HAVING traveled to Greece, Italy, and Egypt, where he had studied antiquity; to Scandinavia, Germany, Spain, and England, where he had examined medieval and modern civilization; to Cairo and Constantinople, where he had investigated the Mohammedan world; Jean-Jacques Ampère, an erudite and restless Frenchman,\(^1\) embarked on August 27, 1851 for America. Since "China was not open and the moon inaccessible," Ampère considered it necessary to come to America if he wished to see something new.

The traveler was the son of the distinguished scientist and philosopher, André-Marie Ampère, who was professor of experimental physics in the Collège de France. Science is largely indebted to the elder Ampère for his electro-dynamic theory and for his original views on the identity of electricity and magnetism. His name has been immortalized in the world of electricity by the use of the term \textit{ampere} to designate the unit of strength of electric current. Jean-Jacques was also a scholar, occupying a chair of history and French literature at the Collège de France, and being a member of the French Academy. A certain dilet-

\(^1\) Born 1800, died 1864. An article appears over his signature in the \textit{Revue des Deux Mondes} for November, 1866. This is evidently a posthumous work for 1864 seems to be the accurate date for his death.
tantism, however, hindered him from holding the high place in the intellectual world of the nineteenth century to which his knowledge and cleverness entitled him. His indefatigable intellectual curiosity took the form of extensive rather than intensive observation. As a result he was an interesting and versatile person but not a specialized scholar. For example, his interests in the United States ranged all the way from the evolving social structure to the primitive remains that he hoped to find on the banks of the Ohio. He wrote extensively, and in his writings, says Larousse, "the original character of his thought and of his talent were mixed in a piquant manner with the impressions received by the tourist, the imagination of the poet, the erudition of the philologist and of the archeologist, and the free taste and extended views of the man of letters."

Ampère's interest in America was first aroused by the attractive and popular actress and author, Fanny Kemble. Her "capricious and poetic volume on the United States," says our visitor, "had charmed me for many years, and although a little hard on American manners, had given me for the first time the mind to make the trip [to America]." This original incentive was further stimulated by interest in the theories of his intimate friend, Tocqueville, to whom Ampère dedicated the two volumes in which he described his travels in America. This *Promenade en Amérique* occupies an honorable place in the series of French writings on America.  

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3 The reference is to Frances Ann Butler, *Journal of a Residence in America* (Paris, 1835). This is an entertaining record of things experienced while traveling in America. It contains piquant observations, not always flattering, on American customs. Apparently Miss Kemble revised her opinion later, for in 1851 she referred to her "impertinences" in her earlier days on American manners. Jean-Jacques Ampère, "Promenade en Amérique," *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1853), I, 6.  
4 Miss Kemble came with her father in 1832 to America. Two years later she married here a southern planter, Pierce Butler. Her return to the stage in 1847 was followed by her divorce two years later. In 1877 she returned to England, where she lived—using her maiden name—until her death in London in 1893. During this period she was a prominent and popular figure in the social life of London.  
The itinerary of the French traveler in America was not confined to the United States, for it also included Canada, Cuba, and Mexico. He made some enlightening observations on the antiquities found in Mexico and prophesied that a grandiose Utopia would some day develop on the Isthmus of Panama. He even risked predicting the foundation of a city, a colossal Alexandria, which would one day be the queen of the cities of the universe; and in this future city he considered it would be only right that one of the great streets should be called Ampère. In the United States, where he met the most distinguished American scientists, publicists, and authors, Ampère's travels were confined to the region east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio. He was so greatly impressed by the beauties of American cemeteries that he hoped for a moment to die and be buried in one; after some thought, however, he decided he would prefer having a professorship at Harvard University.

It seems almost more than coincidental that upon arriving at Southampton, where he was to board the Franklin which was to carry him to New York, our traveler should learn that one of his fellow wayfarers was to be Fanny Kemble. Theodore Sedgwick, a distinguished New York lawyer, with his mother and sister, were also among his traveling companions on the boat. Ampère's observations about Americans began even before he had boarded the ship. He notes first the lack of hurry on the part of the traveled American, who "looks tranquilly at his watch and says we have yet a quarter of an hour to go on board, as if he were going from Paris to Saint-Cloud."

