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## Man and Society In The Works of Georges Duhamel

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This thesis was conducted under the direction  
of Leont Bauer as major professor  
Signature of Professor

and approved by Sister Mary Augusta.  
Signature of Reader

and by Michael C. D'Argonne as Dean.

MAN AND SOCIETY

in the works of

GEORGES DUHAMEL

A Thesis

Submitted to

the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences  
Xavier University of Louisiana

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

by

Sister M. Reginald, Carter

May, 1958

RB  
378.24  
324m  
1958

Dedicated with loving gratitude  
to Our Lady of the Rosary and  
St. Jude.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. UNITY IN THE FAMILY .....	1
II. DISUNITY IN THE FAMILY .....	15
III. MAN AND ACQUAINTANCES .....	38
IV. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OF MAN IN THE COMMUNITY.....	73
CONCLUSION .....	100
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	103

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express her gratitude to her community for the privilege given to her to do graduate work at Xavier University in New Orleans; to Doctor Leon Baisier, Chairman of Foreign Languages, and Sister Mary Augusta, S.B.S., for their helpful criticisms and suggestions in aiding to develop this thesis; and to all her interested friends who encouraged her to continue in spite of handicaps. She is equally grateful to Sister Mary Redempta, Librarian of Xavier University, for her aid in obtaining books.

## INTRODUCTION

Man and the circumstances influencing his activities have always interested Georges Duhamel. This concern developed from a profound desire to aid, to improve, and to cure the ills of mankind.<sup>1</sup> Having become a physician, he was able to fulfill his wishes, particularly in his surgical experiences on the battle front where he treated thousands for all types of human miseries. From his contacts with and his observations of numerous painwacked bodies, he resolved to study man even more closely, to discover his deeper sentiments, in order to help him more efficaciously.<sup>2</sup> Through literature he began to express his ideas of man as he knew him, not as an isolated individual but as a part of society. Following the trend of the moderns, Duhamel attempted to reveal the inner emotions of man amidst the problems, trials, defeats, and triumphs of social life.

The aim of this study is to show the extent of Duhamel's understanding of the society of his time considering man as the active participant in its formation and

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Georges Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abime (Paris: Mercure de France, 1949), p. 44.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Henri Clouard, Histoire de la Littérature Française (Paris: Ed. Albin Michel, 1949), p. 254.

development. The investigation consists of two parts; the first deals with the family, and the second, with the community. In discussing these two orders of society, the Chronique des Pasquier and the Salavin novels are used together with five volumes of the author's autobiography.

The highest esteem for noble families was developed in Duhamel because of disturbances in his own family-life during his youth. He never forgot the problems created in his home by his restless father and the toils and cares of his suffering, loving mother. Later, however, he compensated for the void in his early life by carefully preserving happiness and harmony with his wife and sons.<sup>1</sup> In the Pasquier cycle, souvenirs of Duhamel's life as well as those of any family of the early twentieth century are mirrored. Mme Pasquier is Duhamel's representative of ideal womanhood which he saw in his own mother and tried to discover in every mother. The father and children of this household symbolize the agitation of the era prompted by business, colonization, and anti-clerical movements which governed the thought and activities of men. The effects of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Pierre Brodin, Les Ecrivains Français de l'Entre-Deux-Guerres (Montreal: Valiquette, 1945), p. 216.



these forces on family life will be seen in the chapters Unity in the Family and Disunity in the Family, as the members try to keep abreast of the times in progress and business.

Besides his intimate knowledge of the family, Duhamel had a wealth of experiences among men of various communities as he traveled throughout France and her colonies.<sup>1</sup> His association with human beings, particularly with suffering in his profession as a doctor, afforded him the opportunity to see men's need of each other in the struggle for survival and even for success. Relationships among men are considered in Chapter III with emphasis on friendship which Duhamel praises so highly. Especially significant is his development of mutual esteem between Laurent Pasquier, the Frenchman, and Justin Weill, the Jew. Their loyal and constant friendship seems to be a reflection of the author's attitude toward the Dreyfus Affair. At the time of Dreyfus's release from prison, Duhamel was fifteen years old, quite old enough to be favorably or unfavorably impressed. Other relationships discussed range from indifference, as noted in some of the Pasquier children, to repulsion, as typified by Louis Salavin.

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abime..., p. 208.

The evolution of the Pasquiers and Salavin is completed in the last chapter, Social Activities of Man in the Community, in which the search for security induces numerous activities. In some instances temporary peace is reached by the characters, but in the majority of cases they find only fleeting moments of happiness.

## CHAPTER I

### UNITY IN THE FAMILY

According to Georges Duhamel, human groups primarily seek protection and security.<sup>1</sup> To assure this state of security, man is associated with a smaller group - the family, or "clan", as Duhamel calls it. The family has been defined as a group of kindred persons established according to nature for daily mutual help, using together the daily needs of life, living a common life in the home, eating together at the same table and presided over by a head.<sup>2</sup> Besides being considered as a group of related members acting in common, Duhamel says that the family should have noble aspirations, stemming from the father or head of the household. He should be an exemplar, since it is to him that the kindred souls look for direction and correction. Duhamel further states that circumstances may alter the position of the father as authoritative head. In such cases, necessity demands that another assume responsibilities, if the family

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Le Temps de la Recherche (Paris: Mercure de France, 1947), p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Sister Mary Consilia O'Brien, O.P., Ph.D., Christian Social Principles (New York: P. J. Kennedy & Sons, 1941), p. 226.

is to be kept on a high and noble plan:

J'ai toujours eu, de la famille, une idée haute et rigoureuse. Les défaillances de mon père me fortifiaient dans cette passion. Il me semblait parfois que je devais, à sa place, moi, l'aîné des garçons, veiller et réfléchir. Plus tard, ayant créé moi-même, un foyer, j'ai toujours eu un sentiment très serre des devoirs que doit assumer le capitaine de navire.<sup>1</sup>

To further ennoble the family, a strong bond of unity is required, for the moral and spiritual success of the household. Unity is the state of being one; it is harmony with the absence of diversity. Duhamel says that harmony is the desire of every human heart, "un tel desir n'a jamais cesse de poindre les hommes de coeur et d'imagination."<sup>2</sup> Unity is also a formula for happy living:

Les sociétés humaines cherchent, à travers des convulsions dramatiques, une formule de vie sociale qui leur donne l'équilibre et peut-être plus de justice et sans doute plus de bonheur.<sup>3</sup>

Duhamel attempts to effect unity in the family in various ways. In each case, where there is an achievement of unity, there is a feeling of a balanced existence, with

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abîme (Paris: Mercure de France, 1949), p. 227.

<sup>2</sup>Georges Duhamel, Le Temps de la Recherche ..., p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

happiness and joy. He considers the contributions of the mother and children to the common cause. Potent factors, such as reunions, family meals, conversations, and music are considered in their relation to harmony. Examples for the cause of unity are proposed in the Pasquier family, in associates of the Pasquier members, such as the Baudoin family, and in the mother of Louis Salavin.

Duhamel's own experiences of household discordance made him realize that harmony can exist, if each member is aware of his part in the common life:

Ainsi, la vie d'une maison, d'une famille, ne présentait pas de problèmes insolubles si chacun faisait son devoir.<sup>1</sup>

It was to the woman in the house that Duhamel assigned the task of bringing about moral and spiritual unity:

A côté de chacun de ceux que j'ai rencontrés dans ma vie, j'ai toujours tâché de bien voir la femme et de comprendre son rôle...J'ai vu des malheureux remonter la pente d'une destinée difficile parce qu'une femme, auprès d'eux, leur inspirait le courage, savait alléger leur fardeau, éponger la sueur de leur front, écarter les pierres, signaler les failles ...<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Temps de la Recherche...., p. 154.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 173-174.

Moreover, the author realized that noble and virtuous women lead lives of abnegation and devotion which contribute greatly to the well being of family unity.

Lucie-Eléanore Pasquier exemplified the spirit of self denial and sacrifice. Her feelings were derived from her maternal love, a love which naturally forgets self as Laurent Pasquier declares:

La mère de ma petite enfance est, tout entière, assentiment, extase, don et pardon. Parfait don de soi et total pardon de toute offense.<sup>1</sup>

Besides these qualities, Duhamel noticed other commendable traits in women. He observed them in the mother of one of his friends, Mme Couton:

Mme Couton était une maîtresse de maison pleine de grâce et d'autorité. Elle régnait avec tendresse.<sup>2</sup>

In noticing the authority and tenderness of Mme Couton, a likeness is found in Mme Pasquier:

Quand le maître parle de la science, elle dit, comme autrefois. "Mes enfants, écoutez votre père!" Que l'un de nous tousse, ou même simplement soupire,

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages (Paris: Mercure de France, 1934), pp. 134-135.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Temps de la Recherche..., p. 20.

et la voici, offrant ses mains magiciennes, son regard plus suave qu'un baume, sa voix chargée de bénédictions.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the profound maternal tenderness in Mme Pasquier, there was a persevering sense of duty. Firstly, this duty rested on her love of responsibilities, secondly, on the thought that nothing was worthier than devotion to her children and husband. She was conscious of the state of confusion and disorder outside of her loved ones:

Ma mère, toute à son fardeau, toute à la fièvre sacrée de ses devoirs, n'imaginait le monde, hormis les enfants, et l'époux, que peuple de fantômes inquiétants, dont il était quand même préférable de se concilier les bonnes grâces.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, Jacqueline, the wife of Laurent Pasquier, was endowed with a gentle and loving character. Not only was she loyal and devoted to her husband and three children, but she also generously shared the burdens of Mme Pasquier, in the latter's declining years, as Laurent remarks:

Ce n'est pas trois enfants que nous avons, Line et moi, mais quatre enfants. Matin et soir, Line la peigne, la lave et la poudre, lui fait toutes

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 189.

<sup>2</sup>Georges Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre (Paris: Mercure de France, 1933), pp. 78-79.

sortes de petits soins, et de petits pansements avec une adresse allègre, avec beaucoup d'imagination dans la gentillesse et la simplicité.<sup>1</sup>

The same motherly devotion is noted in the life of Louis Salavin. His mother played an important role in trying to make his living a consistent whole. It was through gentleness that she gave Salavin a sense of dignity:

Maman ne disait rien; elle avait posé ses mains sur ma tête. Elle devait être très émue; je sentais pourtant qu'avec la pointe d'un ongle elle grattait une petite tache au col de mon veston: elle est si soigneuse pour moi, si soucieuse de moi et si fière de moi, la pauvre femme, comme s'il était vraiment possible que quelqu'un soit fier de moi.<sup>2</sup>

When made to realize the value of the common good of a family, children will be led to direct efforts to attain this desirable good. This is noteworthy as Laurent Pasquier explains. He is the veritable spokesman for the family and it is believed that he is Duhamel's double.<sup>3</sup> He understood that the spirit of unity called for an interchange of ideas and an overlooking of defects. Laurent also knew that difficulties within the family should not be exaggerated, if a

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier (Paris: Mercure de France, 1945), p. 110.

<sup>2</sup>Georges Duhamel, Confession de Minuit (Paris: Mercure de France, 1925), pp. 53-54.

<sup>3</sup>Andre Rousseaux, Littérature du Vingtième Siècle (Paris: Albin Michel, 1939), p. 39.



true family spirit existed:

Je ne suis pas sentimental, fichtre non, mais, quand on doit vivre ensemble, il faut de la diplomatie, de la correction, du savoir-faire. Il faut glisser sur mille petites choses et ne pas voir des montagnes où il ny a que des cailloux.<sup>1</sup>

An intimate knowledge of individual peculiarities among the Pasquier children and a marked interest in their doings and whereabouts helped much "dans l'harmonie du concert Pasquier".<sup>2</sup>

Nous vivions si près les uns des autres qu'il nous était impossible de risquer un geste inhabituel sans qu'il fût remarqué.<sup>3</sup>

Filial love, which prompts obedience, is a natural motive for submission to parental authority. On the other hand, such a duty may be performed out of fear. The Pasquier children knew that their father was temperamental, therefore, they obeyed him without hesitation in order to preserve peace:

Nous n'osions pas protester, demander un sursis...

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 226.

<sup>2</sup>Georges Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise (Paris: Mercure de France, 1934), p. 75.

<sup>3</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 94.

