THE FRENCH SENATE.

Something About Its History, Constitution and In view of the present agitation in Paris over the proposition of the Emperor to materially modify the powers and privileges of the Senate, the following from the Pall Mall

Gazette will be read with interest:-So many changes have come over France during the last few months that people were not astonished to see the Senate suddenly bestir itself and evisce a zealous interest in public affairs—a zeal which has ended in calling upon the Assembly more attention than it possibly desired. A year ago a busy Senate would have been a novelty, for it was a maxim carefully inculcated upon the august assembly by Government, and religiously accepted as a postulate by the nation at large, that the last subject to which any well-regulated Senate ought to turn its thoughts is that of public business-or, indeed, for that matter, any other business than that duly chalked out for it by the discriminating wisdom of Ministers. Had it not been for the 30,000f. which every Senator was in the habit of receiving each year in quarterly instalments, there were few Frenchmen who would have thought it worth while to remember that their country was blessed with an Upper Assembly at all. But as 30,000f, multiplied by 120-3,600,000f., the senatorial institution was one of those blessings that make themselves felt; and this oceasionally induced some adventurous spirits to cross over to the left bank of the Seine, and try to discover what sort of a political body it could be that consumed so much money and made so little noise. There was something of a holy mystery about the assembly. It held its sittings in an old historical palace associated with gloomy memories of Richelieu, the Terror of 93-when it had served as a prison—the trials of Ney, of Polignac, and of Louis Napoleon; the suicide of the Duke de Choisel-Praslin, the "Corduroy lectures" of '48, and many other events equally dismal and distressing. All these sittings were private. Once or twice a week-but oftener once than twice-a few broughams and coaches would rumble up the Rue de Tournon and roll slowly under the archway of Marie de Medici's mansion, bearing ex-cabinet Restoration was by no means an unpopular assembly. All the vindictiveness, intolerance, and reactionary energy of the Royalists found refuge in the lower House, not in the Upper. The Peers more than once gave proof ministers, ex-prefects, ex-generals, and ex-judges, with here and there an archbishop. They all had a kind of family likeness, and the same uncomfortably conscious look of being shelved; the liveliest were the archbishops, who, if report said truly, spoke much the loudest when they got inside. Now and then when the venerable procession of Ex-es had terminated, one or two quicker broughams would rattle up with solemn per-sonages discernible through the windows. These were ministers, very sleek and well-to-do, come down to make belief to explain pale copy of its predecessor. The Peers still kept to the blue and gold uniform which Louis XVIII had devised, and pretended to believe themselves the first power in the things which nobody there wanted to know, State. But nobody talked about them. It and to titillate the venerable Ex-es by talk of independence, patriotism, disinterestedness, seemed to be tacitly understood that, think as they might, the Peers would always vote and other properties quite useless as times went, as well as dangerous. Nobody was ad-mitted to the privilege of hearing or seeing as they were told; so that, excepting when M. Victor Hugo or some other famous member was going to speak, the debates excited only what went on within the ancient walls; but the same kind of somnolent interest as the if one liked to go on the morrow there was a verger to show one the session-room where the Senators had been debating the preceding day. This was better than nothing. The room was very sumptuous and imposing; indeed, it is doubtful whether the sight of so much green and gold and such fine empty benches did not leave a more striking impression than could have been gathered by the spectacle of M. Rouher at the tribune and the whole hundred and twenty Senators applauding his utterances with both hands. Besides, if a visitor was imaginative it was not very difficult to conjure up a senatorial | title of Senator offered seductions not to be sitting, speeches, applause, and all—the resisted. But when these had been called verger was communicative and gave one help

if needful. There, on the first tier of the amphitheatre to the right of the President's seat, sat the cardinal archbishops in their scarlet robes, and a little farther off Monseigneur Darboy, not yet a cardinal though anxious to be, and attired more humbly in a violet cassock. Towards the centre a clump of field-marshals, all gold lace, moustache, and loyal sentiments. Next them the admirals; above them and in the shade of the hemicycle the group of fallen Ministers, pensive and mournful; in a corner the seat whence the famous Marquis de Boissy used to prophesy the invasion of England; in an opposite corner the bench whence M. Sainte-Beuve started up on a memorable occasion to make his chivalrous defense of Ernest Renan; facing these seats and overlooking the armchair of the President, an array of silent statues representing legal worthier of the past. It was to the shades of these worthies that senators run short of inspiration were in the habit of appealing by abrupt apostrophes. As there were no journalists in the tribunes to titter, it was allowable to explain now and then:-"Messieurs, j'invoque ces grands hommes dont la sagesse preside a nos deliberations." Or this, at the moment of voting, with an elegant wave of the hand aloft:-"Messieurs, n'oubliez point que ces six sages vous contemplent," Nowadays it is not sure how far this figure of rhetoric would succeed; those journalists respect nothing. The French Senate is the fifth assembly of the kind that has been instituted since the Revolution. Previously to 1780 there were some Peers, but as their main privilege con-

