1933

The Development of the School Teacher Character in the Works of Leon Frapie

Bernice G. Giltner

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/grtheses

Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons

Recommended Citation


https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/grtheses/155

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Scholarship at Digital Commons @ Butler University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Thesis Collection by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Butler University. For more information, please contact omacisa@butler.edu.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL TEACHER CHARACTER
IN THE WORKS OF LÉON FRAPILÉ

by
BERNICE G. GILTNER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Romance Languages
Butler University

Indianapolis
1933
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to acknowledge publicly here my indebtedness and gratitude to Professor Gino A. Ratti for the biographical information, and for his kindly criticism, helpful suggestions and patient encouragement.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. BIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. FRENCH SCHOOLS</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SOURCES OF MATERIAL</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. ITS RELATION TO WHOLE OF WORK</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. IDEALIZATION</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. REALISM--FIRST PERIOD</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. REALISM--SECOND PERIOD</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. SENTIMENTALIZING</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

One of the distinguishing characteristics of M. Léon Frapié's works is his choice of characters. They are not chosen from the fashionable, aristocratic or intellectual class, but from among the humblest of the wage-earning class. M. Frapié depicts the drabness, ignorance and poverty which oppress these people, and perceives with his keen sensibilities the commonplace tragedy of their lives and of the lives of their children. His own emotion becomes the medium by which a bond of sympathy toward them is transferred to the reader.

M. Frapié is certainly not a cold-blooded writer. Whatever permanence his work may have will possibly be due in part to the emotional treatment of the subject, which is never viewed dispassionately or critically. Indeed, it is doubtful if M. Frapié can be dispassionate or critical. He has a vibrant personality which means that he reacts quickly and positively. His humor, never bitter nor railing, produces that laughter which is closely akin to tears and he assures us. "Parmi mes propres contes, je préfère ceux où-- comme dans l'Infirmière scolaire--l'amour humain se cache sous un masque d'ironie ou de simplicité comique. Quand vous avez les larmes aux yeux, vous pouvez sourire: les gens sensibles seront parfois plus émus que si vous preniez
un visage douloureux." Obviously, M. Frapilé wishes to arouse pity and sympathy in his reader for he has put emotion into his writing. In the preface to the new edition of his first novel he says, "L'émotion—cette chose suprême—qu'elle soit dans un tableau, dans un chant, dans un livre—quand elle y est, elle y reste. On la trouve le jour où elle est livrée au public, on la retrouve trente ans après." Many of his characters are pitiable because they live in both financial and spiritual poverty. Yet, the characters: the children, the teachers, the domestics, are more important than the plots which are almost invariably secondary. The characters serve as the means by which injustices, prejudices and false ideas are exposed. Many of the characters are children.

Pity and tenderness is the keynote of his attitude toward the poor little urchins of the streets. The children of his stories are those of the slums, ragged, dirty, insufficiently fed and clad, and usually neglected. They come from miserable homes where they are sometimes cruelly treated or where they have to do a great deal of work, caring for younger children and doing housework. Imagine children with these responsibilities thrust upon them, making them old before they are young, for whom the recesses at school are their only playtime, and you are envisioning those children

of whom M. Frapié writes. This picturesque, suffering childhood is his primary interest. Then, two other sorts of characters share his attention: the house-maid (la bonne) and the school teacher. The maid is almost invariably a country girl who, not being satisfied in a small town, comes to Paris ambitious to find work. Housework is the only thing she knows how to do, so she becomes a maid in a bourgeois family. She usually intends to go back to her native village when she has saved enough money to make her independent or enough for a dowry but, in most cases, she is betrayed, and either does not return at all or returns in disgrace. Such is M. Frapié's maid, but the teacher is not like that. Her will power and moral stamina never fail her, but she, too, fights a losing battle, a fight for her professional reputation, and for a small place in the life of the community.

M. Frapié's teacher types vary. Some of them are old and a part of these have retired; others are young and inexperienced, making their first trials in their chosen field of work; some are at the height of their careers.

These teachers may be classified according to their professional rank. Four groups represented are, in order of increasing importance of rank: the femme de service, the institutrice, the adjointe, and the directrice. Some explanation of the differences of their positions may be advisable. The femme de service is the woman who does the janitor work and takes care of the physical needs of the small children in an école maternelle. Although not really a

1. Cf. p. 21 for explanation of école maternelle.
teacher, she does teach them right conduct and moral principles. The institutrice is a teacher who usually is in charge of the class of smaller pupils, and who works under the authority of the directrice. Quite often the institutrice is a beginner, whereas the term adjointe is usually applied to an experienced teacher who assists the principal of the school. The adjointe of M. Frapié's works has the intermediate class in larger schools and the directrice, or principal, teaches the older pupils and has the administration of the school.

The purpose of the present dissertation is to trace the development of the school teacher character from M. Frapié's earliest works to those published in 1927. The plan is to find the sources of the character, to make a study of its environment and relative importance in M. Frapié's works, in order to get a perspective of it, and finally to study it in detail throughout its development, presenting in conclusion a critical evaluation of its various phases. The different types will be presented chronologically.

M. Frapié's works may be divided into four periods. The divisions are not wholly arbitrary, for there are periods of interruption between groups of works which form natural divisions. Two of the groups are similar, with the result that there are three phases of development in the school teacher character. After the first novel, which stands alone, five years elapsed before the publication of the second. It inaugurated a new period of writing which included both novels and short stories. This period was followed by a pause which lasted four or five years. By this time the
World War had begun and there was another break in M. Frapié's writing. When the war had been going on nearly two years he published some short stories whose background was Paris in the throes of conflict. These stories were written from the viewpoint of one to whom the war meant thousands of widows, orphaned children and maimed soldiers. For a time M. Frapié's literary work was entirely short stories. Later, after another unproductive interval of three or four years, he continued his work. The most recent period is principally a period of novel writing.

It is the purpose of the present discussion to demonstrate that the principal school teacher character of the first book is idealized, that of the second and third groups is presented realistically, and that of the last division shows a tendency toward sentimentalizing. The study does not include all of M. Frapié's works because not every one of them deals with the school teacher. However, the school teacher character figures frequently, even in the volumes published in the war period.

CHAPTER II.

BIOGRAPHY

Before undertaking a discussion of M. Frapié's short stories and novels it may be advisable to present a few facts concerning his life, for a better understanding of the works themselves. Unfortunately, there is little information available about his life. This fact may be attributed, I believe, to two causes: first, he does not talk much of himself, and second, he is not ranked among the most important writers and, therefore, has received only a small amount of attention from critics and historians of literature.

M. Léon Frapié was born in Paris in 1863. His father was a master jeweler when Léon was born and soon became a notable merchant. The parents had only an elementary education but were very great readers, preferring Hugo and Balzac who were popular at that time, and Léon inherited a love of reading so that, while quite young, he also had read these two authors. They helped to develop in him an impressionable and vibrant nature.

There were four children in the Frapié family and as the house was not large Léon was sent as pensionnaire when he was eight years old to the house of two rather elderly, unmarried women who kept a boarding school for girls. Until he was fifteen years old he remained there and had only girls for associates. These teachers, who were of a literary turn of
mind, taught him Latin and Greek. Both of them had literary aspirations; one was the author of a book for young girls and the other wrote poetry.

Many times after dinner they had him read aloud to them the novels of Daudet and Dickens. He read Nicholas Nickelby when he was the same age as the hero. This early environment among women gave him, no doubt, a feminine sensibility and perhaps encouraged introspection. At any rate, he has the faculty of psycho-analyzing himself. He says of himself, "La caractéristique de ma personnalité, c'est une grand faculté d'émotion--cette faculté me vient de mes parents--de mes lectures--et aussi beaucoup de mon éducation dans une atmosphère toute féminine. Il semble que j'ai deux sensibilités: une masculine et une féminine."

When he was fifteen he went to the Lycée St. Louis where he prepared for the baccalaureate degree in classical studies. At the age of eighteen he entered the administration of the prefecture and from then on has always been an office man. He married when he was about twenty-five years old and this circumstance of his marriage is of importance as one of the sources of the school teachers in his work for the reason that his wife is a teacher, having been a directrice for many years.

Through his family and occupation he belongs to the bourgeoisie and through his sympathies to "le peuple." He

1. The biographical information was given by M. Frapié himself to Prof. G. A. Ratti about May 25, 1926.
It is probably because of his affection for "common folks" that he has chosen to live close to the poorer quarters of Paris near enough to keep in daily contact with the life there. Expressed in his own words, "J'ai besoin d'entendre le bruit des rues pour écrire." Even now he lives within walking distance of the slums which have so large a place in his writings. "C'est le Paris des faubourgs, des quartiers populaires, le Paris du travail et de la lutte pour le pain de chaque jour qui nous est offert dans--les œuvres de Léon Frapié..." 1

The work to which these words referred particularly was La Maternelle. It was this work which won the Goncourt prize in 1904. M. Frapié won over three other contestants. It was alleged that M. H. K. Huysmans proposed his name because he detested Charles-Louis Philippe who was also competing. The Goncourt prize is awarded for "le meilleur ouvrage d'imagination en prose paru dans l'année." 2 Le Temps of December 8, 1904, tells that "un petit incident se produisit sur le mode de transmission de ce résultat. Les Dix refusèrent de recevoir les journalistes. Un maître d'hôtel vint annoncer à ceux-ci: 'Le résultat est à la caisse.' Et ce fut la caissière qui proclama le nom du gagnant." 3

It seems that there is quite often much difference of

---

1. Ibid.
opinion as to who should have the prize. Mirbeau's comment on the prize was, "Il y a deux ans, l'année de Frapié, pourquoi n'avons-nous pas donné le prix à Guillaumin? Sa Vie d'un Simple est une chose admirable, rare, délicieuse--oui, jusqu'à présent nous n'avons pas donné les prix que nous aurions dû donner. Je crois que, ce que nous devons faire, en effet, c'est couronner des livres qui ne pourraient, en aucun cas, être couronnés par l'Académie Française." Montfort says the Prix Goncourt is a bad joke for the reason that it gravely rewards mediocre writers and turns public opinion away from better writers. Notwithstanding the opinions of these gentlemen, the awarding of the prize is indicative of literary merit in the work which receives it, and M. Frapié may be proud of La Maternelle. One critic has said of him that he is a "novelist and story writer whose specialty is the study of the children of the poor and the working classes of Paris." Another refers to him as, "Léon Frapié, auteur de Marcelin Gayard (1903) et d'une étude émouvante sur les écoles, La Maternelle (1904)." He is listed here among "Plusieurs écrivains importants se rattachent encore au naturalisme par leur tendances ou par leurs confraternités littéraires."

M. Frapié contributed to periodicals and to a literary review mentioned in Vingt-cinq Ans de Littérature Française

4. Ibid.
in a discussion concerning the "Fondation de l'Enclos où écri-
vent Louis Lumet et Charles-Louis Philippe auquel collabore
plus tard Léon Frapié."

Although much information about M. Frapié's life is not
available, it is apparent that his has been a rather unevent-
ful life, not very different from that of hundreds of other
government clerks except that he has written some stories
which are noteworthy. The character of his work indicates,
I believe, that it owes very much to the circumstances of his
life for the characters in his stories closely resemble peo-
ple in the class of society which he knew best and which ap-
pealed to his most and are, therefore, surely not entirely
products of his imagination.

CHAPTER III.

FRENCH SCHOOLS

A short discussion of the French school system seems advisable to give a better understanding of the school teacher in M. Frapié's works for the reason that almost any person is more or less affected by the environment in which he lives. Moreover, the school teacher owes her very existence as a teacher to the school in which she spends the greater part of her life. Its aims, ideals and organization necessarily form the background for the study of the teacher.

As much has been written about the French schools, the following brief outline does not attempt to treat the subject exhaustively, but only to give the facts that are necessary as a basis for the present discussion.