The second characteristic noted en route was the constant and perpetual glorification which Americans heaped on their country. He did not have to wait long to have the idea impressed on him,

Ampère, Promenade en Amérique: Etats-Unis, Cuba, Mexique (Paris, 1855). Copies may be found in the New York Public Library; the Library of Congress; and the Bibliothèque Nationale. Two letters relative to the trip to America have been published by Fernand Baldensperger, "Lettres inédites de J.-J. Ampère relatives à sa promenade en Amérique," Revue de Litterature Comparée, VIII (1928), 175-179.


for, in passing the Isle of Wight, an American said to him: "It is something like Long Island." And, as the Franklin entered New York harbor, Ampère heard it said on all sides that it resembled the harbor at Naples, a fact which, "in spite of its magnificence," he could not concede. He found America to be the idée fixe of the Americans; the conviction of the superiority of their country was at the bottom of everything they said. Professing not to listen very closely to the praises directed toward the United States, the Frenchman did notice, however, that no matter what was being discussed, American products were always best. For example, French flour was excellent, but that of Virginia was better; and the oysters that one ate in the United States were superior to all oysters. Although Ampère could not resist the thought that it must be very distressing to the people of the United States not to be able to pretend that an American had discovered America, he felt that on the whole the predilection for their country on the part of the Americans was neither offensive nor aggressive. On the contrary it gave him pleasure to see it expressed ceaselessly. While the opportunities which were seized upon to make these expressions made him smile, they also caused him to have a high esteem for the American people. In France, he thought, there had not been for some time sufficient self-esteem: "We are too denuded of illusions concerning ourselves. It is much more worth while for a nation to respect itself and even to admire itself a little too much than to pity itself philosophically."

Arriving in New York, Ampère had the usual unhappy experience of travelers in a foreign country—that of being overcharged by the cabman. Insult was almost added to injury when, upon appealing to the hotel clerk, the latter nonchalantly dismissed the affair by disregarding Ampère's letter of recommendation and by paying the bill himself—giving the driver what he asked. The traveler thought, however, this gesture would have been somewhat more effective if the clerk had taken the money from his own pocket. Ampère remained in New York for only a short time. Planning really to see this city later, he hurried to Boston

28 Ibid., p. 7.
29 Ibid., p. 10.
30 Ibid., pp. 7 f.
and Cambridge. From there he went to “New France,” stopping at Quebec and Montreal. Next he followed the trail to Niagara, Buffalo, Erie, Detroit, and Chicago. By that time his trip, which had lasted almost two months without rest, was beginning to wear on him. So he gave up his plan of going to St. Louis and decided to return to New York. At this point he discovered that no one should permit himself to become ill in the United States, especially away from the large cities, for everyone was so busy that no one had time to take care of him. But he did want to see Cincinnati. So he returned to Detroit, thence to Sandusky, and from there by train to Cincinnati, from which he returned to New York; then to West Point, Albany, and finally Philadelphia.

The curious Frenchman was obviously disappointed in not finding a greater contrast between Philadelphia and New York. He had expected to find Philadelphia entirely different, dreaming of a “tranquil city, with a Quaker air.” But he found it to be “no longer the city of Penn.” While it was true that certain quarters did have an aspect more peaceable and more ancien than New York; and although it was equally true that Philadelphia possessed no street so dominant as Broadway, with its accompanying excitement, the great activity which seemed so characteristic of all American cities was everywhere apparent. Philadelphia was characterized as a manufacturing city, and New York as a commercial one: the Birmingham and Liverpool of England. Local pride was not lacking in Philadelphia, whose inhabitants questioned the census which had acceded a larger population to New York than to the Quaker City.18

One of Ampère’s first interests in Philadelphia was the theater. Being himself the author of tragedies which were performed, with more or less success, at the Théâtre-Français, he was no tyro as a critic of dramatic production. A current performance was Victor Hugo’s Angelo. Ampère does not indicate who enacted the principal role, that of Tisbe, but his evaluation of the performer makes it clear that he considered the presentation inadequate. Quakerish prudery, he says, did not permit that the heroine be designated a courtesan on the poster; she was called an actress,

which “destroyed the meaning of the whole play, and shows at the same time that the theater is considered profane.” All the prudery, however, our French commentator thinks was expended on the poster, for the part of Tisbe was interpreted with considerable abandon. Certainly, he decides, this was neither Mlle. Rachel nor Mme. Dorval. A rather dashing dancer, who was approved by the audience, also did not command the admiration of Ampère. Apparently sensitive to the caliber of theatrical performances, he thought it would have been more fitting if this presentation “which seemed so American had been a translation of some French vaudeville.”