sisted in holding their tongues until they were asked to speak, it can scarcely be said that their functions were either onerous to themselves or very important to the country. During the Constituent debates of 1700-1 the question as to whether there should be two Chambers or one was of all the knotty points of the time that which gave rise to the longest discussions. Mirabeau, whose opinions fluctuated, ended by becoming a partisan of the English system; but he was in a minority, The intractable spirit of the nobles had irritated the revolutionary legislators, and it was eventually decided that there should be but a single assembly. After the fall of Robuspierre, however, the subject was started again, and by the almost unanimous consent of the Convention the principle of two Chambers was adopted in the Constitution of the Year III. Since that time (1795), and with the excaption of the Republican interval of 1848 to 1852, France has continued to have two legislative assemblies, The first Upper House was called "Le Conseil des Anciens," and was essentially, as its name implied, a square-tood body. It was composed of two hundred and fifty members, who were obliged to be more than forty years of age, and either married or widowers. council elected the five directors, revised or rejected the decisions of the Conneil of the Five Hundred, and possessed the somewhat singular privilege of being able to transfer the residence of the latter from Paris to any other town. The place of meeting of the Ancients was at the Tuileries; they wore no uniform, but had a silver medal tied to their button-holes by a piece of tri-colored ribbon; they were renewable by thirds every year, the electors being members of the Lower House. After a few years' existence, after the Direc- pleasant evening. Let him not flatter himover 14 marks & worker + 7 - 4 - 10 -

tory was merged into the Consulate, the Council of the Ancients left behind them the reputation of having accomplished an incredible amount of talking and of doing nothing -a reputation which was amply shared by the other Council, that of the Five Hundred. It is difficult to establish the balance of power very nicely between rival assemblies. The two Councils under the Directory has been perpetually at loggerheads, and it was doubtless to obviate any recurrence of this that Bonaparte, in his Constitution of the Year VIII, decided that the Senate should have the Corpa Legislatif and Tribunal en-tirely under its control. The number of senators was originally sixty. They were self-elected for life from a list of candidates submitted to them by the Consuls and the Corps Legislatif. They received a salary of 25,000 francs, and their prerogatives were to appoint the Consuls and Judges of Appeal, and to elect, prorogue, and dissolve the Corps Legislatif and Tribunal. Under the empire the number of senators was raised to 187, and their salaries increased to 36,000 francs. Moreover, as it was considered advisable that they should have a comely look on state occasions, a rich attire was given them, consisting of gold-laced coat, satin breeches, mantle of violet velvet embroidered with gold bees, and black velvet hat with white feathers. In exchange for these sumptuous clothes the Senate generously parted with its independence, and cried "Yes," with the utmost spirit, to all that the emperor suggested. It was not till 1814, when the dispenser of past favors had nothing more to give, that the members of the august body discovered suddenly how absurd a thing it was to be atraid. Nothing was ever more brave or noble than their conduct at this juncture. It did credit to human nature in the first place, and in the next set a happy precedent to all subsequent assemblies who should be in doubt as to how to act in puzzling contingencies. To the Imperial Senate succeeded the House of Peers, the members of which were hereditary from 1815 to 1831, and appointed for life from 1831 to 1848. Although the equality principles of 1798 had struck sufficiently deep roots in the minds of most Frenchmen, yet the House of Peers of the Restoration was by no means an unpopular assembly. All the vindictiveness, intolerof real independence by resisting the measures of the Villele Ministry, and it was not until the close of Charles X's reign, when liberal tendencies seemed to be getting the upper hand in the Chamber of Deputies, that the Peers took fright and abetted that series of well-contrived schemes that eventually landed the Bourbon dynasty at Goritz. Under Louis Philippe the Upper House was but a