Mon père, d'un geste large, un peu théâtral, nous poussait vers le sommeil, comme un troupeau vers la bergerie.<sup>1</sup>

There were special elements which reacted to strengthen unity, particularly in the Pasquier and the Baudion households. Among these, family meals held a prominent place. Meal time offered opportunities for wholesome discussions of affairs which were significant or of concern for the members of the family. In the Pasquier family, it was during the meals that little business matters and news were happily or otherwise brought to fore:

La nuit renouait toute la famille. En général, père rentrait pour dîner, mais ce n'était pas de règle. Une fois la semaine, au cours du repas, mère donnait lecture d'une lettre dans laquelle Joseph racontait la caserne et demandait un peu d'argent. Père tapait du bout des doigts, sur la table et poussait un soupir d'une espèce particulière, un soupir qu'on entendait seulement quand il était question d'argent.<sup>2</sup>

After the Pasquier children had grown and gone their separate ways, the family reunion was an effective means of trying to preserve unity:

Joseph ne m'avait point trompé: la famille était

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 67.

au complet quand je suis arrivé. Nos parents nous réunissent quatre fois par an de cette manière.<sup>1</sup>

Family gatherings are more impressive when they occur around special feasts or holidays. Memories of such events are ordinarily coupled with pleasant experiences. Love is renewed and joyous feelings are strengthened. Indifferences and antipathies are shelved or forgotten. Laurent gives the procedures of one of the family gatherings:

Tu sais le soir de la Saint-Sylvestre, nous dînons toujours en famille. C'est une tradition... On soupe. On entend le coup de minuit pour saluer l'année nouvelle, on s'embrasse et chacun va se coucher. Je pense que si nous manquions cette petite cérémonie, maman serait très malheureuse: elle vit de fidélité. Et il y a beaucoup de chance pour que tout cela dure encore, malgré ce que j'appelle "notre explosion".<sup>2</sup>

Like the Pasquier family, meals and family gatherings had special significance for unity in the Baudoin household, where Suzanne found refuge after a misunderstanding in the theater. There was a definite warmth which pervaded the group and left a total picture of joy and happiness:

Le visiteur lettré pensait toujours à cette vieille et charmante image, quand il pénétrait pour

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Les Maîtres (Paris: Mercure de France, 1937), p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 234.

première fois dans la maison de Jérôme Baudoin, sur tout aux heures du repas, car la famille alors se trouvait réunie.<sup>1</sup>

Besides representing the meals held in common and the family gatherings, Duhamel shows Mme Pasquier as careful about expressions in conversation. These expressions tended to exemplify unity and to reduce the idea of ownership to a common term. Thus the spirit of independence was lessened while that of interdependence was inculcated:

Pourtant, je disais "le nôtre", parce que, depuis l'enfance, mère ne nous apprenait guère les pronoms et les adjectifs que dans cette forme plurielle. Maman fut réellement stupéfaite quand elle découvrit que Joseph disait instinctivement "mon nom, mon ami, ma maison, mon dîner".<sup>2</sup>

The idea of self-centered speech in the Baudoin home was analogous to the reactions and reflections of Mme Pasquier. Again, the choice of words in conversation was not for the purpose of showing a lack of self interest, but to instill the spirit of the common life, in which each member felt free to enjoy the privileges of the household:

L'adjectif possessif, dont tous les hommes font grand usage, ne jouissait pas, chez les Baudoin, d'un

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes (Paris: Mercure de France, 1949), p. 119.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 133.

faveur excessive... Cela n'était certes pas un signe de désintéressement et d'abnégation, au contraire, mais bien une manière de montrer que chacun se trouvait des droits naturels sur toutes choses de la tribu.<sup>1</sup>

Music is another feature which has powerful effects on individuals and groups. Georges Duhamel, in his love for music, considered it a balm and an instrument of peace:

Cette mémoire musicale m'a rendu de grands services. Elle a, de tout temps, enchanté ma solitude.<sup>2</sup>

He makes Laurent Pasquier the interpreter of the power of music in the life of man. Laurent considers that music has not only a soothing effect, but also the power to give man a sense of living:

Eh bien, si j'avais à choisir, si je pouvais, librement recommencer une vie, ouvrir une carrière et désigner mes vertus, je prierais que me fût accordée celle de la musique dont l'oeuvre aide les hommes non pas à ne point mourir, mais à supporter la vie.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, Laurent felt that music helped one to understand man in his fullness. "C'est la musique souveraine qui nous a fait entrevoir les vraies dimensions de

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 148.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abîme..., p. 71.

<sup>3</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 190.

l'homme."<sup>1</sup> He believed that music uplifted the entire Pasquier family from the sorrows and miseries of daily associations. It was through the eldest daughter that such wonders were performed:

Même la musique de Cécile est sage, est pacifiée.  
Si j'ose, après tant d'années raconter les traverses de notre vie sans éclats: c'est que la musique est là, partout présente jaillissante. Ce noble et riche accompagnement rehaussait toutes nos misères.<sup>2</sup>

For the Baudoin family, music had more than power to soothe and charm. It gave meaning to life itself. It left an indelible mark on the family through which the members of the group were able to share their feelings more intimately. Music was the connecting link in the chain of Baudoin hearts, which bound them to fidelity and trust:

La musique semblait le lien paradoxal et le suprême souci, le souci aérien de cette famille surprenante. Petit à petit, les enfants s'acheminaient vers des carrières choisies... mais la musique demeurerait le truchement entre les âmes; le langage secret, la nourriture eucharistique.<sup>3</sup>

Since the Baudoin was a family of singers, music conveyed more than enchanting sounds; it was a kind of prayer from

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 190.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>3</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 122.

which eternal truths were gleaned. The songs provided food for thought and an unction for a closer union within the family:

Et toutes les voix se mêlaient, se séparaient, se rejoignaient encore pour dire des paroles très simples, des paroles qui célébraient des idées naïves: l'espérance, la confiance, la certitude obstinée du bonheur et dépit des tempêtes; le désir persévérant de la justice, dépit des méchants; l'amour et harmonie entre les âmes reconciliées.<sup>1</sup>

These several examples of motherly affection, meals in common, conversations, and music prove the interest which Georges Duhamel had in family peace and harmony. He realized that perfect unity could not be achieved but he loved it and felt that ideal unity was worth the striving. He had a high esteem for women, therefore, it was to the woman in the house that Duhamel attributed the power of binding the family as one through love. This love was shown in service and in responsibilities based on maternal duty. Duhamel believed that it was the mother who had the supply of just the right words or touch for the propitious moment. He knew how to present maternal love in a manner to evoke corresponding sentiments of filial love and respect, which aided in the development of solidarity among the members of the family. He seemed to show how an awareness of re-

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 122.

sponsibilities tended to produce greater peace in the home. Through the special functions of family meals, gatherings, and music, Duhamel tried to demonstrate their potency in helping to harmonize the group. It was through them that a fuller knowledge of the individual members was acquired and an awareness of shortcomings recognized. The family of the Pasquier was created on Duhamel's idea of fate, by which he interpreted life as being a series of sorrows and pain, from which escape was impossible.<sup>1</sup> Hence, only an apparent state of unity was developed in the family while the children were young and pliable. With the knowledge of existing defects, a state of disunity became practically inevitable, as will be seen in the next chapter.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. B. G. Carter, "The Classical Aspects of Georges Duhamel's Pessimism" The French Review XIX (March, 1946), pp. 284-285.



## CHAPTER II

### DISUNITY IN THE FAMILY

With the realization that only relative unity can exist in any family group, Duhamel seemed to sense the nature of the imperfections that disturbed the family concord. He concluded that these deficiencies might range from petty disturbances to conditions leading to grief, loneliness, frustrated hope and despair.<sup>1</sup> When such signs appear, there is evidence that the existing order of a household has been interrupted. Circumstances of a similar nature are revealed in the Pasquier family. One source of the disorder was an inheritance received by the mother. From thence proceeded arguments, irregulated ambitions to attain a higher place in society, selfishness and numerous other failings which were seeds of discord. These obstacles to unity are first seen in the father, then later in the children as they reach manhood. A state of disunity becomes inevitable resulting in the weariness and regret of the mother who hoped to keep the family together.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. B. G. Carter, "The Classical Aspects of Georges Duhamel's Pessimism", The French Review, XIX (March, 1946), p. 284.

The fact that man is ever on the alert to improve his condition in society was early recognized by Georges Duhamel. He saw that material progress of humanity was a constant process and that man sought especially the upper ranks in culture, which were always opened for new members:

Le nombre des élus n'est point sottement restreint; la classe privilégiée s'accroît de décade en décade.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, Duhamel saw in his own father how the efforts to ascend in society proved detrimental to the unity of the family. According to his father, the amassing of a fortune was necessary for social ascension, therefore, he was engaged in many enterprises which he felt might bring success:

Mon père, en raison sans doute de cette mauvaise santé qu'il ne voulut jamais avouer franchement et qu'il espéra toujours de mater, de surmonter, mon père avait du quitter la ville et s'installer à la campagne. Il envisagea tout aussitôt cela mon point comme une défaite, comme une retraite, mais comme une entreprise. "Il allait s'installer à Septeuil et y faire de l'élevage de volailles, c'est à dire passer le temps de sa cure en gagnant une fortune".<sup>2</sup>

With such earnestness about securing money, the father always had fresh projects and new jobs in mind. A lack of

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abîme..., pp. 121-122.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 95-96.

coordination and extravagance were the results of his pre-occupations. Moreover his wife perceived that his sense of responsibility in household matters was on the decline. His presence made her tasks more difficult, therefore, a reasonable peace was obtained without him:

Elle commençait de faire longs calculs pour résoudre maints problèmes et emmener ses brebis aux champs. Ce n'était pas fort simple. Il fallait d'abord laisser à Paris l'époux indocile et lunatique.<sup>1</sup>

A likeness to Duhamel's father was created in the Pasquier father, Raymond. For the latter too, one of the principal ambitions was money. The desire became more evident when news was received of an inheritance. In the beginning, he tried to show the necessity of money in the family's aspiration of rising in society, but with a pretense of disinterestedness:

-De l'argent? De l'argent?  
Qui, je veux de l'argent. Et pourquoi? Pour continuer à m'instruire, pour m'élever au dessus de moi-même, pour devenir un homme supérieur, montrer ce que j'ai dans le sang.<sup>2</sup>

However, little by little, the power of money asserted itself, as the certainty of the inheritance grew. The father's

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abime..., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 125.

efforts toward moderation in its use and indifference to its appeal became futile:

Il y avait dans les efforts de mon père, une part de désintéressement sincère: il désirait la science d'abord pour elle-même; l'orgueil et l'argent ne jouaient pas le premier rôle, en principe; mais l'argent, le cruel argent finissait toujours par venir à l'avant-scène.<sup>1</sup>

As long as finances were low, Raymond Pasquier remained dependent on his wife for help in making decisions, but with the acquisition of money everyone was made subservient to his will:

Il était bien résolu, depuis qu'il avait l'argent, à n'en faire qu'à sa tête. Lui qui, si volontiers, criait: "Lucie! Lucie!" dans les instants de détresse, il redevenait avec la prospérité, le maître, le dictateur.<sup>2</sup>

It was the mother who was conscious of the havoc that money was effecting. With hopeless pleas, she tried to make her husband forget the inheritance:

- Si nous n'avions pas reçu cet argent de tante Coralie, tu t'en serais forcément passé, Ram...

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 88.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 203.

- Alors laissons cet argent en repos. J'en aurai besoins pour les enfants.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, his attachment to money became more pronounced because he began all kinds of investments and considered no advice profitable. Heedless to the entreaties of his wife, he expressed open resentment to the least reproach:

- Cette scène est ridicule, elle est même inconvenante. Ne t' imagine pas que je vais céder à la peur et liquider mes actions. Je n'en vais, de ce pas, travailler ailleurs, dans un endroit quelconque où, du moins, j'aurai la paix.<sup>2</sup>

With such reactions, Mme Pasquier regretted even the thought of the inheritance. It was like a pall which threatened to hang eternally over the household:

Elle commença de maigrir, de pâlir, de se tourmenter... Je l'entendais murmurer; "De l'argent qui n'est pas à nous! Oh! je ne peux pas vivre comme ça."<sup>3</sup>

The children were aware of the disturbances in the family and of greater differences that had developed in their parents' relationships. Gradually, these events were

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 208.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 206.

casting shadows on the relative peace of their childhood days, as Laurent sadly admits:

L'ordre du monde était boule versé; maman venait de refuser quelque chose à notre père...

Et je fus alors bien sûr qu'un monstre inconnu s'avançait à travers notre vie et qu'il allait tout écraser, tout broyer, tout déchirer.<sup>1</sup>

Each of the children also saw their father's incessant borrowings on their successive titles of the inheritance and realized that he was becoming a slave to money. Money took the form of a demon which would suddenly appear to torment them:

Le démon de l'argent surgissait à l'improviste et nous plantait ses crocs dans la chair vive. Pendant bien de jours, cette douleur secrète était notre principale pensée.<sup>2</sup>

However, even the children themselves became interested in money. In particular, Joseph, the eldest of the children, imbibed this love and interest in wealth during his early manhood. It was then that money began to excite physical reactions to him:

...Pour les titres mêmes, ils représenteraient à

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 85-86.

peu près cinquante mille francs... Joseph sursauta. Ses yeux s'élargissaient, une goutte de salive lui coula de la bouche.<sup>1</sup>

Later, he believed that with the acquisition of money everything could be accomplished, any desire fulfilled, and any situation improved:

Moi, fit-il, je suis logique et, surtout, je suis honnête. Je dis les choses comme elles sont. Il faut toujours penser à l'argent et tout le monde pense à l'argent, car tout repose sur l'argent.<sup>2</sup>

On the contrary, his brother Laurent could never condone Joseph's all-absorbing love of wealth. To give one's life to money was for him absurd, even base:

- Tu as raison bassement. Tu parles de l'argent d'une façon que je dis basse. Tu donnes ta vie à l'argent... Mais tu t'immoles, tu t'avilis pour gagner mille francs par mois, peut-être moins, je ne sais pas. Et voilà ce que je trouve absurde.<sup>3</sup>

For this reason, Laurent did not allow money to be the prime factor in his life nor the dictum of his conscience. He tried to keep it in its place. Yet, he realized its tremendous influence on society and on his family in

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 180.

<sup>3</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 144.

particular. Hence, he experienced a certain pride in admitting that he had a different attitude towards money:

Je finis par croire que je suis le seul au monde à ne pas être hypocrite sur le chapitre de l'argent.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, a slight rupture arose between Joseph and Laurent because of the latter's display of unconcern for wealth. When he proved this by throwing a sum of money into the Marne river, Joseph was horrified and dismayed at his brother's explanation of the act:

Pour que le sacrifice ait tout son prix, toute sa valeur, il fallait faire... ce que j'ai fait. Pour les pauvres gens eux-mêmes, pour ceux qui ont besoin d'argent qui meurent à cause de l'argent il fallait que le billet fut complètement détruit, enfin un geste absolu.<sup>2</sup>

Further consideration of the place of money in the Pasquier family reveals the trials and shortcomings which ensued in connection with and as a result of the desire for gain. These are seen in the father as he plans for social ascension, and in his many-sided interests. Firstly, he made a firm resolution to succeed in studies:

"J'engagerai jusqu'à mon lit, mais je passerai

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 33.



mes examens. Pour les premiers, Lucie, ce n'est plus qu'une affaire de jours. Je ne veux pas finir ma vie dans de vagues besognes. Je veux arriver!"<sup>1</sup>

According to his plans, his future was assured. There were no thoughts of any possible failure, little or no disappointments. Each enterprise would bring its own particular success and would be instrumental in the furtherance of new projects:

Dans quatre ans, mes examens seront passés et j'aurai mon diplôme. Alors, la route libre! Avec mes articles et, bientôt, des remplacements, des occasions, des imprévus, mille petites, choses à côté... La tranquillité. Le travail et l'aisance.<sup>2</sup>

After obtaining his diploma, M Pasquier, through a *pro-*cess of trial and error, undertook his many ventures. Nothing was too much or too difficult to attempt, as Laurent explains:

- Un homme, repris-je avec un élan soudain excessif, comme si j'allais entonner l'hymne de la famille, un homme qui a fait tous les métiers, tout tenté, tout essayé.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 103-104.