In introducing these facts it should be stated that the University of France, that is, the entire school system, comprises a large number of public schools of three classes. First, there is the enseignement primaire (primary instruction) which gives elementary and practical knowledge. Second, the enseignement secondaire (secondary instruction) gives in lycées and collèges a more developed instruction. Third, the enseignement supérieur (higher instruction) gives to advanced students an addition of culture and an introduction to scien-
scientific research. There are also many technical schools which continue the primary instruction. The school which continues the vocational work of the école primaire is the école primaire supérieure. It is vocational and does not prepare for the university. Normal schools belong to this classification. There are other specialized schools for the training of teachers, mining and civil engineers, army and navy officers. A free industrial school is maintained at Amiens. It was begun in a time of industrial depression and gives instruction in textile arts. Twenty-eight courses are now offered. There are also night classes for the employed. Some industrial firms establish school centers at their mills for the apprenticing of prospective cloth weavers while other schools try to encourage agricultural workers. Another type of vocational or professional school is the normal school, there being one in each department. Then there are the so-called "free schools" maintained by religious groups. However, they must give the standard course and may give whatever else they please in addition.

France has a sense of national responsibility for the education of all her citizens. This means equal educational opportunity for all, although not equal education for all, since the old class distinctions are still felt, but it means an adequate, practical education for everyone. "The spirit

of French education may be summed up as a sense of national responsibility for the education, in various degrees, of all citizens, involving supervision of the way in which, whether by state officials or by private bodies or individuals, this education is conducted and the need for it supplied.

This sense of responsibility is shown by the fact that one of the cabinet members is the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, which brings the educational system directly under national control. However, the schools are really controlled by the Conseil Supérieur, an organization which meets twice a year with the Minister and is composed of educational experts the majority of whom are chosen by the teachers from among their ranks. Among the principal advantages of such centralized management are the close coordination of the schools and the cheapness of a good education.

The school system of France is divided geographically into seventeen académies or units. The rector of the university in each division is the head of that académie. He is assisted by the inspecteurs d'académie who supervise the work of the inspecteurs primaires. Each arrondissement (a governmental district) has one inspecteur primaire. There are women inspectors for the girls' schools and écoles maternelles. The word "university" applies to that institution of higher learning which corresponds to our university,

3. A more complete explanation will be found on page 21.
except that the French school is strictly a school for advanced studies. "Academy" means here the whole organization of schools in that district beginning with the most elementary and including the highest, the university itself. In each of these seventeen academies there is a council which meets twice a year under the chairmanship of the rector who is appointed by the Minister of Public Instruction. A conseil académique composed of the academy inspectors, deans of the university faculties, heads of superior schools and representatives of the university and secondary school professors is likewise under the chairmanship of the rector. This organization decentralizes school control to some extent and safeguards local interests. The most elementary schools in the academy system are the écoles maternelles which may be compared with the American day nursery with slight differences.

An explanation must be given here of several types of schools beginning with the highest and proceeding to the lowest. The university differs radically from the American university in several respects. In the French institution there are no "school spirit," no organized athletics, no social activities sponsored by the school nor any fraternities. Thus, it can be seen that probably only those who really want to study will enroll since there are no extra-curricular activities to attract those persons of less serious purpose. At the French university, students are given a chance to learn directly from professors engaged in research work. All the university work is of a graduate nature.

The secondary schools are of two types, lycée and collège.
The collège gives the same courses of study as the lycée but is supported and controlled by religious groups or municipalities; whereas, the lycée is controlled by the federal government. Most of the secondary schools include the work of the elementary school, taking children from five to sixteen or seventeen years of age. None of the secondary schools is permitted to be co-educational; girls are taught by women and boys by men. There are four types of students: pensionnaires or internes who live at the school, demi-pensionnaires who take the mid-day meal there, externes surveillées who study at school and the externes libres who study only the teaching classes. In a boys' lycée where discipline and routine are usually very rigid, the pupil receives good intellectual training but his general interests which will develop in him a well-rounded personality are ignored. The French secondary course is two years ahead of ours in cultural subjects but until recently their courses in science have not been as good. Although the secondary schools have tuition fees, many scholarships are available for the deserving pupils of intellectual promise who cannot afford to pay. On the other hand, the instruction in the primary schools is free and elementary education is compulsory.

Every child is required to attend school from the age of six to thirteen or be taught at home. Parents and guardians of a six-year old child must notify the mayor what they intend to do, either to educate it at home or in a public or private school. On the first of August lists are made out informing the schools of the pupils they may expect. Failure
to notify the mayor is punishable by fine. Stray children on
the street may be seized and taken to the nearest school.
Persons employing children who are under the age limit are
liable to a fine. The children who are privately educated
must on and after the age of nine submit yearly to a public
examination. Failure on this examination entails sending the
child to a public or private school.

The primary and secondary schools take children of the
same age extending, in terms of our schools, from the begin-
ning of grade school to the finish of high school. Up to high
school age the courses of instruction are identical in the
two schools. Then the upper division of the primary school
continues with instruction of a vocational character; on the
other hand, the secondary school gives a strictly academic
course which prepares for the university. The school which
continues the work of the primary school is a specialized
technical or normal school. "Whereas in America the primary
school leads up to the secondary, in France it educates chil-
dren of the same age alongside of it, and the transition from
one to the other is by no means easy nor widely extended." 2
The diploma given by the primary school is the certificat
d'études primaires; and the baccalauréat is given
on examination at the end of the secondary course. The latter
entitles its holder to enter the university. All diplomas

P. 557.
are given by the State.

Elementary or primary schools must be maintained by every commune for children from six to thirteen years old. Usually there is one for boys and one for girls but it may be a mixed school provided that the commune has fewer than five hundred inhabitants and can prove that it can not support two schools. "The whole tradition of France is against handing over to women the education of all but the smallest boys." The school hours are from eight-thirty to eleven-thirty o'clock in the morning and from one to four o'clock in the afternoon except that on Thursdays and Sundays there is no school. This schedule is somewhat different from that of American schools, being longer in number of hours and having Thursday free instead of Saturday.

Another difference is the method of supervision or teacher inspection. The primary inspectors, whose duty it is to look out for defects and merits in the teachers under their supervision, are appointed from the teaching ranks after a severe competitive examination. When they have made their inspection visit they leave a memorandum of their criticisms with the teacher and make a report to their superior, the academy inspector. The délégués cantonaux and the conseil d'école act as school managers and take care of the material welfare of the pupils. We have no school official or board that corresponds to this. There are many other more or less important differences. For instance, the school master in small towns is usually secretary to the mayor.

1. Ibid. P. 317.
To become a primary teacher one must hold the brevet élémentaire (a diploma) and be at least eighteen years old if a man or seventeen if a woman. He or she is a stagiaire or probationer for the first two years. Then upon passing an examination the stagiaire can be recommended for full teacher-ship by the academy inspector who is the only person who can raise the probationer to a titulaire, which means being accepted as having fully qualified for the position of teacher after giving evidence of sufficient ability.

The certificat d'aptitude pédagogique is given after two years of successful teaching. That the teaching staff is generally excellent is due, in part, to these facts; first, there are many competitors for teaching positions; second, teachers must give proof of ability and intensive study; third, their tenure of office is practically assured.

The salaries even for the first rank teachers are low and are fixed by a national scale. Allowances are made for residence quarters if the commune does not provide it. The stipend varies with the locality since living is dearer in the city than in rural districts. Teachers' salaries are taxed five per cent to provide for their retirement, and one may retire on half-pay after twenty-five years of service if one has reached the age of fifty-five. In case of death, if the teacher has been married six years the widow and minor children receive one-third of the amount to which he would have been entitled.

From the discussion of the teacher let us turn to the pupil, to note, when necessary, differences existing between
the French and American elementary school pupil. The pupil of the French elementary schools usually wears a black smock fastening in the back with a button at the neck and a belt around the waist—a very economical garb. The pupils march in double file entering or leaving the school room and sometimes sing as they march. This device aids in keeping good discipline. Corporal punishment is forbidden but still common, although a favorite device to promote good discipline is the generous distribution of bons points (merit points). They are like the gold stars and similar rewards given by our primary teachers. A child is expected to receive some of them each day. One means of punishment is to deny the pupil his merit point.

The pupils are required to keep a notebook for all subjects to supplement or supplant the textbooks. The teacher dictates a summary of the chief points for the next day’s lesson to be written in the notebooks which are frequently inspected. Homework increases in proportion to the pupil’s age. The home work and notebooks which must be done neatly often exhibit several styles of penmanship which are used to add to their attractiveness and merit.

Penmanship is an important subject in the primary curriculum. In the course of study, moral and civic instruction replaces the religious. The law of March 28, 1882, excluded the teaching of any particular dogma and gave first place among the required subjects to moral and civic teaching. Jules Ferry called it the chief dignity of the teaching profession.
Ce fut surtout l'oeuvre de Jules Ferry de 1879 à 1882. Depuis lors, il y a toujours eu des établissements publics et des établissements libre. Mais chacun est maître chez soi; l'Eglise ne surveille plus l'Université....L'enseignement primaire est enfin organisé. Tout instituteur public ou libre doit être titulaire d'un brevet décerné après examen. Le clergé perd, avec la lettre d'obéissance, un de ses plus grands privilèges. De grandes lois de 1881 et de 1882 établissent l'école primaire laïque, gratuite et obligatoire, lois indispensables sous un régime démocratique où le peuple souverain doit savoir lire.

The success of the moral instruction depends on the teacher, but too often it is merely repetition of copy-book maxims.

That the curriculum is too heavy is the belief of Dr. Dufestal who thinks the pupils' health is impaired by eight hours in school plus homework. There has been much discussion on this subject lately and a tendency to decrease the overloaded program.

Lessons are standardized and the teacher has little personal influence on the course of study. The method, which is more standardized than the texts, is always collective, not individual. A great deal of emphasis is put on memory to the detriment of the development of reasoning ability.

Very little attention has been paid to gymnastics. The law holding teachers personally liable for all accidents to their pupils while under their charge tended to prevent any use of gymnasium apparatus. In the late war the physique of the French soldiers showed the lack of physical training and

as a result, military training was added to the curriculum in 1921 and is practically obligatory. Another result has been the increased interest in sports throughout the country since the World War.

The decision of the councils of the universities of Nancy and Toulouse to establish an institute of physical education was sanctioned by a decree of the French president. These schools will be the first of the kind to be organized in a faculty of medicine. There will be courses designed for various types of students. It will be both theoretical and practical for it is also to be a center of research in physical education. More attention seems to be given to physical education in higher schools than in lower schools.

For children of pre-school age, there is the école maternelle. As has been said before, it corresponds somewhat to our kindergarten or day nursery except that its aim is principally to instruct and not to amuse children. In La Maternelle there is an explanation of the école maternelle which is partially quoted from the school by-laws. The quotation is:

L'école maternelle n'est pas une école, au sens ordinaire du mot; elle forme le passage de la famille à l'école; elle garde la douceur affectueuse et indulgente de la famille, en même temps qu'elle initie au travail et à la régularité de l'école.

Le succès de la directrice est jugé par l'ensemble des bonnes influences auxquelles l'enfant est soumis, par le

plaisir qu'on lui fait prendre à l'école, par les habitudes
d'ordre, de propreté, de politesse, d'attention, d'obéissance,
d'activité intellectuelle qu'on y doit contracter, en jouant.\footnote{La Maternelle. Albin Michel. Paris. 1908. P. 106.}

As defined in the \textit{Annuaire General}:

Les écoles maternelles mixte reçoivent dans les villes
des garçons et des filles de 2 à 6 ans, leur donnent un en-
seignement très élémentaire sous forme de jeux et d'exercices

It is elementary instruction adapted to very young students.
Its pupils are from two to six years old and are children
whose parents work during the day. In such families where
both parents work this is practically the younger children's
home. In winter the school is open from seven in the morning
until seven in the evening and in the summer its hours are
from eight until six. The children are brought and called
for by the parents or older brother or sister. A good fea-
ture of this type of school is that it serves a warm, nour-
ishing lunch at a very small cost. In the case of needy
pupils the lunch is free but some are too proud to accept
charity and bring their own miserable rations from home.