sittings of the Academie Française. When the imperial regime succeeded for the second time to the republic, the idea of an Upper House recruited among all the great men ('fillustrations') of the empire found general favor. Unluckily, however, at the beginning of 1852 all the great men of France were either under lock and key or in exile. It was impossible to find a great man able and willing to sit in the new Assembly. To be sure, there were plenty of persons who occupied eminent positions in their own esteem, and to whom 30,000 francs a year and the into requisition, on the crust and crumb principle, they failed to impress the country with any very vivid sense of their grandeur, and from the earliest days of its existence the Senate took rank in public opinion somewhat on the same level with that estimable assembly which voted the seasoning of Tiberius' turbot. To make matters more humiliating, the Senators at first had nothing to do. Their mission, as stated on paper, was the safe-guarding of the Constitution: but as a Constitution does not run dangers every day of the week, the "great men" would have been at their wits' end for employment had not the expedient been resorted to of making them the recipients of public petitions. The French are prolific in petitions. There seems to be a whole class of persons whose chief occupation is to elaborate fantastic requests, and to drop them into the letter box of the Luxembourg. The senators go through the form of reading these documents, draw up reports on them, and on set days unanimously consign them to the waste paper basket. This is unexciting work, but up 1800 it was the only pastime the Senators had. If by any evil chance there had been a dearth of petitions in the land, the first assembly of the empire would have been reduced to the distressing necessity of pocketing their salaries without carning them. Since 1860, however, there has been a series of changes, the privileges concoded to the Senate keeping pace with those obtained by the Corps Legislatif. In 1860 came the right of voting an address in answer to the speech from the throne; in 1866 the right of suspending for a twelvemonth laws passed in the Lower House; in 1867 the right of interpellation; and in 1869 the right of initiative. All these prerogatives were accepted at the hands of Government with perfect decility, though without enthusiasm. The Senata felt no special desire for the prerogatives. It had never asked for them, nor would ever have been likely to do so; indeed, it had often, in the good times, five or six years ago, denounced the greater number of them as superfluons, traught with danger, and tending to anarchy. But what Casar wills the Senate wills. It is no dispraise of the French Upper House that it has always, with admirable deference, sacrificed the petty vanities of personal convic-tion to the loyal desire of remaining on good terms with the sovereign. And there can be no doubt that his Majosty's newly expressed desires as to its modification will be accepted with little murmuring.

Going Mome With the Girls. The entrance into society may be said to take place immediately after boyhood has passed away; yet a multitude take their initiative before their beards are presentable. It is a great trial either for a tender or a riper For an overgrown boy to go to a door, knowing well that there are a dozen girls inside, and knock or ring, with an absolute certainty that in a few moments all eyes will be upon him, is a severe test of courage. To go before these girls and make the tour of the room without stepping on their toes, and sit down and dispose of his hands without putting them in his pockets, is an achievement which few boys can boast. If a boy can go so far as to measure off ten yards of tape with one of the girls, and cut it off at each end, he may stand a chance to pass a

AND TORISH TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY OF

self that the trials of the evening are over. Then comes the breaking up. The dear girls den their hoods and put on their shawls, and look so savey and mischievous, so unimpressible and independent, as if they did not wish anybody to go home with them. Then comes the pinch, and the boy who has the most pluck goes up to the prettiest girl in the bis mouth, and crooking out his albow, stemmers out the words, "Shall I see you hou e?" She touches her finger on his arm, and they walk home, feeling as awkward as

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CITY ORDINANCES.

COMMON COUNCIL OF PHILADEL-PHIA. CLERK'S OFFICE,

PHILADELPHIA, March 25, 1870. In accordance with a resolution adopted by the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia on Thursday, the twenty-fourth day of March, 1870, the annexed bill, entitled "An Ordinance to authorize a loan for the crection." of a bridge across the river Schuylkill at Fair-mount," is hereby published for public infor-

JOHN ECKSTEIN, Clerk of Common Council.