<sup>3</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 30.

His instability and his imprudent investments paved the way for his loss of income and his subsequent insecurity. Not having security for himself, the family had no assurance of it. His perseverance in his capricious habits provoked disdain from the courageous mother and censure by the children:

Tu sais que mon père a plus de soixante-deux ans. Tu le connais, c'est la vie même. Non pas la vie sage et patiente, mais la vie folle, véhémence, et capricieuse. Il n'a presque jamais trois mille francs devant lui.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the father had interests in other women. He expended his earnings on his mistresses who naturally remained in embarrassing situations whenever he didn't provide for them financially. Two of his mistresses were disturbed because he went on a long desired trip to Africa and corresponded with them rarely or not at all. Their concern for him and pity for themselves developed from their financial needs:

Mais Paula Lescure existe encore. Elle est toujours la maîtresse de papa... Elle est venue nous voir à la maison... Sais-tu qu'elle a beaucoup pleuré? Papa

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., pp.119-120

lui a tout juste envoyé une carte postale et je crois qu'elle n'a pas d'argent...

- Eh bien, j'ai vu Marie Peuch... Marie est venue me voir et elle a pleuré. Marie Peuch aussi, à l'heure actuelle, est sans nouvelles et sans argent.<sup>1</sup>

The knowledge of such conditions always added fresh torture to the faithful wife. At times, she wondered if her maternal efforts were not useless since she had no practical support from the father. Instead of a help, he proved an additional responsibility, as was realized by Laurent:

Père est parvenu, enfin à faire une chose difficile et qui semblait impossible; il a si bien torturé cette pauvre vieille femme que la fibre maternelle est usée et détendue.<sup>2</sup>

Especially noteworthy is Laurent's description of the effects of his father's infidelity in the Pasquier house:

Depuis que je sais ce que je sais, la maison est comme gâtée, ou plutôt, j'y songe comme à une pomme véreuse.<sup>3</sup>

All of the father's failings left indelible marks on Laurent's sensitive soul, and exerted a powerful influence

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres (Paris: Mercure de France, 1939), pp. 176-177-178.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>3</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 106.

in his later life. He visualized the defects with bitterness, and, as a result, they blinded him to the better aspects of his father's character:

Ce n'est pas assez, je répondrai de toutes les fautes et toutes les erreurs de mon père. Il me faudra, toute ma vie, songer à ses dettes, à ses maîtresses, à ses amis - il en a très peu - à ses ennemis - il les sème et les décourage - à ses goûts, à ses passions, à ses aventures, et sans doute à ses maladies qui survivront peut-être en moi quand il sera parmi les ombres.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the father's preoccupations, the principal aim of the family, to rise in society, remained intact, but like Laurent, the children felt the effects of the father's restless nature as they went on their way in society. They experienced a general sense of freedom as they approached manhood and tried to attain a richer and fuller satisfaction heretofore unknown:

Toute la famille Pasquier éclatait comme une pièce de pyrotechnie qui lance des fusées brillantes vers tous les points de l'horizon.<sup>2</sup>

Instead of satisfaction, they experienced only feelings of sorrow and regret as they remembered their family life filled with unhappiness and discord. Laurent expresses the attitude

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., p. 246.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 290.

of the group:

Nous ne serons jamais heureux comme au temps de notre enfance. Nous savons trop de choses, nous sommes empoisonnés.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, each member cultivated his own individual traits which were sometimes directly opposed to family harmony. The eldest among the children, Joseph, was most like his father in the pursuit of ambitions. From his youth, he planned a wide range of endeavors in order to obtain success. He believed that fame had to be achieved, especially since he himself willed it. His ambitions were such that no one thing would satisfy his yearnings. He wanted success in everything he planned:

Joseph, depuis l'enfance apportait dans le désir de la propriété temporelle, cette ferveur de langage et de pensée que les hommes réservent d'ordinaire pour l'amour ou la religion. Il disait: "J'aurai une cave, j'aurai un verger, j'aurai une ferme avec des paysans et des bêtes. J'aurai des écuries, j'aurai des forêts avec des arbres de quatre cents ans... J'aime tout et je veux tout..."<sup>2</sup>

Added to this inordinate desire for material goods, Joseph

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 169.

<sup>2</sup>Georges Duhamel, La Nuit de la Saint-Jean (Paris: Mercure de France, 1935), pp. 133-134.

was dominated by an excessive pride. He seemed to live only to be praised and admired. In his social position, he craved the attention of great and honorable personages and had little or no place in his life for the commonplace people whom he scorned. Even his mother had fallen into that category for him:

Avec la vie que je mène, ce serait complètement impossible. Les affaires, les réceptions! Le genre de monde que je reçois! Cette pauvre maman n'est presque plus présentable, elle serait perdue au milieu de tout cela.<sup>1</sup>

Again pride was exhibited when he visited his brother Laurent at Bièvres. A keen sense of superiority marked Joseph's demeanor and he was convinced that no one could attain his position, for he ruled supreme:

... Un jour, plus tard, quand je viendrai par ici, les portes s'ouvriront toutes seules et les gens, du plus petit au plus huppé, me salueront à cul ouvert.<sup>2</sup>

According to Joseph, the entire Pasquier family owed him a debt of gratitude because it was he who caused their entrance into society. Even in spite of such an assertion,

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>Georges Duhamel, Le Desert de Bièvres (Paris: Mercure de France, 1937), pp. 257-258.

he disdained the success attained by the clan. He loved total success and believed that it could be achieved. Failure never occupied his thoughts and he had made no provisions for it, as he engaged in his passionate struggle for glory and riches:

Il n'avait jamais échoué complètement dans une entreprise... L'idée d'accepter un échec, même de l'accepter franchement, lui était intolérable.<sup>1</sup>

However, with the knowledge that failure was possible, Joseph became more aware of weaknesses and miseries as he encountered losses in business and finance. For the sufferings which occurred, he had no remedies. When misfortune did overtake him, he remained alone, because he had voluntarily isolated himself from those who were capable of loving him:

Il souffre, comme tout le monde. Quand il perd cent francs, lui qui est millionnaire, il se croit soudain le plus dépourvu des hommes.<sup>2</sup>

Quite significant was the plight of Ferdinand, the second oldest son. He, too, was imbued with the desire for success and pursued it, but not being able to face the

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., p. 159.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., p. 75.

humiliations of his first failure to obtain his diploma, he became reticent. However, he did become a lawyer and resolved not to endeavor too much, less perhaps he would find other disappointments. He was contented to remain a mediocre character. Later, he found a companion in life, Claire, who became his measure of full satisfaction. Compensation for the ills of life was found in their intimate union of husband and wife. Nothing outside of their conjugal life held any interest for them. Even Mme Pasquier was barred from their midst. The sympathy with which Duhamel had endowed the mother had no counterpart in the son. Despite the fact that it was the question of a haven for the aging mother, Ferdinand remained obstinate:

Ferdinand et Claire étaient farouchement résolus, depuis toujours, à ne laisser personne - même pas la pauvre maman troubler l'intimité de leur extravagant duo. Ils ne voulaient à aucun prix accepter une responsabilité de cette sorte.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, selfishness and jealousy marked their lives. Each had to include the other in every movement or endeavor. A state of restlessness and misery developed and prevailed throughout their lives. Their intimacy ceased to be a

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., p. 109.



blessing:

Ferdinand est follement jaloux... En sorte que ces deux êtres sont condamnés à vivre et à veiller dans l'horreur d'une intimité si close et si farouche qu'elle ne laisse à peu près rien transpirer d'elle-même au dehors.<sup>1</sup>

A more careful pursuit of ambitions seemed to animate Laurent Pasquier, the youngest son of the family. He dedicated his life to the search of truth. Truth was the standard by which his life was directed. Because he sensed a lack of it in his family, he decided to leave home:

Ils disent tous: "fermer les yeux" ou quelque chose d'approchant, et ça signifie: mentir. Nous vivons sur le mensonge. Voilà, nous allons désormais vivre, le sourire aux lèvres, sur un perpétuel mensonge...  
"Est-ce donc ça, une famille? Des duperies, des trahisons, des querelles, des chantages et des mensonges!"<sup>2</sup>

Yet, Laurent encountered even more deception among the members of the society of friends organized at Bièvres. Through such an experience, he concluded that not even close friends could live in harmony, although endowed with like aspirations. The deficiencies were similar to those which

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., pp. 232-233.

characterized the Pasquier family:

Que veux-tu? J'ai fui ma famille parce que j'avais l'horreur de toutes les petites bassesses, de toutes les méchancetés, de toutes les petites jalousies. Et ce que je retrouve ici, ma foi, c'est la même chose. Il faut croire que les hommes ne savent pas vivre autrement.<sup>1</sup>

A life of peace and joy was always the wish uppermost in Laurent's mind, a life of union wherein each member of the family would strive to recognize each other's rights and would not in any way hinder their efforts towards success. He gives a summary of his longings and the reasons for the lack of the unifying qualities in the Pasquier family:

Mais je ne veux que la paix, je ne veux, grand Dieu! Que la joie, je ne veux que l'harmonie, et c'est moi qu'on accuse de jeter de trouble partout. C'est moi, comme toute, que l'on fait chanter, car c'est un énorme chantage, car, cette vie en commun, c'est un perpétuel chantage. Ils n'ont, les uns et les autres, qu'une pensée qu'un désir! réduire à l'impuissance tous ceux qui pourraient les empêcher de faire ce qu'ils veulent faire.<sup>2</sup>

Laurent's constant efforts to reduce the problems of life to a minimum left him always perturbed. Being ever haunted by the unsolved problems, he remained the suffering idealist.

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, *Le Desert de Bièvres...*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, *Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages...*, p. 232.

Of all the Pasquier children, Cécile, the eldest daughter, was the only one who included eternal values in her ambitions. As a musician, she attained fame and glory, but her career was somewhat neglected as she attempted marriage life with Richard Fauvet. Their unhappy conjugal relationship prompted her to regulate her life with religion as a support. The death of her infant son strengthened her decision. Cécile reviewed her life and realized that she and her family had neglected all religious formalities outside of Baptism and First Communion. Her renewal of faith, although not firmly rooted, tended to isolate her from the Pasquier, but it was a bulwark for future difficulties and an enlightenment for a more profitable use of her talents. Seeking refuge once again in her musical career, with God as a real sanctuary, Cécile obtained some peace, even temporarily driving away frustration and despair:

"Seigneur, je ne suis pas malheureuse... Il me semble seulement que je fais mauvais usage de ce que vous m'avez donné..."

"Seigneur, je serai modeste dans ma vie et dans l'art où vous m'avez comblé..."

"Seigneur, nul ne m'a tirée, nul ne m'a poussée..."<sup>1</sup>

It was in her expressions of regret for the past and hope

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Cécile Parmi Nous (Paris: Mercure de France, 1938), p. 133.

for the future that her petitions for peace and happiness were recognized. She desired to love God and to spend her life making reparation for her negligence:

Je ne demande à mon Dieu que de me permettre de l'aimer. Je lui demande aussi la grâce de souffrir sans honte et sans désespoir et plus tard, demain peut-être, une autre grâce: celle de mourir sans regret.<sup>1</sup>

The youngest member of the family was unlike Cécile. Suzanne Pasquier was more like Joseph. She had a single interest in life - to succeed on the stage. If success did not come to her, she was ready to sink into nothingness:

- Suzanne hochâ les épaules avec mélancolie.  
- Hélas! dit-elle, Suzanne sans le théâtre, ce n'est peut-être plus Suzanne.<sup>2</sup>

The theater was her life. It was to it that she turned for security from the deceptions and disappointments of daily living. Anything not connected with the theater was looked upon with disdain. For Suzanne, even happiness was impossible off stage:

- Vous me demandez si j'aime le théâtre. Quelle question! J'aime mieux être Andromaque sur le théâtre qu'une femme heureuse et une mère comblée

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Cécile Parmi Nous (Paris: Mercure de France, 1938), p. 290.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 98.

dans la vie.<sup>1</sup>

However, Suzanne was awakened to reality after seeing the close living of the Baudoin family. She learned that permanent values for peace and happiness were found in real family union. Then she discovered that the theater was only a phase of life. Although her career was voluntarily chosen, she had gained nothing from it. The praises given to her were as temporary as her acting. The directors and managers lauded her when performances brought success, but when Suzanne did not reach their goals, she was set aside. Realizing such situations and reflecting on the conditions of her own family life, Suzanne felt that her life was useless and refrained from seeking the real meaning of living:

Elle ne pouvait pas se plaindre. Elle ne songeait pas à se plaindre. Elle avait librement choisi sa route et sa vie. Et voilà que cette vie n'était peut-être qu'un fantôme de la vie véritable.<sup>2</sup>

The last hopes for contributions to the happiness of the Pasquier family were centered in Suzanne, the youngest child, but with her failure and ultimate despair, the depth of human misery was revealed in Mme Pasquier.

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 138.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 294.