Nor did our French friend consider music appreciation to be highly developed in America. He attended a concert given by Jenny Lind in Philadelphia and one given by Catherine Hayes in Baltimore. On the basis of his observations at these performances, which were well attended by the beau monde, he reached his conclusions concerning the musical taste of Americans. In addition to appreciation of her talent, the enthusiasm for Jenny Lind was based, Ampère thought, on her European reputation and on the respect for her character which resulted from the benefit concerts she gave for schools and hospitals. In short, à la vogue s’est jointe l’estime. The observer thought the great operatic airs were listened to rather coldly but that the ballads were more greatly appreciated. For this reason Catherine Hayes, who was not at all in the same class with Jenny Lind and who sang the ballads of her own country (Ireland) pleasantly, had, he noted, the greater success in the two concerts he heard. Concerts, he remarked, were very well attended in spite of high admission prices; also, the newspapers were highly laudatory in their reviews, using “the strongest hyperboles and the same ones to describe superior and mediocre talent.”

\[\text{Mlle. Rachel was a Jewish tragedian whose success was nothing short of amazing. On the stage of the Comédie-Française when only seventeen, she also played in England, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Russia, and finally America. Completely worn out, she died at the age of thirty-seven.}\]

\[\text{As a result of Mme. Dorval’s success in the Antony of Alexander Dumas, Victor Hugo gave one of his roles to her. Her portrayal was so superb that it led to her engagement at the Comédie-Française, where she impersonated Tisbe in Angelo. Apparently Ampère had seen both Mme. Dorval and Mlle. Rachel portray this character.}\]

\[\text{Ibid., II, 590.}\]
Many musical instruments were manufactured in America, pianos being made in particularly large numbers. In spite of these facts Ampère did not believe musical instinct to be highly developed. America had produced sculptors, and even painters, but he had not heard of a single celebrated musician, whether composer or performer. Americans, he said, were too English to be good musicians. It was easier to pay a thousand dollars per concert to a European performer than to have a musical sense. Some efforts were being made in America, the Frenchman conceded, to cultivate sacred music. Church songs had been perfected at Boston by the Society of Handel and Haydn; and at Lowell he found an effort to put the music of the great masters within reach of the people. But in spite of these attempts, there was no great progress, for "the Anglo-Saxon temperament got in the way of development." Happily our writer ends on a hopeful note, concluding it is possible to be a great people without having a highly evolved musical sense; the English had proved that. He also encouragingly, although a little tritely and obviously, states that it is possible to increase this sense by education and exercise; the French had proved that. The Americans have one asset which Ampère believes the "haughty Yankees" would do well to recognize; that is, the musical ability of the black race.

Being essentially a philosopher and accustomed to thinking in terms of natural law, Ampère probably did not accept traditional religious beliefs. His respect for custom, however, was such that he did not openly flout conventional religion. Some of his admirers wish to attribute greater religious interest to him than the above statements would indicate. But, in any event, he must be considered a religious liberal.

Considering this ideological background, one is not surprised that the traveler should have found the principal characteristic of the Quakers to be tolerance, a principle and practice of which the philosopher must highly approve. The Quakers, Ampère reflected, were the real founders in the United States of tolerance,

\[\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\] However, too big a story had been made in Europe, he says, of the excessive enthusiasm of the Americans for the singers and dancers from Europe. Mlle. Fanny Essler at no time sat in Congress, and she was not carried in triumph by the senators. \[\text{Ibid.}, \text{II}, 618.\]

one of the "strong points and one of the glories of America." Religious toleration could not, he thinks, have come either from Episcopal Virginia or Puritan New England. Curiously enough, he sees no other fundamental peculiar Quaker characteristic. "With this exception [tolerance], the Quakers have no other bizarrerie than the tutoiement and the shape of their great hats."21

In this city, which was established under the influence of the unlimited tolerance of William Penn and the Friends, Ampère listened to the most intolerant sermon he heard in America, and, he adds, the most eloquent. The thesis of the orator was that sincerity of belief was in no way an excuse for error. He said:

Sincere belief can be criminal, and one judges the tree by its fruit. And what is more, belief is the result of moral character and receives its imprint from it. Tell me what you believe and I will tell you what you are. He who mistakes honestly is culpable. . . . Were the Inquisitors innocent when they tortured their victims? Do you believe the geologist is innocent when he evokes antediluvian monsters against the truth? Do you think he is innocent who mutilates the Bible and in so doing distorts known fact? Do you think the French philosophers of the eighteenth century were innocent? Do you think Napoleon was right when he suppressed liberty under the pretext of stifling the Revolution? And poor Shelley, who one stormy night cried out: "No, there is no God"; do you think he will be with the elect? Newport believed there was no hell; is that sufficient to destroy hell? The pilot in the midst of rocks during the night leans over his map and watches at the helm for the rocks: is it enough for him to escape the rocks to believe he is going in the right direction? Do like him, search your route, assure yourself that what seems to you like the truth is truth and not only the appearance of it.22

The preacher terminated with a morsel, which according to Ampère, had a truly formidable effect on his audience:

21 Ibid., II, 593.
22 Ibid., II, 606 f.
It is believed that the route to hell is somber, that in approaching it one will see livid reflectors, hear many sinister voices; no, my hearers; this road is charming, it is lighted with the most sweet light: one thinks he hears choirs of angels, ... One goes, one goes always ... one arrives ... these choirs of angels, they were the cry of demons, this light so sweet, it was the light of hell!\textsuperscript{23}

Brilliant and somber rhetoric, says our narrator, which charmed the intolerant of all communions and each took occasion gladly to accuse the others of the sin in question. Ampère does not recall to what sect this preacher belonged. But he does show an understanding of Protestant doctrine when he indicates surprise that this preacher should have emphasized the impossibility of salvation outside the church.

Ampère's liberal and democratic tendencies were apparent not only in his reactions to religious practices in America but also in his observations on judicial customs. In addition to Mr. Sedgwick and other lawyers whom he met in his travels, he was closely associated, while in Philadelphia, with a Mr. Gerhard. He describes him as a distinguished member of the bar, to whom he had been recommended. He professes to owe a great deal to him and he writes of him as belonging to that group of men in the United States who form a veritable aristocracy of the mind. The observer should have been dear to the heart of Alexander Hamilton, considering that "the best" in society are the intellectual aristocracy. The wealthy who tried pretentiously and \textit{gauchement} to imitate European manners in America he did not regard as true aristocracy.

Mr. Gerhard took our commentator to some court sessions and thereby gave him opportunity to witness judicial procedure. He approved the practice of judges not wearing judicial robes and thereby further demonstrated his democratic proclivities. He states:

The judges do not appear to me less imposing for not having black robes and \textit{bonnets carrés}. I will say as much for the lawyers. I like to see a man in a dress coat explain a matter to other men in dress coats instead of a personage vested like \textit{l'avocat Patelin},\textsuperscript{24} who gesticulates, takes off and puts on his cap, pushes up his sleeves, be-

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., II, 607.
fore other people in black robes, who make me, by their costume, think involuntarily of Perrin Dandin and of Brid’oison. Costumes are signs of aristocracy which tend to separate different classes in marking each of them with a particular character. . . . The democratic principle tends to suppress everywhere the hierarchy of degree. . . .

A minority opinion was read in one of the court sessions attended in Philadelphia by Ampère. He was quite impressed by this procedure, considering it a striking expression of the respect given to individual opinion in America. It also seemed strange to him that there was no fear this action would weaken the decision. It is perhaps not necessary to add that although astonished he thought the practice a good one.

Although he discusses political questions very little, it is apparent that Ampère is—as one would expect—a political liberal. Ample evidence to support this conclusion is available. In the first place, he frequented the salons, particularly that of Mme. Récamier, whose friend and admirer he was. In addition, he was for twenty years the intimate friend of Tocqueville, at whose

