to Villon. The enraged priest later sought and found an opportunity for revenge, but lost his life in the quarrel which ensued.

Alheim keeps close to the known facts of the murder. His account of the events that followed, Villon's arrest, trial, and appeal to the Parlement, is drawn from records of 1462 and 1463. The novelist goes on to say that the sentence of death placed on Villon was commuted to banishment for life through the efforts of maître Guillaume and "une abbesse des environs de Paris . . ." (138) She was Huguette du Hamel, the notorious abbess of Port-Royal. It was she whom Villon had met at the "Pomme de Pin".

This same woman when not in the convent was known as the wealthy Catherine de Vauxcelles. Historically Alheim has no justification for identifying Huguette and Katherine. "Huguette du Hamel . . . passait pour être la fille de Hugues Guillerel, abbé de Saint-Riquier. Entrée en religion vers l'an 1439, elle était devenue abbesse de Port-Royal à la mort de Michelle de Langres en 1454 ou 1455." (139)
We know nothing so definite about Katherine de Vauxcelles, but Champion remarks in his biography: "Sans doute elle habitait sur la montagne Saint-Geneviève; près du collège de Navarre. Mais le nom de Vausselles, qui n'atteste pas une origine parisienne, se rencontre assez fréquemment à cette époque à Paris." (140)

Alheim's Villon when banished from Paris hid himself at Port-Royal as the brother of the abbess. Champion agrees that Villon may have gone there, or near-by to Bourg-la-Reine. At the abbey François plays in the novel the same role as does the "procureur" Baudes le Maistre in the "Plaidoiries, en la cour de Parlement au sujet de la possession de l'abbaye du Port-Royal... 15 et 18 décembre 1469, 11 janvier 1470". (141)

Villon's relations with Huguette ended abruptly when he saw with his own eyes that she had deceived him. It happened one night after he had been away from Port-Royal for some time and he had returned to bring money to Huguette. She was unaware of his visit at the time but heard of the insulting language he used about her and vowed to have her revenge. Some time later Noël Joli administered to Villon a thrashing which satisfied her wrath.

François Villon, in reality, was beaten in somewhat
the same way, as we have seen in *la Double Ballade sur l'amour*.

Albein next relates the account of the robbery of Guillaume Coiffler, a rich Augustinian. Villon, with fellow-Coquillard, for he had at last been drawn into the Coquille, directed the theft, and six hundred écus were taken. There is historical basis for this incident. Guy Tabary related something like this when he told Pierre Marchand of the robbery of the college of Navarre, but he did not give the names of those taking part. (142)

Immediately after this theft the Villon of the novel and his companions planned and executed that of the college of Navarre. In recounting the details of the stealing Albein is in accord with Champion's biography, except that "le Cordelier apostat" is substituted for "damp Nicolas".

According to the novel Villon could no longer bear to remain in Paris, not because he feared detection, but because of the humiliating encounter with Noël Joli; so he resolved to turn traveling merchant. He bought an ass and set out for Angers where he expected to get help from an uncle, a wealthy monk of that city. Villon received but a cold welcome and passed into Poitou where he met the two ladies to whom he refers in his poems.
He stayed about a month in Poitou and then left for Blois and the court of the duke of Orléans. However, before he reached the château he was arrested for robbing a bourgeois. He was thrown into prison and was later released at the birth of the Duke's daughter, Marie. Alheim has placed this imprisonment several years before Champion's date (1460).

According to the novel Villon next went to the duke's château in Orléans, where he was first received as one of the duke's soldiers. Later he was put to work in the château library as an aid to Nicolas Astesan. François kept aloof from the other poets. It was only when the duke wished some verses written that François showed an interest. "Il portait même robe et même chaperon qu’eux; mais, en dépit de sa volonté, ne pouvait astreindre son esprit à s’enrober et chaperonner à la façon de leur."(143) For this reason Villon was not treated kindly by the other poets and the duke's treasurer went so far as to discontinue Villon's wages. Although François realized that Monseigneur d'Orléans recognized his ability to rime, he knew that he was not wanted by the others; so he accepted the purse which the duke gave him and departed.

Jean-Marc Bernard in his article on "François
Villon à la Cour de Blois" praises this portion of Alheim's novel, and justly so. "En quelques pages", he says, "il nous montre là le caractère indépendant de Villon, qui ne peut se plier aux exigences de la politesse servile et courtisanesque. L'obséquiosité des Faret, des Fraigne, et des Fredet révoltait le poète."(144)

Leaving the ducal palace and its sycophants Villon made his way to Bourges. There he was again arrested because he was thought to be a member of the Coquille. By bribing the jailer with the little money he had, he managed to escape a long imprisonment.

We remember that the historical Villon's stay at the château of Jean de Bourbon was brief and that we could find nothing about it except that Jean gave him a wage. Alheim tells in the novel that Villon received from the duke of Bourbon six sous "et l'offre de se retirer à Roussillon".(145) Villon accepted the offer and went to that city. Louis de Bourbon, the lord of Roussillon, was kind to him at first, but, when the hunting season was over, he left the château, taking with him his entire court. Villon remained there during the winter, but the loneliness of the place led him to go elsewhere.
"Il courut les villages, amusa les bonnes gens de ses récits et de ses tours, et but, et joua, fréquentant les auberges." (146)

One evening while in a tavern Villon heard from some of the Coquillards that Regnier de Montigny had been hanged, and that Colin de Cayeux had twice been taken prisoner but had escaped. He learned also that in March 1457 Guy Tabary had talked and had revealed the details of the robbery of the college of Navarre to one Ferrenet Marchand. (147) We know that the robbery was revealed in this way.

Champion says that Regnier de Montigny was hanged on the 15th of September 1457. He had been implicated in several robberies, one at the church of Saint-Jean-en-Grève, and the other at the church of the Quinze-Vingts, and had also been an accomplice in the murder of Thévenin Pensete, "en l'hôtel du Mouton, au cimetière Saint-Jean." (148)

According to Alheim Villon suffered anguish and despair on hearing the news, the more so that he felt that he was likely to be arrested at any time.

Villon was told by some members of the Coquille that Colin was in town. When he sought him out, however, he found that his former companion with six others had
been executed. While Villon contemplated the bodies of the seven hanged men, "il eut des larmes, et une longue détresse . . . Et pourtant un baume s'étendait sur son cœur saignant. C'était une pensée qu'il n'avait pas eue, comme venue de loin, que Dieu ne veut pas la mort du pécheur, mais qu'il vive en bien . . .

"Maître François se relevait, quand il fut empoigné, lié, baillonné, emporté comme une proie dans les prisons de l'évêque."(149)

We find in this quotation the thought that Villon expressed in his Grand Testament.

Je suis pécheur, je le sçay bien;
Pourtant Dieu ne veult pas ma mort,
Mais convertisse et vive en bien;
Miaulx tout autre que peche mord.(150)

François Villon remained in the bishop's prison at Meung-sur-Loire six months. As Alheim says, he was tortured by the lack of food and the complete separation from his fellowmen. To him this imprisonment was a living death, but he could not bring himself to wish for death itself. Rather, he longed for life no matter what it might bring him. The day that Louis XI came to Meung-sur-Loire, Villon was set at liberty. It was as if a new life had been given to him. He was happy, but
the months in prison had wrought disaster to his body and, overcome by weakness, he could go no further. "Il y eut des bruits de pas et de voix, autour de lui. Puis rien." (151)

He remained in this state of unconsciousness for several days and was cared for by a poor woman, whose husband threatened to drive Villon from the house. Later he was taken back to Paris in a cart and was received by his mother and maître Guillaume de Villon with open arms.

At this point Alheim departs completely from the recorded facts of Villon's life. In brief the story is as follows.

François remained but a short time at Paris. His old friends did not wish to recognize him. His mother and maître Guillaume were his only consolation. The thought of death haunted him night and day and his great desire now was to live. Le Débat du cœur et du corps which he wrote while in the prison at Meung, clearly shows the horror that he had of dying. There are references, too, in his poems to the "danse macabre" pictured on the walls of the cimetière des Innocents. According to Alheim's story Villon had visited this cemetery and there the horrors of death became so vivid
that he shuddered at the thought of their approach.

"En tout cas, . . . mieux vaut vivre pauvre en de mauvais draps que d'avoir été riche et pourrir en linceul. Je vis, je veux vivre, et je vivrai."(152)

With this resolution in mind Villon left Paris, and in the spring was again at Saint-Maixent in Poitou.

We know so little about this part of Villon's life that the novelist has had to insert a good deal to make an interesting story. He therefore utilizes the legend that Villon produced a Passion play in that country. The production was most successful, and Villon received an invitation from a rich lord of Poitou to return at Pentecost and again direct the Passion play. After some hesitation Villon accepted the offer and the following week set out for Paris with his purse filled with gold.

Now that he was rich Villon found that there were crowds to welcome him, but he recalled the coldness to him when he was poor, and realized that their friendship for him was not sincere.

At the proper time he remembered his promise to return to Poitou; so he again left his mother and maître Guillaume. There occurred during this third sojourn in Poitou the incident of Frère Tappecoue which
we find related by Rabelais. The two stories as told by Alheim and Rabelais hardly differ. In Rabelais the stole was borrowed for "Dieu le père", in Alheim for "un ange". Rabelais related that Frère Tappecoue's body was so injured in the terrified horse's run that when the animal arrived at the convent, nothing remained but "le pied droit, et le soulier entortillé". (153) Whereas Alheim has it that Frère Tappecoue's body was found near the convent where it had been dragged by the horse.

According to Alheim Villon left Poitou immediately after his play had been presented, and on arriving at the Porte Rouge in Paris learned that his mother and maître Guillaume had died in his absence. One of his first acts was to have masses said for the repose of the soul of Frère Tappecoue.

"Morne, silencieux, fuyant les gens, on le vit souvent à genoux disant des prières devant les chapelles de Notre-Dame et de Saint-Jean-l'Évangile, à la Cathédrale." (154)

With this ends the story of the Passion de Maître François Villon. The poet died surrounded by his three pupils: Girard Gossouyn, Colin Laurens et Jean Marceau.
In writing *La Passion de Maître François Villon*, Alheim did not intend to produce an authentic biography of François Villon, but he did wish to give an historically correct characterization of the poet. He took for his material known biographical facts, the poems and even legendary tales. As a novelist he arranged, interpreted, and completed this material to suit his purpose. For example, Alheim uses the details given about Villon's arrest and imprisonment at the Châtelet in 1452, but he dates them several years earlier. The novel does not consider Villon's quarrel with François Ferrebourg. (155)

For those periods of François Villon's life for which there are no data, Alheim uses such legends as those of Rabelais and the *Recues Franches* which, although nowhere recorded on good authority, are consistent with fact.

By means of frequently inserting phrases from the Testaments and the Ballades, Alheim has succeeded in portraying the character of Villon as we may justly suppose it to have been. The novelist does not quote directly either from the Petit Testament or the Grand Testament, but he uses many expressions from them although not in verse.

In the scene at the gibbet at Montfaucon Alheim
gives expression to those thoughts from the Testament which portray Villon's trust in the goodness and mercy of God, who wills "not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live".

The verses of the Testament which describe the cimetière des Innocents are recalled to us when Alheim tells of Villon's visit there and his terror at the thought of death. (156) There is a trace of the Ballade des pendus in Alheim's description of the dead bodies hanging on the gibbet at Montpipeau "poussé du vent, becquetés des oiseaux, demain moque's des passants". (157) Villon's love of life and the dread of death of which he frequently speaks in his poems are clearly expressed in La Passion in his "mieux vaut vivre pauvre en mauvais draps que d'avoir été riche et pourrir en linceul!". (158)

Alheim does not attempt to show Villon in the act of composing his poems, but he draws from them certain thoughts in reconstructing the mental activities of the man.

The novelist's success in portraying François Villon is recognized by Jean-Marc Bernard in his article "François Villon à la Cour de Blois". He speaks of "les pages si vivantes de la Passion de Maître François Villon",
and adds "il est curieux que le beau livre de M. Pierre d'Alheim (paru en 1900) soit aussi peu connu! Quels bibliophiles ont cité cet ouvrage d'un intérêt passionnant et d'une documentation solide? M. Pierre d'Alheim cependant a bien mérité des villonistes: son roman est remarquable à tous les points de vue."(159) Jean-Marc Bernard's praise of La Passion de Maître François Villon seems somewhat extreme. The novel deserves appreciation as a serious and sincere interpretation of the poet's character and life, but not all its pages are "si vivantes", and not every reader finds it "d'un intérêt passionnant".
In Hector Talvart's "Fiche Bibliographique" are given the following details of the life of Francis Carco. "François Carcopino-Tusoli, dit Francis Carco, est né à Nouméa (Nouvelle-Calédonie), où son père était inspecteur des Domaines, le 3 juillet 1886. Il débuta par la poésie en collaborant à d'innombrables revues éphémères et en publiant, aux côtés de Jean Pellerin, Tristan Derême, des vers ironiques, savants et d'une résonance grave qui lui assignent au Parnasse une place à part, très personnelle, très distincte. Mais c'est avec le roman que la gloire lui vint. Romancier des mauvais lieux, des mauvais garçons, des apaches et des filles, il devait se faire l'historiographe d'un monde auquel il demanda, contre toute vraisemblance, de répondre par la substance humaine foncière à ses besoins de psychologue, alors que les maîtres du genre, un Charles-Louis Philippe, un Charles-Henry Kirsch en avaient surtout tiré l'élément d'un pittoresque nouveau. C'est toutefois avec "l'Homme traqué", qui obtint le grand prix du Roman en 1922, que Carco atteignit au faîte de son art ... Le tour de force de Carco c'est de ... fortement analyser
les êtres, et surtout l'être dans les êtres, sans que la peinture en souffre pour la netteté, le relief ou la couleur ..." (160)

Le Roman de François Villon, which first appeared in the collection Le Roman des Grandes Existences, 1926, begins at the time that François de Montcorbier was a boy of seventeen, "un chétif, brun, et espiègle écolier". (161) He lived at the Porte Rouge with maître Guillaume de Villon, his uncle, who was chaplain of Saint-Benoît le Bétourné.

His mother, a very pious woman, lived at the Cordeliers, happy in the midst of her poverty because she felt that François had a good home and a brilliant future. Carco does not say what he meant the Cordeliers to be, but we might even consider them nuns.