She had lived agonizingly through the varied tempos of her children's activities in society. She was the veritable martyr for the cause of unity. Her influence waned in the face of such divers reactions to the family's humble beginnings. "Il paraît que rien n'est simple dans le clan Pasquier."<sup>1</sup> As the children went their different ways in life, Mme Pasquier knew that no amount of tenderness could bring them together as one big family, although she wished it so ardently:

Mon Dieu! comme j'aurais voulu que vous restiez toujours des petits, mes tout petits. J'avais du mal; mais j'étais si heureuse. Je vous écoutais la nuit respirer contre moi, et rien ne m'était trop dur. Maintenant, voilà que vous êtes là, tous, avec vos histoires à vous que je ne comprends même plus et dont vous ne me dites rien.<sup>2</sup>

Her mother's heart was torn by the infidelities of her husband, but she suffered yet more upon learning of the like excesses in her children. She had worked diligently to form strong characters of them but her efforts were not as successful as she had hoped:

Elle était faite, et de longtemps, aux extravagances de son mari, mais tout ce que nous tentions, nous

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 174.

autres, les enfants, la jetait dans angoisse et même dans l'épouvante... Elle nous eut empêchés de vivre pour mieux nous marquer son amour... Elle avait sacrifié sa vie pour nous donner des âmes fortes et, maintenant vieillissante, facilement effrayée, elle regrettait presque de ne pas nous voir timides, faibles, dociles à son appel.<sup>1</sup>

It was in this manner that Georges Duhamel completed the development and separation of the Pasquier family. From a semblance of harmony, effected primarily by the mother, a state of decided disunity developed. Maternal efforts, to conform the specialized interests of the Pasquier members to the common interests of the group, proved futile. Instead of solidarity in unity, Duhamel demonstrated how individualism was achieved. He also showed how an inheritance initiated discord in the family. The father's interest in money led to self indulgence and its excesses - irresponsibilities, infidelities, inordinate passions for gain and success, and unlimited freedom for pleasure. The children, following the example of their father, sought security and found only phantoms of peace and happiness. Disunity, then, was inevitable because unity prevails where diversity is absent. Each member had its share in opposing unity.

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Desert de Bièvres..., pp. 77-78.

## CHAPTER III

### MAN AND ACQUAINTANCES

Intimate family relations do not exclude other associations as Georges Duhamel experienced and observed. For that reason, attempts will be made to show the extent and circumstances of the various contacts among men in a community, as treated by Duhamel in the lives of the Pasquier family and Louis Salavin. This study will be developed in an ascending order beginning with casual acquaintances, rising to the level of the singular efforts of Edouard Loisel in his friendly relations with Louis Salavin to the youthful passing friendship of Laurent Pasquier with Désiré Wasselin and culminating in the lasting friendship between Laurent and Justin Weill.

In some instances, the relationship of the Pasquier family with neighbors will be considered; in others, the associations formed as a result of partnerships undertaken for the sake of profit or simply for companionship, as exemplified by Joseph and Laurent Pasquier respectively. Still other circumstances will be seen as leading to more personal encounters, such as those experienced by Laurent, Cécile and, in a lesser degree, by Suzanne Pasquier. But, beyond all these cases, the formation and development of



friendship, which seemed to have made the deepest impression on Duhamel, will receive the greatest consideration.

In spite of the lack of harmony which might have disturbed homelife in the Pasquier family, special care was taken to preserve the uneasy peace among themselves by limiting the number of visitors to their home. These few encounters of the family with a few of the neighbors of the vicinity initiated them to the outside social relations which gradually developed within the Pasquier home. The first significant association was prompted when the three Ségrédats sisters were attracted to the Pasquier family by Cécile's musical ability:

C'est dans notre voisinage immédiat que se sont toujours déclarée nos quelques amis. Les demoiselles Ségrédats habitaient le logement voisin du nôtre... Elles étaient toutes les trois sensibles à la musique et venaient souvent, subjuguées, entendre Cécile qui n'avait pas toujours l'air de les voir.<sup>1</sup>

This cultural motive was sufficient for their entrance into the home since their presence did not upset the usual habits of the family.

Of the three women, Therese Segredat was the most

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., pp. 66-67.

conscious of the general conditions in the Pasquier home and she was eventually incorporated in the intimate lives of the household through her acts of service. She helped Mme Pasquier with the chores around the house and was a faithful substitute when the Pasquier mother became ill. Kindness and dutifulness marked Thérèse's movements as she tried to manage some of the essential household matters, such as the preparation of the meals:

Mère a dû rester au lit. Il faut qu'elle soit bien malade. Thérèse Ségrédât notre voisine, la petite, la blanche, est venue soigner maman et faire cuire la nourriture.<sup>1</sup>

A final expression of charity and genuine interest in the family was shown after Therese witnessed the tense moments brought on by a monetary problem. She went to the bank, withdrew her savings and offered them to Mme Pasquier for the purpose of settling the family's financial affair without incurring the bitterness of M. Pasquier:

Soudain, Thérèse baissa la voix...  
- Mme Pasquier, je suis sortie, ce matin et je vous apporte l'argent.... Il est à moi, je vous assure. Et le voilà! Prenez-le!- Je ne veux pas, non, je ne veux pas que M. Pasquier se mettre en colère. Alors, prenez, Madame. Prenez! Je serai si contente.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 108.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 169-170.

On the other hand, Mme Pasquier was prompt to offer timely aid whenever the opportunity arose. The case of the Wasselin neighbors presented such an occasion for her. Mme Wasselin, a courageous woman, although she constantly protected her children from the disorders of an intemperate and ill humored father, realized that he was a part of her family and tried to bear with him. Nevertheless, she was not prepared to accept so readily the news of his imprisonment for theft, because she knew that it meant ruin for her children. After receiving the news of her husband's situation Mme Wasselin was overcome by grief. Her wails of anguish moved the neighborhood, especially the Pasquier mother who immediately resolved to go to the assistance of the unfortunate woman and to see if, by her support, she could alleviate the pains of the distressed wife, as she explained to M. Pasquier:

- Ram, dit maman, Ram, s'il faut consoler cette pauvre dame, j'irai, le moment venu....<sup>1</sup> Je vais aider cette dame à remettre de l'ordre.<sup>1</sup>

Like feelings were not usually expressed by the Pasquier father. He did not offer to help others for the sake of charity alone, consequently, he in turn was neglected

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., pp. 222-224.

and received only the passing observations of the neighbors. Furthermore, M. Pasquier believed that there were more important things in life than seeking social standing with other men, therefore, he made no efforts to be friendly. He even shunned the mere approaches of amicable persons:

Mon père, comme tous les hommes dont la vie est gouvernée par des passions exigeantes et précises, passions que j'ai découvertes jour à jour, dont j'ai cruellement souffert et que je ne manquerai pas de peindre.... Mon père ne se gaspillait guère en émotions accessoires. Il n'a ni recherché ni connu l'amitié que, bien à tort, il devait juger passion mineure. .... Donc, point d'amis véritables, des "connaissances", des realltions, des voisins.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the Ségrédat and Wasselin families, there was only one other neighbor numbered among the Pasquier's casual acquaintances, Valdemar Henningsen. He, too, was attracted to the house by Cécile's music, and by offering himself in the capacity of a sponsor and instructor was warily and very slowly admitted into their society. Even then, his reception was not wholeheartedly sanctioned by all of the Pasquiers. Nevertheless, Valdemar made himself a part of the household without ever properly understanding the reactions of the family to his presence, as Laurent cited:

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre...., p. 78.

Excellent Valdemar! Il n'a sans doute jamais compris que si nous poussions - tout au moins maman et nous les petits - si nous poussions toujours soigneusement les verrous, c'était pour défendre, plus encore que nos hardes et nos meubles, le génie du foyer, les dieux de notre clan!<sup>1</sup>

Although aware of the few relationships existing between their elders and the neighbors, the younger members of the family felt the necessity and knew the advantages of broadening their social life. They developed a particular interest in people who were prominent in business, especially persons of prestige. The eldest son, Joseph, used his associations with men to serve his private gains. His concept of a friend included anyone who might contribute to his general welfare, as can be observed from his conversation with Laurent who questioned one of his nocturnal wanderings:

- Ne te monte pas la tête. J'étais avec mon ami Valencin.

- Qu'est-ce que c'est que ce Valencin?

Le cou de Joseph augmenta de volume, ce qui exprimait à merveille le respect, le contentement. Il dit avec une religieuse ampleur:

- C'est un monsieur puissamment riche.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., pp. 56-57.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 179-180.

In addition to the wealthy, Joseph sought powerful and influential men in order to enhance his social position. He relied on all of them to serve his purpose in business and political affairs, but he himself contributed nothing to their benefit. Furthermore, he studied how he might use important men: those who held key positions. He foresaw any future event in which particular individuals would be instrumental in securing his social standing or in furthering his plans for success, as in the example of Urbain Leveque who was vice-president of the Chambre des Deputes. Joseph explains to his brother his reasons for associating with Urbain:

- Urbain Lèveque est très puissant. Il sera peut-être garde des sceaux, si le cabinet vient à tomber. La lettre qu'il m'a donnée doit faciliter les choses .... Il faut conquérir les clefs qui permettent d'ouvrir le plus grand nombre de portes.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, there were some among Joseph's business associates who worked partially for their own interests, like his elderly secretary, Mairesse-Miral. After studying Joseph's inclinations and procedures, he tried to win his employer's respect through flattery. However, far from approving his conduct, Mairesse inwardly

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Desert de Bièvres..., p. 257.

condemned him for it, but he was powerless to change Joseph's business methods. In his conversation with Justin Weill, Laurent related the confidences made to him by Mairesse-Miral who tried to salvage his conscience by confessing his share in Joseph's dishonest business transactions:

M. Mairesse-Miral, que je rencontre quelquefois, me dit, sous le sceau du secret, toutes sortes de choses curieuses concernant mon frère Joseph. Comprends bien: c'est la vengeance de M. Miral. Il adore mon frère, son bourreau, et il le déteste en même temps.<sup>1</sup>

Another trait in his employer which provoked the secretary's dislike was the hypocrisy practiced by Joseph. While pretending to share his secrets with his confidential secretary, Joseph withheld those which were essential to his own greed for money. To advance his personal interests and preserve his secretary's good will, he confided some of his plans but his more important schemes were not revealed because, in reality, he trusted no one, as one learns from Laurent:

Cela ne concernait qu'une part des valeurs car, même à Mairesse-Miral, Joseph ne confiait pas tout. Et outre les valeurs cotées, les papiers déposés dans

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Cécile Parmi Nous..., p. 93.

les banques et chez les agents de change, il y avait encore toutes sortes de choses que Joseph gardait par devers soi, dans ses coffres et ses armoires.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of his plans, the influence of his numerous acquaintances did not prove as profitable to Joseph as he had expected. This was because he offered nothing in exchange for their interests and affections. His transactions with associates were restricted to business in which time was not allotted for social pleasures. Thus, real feeling and concern were centered in his work and in political enterprises. In truth, Joseph did not wish to make true friends, as Laurent concludes in a final estimate of his brother:

Joseph qui, depuis, a connu tout Paris, Joseph n'a jamais eu d'ami véritable. Il n'était d'ailleurs aucunement tenté d'introduire dans notre intérieur des gens avec lesquels, à cette époque de sa carrière, il nouait et dénouait toutes sortes d'obscures petites affaires.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast to the eldest son, Laurent Pasquier, the youngest, manifested a real human interest in his relations with people. He considered his partners as real companions

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., pp. 184-185.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., pp. 104-105.



because he realized their human dignity. Moreover, he held the other associates in esteem because of their fine qualities which especially appealed to him. Among these associates, Laurent developed a profound interest in the scientist, Leon Schleiter, whom everyone admired because of his love for his work and his general concern for the welfare of his co-workers and acquaintances. Although hardened by experiences among various human types, Schleiter always maintained high principles in dealing with men. This latter characteristic particularly impressed Laurent who proclaims it to Justin:

Schleiter a du bon. Tu sais qu'il m'avait promis de me trouver quelque chose: un travail intelligent et suffisamment payé. Cet homme sec a des principes: il promet peu et tient ses promesses. Il a cherché ce qu'il me fallait et il a trouvé.<sup>1</sup>

An even finer appreciation of humanity was expressed by Laurent for Renaud Censier, a director of the science laboratories. In the beginning, interest was aroused from the standpoint of hero worship; Laurent recognized in Censier an exemplar of perseverance in labor and of devotion to science. Later, as a result of his admiration, Laurent

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 240.

believed that every command and wish of his master helped to greater efforts in scientific achievements:

- Oui voilà quelque chose que je sais maintenant, poursuit Laurent, j'aime Censier, j'aime le patron. Il y a dans l'obéissance, quand elle est libre et enthousiaste, une sorte d'ivresse, d'élan, de don.<sup>1</sup>

Laurent's homage never wavered; on the contrary, he made an avowal of undying fidelity to Censier in which he expressed a willingness to sacrifice his life for the director. Such a declaration elicited deep appreciation from Censier.<sup>2</sup> Thenceforth, mutual esteem marked the relationship of the two associates, which was partially revealed in Justin's conversation with Censier from whom he solicited advice for Laurent's deep melancholy:

- Je sais, monsieur, disait Justin, je sais que vous avez montré toujours à mon ami, Laurent, beaucoup de bienveillance et même plus: de l'affection. Il faut le décider, monsieur, et l'aider, en quelque sorte... Ce n'est pas moi monsieur. Je n'ai ni l'âge, ni l'autorité nécessaire. Mais il me semble que vous, qui êtes son maître et son modèle, vous serez naturellement son conseiller et son protecteur, si j'ose dire.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Nuit de la Saint-Jean..., pp. 56-57.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 206.

Further manifestations of Laurent's attitude towards associates were revealed in his encounters with Doctor Chabot, a surgeon, who frequented the laboratories where Laurent worked. On three occasions Chabot had the opportunity of proving his interest and devotion to Laurent and to the Pasquier family. First, Chabot answered Laurent's urgent appeal to save the life of Cécile's baby. Although he knew that his efforts would be futile, Chabot brought all the necessary equipment for surgery to Cécile's house and used every precaution as he proceeded with the operation. His reason for his generous service was simply stated to Laurent, "C'est pour vous que je le fais Pasquier, pour votre soeur et pour vous."<sup>1</sup>

On another occasion, Laurent sought Chabot for his father whose poor health caused considerable anxiety to Mme Pasquier. She asked Laurent to obtain an excellent physician, one who would understand and give positive remedies for M. Pasquier and at the same time remain firm while dealing with his patient.<sup>2</sup> Laurent believed that Chabot was the man for the case since his knowledge of individuals was

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Cécile Parmi Nous..., pp. 276-277.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Le Desert de Bièvres..., p. 261

adequate enough to cope with difficult personalities:

- Je ferai venir Chabot. Il est interne, et c'est mon ami. Je pense qu'il sait tout comprendre.<sup>1</sup>

A final example of Chabot's kindness and concern was displayed toward Joseph's son who was injured in a fall. Solicitude and sympathy marked the surgeon's inquiries about the injured boy for whom he gave the best of medical aid. He even sent an interne to help the Pasquier family keep watch over the boy.<sup>2</sup> It seemed that Chabot found no situation too complicated to cope with whenever Laurent called upon him.