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25 Principal character in an amusing comedy by this name. The term d’avocat Patelin is synonymous in the French language with craftiness, wheedling, hypocrisy, and flattery.
26 Character created by Rabelais in Pantagruel, who being made arbiter, terminates all procedure in the most expeditious manner. Racine has made of him in his Plaideurs, the young fanatic of the legal profession.
27 He will be recognized as the comic personage, always stuttering, who fills the role of the ridiculous judge in the Mariage de Figaro. Brid’oison loves form above all things else; he represents the type of silly judge who is ignorant and formal.
28 Ibid., II, 598.
30 From 1839 to 1859. After this date the relations between the two were less strong than formerly, although there is no evidence of coolness between them. Tocqueville was at Sorrento and Ampère was living with a family of friends in Rome, apparently finding it more pleasant here than at the bedside of his friend. In writing Ampère at this time Tocqueville said: “I desire from the bottom of my heart that you should be happy. . . . I know I may not hope to see you for a long time unless this illness is of short duration. The center of your existence is now at Rome: . . . this is the sad state of affairs, and we should be pardoned if we see it and afflict ourselves a little by it. The good side we see is that you, after all, lead the life you have chosen, which pleases you. . . . You have the society of an amiable and distinguished family, agreeable living without too great limitations, and to crown all, the sojourn in Rome, this is the consolation we have for not seeing you. I assure you in all sincerity that my friendship is of sufficiently good alloy to find a live satisfaction in these thoughts; and
château there was a "chamber in the tower, far from noise, an isolated study, which was Ampère's and carried his name." He also shared the ideas of his more famous contemporary, who consulted Ampère about his lectures and writings. But apparently Ampère was not objective in his criticisms, for Sainte-Beuve considers that his affection biased his judgment. Tocqueville was equally complimentary to Ampère about his writings. He wrote to him of his César: "I have a great impatience to see César embellished!" A true critic would have said to him, says Sainte-Beuve: "Leave this César, it is a mistake."

A letter written by Tocqueville to Ampère in the last year of the reign of Louis Philippe indicates that there was some question about Ampère's loyalty to the monarchy. Tocqueville writes:

My dear friend, M. Guizot came to my desk yesterday to ask me whether if, when the time comes, you would consent to being presented to the king. I responded about your monarchical and even dynastic sentiments, and I affirmed that you would accept with respect this opportunity to enter into direct communication with Sa Majesté. Although M. Guizot certainly believed my words, he has asked me to address the question to you and to make known your response. Write me then or come and speak a word to me today. . . .

Sainte-Beuve had difficulty understanding why there should have been any question on this point. For, he says, it must be remembered that Ampère had just become a member of the French Academy; that he had never failed since the beginning of the regime (of Louis Philippe) to perform his duties in the name of the state, either as substitute at the Ecole Normale, or as professor at the Collège de France; and that under the Ministry of Public Instruction he had been given a mission to Egypt. How, in the light of these facts he could be suspected of having any objection to following the custom—one of pure form—of being provided you do not forget us, which I know you will not do under any consideration, we will be satisfied. Remain then there as long as it seems good, without fear of cooling our affection for you. . . ." Ibid, LXXVII (1868), 43 ff. Tocqueville died without seeing his friend again. Ampère rushed to his bedside when he learned how dangerously ill he was but did not arrive before his death. Ibid., II, 44.

a Ibid., LXXVII (1868), 40.

a Ibid., LXXVII (1868), 41.
presented to the king, Sainte-Beuve could not understand. He admits, however, that Ampère did without doubt make a "theoretic profession of republicanism"; but, again coming to Ampère's rescue, Sainte-Beuve says he was "un pur républicain," never in his life having written "a single political article . . . neither under the Restoration, nor during the eighteen years of Louis Philippe, did Ampère print a single political line." On the other hand Sainte-Beuve admits Ampère did "speak very strongly and very sincerely . . . He was what one would call a républicain Platonique . . . who did not hesitate to talk republicanism in the salons." But this, thought Sainte-Beuve, should not have been disquieting. Doubtless he was only a philosophical liberal who had the usual practical turn of mind of the parlor liberal, for he was careful to do nothing that would interfere with his being admitted to the French Academy. But his political proclivities were so well-known that "the establishment of the Second Empire put Ampère outside of it, so to speak . . . and henceforth sojourn in France became insupportable to him." There is probably an immediate connection between this fact and the trip to America. On returning from America he lived in Italy.\[32\]

Being accustomed to the system of private education at home, our French friend was interested in the public school system in America. In Philadelphia he found private societies exerting pressure on the state legislature to improve the school system, particularly elementary education. As a result of this agitation the schools of Philadelphia benefited greatly. In 1836 they became public schools in fact, being opened to all the community; a central high school was also established at this time. Between 1839 and 1851 Ampère reports that the number of schools grew from sixteen to sixty; the number of teachers from 781 to 928, including those teaching in the high schools; and the number of students from 19,000 to 48,000. The proportion of students to teachers in 1839 was one to 100; in 1851 it was one to sixty.\[33\] Public instruction, the writer concludes, in Philadelphia as in New York, has grown more rapidly than the population itself. An increased amount of local support of public education is also reported. In place of the $190,000 spent in 1839, $366,000 was spent in 1851.