But François was well on the way toward ruining all his prospects. He had already made the acquaintance of two rogues, Régnier de Montigny and Colin de Cayeux, whom he admired for their courage and their wicked lives. With them "on se sentait mieux vivre". (162)

Colin saw in François the elements of a rogue like
himself, and realized that contact with women would give the boy the necessary self-assurance. So he, who "mieux que personne ... savait ce que valent fillettes et marchandes de Paris" (163), one night helped François to steal out of the Porte Rouge, and introduced him to Marion. François, as he did not want to be a coward before Regnier and Colin, treated her as they would have done. From that time on François was a changed boy. Little by little he overcame his shame and acquired a certain pride in what he considered his manliness. The first time that he got money from Marion, "il n'eprouvait aucun scrupule, mais au contraire une espèce de sérénité qui lui faisait trouver fort naturel qu'une femme de mauvaise vie lui eut remis ces deux écus." (164)

As François became more deeply engrossed in vicious pleasure he neglected his studies more and more. Carco tells us that every day when "il se rendait rue du Fouarre au cours que professait Jean de Conflans, son maître, comme à tant d'autres qui étudiaient la logique, Aristote, la grammaire, la syntaxe, il bayait aux corneilles et ne s'instruisait pas". (165) However, cramming before his examinations, François managed to obtain his bachelor's degree.

This new honor seemed trivial to him but Colin
assured him that he would need it if he intended to lead a rogue's life. Colin himself was the leader of the Coquillards in Paris and often directed his thievish crew in its raids on the provinces. He saw in François a potential asset of the Coquille, and secretly tried to win him over by awakening in him a realization of the injustice of the law. One day, therefore, he took the boy to witness a hanging in Paris—the hanging of a woman. This cruel scene so affected François that Régnier and Colin made fun of him, but took him to the tavern of "la grosse Margot", where he drowned his grief in drink.

The names of all the characters of the novel so far are familiar to us. The incidents are either based on historical facts, or are consistent with what we know of the character and life of François Villon. Carco's portrait of François corresponds to Villon's description of himself, "sec et noir comme escouvillon"(166) We see the youth with "son teint plombé, ses joues creuses, sa bouche grande et disgracieuse, ... petit, laid, mal vêtu". (167)

François's character as we have seen it depicted so far by Carco, is logically developed during the rest of the novel. His relations with Margot and his enjoy-
ment of the grosser pleasures are what we might expect after reading his Ballade à la Grosse Margot.

In spite of his evil ways François still saw something of respectable people. Sometimes he went with maître Guillaume to dine with Jacques Seguin, whom Champion introduced to us. All the while the scapegrace was at Seguin's he could hardly wait until he should get back to the tavern where he could mimic the ladies and gentlemen. Villon's cronies were delighted with the expertness of his mimicry, and even more by a night feast which he and Frère Baudé prepared for them. The same stratagems which are related in the Rêves Franches were used by Villon. Most of these have been discussed in connection with Albein's Passion. Carco also tells us how Villon obtained the tripe.

François entered the shop of a woman selling meat, and began a conversation with the shopkeeper concerning the merits of tripe. As they were talking Régnier came up and by his insulting gestures aroused the good woman's anger. Villon appeared to be indignant and, losing his temper, flung the tripe which he was holding in his hands at Régnier. The tripe-vender refused to take back these wares, and Villon, seemingly vexed, stormed out of the shop following Régnier who carried away with him enough
food for twenty people.

So far all had happened as Villon had planned, but he still had to get the roasts. He entered a store and engaged in a conversation with the owner as if he intended to buy. As he was talking, Vallée, a friend of his, arrived and started a quarrel. While the owner was dealing with Vallée, Villon snatched several fat capons and dashed out into the street.

Several months later occurred the first student riot in the city, with François as its instigator. Carco relates the details of the capture of the Pot au Diable and the Vesse as they are found in Champion's biography, but he maintains that François took an active part in these affairs, which, to be sure, is not improbable. Carco says also that whenever there was danger of arrest, Villon would slink away, fearful of the provost, Robert d'Estouteville.

Eventually, though, the provost learned everything. Strange as it may seem, Villon helped to appease his wrath by writing for him the ballad containing in acrostic the name of his wife, Ambroise de Loré.

Carco's Villon became a frequent visitor at the home of Ambroise de Loré. There he was attracted to a certain Marthe, a better type of woman than his tavern
friends, and for a while it seemed that he might give up his vicious habits. But Marthe was not particularly interested in him. She introduced him to a friend of hers, Catherine de Vausselles. There was something about this woman which irritated him. She snubbed him, and poor François realized to his amazement that this annoyed him. Still he was irresistibly attracted to her, and soon he was following her around like a hungry dog.

She became a regular obsession to him and he found himself engrossed in her as he had never been in Marion and Margot. He wasted a good deal of his time walking under her window waiting for the least sign of recognition. It was there that Philippe Sermoise saw him and immediately vowed to get rid of him. They quarreled and even came to blows, but Catherine appeared and put an end to the fight.

The enmity between the two men lived on and they fought again in June, two months later. The murder of Sermoise is related in the novel in much the same way as it is given in the "lettres de rémission". Carco says that François and Isabeau were alone when Sermoise appeared and there is no mention in the authentic documents referred to that Sermoise had a companion. This is a slight departure from the truth, as we read in both
"lettres de rémission" granted to Villon, that Gilles the priest was with Villon and Yeабeau when Sermoise came up with Jean le Mardi. (168)

According to the novel Villon was arrested the day after the murder on a charge of homicide, and banished from Paris. He went to Bourg-la-Reine where he lodged with a barber, Perrot Girard, a friend of Colin's. After a month Villon went to the abbaye of Pourras. "Or "Pourras" était le nom vulgaire de Port-Royal". (169) There he was not only lodged, "mais l'abbesse le fête et le retint près d'un grand mois à s'ébattre avec elle." (170)

In the Grand Testament Villon refers to Perrot Girard as well as to the abbesse of Pourras. We have seen that it was not improbable that he knew them during his first banishment from Paris. (171)

Villon remained away from Paris seven months, and then was free to return, thanks to the influence of Marthe with Robert d'Estouteville.

During this banishment from Paris he had been forced from lack of funds to join Colin as a member of the Coquille. At this time too Colin's attempt to form a general organization of all Coquillards had failed, and now he had to confine his activities to the city of Paris. For this reason it was decided to make a raid on the
college of Navarre. Carco relates that Villon was chosen to guide the others because he would be more likely to know the interior of the college.

The robbery was conducted much as we read it in the confession of Guy Tabary. (172)

On the following day Villon went to see his mother, and told her that he would be absent from Paris two or three months. His intention was to visit an uncle in Angers and relieve him of some of his coin, but he did not explain to his mother the reason for the journey.

Before he left, Villon and his companions gathered at the Pomme where he composed the Petit Testament and recited it to the delight of the crowd of listeners. That same night Colin came for him and the two set out together from Paris.

In the Grand Testament Villon calls himself "pauvre mercerot de Rennes". (173) Carco has him buy some silks and pictures, and start on his wanderings as a pedlar. As he went from town to town selling his wares he composed some of the ballads which he later wrote down.

"—Admirez, disait-il, le Jugement dernier où Christ tient, dans sa droite, une épée flamboyante et,
dans l'autre la fleur de lis. Je le porte d'Allemagne.
Quoi? Est-ce le Saint Christophe qui vous plaît mieux,
on la reine Blanche, ou Hellois?

"En même temps, sur un air plaintif, il déclamait,
indiquant à mesure les personnes dont il était question:

Où est la très sage Hellois,
Pour qui fut castré et puis moine
Pierre Esbaillart à Saint Denis?

"--Ici. Nous la voyons, répondaient les bonnes
gens ébaubis de la façon dont il disait les vers.

"Mais François continuait. Demandant à chacun
s'il savait ce qu'étaient devenues

La royaute Blanche comme lis
Qui chantait à voix de seraine,
Et Jehanne la bonne Lorraine
Qu'Anglois bruslèrent à Rouan . . .

il ajoutait, criant très fort:

Où sont-ils, où, Vierge souvraine?
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?" (174)

People listened to his poems but cared nothing
about his wares.

For one month Villon lived at his ease on the
gold from the college of Navarre. In Angers his uncle
refused him any help, but Villon remained there for some
days entertaining many of the young scholars with his
poems. King René became aware of the poet's presence
and invited him to the château. There Villon might
have lived happily for some time had he not learned that the details of the robbery of the college of Navarre had become known, and that Colin was in hiding at Montpipeau.

Believing himself to be a suspicious character to all those who met him, Villon became uneasy, and left Angers not knowing where to go next. Now his only hope of obtaining any money lay in a gift from Charles d'Orléans, who was a lover of poetry. Arriving at Orléans the day of the birth of Marie, daughter of the Duke, François composed a long poem for the occasion, and had it presented to Charles. In a few days he received three écus and an invitation to appear before the duke.

Villon's welcome by Charles was more than he had expected. The duke invited him to remain at the château, and added his name to the register, indicating with his own hand the wage which was to be payed.

Carco relates the stay of Villon at Orléans in much the same manner as we found it told in Le Passion de Maître François Villon. The duke openly recognized his talent in a contest of verses and thereby caused the jealousy of the other poets. But Villon, who disliked the life he led at Orléans, was not induced by this
praise to stay there.

It is interesting to note here Carco's interpretation of the ballad which Villon composed at the château on the verse

Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine,
the last lines of which read:

Que sais-je plus? Quoy? les gaîges ravoir,
Bien recueullly, déboute de chascun.

Champion (175) asserts that Villon must have made two visits at the château and that this ballad dates from the second. Altheim, in La Passion de Maitre François Villon, (176) and Carco, in Le Roman de François Villon, imply that Villon's wages had been suppressed during the latter part of this sojourn and that they were given back to him before he left.

The following summer, the story goes on to say, Villon was at Nevers where he made a little money by copying his poems and selling them. All during the winter he was on the roads, still appearing as a pedlar, but in reality having no merchandise in his pack. His business those days consisted in stealing chickens at night and selling them the next day to honest folk.

Toward the end of the year 1459 he entered the city of Moulins and was received at the château of Jean
de Bourbon. The life here pleased him no more than that at Orléans. The following April he left Moulins and returned to Orléans, where he hoped to find Piez Blans, an old acquaintance of his and the leader of the vagabond crew which ravaged the country around Paris. Carco is wholly responsible for his appearance, as there is no mention of such a person in the biographies, nor in Villon's poems.

At Orléans Villon was arrested as a member of the Coquille, and imprisoned. On the 19th of June he was put to the question, and told all that he knew about Piez Blans' former stay at Orléans. He was tortured on the 23rd of June and again on the 2nd of July for further information about Piez Blans. A few days later Charles d'Orléans, his wife, and their daughter Marie entered the city, and all prisoners were set at liberty.

As soon as Villon obtained his freedom he set out for Montpipeau, where he found Colin. The two planned and carried out the robbery of the church at Baccon, for which Colin was arrested and hanged. Villon escaped arrest for one week, but one day as he was standing near the gibbet looking at the corpse of his old friend, he was arrested, gagged and dragged off to Meung-sur-Loire.

His imprisonment there was a living death, made
more terrible by the uncertainty as to what was going to happen to him. He was tortured and it was miraculous how he lived after being stretched on the rack for the third time.

Garco inserts in his description of this imprisonment, lines from the Débat du cœur et du corps and from the Ballade à ses amis.

Villon was set at liberty when Louis XI entered Meung. The poet started immediately for Paris, regaining his strength little by little on the way. As he went along from town to town he formed in his mind the beginning of a long poem which he was later to call the Testament or the Grand Testament.

Villon's reflections on his relations with women, the thought of which is contained in the lines of the Grand Testament which begin:

Ainsi m'ont amours abuse . . . (177)

Garco reproduces thus: "il n'avait jamais eu des femmes, à part Margot, que des railleries et de mauvais traitements. Marion s'était moquée de lui, jadis. Catherine l'avait fait battre et Marthe, à son retour de Bourg-la-Reine, s'y était prise de telle façon pour l'écarter qu'il en avait le cœur meurtri."(178)
According to the novel the poet was next beset by those vices which had most often seduced him in former years. Each one came to him in the form of a woman recalling to his mind the pleasure he had found in giving himself up as its slave, and each one called him back to his old life. He tried to keep them at a distance and begged Our Lady to help him, addressing to her a prayer which he thought his mother would use, the Ballade à Notre Dame.

When François arrived in Paris he learned that the affair of the college of Navarre had not yet been satisfactorily settled, and that he would have to hide. He went to live with his mother for two months while he worked on the Grand Testament. This confinement became such a torture that he could no longer bear it; putting aside his fear of arrest, he went from the Cordeliers' daily and roamed the streets of Paris looking for familiar faces.

His old friends would have nothing to do with him; so he spent most of his time with several young men, Robin Dogis, Hulin du Moustier, and Pichard. Vice again took hold of him and soon he was arrested for stealing some money from a wench. Now that the law had him again in her hands the old affair of the robbery of the college
of Navarre was brought up, and François had to promise
to return within three years the écus that he had stolen.
He was released on this promise, but was soon arrested
once more for the affair with Ferrebourg, the details
of which we have noted. His sentence was a banishment
of ten years from Paris.

Carco relates that on leaving Paris, Villon went
to Bourg-la-Reine where he met the barber, Perrot Girard.
This man told him that he was keeping concealed in his
house Piez Blans, who sat all day long with his dagger
drawn, fearful of everybody. After talking a while with
Piez Blans about Colin and Regnier de Montigny, Villon
prepared to leave him. Piez Blans arose and offered
Villon his own coat to shelter him from the rain. The
poet, after accepting the cloak, departed. Piez Blans
at the door, "attendit qu'un grand cri dans la nuit,
suivi d'une lutte brusque et sauvage l'eussent averti
qu'il pouvait déguerpir, quand, à vingt pas de là, il
fut lui-même saisi, désarmé, ligoté par trois sergents
que Girard, le barbier, avait en grand secret ramenés
de Paris."(179)

With this Carco ends his novel.

The background of Le Roman de François Villon is
historically exact, and nowhere is the story inconsistent with recorded biographical fact. The activities of the Coquillards in and around Paris are considered by Carco as inseparable from the life of François Villon; yet the novelist takes for granted, on the part of the reader, a considerable knowledge of that organization. With the aid of historical facts Carco has attempted to present the true Villon rather than a fantastic figure. He has woven a story around the incidents of Villon's life as we see it presented in Pierre Champion's biography of the poet.

Apart from the similarity of the facts related, there is, perhaps accidentally, a similarity between his biography and the novel. Pierre Champion, when giving an imaginary picture of Villon's death-bed scene, says: "Autour de Villon hurlaient bien des vices à face d'animaux: Luxure, Gloutonnerie, Paresse, Mensonge, Désespoir, Envie et Violence". (180) Francis Carco shows Villon in his despair after his release from the prison at Meung-sur-Loire with embodied vices hovering about him: "il se voyait entouré de ses vices qui ... quoi qu'il fît ... l'avaient toujours séduit et entraîné". (181)

Carco like Alheim has had to supply material for
those years of Villon's life for which we have no historical data, but all that he adds is quite probable and in keeping with the character of Villon. We have seen how he utilized the Repues Franches.