The women who worked in the scientific laboratories aroused more sympathetic sentiments in Laurent. This was demonstrated in his unfeigned compassion for Catherine Houdoire who worked with him under the supervision of the scientist Rohner. The latter exposed Catherine's life for the discovery of bacilli which would bear his name, and made no effort to save her as he watched the deadly bacilli accomplishing their work of destruction. As a subordinate

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., pp. 258-259.

under an inhumane supervisor there was little Laurent could do to help Catherine directly but he visited, comforted and even tried to distract her in his efforts to alleviate her sufferings. He mingled pity with love in his acts of kindness toward her:

Je vais la voir chaque jour au debut de l'après-midi. Je retourne souvent lui faire une courte visite avant de quitter l'Institut.... Je lui ai, deux fois, apporté des fleurs....

Le premier soir, au moment de me retirer, j'ai vu, sur le drap, la longue main de Catherine: c'est une main de travailleuse, mais une main très bien faite, belle et pleine de noblesse. J'ai saisi cette main et l'ai baisée, affectueusement.<sup>1</sup>

Although Catherine did not live long enough to thank Laurent adequately for his kindness and attention, he was somewhat repaid by the gentle consideration and interest of Hélène Strohl, another laboratory worker. She had always impressed Laurent as a wise and noble woman, as a result, she became his confidante. He spoke to her openly and she patiently listened to his unrestrained chatter. Besides Justin Weill, it was only to Hélène that Laurent revealed the story of the money he had thrown away to prove to

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., pp. 172-173.

Joseph that money was not to him a god.<sup>1</sup> Above all, Laurent admired Héle<sup>n</sup>e because of some maternal quality which he had observed in her. "Héle<sup>n</sup>e était conciliante, accomodante, maternelle, oui, c'est bien le mot, maternelle."<sup>2</sup> Laurent's high regard for Héle<sup>n</sup>e endured even after she married his brother Joseph.

Besides his own preoccupations Laurent observed those of his sisters as they met various individuals in their professional activities. As artists, both Cécile and Suzanne were more selfishly engaged. At an early age, the eldest girl, Cécile, had attracted Valdemar Henningsen who, during the succeeding years, had continued to aid Cécile as piano instructor. His interest, however, ceased to be merely on the musical level after Cécile reached womanhood. In his desire to marry her, Valdemar hoped to retain all that he had given this young woman of his musical genius, so that both she and her talent would be unquestionably his. When

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., pp. 63-64. (On this occasion, Laurent urged Joseph to take a walk with him and deliberately threw a large sum of money in the Marne river to spite his brother who considered money the prime factor in life.)

<sup>2</sup>Loc. cit.

Cécile finally consented to marry Valdemar, he constantly harassed her with his anxious attention, so fearful was he of losing her:

Valdemar disait: "Tu peux aller dans ce Creteil. Je t'y suivrai, je te suivrai partout. Et dans deux ans, je t'épouserai. Jure-moi que je t'épouserai."

Il serrait, autour des genoux de Cécile, une étreinte qu'elle dénouait, d'un doigt calme, obstiné. Encore blême de colère domptée, elle répétait, serrant les mâchoires: "Mais oui, nous nous marierons, puisque je vous l'ai promis."<sup>1</sup>

Eventually, Valdemar destroyed himself by suicide and thus lost his fiancée. With all immediate plans for marriage shattered, Cécile was completely preoccupied with her music and became a celebrated concert pianist. During her numerous appearances at home and abroad, music lovers shared her triumph and contributed to her success by their devotion and encouragement. They alone conformed to her concept of life in which music was a distraction, a haven, and a source of security. Laurent realized that Cécile had found happiness among the admirers and fans of many countries:

Je suis heureux de savoir que ton quatrième voyage en Amérique te gagne de nouveaux amis, heureux de

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 103.

savoir que ces milliers et ces millions d'hommes qui vivent loin de nous et que nous connaissons quand même assez mal peuvent aimer ce que nous aimons et communier avec nous dans l'admiration des génies prodigieux aux-quels tu as dévoué ta vie.<sup>1</sup>

Between concerts and tours Cécile was often in Laurent's company in which Justin Weill played an integral part. A friendship developed between Cécile and Justin. Both were aware of a growing mutual esteem, and Justin desired to make her his own through marriage. Her refusal to accept his proposal left him deeply disappointed. In her efforts to console Justin, Cécile revealed her sisterly regard for him whom she considered next in affection to her favorite brother Laurent. In the final analysis, Cécile and Justin remained faithful friends who were ever on the alert for each other's security and happiness:

- Mais non, mais non, je ne vous renvoie pas, soupirait Cécile d'une voix tremblante. Vous êtes mon meilleur ami, après Laurent bien sûr, après mon frère Laurent. Moi non plus, je ne veux pas vous perdre... Elle posa ses mains fragiles sur la tête du jeune homme.

- Vous savez bien, Justin, que je n'aime aucun autre homme... J'aime votre amour. Il est bon. Il me tient chaud.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., pp. 107-108.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, La Nuit de la Saint-Jean..., pp. 118-119.



The professional life of Suzanne, Laurent's youngest sister, brought her also into intimate contact with many people but few of these were sincere. Besides the audiences before whom she performed as an actress, there were numerous directors and managers with whom she conferred and who held her in admiration. Although Suzanne was applauded and praised by all, there were occasions when circumstances forced her to seek advice and consolation away from her theatrical acquaintances. Such a situation occurred when one of the managers cancelled a play in which she had a leading role and selected another in which she did not carry the principal part.<sup>1</sup> Feeling neglected she left the theater in bitterness with the intention of never returning. Later developments brought her to a change of mind.

Suzanne found security and peace in the Baudoin family, especially in the company of Philippe Baudoin who sincerely loved her. His trustworthiness inspired confidence in Suzanne; his very presence conveyed a sense of happiness, while the entire Baudoin family comforted and sustained her, as she admits to Philippe:

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., pp. 89-91.

- Philippe, vous êtes mon ami, Philippe vous me plaisez beaucoup. L'idée de vivre quelques jours avec vous, au milieu des vôtres que je connais à peine ou même que je ne connais pas, cette idée me console et me fait chaud au cœur.<sup>1</sup>

Suzanne's sympathetic sharing in the disappointments, joys and sufferings of the family made her realize the intimacy of her relationship with the Baudoins. On her return to the stage, she recognized the difference between the sincere associates whom she had left, and the vacillating co-workers of the theater with whom she was destined to live:

Elle avait des camarades. Elle avait, toujours et partout, rencontré beaucoup de camarades. Elle n'avait pas d'amis.<sup>2</sup>

To further illustrate Duhamel's treatment of friendship, the relationship of Edouard Loisel with Louis Salavin affords an example of failure to respond to a friend's devotion. In this case Duhamel emphasizes the human weaknesses of the one and the unselfish devotion of the other. Even when Salavin fails to reciprocate Edouard's acts of friendship, the latter pitifully perseveres in his efforts in behalf of Salavin. However, from the very beginning of

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 302.

their association, Loisel's attempts to instill feelings of trust and sincerity in Salavin proved futile. First of all, the latter did not have self-confidence nor would he confide in others. Besides, he was not inclined to accept the company of men on their probable worth, as Edouard had received him.<sup>1</sup> He believed that time and substantial proofs were the proper measures for dealing with men. However, like Joseph Pasquier, Salavin thought that the real purpose and value of contacts with other men should be the profit derived from their degree of usefulness to him. Yet, he did not render willing service to any man, although he himself was the recipient of many favors from Edouard who recognized Salavin as one of his numerous friends for whom he would perform any service. Salavin did not fail to remark on such devotion:

"Lui, Edouard, n'avait pas de besoins; il méprisait les biens de ce monde. Obliger ses amis était la seule joie véritable..."<sup>2</sup>

It was a joy for Edouard to give whatever temporary or permanent aid Salavin needed, and his happiness was not complete until he had offered his best. Nothing was too dear to share in the cause of friendship. Edouard's

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Georges Duhamel, Deux Hommes (Paris: Mercure de France, 1924), p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

generosity is apparent from the conversation between him and Salavin:

- Nous voilà riches, veux-tu dire! Tout ce qui est à moi est à toi; puisque tu es mon ami.

Certes l'argent, la gloire, il n'y en aurait pas pour tout le monde; mais lui, Loisel, saurait en prendre pour deux.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of Edouard's self sacrifice, Salavin remained obstinate in his perverse attitude toward men, yet, at times, he seemed to succumb to the many acts of kindness shown toward him. On such occasions, he appeared less heartless and more appreciative, as he expressed praises for Edouard's benevolence. Being aware that he was the sole beneficiary of unselfish service, he accepted Edouard even graciously:

C'est un homme sur l'épaule de qui l'on peut s'appuyer. Un homme sans arrière-pensée. Un coeur pur. Il me comprend, je le sais, et il m'aime quand même.<sup>2</sup>

However, his reactions were short-lived because he was never sufficiently moved to be receptive of Edouard's true affections.

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Deux Hommes..., p. 162.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

Besides lacking self-confidence, trust in others, and capacity for friendship, Salavin's irresolution and bitterness raised a wall between himself and others. Selfishness governed the greater part of his activities and of necessity led to many disappointments. However, it must be admitted that Edouard was partially responsible for Salavin's self-love; during the early days of their acquaintance, Edouard abandoned all his old comrades to satisfy Salavin's wishes of being his only companion. In time, Edouard became the victim of Salavin's suspicions and fears whenever appointments were broken or whenever conversations were not shared with him. Unjust judgments resulted from this attitude, which were nothing more than expressions of jealousy. Instead of showing gratitude, Salavin even rebuked Edouard for faults of which he himself was guilty. His reproaches were neither complimentary nor friendly:

Tu n'aimes pas les hommes, tu en as besoin seulement, pour être toi-même, pour être heureux avec toi-même, tout seul, entends-tu? Tout seul.<sup>1</sup>

This avowal aroused disgust in Edouard as he recalled the situations in which he had placed himself for Salavin. He had not only sacrificed his friends through neglect but

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Deux Hommes..., p. 268.

also his high social position. Too late Salavin's egotism was recognized, as Edouard painfully admits:

"Je suis injuste et méchant. J'ai perdu l'équilibre. J'ai perdu ma place dans le monde. J'ai sacrifié tous mes amis pour un seul homme. A son tour, celui-là m'a sacrifié. Je n'ai que ce que je mérite."<sup>1</sup>

As a result of his selfishness, suspicions, and unjust judgments, Salavin was abandoned by all men. He was left to ponder over his mistakes and he sank deeper into unhappiness and despair.<sup>2</sup> Later in life, a new acquaintance, M. Dargoult tried to help him to find his place among men, but these efforts proved unsuccessful because Salavin still felt incapable of giving what friendship demanded - a reciprocal share of what others bestowed on him:

Je viens de traverser une période assez amère pendant laquelle je n'aurais pu soutenir la vue d'un ami, surtout quand cet ami met en moi une confiance dont je ne suis, définitivement, pas digne.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Deux Hommes..., p. 296.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Georges Duhamel, Journal de Salavin (Paris: Mercure de France, 1926), p. 139.

<sup>3</sup>Georges Duhamel, Tel Qu'En Lui-Même (Paris: Mercure de France, 1932), p. 150.

The genuine friendship, which could have developed between Salavin and Loisel had both men been favorably disposed toward each other, is realized in what seemed to be Duhamel's ideal manifestation of affection between Laurent Pasquier and his ardent companions. The first significant friend was Désiré Wasselin whom Laurent discovered during childhood. Because of their mutual and immediate attraction to each other, Laurent believed that Désiré was a special gift to him, probably of divine origin:

C'est donc sur nos pas enfantins que la divine amitié fit son entrée dans la maison.

Je ne peux dire que Désiré Wasselin devint mon ami: le verbe devenir suppose un développement, un progrès. Or, dès la première minute, Désiré fut un ami total, accompli, l'ami par excellence.<sup>1</sup>

Their close friendship was further enriched by little acts of devotion and thoughtfulness. Dependability was one of the chief qualities which strengthened Laurent's feelings toward Désiré who not only proved himself by timely aid but also by the meticulous care with which he performed his actions, particularly during their journeys to and from school.<sup>2</sup> Laurent felt secure with Désiré whose protective

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre., p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ibid., p. 73

attitude helped to develop in him greater love and esteem for his companion. At times, Désiré even seemed indispensable to Laurent's happiness, as the latter explained:

J'admirais donc le cher Désiré, je me confiais à son bras, je m'en remettais à lui de toutes vertus protectrices et, quand il vint à me manquer, je dus faire, douloureusement, l'apprentissage de certaine adversité, me former, petit à petit, une carapace et des pincés.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, there was a general sense of joy for both friends whenever they were together. They never wearied of each other's company, although Désiré was of a melancholy disposition. Their close companionship offered them opportunities to share their best gifts unselfishly, therefore, natural pleasure and satisfaction were experienced in their association. Anything which tended to change the prevailing circumstances of their lives aroused feelings of depression, especially in Désiré who desired to keep Laurent always near:

Désiré retombait à la mélancolie. Si nous venions à parler de l'expropriation, son visage se contractait avec une expression douloureuse.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 116.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 167.