Until 1881 these schools were called \textit{salles d'asile}.
They take both boys and girls and the teachers are always
women. No special training is required of the teacher. If
there are more than fifty pupils the teacher has an assistant
and there is always a motherly sort of maid, \textit{la remme de ser-
vice}, who performs many services for the small pupils. The
infant school or maternelle trains and takes care of boys and girls until they are old enough to enter the elementary school. The classe enfantine, taking children from four to seven years of age, is another type of the maternelle and both nursery and primary school are free of charge. We have devoted more space to these schools because they are the schools in which M. Frapié's teachers are found.
CHAPTER IV.

SOURCES OF MATERIAL

The realistic portrayal of the school teacher by M. Frapié shows a knowledge of and an acquaintance with real members of this profession while the idealization of the type indicates that M. Frapié is not lacking in imagination and creative ability. The character is neither a photographic word-reproduction of real persons nor wholly imagined. It is realistic enough to indicate knowledge, and idealized enough to show originality of idea. The source of the latter is naturally in his literary ability but where did he obtain his knowledge of teachers?

A glance at his biography will show that in his early life he was in personal contact with the two women teachers of the boarding school. He was in a unique position because of being the only boy in the school. This would necessitate special attention and consideration toward him on the part of the teachers. He was probably a favorite pupil of theirs. He relates that they had him read Dickens and Daudet aloud to them for their enjoyment and his edification. There is a marked resemblance between the child characters of these two writers and those of Léon Frapié. Perhaps this resemblance is due to the fact that M. Frapié was much impressed by the children he met in his reading. The little heroes whom he especially liked had to substitute for real flesh-and-blood
boy companions whom he lacked.

Real children of the same sort interested him and when he began to write, years later, he made them live on the printed page. He portrays their various temperaments, their sufferings, their pathetic joys with amazing fidelity and understanding. On the other hand, his observation of teachers was not given impetus by his reading. He had daily contact with two of them during the most formative years of his life. They were almost the only adults he had a chance to know well during this time; consequently, feminine qualities were developed in him through his having women instead of men teachers. The French usually insist on having separate schools for boys and girls, and on having the girls taught by women and the boys by male teachers. This is especially important where many of the pupils live at the school. With the pensionnaire the home influence and interests are gone and the school is the center of the child's existence. He will absorb by imitation the interests and attitudes, perhaps even the way of thinking of those persons around him who have the greatest influence on him. A boy placed in an entirely feminine environment would miss the fights, rivalries, enmities and friendships he would have had if he had attended a boys' school. These things might not do him a great deal of good but without them he would be less likely to become a vigorous sort of man.

The naturally harsher masculine traits were subdued in M. Frapié and he acquired an uncanny insight into feminine psychology. It seems at times that he has two viewpoints of things, a masculine and a feminine. Sometimes impressions
and ideas acquired in childhood are most clear-cut and persist after later ideas have sunk into the background of memory. If the influence of M. Frapie's early schooling were not stronger than that of the lycée would he have written frequently of women teachers and rarely of men teachers?

Another circumstance to be noted as a source of the teacher character in his works is his marriage. When he was about twenty-five years old he married a school teacher. She continued to teach after their marriage and is now a directrice. In a household where both members work each is usually interested in the other's profession. M. Frapie probably spoke of the various government employees of his acquaintance and told the bits of news concerning the office while Mme. Frapie would have been a very unusual person if she had not talked over with her husband her experiences in the classroom. The children who attended the school would have been described and discussed. The outstanding ones must have been talked about many times until M. Frapie felt as if he knew them. Their doings and sayings were then interesting to him. Some of them may have been outstanding because they behaved badly, some because of superior intelligence, some because they were especially pitiful or unfortunate. Likewise, Mme. Frapie's colleagues must have been the topic of conversation frequently. Their habits, manners, peculiarities, faults and virtues must have been related. It is a noteworthy fact that M. Frapie did not begin to write until he was nearly thirty-five years old. That is ten years after his marriage. In ten years time one person can have a great, but sometimes unrecognized
influence on another's ideas. M. Frapić denies that his wife had much influence on his writing yet she herself was a teacher and he must have known of her school experiences and associates. We may infer from his denial of her influence that he did not discuss his school teacher characters with her nor ask her advice about them. Her influence was not direct, to be sure, but sometimes people are influenced so gradually and subtly that they are not conscious of having been influenced by that particular person or thing. Granted that school teachers were topics of conversation occasionally between M. and Mme. Frapić during a period of ten years, is it not logical to suppose that M. Frapić formed ideas that were amplified and crystalized during this time and that these ideas were formed partly as a result of his wife's experiences and acquaintances?

It would be difficult if not impossible to determine whether he owes the greater part of his knowledge of school teachers in general and of some in particular to his early life or if the greater part of it were acquired from his wife. He may have met some of her colleagues or he may never have seen any of them. Even if he did not, he surely knew them through her. If, merely by an occasional remark or incident, she gave an incomplete sketch of a person, his imagination would have filled in the details, thus creating the fictitious characters based on fact found in his stories. No attempt will be made here to fix the relative importance of the two sources but merely to point them out as worthy of consideration in dealing with the origin of the teacher in M. Frapić's literary productions.
CHAPTER V.

RELATION TO WHOLE OF WORK

M. Frapie's field of writing is somewhat limited; that is, he does not use a great variety of characters and situations. All his principal characters are taken from the poorer class of school children, or from the petit bourgeoisie including school teachers and office clerks, or they are maids from the peasant class. He knows his particular field well, and wisely restricts his choice of subjects to keep within its limits. Further examination of the subjects about which M. Frapie writes shows that there are three principal classifications of them. One group deals with the school and its pupils and teachers; another group is those stories in which the maid is the principal character; the third group is those stories with the World War as the background or those placed in the post-war period. The volumes dealing with the school are: La Maternelle, La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites), L'Ecole, Les Contes de la Maternelle, Nouveaux Contes de la Maternelle, Les Amis de Juliette, L'Institutrice de Province.

In the following novels, Marcelin Gayard, La Virginité, Les Filles à Marier, La Figurante, and Les Obsédés, the heroine is a maid or some other girl who is betrayed by her innocence or stupidity. Les Contes de la Guerre, most of Bonnes Gens, and Le Capitaine Dupont are concerned with situations brought about by the war.
Probably there are few writers, if any, who have surpassed M. Frapié in dealing with les pauvres petits and the petit bourgeoisie for his thorough, sympathetic understanding of his characters enables him to present them with a vivid, masterly stroke. Yet, a writer whose scope is thus limited has less opportunity to attain the foremost rank of literary celebrities. However, M. Frapié has achieved considerable prominence. La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites) has been staged in France as a play; La Maternelle (a novel) was awarded the Goncourt prize; and others of his stories are widely read. One can safely say, I believe, that although not an outstanding genius, M. Frapié has achieved an enviable position among contemporary French writers.

A review of M. Frapié's stories will indicate how much of his work deals with the school teacher, that is, what proportion of his whole work offers material for this study. A glance at a complete list of M. Frapié's works shows them to be almost evenly divided between novels and short stories. There are ten novels, ten volumes of short stories and one story written in dramatic form. They are not, in my opinion, of equal merit. The short stories are usually better than the novels. M. Frapié is not a writer de longue haleine. It is interesting to note that the first five and last three books are novels, thus placing the majority of his novel writing in the earliest and most recent periods.

An analysis of the content of the works shows that of the novels the following three have short references to the school teacher: Marcelin Gayard, La Liseuse, and La Virginité.
Gamins de Paris has considerable material and in two novels the principal characters are school teachers. These are La Maternelle and L'Institutrice de Province. Interesting and varied types of them figure in many of the contes or short stories. Of these, Les Contes de la Maternelle and Nouveaux Contes de la Maternelle furnish most of the material about the school teacher. As for the story in dramatic form, La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites), it is a different version of the theme used in one of the earlier novels, La Maternelle. The same femme de service is the central figure and other important characters are also identical in the two books. The following volumes of short stories present material: L'Écolière (two stories), La Boîte Aux Gosses (one story), Le Capitaine Dupont (four stories), Bonnes Gens (three stories), and Les Amis de Juliette. The two novels, La Figurante and Les Filles à Marier, contain no material. In only a small part of M. Frapié's stories does the school teacher character have no place.

The plots which deal with social problems set forth some unconventional ideas. They seem to regard the welfare of the individual as equal or greater than the welfare of society. Of course they are only theories and their author realizes their impracticability but they reveal another side of his idealistic and sympathetic nature. The individual is represented as being more important than the traditional moral standards of society which may sometimes be set aside with benefit. Occasionally the two themes, social problem and school teacher, are found together but more often not, since
the school teacher is not an unconventional sort of person.

A review of the subject matter of M. Frapié's complete writings shows that a conservative estimate would be that one-third of them are devoted to the school, its ideals, methods of teaching, teachers and pupils. The teachers are thus found in connection with M. Frapié's chief interest—les pauvres petits. The school teacher theme has an important place in M. Frapié's work because of these two facts, first, that this theme predominates in a large proportion of M. Frapié's stories, and second, that the best works are in this group.

All the teacher characters in M. Frapié's novels and short stories may be classified as to rank in four groups. It is necessary to indicate the differences between them since each works in a different sphere and is a distinct type. As we have already seen, these types of teachers are the femme de service, the adjointe, the institutrice, and the directrice. English terms do not convey quite the exact meaning, but for the purpose of convenience English equivalents will be used as follows: for femme de service maid will be used; for adjointe, assistant; for institutrice, teacher; and for directrice the word principal. There follows an explanation of each.

The femme de service is the maid in the école maternelle. She is usually a motherly sort of person who attends to the physical needs of the small children. In addition to this, her duties include taking charge of a class when needed, and doing the cleaning, sweeping and ventilating. She must also be at the beck and call of the teachers all day.

When there are many pupils in the école maternelle, the
directrice, or principal, has one or two helpers, called adjointes. The pupils in the école maternelle are divided according to age into two or three classes, depending on how large the enrollment is. The assistants (adjointes), in addition to teaching their classes, alternate in the supervision of the play periods and the lunches.

The management of the school is in the hands of the principal. Quite often she teaches one of the classes, and the assistants, who are under her orders, have the others. The principal sometimes lives in an apartment in the school building or at least has an office there. The requests and complaints of the parents are made to her because the teachers avoid contact with the parents. "Les gens sont très pénétrés aussi du respect hiérarchique. Ils menacent peu la directrice, mais ils se rendent compte qu'une institutrice-adjointe est une salariée d'un genre à part, guère mieux lotie qu'eux-mêmes, et... ils adressent une plainte à M. l'inspecteur, ou à M. le directeur de l'enseignement, sur du papier de cérémonie, avec force protestations de dévouement servile." The principal is responsible to the inspector for the order of the school and the welfare of the pupils. The position of principal is filled by older women who have been promoted after years of successful teaching or who have personal influence with the school authorities.

The first teacher of M. Frapie's works teaches in the

2. Ibid. P. 236.
elementary school. Her pupils are all girls unless the dis-

triet has fewer than five hundred inhabitants and cannot af-

ورد two schools. In such a case she may have the boys, too.

It is her duty to prepare her pupils for the examination at

the completion of the elementary course. If the child passes

this examination he receives the certificat d'études primaires

élementaires. The success of the teacher is measured to a

large extent by the percentage of her pupils who are success-

ful in this examination. "...si on ne nous sait pas gré des

succès obtenus aux examens, par contre on n'hésite pas à nous

faire un crime des insuccès, pour pouvoir nous déplacer ou

nous refuser un avancement légitime...."

All M. Frapié's teacher characters teach in the école

maternelle except those of the first novel. They teach in

écoles primaires élementaires.


2. Cf. page
CHAPTER VI.

IDEALIZATION

M. Frapié made his literary debut as a novelist with the publication of *L'Institutrice de Province* in 1897. Thirty years later another edition of it was published with a preface by the author in which he says, "Est-ce que toute l'oeuvre future de certain écrivain est en germe dans son premier ouvrage?" If the answer to this is "yes," then it is significant that this first novel tells the life story of a teacher. She is just a country school teacher, but the fairness of Mlle. Bord, the sympathy and sensibility of Rose, the enduring devotion to her profession of the retired teacher, and the mother-like attribute of the substitute teacher who comes later are qualities particularly noted in Louise Chardon. She is a composite, as this study will try to demonstrate, of the best qualities any teacher can possess. To make her virtues stand out more clearly, more appealingly, M. Frapié makes her a martyr.