Like Alheim, too, he uses Villon's poetry as a means of characterizing the poet. Unlike Alheim, however, he uses direct quotation rather frequently. We find lines from the Ballade de la Grosse Margot, the Ballade à s'amye, the Ballade à Monseigneur de Bourbon, le Débat du cœur et du corps, the Ballade des dames du temps jadis, the Prière à Notre Dame, and many verses from the Testaments. These verses serve in the development of the story, and could not be omitted from the novel without detriment to it. For example, Carco has Villon compose the Ballade de la Grosse Margot one day when he is at the tavern of the Grosse Margot, Antoine, Margot's husband, recognizes himself as the target for the ballade, and Margot takes offence at the lines of the third verse wherein Villon speaks so disparagingly of her. The Ballade à s'amye is composed in the presence of Marthe, to whom Villon complains of the deceit and the coldness of Catherine. The verses of the Petit Testament are inserted into the story at the point at which Villon takes leave of his friends before his departure for Angers. The Ballade à Notre Dame is written in a moment of despair when Villon feels himself called
back to his old vices. He bursts forth into the kind of prayer which he thinks his mother would use. The Grand Testament is presented in the novel as Villon's real will. Carco has him write it while he is at his mother's, hiding from the law. His physical strength is almost gone and he feels that his death cannot be far off. Carco uses the same method in inserting other verses of Villon's, revealing in this way much of his character.

A similarity has been pointed out between this novel and Champion's biography of Villon. Such is also the case, but to a greater degree, with Alheim's La Passion de maître François Villon. Both novelists wrote with the same purpose, and used and developed the same biographical material and the poetry. Events for which there are ample historical data, like the robbery of the college of Navarre, are narrated by Carco and Alheim with scarcely any differences. Then, too, those incidents which are suggested by Villon's poems, but not developed in them, such as his life at Port-Royal and the imprisonment at Meung, receive from both a similar treatment. It is still more striking that there exists a likeness between the two writers in the case of events like Villon's stay at Blois, which are not described to any extent in the biographies. Alheim
says that Villon disliked the life at the château, that he preferred to be alone rather than to "considérer ces gens amenuisant leurs lèvres et débitant d'un ton précieux rondeaux et ballades". (182) In *Le Roman de François Villon* the poet found this life "si insipide qu'au lieu de se bien faire voir du duc en assistant à ses concours, il passait ses journées entières dans les cuisines, s'y chauffait, y buvait de grands coups . . . Il préférait la valetaille du ventre à celle de l'esprit". (183) No biographer tells of the circumstances of Villon's arrest by the officers of the Bishop of Orléans. When Carco describes this scene before the gibbet at Montpipeau we feel certain that his ideas come from Alheim. Both novelists relate that as the poet contemplated the corpse of his friend Colin, he was arrested, gagged, and dragged off to Meung-sur-Loire. We have already learned that Carco differs from Alheim in his direct use of Villon's poems. Moreover, Carco's scenes, which show the composition of the poetry, have no counterpart in Alheim.

It is difficult to estimate Carco's debt to Alheim, but the debt certainly exists. Like Alheim in his treatment of biographical and other material, he also greatly resembles him in giving us a portrayal of the historical figure of Villon which we may draw from the *Testaments* and
the Ballades. It is interesting to note that dealing with almost identical material, the two works differ so greatly in the impression they produce on the reader, the story as told by Carco being interesting, well narrated and the characters lifelike.
Chapter III

FRANÇOIS VILLON IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

A Lodging for the Night

Robert Louis Stevenson

Robert Louis Stevenson was twenty-seven years old when in 1877 his A Lodging for the Night appeared in Temple Bar. It gives in story form a character sketch of François Villon, whom Stevenson, in his essay François Villon: Student, Poet, and Housebreaker, called "the sorriest figure on the roll of fame." (134)

One November night of the year 1456 Villon and four other rogues were "keeping the night alive and passing around the bottle" in a small house huddled up against the wall of St. John's cemetery in Paris. Dom Nicolas, the Picardy monk, was warming his huge frame at the fire. Guy Tabary, with an imbecile-like countenance, sat near Villon "spluttering admiration", for the poet was engaged in the making of a ballad which was to be called "The Ballad of Roast Fish". Tabary was "a rag of a man, dark, little, and lean with hollow cheeks and thin black looks. He carried his four and twenty years with feverish animation. Greed had made folds about his eyes, evil smiles had puckered his mouth. The wolf and the pig struggled together in his face. It
was an eloquent, sharp, ugly, earthly countenance."(185)

René Montigny and Thévenin Pensète were at a table engaged in a game of chance. Montigny was losing heavily. His mouth was "a little to a side; one nostril nearly shut, and the other much inflated."(186) Thévenin, on the contrary, was beaming. His bald head shone "rosily in a garland of red curls".(187)

All of a sudden Montigny leaped up and stabbed Thévenin in the heart. The dead man's head fell backward with wide opened eyes. "Villon broke out into hysterical laughter. He came a step forward and ducked a ridiculous bow to Thévenin, and laughed still louder. Then he sat down suddenly, all of a heap upon the stool, and continued laughing bitterly as though he would shake himself to pieces."(188) René divided the dead man's spoils with the others, and all swiftly prepared to depart. Then Villon's nerves gave way and, as he sat there weakly gibbering of Thévenin's head, "'It sticks in my throat like phlegm' ", he did not notice that Dom Nicolas was filching his purse. When the four separated a few minutes later Villon was still unaware of his loss.

The sight of the dead man's head still haunted him and, groping his way alone through the snow and the dark, his imagination called up before him the gallows of Mont-
faucon. His heart fairly ceased to beat. When he entered an empty porch to avoid the night patrol he ran against the body of a woman recently dead. He took two coins off her body, but when he reached for his purse found to his astonishment that it was gone. As he thought of the horrible nearness of death he cursed, and stamped his feet and, although but a moment before bathed in a nervous perspiration, became stiff with cold.

No one would give him shelter, not even his uncle, the chaplain of St. Benoît. "'Wormy old fox!'" cried Villon. "'If I had my hand under your twist, I would send you flying into the bottomless pit.'"(189)

He passed on, resolved to take a lodging if no one would give him one. He knocked at the door of a large house where he saw a light, and was received courteously by an old gentleman, the seigneur de Brisetout. Here Villon ate a hearty meal and regained some of his old self-assurance. While the old man was out of the room Villon took an inventory, but, as he could see only seven pieces of plate, did not bother to steal them. When the lord of Brisetout returned he engaged Villon in a conversation which became heated. The question of honor was discussed and Villon, who wished to show his host that he also had a sense of
honor, told him that it was from just such a motive that he had not taken the plate. The master of the house thought that he could convert him to better ways. But Villon so shocked and insulted the old man with his preposterous ideas that the task of conversion appeared hopeless. The lord of Brisetout felt himself disgraced at having passed his time with such a black-hearted rogue, and very coldly but courteously showed Villon the door.

As the poet wandered out into the night he muttered to himself. "A very dull old gentleman. I wonder what his goblets may be worth." (190)

This short story, primarily a character sketch, has however, a well-sustained narrative thread which, if not historically true in all its details, follows closely enough known facts. Regnier de Montigny is on record as having killed a certain Thévenin Pensete in "l'hôtel du Mouton", and it is probable that Villon was there when it happened. He may have had a hand in the murder.

Stevenson takes the bare fact of this murder, develops and completes it by pictures and ideas probably suggested by Villon's poetry. In the third stanza of the Ballade des Pendus Villon writes:
La pluye nous a debuez et lavez,
Et le soleil dessechez et noircis;
Pies, corbeaulx, nous ont les yeux cavez,
Et arrachez la barbe et les sourcilz.
Jamais, nul temps, nous ne sommes assis;
Puis çà, puis là, comme le vent varie,
A son plaisir, sans cesser, nous charie,

In A Lodging for the Night Villon, speaking of
the wind, says: "'Can't you hear it rattle in the
gibbet? . . . They are all dancing the devil's jig on
nothing up there. You may dance, my gallants, you'll
be none the warmer! Whew; what a gust! Down went some-
body just now! A medlar the fewer on the three legged
medlar-tree! . . . "(193)

There is also another resemblance of ideas between
Stevenson's story and the Grand Testament. In the
latter the emperor Alexandre speaking with the pirate
Diomèdes asks him why he is a pirate. Diomèdes answers:

"Pourquoy larron me faiz nommer"?
Pourçue qu'on me voit escumer
Dedans une petite fuste?
Se comme toy me pusaie armer,
Comme toy empeureur je fusse.(194)

The lord of Brisetout, after giving a description
of his manner of living and the sort of life which is
Villon's, asks: "'Is there no difference between these
two? . . . As far as to the moon, 'Villon acquiesces.
'But if I had been born lord of Brisetout, and you had
been the scholar François, would the difference have been
any the less? Should not I have been warming my knees
at the charcoal pan, and would not you have been groping
for farthings in the snow? Should not I have been
the scholar and you the thief?"(195)

Stevenson's characterization of François Villon
is biased and, therefore, not complete. The novelist
attributes to Villon the many vices and the few virtues
one pictures in the writer of the *Ballade de la Grosse
Margot* and the equally disparaging *Ballade pour servir
de Conclusion*, and fails to recognize in him the possibly
sincere believer of the *Ballade à Notre Dame*. With the
lord of Brisetout Stevenson thinks Villon "an impudent
and black-hearted rogue."(196) We may judge this from
his essay, *François Villon: Student, Poet and Housebreaker*.

Henri Vigier, in his article "François Villon en
Angleterre", explains clearly enough the reasons for
Stevenson's black conception of François Villon. "Pour
Stevenson, Villon est le prototype du louche bohème
parisien, fleur des ruisseaux de la colline Sainte-
Geneviève. Et Stevenson, le bohème de plein air et le
réveur de romans d'aventures, se détourne non sans
dégout du bohème de la ville." . . . "Il y a dans la
nouvelle 'Un Logis pour la Nuit' un accent personnel
qui trahit la préoccupation du jeune écrivain. Il ne
veut pas être un Villon. Voilà, semble-t-il, le secret
de sa dureté. C'est lui-même qu'il oppose au Bohème."(197)
Although, guided by his own feelings, Stevenson unintentionally painted Villon’s character blacker, he did not, however, go so far as to meddle with facts, or to attribute to the poet characteristics which, with a slight use of the imagination, might have been ascribed to him. For this reason Stevenson may be classed with Lewis as one of those writers who, treating the historical background rather lightly, have yet made a sincere attempt to interpret François Villon’s character.
2. **If I Were King**

Justin Huntly McCarthy

Justin Huntly McCarthy, dramatist, novelist, and historian, born in 1861, the son of the late Honorable Justin McCarthy, a prominent figure in the House of Commons for many years, has published many novels and plays. Among his novels are, *The Flower of France, A Health to his Majesty, Fool of April, If I Were King, Needles and Pins*, and *The Glorious Rascal*, the last three of which have Villon as their hero. Moreover, his playwriting had not been a success until he turned to our poet and presented *If I Were King*. This play in which François Villon is the central figure, met with such approbation that McCarthy published in 1901 a novel by the same name, the details of which differ in no respect from those of the play. We shall treat only the novel in this thesis.