\[32\] Ibid., LXXVII (1868), 41.

\[33\] These figures have not been verified by the writer of this article.
In the earlier period one-fifth of the total was furnished by the state while in the later one only an eleventh of it was.\textsuperscript{34}

The Frenchman visited one of the schools which "the persevering zeal of the citizens had created" and was taken into classes by the supervisor, who at once began to question the children. Against the background of the discipline, formality, and rigidity of the French system, it is not surprising that Ampère saw a good deal of spontaneity and vivacity exhibited by the children, who were apparently not loath to seize the opportunity to demonstrate their prowess. He reports: "He [the director] did not have to wait for responses which came from all sides at the same time. A live emulation seemed to animate these children, in whom I found an animated air without petulance, great ardor and nothing of the gamin." While interested in the responses of the children, Ampère confesses to being less so than was his companion, who took so great pleasure in interrogating the children that he became oblivious of the passing of time, as a result of which the visitor had to ask permission to retire. "I left him," he says, "perfectly happy in this occupation which seemed to me a little monotonous, and I admired the disinterested and truly respectable ardor of a man who forgot his affairs to question the children on history and geography, as if he had no other interest than that of being useful."\textsuperscript{35}

In visiting Girard College, Ampère was at once struck by the provision that no priest or minister of a religious sect should enter the college. This provision he considered all the more singular in view of the fact that in this country nearly all the colleges had been founded by some religious denomination.\textsuperscript{36} The French visitor understood, however, Girard's purpose, which was not one of excluding religious teaching from the college but of keeping the children free from sectarian influence. Being au courant with Catholic theory and practice he also understood why the Catholic hierarchy was opposed to Catholic children attending Girard College. For the laymen who went there each Sunday to teach the

\textsuperscript{34}Ampère indicates he has taken these figures from the "Annual Report of the Controller of the Public Schools. Philadelphia, 1851." Jean-Jacques Ampère, "Promenade en Amérique," Revue des Deux Mondes (1853), II, 612.

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., II, 613.

\textsuperscript{36}Ampère makes exception to Jefferson's efforts to establish the University of Virginia without religious control.
children could not in the Catholic mind take the place of the priest, whose offices were essential. In spite of this objection, however, he found that a third of the students were Irish Catholics. Ampère was not unsympathetic with Girard's religious ideas.

One would expect the traveler, with his penchant for democracy, to approve the magnificent surroundings provided for the students at Girard College. On the contrary, he did not do so. This "white marble temple" which was built by the administrators of Girard's will "in place of a college," he considered an excess. "While one would like to enjoy untroubled this spectacle unique in the world, of a palace open to the democracy, of this homage to poor children who are too often neglected," it was impossible not to reflect on the contrast they would find upon leaving. Children who in European cities beg on the street or play in the gutter sleep here under a marble roof; but, he says, it is overdone. "Here where the people reign, it is not necessary to spoil the children of the sovereign; Henry IV was in no way harmed by being brought up with the little peasants of Béarn."

Ampère visited the penitentiary at Cherry Hill, which he called the greatest curiosity of Philadelphia, the same day he visited Girard College. The two formed a singular contrast for him: the one sad and gloomy with its high gray walls like those of a medieval fortress; the other laughing and magnificent, with its columns of white marble like a temple of Delos.

The question of the method of treating criminals was a live one in Europe in Ampère's day. He was, therefore, acquainted with the system in vogue at Cherry Hill—the Philadelphia system, which was characterized by continual isolation and work. Opposed to this was the Auburn system under which silence and isolation were imposed only during the night and work during the day was carried on by the prisoners in coöperation. The critics of the Philadelphia system condemned it as barbarous, and likely to lead to madness or death. Among prominent European defenders of the Philadelphia system were Tocqueville and the king of Sweden, Oscar I. Knowing how greatly opinion was divided on the penitentiary system, Ampère approached Cherry Hill with keen in-

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Ibid., II, 613 f.