The plot of *L'Institutrice de Province* is as follows: Louise Chardon, twenty-two years old, comes from Paris to a small village named Chabois to teach her first school. She is lonely and disappointed because the people of the neighborhood


34
are hostile to her. The principal of the girls' school where she teaches is a stern woman, hard on herself and hard on others. She loves only her profession. "Il ne fallait attendre de sa part ni douceur ni affection; elle n'aimait que son métier."

However, her attitude toward the forlorn girl becomes more sympathetic during Louise's illness and finally she reciprocates Louise's affection for her. She becomes Louise's only real friend. Louise is not allowed to remain in Chabois long. She is changed from one school to another, always having to fight against the ignorant public, the misbehaving or lazy children, the politicians and the administrators. A doctor, Dr. Cabans, wishes to marry her but his attentions annoy her because she thinks of him only as a good friend. He hopes to recapture his youth by marrying this young woman. She has to endure the hardships of loneliness, illness, poverty and neglect. Her family ignores her or forgets her because apparently they care nothing for her. She fights to win a little affection, fights for duty and for professional success, only to lose her life and reputation as a teacher.

The time comes when the first class of girls whom she has had from the beginning of their schooling is ready for the examination. She has looked forward to it eagerly but with some anxiety for she knows that the teacher is blamed if the child does not receive the certificate but is not given any credit

when he is successful. "Si un élève ne progresse pas, c'est de votre faute; mais s'il réussit, le mérite ne vous en revient pas."

The day arrives and, although ill, she takes her class to the place where the examination is held. She wishes she could help them or that she could do it for them or give them her strength and her mind. She has prepared them well, but, since for various reasons they do not acquit themselves well, the examiner fails them all. They do not seem to care. They desert her, reach home ahead of her and tell everyone what has happened. When she comes down the street, alone, in a sort of daze, she is insulted by the inhabitants lined up on both sides of the street. She has to run the gauntlet and be the target for their taunts and insults. That night she dies at her desk in the classroom, a martyr to the cause of education.

This is the only instance in M. Frapié's works where we have a whole career unfolded. The story begins with her first position at Chabois, traces her career through Berny, Théraigny, Sourdonneau, and ends with her death at Mirvallon. Théraigny marks the peak of her career. Of her early life we are told only those facts which serve as a background. The following facts depict Louise's life before she became a teacher. M. and Mme. Chardon have two daughters, Louise and Martha. Martha, the younger, is lazy and not at all like Louise. Martha and her mother spend money on clothes to impress the neighborhood and economize where it can not be seen while

1. Ibid., p. 78.
Louise makes her own clothes. Louise's face shows that her character is very different from her sister's. Martha gets the best of everything at home and Louise does not retaliate for the injustices and bad treatment. M. Chardon is a violent, head-strong man who punishes those under his authority and is too stubborn to acknowledge his errors. Louise's mother is a stupid Breton, who, after twenty-five years of housekeeping can not cook a decent meal. Just where Louise gets her admirable qualities is something of a mystery. Her appearance also differs from theirs in that her features are regular and she walks with grace. In her face there is kindness, severity and strength of will. Being introspective, living within herself while yet a child has matured her mind. Her excessive self-esteem is coupled with fierce prudery. She is not contaminated by the wickedness in her environment and associates. Her absolutely serious character does not prevent gayety, yet at school she is called "la bonne soeur." But, since she was thirteen years old she has no longer loved the church. The luxury and pageantry does not suit her simple tastes. She senses the hypocrisy, the hollow gestures and the wickedness of the devout. Nevertheless she is innately and truly religious. "Et pourtant une pieuse croyance habitait en elle; en elle chantaient des hymnes de foi, d'espoirance; en elle brûlait un parfum de charité. Elle possédait la Bonté, cette éternelle religion; elle la pratiquait avec ferveur, son âme s'élevait vers l'Infini Amour." Her decision to devote her-

1. Ibid., p. 23.
2. Ibid., p. 23.
self to teaching comes about because in her school-days an heroic substitute teacher has inspired her. M. Frapié is not so much interested in Mlle. Chardon as a person. He is more interested in her as a school teacher. This assumption is further confirmed by the fact that in the story she really has no existence apart from the school, her pupils and her profession. She does not teach for her living, but lives for the teaching. This is the fundamental beginning of the idealization of the character.

The first of her ideal attributes is extraordinary devotion to the profession of teaching. Teachers who love their work intensely may be found, but seldom one who loves it to the exclusion of all other interests. Louise Chardon has but one interest, one purpose in life—to train the minds and characters of her pupils so as to develop their best potentialities. She is absolutely unselfish and self-sacrificing. The needs of her pupils have her attention first. If she has any time left it may be used for herself but the pupils' interests are always considered before her own. She uses up her strength in the classroom because her teaching consumes all her energy. She teaches as if she were giving, by some psychic means, her mental ability to her pupils. In fact, she is giving them a part of herself. Through the novel one sees her becoming increasingly weaker, worn out and tired as if her life force were something she can distribute among her pupils. However tired she may be out of class, her head always clears the moment she enters the class. Her strength

1. Ibid., p. 30.
seems to come from her devotion to her profession rather than from physical well-being. Unselfishness and self-sacrifice are among her most striking characteristics.

Mlle. Chardon has many hardships to endure. First, the people are hostile. M. Frapié explains the animosity of the peasants by saying that those who do manual labor despise those who do intellectual work. The teacher, who belongs to the intellectual workers, speaks a better language and has better manners than the parents of her pupils. The contrast between her and the people makes them feel their inferiority; each holds a grudge in proportion to his faults and the teacher's qualities. They detest her because she is poor—it reflects on them in a way. The teacher is a sort of common property, dependent on them for her position. Her discomforts are their fault and it gives them an uncomfortable, guilty feeling which is expressed by a kind of hatred of her. "De droit vous assumez toutes les haines; la haine de l'instinct contre la Pensée, la haine de la Bête contre l' Ange, la haine des gens sérieux, positifs, pratiques contre la Chimère." ¹

Louise loves nature. She cultivates a few plants. Nature, in her opinion, exerts a good moral influence. To use her own words, "Qui donc, pourrait rester méchant devant la formidable, l'irresistible bonté de la nature?" ² The need for affection is another salient characteristic of Louise Chardon.

The school inspectors and administrators are too often enemies instead of friends. Most of the school officials are

¹ Ibid., p. 95.
² Ibid., p. 36.
little more than politicians. The unkempt M. Dufouillard is one of the worst of these. Mlle. Chardon shows no bitterness in the face of hardships and no desire for retaliation for the injustices done her. She is a brave character. In such a situation the teacher has to be brave. The school teacher receives hard knocks because she has freed herself from an ancient slavery. She earns her own bread alone, the equal of man, so she is treated according to that equality. Her economic independence and freedom from ancient traditions appear unnatural to many people.

M. Frapié makes a statement that is startling coming from his pen since he married a teacher. He says the school teacher should not marry; she needs all her love for her pupils and all her charms to conquer the village where she is sent. In her own words, "...l'institutrice ne doit pas se marier; elle a besoin de tout son amour pour le donner à ses élèves; elle a besoin de toutes ses séductions pour conquérir le village où on l'envoie...."

As for goodness, Mlle. Chardon is saintly, irreproachable at all times. This is necessary for the idealization of the character, of course. Louise wishes to assume the noble task of being the good teacher from whom the primary lessons form a basis of virtue on which all existence depends. "Louise Chardon voulait assumer la noble tâche d'être la bonne institutrice de qui les leçons primaires forment une base de

1. Ibid., p. 52.
2. Ibid., p. 57.
vertu où s'appuie toute l'existence." Her own life is a living example of the precepts she teaches. Being human, she must have faults and it is here that M. Frapié's idealization realizes its highest point for she is represented as absolutely flawless. She makes no mistakes, shows no unkindness, nor defects in character nor in her teaching. She is never less than perfect. I do not mean that she never becomes angry for M.

Frapié makes mention of the fact that she does. However, this is regarded as a necessary disciplinary measure and not caused from ill temper. He hastens to add that she is quick to pardon.

As one reads, certain of her qualities stand out vividly. One is made keenly aware of those qualities which make her the ideal teacher. Among these are her devotion to her profession, her bravery, unselfishness, generosity and kindness. Other elements appeal to one's sympathy, such as the hardships, loneliness and poverty she has to endure, as well as her meekness and sensitiveness. These combine with her virtues to evoke from the reader pity and admiration for this character. M. Frapié mentions many times that thoughts and actions leave their traces in one's face. With Mlle. Chardon, twelve years of teaching have sculptured her face so that she seems the incarnation of all that is noble and good.

From an analysis of personal traits one's attention is drawn to a consideration of this ideal teacher in her niche in the social organization. This naturally divides itself

1. Ibid., p. 29.
2. Ibid., p. 30.
into four parts: the teacher's relation to the children, her dealings with the parents, her contacts with the school authorities, and with the community as a whole.

Something has already been said of the relation between teacher and pupil. It is a decidedly unequal relationship. Louise lavishes upon her pupils all the love that would have been given to children of her own if she had had any. Mother instinct denied one outlet pours itself out in another unrestrainedly. These little recipients of her affection are particularly in need of it although they, of course, do not realize that. Their parents, oppressed by poverty, usually have to work so hard that they have little or no time to spend with their children even if they have the inclination to do so, and they sometimes do not. Families are large and another child is another mouth to feed, too often another unwanted burden. The parents love their children after their own fashion without demonstrating it. In return for her affection, the pupils are fond of their teacher, but their affection, with a few exceptions, does not measure up to hers for them. Hence, the inequality. Naturally there is an occasional child who almost worships her, and they all respond unconsciously to her love for them. Paradoxically, Mademoiselle Chardon's pupils respect her but are not friends—that is, on equal
footing—with her. She has to avoid too much familiarity with the pupils. Sometimes this means pretending severity when she would like to laugh. She sometimes wonders if her heart will dry up and humor vanish from disuse. She has a fine sense of justice which is invaluable to her in her dealings with pupils. They are quick to appreciate the fairness of a punishment or reward and Louise never outrages their sense of justice. She teaches their souls as well as their minds and constantly treats them with love, fairness, and sympathetic understanding. For all this they are not sufficiently grateful, either through thoughtlessness or inability to appreciate its worth. Their failure in the examination and their subsequent indifference are a poor reward for all that she has done for them.

The parents with whom Louise comes in contact are narrow-minded. Worse than that, they use their spare time gossiping and mischief-making. She must deal with prejudices and be very careful not to get into any argument with them. They naturally believe what their children do is right and at times resent punishment meted out to them. One source of trouble is that children do not always repeat the teacher's comments correctly, and thus start quarrels. It is necessary for the teacher to be constantly on guard to smooth ruffled feelings. The peasants are not people who may be appealed to through reason. In fact, they are principally motivated by emotion. Dealing with them requires much tact on the part of Mlle. Chardon. When she wants to secure a change at home for the pupils' welfare she sometimes succeeds in suggesting to the mother's mind what she wants and in making her think it was
her own idea. This is her cleverest way of securing coöpera-
tion at home. It is necessary for her to meet them on their
own ground and speak their language, because they are always
more or less aware and resentful of her superiority. On the
other hand, they regard her as a public servant and therefore
feel they have the right to criticize her as such. Meeting
the parents is no easy task. It requires all her diplomacy
and ingenuity to secure their coöperation or placate them when
they are angry. They know how much salary the teacher receives
and think she does not deserve that meager sum. The attitude
of the public toward the teacher in L'Institutrice de Province
is very unfriendly.