The scene of the first three chapters is laid in Paris in the Fircone Tavern, the famous "Pomme de Pin" about which we read so much in connection with the life of François Villon. The landlord, Robin Turgis, is mentioned by Villon in his *Grand Testament*:

```
Item, vienne Robin Turgis
A moy: je luy payeray son vin . . .
Combien? S'il trouve mon logis,
Plus fort sera que le devin. (198)
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In the novel Robin does not sell to François on credit.

As the story begins we see Turgis surveying with a good deal of pleasure the group of men and women who are patronizing his wares. The men are members of the mysterious Brotherhood of the Cockleshells, all of them admired and feared by Robin.

"Slender René de Montigny, in a jerkin of rubbed and faded purple velvet, with his malign Italianate face and his delicate Italianate grace; rotund Guy Tabarie, bluff, red and bald; Casin Cholet, tall and bird-like, with the figure of a stork and the features of a bird of prey; Jehan le Loup, who looked as vulpine as his nickname; these Robin Turgis eyed and catalogued with a kind of pride . . . On the settle, with his face to the fire, Colin de Cayeulx sprawled in a drunken sleep, forgetting and forgotten, a harmless looking, goodnatured looking knave who was neither harmless nor goodnatured." (199)

McCarthy's use of "vulpine" as synonymous with "Loup" leads one to believe that he did not fully understand the meaning of one or the other word.

René de Montigny, Guy Tabarie, Robin Turgis, and Colin de Cayeulx, are all familiar figures. Jehan le Loup figures in Carco's Roman de François Villon, where his nickname suits his character well. Paul Lacroix
accounts for the name by saying that this man Jehan, who "dévastait les poulailliers et les basses-cours", was "surnommé le Loup, probablement à cause de ses courses nocturnes". (200)

We also find in the Testaments that Villon refers to Casin Cholet, and each time, in connection with Jehan le Loup.

Item au Loup et à Chollet,
Je laisse à la foi un canart
Prins sur les murs, comme on souloit;
Ou vers les fossez, sur le tard; ... (201)

Item, je donne à Jehan le Loup,
Homme de bien et bon marchant,
Pource qu'il est linget et flou,
Et que Chollet est mal cherchant;
Ung beau petit chienment couchant,
Qui ne lairra pouaille en voye. (202)

The women were "gaudy, painted, assertive strumpets with young, fair, shameless faces - worthy Jills of the ill-favoured Jacks who cuddled them - Jehanneton, the fair helm-maker, Denise, Blanche, Isabeau, and Guillemette, the landlord's daughter, who consorted gaily enough with these brightly plumaged birds of a rogue's paradise." (202)

One of these women, a girl of twenty-five, Huguette du Hamel, or the "Abbess", as she was called by her tavern friends because of her convent of "light-o'loves", was of a different type from the other women. She sat on the edge of a table playing a lute and singing in a voice that was
clear and sweet, and appealing in its plaintiveness.

We have met all of these people in our discussion of the life of François Villon. Huguette is the only one who appears with a new character. Records show her to have been really the abbess of Port-Royal, a woman with a shady reputation, whom Villon mentions in the Grand Testament in connection with the barber Perrot Girard.(204)

There were other customers in the inn. Louis XI, king of France, and his "malign satellite", Tristan l'Hermite", sat disguised in one corner discussing a possible plot of the Grand Constable, Thibaut d'Aussigny, with the Burgundians, who were even then besieging Paris.

McCarthy has made of Thibaut d'Aussigny the Grand Constable of France, but, as we shall see, his Villon loves Thibaut none the better.

The conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a man who Tristan in a hushed voice said was François Villon, "scholar, poet, drinker, drabber, blabber, good at pen, point and pitcher. In the Court of Miracles they call him the King of the Cockleshells."(205)

"The man was of medium height, spare and slight and lean; his thin, eager face was bronzed with the suns and winds of a generation. A cunning reader would have
found a home for high thoughts behind the fine forehead, the lines of infinite tenderness upon the mobile lips, the light of some noble conflagration in the wild eyes." (206)

He immediately became the center of an admiring group. The Abbess hung upon his words. Not all the creatures of this crowd loved François as she did, but all admired him. Louis, the king, began a conversation with the rogue and seemed to enjoy it, especially when François spoke of the King of France. "What can a man do but drink," shouted Villon, "when France is going to the devil, with the Burgundians camped in the free fields . . . , and a nincompoop sits on the throne and lets them besiege the city?" (207) He proceeded, then, to tell in the verse of "If I Were King" what he would do if he were Louis. There was a wild outburst of applause and even the king seemed to have enjoyed it.

But Villon was not happy that night. His shoulders still smarted from a beating which he had received not three days before. Once, near a church, he had seen a young woman who had charmed him with her beauty. She was Katherine de Vaucelles, one of the queen's ladies. He had made rhymes and sent them to her, and, now he had his answer - a beating, but his heart remained hers. We have learned from the Testament that Katherine de
Vaucelles had Villon beaten "comme à ru telles". In the novel Villon's beating was caused not by Katherine, but by a jealous suitor attracted by her broad lands, Thibaut d'Aussigny.

McCarthy goes on to tell us that Villon's mother then entered the tavern in search of him, and that he composed a prayer for her, a prayer to our Lady. And when the tavern was empty but for Louis, Tristan, and Villon, Katherine de Vaucelles herself came to ask the poet to prove his love for her otherwise than in rhymes. Secretly she urged François to attack Thibaut, whose suit she hated. So when Thibaut appeared Villon fought with him, and was saved from the Constable's men only by the King, who claimed him as his prisoner.

The next day, François awoke to find himself in the King's palace, Count of Montcorbier and Grand Constable of France. Louis, nettled by Villon's disparaging remarks in the tavern, had decided to give him one week in which he might in a sense rule France, and afterwards pay the price on the gibbet. This fate he might escape by winning for himself the love of Katherine de Vaucelles.

That week, crowded with happiness for François, for though Katherine gave no sign he felt that he had won her,
held an interesting episode when as Grand Constable of France he sat as judge over his companions of the Firecone. Not one of them recognized him, and each one thought the man who knew of so many of their crimes, a wizard. When Guy Tabarie was brought in, Villon leaned toward him and whispered in his ear,

"Do you know the Church of St. Maturin, Master Tabarie?"

"The little piglike eyes of Tabarie widened in surprise, and he stammered a "No, my lord," that was in itself a flagrant confession of shameful knowledge. Villon wagged his head wisely.

"Master Tabarie, Master Tabarie, your memory is failing you. Why, no later than the middle of March last you broke into the church and pilfered gold plate from the altar. The fear of God is not very strong in you." (208)

We know from historical data that when Guy Tabarie was called upon to give the details of the robbery of the College of Navarre, he also mentioned an attempt which had been made to rob the church of Saint Mathurin. (209)

The night of the seventh day of Villon's week, he planned, under cover of celebrations at the palace, to
lead forth the French army in an unexpected attack on the Burgundian troops. That same night Thibaut d'Aussigny, who had disappeared after the quarrel with Villon in the tavern, and was plotting to capture Louis, would have succeeded in carrying out his plans, with the help of Villon's old friends of the Fircone, had not François, through Huguette, discovered and prevented the intended abduction. That night, too, Katherine de Vaucelles learned of the real identity of the Grand Constable of France and thereupon refused him her love.

So Villon went to meet the Burgundian army with Katherine's words of scorn ringing in his ears. Louis chuckled when he heard of the quarrel and gave orders to have the gallows ready on the next day.

Villon led his troops back in triumph. The king and all his court had assembled near the church around the gallows, and were waiting for the victim.

The Grand Constable presented the Burgundian banners to the king and then sentenced himself, as François Villon, to the gallows. A little old woman in the crowd, Villon's mother, and the beautiful Katherine de Vaucelles, offered to give their lives in exchange, but Louis would not hear to it. Finally, however, in fear of an insurrection in Villon's behalf, Louis granted the poet his freedom and
consented to his marriage with Katherine de Vaucelles.

McCarthy's novel takes place when, as he says, Villon was thirty-three years old and but lately released from prison. He has him refer to the imprisonment in these words, "Well, God bless his majesty, say I, for I owe him my present liberty. There was a gaol-clearing when he came to Paris and as I happened to be in gaol at the time through an error of the law . . . they were good enough to kick me into the free air."(210)

We may assume that the story takes place immediately after Villon's release from the prison at Meung.

Before the publication of Schwob's Spicilègue in 1896, nothing was known of those years of the poet's life. Schwob revealed Villon's imprisonment at the Châtelet in November 1462, and the affair with François Ferrebourg in 1463, for which Villon was sentenced to ten years of banishment from Paris.

In writing If I Were King McCarthy ignores these revelations - perhaps he did not know them - and creates characters and episodes. His plot is far-fetched and verges on the impossible. One may well imagine the tavern scene, but Villon's elevation to the place of Grand Constable of France is fantastic, though it is
a device that serves well a writer of pure romance, and McCarthy pretends to be nothing more. He is telling a pleasing tale in the colorful setting that the readers of England and America loved at the beginning of this century. He is making no attempt to portray an historical personnage. His François belongs, not to the family of Alheim's François Monterbier, but to that of the Gringoire of Hugo and Banville.

In the tavern scene Villon tells us what he is. "'I am, Heaven forgive me, a jingler of rhymes, with the stars for my candles and the roses for my toys.'"(211) Although, on the exterior, a rogue like his companions of the Ficcone tavern, he was all the while living in another world where there was love and beauty and goodness.

Even in the description of Villon there is the touch of the writer of romance. McCarthy gives a picturesque translation of Villon's words of the Petit Testament, "sec et noir comme escouvillon".(212)

His Katherine de Vaucelles is a fitting heroine of romance, a woman of noble birth, beautiful, and possessing a finer sense of the good than her prototype. Katherine of the Testaments, who showered on Villon her
"doulx regars et beaulx semblans", (213) bears little resemblance to McCarthy's heroine. The novelist needed a character and he created a Katherine de Vauvelles of his own. The same theme which McCarthy so picturesquely develops in his If I Were King, both novel and play, has been used for Russel Janney's operetta The Vagabond King and for the talking picture of the same name.

McCarthy's If I Were King brought him such success that he continued the same narrative in Needles and Pins, which appeared in 1907. This novel deals with the trials and tribulations endured by Villon in establishing himself as a Poitevin nobleman. Except for the interlude of a visit by his old friends of the Firoone, it has not the remotest relation to the facts of the life of François Villon, unless we take into consideration the legend about Villon's stay in Poitou. The characterization of Villon, too, is romantic and differs little from that of If I Were King.

The Glorious Rascal which McCarthy wrote in 1915 as a sequel to both If I Were King and Needles and Pins, will be discussed next.
3. The Glorious Rascal  
Justin Huntly McCarthy

The Glorious Rascal was published in 1915. Although written some eight or ten years after If I Were King and Needles and Pins, it deals with an earlier period of the poet's life. It portrays the life of François Villon from his early childhood to his departure from Paris after the killing of Philippe Sermoise, or Sermois, to use McCarthy's spelling.

As a child of three or four years François lived with his mother who managed to earn a livelihood for herself and her son by making lace. A new burden was put on her when an unknown child, a baby girl, was brought to the house by a drunken Burgundian soldier. But Mother Villon cared for her, and Huguette and François became as brother and sister. No attention was given to the small silk bag found on the baby nor to the piece of parchment which the bag contained. After several years the Burgundian returned to claim the child and immediately left Paris with her. Neither Mother Villon nor François saw or heard of them for many years.

François knew little about his father, who had died several years before the time that the story opens.
His mother told the boy that his father was poor, and that he had a rich clerical brother living somewhere in Paris, and François, knowing of a rich ecclesiastic by the name of Guillaume de Villon, soon found the residence and presented himself as that worthy gentleman's nephew. The Canon of Saint-Benoît - for such was Guillaume de Villon - took an immediate liking to the boy, and decided to educate him for the Church or for the law. Mother Villon went to live at the Celestines', a short distance from Saint Benoît.

McCarthy evidently understands the Celestines' to be nuns.

When François was fifteen years old the Canon was invited by his friend, Lord Robert d'Estouteville, to travel in his company to Saumur in Anjou, where King René was to hold a great tournament. Guillaume was most anxious to go to Anjou as he had there a much loved kinsman, a cleric like himself, and he accepted the invitation. François went with him acting as Robert d'Estouteville's favorite page.

There came from Paris to attend the tournament the beautiful daughter of Ambroise de Loré, Provost of Paris. She, like her father, bore the name Ambroise
de Lore'. Her beauty won for her many admirers among the nobles of Anjou and two especially, the Lord of Beauvau and Robert d'Estouteville. Beauvau advanced his cause with Ambroise by writing for her many beautiful verses. Messire d'Estouteville was greatly downcast until François furnished him some poetry for his lady. His cause was won, especially as in the tournament he was victor both on horse and on foot, and though François did not know it, he returned to Paris certain that Ambroise would soon be his wife.

This tournament at Saumur is mentioned in the biographies of François Villon. Pierre Champion, when referring to Robert d'Estouteville, says: "A ce prévôt, qui a conquis sa dame au pas d'armes que tint René, roi de Sicile, et où il parut comme un Hector ou un Troilus, Villon donne une ballade courtoise; en acrostiche, on y lit le nom de sa gracieuse épouse, Ambroise de Lore'."(214) Champion also has a reference to the Lord of Beauvau in connection with the tournament.(215)

Villon's ballade containing in acrostic the name of Ambroise de Lore' is translated by McCarthy in this novel.

From this stay in Anjou dated François's acquaintance with Philippe Sermois. This youth who was being
educated for the Church by Guillaume's kinsman, was jealous of François because of his position as d'Estouteville's page, but especially because of his intercourse with Ambroise de Loré.

François, in spite of his youth, had fallen in love with Ambroise de Loré. When he wrote the verses for d'Estouteville, he himself had carried them to her, and on presenting them had been startled to find himself face to face with the image of Huguette. It was not she, however. François saw Huguette while he was at Saumur, though only for a minute. She, with the Burgundian as her exploiter, was a dancing girl in a side-show. François attempted to speak with her, but a quarrel with Sermois prevented.

With the return of François and his uncle to Paris ends the first period of his life as it is portrayed in the novel. At this time he was still "little François. But if the swelling years did not swell his bulk, he was a well put-together rascal, with a wiry mind in a wiry body. He always looked younger than his years; he always looked weaker than his veritable measure of strength."(216)

When the Canon sent him to the University, he