Defends the system in his treatise on Des Peines et des Prisons.
terest, “curious to know what will be my impression of a matter so much debated.”

The cells he found to be clean, well kept, well-heated, rather large, and with provision for carrying on some trade. Each prisoner had a small garden. The traveler compared the cells to those of the Chartreux monks, who also had a garden and a workshop and who like the prisoners at Cherry Hill were, he considered, condemned. Carrying the comparison further, he decided that even though the Chartreux monks were voluntary prisoners the Philadelphia inmates had the advantage. For, the latter had from ten to fifteen minutes of conversation each day either with the guards, the director, with charitable persons who came to visit them, or with the curious passer-by. Then, too, the inhabitants of the Philadelphia penitentiary had permission to sing, to whistle while working, and to smoke, in none of which activities the Chartreux monks could indulge.

Corporal punishment was never inflicted; punishment consisted of diminution of food rations; imprisonment in the dark; or induction to the shower bath. The prisoners were taken to baths once every two weeks. On these occasions, as when they entered the establishment or changed cells, a veil was put over their heads in such a manner that no one was seen by any one else. They left the prison without knowing the face of any of their fellow-prisoners and without being known by them.

The prison terms varied considerably in length. The minimum was a year; the maximum twelve years. The warden, with whom Ampère discussed this point, thought the punishment should not exceed four years. When the French observer later found a prisoner who had served five years and had two more to serve for having stolen a horse he was surprised in view of what the warden had said to him. But surprise mounted to astonishment when he learned that another was condemned to only four years for homicide. It was explained to him that this inequality was the result of the maximum sentence having been given to the horse thief and the minimum to the murderer. But the explanation was not satisfying for he continued to find it impossible to understand why one

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It is with reservation that one accepts the word of a Frenchman that any place is well-heated.
children could not in the Catholic mind take the place of the priest, whose offices were essential. In spite of this objection, however, he found that a third of the students were Irish Catholics. Ampère was not unsympathetic with Girard’s religious ideas.

One would expect the traveler, with his penchant for democracy, to approve the magnificent surroundings provided for the students at Girard College. On the contrary, he did not do so. This “white marble temple” which was built by the administrators of Girard’s will “in place of a college,” he considered an excess. “While one would like to enjoy untroubled this spectacle unique in the world, of a palace open to the democracy, of this homage to poor children who are too often neglected,” it was impossible not to reflect on the contrast they would find upon leaving. Children who in European cities beg on the street or play in the gutter sleep here under a marble roof; but, he says, it is overdone. “Here where the people reign, it is not necessary to spoil the children of the sovereign; Henry IV was in no way harmed by being brought up with the little peasants of Béarn.”

Ampère visited the penitentiary at Cherry Hill, which he called the greatest curiosity of Philadelphia, the same day he visited Girard College. The two formed a singular contrast for him: the one sad and gloomy with its high gray walls like those of a medieval fortress; the other laughing and magnificent, with its columns of white marble like a temple of Delos.

The question of the method of treating criminals was a live one in Europe in Ampère’s day. He was, therefore, acquainted with the system in vogue at Cherry Hill—the Philadelphia system, which was characterized by continual isolation and work. Opposed to this was the Auburn system under which silence and isolation were imposed only during the night and work during the day was carried on by the prisoners in coöperation. The critics of the Philadelphia system condemned it as barbarous, and likely to lead to madness or death. Among prominent European defenders of the Philadelphia system were Tocqueville and the king of Sweden, Oscar I. Knowing how greatly opinion was divided on the penitentiary system, Ampère approached Cherry Hill with keen in-

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37 Ibid., II, 613 f.
38 Defends the system in his treatise on Des Peines et des Prisons.
terest, "curious to know what will be my impression of a matter so much debated."

The cells he found to be clean, well kept, well-heated, rather large, and with provision for carrying on some trade. Each prisoner had a small garden. The traveler compared the cells to those of the Chartreux monks, who also had a garden and a workshop and who like the prisoners at Cherry Hill were, he considered, condemned. Carrying the comparison further, he decided that even though the Chartreux monks were voluntary prisoners the Philadelphia inmates had the advantage. For, the latter had from ten to fifteen minutes of conversation each day either with the guards, the director, with charitable persons who came to visit them, or with the curious passer-by. Then, too, the inhabitants of the Philadelphia penitentiary had permission to sing, to whistle while working, and to smoke, in none of which activities the Chartreux monks could indulge.