The teacher's relation to her associates and to the school
authorities should be considered. The system is that in schools
large enough to have more than one teacher the woman in charge
is the directrice and the other teacher or teachers are under
her supervision. With one exception there are no very frien-
dly relations between teachers in the novels and short stories
considered here. The teachers are lonely, reserved people.
"...l'existence de l'institutrice coulait comme un pauvre
petit ruisseau perdu, sans se mêler au courant des autres
existences." They treat each other with politeness but show
no real interest in one another. The one exception mentioned
is Louise's first principal. She takes a lasting, genuine
interest in her young assistant and becomes her only sincere
friend. When compared with various others of M. Frapié's

1. Ibid., p. 93.
principals, this particular one appears unusual, not typical. She is kinder, more human, than the others. These teachers rebel against their fate and this rancor falls on every person with a like fate. The principal's advice to Louise is not to mix with people, to know no one. Among Mlle. Chardon's associates are Mlle Seinur who is devout, let us say sanctimonious, and Mlle. Lelande who était gourmande. These two older teachers fulfill their duty as teachers honestly but blindly and with the resignation of a slave. The idea of diminishing a rival's merit leads them, rather than the idea of duty. "La nouvelle institutrice reçut le pressentiment qu'une animosité spéciale devait exister entre gens du même métier, entre confrères, entre collègues." Mme. Lapointe, too, is at first jealous of Louise's youth and charms. She criticizes Louise before her class and this makes it harder for Louise to keep good discipline. These other characters serve to make Louise's goodness stand out more clearly. A background of characters which one can not admire makes the ideal one seem even nobler by contrast.

In L'Institutrice de Province the inspectors and others of authority in the school system are varied as to type, with the bad ones predominating. M. Dufouillard is especially villainous. He is a district deputy who is a busybody, absolutely unscrupulous, and fault-finding where there are no faults. The school positions are political jobs so, of course, not much real ability can be expected of them. This situation ex-

1. Ibid., p. 12.
plains why some teachers are advanced more rapidly than their ability warrants. Some of them become involved in scandal yet secure better posts than teachers of real merit. For every job there are three hundred competitors. Louise's father has obtained her position for her through political influence and shrewd management. If a person holding a position of authority is really fitted for it, his subordinates are fortunate. M. Vaupasse, L'inspecteur primaire, is somewhat of a dandy. Young and arrogant, he evaluates the woman and not the teacher. When the lesson is over he asks questions about the method of teaching and progress of the pupils but gives no attention to the answers. He finds something to criticize and becomes threatening, then smiles and is transformed into a polite, protecting, kind person. This change of attitude exposes the two sides of a situation. It is given to the teacher to choose between administrative severity and favor—this favor depending on arbitrary considerations among which professional worth has no place. Louise evidently escapes the dislike of this man, for after three years at Berny she is called to a more advantageous appointment, the advancement being due to him. In his successor, M. Doucent, M. Frapié presents his most admirable school authority. He is a scholar, a philosopher, and a man who is absolutely just and good. He takes his work seriously. His criticisms are declared openly and one has a chance to defend oneself. He is willing to be shown where he may have been wrong. He furnishes us with a picture of the idealized teacher from another angle. In Louise he sees the
Universal teacher, the ideal, all teachers in one. Because of his opinion of her she is advanced to Théragny where there are two classes and she has an assistant.

In contrast to him is another inspector. Once when he comes, Louise loses control of the discipline. He reproves her and says he will show her how to manage the class but he has no success and bedlam reigns. He retreats and puts his anger on paper. The inspection report causes the withholding of fifteen days' salary from Louise.

M. Lecoq, also an inspector, is selfishly ambitious. He has been advanced beyond his ability and, feeling that his position is insecure, adopts an unjust attitude toward the teachers. The inspectors impose their books and methods on the teachers under their supervision. The teachers have to buy their own copies. A principal tells Louise that the inspector is really their highest authority because he visits them and knows them. All promotions, rules, and changes come as a result of his reports.

This principal has also advised Louise not to mingle with the people of the community but Louise determines to do so because she wishes them to like her. Her friendly overtures meet with little success. The hostile attitude of the people has been explained as due to their resentment of the teacher's better manners and language, and to the uncomfortable feeling that her poverty, and insufficient food and clothing, are their fault. Another factor to be considered in the relation of

teacher and parents is the civil code which holds teachers responsible for any harm caused to pupils while under their care. This means that the teachers may be required to pay for torn clothes, damages for dirt flying in a child's eye while he is at school and for any injury to person or clothing. The teacher is usually unjustly held responsible. She is helpless in the enforcement of this unfair law. There is a general feeling that the teacher is common property belonging to the community.

It is on the subject of Louise's pedagogy that M. Frapie has an opportunity to express his own theories of education. By implication he asserts that teachers are born, not made. For Louise, teaching is not only an interesting profession but a primordial necessity. "Soudain, une voix lui dit... qu'elle était née pour être institutrice." In the teaching itself Louise believes the emphasis is not to be placed on certain definite knowledge units to be mastered but is to be on moral and spiritual values. This corresponds, in American education, to the development of attitudes and ideals which is being given more attention at the present time than previously. Perhaps then, M. Frapie has created in his ideal teacher a person who is a step ahead in modern education.

However, there is one important difference. It is in the attitude of approach to this aim of education. We, in America today, approach the teaching of attitudes and ideals in a rather practical manner. We say that certain attitudes and

1. Ibid., p. 27.
ideals make an individual a more useful member of society and increase his personal worth. M. Frapie turns to sentimentality and says, "...grâce à sa profession, elle étudierait l'âme humaine teintée, plus ou moins, de blanc et de noir, et, en somme, sa tâche consisterait à blanchir les jeunes âmes et aussi à se faire aimer." Basically the same, we choose different paths to reach the goal. Moreover, Louise wishes to teach by example. The noble task she chooses for herself is that of being the good teacher whose primary lessons will form a basis of virtue for the superstructure of her pupils' future lives. Many references are made to her being able to teach instinctively. Louise herself says, "La pédagogie ne s'enseigne pas; c'est une affaire de tempérament, d'instinct et d'expérience personnelle." M. Frapie sets forth the same idea elsewhere:

Les critiques ont coutume de dire d'un romancier médiocre qu'il a besoin de travailler encore; on croirait qu'il n'a pas assez lu de traités littéraires. C'est comme si l'on disait d'un instituteur qu'il n'a pas assez étudié les manuels de pédagogie: la vraie pédagogie ne s'apprend pas dans les livres.  

Another of Louise's theories is that the heart of a child five or six years old is absolutely pure. It is a question of watching over it and surrounding it with a healthy atmosphere, of destroying or driving away or absorbing into oneself the influences that spoil this purity. Her attitude is this: wickedness known and divined does not frighten her. She denies

1. Ibid., p. 7.
2. Ibid., p. 63.
the persistence of evil and does not believe in its quality. She hopes to overcome ingratitude by her persistent kindness.

As to the effect of teaching upon Louise, one must say that it uses up all her vitality. For the first month the work is very tiring. She finds her head aching, void of thoughts and full of confusion at the end of the day. Whenever she enters the classroom, however, her head clears and she forgets her fatigue as long as she is teaching. She is afflicted with laryngitis, presumably due to talking so much and so loudly. In spite of physical strain she does not tire of her profession and does not become discouraged.

One of M. Frapié's teachers is like an old soldier. Something heroic vibrates in him, or her. The invalid and aged among them want to march again with the young. They never lose their interest in the school and have become so much a part of the system that after years of service they are not able to shake off the bonds that have bound them for so long. Moreover, they do not care to do it and those who are too old to teach and who have been retired are pathetic creatures. School teachers' lives are represented as very limited. M. Frapié gives to his characters no life nor interests apart from the class-room. For them the world is inhabited only by their pupils and themselves. They are as completely out of touch with other people as if they lived on another planet. Louise's thoughts focus on her pupils; they become the center of her universe, her raison d'être. This detachment from the outside world creates a one-sided character. In Mlle. Chardon's case this is advisable. If she had too many other interests they
would detract from her ability as a teacher. She would not have so much time and energy for the work of the school. In my opinion, her personality would have been enriched by various interests but for the purpose of creating a model they would have been detrimental. Her singleness of purpose helps to make her ideal.

According to the usual system in use in M. Frapiès's stories, the teacher does the thinking and the child uses only his memory. The graduation certificate proves neither the knowledge, nor the intelligence, nor the will of the pupil, because of the manner in which he is prepared and examined. It requires too little intelligence and too much memory. It is not a question of cultivating the reasoning powers of the child. On the other hand, the child's mind is like a receptacle to be filled by the teacher and emptied at the examination. This prevailing inadequate conception of education handicaps the teacher. She can not develop individual abilities. There is no time for "cette méditation d'ou résulte tout le profit du savoir." Louise tries to overcome this handicap and in so doing incurs the censure of the examiners and inspectors who can not understand that class discussion indicates activity of the pupils' minds, whereas, mere question and answer usually requires less of reasoning and more of memory. They try to shape every pupil to the same mold, but she studies the temperament and character of each child. Her pedagogy is adapted to individual differences. She forces her pupils to reason

1. L'Institutrice de Province, p. 77.
along with her, trying in every possible way to strike a spark of intelligence from their brains. She hammers unceasingly at the stupid, but to the well-endowed, intellectual life is communicated with a strange ease. She tries to foresee their destiny and the changes that she, as teacher, can effect in it for the better. No other school teacher character in these writings takes that much interest in the future of her pupils. She cannot endure that a child shall give no response to the stimulus. All of them respond in different degree. By the expression of her eyes, her gesture, and the inflection in her voice she forces them to think with her. M. Vaupasse, an inspector, has seen the children listen to her words and notes the intelligence called forth by the magnificent passion which shines like a flower in this small, quick, energetic woman. He proves the idealization of this character when he makes his statement, "J'ai vu l'Institutrice...celle qui lutte pour enfoncer les bonnes semences et pour empêcher les mauvais germes de se développer dans l'humanité en croissance; celle qui donne en pâte son sang, ses poumons, son cerveau...et qui entre...1
son âme dans la leur." For all this she is badly paid in meager sums of money, professional success, and happiness. Throughout the story one can see that Louise gives not only lessons, but part of herself to her pupils. She permits them to feed like little parasites on her mind and soul. As her pupils improve, her strength diminishes as if she had poured into them the essence of her life. What does she teach? The

1. Ibid., pp. 69, 70.
required material, and in addition, moral principles and virtues. How does she teach it? By helping her pupils develop their intellectual capacities, by taking into account their individual differences and by giving her own life to the work. Teaching, according to M. Frapié's presentation of it, requires much of its follower. She must be courageous, good, and absolutely self-sacrificing. She must be fanatically devoted to duty and inspired in her work. In return, it offers the satisfaction that comes from doing worth-while work. No one person could have all the qualities revealed in Louise. She is not merely one teacher but a composite, the product of imagination, the ideal.
CHAPTER VII.

REALISM—FIRST PERIOD

After the story of Louise Chardon, five or six years elapsed before the publication of Marcelin Gayard (1903) which began a new period of work. This novel is the story of Lucette, daughter of a government clerk, who befriends a former servant in her family. The story does not have a logical conclusion in regard to the servant girl. It contains only one allusion to a school teacher, but it shows that the idea persists in M. Frapié's mind.

In 1904 La Maternelle was published and was awarded the Goncourt prize. By this time M. Frapié had found his literary stride and had returned to the school for the setting of his story. The minor characters of L'Institutrice de Province are the transition from that period to the second phase for they are realistic characters. This type of character which has served previously as a background for the contrasting, idealized, central figure, now, with modifications, becomes the foremost type. Realism becomes the keynote of a long series of volumes among which are M. Frapié's best works.

One of the first impressions of realism a reader receives from M. Frapié's works is conveyed by his choice of words. The vocabulary of his writings includes popular and vulgar words such as are frequently used by the masses of uneducated people. It seems to me that the ability to reproduce the con-
versations of his characters with verisimilitude is one of the strong points of M. Frapié's writing. He makes them speak as they, in view of their character and environment, would speak in real life, because he has absorbed the language of the people of whom he writes and has a clear insight into their manner of thinking. His language is not, therefore, a literary language, in the sense of using polished phrases, carefully balanced sentences and fine words. Nevertheless, M. Frapié's style is clear and forceful and the words frequently fit the meaning so precisely that the impression conveyed to the reader has an almost startling vividness.