applied himself with diligence to his studies in the hope of making himself worthy of the love of the lady Ambroise de Loré. The thought never occurred to him that one day she would marry another and this wedding change his whole life. It was remarkable too how solicitous he became for the comfort of others. He would surely be a successful man, thought his mother and the Canon, and Robert d'Estouteville showed his esteem by inviting him to his house. There the boy made the acquaintance of the various magistrates of the city.

Then came the day of Ambroise's marriage to Robert d'Estouteville. François was stunned, so stunned that he was not greatly affected when that same day he met Philippe Sermois. Sermois had disappeared from Anjou, and had not been heard of since, but here he was giving lectures at the university under the name of Brother Sententius.

On that day too François made the acquaintance of René de Montigny and Guy Tabarie, two disreputable students who brought into François's life only trouble and sorrow. He became in a short time as degraded as they, and found in his misery and dissipation the means for his release from the charm of Ambroise de Loré. He
realized what madness it was for him to go through life with his soul and body dedicated to the service of a woman, and that woman the wife of another. Soon, too, he came to look on René de Montigny as a demi-god. Guy Tabarie evoked no admiration from Villon, but René de Montigny "wooed with a cunninger voice; he talked with an art that could, as the saying goes, charm a bird from the tree; he was steeped in vile rhymes and putrescent philosophy; he was brisk in infidel villainies . . . " (217)

Little by little Villon neglected his studies until finally the affair of the Devil's Whistle made it clear to the Canon that his nephew had ceased to be the conscientious lad of former days.

McCarthy relates the affair of the Devil's Whistle, Mademoiselle de Bruyères's boundary stone, as it has already been told, (218) with the exception that he makes Villon the instigator of the mischief. McCarthy says, too, that "Villon immortalized it in song, or hoped he had done so, making a burlesque epic on the business, which he caused Guy Tabarie, who wrote a clerkly hand, to copy out fair for him, on fine white paper." (219) This is a reference to the Rommang du Pet au Diable bequeathed to Maistre Guillaume de Villon:
Je lui laisse ma librairie,
Et le Rommant du Petit au Diable,
Lequel maistre Guy Tabarie
Grossoya, qu'est hom veritable.
Par cayers est soubz une table.
Combien qu'il soit rudement fait,
La Matiere est si tres-notable
Qu'elle amende tout le meffait. (220)

The escapade of the Devil's Whistle closed Robert d'Estouteville's doors to François. He became a greater rascal than before and one of the city's most dangerous wretches. With other rogues he witnessed the hanging of the Burgundian who had found Huguette. The girl was there clapping her hands as the noose was put in place.

Once more she and François were as brother and sister. François now recalled the piece of paper which had been found on Huguette when she was picked up by the Burgundian, and he became anxious to discover the girl's identity. The paper was brought forth and François, on looking at it, recognized the coat-of-arms of old Ambroise de Loré. This fact and the remarkable resemblance between Huguette and d'Estouteville's wife led François to pay a visit to the former provost.

There he learned of Ambroise de Loré's relations with Huguette du Hamel, a novice in a convent in a provincial town. The memory of her had always remained with the old man. When François took him to see Huguette,
the Provoost at once claimed her as his child and promised to provide for her by giving her an abandoned convent which had formerly belonged to the members of Port-Royal.

We have already learned that according to historical fact a certain abbess of Port-Royal was called Hugusette du Hamel. (221)

Philippe Sermois again returned to Paris after an absence of several years, this time coming as an Italian count, bearing a different name but unchanged in his hatred for François. Count Filippo told François that he would one day kill him, but not until Ambroise de Loré had, in Villon's presence, bestowed her favors on his hated rival.

From that day François had the Count Filippo followed by some friend of René de Montigny's who belonged to the Court of Miracles. There was not one of the Count's activities which was not reported to François. For some days nothing happened, and then Villon was notified that the Count had bought an empty house and that every night large bundles were carried into it by some of the Count's workmen. René de Montigny and Guy Tabarie cunningly offered to work for
him and were asked to bring François Villon on a certain night into this house. He was not to be killed until the Count should give the word. François was amused when the plan was told him, and went armed to the intended ambuscade.

On this particular night too Ambroise de Loré was lured to the house by a note telling her that François Villon was dying and wished to see her before his death.

In rescuing her Villon did not kill Sermois outright but the nature of the wounds showed that the man would not live. Ambroise advised François to flee from Paris for a time in order to keep himself from the law. So he left Paris accompanied by his old playmate Huguette. Here McCarthy leaves François Villon. In If I Were King we meet him again in Paris.

In The Glorious Rascal, where we find depicted the moral rise and fall of François Villon, McCarthy manifests more appreciation of the value of historical facts than he did in If I Were King and Needles and Pins. Here, too, however, the novelist dominates, changing and developing biographical facts as he sees fit, having no other end in view than that of producing a romance.
Many of the incidents of this novel have an historical foundation, but in most cases the writer transforms them. He transfers the fight with Philippe Sermond from the square in front of the Church of Saint-Benoît to a setting he has imagined. He does away with the witnesses and replaces them by others.

Then, too, McCarthy finds in Villon's poetry a suggestion for incidents in his story. François Villon, we know, wrote a ballade which he presented to Robert d'Estouteville, but in The Glorious Rascal McCarthy has it presented much later than it was in the biography. He uses also thoughts from the Ballade des Pendus to express Villon's horror at seeing the fatally wounded Sermon.

"He would have liked," says McCarthy, "to seek immediate shelter . . . The lean gibbet of Montfaucon seemed to be branded on the wreck of his intellect. As he thought swiftly and instantly of these terrors, it was all that he could do to restrain himself from screaming aloud."(222)

We know also that Villon mentions Huguette du Hamel(223) in the Testament and it is probable that he knew her, but not until after the murder of Philippe Sermond.

We see how McCarthy has changed historical incidents to make them fit into his romance. We also recognize
that The Glorius Rascal is a more serious work than either If I Were King or Needles and Pins, that it interprets more closely the character of the historical Villon, and that it relates events which, if not historically exact, are not inconsistent with biographical facts.
D. B. Wyndham Lewis, one of England's brilliant young journalists writing for the Daily Mail, made an extensive study of that period of French life and letters which is represented by the poet Villon. In 1928 Lewis published the biography, François Villon, which serves as a source of genuine information based on authenticated documents. His one act play Noel, which appeared in The Living Age of December 15, 1927, is important only in so far as it is preliminary to the biography. (224)

In Noel, so named because the time of its action is Christmas Eve, François Villon and Colin des Cayeulx, are revealed to us sitting in the Mule tavern, opposite St. Bennet's Cloister near the Sorbonne, at a quarter before midnight. Just as they have completed their plans for the robbery of the College of Navarre where the Faculty of Theology has a chest containing three hundred gold pieces, they are startled by the entrance of a Sergeant, two Archers and a little old lady who goes immediately to warm herself at the fire without taking notice of anybody in the room. The Sergeant knows the
two boys, especially François for, as he says, he remembers that one day François was held at the Châtelet "for stabbin' a bloke outside of St. Meri." (225) Now he arrests him for having hit this old woman over the head and robbed her as she was returning the night before from services at Saint-Severin.

As the Sergeant is speaking Colin deftly extinguishes the last of the lighted candles and escapes. The only light in the room comes from the fireplace.

Left alone with the Sergeant and the old woman, François looks at her for the first time since she came into the room and, as he does so, shrinks back into the shadow. She is his mother.

When the poor old lady learns that her son has been accused of robbing her, she tries to excuse him before the Sergeant, and keeps repeating that it was not he who committed the robbery, but a tall man "with a shade over his eye" (226) and even agrees to swear to it. All the while Villon is whispering in her ear that she must not do it, because she cannot.

The outside door is suddenly opened and a young
woman "in a high headdress, painted and bedizened, comes in defiantly". (227) It is Katherine de Vaucelles. The Sergeant asks her coldly whether she knows anything about the actions of François on the night of the twenty-third. Katherine answers scornfully that Villon was with her and that when he left he relieved her of two silver spoons. Then in a mocking tone she tells the Sergeant that she cannot have a poor fellow like François hanging around her. This last cuts the mother to the heart, but Katherine seems not to notice her. Then Villon speaks in his defence.

Villon- I've given you something, Kate, that's better than money.

Katherine- Don't mention it.

Villon- (with shining eyes) I've given you Immortality. Your name will be in men's mouths for ever and ever. There is a Ballad I've written in my heart's blood. If you weren't a common, dirty little drab you'd kneel and kiss my hand and thank God for it.

... 

Villon- It's I should be thanking you, too for treating me like the dirt you have. I thank you for myself because you wrung that ballad out of my pain; and I thank you for all the millions in the years to come who will read it and say, 'This is a poet!' (228)

Katherine laughs mockingly and goes out. The
Sergeant draws from his pocket a small book of the Gospels, and Villon's mother commences, "'I swear'". But at that moment the Sergeant staggers back, a gag in his mouth. Two men leap from behind, and he falls senseless. René de Montigny and Guy Tabary (for it is they) drag the body out of the door saying that they will "'shove the blame on Gilles. He and Kate brought the cops here tonight." (229)

Villon and his mother are left alone. The bells are beginning to ring for the midnight Mass, and she pleads with him to go with her just this once. He coughs, passes his hands over his eyes, and says that he cannot because he has work to do. His mother is not satisfied, and before she goes asks François for a Christmas gift, a poem to our Lady. She remembers that years ago he had promised her that he would write one for her.

Villon - Yes, mother, I'll do it for you, all right. I'll do it tonight instead of my other work. (Awkwardly) Will you bless me? (goes down on his knees. The old woman blesses him and wipes her eyes on her cloak) (230)

As Villon takes her to the door she asks him anxiously if he is not cold, and offers to give him her cloak.

Villon - No, no, Mother. I'm all right. I shall be seeing Monsieur de Villon
again in a day or two. He'll give me a cloak, I expect.

Old woman - (clasping her hands) Ah, the good priest! You are almost like a son to him, dearie. (231)

With this François and his mother leave the tavern. In a few seconds he returns alone, throws himself on a stool near the fire, burying his face in his hands. A little while later, when Colin tip-toes into the room, François is sitting there pondering over the words in his mother's prayer.

"'Lady . . . Queen . . . No! 'Lady of Heaven, Regent of the world' . . . 'Ruler . . . Ah! . . . 'Empress of th' Infernal Marsh! That's the line! Say to your Son that I am His alone! (232)

In ten minutes Villon is at the College of Navarre.

As we can readily see, Noel is a character study of François Villon and his mother rather than an attempt to relate historical incidents. There are minor deviations from fact in the treatment of the theme. The location of the "Mule" is not exact, the plans for the robbery were not made there, and the hour of the robbery was ten o'clock instead of twelve. Lewis's account of the robbery at Saint-Severin is not founded on fact. It is apparently added here to motivate the appearance of
the poet's mother at the "Mule".

The accusation of the Sergeant against Villon "'for stabbin' a bloke outside St. Meri'". perhaps has reference to the stabbing of Philippe Sermonise in front of the church of Saint-Benoît.

However, some of the details given by Lewis are exact. When cross-questioned by the Sergeant, François gave his name as "Montcorbier, François. Called Villon", his age as "twenty-five", his birthplace "Paris", his civil status "Master of Arts".

François Villon does not tell us, in the Grand Testament or elsewhere, how or when he composed the prayer for his mother; the different writers whom we have discussed have imagined the scene for themselves. Carco in Le Roman de François Villon has Villon compose it when he left the prison at Meung-sur-Loire. He is then tempted to return to his old vicious habits and in order to obtain strength to resist these inclinations, breaks forth into the prayer which he imagines his mother would use to address the Mother of God. In If I Were King, McCarthy relates that one evening Villon's mother came to the Fircone Tavern looking for him, and was made sport of by René de Montigny and his crowd. When Villon
arrived and the others had departed, Mother Villon sat and listened to the prayer her son had made for her.

The ballad which Villon says, "'I've written in my heart's blood'" is clearly the Ballade de Villon à s'amye. The Katherine in Noël does not appreciate it much more than Katherine de Vauselles of the Testaments.

Lewis gives in Noël what we may call a true picture of the Katherine of the Testaments. We may well think of just such a character when we read of the woman who favored Villon with her "doulx regars et beaulx semblans", who had him beaten "comme à ru telles".

The character of François Villon is portrayed as we would expect the author of the Testaments to be while he was yet a student. We see the struggle between his better self and his lower nature. His love for his mother calls him unceasingly to good, but is almost always overpowered by his inclinations to evil. We may well believe that he loved her although he caused her so much grief.
Like Stevenson, Lewis shows in this short sketch an appreciation of historical material although he alters it at times. In spite of this he has succeeded in interpreting Villon's character as biographers have given it to us.
CHAPTER IV
FRANÇOIS VILLON IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

1. In Necessity's Mortar
James Branch Cabell

James Branch Cabell, American novelist and critic was born in Richmond, Virginia, 1879, of an old Southern family. The greater part of his life has been spent in the study of literature and in writing. His fiction falls into two divisions: romances of the middle ages like Jurgan (1919), and comedies of present day Virginia such as The Cream of the Jest.

To the first of these groups belongs his short story, In Necessity's Mortar (1904) (233), which has as its theme the mutual love of François Villon and Catherine de Vaucelles.

Penniless François de Montcorbier became betrothed to Catherine de Vaucelles. On hearing this, Noël d'Arnaye; Noël the Handsome, favorite of the banished Dauphin Louis, drank himself into a "happy insensibility"; "Ysabeau de Montigny, having wept a little, sent for Gilles Raguyer, a priest, and aforetime rival of François de Montcorbier for her favors" (234); and Philippe Sermaise, who, though a priest, had long been aspiring to the favors of Catherine, crazed with jealousy, set out in search of this François.
The stage is all set for Sermaise's attack on François. Jealousy may well have been its cause. There is no record of the origin of the quarrel between the two men, but Champion hints that the girl Ysabeau could have told it if she had wished.

Before the tragic scene Cabell gives us a lyric interlude. That same day, at nine o'clock in the evening, François climbed the wall of old Jehan de Vaucelles's garden to serenade his Catherine. Standing beneath her window he played on his lute and sang softly:

O Beauty of her whereby I am undone!
O Grace of her that hath no grace for me!
O Love of her, the bit that guides me on
To sorrow and to grievous misery!
O Beauty of her that slays! O pitiless, great,
Sweet eyes of her! Have done with cruelty!
Have pity on me ere it be too late! . . . (235)

We immediately recognize in these lines and in those which follow them a paraphrase of François Villon's Ballade à s'amye which begins:

Faulse beaulte, qui tant me couste cher, . . . (236)

When the historic Villon wrote the Ballade à s'amye he was suffering because his love had been so rudely disdained. The singer of the ballade in this story found "it was good to sing to her a wailing song of unrequited love and know that she loved him."(237)
But Catherine, who had just been told of François's previous relation with Ysabeau de Montigny, accused him of having been false to her.

"It was before I knew you, Catherine. The stars are beautiful, ma mie, and a man may very reasonably admire them; but the stars vanish and are forgotten when the sun appears," (238) he protested, adding that Ysabeau was the sister of his friend René de Montigny, and that he could not be cold to her.

François succeeded in assuring Catherine of his faithfulness to her. She was so happy that, as she told François, she feared death. In his response to her we detect traces of the philosophy of the Grand Testament. "'We have our day,'" he said. "'Let us drink deep of love not waiting until the spring run dry. Ah, Catherine, death comes to all, and yonder in the churchyard the poor dead lie hagger-mugger, and a man may not tell an archbishop from a ragpicker. Yet they have exulted in their youth, and have laughed in the sun with some frank lass. We have our day, Catherine.'" (239)

These same ideas are expressed in the Grand Testament,

Quand je considère ces testes
Entassees en ces charniers,
Tous furent maistres des requestes,
Au moins de la Chambre aux Déniers,
Ou tous furent porte-paniers,
Autant puis l'ung que l'autre dire.
Car, d'eyesques ou lanterniers, 
Je n'y congnois rien a redire.

Et icelles qui s'inclinoient
Unes contre autres en leurs vies,
Desquelles les unes regnoient,
Des autres craintes et servies:
La les voy toutes assouyies,
Ensemble en ung tas mese-pesle.
Seignuries leur sont raves:
Clerc ne maistre ne s'y appelle. (240)

Somewhat later as François passed down the street, he saw Ysabeau de Montigny and Gilles Raguyer sitting on a stone bench in front of the church of St. Benoît-le-Bétourné. The girl was trying to persuade Gilles to kill François, but Gilles, from cowardice Cabell would have us believe, showed no desire to carry out her wishes. Even the sight of François did not arouse his rage. But when Ysabeau saw Philippe Sermaise coming down the street with his drunken companion, Jehan le Mardi, she knew that she had found her man.

Cabell's account of the murder of the priest coincides pretty well with the historical version, which, however, has it that François was quietly talking to Ysabeau and to Gilles, neither of whom is given a surname. Moreover in the latter part of the episode the role of Ysabeau and of Gilles is altered.

The story says that, "as François drew back his sword to slash at the other's shaven head, ... Jehan
le Mardi leaped from behind, swift as a snake, and wrested away his sword.\(^{(241)}\) The second "lettres de rémission" granted to François read thus:

"Néanmoins persévérant l'ung contre l'autre, seurving ledit maistre Jehan Mardi et voyant ledit suppliant avoir mys sa dague en sa main gauche et tenir une pierre en la droite c'efforça de prendre ladite dague dudit suppliant ...\(^{(242)}\)

The next day, according to Cabell, Catherine de Vaucelles heard of the murder. Then, not because Sermaise had been killed, but because her jealousy of Ysabeau had again been quickened, she sent for Noël d'Arnaye and promised to marry him when he should bring the Dauphin from exile.

François and Montigny vanished from the city. Montoorbier was summoned to appear before the court to answer for the death of Sermaise, and "in default of his appearance was subsequently condemned to banishment from the kingdom.\(^{(243)}\) When François heard that Sermaise had exonerated him on his death-bed, he set to work to obtain a pardon, and after some months succeeded in getting it. François urged René to return to Paris and to give up his evil ways, but René answer-
ed that he and his companions were planning a visit to Guillaume Coiffier, a fat priest who had six hundred écus. François refused to have any part in the robbery.

From this point until just before the close of the narrative we see the gradual weakening of François's will power. He feels helpless in the hands of Fate, and looks upon himself as a victim of Necessity. Returning to Paris he is shunned by all his former friends and even by Guillaume de Villon who sends him on his way. We can scarcely recognize maître Guillaume in this bitter old man who when François asks for shelter shouts at him: "Murderer! Betrayer of women! Now by the caldron of John! How dare you show your face here? I gave you my name and you soiled it. Back to your husks, rascal!" (244) Nor in the answer hurled back at the Canon can we recognize that François Villon who speaks of him in the Testament as his "plus que père". "You gave me your name and I soiled it? Eh, Master Priest, Master Pharisee, beware! As God lives I'll drag that name through every muck-heap in France." (245)

Yet Cabell tells us François resolved to give God one more chance at his soul. Making his way toward the house of Jehan de Vaucelles, he was about to enter when he met Catherine coming out with Noël d'Arnayé. He
thought for a moment that he read a welcome on her face, and "his heart was hot wax as he fell on his knees before her.

"Monsieur d'Arnaye", said she, in a crisp voice, thrash for me this betrayer of women! . . .

"François did not move a muscle in resistance. God had chosen."(246)

He took the beating; then going straightway to Rene' de Montigny he offered to be an accomplice in the robbery of Guillaume Coiffier, the Augustinian.

There is a lapse of seven years before the next incident in the story. Louis XI has made Noël's fortune, and Catherine has promised to wed him at Michaelmas.

On the day set for the wedding, as Catherine sat alone thinking of the night of her betrothal to François de Montcorbier, she heard the same song to which she had listened then, but this time the singer's voice trembled with emotion.

"O Beauty of her whereby I am undone!
O Grace of her that hath no grace for me! . . .

Catherine immediately sent for François. When he saw her he realized that her love had not changed, but he thrust her from him and spoke of what he had become.
He was not now François de Montcorbier.

"François de Montcorbier is dead. The Pharisees of the Rue Saint-Jacques killed him several years ago. That day François Villon was born. That was the name I swore to drag through every muck-heap in France. I have done it, Catherine. The Companions of the Cockleshell - eh, well, the world knows us. We robbed Guillaume de Coiffier, we robbed the College of Navarre, we robbed the church of St. Maturin - the list is somewhat lengthy. René de Montigny's bones swing in the wind yonder at Montfaucon." (247)

All of the events here referred to actually occurred.

For the sake of Catherine's happiness, François even accused himself of the murder of Thévenin Pensete, although Cabell tells us, René de Montigny had done the killing. (248)

Still Catherine did not change. She blamed herself for all the crimes and said to him, "'If you still care for me, I will be your wife.'" She shuddered as she said it. Villon realized that here was his clue.

"'If I still love you! Eh, ask of Denise, of
Jacqueline, of Pierrette, of Marion the Statue, of Jehanne of Brittany, of Blanche the Slippermaker, of Fat Peg - ask of any trollop in all Paris how François Villon loves. For my part, I find one woman much the same as another . . .

"Why can you not believe me? I tell you that Necessity pounds in her mortar to what shape she will. I tell you that Montcorbier loved you, but François Villon prefers Fat Peg. An ill cat seeks an ill rat."(249)

He had won. He read on her face the loathing that came over her.

While in these last few sentences Cabell has his François use the words of the *Ballade de la Grosse Margot*: "C'est à mau rat mau chat", it is with a sublimity of self-sacrifice of which we find no trace in the original.

The dominance of the love theme has not destroyed the background of historical truth in Cabell's short story.

As has been pointed out in the discussion Cabell has indirectly paraphrased some of the poetry of Villon.

The romance is woven around the murder of Philippe Sermoise, and there are references to François's sojourn
at the château of the duke of Orléans, to his imprisonment at Meung-sur-Loire, to the robbery of Guillaume Coiffier and the killing of Thévenin Pensete.

The names of all the characters can be identified with those of people François knew. In Necessity's Mortar places the social position of Catherine de Vaucelles quite high due to her relations with Noël d'Arnaye whom Cabell mentions as being among the nobility. Noël Jolis of the Testamenta has, as far as we may discern, a lower social status. (250)

Cabell has made Catherine a more noble and a more cultured woman than her prototype. Villon's poems reveal an entirely different person, as we have seen. (251) Cabell rids her of her deceitfulness, and makes her love for Villon genuine and, to a certain extent, enduring.

François Villon, as Cabell pictures him, is not the Villon who wrote the Ballade de la Grosse Margot nor the Ballade à Notre Dame. In the story Villon's sensual love is not treated. His love for Catherine is genuine and heroic. On the other hand Cabell's François Villon lacks the confidence in prayer and in the mercy of God which we find sometimes expressed in the poems.
In the Grand Testament Villon tells us of the emperor Alexandre and the pirate Diomèdes. When the emperor asks Diomèdes why he is a pirate the latter replies:

"Pourquoy larron me faiz nommer"?
Pource qu'on me voit escumer
Dedans une petite fuste?
Se comme toy me peusse armer
Comme toy empereur je fusse. (252)

The emperor then promises to change the pirate's fortune from bad to good. He does this and the robber becomes known as Valère "qui fut nommé le Grant à Romme". (253) Villon here adds his application of the story to himself.

Se Dieu m'eust donné rencontrer
Ung autre piteux Alexandre,
Qui m'eust faict en bon heur entrer,
Et lors qui m'eust veu condescendre
A mal, estre ars et mys en cendre
Jugé me fusse de ma voix.
Necessité faict gens mesprendre,
Et faim saillir les loups des boys. (254)

If he had had a rich and powerful protector, he, too, might have had a happier existence.

In le Débat du Cœur et du Corps de Villon also there is something akin to fatalism, but Villon feels that he can if he wishes triumph over the cruel hand of Fate.

--D'ond vient ce mal?
--Il vient de mon malheur.
Quand Saturne me feit mon fardelet,
Ces maux y mist, je le croy. (255)
The answer is especially to the point, though destiny is not the guiding power nor the grim master which Cabell paints it.

---Veux-tu vivre?  
---Dieu m'en doint la puissance!
Il te fault . . .  
---Quoy?  
---Remors de conscience;
Lire sans fin.  
---Et en quoy?  
---En science.
Laisse les folz!  
---Bien,' J'y adviseray.
---Or le retiens?  
---J'en ay bien souvenance.  
---N'attends pas trop, que tourne a desplaisance  
Plus ne t'en dy  
---Et je m'en passeray.(256)

In the Grand Testament there are passages in which Villon blames himself for his misfortunes and considers himself a victim of his own moral weakness rather than of Fate. He regrets the time wasted in his youth when he might have secured for himself a happier future.

Ho Dieu! se j'eusses studié,  
Au temps de ma jeunesse folle,  
Et a bonnes mœurs dedié,  
J'eusse maison et couche molle!(257)

There is in him too strong a belief in the mercy of God that he should feel himself helplessly bound by destiny. As he expresses himself again in the Grand Testament.
Si je n'ay eu fievre ou fumere
Ce m'a faict divine clemence."(258)

Cabell's alteration of the characters of Catherine de Vaucelles and of François Villon, and his idealization of their love, are easily accounted for when we consider his theory of art. According to Cabell, art "is an expurgative edition of nature: at art's touch, too 'the drossy particles fall off and mingle with the dust'."(259)

In writing *In Necessity's Mortar* Cabell, though clearly well acquainted with what is known of the poet's life, produced a picture of François Villon and his environment which idealizes and transforms. It idealizes the love of François Villon for Catherine de Vaucelles, it transforms the sordid details of his existence.
For Love of a Sinner

Robert Gordon Anderson

Robert Gordon Anderson was born in New York in 1881 and is at the present time a newspaper reporter and columnist. He is the author of several books including Not Taps but Reveille (1918), The Little Chap (1919), and Those Quarrelsome Bonapartes (1927). For Love of a Sinner, published for the first time in 1924, is his only work dealing with François Villon.

Three leagues from Paris François Villon awakened after a night spent in the cold open air with his two companions, "Jehan of the Haunted Look" and "Father-Love-the-Little-Ones", a renegade priest, whose real name was Chappelain. They were cold and hungry, but Villon had no cash to give the surly landlord in the nearby tavern other than "a blossom in rhyme to crown thy dunghill". When the landlord would not accept this payment, Villon tripped him up so neatly that he lay stunned on the tavern floor. Then while he dazzled the ugly maid-servant with extravagant praise of her beauty, Jehan and the priest ran off with hams and bread. Their thirst was not quenched until they came upon a man with a tun of "the finest wine ever crushed out of a grape", but which no one would buy. Villon
cajoled him out of a measure or two, and then promised to sell the wine for him if that night the empty tun would serve as a vehicle to take the three rogues into Paris. François, disguised as a priest in the garments of Father-Love-the-Little-Ones, went about selling "Holy Wine from the plains of Napoli, and seven-and-a-half times blessed by his Eminence, the Cardinal of Saturnalia". (261)

He went to the very inn which he had so recently left. There he scared the landlord into buying, by posing as the priest to whom the fellow had confessed his sins. At last the wine was all sold and that night Villon, Jehan and the father rode into Paris in the empty tun.

These adventures are quite reminiscent of those of the Repues Franches. The description of Villon's person recalls more faintly the familiar "sec et noir comme escouvillon". He is "tall and graceful" and wears "a many-chinked coat of a wine-less colour", "scarcely less rent black doublet and hose", and a "cock's-feather hat".

That night, at the Golden Cockerel, Villon sat apart from the others apparently indifferent. The girl, Blanche the Slippermaker, who was beside him tried...
in vain to engage him in conversation, but he was pensive and unresponsive until he was aroused by Mother Meg who begged him to entertain her two new customers, Robert d'Estouteville, the provost, and the Vicomte d'Avrillon. Soon the entire company was enjoying the poet's wit, and all would have been well had not the Vicomte wounded Villon's pride by seeking to force a rosecrown upon him. A duel followed which would have meant death for François had his companions not snuffed out the candles and spirited him away.

Out of this crowd of tavern people Blanche alone knew the cause of Villon's mood that evening. He was thinking too seriously of a certain Katherine who, Blanche was sure, was false to him. After the fray with the Vicomte d'Avrillon Villon went to the Pont St. Michel, where Katherine lived with her rich but miserly uncle. He found her, as Blanche suspected, wearing a beautiful necklace which bore the mark of old Copponole, the goldsmith. Since it was gold that she wanted, Villon vowed that he would get it for her and set out immediately to fulfill his promise. He was true to his word and returned in a short time with a diamond necklace stolen from Copponole himself. But as Villon climbed to her window he heard the Vicomte
d'Avrillon's voice coming from her room. When Villon entered, the Vicomte jumped through the window into the waters of the Seine.

While the Vicomte was taking his cold plunge the members of the d'Estouteville household were impatiently awaiting his arrival, that is, all but the Comtesse Denise de Lorney, the niece of the provost's wife. Although d'Avrillon was to be her future husband if the provost had his way, Denise cared little for him and, at the time, was more interested in the book of François Villon's poems which she was reading. When the Vicomte did arrive, the Comtesse made the evening so unpleasant for him that he was glad when it was time to take his leave. The provost was highly indignant at his niece's conduct and told her that she would marry d'Avrillon if he had to force her to it.