In spite of the enjoyable experiences of Laurent and Désiré, the latter committed suicide which marked an abrupt ending to one phase of Laurent's happiness but which ushered in a period of a more genuine friendship, that of Justin Weill, through whom, as Duhamel states in his biography, Inventaire de l'Abime, he wishes to immortalize one of his own dear friends, Jules K...., a Jew, who was killed in an accident, in the person of Justin, also a Jew. Justin and Laurent thus seem to demonstrate what was, or what could have been, in Duhamel's association with Jules. It is therein that Duhamel's highest sentiments of friendship and of human relationships are finally expressed:

Et comme le poete a des pouvoirs discretionnaires, j'ai décidé, bien des années plus tard, de donner à l'ombre de mon ami cette vie qu'il n'avait point vecue, de faire dure, jouir et souffrir une ample et riche existence, sous le nom de Justin, l'un de mes personnages, et de vivre avec lui, en rêve, toute cette fervente affection qui nous avait été ravie.<sup>1</sup>

The loftiness of true friendship was first recognized as Laurent and Justin enjoyed their daily intimate conversations. From the beginning of their relationship Laurent considered Justin as a brother; such feelings were further em-

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abime..., pp. 155-156.

phasized in their correspondence.<sup>1</sup> These two friends were inseparable as Désiré and Laurent had been. It seemed as if they experienced full satisfaction solely while in each other's company. As a further means of strengthening their friendly relations, Laurent and Justin recalled that fidelity is the foundation of friendship, therefore, every opportunity was a stepping stone to increase faith in each other. Justin in particular realized the significance of Laurent's faith in him, because he was a Jew and had experienced the unfriendly attitude of Frenchmen toward those of his race. As a result, Justin unflinchingly expressed appreciation for Laurent's constancy; he even reflected on his good fortune for having known Laurent, especially when he considered the plight of the Jews:

Justin rougit de nouveau, sans chercher à le dissimuler. En présence de Laurent, ami sûr, ami fidèle, il éprouvait à se juger, à juger ceux de sa race... qui se muait en dépit pour peu qu'on vint à l'aprouver.<sup>2</sup>

Other examples of fidelity demonstrated the sincerity which bound Laurent and Justin. Without pretense, each man weighed the character of his friend; each found desirable

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 244.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, La Nuit de la Saint-Jean..., p. 55.

qualities in the other. Nevertheless, Duhamel made them really human when he allowed little misunderstandings to develop in their relations. Sometimes, even a certain ire was aroused at some revelation made, as on the occasion when Justin expressed his resentment of a political article which Laurent had written for a newspaper. However, the knowledge of the deep personal interest existing between the two friends was sufficient for the acceptance of rebuffs, especially when explained in sentiments as noble as Justin's:

Je te connais depuis vingt ans. Je t'aime assez pour te dire ce que je pense.<sup>1</sup>

At another time, Laurent had the opportunity to remind Justin that the nature of friendship demands frankness if mutual understanding and support were to be preserved. On this occasion, Justin became displeased because Laurent disapproved of his love affair with a Mlle. Marthe. Like Justin, Laurent explained that his remonstrances were given as a friend:

Ne monte plus sur tes grands chevaux... Méfie-toi, Justin: nous avons décidé qu'une sincérité parfaite serait le principe et la règle de toute notre correspondance. Je respecte cette convention. Tâche donc d'agir de même, avec autant de naturel.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 162.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., p. 149.

Because of the deep loyalty between the two friends, mutual confidences were inevitable. These exchanges were made in matters of great or minor importance, of which a greater portion pertained to family affairs, especially in the case of Laurent. By discussing his problems and secrets with Justin, Laurent felt that his sorrows were alleviated. In addition, he believed that Justin was able to help him by merely listening, as for instance, when he confided to Justin the circumstances and places where his father consorted with his mistresses. No comment was demanded from Justin; Laurent was consoled simply by unburdening his disturbed mind:

- Ne le dis pas! Ne le dis pas! Ce que je peux t'assurer, c'est que de telles maisons existent. C'est incroyable, mais c'est vrai. Tais-toi, Justin. Au nom de notre amitié, tais-toi!  
Justin me donne une grande preuve d'amitié: il se tait.<sup>1</sup>

Time and space did not prove barriers for either friend whenever the need of a consultation became urgent. For Laurent, in particular, obstacles did not exist, since Justin's advice had to be the determining factor for his actions. Therefore, it was to Justin that Laurent wrote when he felt the need of explaining his conflict with Joseph

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 101.

whom he had angered by throwing away a large sum of money:

"Justin, mon cher Justin, tu es mon seul ami,  
Au nom de la poésie, de l'amitié, de l'amour, de  
tout ce que nous chérissons, viens me voir à Cre-  
teil, demain. Arrange-toi pour rester quelques  
jours avec ton malheureux

Laurent, qui est abandonné  
des hommes, des Dieux et  
des Idées.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, no secrets were too great to divulge. Candidly and freely, Justin explained to Laurent his romantic tendencies and his tentative plans for marriage while he believed that Laurent could offer him the best possible counsel. There was no limit to his beliefs in Laurent:

La seule personne à qui je veuille apprendre tout de suite ce qui m'arrive, Laurent, c'est vous, et pour beaucoup de raisons.

Je vais me marier, Laurent.... La décision est d'hier. Vous reconnaîtrez, mon ami, que je n'ai pas attendu beaucoup pour me confesser.<sup>2</sup>

Whether happy or depressed, Justin had recourse to Laurent who did <sup>his</sup> utmost to sustain and encourage him. At times, Laurent seemed to be advising hopelessly, nevertheless, he patiently persevered in his efforts to show Justin that life was worth living both for himself and for society, <sup>as de-</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

monstrated in their conversation:

.... Ta vie a un but, un but admirable: tu as opté pour les lettres...

.... Comment te dire, Laurent, que je n'aime plus la vie? Voilà, très exactement, le malheur qui m'est arrivé.

Justin baissa la tête. A de telles confidences, il apportait, naguère encore, une pointe d'affectation théâtrale.<sup>1</sup>

While confidence and fidelity form the basis for friendship, mutual service strengthens the foundation. Thus it was for Laurent and Justin who reciprocated in rendering services. Deeds were performed principally by anticipation and without any aforesaid conditions. During illness or health each was available to take on responsibilities or to comfort and distract, as exemplified by Justin during his visits to Laurent who was ill:

La voix de Justin fut la bourdonnante fanfare de ce retour à l'existence. Au début, il venait chaque jour, s'asseyait au pied de mon lit et se prenait à parler avec une ivresse voluble.<sup>2</sup>

Again Justin proved his devotion by the promptitude with which he fulfilled Laurent's wishes. The latter were expressed when Laurent saw his father in the company of one of his mistresses and did not want Justin to witness this

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Cécile Parmi Nous..., pp. 215-216.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Desert de Bièvres..., p. 68.

act of infidelity. He, therefore, besought Justin to disappear from view. Laurent's esteem increased even more by the prompt compliance of his friend as is implied in the conversation of the two friends:

- Justin, dis-je à voix basse, il faut que tu me rendes un grand service.
- Ordonne, s'écria-t-il, et ce bras t'appartient.
- Justin, quitte-moi tout de suite et remonte le boulevard sans retourner.
- .... Comme il était fait à mes façons et fort courtois de nature, il eut un geste fatal, sourit et disparut dans la foule.<sup>1</sup>

While Justin displayed his admirable qualities in friendly service, Laurent could do nothing but react in a similar manner. His first deep impression was made on Justin when he agreed to live with him in a colony of friends at Bievres. Justin expressed appreciation for the sacrifice which he felt was heroic. Moreover, he knew that Laurent's actions were all the more noble because such a life had quickly become repugnant to him:

- Oh! toi, Laurent, tu n'y as jamais bien cru, à cette histoire du Desert. Tu n'as peut-être marché que pour me faire plaisir. Je n'ai jamais eu le sentiment que tu y allais de ton voyage, que tu étais vraiment parmi nous de toute ton âme. Ne proteste pas, c'est la vérité. Je te remercie quand même d'avoir été près de moi.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 202

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Desert de Bievres..., p. 277

On a subsequent occasion, Laurent's willingness to serve Justin gave proof of his greatness of heart. He was anxious for Justin to succeed in life, but he was also mindful of the despondent moods to which his friend was subject, especially when engaged as a journalist. In order to help Justin to find his way in life, without too much anxiety about the future, Laurent always assured him of a refuge should disappointments or trials prove too great. This was a final tribute to their friendship:

Je croyais que tu étais très fier de ton poste, fier de ce travail que tu avais accepté dans l'enthousiasme. Et il me semble qu'une fois encore tu es déçu, que ce journalisme ne te plaît pas et même t'épuise. Si je croyais que tu fais cela pour vivre, seulement pour vivre, je te dirais: "Viens à Paris. Nous vivrons ensemble, dignement, fièrement, comme deux célibataires résignés. Je gagne assez pour deux... Viens donc, vieux frère! Viens."<sup>1</sup>

In this climax of association of friends, the scope of Duhamel's treatment of human relations seems to be complete. He had an understanding of and was aware of human virtues and foibles as displayed in his many encounters with men.

Among the mere acquaintances of the Pasquier neighborhood he depicted gentle kindness and charity as outstanding traits. With working associates, two opposite views were

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 201.



presented: in the first, Joseph Pasquier appeared as the selfish conniving business partner, while on the other hand, Laurent was depicted as a man possessing deep understanding and profound interest in human progress.

In the professional field, both Cécile and Suzanne were more or less selfishly engaged. The former's musical talent was flaunted before the world for personal satisfaction. There was neither time nor place for happiness away from music. In a similar manner, happiness for Suzanne was centered in her acting career. She lived to be treated as a queen but disillusion and disappointment made her realize that sincere friends were more valuable than the stage where the praises of audiences and of fellow workers were so changeable and uncertain.

Although Edouard Loisel possessed the genuine qualities of friendship, his relation with Louis Salavin was one-sided. Yet, Edouard's unrequited devotion proved a contrast to the mutual affections of Laurent Pasquier with Désiré Wasselin and Justin Weill.

Thus it is seen that Duhamel's thorough understanding of acquaintances in general and of friendship in particular find proof in the foregoing discussions of relation-

ships among his characters. His knowledge of every degree of human relations are a result of personal experiences exemplified chiefly by Laurent Pasquier who is Duhamel's best portrayed character and in whom he was projected himself.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OF MAN IN THE COMMUNITY

Fully aware of the various relationships existing among men, Georges Duhamel observed and analyzed their activities in the community. He watched man's efforts to rise socially and economically, but he realized that all could not attain the same success. He noticed not only the differences resulting from exterior occupations, but also the innermost moral differences. These ideas of the author are reflected in his works, but in this chapter the effects of the turmoil of society will be seen first, in the apparently inactive and wasted life of Louis Salavin, then in the busily occupied and useful life of Laurent Pasquier.

The inactivity, isolation, dejection, and final change of Salavin will be shown in contrast to the restless activities of the Pasquier father and Joseph Pasquier; to the professional careers of Cécile and Suzanne Pasquier. However, only Laurent Pasquier seems to grasp the significance of his activities in society from the very beginning and to direct his labors for the benefit of humanity.

Every man is more or less beset by social problems, but these were all the more complicated for Louis Salavin because he was at odds with society in general.<sup>1</sup> Besides rejecting the helps of friendship, as has been discussed in the preceding chapter, he failed even when gainfully employed. He blamed his failure on his dislike for secretarial work. The first incident leading to Salavin's jobless wanderings occurred at the Soque and Sureau's firm where he worked as a secretary. He forfeited his position because of an apparently childish act of touching his employer's ear to see if it were like his own and because he lacked the necessary self-assurance and humility to seek a reconciliation. His manner of acting not only disturbed and distracted M. Sureau but also angered him:

Il faut dire que M. Sureau n'a pas voulu comprendre. Il m'aurait été nécessaire de lui donner des explications et, tout bien pesé, j'ai mieux fait de ne rien expliquer.<sup>1</sup>

Without an occupation, Salavin was somewhat ashamed and therefore led a more solitary life, becoming daily more miserable during his frequent walks through the most deserted streets. Pride prevented his seeking aid from others, hence,

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Confession de Minuit..., p. 5.

the future seemed dark indeed as he hopelessly sought satisfaction alone. He began to convince himself that sorrow and unhappiness were his lot and could not be altered. Such pessimism became a shield and a sanction for his seclusion.<sup>1</sup> Eventually, Salavin accepted secretarial work again, but he remained nowhere too long. His longest stay was with the Cilpo, a milk Corporation. While there he was named publicity secretary but was removed because of his efforts to expose what he considered fraudulent operations in the preparation of the milk. He was then assigned to a small office by the employer M. Mayer who tried to make Salavin see the harm which the Cilpo personnel would have had to face if the public had received the misinformation of the deoxygenation of the milk. Still Salavin was discontented with his position which helped to increase his self-pity. Considering himself the most unfortunate of men, he believed that he did not possess the bare necessities to elevate himself in society:

Un petit employé de bureau, seul dans une ville monstrueuse, un être infime usé jusqu'à la fibre, rompu par une vie ingrate. Etoffe médiocre, ressorts douteux. Un désir dans la poitrine, plus pesant qu'une tumeur. Il espère, le pauvre homme,

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Confession de Minuit..., p. 21

sans même, certains jours, savoir exactement quoi. Il espère, oui, de désespérer, pour finir, et d'avoir ainsi la paix. Dix mois d'observation sévère: il se connaît mal doué.<sup>1</sup>

The self-engendered disappointments and hardships of Salavin blinded him to the numerous enjoyments which could be found with others in society. Furthermore, he believed that his unhappiness could not be equalled. For a short while, he attempted to cease being a recluse and to act normally; he even resolved to accede to the idea of a fixed destiny which he was powerless to change:

- A quoi bon? répondit Salavin en levant une main, paume ouverte. A quoi bon? Les hommes sont partout les hommes. La vie est toujours la vie. Ce qu'il faut c'est se faire à la résignation.<sup>2</sup>

Although resignation was sometimes hard to practice, it became a rule of life which strengthened Salavin. A period of illness caused further changes in him especially in his moral outlook. A more courageous, self-reliant, and truly active Salavin was the result:

... Car chose incroyable, malgré les déconvenues, malgré la maladie, malgré ce corps consumé, Salavin sortait de l'épreuve avec une force nouvelle, si l'on peut appeler force un puissant désir. La mort, l'avait

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Journal de Salavin..., p. 187.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Deux Hommes..., p. 196.

renvoyé. Soit! C'est donc qu'il lui était, en quelque sorte, enjoint, par les forces obscures, de tout recommencer... Un espoir nouveau bourgeonnait avec vigueur sur la vieille souche calcinée.<sup>1</sup>

This illness made him realize his need for conversion, but it was yet some time before active measures were taken. During the intervening span, he observed and associated with a communist group. He remarked the assiduous care with which the chief members of the Club des Lyonnais worked for their cause. The death, by suicide, of Cesar Devrigny, one of the party members, was the determining factor in Salavin's change. From his encounters with such men of multiple natures Salavin deduced that there were others even unhappier than he. Besides expressing a deep compassion for them he revealed the effects of a self-analysis:

Je sens, aujourd'hui, que je ne suis plus seul en question. Je suis sorti de ma retraite. J'ai vu les hommes. Tu ne peux imaginer comme ils sont malheureux et, surtout, incompréhensibles. Ils ne savent ni ce qu'ils veulent, ni ce qu'ils disent, ni ce qu'ils font. Oui, je les ai vus et je ne peux t'exprimer la pitié qu'ils m'inspirent: ils sont tous aussi misérables que moi. C'est terrible à penser, je t'assure.<sup>2</sup>

Thenceforth, in this newly-formed resolve to help

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Le Club des Lyonnais (Paris: Mercure de France, 1929), p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 270.

others, Salavin noticed that men began to play an integral part in his life. He no longer considered them as one inseparable mass which frightened him, but he learned to appreciate man's dignity and perceived the urgency of protecting and aiding humanity. Instead of avoiding social encounters Salavin was always in their midst. To give greater significance to his new life, he even changed his name to Simon Chavegrand, traveled to Tunis as a phonograph merchant and began noble activities although he was still fearful. En route to Tunis he performed his first heroic action when he rescued a child from the path of an approaching train. The child's father, M. Dargoult, upon reaching Tunis, related the brave deed to a doctor:

- Eh bien Chavegrand s'est précipité sur l'enfant. Oui! Je les ai vus, tous deux, rouler sous le train, docteur! Je n'oublierai jamais ce spectacle. Et ce n'est pas seulement parce qu'il s'agissait de ma fille...