The children of his books are almost invariably presented in a realistic manner. These wretched little urchins are drawn with none of their defects, mental or physical, omitted from the picture. One can not read of these poverty-stricken, underprivileged children without being convinced of the sincerity and sympathy with which M. Frapié writes of them. His fidelity to nature extends to other characters as well, particularly the school teachers of the second and third periods of his works as they are divided for the purposes of this discussion.

As it has been stated, Marcelin Gayard has only a short reference to school teachers and that is thrown in casually. The reference is the following. Lucette's appearance is described by saying that, "Un air sérieux d'institutrice pauvre est dans son regard court, dans des plis de peau dégraîchie." Although rather insignificant in itself it is a straw in the

wind indicating M. Frapié's trend of thought.

_Le Maternelle_ appeared next and has the school for its setting and teachers for its characters. The fact that _Le Maternelle_ was awarded the Goncourt prize suggests that it is better than _Marcelin Gavard_. So it seems that M. Frapié had found in it his best field of writing, the thing that he could write about with the greatest enthusiasm and sympathy.

The maid is the type of school teacher that predominates in _Le Maternelle_. Although she does not hold an official teaching position she has some opportunity to teach. In the absence of a teacher from a class for a short time she takes charge of the class and does real class-room work. However, her greatest service is that she teaches the children in their contacts with her outside the class-room. The teaching is not from texts, to be sure, but is the teaching of ethics, attitudes, and behavior. She teaches the heart while the regular teacher teaches the brain of the child.

Rose is an unusual maid. The children and the other teachers are so true to life that they seem to have been drawn from observation in the schools. Rose is a real, vividly sketched character also, but not a typical maid. A brief summary of her story follows. When Rose is twenty-three years old, her father dies as the result of an unfortunate financial affair. She is now an orphan and a second blow comes when her fiancé deserts her because there is no longer a dowry.

1. Cf. chap. II.
for her after her father's death. An uncle, who is her only relative, grudgingly takes her into his household but she is so unhappy there that she begins to look for employment and chooses teaching as the occupation in which she wishes to engage. To her astonishment she finds that her university degree is of no assistance in obtaining a position as teacher. In fact, it is worse than useless; it is a hindrance. Her uncle, who is much opposed to classical education for women, does not neglect to remind her that all her diplomas are useless because she does not have the only one (brevet élémentaire) which is necessary. It requires a much lower degree of education than hers but is obtained in the elementary school and not in the secondary. The uncle uses what influence he has to secure a teaching position for her but with no success. There is a vacancy for a maid in an école maternelle but it requires an almost illiterate person. That gives Rose the idea of pretending illiteracy in order to obtain the position. At first she is not successful, betraying herself in speech or behavior. Then she observes uneducated women, their mannerisms, mode of dress, and habits of speech, practicing what she learns by watching them until she is nearly perfect in every detail. Finally she succeeds in deceiving the school authorities and is employed as femme de service.

Her duties are to light the fires in winter, sprinkle the courtyard and ventilate the class-room in summer, wash dirty hands and faces, make the children as neat as possible,

1. Cf. chap. III.
do the sweeping and cleaning and be ready to attend to any emergency or errand for which the teachers might call her. One might suppose that such a routine of tasks would dull her mental faculties. Although at the end of the long day she finds herself physically tired, she realizes that she craves intellectual satisfaction. She begins to keep a diary to fulfill the need for mental exercise. In it she writes of her new surroundings, new associates, and new occupations. *La Maternelle,* written in first person, is told by Rose herself.

The love motif, considered by many to be a necessary attribute of the novel, is not lacking in this one but is an undercurrent rather than the main theme. Overshadowing it are the incidents of the school and the pupils who participate in them.

One night Rose tears up her diplomas. She feels satisfied with her position. The manual labor is good for her physical health and the writing and thinking she does in the evenings benefit her intellectually. She wants to feel that she has always been of the people and that she knows only what the children have taught her. But one does not leave one's social class so easily, says M. Frapié. "On ne quitte pas ainsi son rang." "Il paraît qu'on ne s'évade pas de sa classe." A person may try to do so and imagine himself successful for a time but he is only deceiving himself. Rose's uncle arranges a marriage for her. Then begins a struggle between two forces

1. *La Maternelle,* p. 12.
2. Ibid., p. 6.
3. Ibid., p. 282.
within her. One impels her to turn toward her original social class. On the other hand, she realizes that she owes something to the children through their love for her and need of her, that if she leaves them and establishes a home of her own she will no longer love them. After considerable mental conflict she leaves the school.

The outstanding characteristics of Rose are her exceptionally good mind, her sensitiveness and her kindness and affection for the children. The first two traits set her apart from the usual maid who naturally is not an educated person. Unlike Mme. Paulin, her immediate superior, Rose has very keen sensibilities. In spite of her brilliant intellect, she is ruled by her heart. Her emotions are easily aroused, especially pity and tenderness. She sees persons and situations as they affect her through her sentiments, not objectively, as they are without relation to herself. This is, possibly, a reflection of M. Frapić's own sensitive personality. Rose expresses the impressions and reactions he might have had, had he been in her position. He has used her, too, to express his ideas about education, above all, to point out the shortcomings of the present methods. That far, Rose is a subjective character who seems very real because of the author's unusual insight into feminine psychology.

Her attitude toward the children is protective and affectionate. She adopts them all but some are more hers than the others. She is in a position which permits her to show favoritism among the pupils, a thing which regular teachers must avoid. The attitude of the teachers toward Rose makes her con-
conscious of her inferior position, causing occasional twinges of humiliation. In becoming adjusted to her occupation, her adaptability again serves her well. She does not fit into her job until she has become friendly with the mothers of the children. She studies them and assumes a gayer attitude in order that they should like her better. It is their custom to linger a few minutes to talk with the maid. If they do not feel free to do this with her, her position would be insecure. When one of them offers her a tip for the first time, her hand fails to stretch out for it. She shrinks from accepting this acknowledgment of her servitude yet does not dare refuse. She uses it to buy bread and puts it into the lunch baskets of children who do not have sufficient food. She learns how to be on good terms with the patrons of the school because it is policy to do so and because she wants to know these people better. From that time until she leaves the school she has a niche in the life of the community where she works.

To sum up her personal traits one would say that Rose is sensitive, intelligent, adaptable, kind and motherly. She is an emotional sort of character with great teaching potentialities and should have a regular teaching position instead of an occupation in which only a part of her teaching ability can be utilized. Perhaps the informality possible in her position enables her to touch the lives of the children more intimately without the hindrance of the barrier which being a teacher would have placed between her and her pupils.

1. Ibid., p. 97.
The other teachers at this école maternelle are presented as one would expect to see them every day in their classes, good teachers but not faultless ones. The principal is a widow, about forty years old, who has charge of a class in addition to having the management of the school and the collection of the money from the children who take lunch at school. If a child who is accustomed to eat the lunch which is provided, fails to bring his money, the principal extends credit. It is granted easily but she takes care that it is not abused. In charity, she sometimes forgets debts if the child is especially needy. The school is large, therefore the principal has two assistants. Mlle. Bord, one of the assistants, has the class of oldest children. Mme. Galant is in charge of the intermediates and the principal herself teaches the youngest class.

Mme. Galant is a large, talkative woman of common appearance, more like a market woman than a school teacher. In contact with her class she seems dull and placid. She has little keenness or enthusiasm. This shows in the lack of expression or eagerness in her face. She is devoted to her profession but not to the children. "Mme. Galant détient le record des punitions regrettable. C’est une maîtresse fanatiquement dévouée à l’enseignement—je ne dis pas dévouée aux enfants—elle emplie une pédagogie de dévoue: implacable, sans pardon."

Punishment is dealt out according to fixed rule without consideration of its effect on the pupil although the same punishment for the same offense is likely to have different

1. Ibid., p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 163.
effects on the various pupils according to their dispositions and characters. Unfortunately, Mme. Galant has only one method of punishment—that of confiscation. She confiscates merit points, paper soldiers, corks, and various small articles. Her apron pockets bulge with odds and ends of things taken from the pupils.

Her method of keeping good order is quite interesting. Whenever the turmoil and noise in the class-room becomes excessive she says, "Chantons!" If the children are restless and noisy, singing provides an orderly outlet for their energies and impulses. Mme. Galant is clever in converting a tendency toward disorder into a suitable school room exercise. It is a good teacher who can direct the impulses of her pupils into a desirable channel.

There is no personal relation between Mme. Galant and her pupils. I believe the personal relation is essential with young pupils but less important with older ones. Later on, the teacher may be just the means of supplying the information or guiding one's study, as in lecture courses. But the teacher is an important person to the école maternelle children. Most of them are interested in her personally and want to feel that she is interested in them as individuals. She is a person to be liked or disliked, not simply a source of knowledge. Mme. Galant's pupils represent to her the aim of her teaching, and she is more interested in the teaching process than in

1. Ibid., p. 56.
2. Ibid., p. 19.
the individuals being taught. An impersonal, mechanical method results from this point of view.

The other assistant is Mlle. Bord. To her pupils she seems the incarnation of beauty. She is young and slender, with dark complexion. Her real beauty lies in the Greek regularity of her features and in the majestic expression of her forehead and downcast eyes which seem to say, "Mortels, ne me touchez pas!" She dresses well, always in black, and there is about her an air of aloofness. Her calm, sculptural person is like a statue.

Having these characteristics, it is to be expected that her relations with her associates should be just what they are. She is invariably polite to Rose but when speaking to her, Mlle. Bord's eyes are not on her. They look beyond or over Rose with an impersonal gaze. Rose is slightly resentful but not so annoyed by mademoiselle's superior airs as is Mme. Galant. The latter is somewhat disparaging and ironical with respect to mademoiselle. The antagonism is due to the fact that Mlle. Bord is a specially trained teacher, a graduate of a normal school. Teachers are of two sorts, those who are simply provided with the brevet élémentaire or the brevet supérieur, and the normaliennes.

The young internes at the normal school lead an incomplete and artificial life. They are too separated from the outside world. Absorbed in their compositions and examina-

1. Ibid., p. 21.
2. Ibid., p. 71.
tions they neglect exercise and recreation which causes them to have poor health and tired, grave appearances. They form close friendships with their companions and with no one else, thereby narrowing their circle of friends and range of interests. M. Frapie says that normal school students are deeply convinced of their own superiority. He says, too, that their knowledge of children comes from books instead of personal contact with children themselves. Thus, their professional knowledge is purely theoretical. They are prepared to be anything except real women and good, intelligent mothers. However, as teachers they make a good impression.

In her treatment of the children Mlle. Bord is impartial, treating the least attractive like the others instead of showing pity. It is best to do this so that none will feel inferior to the others. By making the poor ones feel equal to the more fortunate ones she starts them toward being equal. Other faults may escape the child's notice but if the teacher outrages his keen sense of justice she loses much of her power and forfeits the liking of her pupils. Mlle. Bord has this valued trait of fairness. No doubt this partly explains her influence over the pupils.

If teachers were rated on the basis of their methods of teaching, the calm Mlle. Bord would surely receive high honors. She seems to be method personified. The impression Mlle. Bord leaves is that she is considerate but aloof toward the

1. Ibid., p. 201.
pupils and efficient and thorough in her teaching as far as it
goes, but that it is rather artificial. Rose observes that the
lessons Mlle. Bord gives are well planned. Moral precepts are
taught indirectly by the use of stories with a moral. Mlle.
Bord is very proficient in telling these stories in an interesting
manner. To add to the interest she illustrates them by
drawings on the blackboard. Sometimes the stories are not about
people but about flowers or animals. She does not suspect that
some of the maxims may have a double meaning and that the chil-
dren may draw a conclusion that is not intended.