One week later as Villon sauntered down the street in front of the d'Estouteville mansion, a light high up in one of the towers attracted his attention, and it was not long before he was straddling a ridge-pole not far from the tower. Looking in at the window he saw something which reawakened his trust in women. The Comtesse de Lorney knelt in prayer, and Villon
thought as he gazed at the kneeling figure that no evil could reside in her. The sight of her face was vivid in his memory when he returned to the Golden Cockerel, and it called him back to the tower the very next night. There "suspended again between heaven and earth, the more perilously for the snow which, fast turning to rain, made the foothold slippery, he scratched with the diamond on the windowpane these words:

'To the Unknown Ladye
The Love of a Sinner.'" (232)

Lady Denise read the words the next day and was firmly convinced that they must have been put there by her favorite poet, François Villon.

It was at the Palais des Tournelles during a royal ball that Villon first spoke to the Lady Denise. He and his tavern friends had stopped the Envoy of Florence, and stripping him of his red velvet coat, had set him and his lady astride of the iron horse in front of the Church of Saint Martin. Villon put on the coat and when he came to the two befuddled sentries at the palace gate, "transfixed them with overbearing and mortally-affronted eye, and called in a clarion voice: 'Make way--make way, for the Comte de Rigole, le Duc de la Meule de Foin!'" (233)

The sentries made way, but the guards within the
palace were more persistent. When Villon had slipped between them, and they were pursuing him, he ducked into a corner, let them go into the cellar and locked the door behind them. Villon then made his way to the balcony of the Grande Salle.

The Lady Denise was conversing with the Vicomte d'Avrillon when she caught sight of the curiously garbed figure in the doorway. The next moment she saw with him someone in black whom she recognized as the king.

Villon told Louis how he had entered the palace, and the king, pleased with the man's wit and daring, bade him go up to the Comtesse de Lorney, the provost and the Vicomte d'Avrillon, and present himself with all his fanciful titles. The king had a mind to make sport of the provost, and of d'Avrillon also, "that coxcomb and tool of the d'Armagnacs". (264) Villon played his part well and the provost would have killed him had he not seen the king in the gallery.

The lady Denise made good use of this opportunity to speak with Villon. She told him of her faith in him, assured him that sinners can repent, and offered to help him. Villon made up his mind that from that night on he would with her aid be a different man.
On the following night Lady Denise and her maid went to the Golden Cockerel to warn Villon of an official raid ordered by the provost. Villon was not at the inn, for, as Blanche said, he had gone to Gentilly to see a woman. Denise did not know that this woman was his mother and her trust in him wavered a little.

That night the Golden Cockerel was raided and the inmates fled from the city. As Villon was returning from his visit to his mother he came upon them. They persuaded him to go with them to rob the Church of Saint Julien the Poor, of plate which the provost's wife had donated. François returned to Paris with his companions and even went with them to the Church, but he took no active part in the robbery. While he was there he lost the feather from his hat, but luckily Denise found it and gave it to him with the plea that he reform.

So Villon returned to the Porte Rouge, to the Canon Guillaume de Villon, and for two months applied himself assiduously to his books, with few intervals of idleness. He was bravely beginning on his third month of good conduct when he chanced to meet one of his old companions of the tavern, and was induced to
spend an evening there. The wine went to his head and it was early in the morning when he returned to Saint-Benoît.

He had not, however, taken up the tavern life for good. While walking by the Pulpit Tavern he chanced to hear Guy de Tabarie boastfully blurting out to Katherine and to the priest Chermoise a confession of the robbery of the Church of Saint Julien the Poor. Villon did not stop, for he was hurrying to the gibbet at "Montfauc'on" (sic) where Blanche was to be publicly whipped. He arrived just in time to offer himself in place of the woman. Denise and the provost rode up as Villon was receiving the bloody lashing ordered by d'Avrillon. Afterward he was thrown into prison, was tried for the robbery of the Church of Saint Julien the Poor, and was sentenced to death. Denise appeared at Villon's trial and openly gave evidence that he was outside of Paris at Gentilly the night of the robbery. The provost assured the judge that his niece was suffering from a mental sickness, and had her taken from the courtroom. After the conviction she pleaded with her uncle to aid Villon, but he would not heed her words. She turned to Charles d'Orléans who she thought was a friend of Villon's. He
made no attempt to help her, so at last she had recourse to King Louis. Villon's sentence was changed to one year's banishment from Paris.

He could not remain away so long, and within the year returned just to see Paris and Denise. She met him one evening in the church of Notre-Dame and pleaded with him to take her away. But Villon refused to drag her through the mire and departed.

As she went out of the church the Vicomte d'Avrillon met him. In the fierce struggle which ensued d'Avrillon fell on the steps dead, and François, instead of fleeing, remained there until the guard came and found him.

While Anderson, in For Love of a Sinner, does not relate historical facts, there are numerous incidents which have some relation to fact. For example, there is a probability that Anderson drew his account of the robbery of the Church of St. Julien the Poor from the details of the robbery of the College of Navarre. The death of the Vicomte d'Avrillon suggests the death of Philippe Sermonise before the church of Saint-Benoît. Villon's year of banishment from Paris might be compared to one of the three times that the
historic Villon was sent from the city. In *For Love of a Sinner* Denise de Lorney, by helping François and by trying to save him from death, acts the part which Guillaume de Villon and many of his friends played in real life with the vagabond poet.

Anderson uses many proper names in the novel which he finds in the poems and in the biography of François Villon, but he does not always correctly relate the name to the character. There is a reference in the *Grand Testament* to a man who probably suggested to Anderson the name Chappelain (Father-Love-the-Little-Ones).

*Item, à Chappelain je laisse*
*Ma chapelle a simple tonsure,*
*Chargée d'une seiche messe,*
*Où il ne faut pas grant lecture.* (265)

Blanche, the Slippermaker, is listed in the *Ballade de la Belle Healmière*, as "Blanche la Savetière". Anderson presents the man, Cotart, as one "who made a fat living from the ducks that swam the moats of Paris", thus confusing him with Jehan le Loup and Casin Chollet. (266)

Villon wrote a ballade commending to hard drinkers of the past the soul of Jehan Cotart who

*Toujours cricot: Hars, la gorge m'ardi*
*Et si ne sceuq sa soif estancher.* (267)
He also mentions Cotart in the Grand Testament.

Item, à maistre Jehan Cotart,
Mon procureur en Court d'Église
Devoye environ ung patart
(A ceste heure je m'en advise),
Quant chacanner me feit Denise,
Disant que l'avoye mauldite:
Pour son ame, qu'es cieulx soit mise,
Ceste Craison j'ay cy escripte."(268)

Mother Meg, although her name might be suggested by that of Margot, is, no doubt, the Belle Heaulmière of Villon's ballade, Les Regrets de la Belle Heaulmière. Mother Meg boasts, "there was never a man I couldn't hold in my day", and breaks forth into a litany of the beauties of her youth. La Belle Heaulmière expresses a similar sentiment.

Tollu m'as haulte franchise,
Que beaulté m'avait ordonné
Sur clerz, marchans et gens d'Églisse:
Car alors n'estoit homme né
Qui tout le sien ne m'eust donné... (269)

Denise de Lorney is a character who is not accounted for in history or in biography. There is, in the Grand Testament a girl by the name of Denise who had Villon summoned before the ecclesiastical courts for swearing at her(270), but there is no similarity between this Denise and the Denise de Lorney of For Love of a Sinner.

Anderson remarks that Villon's mother was living
at Gentilly. There is no record of that fact, but in Champion's biography of François Villon we read that maître Guillaume de Villon "fut pourvu de la Chapellenie de Notre-Dame, dans l'église paroissiale de Gentilly..." (271)

The character of Katherine de Vaucelles, as portrayed by Anderson, is however, quite consistent with the Katherine whom we see in the Testaments. Anderson pictures a woman as deceitful as was she of the "doulx regars et beaulx semblans".

We may overlook many of Anderson's inexactitudes because we realize that he did not purpose to write a biography. While he takes as a starting point a broad if superficial knowledge of the life and works of François Villon, his work was meant to be a romance, a romance in which a sinning poet should be redeemed by the love of a woman.

Anderson's Villon is "one, who possessing the higher, lives by the lower wits". (272) Even as a scamp, he is inspired, as we have seen at the country inn and at the King's palace; and before his regeneration he admired goodness. He tells false Katherine, "I worshipped what I thought was good in thee, and in my heart...there was one spot sanctuary. There I set an altar on which one holy taper gleamed--What I thought thee, Kate." (273)
When he changes, his reform is motivated not alone by amorous passion but by a higher religious sentiment. As he stands in the Church of St. Julien the Poor while his friends steal the sacred vessels, he says to himself, "A little while back I balked not at the theft of sacred vessels, ... yet now I withdraw and would not lay impious hands on them."(274) This Villon is endowed with greater will power than the Villon of the Testamenta, but he reflects on his struggles in much the same way. He feels "the inevitable reaction, some fall, if not the descent of justice, so long dogging his heels. He must fight it out."(275)

Anderson undertook a difficult task when he attempted to recount the regeneration of a poet because he had to be at one and the same time a poet and a psychologist. He really pretends to give us poetry, although, as is to be expected, his effort suffers in comparison with the poetry of François Villon. As to the psychological analysis, Anderson shirks the task probably as much as he does historical exactitude.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

From this brief study we may conclude that there are in the fields of French, English and American literatures since 1876, biographical works, character studies, and romances, each with its own portrayal of the life and the character of the poet, François Villon.

La Passion de Maître François Villon by Pierre d'Alheim, and Francis Carco's Le Roman de François Villon, both biographical French novels, endeavor by interpreting Villon's poetry and marshalling such facts of his life as are known, to present a living picture of the man and the poet. Only those periods of his life for which there are no data are developed by legendary material, or by the imagination of the novelists themselves. There is no conflict or inconsistency with biographical facts but a logical development of the recorded life and poetry of Villon.

English writers, like Robert Louis Stevenson in A Lodging for the Night, D. B. Wyndham Lewis in Noel, and Justin Huntly McCarthy in The Glorious Rascal, show a sincere attempt to interpret character, but they fail to give historical background the serious consideration which it received at the hand of the French novelists.
McCarthy's *If I Were King* and *Needles and Pins*, which he wrote several years before *The Glorious Rascal*, may be classed with the works of some of our American writers.

James Branch Cabell's *In Necessity's Mortar*, and Robert Gordon Anderson's *For Love of a Sinner* give us, in the main, pure romance which uses historical material only for coloring. Here, at least, the love life of the poet is idealized in the picturing of a pure love by which he is ennobled.

Since all the writers except Stevenson are fair-minded in their characterization of François Villon, they portray both the good and the bad in him. Even in the romances, where the good moral side of the poet is exaggerated, Villon is made to be something of a scamp. There he is a creature of imagination and overpowering emotions. In one instance it is the sight of a dead man's red head which haunts him; in other instances it is his passion for women, especially for Katherine de Vaucelles.

Villon's affection for Katherine de Vaucelles is pictured in all of the works discussed with the exception of the character sketch of Stevenson. In some instances this affection is idealized, as in Cabell and McCarthy, but always Villon's love for her is portrayed as being deep and sincere. Alheim, Carco and Lewis are more realistic
in their interpretation of Villon's love for Katherine. In each case her character is made to correspond to the nature of Villon's attachment for her. This is also true of the character of the other women mentioned by these writers, - Margot, Marion l'Ydolle, Ysabeau, Huguette du Hamel and Marthe.

Villon's relations with these women and with men like René de Montigny, Colin de Cayeux, Jehan le Loup and Guy Tabary, his tavern friends, are usually recognized by writers as being indispensable in a study of the character and life of François Villon.

Of the incidents of the life of Villon which we find recorded, the murder of Philippe Sermoise, the robbery of the College of Navarre and the imprisonment at Meung-sur-Loire are most frequently treated. The narrative account of these biographical facts is fitted to the nature and the purpose of the work. In works which are of a biographical tendency, the stealing of the Pet au Diable, along with the incidents already named, occupies a major portion of the narrative.

From all this we may conclude that romancers and character-students alike have, in the main, attempted to portray him as an historical figure, attributing to him a character and characteristics which may be seen in his poems.
NOTES

(1) "Le Grand Testament", François Villon, Œuvres, Paul Lacroix, 1926, huitain I.
En l'an trentiesme de mon aage,
Que toutes mes hontes j'ay beues,
Ne du tout fol, ne du tout sage,
Nonobstant maintes peines eues,
Lesquelles j'ay toutes receues
Soubz la main Thibault d'Aussigny:
S'evenque il est, seignant les rues,
Qu'il soit le mien je le reny!


(3) Schwob, Marcel, "François Villon", Spicilèges, 1931, p. 11.

(4) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., "Nous pouvons, grâce à l'obligence de notre savant confrère, M.Chazaud, archiviste de l'Allier, assurer que son emplacement est occupé aujourd'hui par le hameau de la Rue-Neuve, situé à 4 kilomètres à l'est des Ponters, à la limite des anciennes provinces de Bourbonnais et de Bourgogne, et s'étendant aujourd'hui sur le territoire des deux communes de Céron (Saône-et-Loire, arrondissement de Charolles, cant. de Marcigny) et du Bouchaud. Montcorbier, encore habité au XVIème siècle, fut détruit à une époque postérieure et remplacé par le hameau actuel de la Rue-Neuve, où l'on voit encore, dans un pré dit Pré-Corbiére, les vestiges d'une motte féodale." p. 28-29


(9) Le Petit Testament, Paul Lacroix, op. cit., huitain IX.


(11) Ibid., p. 30.

(12) Le Grand Testament, huitain XXXVIII.

(13) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 31.


(17) "Ballade pour prier Nostre-Dame", Lacroix, p. 111.


(19) Le Grand Testament, huitain LXXIX.


(21) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 16.

(22) Le Grand Testament, huitain LXXXVII.


(24) Ibid., p. 11.

(25) Champion, op. cit., I, p. 1. "Dans les premières années du XVIe siècle, quand on montait la grand'rue Saint-Jacques, on voyait sur sa droite ... le chevet d'une vieille petite église enchâssée dans les maisons d'un cloître; c'était Saint-Benoît-le-Bétourné.

"On la tenait alors pour l'une des trois églises que Monseigneur saint Denis avait fondées à Paris sous le vocable de la Trinité ... l'église formait déjà une paroisse de Paris au XIIe siècle. Alors on appelait la Sainte Trinité Benedictus Deus, Saint Benedict, Sire Dieu, Saint Dieu; le nom de Saint Benoît semble donc avoir été une autre façon de désigner la Trinité. Mais il y avait fort longtemps qu'on avait perdu le sens de ce vieux vocable; dès le XIVe siècle le chapitre de l'église célébrait le II juillet la translation de saint Benoît, le célèbre réformateur du Mont-Cassin, sens qu'aucune tradition justifiait cette fête."