Chavegrand est sorti, entre les roues, avec l'enfant dans ses bras... Un miracle! Vous dire le mouvement de cet homme, son élan!<sup>1</sup>

Other remarkable accomplishments were recognized in Tunis. Salavin offered his secretarial service to a surgeon for whom he kept notes concerning operations and

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<sup>1</sup>Georges Duhamel, Tel Qu'En Lui-Même (Paris: Mercure de France, 1932), p. 73.



other medical details. In addition, he began to assist Doctor Rude in performing the operations and afterwards visited and comforted the patients. On another occasion, Salavin volunteered to remain with four malignantly-afflicted men who were outcasts from society. He fulfilled the capacity of a nurse and remained with them until they died. Physicians and friends gave commendations; but Salavin apparently still a prey to a certain pessimism, could not see the greatness of his deed since the men did not survive.<sup>1</sup>

A further manifestation of courage and growing stability were revealed in Salavin's dealings with his Arab slave servant, Moktar. From the beginning he treated Moktar as a brother, even tutored and showed him civilized methods for household living.<sup>2</sup> Salavin expressed deference towards Moktar because he saw in his servant his old inhibited self, as he began to explain to M. Dargoult, who knew nothing of his former life:

- Je ne le traite pas comme un prince. J'essaye de le traiter comme un homme. Ce n'est pas facile...  
- Si, fit Simon avec un sourire mystérieux. Si maintenant, il m'intéresse. Je l'ai mis en observation et j'espère le guérir. Si je le renvoie,

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Tel Qu'En Lui-Même..., p. 113.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

c'est la rechute assurée. Alors, je le garde à mon compte. J'ai connu un homme qui, dans les circonstances non pas absolument analogues....<sup>1</sup>

Unlike Salavin, Moktar never completely changed at heart. During an angry argument he killed an Italian salesman, resisted the police sent to apprehend him, then shot and wounded Salavin who tried to reason with him to surrender. The unfortunate Moktar was finally killed by the pursuing police.<sup>2</sup> However, the apparent failure of Salavin to change the youthful Moktar did not daunt his courage. New zeal and greater interest were displayed for the youth of society because Salavin knew that the future of humanity depended on their stability. He wanted them to be strong enough to meet the problems of their day and to attempt worthwhile solutions, not fearful as he had been for the greater part of his life:

- Certes dit M. Chavegrand, former de jeunes âmes, les détourner des aventures dont on a soi-même souffert, les introduire à l'amour des belles choses, des grands et fécondes idées. Quel destin admirable.<sup>3</sup>

These acts of devotion drew Salavin's thoughts away from self and to the community. He saw the many occasions

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Tel Qu'En Lui-Même..., pp. 69-70.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

on which he could have played an active part. He met old acquaintances again and thought of the numerous others whom he had slighted and to whom he might have opened his heart and found relief and happiness. After passing his later years in review, Salavin was consoled by the appreciation shown to him for deeds and sacrifices so generously performed for others. His one regret that he had realized so late the value of working with and for others was expressed to his wife:

- Oh! si je devais recommencer une autre vie, il me semble que je saurais. Comme ce serait simple! Comme nous serions heureux!<sup>1</sup>

As a direct contrast to Louis Salavin stands M. Pasquier who was always impelled by feverish desires for social and financial success, whereas, Salavin only sought peace with himself. M. Pasquier did not flee the company of men but pursued ambitions among them. At first he is considered as a redressor of wrongs, but his indiscretion incited the displeasure of men rather than their appreciation. He observed their least actions and openly criticized what he termed breaches of etiquette, as in the case of the man on the bus who was yawning:

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Tel Qu'En Lui-Meme..., p. 246.

Mon père, par exemple, ne pouvait souffrir la laideur. Le spectacle du ridicule, chez les autres, le trouvait intolérant. La réaction était franche, immédiate, peu prévisible. Nous étions dans l'omnibus, un monsieur d'un certain âge, peut-être même décoré de la Légion d'honneur... se mettait à bailler, à rebailier. Mon père, sortant de la réserve, prenait alors la parole. L'attaque, en général était directe. "Allons monsieur, disait-il d'une voix en même temps suave et sifflante, vous n'avez donc pas honte de nous montrer tout ce que vous avez dans la bouche?... Le bailleur, stupéfait, bredouillait parfois une excuse, parfois épouvanté, se levait en hâte, tirait le ficelle et quittait le véhicule. Parfois il protestait avec aigreur, avec noblesse, avec tristesse, avec indignation.<sup>1</sup>

At another time, the insulting remarks of M. Pasquier revealed his unconcern for the rights and feelings of others. He seldom suffered retaliations from those whom he tormented, but whenever his children accompanied him, they silently endured the shame they felt on account of his actions, as Laurent explained:

Il promenait sur l'assistance un regard froid et luisant. Il souriait et prononçait avec une force glaciale: "Quand on est affligé de cette affreuse manie, monsieur, on prend un fiacre..."

Les droits et les devoirs de l'individu dans le sein de la société, voilà ce qui se trouvait en débat et rien de moins. Nous autres, les enfants, nous attendions le catastrophe et feignons, mais en vain, de ne pas connaître l'extravagant défenseur des bonnes manières.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 118.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 118-119.

This indiscrete attitude of M. Pasquier in public did not improve after he had become a physician. He had few clients because two of his confreres, who had borne the brunt of his unchivalrous conduct, used every means to ruin him by expressing their suspicions to the public concerning M. Pasquier's many hours of leisure spent away from his medical practice.<sup>1</sup> Even then, M. Pasquier seemed to enjoy exploiting his profession abroad. Everyone passed his scrutiny and his advice and reactions were unlimited, as on the occasion when he not only expressed his opinion, about the way a woman was carrying her baby but also took immediate steps to demonstrate the correct manner of handling the child. Again Laurent revealed his horror of his father's interference:

Papa ne pouvait souffrir qu'une femme portât un enfant de manière défectueuse. Il éclatait, pas d'autre mot. "Mais non, madame! on ne laisse pas pendre ainsi la tête d'un nourrisson. Vous en ferez un idiot ou un estropié, de ce petit." La dame s'avisait-elle de protester, elle ou quelqu'un de sa séquelle, papa devenait péremptoire. "Pas d'explication. Je sais ce que c'est que les enfants, madame, j'en ai eu six." Je l'ai vu saisir l'enfant et lui donner en grondant une position convenable. Il s'enflammait alors: "Je vais vous le porter jusqu'à votre maison. J'aime encore mieux ça. Vraiment, on n'a pas idée de pareils maladroits!"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Vue de la Terre Promise..., p. 118.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Notaire du Havre..., p. 121.

Although the general public seemed to be M. Pasquier's self-appointed care, he had no financial returns for thus practicing his profession. Hence, he thought of using an assumed name and a new practice in order to build up a clientele. He posed as a physician for the timid in which he pretended to supply remedies to develop personal prestige.<sup>1</sup> His new approach gave him courage to persevere for a time because he believed that his labors were more rewarding, as he proudly informed his son Joseph:

Veuille comprendre, mon garçon, que je n'ai pas encore réussi mais que ma méthode est d'hier, que je commence à l'appliquer pour mon propre compte et que j'ai l'avenir devant moi.<sup>2</sup>

Whenever M. Pasquier was not professionally engaged he sought diversion with his mistresses. They awaited him for the money which he so generously distributed among them. Several women attracted him but Paula Lescure was the most prominent. Laurent disapproved of his father's conduct but the latter boasted that his knowledge of women warranted his actions, especially his lengthy affair with Paula Lescure:

- Paula! Mais c'est naturel. Cinq ans! Tu ne

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

vas pas, maintenant, me reprocher d'être fidèle. Ce serait à ne plus s'y reconnaître. Je suis un homme capable de plusieurs fidélités. Voilà ce que les gens de votre génération ne pourront jamais comprendre... les jeunes gens d'aujourd'hui ne comprennent rien aux femmes.<sup>1</sup>

The unrest of M. Pasquier culminated in his severance from home, business and mistresses to pursue new interests abroad. He desired to establish a colony in North Africa, therefore, he traveled to Algeria.<sup>2</sup> While there, he also hoped to win an Academy prize for writing a remarkable work. With the funds received from such an enterprise he planned to repay Joseph who had secretly financed the trip. In spite of all his endeavors M. Pasquier never attained worthwhile success.

The same restlessness of the father seemed to affect the Pasquier children. Joseph even exceeded his father's scheming character, particularly in respect to financial success. To attain this end Joseph used foul and fair means. Whenever affairs did not measure up to his expectations, crafty methods were employed to correct the situation in his favor, as revealed in the incident of certain explosives. The Bulgarians had ceased ordering explosives from the

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Nuit de la Saint-Jean..., p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 159.

Germans, for whom Joseph's business firm acted as intermediary, and had begun to patronize England's supply. Laurent learned how his brother had borrowed some photographs irrelevant to the Balkan War and had misrepresented the new explosives as being badly constructed:

Joseph Pasquier a cherché le moyen de jouer un sale tour aux fournisseurs anglais. Il a fait constituer, par M. Mairesse Miral, un dossier de photographies établissant que les nouvelles balles bulgares étaient l'objet d'un malfacon et qu'elles produisaient des effets quasiment explosifs... Mais alors, ces photographies sont, pour plus des deux tiers, empruntées par M. Mairesse-Miral à d'intéressantes collections particulières et n'ont pas de rapports précis avec la guerre balkanique. Bien. Si l'armistice est rompu, M. Joseph Pasquier a des chances de retrouver son marché, parce que l'opinion publique a commencé de se mettre en branle.<sup>1</sup>

Not only did Joseph consider such underhand dealings as necessary features of his efforts toward prosperity, but he further believed that these maneuverings, when undiscovered, increased his prominence as a business man. Yet, his greatest satisfaction was realized whenever he was elected an officer of business or cultural organizations. Although he occupied many important posts, he still aimed at the highest positions possible:

M. Joseph Pasquier est à l'heure actuelle, président de dix-neuf sociétés différentes et vice-président de

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Cécile Parmi Nous..., p. 95.



quatre autres. M. Pasquier n'accepte le vice-présidence que si elle est considérée comme obligatoire pour préparer au fauteuil présidentiel.<sup>1</sup>

Relaxation had no part in Joseph's program as he sought further prestige. No one was an obstacle because those who were not serviceable to him were crushed by his power. He boastfully proclaimed his good fortune for the least amount of success achieved:

J'ai cinquante et un ans, vous m'entendez? Et j'ai réussi tout ce que j'ai entrepris dans ma vie. Tout! Les petites affaires comme les grandes.<sup>2</sup>

The succession of enterprises brought problems which were too numerous for Joseph to solve alone, yet he consulted no one. Needless to say, in a short while, he was deceived and betrayed by those to whom he had meted out like portions of trickery and foul play:

Les affaires de Joseph étaient sans doute comparable à une jungle confuse... On s'y battait, on s'y trompait, on s'y devorait à belles dents. C'était le jeu. Un jeu qui ne pouvait aller, on l'entend bien, sans trahisons, sans duperies, sans machinations, sans stratagèmes et ruses de guerre. Tout cela pouvait amener Joseph à faire beaucoup de pas, à voir beaucoup de gens, à prononcer beaucoup de mots, à imaginer beaucoup de ruses...<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 209.

As the years progressed, Joseph's energy decreased more and more. He had risen to glory by leaps and bounds principally at the expense of others. Nothing really meritorious had been achieved for himself or for society. Full realization of his additional misery came as he witnessed the suicidal attempt of his son. Joseph watched his brother's reproachful look and knew that he was beginning to pay the price of his past avarice. Paternal neglect was only one of the many faults for which Joseph pitied himself and for which he had no remedy, yet, he sought to excuse himself:

"Toi, Laurent, je te connais. Tu pense que je suis puni. Ne dis pas le contraire. Je connais tes idées... Puni de quoi? De quoi? D'être fait comme je suis? C'est comme si tu reprochais au lion d'avoir des griffes ou au cobra de secreter du venin... Je ne peux pas continuer à vivre comme ça. Non! non! Le malheur est que je suis incapable de vivre autrement. Je me connais! Je me connais.<sup>1</sup>

The younger members of the family chose professional careers in their search for security and greater freedom. The stage was the principal attraction for Suzanne who, like the artists and poets of the time, tried to escape from the vivid reality of life and in her case - home-life. Hence,

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, La Passion de Joseph Pasquier..., p. 258.

the theater was the mainspring for her expression and suppression of deeper emotions:

Elle s'est détournée, presque dès le commencement, de toute cette passion du clan natal: trop de cris, trop de calculs, trop de chamailles! Suzanne s'est envolée dès qu'elle a trouvé la porte ouverte.<sup>1</sup>

While still in the midst of her family, Suzanne used her beauty and dramatics to attract the attention of older men, Testevel and Larseneur, acquaintances of her brother Laurent. She played the coquette with both men who in turn vied for her attentions which consisted usually of mere cajolery and even abuse. Laurent understood his younger sister's intentions and could watch only sympathetically the disappointment of the two men while Suzanne heartlessly enjoyed herself:

Elle a des vues sur sa carrière, sur le théâtre, sur la condition d'artiste. Elle se moque de Testevel comme d'une.... Elle n'hésite jamais à le charger de mille courses impossibles...