An unobtrusive note of irony is occasionally sounded in
Le Maternelle. There is much sarcasm about the moral teach-
ings of the school with respect to filial love and duty. M.
Frapié shows that in teaching there is too much "playing to
the gallery." ("La vertu sur commande, au moment favorable: 
faire le bien pour la galerie." 1) The teachers teach the chil-
dren not to become on terms of comradeship with their parents
but to respect them and show the proper signs of love and re-
spect. They are not encouraged to have the sentiments of love
and respect but are merely required to act as if they have
them. The pupils are taught that they should obey and imitate
their parents, that they are wiser and that what they do is
well done. Rose thinks this is not so, that the teaching of
the school is mistaken and that it should try to help the chil-
dren to be better than their parents, that the standards ought

1. Ibid., p. 221.
2. Ibid., p. 218.
to be abstract. She discovers that the poor, wretched sort of people do not want their children taught to imitate them. The children probably will do so anyway, but there is always the hope that they will be more fortunate, better educated, and that they will lead easier lives. In their own phraseology, the mother of one of the pupils says to Rose, "Dis donc, la maternelle, est-ce que tu crois que c'est toujours les mêmes qui la danseront!"

According to M. Frapié, Mlle. Bord's shortcoming is in the lack of a practical basis for the moral and ethical teaching. She teaches fine theories but does not give due attention to practical things. The lessons are fine sermons on abstract morality but she does nothing to better conditions outside the school. In fact, she does not interest herself in the home conditions of her pupils. Consequently, the moral instruction she gives them at school is not suitable in view of their home life and makes them only the more easily exploited.

"...l'école est mauvaise à proportion, puisque son enseignement moral est basé sur la famille supposée parfaite."

It is interesting to note the theories on education which are presented in these volumes. There are evidences that there are many methods and aims of the school of which M. Frapié does not approve. He says, "...l'école aussi est mauvaise et l'on ne voit partout que crimes contre l'enfance."

1. Ibid., p. 111.
2. Ibid., p. 304.
3. Ibid., p. 262.
4. Ibid., p. 266.
In another passage he exclaims, "Combien de force, de beauté, de possibilité heureuse apportée là, (à l'école) et détruite! Car il faut le dire: c'est le meilleur de l'individu qui se dissout à l'école." He denounces the uniformity for which the school strives, believing that education means developing the best potentialities of a child, weeding out his bad tendencies and not destroying his individuality. It naturally follows that teaching methods should allow for differences of temperament and character in the pupils. Louise Chardon of L'Institutrice de Province adapts her pedagogy to individual differences. She also helps her pupils to reason with her instead of following the usual method of requiring a certain amount of information to be memorized. This provides M. Frapie with the opportunity to criticize the memory system.

It is not a question of giving the pupils lessons which will benefit them but those which will have the appearance of that result in the eyes of the public and the inspector. The inspector is the authority before whom the teachers and even the principal tremble. A part of their realism is that they are like our own teachers who try hard to make a good impression when the inspector comes to visit.

The inspector, or district superintendent, of La Maternelle is of the opinion that one puts nothing into a child. He has potentialities, some of which one encourages and de-

1. Ibid., p. 279.
2. L'Institutrice de Province, p. 106.
3. Ibid., p. 78.
4. La Maternelle, p. 180.
velops, others that one suffocates. The unwise teacher excites too much a certain quality in one child and does not touch it enough in another child. In reality she has nothing to give, says M. Frapié, but should make worthwhile or mitigate what the child already has. The children before Mlle. Bord seem to say, "Tiens; nous sommes la simple, sereine et ouverte nature; va, tu n'as qu'à susciter en nous la potentielle richesse." The children have an attachment for their teacher but are not friends with her. The teachers handle the children with too much pedagogy believing that they are inclined to misbehave. M. Frapié thinks that children are not by nature very wicked nor very audacious but (with exceptions) easily intimidated.

Although M. Frapié expresses disapproval of unquestioning obedience, he stresses good discipline through the character, Rose. Rose's idea is that one should reason with a child. It should be explained to him wherein he has misbehaved and the teacher must guard against false reasoning and wrong accusations. The principal character in La Directrice is a teacher who is an extreme disciplinarian. M. Frapié's opinion, if one may base a conclusion on the ideas expressed by his characters, is that perfect discipline is conscious acquiescence and not apathetic obedience.

Mlle. Bord's way of punishing mis-doers differs from that

1. Ibid., p. 289.
2. Ibid., p. 43.
3. Ibid., p. 41.
of Mme. Galant. The former seldom uses the same punishment twice. Each offense is dealt with according to the child who committed it. Moreover, the punishment is purely a mental one. The outward manifestation of it may be the performance of some simple, ridiculous act but the child is made to feel that he has acted in a shameful manner. Frequently the attention of the other pupils is directed to the culprit and he is caused to feel humiliated.

To sum up M. Frapie’s criticisms and educational theories, we note the following facts. The children are treated as groups separated according to age. No attention is paid to individual differences, worst of all, the pupils are punished alike. The teacher must be sure she is right before she accuses because the child is forming a criterion of justice during his school days upon which his future life is based. In Rose’s observations on the school two of its inadequacies are pointed out. Rose wonders if the principal purpose of the school is not to make physical and moral wretchedness agreeable, polite, and resigned. She remarks that one should develop and strengthen inferior children. The other fault is that the school makes for uniformity. When individuality is lost the best of the individual is taken away. The meek, well-behaved pupils are moulded into the type approved by the school. Therefore, the hope of the generation lies in the bad pupils since they show the most initiative and individuality. "L'espoir de la génération est dans les mauvais écoliers." The highest purpose

1. La Maternelle, p. 279.
of the school is defeated when it pays no attention to individual differences for the school is great only when it shapes a great personality.

The teacher to whom M. Frapié pays tribute—*la vraie maternelle*—has a minor role in *La Maternelle*. She substitutes for one of the instructors who is ill a few days. M. Frapié pictures her vividly in a few words. She is thin, rather homely, and very tired, but she teaches well and the children immediately like her. She resembles the idealized teacher of the first phase of this study.

Another teacher mentioned in *La Maternelle* is a retired teacher who comes to visit. She is an old lady who has lost her voice. Like many old people who can no longer be active in their professions but who must have some way of keeping in touch with the work, she would not be happy unless she could see the classes and keep informed about the teaching. We, also, have teachers who love to teach and dread to see the time approach when they will be forced to retire. These two minor characters are after-thoughts of the idealization phase.

*Les Obsédés* contains no school teacher material. It deals with the writing of a novel about the life and experiences of a house-maid. *La Proscrite* is not considered here; consequently, *L'Ecolière* is the next work to contribute to the development of the school teacher character. Two stories from this volume of short stories will show that there is some overlapping of realism and idealism. In one story, a child

describes the principal of the school she attends by saying that her principal is tall, with silvery-white hair, a severe face, and an eagle nose. Two other characteristics which impress the little girl are that the principal speaks loudly and that she always wears clothes of a dark violet color. An imperious air makes her quite unlike Louise.

In contrast, another story in the same book presents an idealized character similar in many respects to Louise. A glance at the plot will prove this. In a charitable institution there are some indigent persons among whom is an old school teacher. The others complain daily of their ailments but she has told hers once for all. She is very frail, with poor eyesight, and voice and memory failing. In M. Frapié's own phraseology she is used up; yet, because she does not complain she is considered queer, mentally unbalanced. There comes a time when the funds for charity are discontinued and the committee conceives a new idea of helping these people. Their plan of placing them in homes in the country is carried out by assigning them to the homes of peasants and paying the family a little more than enough for the maintenance of the lodger as an inducement to them to offer their home for the cause. Although penniless, the unfortunates are hard to satisfy because they think they are better than the people with whom they live. The teacher asks only to be placed where she may help care for children. After a while the inspectors call to see how their idea is being worked out. All of the lodgers, excepting the

1. Ibid., "L'Aliénée," p. 305.
teacher, finds fault and wants more luxuries. She is in the poorest place, a mere hut, but the children are already fond of her. She takes care of them all day while their parents work and she is perfectly happy. Nevertheless, the inspectors send her to an insane asylum for the following reasons. They think she must be abnormal for she alone has not asked for an increase in appropriation, and they also want one exception in the report of the experiment to prove its success, since all rules have exceptions. On the other hand, the other lodgers are granted their increase in appropriation to prove that the inspectors are not mercenary. The character just considered resembles Louise in several respects. She is poor, loves children, suffers hardships, is misunderstood, uncomplaining, patient, and gentle.

The next story, in point of time, is "La Directrice" from the volume of *contes, La Boîte aux Gosses*. Mme. Grude is a large woman of forty-five with regular features, with a heavy braid of hair and a slow, harmonious voice. Her manner is highly agreeable but her eyes are her outstanding trait. Mme. Grude is feared because her eyes are two magic mirrors which seize one's real thoughts with their direct, searching glance before which it is useless to pretend. She never lies, never even veils her thoughts, thus forcing upon others an obligatory sincerity which is disconcerting to them at times. The school of which she is principal has the reputation for being the best kept in the department. When undisciplined children appear before her she considers their cases very carefully and her decisions are without appeal. She really likes best those
children who are hard to manage. The method of punishment she uses is that of keeping pupils after school. Supplementary duties to be done at home permit cheating; therefore, she favors the other method. She is a fanatic because of her faith in rules and in her own infallibility, but underneath she has a really kind heart although she is a hard disciplinarian. She loves her authority and it seems to her that she will no longer have a purpose in life when she is no longer principal. One of her pupils particularly appeals to her "parcequ'elle est de la bonne race française emportée, audacieuse, et qu'elle ne pouvait pas voir un abus sans protester."

Les Contes de la Maternelle marks the first reappearance of Mlle. Bord. She is the statuesque young person who appears in La Maternelle, always wearing a black dress and a black apron whose pockets bulge with slate pencils, chalk, and honor points. She will be remembered as the personification of all-powerful justice. Her pedagogy is based on the belief that all children are alike and are worth-while.

Next, there appears a type of teacher totally unlike any of her predecessors. She is the empty-headed, butterfly type, blond, pretty, and gay. She knows only what one learns at a fashionable girls' school and thinks there is nothing else to learn. When she is twenty-two years old her father has financial difficulties and she obtains a teaching position in one of the poorer quarters of Paris. She does not try to study her environment. The pupils have physical and moral blemishes.

1. La Boîte aux Gossets, p. 122.
but all that seems simply picturesque to her. Misery has only an outward aspect. To her mind, poor people are those who are badly or insufficiently clad, and one performs one's duty toward the unfortunates by supplying warm clothing for winter. Her amiable, child-like face, and tender expression reveal her confidence in the goodness of the world. But, an event occurs which shocks her placid state of mind and awakens in her an understanding sympathy which immeasurably increases her value as a teacher. The principal tells her to assign a composition. She thinks back over her school days and remembers a composition entitled *The Happiest Day of My Life*. That subject is assigned and when she reads the compositions she is introduced to a new world. For the first time in her life she is brought face to face with reality. The "happiest days" are so heart-breaking, pitiful, such as the day a girl broke her leg and was sent to the hospital where, for the first time in her life, she could lie on a good, comfortable bed, or the day another girl's worthless, drunken father was put in prison, and other pathetic events. The next day the teacher goes to school disillusioned and saddened.

Another of the teachers of this period is the aged, retired teacher who is melancholy because she feels she is no longer of use to anyone. One day there comes to her garden gate a pale, unkempt man of no particular age whom she recognizes as Clément, one of her former pupils. He is hunted by the police and she offers to lodge him, realizing his great need of her. She has found an interest in life again because this man, sick in body and soul, needs her. When she has
made him well physically she sees his criminal tendencies and
decides that to make him overcome them she must make him do a
good deed. She thinks of the strategy of pretending that her
hands are paralyzed and that he must feed her. He performs
the service with bad grace at first but she tells him constant-
ly how good he is until he believes it himself and reforms.
Gradually, she pretends to grow better and says she must not
keep him from finding work. He finds work in a factory and
sets up a household of his own. To the physical cure, she has
added a moral one. The story is entitled "Le Dernier Elève."

The foregoing pages have presented a variety of teacher
characters. They represent the largest division of M. Frapié's
works. Four other novels, La Figurante, La Liseuse, La Mère
Croquemitaine, and M'me Préciat have not been mentioned because
they are of no importance to this study although they belong
chronologically within this group.