A N ORDINANCE To Authorize a Loan for the Erection of a Bridge across the River Schuylkill at Fair-

Section 1. The Select and Common Conscils of the city of Philadelphia do ordain, 1 hat the Mayor of Philadelphia be and he is hereby au-thorized to borrow, at not less than par, on the credit of the city corporation, from time to time, such sums of money as may be necessary to pay for the construction and erection of a bridge over the river Schuyikill at Fairmount, not exceeding in the whole the sum of seven hundred thousand dollars, for which interest not to exceed the rate of six per cent. Per annum shall be paid, half-yearly, on the first days of January and July, at the office of the City

Treasurer. The principal of said loan shall be payable and paid at the expiration of thirty years from the date of the same, and not before, without the consent of the holders thereof; and certificates therefor, in the usual form of certificates of city loan, shall be issued in such amounts as the lenders may require, but not for any frac-tional part of one hundred dollars, or, if re-quired, in amounts of five hundred or one thousand dollars; and it shall be expressed in said certificates that the said loan therein mentioned, and the interest thereof, are payable free from

Section 2. Whenever any loan shall be made by virtue thereof, there shall be, by force of this ordinance, annually appropriated, out of the income of the corporate estates and from the sum raised by taxation, a sum sufficient to pay the interest on said certificates; and the fur-ther sum of three-tenths of one per centum on the par value of such certificates so issued, shall be appropriated quarterly out of said income and taxes to a sinking fund, which fund and its accumulations are hereby especially pledged for the redemption and payment of said

RESOLUTION TO PUBLISH A LOAN BILL.

Resolved, That the Clerk of Common Council be authorized to publish in two daily newspapers of this city, daily for two weeks, the ordinance presented to the Common Council on Thursday, March 24, 1870, entitled "An ordinance to authorize a loan for the erection of a bridge across the river Schuylkill at Fairmount," And the said clerk, at the stated meeting of Councils, after the expiration of four ing of Councils, after the expiration of four weeks from the first day of said publication, shall present to this Council one of each of said newspapers for every day in which the same shall be made. 3 26 24t

COMMON COUNCIL OF PHILADELPHIA.

CLERK'S OFFICE,
PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 4, 1870.
In accordance with a Resolution adopted by
the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia, on Thursday, the third day of February, 1870, the annexed bill, entitled "AN ORDINANCE

To create a loan for the building of a bridge over the River Schuylkill, at South street, and for the payment of ground rents and mortgages," is hereby published for public in-JOHN ECKSTEIN,

Clerk of Common Council.

AN ORDINANCE TO CREATE A LOAN FOR THE BUILDING OF A BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER SCHUYLKILL AT SOUTH STREET, AND FOR THE PAYMENT OF GROUND RENTS AND MORTGAGES.

Section 1. The Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia do ordain, That the Mayor of Philadelphia be and he is hereby authorized to borrow, at not less than par, on the credit of the city, from time to time, one million five hundred thousand dollars, to be applied as follows, viz .: - First. For the building of a bridge over the River Schuylkill at South street, eight hundred thousand dollars. Second. For the payment of ground rents and mort-gages, seven hundred thousand dollars, for which interest not to exceed the rate of six per cent. per annum shall be yearly on the first days of January and July, at the office of the City Treasurer. The principal of the said loan shall be payable and paid at the expiration of thirty years from the date of the same, and not before, without the consent of the holders there f; and the certificates therefor, in the usual form of the certificates of the City Loan, shall be issued in such amounts as the lenders may require, but not for any fractional part of one hundred or one thousand dollars; and it shall be expressed in said certificates that the loan therein mentioned. and the interest thereof, are payable free from all

Section 2. Whenever any loan shall be made by virtue thereof, there shall be, by force of this ordinance, annually appropriated out of the income of the corporate estates, and from the sum raised by taxation, a sum sufficient to pay the interest on said certificates; and the further sum of three-tenths of one per centum on the par value of such certificates so issued shall be appropriated quarterly out of said in-come and taxes to a sinking fund, which fund and its accumulations are hereby especially pledged for the redemption and payment of said certificates.

RESOLUTION TO PUBLISH A LOAN BILL Resolved, That the Clerk of Common Conneil

be authorized to publish in two daily news-papers of this city, daily for four weeks, the ordinance presented to Common Council on Thursday, February 3, 1870, entitled "An ordinance to create a loan for the building of a bridge over the river Schuylkill, at South street. and for the payment of ground-rents and mort-gages." And the said Clerk at the stated meeting of Councils after said publication, shall present to this Council one of each of said newspapers for every day in which the same shall

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