Ce que Testevel ne sait pas, ce que Testevel ne doit pas savoir, c'est que maintenant, Larseneur souffre à la place de Testevel. Le tour de Larseneur est venu... Suzanne lui reproche d'avoir poussé Testevel au désespoir... Larseneur commence de composer des plaintes, des lieder désespérés. Ses dernières œuvres sont d'ailleurs excellentes. Elle ne semble comprendre ni son pouvoir ni son action... La vipère! Le venin! Pauvre petite Suzanne, pauvre gentille soeur Suzanne!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., pp. 194-195.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., pp. 63-64, 191-192.

After the dismissal of her last suitor, Suzanne zealously prepared herself for the pomp and glory of the stage for which she never lacked words to express her love. During this time she demanded respect and attention. She even commanded and reprimanded her directors, especially Eric Vidame who nevertheless admired and lauded her.<sup>1</sup> As an actress, Suzanne easily forgot her sorrows and disappointment as she dramatized famous characters of past renown. Yet, she could not always live the unreal life of her heroines, therefore, when adversity did come in the form of apparent neglect, she was unprepared to meet it. It was then that she found the genuine friends in the Baudoin family, as has been mentioned in the preceding chapter. Her reflections were dark and despairing when notified that she was not needed. She did not expect such shortcomings and lack of foresight on the part of her directors because she believed that she rated among the best in her profession and did not deserve to be forgotten or deprived of her protective haven, the stage:

Et Suzanne était pourtant la plus intelligente de la bande, la plus clairvoyante de tous ces enfants égoïstes et vaniteux... Et le plus amer de tout, c'

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 35.

était que Suzanne était une vraie femme de théâtre, presque une enfant de la balle... Une femme vraiment dévouée à la cause du théâtre eût fort confiance à son patron, malgré quelques petites erreurs.<sup>1</sup>

It was a difficult task for Suzanne to accustom herself to life without the glimmer of the footlights. She was ill-prepared to meet the demands of others or to remain in reality long enough to see what was lacking in her life. Even during her stay with the Baudoin family, her adjustment was in proportion to the amount of dramatization seen and enacted, as noted in her preparations for a performance with the Baudoin children:

Suzanne songeait à la distribution, il va sans dire; mais elle avait mille choses à faire et ne savait, soudain où donner de la tête. Elle avait été jusqu'ici, dans la maison de la colline, une visiteuse indolente, un étrangère adulée, Balkis chez Salomon. Elle se trouvait maintenant res-saisie du premier rang, à sa place naturelle. On la voyait pleine de feu, de vie, et de plaisir.<sup>2</sup>

The stagg retained a singular interest for Suzanne, but she realized that her life appeared wasted whenever confronted with reality. She compared the sacrificial life of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., pp. 272-273.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 235.

her mother to that of her own which was free from real hardships and worries. Suzanne knew then that she had accomplished nothing profitable or lasting:

Elle regardait avec amertume ses belles mains qui n'avaient jamais, comme celles de sa mère, la pauvre Lucie-Eléanore, connu les besognes.<sup>1</sup>

While Suzanne sought refuge in her dramatic art and encountered only vanishing dreams, Cécile Pasquier found peace as a musician. Through her, Duhamel's faith in the power of music was depicted. He believed that music was beneficial because it enriches and ennobles one's life while it has an accent which affects all our thoughts and sentiments.<sup>2</sup>

For Cécile, music was an early inspiration to success. While quite young she amazed her parents with her talent and showed a determination to become a great pianist. After cultivating self-assurance and courage, Cécile was prepared to entertain audiences throughout the world. At her first concert the spectators were easily convinced of the grandeur of her art:

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Suzanne et les Jeunes Hommes..., p. 294.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Duhamel, Inventaire de l'Abime..., p. 221.

Elle vint sur le devant de la scène, s'assit et regarda la foule. Tous les musiciens applaudirent. La salle, entraînée, agitait des milliers de mains. Ce n'était plus le moment de défaillir mais de vivre.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, Cécile won the hearts of listeners and made them participators in her flight to the unreal through music. All classes of people were able to share her art. She had the power to sway her audience, to surprise, to reassure, and finally to conquer it:

Mais la foule musicienne, celle qui réunit, aux grands jours, les savants et les néophytes, les maîtres et les écoliers; les pauvres et les riches, les princes et les mendiants, cette foule a compris, dès le début de l'aventure, qu'il n'y aurait qu'une Cécile...

Les sons appartiennent à tous, ils sont à la merci de tous... Tous les hommes, toutes les femmes se recueillent dans une paix profonde. Ils savent que, pour un temps, la délivrance va leur être accordée.<sup>2</sup>

Happiness and security for Cecile were embodied in her profession, nevertheless, she tried to settle down to enjoy the pleasures of motherhood and to know and understand life which other musicians had told her was unnecessary knowledge. Upon the death of her infant son, Cecile was

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Jardin des Bêtes Sauvages..., p. 223.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Cécile Parmi Nous..., pp. 232-233.

beyond human comfort. Because she had learned the cost of suffering, she turned with greater zest to her musical career which became more brilliant because of her deeper knowledge of human life and suffering.

Apart from his confidence in musical art, Duhamel also trusted the power of science as a benefit to humanity.<sup>1</sup> Laurent Pasquier championed this cause especially in the combat against pure science or science for personal prestige. Suffering humanity particularly interested Laurent as noticed in his remark after having performed a simple act of service for one of his rheumatic co-workers, "Je l'ai fait car j'ai pitié des gens qui souffrent."<sup>2</sup> He became a biologist and later a physician and was able to confirm the fact that suffering could be alleviated if others were more conscious of the afflicted. Devoting his life to the curing of man's ills, Laurent's activities were marked by self-sacrifice. At the age of thirty-three he bore on his body the marks typical of hard labor:

Il y a sur l'étui des chairs, toutes sortes de plis profonds qui ne s'effaceront jamais, des calus, et

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Clouard, Histoire de la Littérature Française..  
.., p. 259.

<sup>2</sup>Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 65.



des cicatrices qui sont comme la signature indélébile des combats, des travaux et des jours.<sup>1</sup>

He recognized the value and importance of his labors and knew that he was amply repaid since personal glory and renown were never his motives for work. His indefatigable zeal was the result of his genuine compassion for people:

J'aime la vie, même quand elle me blesse, même quand elle me désespère. Que pourrait-il m'arriver qui me fit dévier de ma route? Toutes mes ambitions sont déclarées, toutes mes ambitions se présentent en pleine lumière. Je fais le métier que j'aime. Tout le monde s'accorde à dire que je le fais loyalement. Si je ne suis pas heureux, cela ne regarde que moi. Je n'ai pas même le droit de m'en plaindre à qui que ce soit.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of his efforts to give man the care worthy of his dignity, Laurent encountered others, like the scientist Rohner, who were opposed to humane treatment of individuals. For them, personal triumph was uppermost even at the expense of human lives. Laurent disapproved of Rohner's entire demeanor marked by selfishness and conceit:

Le monde affectif, pour lui, se limite à sa personne qui est douillette, irritable, susceptible de certains sentiments et de certaines passions ou émotions comme

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

la rancune, le mépris, la haine, la colère. Que le reste du monde soit tourmenté par l'amour, le désir, la tristesse, la rage, le désespoir, voilà ce qu'il ne peut même pas comprendre. Les penchants, les passions et les émotions des autres sont de curieux phénomènes presque toujours gênants et désagréable dont il se fait une représentation intellectuelle et strictement objective.<sup>1</sup>

The heartlessness of Rohner only prompted greater love for mankind in Laurent who saw how profitable he could be in his community by serving humanity rather than contributing to its ruin. His attitude towards Rohner and all others like him was simply but profoundly expressed:

"S'il faut cette froide passion pour devenir un grand savant, je demande à rester un humble, à rester un ignorant, je veux désapprendre à lire."<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, Laurent did not tolerate interference with his first interest, humanity. To Justin's query about his political stand Laurent frankly revealed his position which was one of disinterestedness:

Je n'ai jamais eu de position politique, je n'ai pas de position politique, j'espère ne jamais avoir dans l'avenir, ce que tu appelles une position politique. A l'égard des problèmes que la vie me soumet, j'entends n'avoir qu'une position humaine.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Les Maîtres..., p. 183.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>3</sup>Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 54.

In a final tribute to science and man, Laurent stated that the only reward he wished to receive was the knowledge that he had proficiently served his fellowmen and that he had encouraged the acquisition of scientific recognition for the service of man. Moreover, he wished to instill his spirit of sacrifice in the hearts of his co-workers as explained to M. Larminat, one of the laboratory supervisors:

- Il ne s'agit pas de moi, monsieur le Directeur. Il s'agit du bon fonctionnement de mon service, de la rigoureuse technique à laquelle doivent se plier tous mes collaborateurs. Il s'agit de la santé des malades pour qui nous travaillons ici tous ensemble.<sup>1</sup>

This study of the characters created by Georges Duhamel and of his observations on man actively engaged in society offered a glimpse of the general restlessness and uncertainty of the era. His encounters with men of many environments afforded him opportunities to understand the forces influencing man's social life.

In Louis Salavin was portrayed the embodiment of everyman in whom suffering and depression seem to predominate until he is awakened to reality. After a period of illness the egocentric Salavin felt the necessity of active participation in work with others whom he saw less fortunate than

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<sup>1</sup>Duhamel, Le Combat Contre les Ombres..., p. 113.

he. From thence proceeded remarkable changes which resulted in a truly humane character. He changed his name, found occupation as a phonograph merchant, traveled to Africa, assisted in giving medical aid to doctors and crowned his activities by his earnest but futile efforts to convert his Arab servant. Salavin learned that happiness is obtained by forgetting self and rendering service to others.

On the other hand, the elder Pasquier and son, Joseph, pursued their personal interests unrelentingly. M. Pasquier remained dissatisfied even after fulfilling his main ambition as a physician. His caprice and restlessness were further noticed in his distractions among other women and in his escape from everyone when he secretly departed for Africa. Joseph was more persevering in his efforts to attain total success. However, his endless engagements in enterprises did not compensate for the unhappiness which awaited him with his family and which he was incapable of changing because he could not live without connivance and deceit.

The spirit of the escapist from reality was imbibed by Suzanne and Cécile Pasquier. The former felt that dramatics would afford her security from the distress and heartaches of her family and society in general. Lacking knowledge of the value of sacrifice and suffering Suzanne never enjoyed

real peace. She never learned how to accept trials, even those encountered in the theater. Cécile, on the contrary, experienced the depth of sorrows and sufferings, therefore, when she continued her musical career, after the death of her son, she found satisfaction and a refuge in music where she could think beyond mere earthly existence and sorrows.

The medical and scientific knowledge of Laurent Pasquier and his interest in and love of mankind expressed by his untiring service indicate what Duhamel considered to be the beacons needed to guide those who were purely intellectuals and living without a thought of aiding man.

From Duhamel's descriptions of man of his times by means of Louis Salavin and the Pasquier family, there is exposed the need for directed activity in every man in order to successfully withstand the trials of the day and solve the problems which naturally recur in any society. Moreover, he realized that man's activities were not relegated for his happiness alone but they affected other men either to their advantage or disadvantage.

## CONCLUSION

This study of Georges Duhamel's series of novels, the Chronique des Pasquier and Salavin, has revealed his understanding of man in society - an understanding developed chiefly from his contact with suffering humanity. He observed the physical and mental struggles within the family and the community and made them active forces for the uplift or degradation of man.

The nobility of the family was overshadowed by the constant disturbances created by the individual members who sought personal satisfaction and ambitions. The contrasting spirit of happiness in the Baudoin family counterbalanced the disorders of the Pasquier household. The devotion of the mothers in each case was the mainstay of the peace and unity achieved. Most of the characters, however, were not in accord with Duhamel's concept of true family living. He probably wished to emphasize man's weaknesses and miseries which he felt were prevalent in the greater part of men. Even with faith in man's ability to correct faulty situations, Duhamel never portrayed his families in ideal or perfect conditions. They did, however, put forth efforts to attain happiness and stability in spite of various oppositions from within.

The depth and extent of Duhamel's knowledge of relationships among men were displayed as results of his observations and personal experiences. He excelled in the portrayal of friendship, the ideals and limitations of which are expressed in the sincere emotions of Laurent Pasquier, Justin Weill, and Désiré Wasselin and in the irresponsible attitude of Louis Salavin towards Edouard Loisel's expressions of true friendship.

In addition to the description of ideal friendship, Duhamel also presented men in their varied activities in the community. He showed in the Pasquier father, in the children, Joseph, Suzanne, and Cécile Pasquier, and in Louis Salavin the sad plight of the selfish man who pursued ambitions or lived in seclusion, but he was also keenly aware of the happiness experienced by those who willingly sacrificed and suffered for the sake of men in society, as seen in the later life of Louis Salavin and in every activity of Laurent Pasquier.

Besides demonstrating proficiency in his interpretation of the moods and actions of his characters, Duhamel made them correspond with the spirit and tempo of society. His close experiences among men revealed hidden sentiments, especially in suffering mankind, thus, he was better prepared to place man in situations of his own creation and in those which reflected the outstanding memories of his

life, all of which tended to develop the picture of con-  
temporary society.



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