"Quant au surnom de Bestorné (mal tourné), il venait à l'église Saint-Benoît de ce que le chœur du vieux sanctuaire regardait l'occident; anomalie qui s'explique facilement par la position même de l'édifice bâti en bordure de la rue Saint-Jacques. Mais ce surnom n'était plus qu'un souvenir. Depuis 1349, on trouve des exemples de Saint-Benoît le bien tourné dès ce temps une application plus sévère des règles de la liturgie avait donc fait reporter le maître-autel du côté de l'ancien portail. Ce qui est certain, c'est qu'au XVe siècle l'accès de l'église avait lieu par une porte latérale ouverte au nord, dans le cloître."


(28) Ibid., I, p.133.


(31) Ibid., I, p. 30.

(32) Le Grand Testament, huitain XXVI.

(34) *Le Grand Testament*, huitain XII.


(38) Pierre Champion is not in accord with Longnon as to the identity of Colin Laurens, Girart Gossouyn, and Jehan Marceau. "Mais ces trois petits enfantons pitoyables sont trois riches et vieux usuriers, entre les plus riches de France!" *François Villon, sa vie et son temps*, II, p. 27.

(39) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 33-35.


(41) Schwob, Marcel, op. cit., p. 24.

(42) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 32.
(43) Champion, Pierre, op. cit., I, p. 43.
(49) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 11-12. "Nous renonçons à expliquer ce fait d'une double requête adressée par le même personnage sous deux noms différents et amenant la délivrance de deux lettres de rémission. Nous nous contenterons de faire remarquer pour l'honneur de la chancellerie royale que les deux lettres de rémission ne furent pas données au même lieu: la première est datée de Saint-Fourqain, en Bourbonnais, où le roi se trouvait alors; et la second de Paris."
(54) Ibid., II, p. 46.
(55) Ibid., p. 46-47.
(56) Le Petit Testament, huitains II, V, VI.
(57) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 44-45.
(59) See note (250).

(60) Champion, Pierre, op. cit., I, p. 121.

(61) Le Grand Testament, huitain CXLI.

(62) Ibid., huitain LXV.


(64) Le Petit Testament, huitain XL.


(67) Ibid., p. 74 & 76.

(68) Ibid., II, chapter XII, "Les Coquillards".

(69) Levet, Pierre, Jargon et Jobelin, 1489.

(70) Champion, Pierre, op. cit., II, Chapter XII.

(71) Ibid., II, p. 79.

(72) Ibid., II, p. 88.

(73) Ibid., II, p. 51.

(74) Le Grand Testament, huitain XCIV.

(75) Schwob, Marcel, op. cit., p. 56.

(76) Ibid., p. 58.


(78) Le Grand Testament, huitain LXXXI.

(79) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 83.

(80) Schwob, Marcel, op. cit., p. 62.


(82) Schwob, Marcel, op. cit., p. 62.


(86) Double *Ballade*, Lacroix, op. cit., p. 197.


(88) Schwob, Marcel, op. cit., p. 62.


(90) Baccon, village situé à six kilomètres de Montpipeau - Longnon, op. cit., p. 86.


(92) Longnon, op. cit., p. 88.

(93) *Ballade à ses amis*, Lacroix, p. 181.

(94) Schwob, Marcel, op. cit., p. 63.


(96) *Le Grand Testament*, huitains II & IV.


(100) Schwob, Marcel, op. cit., p. 63-64.

(101) *Le Grand Testament*, huitain I.

(103) Ibid., II, p. 237-238.


(106) Ibid., II, p. 244.


(109) Longnon, Auguste, op. cit., p. 90.

(110) Le Grand Testament, huitain XIX.


(112) Ballade des dames du temps jadis, Lacroix, op. cit., p. 78.

(113) Le Grand Testament, huitain LXXIX.

(114) Ibid., huitains VII. & XI.

(115) Champion, I, pp. 102, 111, and II, p. 164, and Le Grand Testament, huitain CXII.

(116) Champion, I, p. 258, and Le Grand Testament, huitain CXII.

(117) Le Grand Testament, huitain CXV.

(118) Ibid., huitain CXXXIX.


(120) Le Grand Testament, huitain LV & LVI.

(121) Ibid., huitain LIX.

(122) Ibid., huitain LX.

(123) Ibid., huitain LXXX.

(124) Ibid., huitain LXXXIII.
(126) Ballade de Villon à l'amye, Lacroix, p. 115.
(128) Ballade pour servir de conclusion, Lacroix p. 178.
(134) Longnon, op. cit., p. 137, "Pièces Justificatives".
(135) Alheim, op. cit., p. 37.
(136) Ibid., p. 61.
(137) Le Grand Testament, huitain XCI; Le Petit Testament, huitain XX.
(139) Longnon, op. cit., p. 38.
(140) Champion, op. cit., II, p. 5.
(142) Champion, op. cit., II, p. 46.
(144) Bernard, Jean-Marc, "François Villon à la Cour de Blois", in La Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France, vol. XV, 1908.
(145) Alheim, op. cit., p. 216.
(146) Ibid., p. 220.
(147) Champion, op. cit., II, p. 327. In Champion the curé-prieur de Paray to whom Guy Tabary talked too freely, is always called Pierre Marchand, whereas the name Perrinet Marchand designates the bâtard de La Barre.
(149) Alheim, op. cit., p. 235.
(150) Le Grand Testament, huitain XIV.
(152) Ibid., p. 260.
(153) See page 47 of this thesis.
(154) Alheim, op. cit., p. 338.
(155) See pages 42 and 43 of this thesis.
(156) Le Grand Testament, huitain CL & CLI.
(158) Ibid., p. 258.
(159) Bernard, Jean-Marc, op. cit., vol. XV.
(160) Talvart, Hector, Fiche Bibliographique: Francis Carco, Jean Toucher, La Rochelle, 1929.
(162) Ibid., p. 3.
(163) Ibid., p. 5.
(164) Ibid., p. 42.
(165) Ibid., p. 50
(166) Le Petit Testament, huitain XL.
(167) Carco, op. cit., p. 79.
(168) Longnon, op. cit., pp. 133-137.
(170) Carco, op. cit., p. 178.
(171) *Le Grand Testament*, huitain CV.
(173) *Le Grand Testament*, huitain XLII.
(176) Alheim, op. cit., p. 211.
(177) *Le Grand Testament*, huitain LIX.
(178) Carco, op. cit., p. 277.
(179) Ibid., p. 301.
(180) Champion, op. cit., II, p. 177.
(181) Carco, op. cit., p. 278.
(183) Carco, op. cit., p. 235.
(186) Ibid., p. 241.
(187) Ibid., p. 240.
(188) Ibid., p. 242.
(189) Ibid., p. 247.
(190) Ibid., p. 259.
(192) Ballade des Pendus, Lacroix, p. 189.
(194) Le Grand Testament, huitain XVIII.
(196) Ibid., p. 259.
(198) Le Grand Testament, huitain XCIII.
(199) McCarthy, Justin Huntly, If I Were King, New York; 1901, p. 11-12.
(200) Lacroix, Paul, op. cit., note, page 125.
(201) Le Petit Testament, huitain XXIV.
(202) Le Grand Testament, huitain C.
(203) McCarthy, op. cit., If I Were King, p. 12.
(204) Le Grand Testament, huitain CV.
(205) McCarthy, op. cit., If I Were King, p. 27.
(206) Ibid., p. 28.
(207) Ibid., p. 44.
(208) Ibid., p. 124.
(210) McCarthy, op. cit., If I Were King, p. 32.
(211) Ibid., p. 36.
(212) Le Petit Testament, huitain XL.
(213) Le Petit Testament, huitain IV.


(215) After discussing the probability of Villon's stay at the court of King René, Champion says, "Et peut-être aussi notre fugitif entra-t-il alors en relations avec Louis de Beauvau, qui avait combattu jadis dans ce pas d'armes présidé par Madame Ambroise de Lore." Champion, op. cit., II, p. 56.


(217) Ibid., p. 163.

(218) See pages 17 and 18 of this thesis.


(220) Le Grand Testament, huitain LXXVIII.

(221) See page 59 of this thesis.

(222) McCarthy, op. cit., The Glorious Rascal, p. 305.

(223) Le Grand Testament, huitain CV.

(224) The source of this material is the jacket for D. B. Wyndham Lewis's biography François Villon. See bibliography.


(226) Ibid., p. 1092.

(227) Ibid., p. 1094.

(228) Ibid., p. 1094.

(229) Ibid., p. 1095.

(230) Ibid., p. 1095.

(231) Ibid., p. 1095.

(232) Ibid., p. 1096.
(233) *Harper's Magazine*, October 1904, CIX.


(235) Ibid., p. 703.

(236) Ballade de Villon à s'amye, Lacroix, p. 115.

(237) Cabell, op. cit., p. 703.

(238) Ibid., p. 703.

(239) Ibid., p. 703.

(240) *Le Grand Testament*, huitains CXLIX & CL.

(241) Cabell, op. cit., p. 706.


(244) Cabell, op. cit., p. 707.

(245) Ibid., p. 707.

(246) Ibid., p. 707.

(247) Ibid., p. 710.


(249) Cabell, op. cit., p. 709.


(252) Le Grand Testament, huitain XVIII.

(253) Ibid., huitain XX.

(254) Ibid., huitain XXI.

(255) Le Débat du cœur et du corps, Lacroix, op. cit., p. 185.

(256) Ibid., p. 186.

(257) Le Grand Testament, huitain XXVI.

(258) Ibid., huitain LXXIV.

(259) Manley & Rickert, Contemporary Literature, 1922, p. 27.


(262) Ibid., p. 121-122.

(263) Ibid., p. 151.


(265) Le Grand Testament, huitain CLIX.

(266) Le Petit Testament, huitain XXIV.

(267) Ballade et Oraison, Lacroix, op. cit., p. 135.

(268) Le Grand Testament, huitain CXV, and huitain V.

(269) Les Regrets de la Belle Heaulmière, Lacroix, p. 89.

(270) Le Grand Testament, huitain CXV.
(271) Champion, op. cit., I, p. 11
(272) Anderson, op. cit., p. 5.
(273) Ibid., p. 78.
(274) Ibid., p. 192.
(275) Ibid., p. 216.
APPENDIX A

1. Works of the 19th century in which François Villon is the central figure:


Membrière, Edmond, "François Villon, opéra en un acte, paroles de M. Got, musique de M. Edmond Membrière; représenté à l'Académie impériale de musique le 20 avril 1857. Le livret n'était pas des mieux réussis. Dans un bon jour de bonne humeur, Louis XI a fait grâce de la potence à Villon; ce pauvre diable, bohémien lui-même a été consolé dans son cachot par une petite bohémienne, nommée Aika. Son imagination poétique, ses malheurs touchent le cœur de la jeune fille, qui lui assure qu'elle l'aime, malgré ses cinquante ans... Il a le courage de refuser le bonheur qu'elle lui offre." Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIXe siècle, Pierre A. Larousse, 1876, p. 1065.
Lajarte, M. Th., "La Farce de Maître Villon, opéra-comique en un acte, musique de M. Th. de Lajarte; représenté au théâtre de l'Athénée le 31 décembre 1872. On aurait pu tirer un meilleur parti de la vie accidentée du rimeur et faire une farce plus spirituelle et moins lugubre que celle qui consiste à laisser arracher sept dents à un cuisinier par un charlatan pour lui faire payer le dîner de l'auteur de la Ballade des dames du temps jadis."

Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIXe siècle, Pierre A. Larousse, 1876, p. 1065.

2. Works of the 20th century in which Villon is a minor character:

Drummond, Hamilton, "The Justice of the King, an imaginary attempt of Louis XI to fasten complicity in a conspiracy upon the Dauphin. Not an actual historical episode, but accurate as following the trend of history. Commines and François Villon appear. New York, 1911."


3. Works of the 20th century in which François Villon is the central figure but which were not available:

Palmer, H. E., "Judgment of François Villon, a pageant episode play in five acts, 1917."


Morehead, "François Villon, a story of François Villon, the hero of If I Were King, J. S. Ogilve."


APPENDIX B

VILLON-PANURGE

D. B. W. Lewis gives an interesting discussion in his biography of Francois Villon on the possible resemblance existing between Francois Villon and Rabelais's Panurge.

"Theophile Gautier, round about 1832, first put forward the thesis that Rabelais drew Panurge in the main from Villon of whose works Rabelais had such knowledge, and for whose memory such affection. I judge it of value to reproduce the portrait of Panurge from the Second Book of _Pentagruel_, Sir Thomas Urquhart's translation, 1653.

Panurge was of middle stature, not too high, not too low, and had somewhat an Aquiline nose, made like the handle of a Rasor; he was at that time five and thirty years old or thereabouts, fine of gild like a leaden Dagger; for he was a notable Cheater and Cony-catcher, he was a very gallant and proper Man of his person, only that he was a little leacherous, and naturally subject to a kinde of Disease, which at that time they call'd lack of money: it is incomparable grief, yet, notwithstanding he had three-score and three Tricks to come by it at his need, of which the most honorable and most ordinary was in manner of Thieving, secret Purloining and Filching; for he was a wicked lewd Rogue, a Cosener, Drinker, Royster, Rover and a
very dissolute and debauch'd Fellow, if there were any in Paris; otherwise, and in all Matters else, the best and most vertuous Man in the World; and he was still contriving some Plot, and devising Mischief against the Sergeants and the Watch.—Ib., XVI.

In brief, he had (as I said before) three-score and three Ways to acquire Money, but he had two hundred and fourteen to spend it, beside his Drinking.—Ib., XVII.

And with this he ran away as fast as he could for Fear of Blows, whereof he was naturally fearful.—Ib., XXI.

"At Pantagruel's first meeting with Panurge (II. IX.) Rabelais makes Panurge "a young Man of very comely Stature, and surpassing handsome in all the Lineaments of his Body." I conjecture, therefore, that he began to draw Panurge but vaguely, feeling his way, as it were; and that as he proceeded—it is five chapters more before he describes Panurge further, emphasising this time his leanness and cat-like tread—the Villon portrait gradually took shape and blossomed in his mind.

"In the chapter (II. XVI.) called "Of the Qualities and Conditions of Panurge" there seem clear echoes. For example:

At one time he assembled three or four, especial good Hacksters and roaring Boyes, made them in the evening drink like Templers, afterwards led them till they came under St. Genevieve, or about the Colledge of Navarre, and at the
hours that the Watch was coming up that way, which he knew by putting his Sword upon the Pavement, and his Ear by it, and when he heard his Sword shake, it was an infallible Signe that the Watch was neare at that instant: then he and his Companions took a Tumbrel or Dung-Cart, and gave it the Brangle, hurling it with all their force down the Hill, and so overthrew all the poor Watchmen like Pigs, and then ran away, etc.

"In this, in other japes and frolics of Panurge, and again in his squandering three years' revenues of his Lordship of Salmygondin in fourteen days,

in a thousand little Banquets and jolly Collations, keeping open House for all Comers and Goers; yea, to all good Fellows, young Girles, and pretty Wenches; felling Timber, burning the great Logs for the sake of the Ashes, borrowing Money beforehand, buying dear, selling cheap, and eating his Corn (as it were) whilst it was but Grass,

"I see the Villon of the Pat-au-Deable, the Repues Franches, and the College burglary. Finally, Rabelais has not overlooked the poet's other dominant note:

One day I found Panurge very much out of Countenance, melancholick and silent.--II. XVII.

"It is pleasant to believe that the author of Pantagruel, who shared with the Parisian poet, his spiritual ancestor, the magic formula, made him to some extent his model for Panurge, the compere of his gigantic work. (Lewis, p. 392-393)

Théophile Gautier in Les Grotesques compares François Villon and Rabelais's Panurge. "Panurge,
avec son nez fait en manche de rasoir; Panurge, poltron, gourmand, hâbleur, ribleur, avec ses vingt-six poches pleines de pinces, de crocs, de ciseaux à couper les bourses, et mille autres engins nuisibles; Panurge fin à dorer comme une dague de plomb, bien galant homme de sa personne, sauf qu'il est quelque peu paillard, et incessamment travaillé de la maladie intitulée "faute d'argent", malgré ses soixante-trois manières de s'en procurer; Panurge impie et superstitieux, et n'ayant réellement peur de rien, sinon des coups et du danger;---et Villon, avec son tempérament de Bohème, ses longues mains sèches, près prenant comme glu; son habit déchiqueté, à barbe d'écrevisse, et dépénailé comme celui d'un cueilleur de pommes du Perche, Villon en extase devant les grasses soupes de prisme des jacobins; (276) . . . Villon invoquant, à chaque vers, le bon Dieu, la sainte Vierge, et tous les saints du paradis, et ne manquant pas une occasion de dauber les prêtres, les moines, de quelque robe et de quelque couleur qu'ils soient." (Théophile Gautier--Les Grotesques, 1882, p. 31-32.)

Sir Walter Besant has an entirely different view of the similarity of Villon and of Panurge. He says, "Panurge as a character is wholly inferior to what we conceive of Villon. Gautier admits this. 'Tout complet
que soit Panurge, Villon, cependant, l'est encore davantage: il a une mélancolie que l'autre n'a pas, il a le sentiment de sa misère. Quelque chose d'humain lui vibre encore sous les côtes: il aime sa mère ... Panurge n'a pas non plus, pour la beauté de la femme, le même respect amoureux que son prototype ...'

"Villon was a rogue who, in moments of reflection, which were many, hated his own rogueries ... sensitive as he was to every passing feeling, he could not be hardened to the moral deadness of Panurge.

"Now Panurge would never have been grateful or affectionate to anybody ... If the great work of Rabelais be carefully devised and cunningly wrought out allegory (which I do not believe), then is Panurge the representative of men without a soul ... But Villon—Villon was all conscience. His melancholy soul administered perpetual castigations.

"Panurge was joyous and free from remorse; Villon was sad and full of self-reproach. Panurge looks ever for what may be; Villon looks back at what might have been. Panurge was imperfect only on the side of conscience; Villon only on the side of will. Panurge was anything in the world but François Villon." (Studies in Early French Poetry—Sir Walter Besant)
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