Corporal punishment was never inflicted; punishment consisted of diminution of food rations; imprisonment in the dark; or induction to the shower bath. The prisoners were taken to baths once every two weeks. On these occasions, as when they entered the establishment or changed cells, a veil was put over their heads in such a manner that no one was seen by any one else. They left the prison without knowing the face of any of their fellow-prisoners and without being known by them.

The prison terms varied considerably in length. The minimum was a year; the maximum twelve years. The warden, with whom Ampère discussed this point, thought the punishment should not exceed four years. When the French observer later found a prisoner who had served five years and had two more to serve for having stolen a horse he was surprised in view of what the warden had said to him. But surprise mounted to astonishment when he learned that another was condemned to only four years for homicide. It was explained to him that this inequality was the result of the maximum sentence having been given to the horse thief and the minimum to the murderer. But the explanation was not satisfying for he continued to find it impossible to understand why one

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\(^{29}\) It is with reservation that one accepts the word of a Frenchman that any place is well-heated.
would receive twice as heavy a sentence for stealing a horse as for killing a man.

Solitary confinement, which characterized the system in Philadelphia, usually had a salutary effect, the warden said. But some of the prisoners, liking solitude, were not punished by it. So the worst criminals did not always suffer most. For example two of the "most detestable characters" found this type of life quite to their liking. Interestingly enough the warden records not only that the women in general resigned themselves to the regime of solitude, but also that silence appeared to be less of a trial to them than to the prisoners of the masculine sex. Could it be that the traditional dictum relative to the volubility of the ladies is wrong?

The curious French traveler visited the gas-works and the water works; also an industrial establishment where he was impressed by the use made of by-products and by the scientific interest of the owner, a Mr. Wetherel, who "after having shown me with great eagerness and vivacity [his industrial plant], conducted me to his laboratory, saying to me: 'It is here that I am happy....'" Ampère concludes that "evidently the pleasure of research was more important to him than the acquisition of wealth." Apparently the ivory tower and pure research were as attractive ninety years ago as they are today.

A visit to the Mint presented to the visitor an extraordinary spectacle. Thanks to the gold from California which was brought to Philadelphia to be made into five dollar gold pieces, he found gold running like water. He found these gold pieces being treated like the most common commodity. Troubled about the honesty of the workers at the Mint, Ampère asked how one could be sure of their integrity in the presence of so much money. The answer was that it did not matter if small pieces of gold were taken; for any one who would take small amounts would take large ones and then he would inevitably be discovered. In fact he was told it was in general easier "to abstain than to contain."

The Museum of Natural History, which Ampère pronounced remarkable particularly because of a beautiful collection of birds, strengthened his opinion that there was a great deal of scientific and literary culture in Philadelphia. Here he met Audubon for whom he expressed appreciation.

But the itinerant Latin had not yet exhausted the possibilities of his sightseeing. For the mayor proposed to take him to the "mauvais quartiers" of the city and also to police headquarters. He considered it an opportunity for a traveler to visit the former, particularly when so well conducted. His description of this section of the city does not present an attractive picture.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 598 f.} Having noticed that the police system was rather on the "feeble" side in America, especially in New York, he was curious to see what had been accomplished in this respect in Philadelphia. Accompanied by the mayor, whom he had heard filled his office in a very distinguished manner, he visited the night police headquarters and concluded from what he saw of the police organization that it functioned with precision and exactitude.

The gracious visitor left Philadelphia with regrets. But having an inherent dislike for cold weather, he found it necessary, as a result of a suddenly lowered temperature, to flee toward Washington. There is no country in the world where the changes of temperature are more sudden and the contrasts more extreme than in the United States, he says. New York has the temperature of Naples in the summer and that of Copenhagen in the winter, he adds. In all the northern part of the United States one passes, he states ruefully, almost without transition from \textit{une journée douce} à \textit{une journée glacée}, while in Rome the difference between the maximum of warmth and cold is only twenty-four degrees. The sudden changes of temperatures, he suggests, should toughen the fiber of the North Americans.

From Washington, the traveler's peregrinations led him to the south, thence to Cuba, and finally to Mexico, from which he embarked for Europe, having found in America materials to justify the theories expressed by Tocqueville in his \textit{American Democracy}.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 598 f.}