If idealization is the exaggeration of certain qualities,
especially good ones, and if realism consists in portraying
character as it is found in human life, both good and bad, it
may be that the following points will help to demonstrate the
realism of the characters just presented. First, there is the
criticism that M. Frapié makes, which applies to all the teach-
ers. He shows that they teach subject matter, not children.
A certain amount of a certain branch of learning is to be pre-
ented in a particular way at a given time. Perhaps it is
placing too much blame on the teacher but could not an intel-

1. Les Contes de la Maternelle. E. Flammarion. Paris (new
lignant teacher find a way to modify a bad method instead of following it blindly?

Mme. Galant is the example of a teacher whose worst fault is that she is too devoted to method and too little interested in the development of the children themselves. Mlle. Bord is somewhat better in this respect but her fault is that she is impractical and leaves the impression that she is an egoist.

Rose's kindness, sympathy, and passion for her work far outweigh the faults, but like real people she has a few. One instance that shows what a normal person she is, is the occasion when she strikes one of the little ones as a relief for her feelings, as an emotional person sometimes does when annoyed either by the child or by something else. The small boy accepts it in a resigned manner which tells eloquently of the treatment to which he is used. He merely loses a little of his trust in her. At another time she is harsh with a child who is last to be called for. If children cried their mothers would be likely to be more punctual. So Rose, eager to finish her cleaning work, says to a little pupil, "Moi foi, puis-qu'on ne vient pas te chercher, je vais éteindre le gaz et t'enfermer là, seul, toute la nuit." Only this once does Rose frighten or distress a pupil, and even here she soon relents.

The natural climax to her career in the school is her decision to return to her own social class. The idea of marriage attracts her as it would any normal young woman in sim-

1. La Maternelle, p. 264.
ilar circumstances. Her yielding to that impulse is additional proof of the fidelity with which her character is drawn.

A noticeable contrast between the first and second phases is the relative importance of the character to the other elements of the story. Here, the plot and the other characters are much more important and the principal character, the teacher, is less important. Again, the impression one gets is that in the second phase the author is less in sympathy with the teacher characters. There is less emotional reaction to the teacher in the delineation of her character and personality. One feels that these characters interested M. Frapié but that he was not sorry for them or that he greatly admired them.

The realism of two of them lies in the nice balance between leniency and severity. One of these characters commands the instinctive obedience of her pupils by her stern countenance, yet she really has a kind heart. The children know that she is kind but the influence of the personal appearance of the teacher is strong enough to safeguard the impression of severity. The other character is the one who is a fanatic on rules, ordinarily, but will set them aside when necessity demands. Usually it is the teacher who has a great influence on the pupils but in the case of the frivolous teacher, just as it happens once in a while in real life, the pupils influence the character of the teacher. They bring her into contact with a new world. It has a good effect on her because, instead of turning reformer and trying to mend a hopeless situation, or becoming sentimental and weeping over the sins of the world, she adopts a sensible, understanding attitude and
shows much common sense. Thus, it may be seen that these are human characters having good qualities and bad ones, living ordinary lives, and making mistakes. Because they have these qualities they may be said to be realistic.
CHAPTER VIII.
REALISM--SECOND PERIOD

The period just closed is one of novels chiefly, there being included in it eight novels and three volumes of short stories. In contrast, is the next group—entirely contes. These four volumes, Le Capitaine Dupont, Bonnes Gens, Les Contes de la Guerre, and Nouveaux Contes de la Maternelle, appeared between 1915 and 1919. The first three are concerned with situations caused by the war and the last is a return to the author's first love, the school. These stories repeat some material used previously. For this and other reasons the third period is not quite as good as the second. The teachers of the third period are realistic but somewhat less clearly and forcefully delineated than those of the immediately preceding period.

A distinctly new and interesting type appears in "Atavism" published in Le Capitaine Dupont. Here is a teacher who is rather humorously described. Mme. Estorel, a teaching inspector, has spent her life trying to give herself a severe look. Nature has given her an agreeable face which reflects too clearly her indulgent heart. Now at sixty she has acquired a fine, severe look but she has retired. She has reared her son according to her pedagogical principles and he is, therefore, perfect according to her ideas. She
is now exercising her professional severity on her grandchildren who have inherited also from their mother (not so perfect as her son, in the grandmother's estimation). Her method of punishment is unique. She makes the children feel deprived of being good and generous. Their worst sin is a tremendous fondness for sweets and like most grandmothers she really indulges them in this. She is, perhaps, as human and natural a character as M. Frapié ever created.

A little story called "Les Yeux du Coeur" is quite interesting. It reveals more of child nature than it does about the teacher, but because it presents another type of teacher, it may not be out of place here. Mlle. Fernande Gontran, a woman of twenty-five, wishes to become a teacher. However, she is physically unattractive and the principal is of the opinion that it is a crime against children to put ugliness continually before them for they are eager for beauty. Mlle. Gontran is told to wait for certain formalities which are never concluded. Then comes the war and so many teachers flee from the country that she secures a position in an école maternelle. When the enemy is driven out and the principal returns she is doubly vexed that Fernande is now in service and that she has not prepared the children to make a good impression when the inspector comes. The principal hastens to give them a lesson on patriotism. When the inspector arrives, he asks the children what is the nicest and most beautiful thing they know in the world. They answer, "Mlle. Fernande." That children have

---

a limitless faculty of illusion is shown by the fact that beauty of soul has replaced, in their minds, the more tangible reality of beauty. Mlle. Fernande has shown such qualities of mind and heart that they see those and not the exterior appearance.

Aside from a small reference in "L'Actrice" there is one other teacher in this collection of stories. "L'Ingénue" presents a new teacher, eighteen years old, who is blond and has an innocent expression. She is a war refugee whose parents, bourgeois people, are prisoners. She is delighted with her new surroundings and with the poor, underfed children. They look at her as if she were something good to eat. Prompted by the natural reaction of a war refugee who has seen too much horror, she wants to play with the children. Their play reproduces the life they see around them, for, says M. Frapié, children have a natural theatrical instinct. "Les enfants ont, d'instinct, le sens du théâtre." The conclusion again stresses the theory that a teacher should emphasize moral and ethical training.

*Bonnes Gens* contains an amusing story ("Les Deux Apaches") which, although primarily concerned with the child characters, is of interest in regard to the teacher. The teacher of a class of very young children is a girl, twenty years old, brunette, "le profil et la coiffure d'une muse romantique." Two of her pupils are five-year old boys who are chums. Their fathers have been killed in the war and their mothers work in an am-

1. Ibid., p. 101.
2. Ibid., p. 173.
munition factory. Because these two are more miserable looking than the other children, the teacher treats them differently, that is, more severely than the others. When she finds out their story she is remorseful and begins to treat them more affectionately than the others. Immediately they become sad and do not want to play. When questioned, they say they are sad because mademoiselle is sad. She must be to be so good to them. They are not unhappy over their own misfortunes.

In "L'Ecole Marraine" the teacher character is the center of interest. This story is significant because it marks the beginning of the romantic element which later becomes increasingly evident in La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites), Les Filles à Marier, and La Divinisée. "L'Ecole Marraine" contains merely a trace of romantic inclination yet it is sufficiently definite to be worthy of notice. The teacher in this story is efficient and kind, young, pretty, and vivacious. Before the war brought misfortune to her she seemed destined for a happy, poetic, and social life. Suddenly left without hope or future, she is given charge of sixty children in order that she may have something useful to do. The class becomes "godmother," or sponsor, for a soldier in the trenches to whom they desire to send a package and a letter. When the letter is written the teacher listens attentively to the children's ideas of what they want to say although their ideas are inappropriate. Then she composes a courteous and interesting letter which expresses among other things, a personal note. She thinks he

will be able to see that they two have certain affinities of
education, character, and taste, and hopes he will visit the
school on his leave of absence because, she hastens to add, of
the good it will do her pupils to see the object of their kind-
ness and sentiment. This story has a suspicion of humor so
elusive that the reader can not be sure whether it is inten-
tional or not.

Another story in this volume, "La Divine Etincelle," re-
affirms M. Frapié's opinion that some teachers are devoted to
pedagogy and not to the children. He says the very avoidance
of the least sign of impatience makes a teacher cold and dis-
tant. One concludes that he disapproves of the aloof, unem-
tional teacher.

A story in Nouveaux Contes de la Maternelle shows that
children dislike cold, hard persons and instinctively like
kind people. M. Frapié says an act of kindness performed is
reflected in the face, especially in the expression of the
eyes. One teacher in this volume is presented as an ideal
but she does not noticeably resemble the first ideal character,
Louise. The later character is described as a blonde, deli-
cate little person. When the superintendent of instruction,
who is a great artist, comes to make an inspection, he tells
the children that art is living and that whatever inspires
them to be fine, strong, beautiful, and good is art. He asks
them if they see any art in the classroom, to which they re-
ply unhesitatingly, "Mademoiselle." It is interesting to com-

1. "L'Art à l'école." Nouveaux Contes de la Maternelle.
pare this story with "Les Yeux du Coeur" as the themes of the two contes are quite similar. As teachers, their heroines are realistic enough; it is only to their pupils that they seem ideal.

Another story shows the place which a teacher holds in the lives of the poor classes of people. They feel that in some way this distinguished and amiable person belongs to the family. She is of a superior rank, they say, but always ready to do you justice.

That teachers should have a professional attitude just as persons in other professions are expected to have a certain manner is illustrated by a story. One's attitude in the maternelle school ought to be joyous, for, according to Martha's story, a teacher has no right to show a sad face. Martha is a poor girl who, at the age of eighteen, is forced to go to work and chooses teaching. She dresses poorly, in black, and has an anemic face. She is sent to one of the most wretched maternelle schools where the pupils come from a miserable environment. Then she realizes that her first duty is to appear gay. Even the next morning after a bitter, personal disappointment she forces herself to be gayer than ever.

One of the most unique of M. Frapie's teacher characters is to be found in Nouveaux Contes de la Maternelle. She is an old teacher with pensive eyes like those of a poor child. People say she is slightly deranged mentally. One wonders why, if that be true, she should be permitted to teach, but M.

1. Cf. p. 80. (Note also "La Camarade" in Les Contes de la Maternelle.)
Frapié does not explain this illogical circumstance. She is put in charge of a class of the worst, most wretched children. They are physically very weak and extremely unresponsive. In order to awaken their energies and break through their wall of apathy she brings specially constructed wooden toys and boxes for them to destroy, knowing that the destruction of something gives the sense of power which they need. However, these toys do not encourage the weakest children, so she encourages these to strike her, pretending to be hurt by the lightest blow.

When they have improved and should now keep all their energies for defense she is faced with the problem of making them stop. She conceives a device to teach them that kindness is sometimes stronger than force. She pretends to hurt herself and faint, and when they strike her to wake her up she does not move, but when they caress her she revives. Such is the conclusion of this very odd story.

The above resumes have shown that there are approximately ten teacher characters in the third division, if one does not count those which are merely mentioned and which do not figure prominently in the stories. In addition, Mlle. Bord has been continued from the second period. The new characters are realistic just as are those of the preceding group. There is a pleasing variety among them for each has a distinct individuality, yet they all have this in common—their realism. Nothing can show the realism of these characters so clearly as the events and circumstances in which they play their parts. Each is vivid, true to life, and not exaggerated.

There are only slight differences between the characters
of the second and third periods. While the type remains the same, one can notice a slight lessening of power in the treatment of the teacher characters. Some of them are not quite so clearly drawn, and there are fewer teachers in the third period, due, perhaps, to the fact that so much of M. Frapié's work of this period is war stories. To summarize—the third group of M. Frapié's stories adds little that is new to the development of the school teacher character but continues the trend of realism of the second phase. However, it is continued in a manner which shows a diminishing of that tendency as far as the teacher character is concerned.

This period is a good example of the overlapping of phases of literary work which may occur. A slight trace of the idealism of M. Frapié's first novel is found in "Les Yeux de Coeur" (in Le Capitaine Dupont) and in "L'Art à l'Ecole" (in Nouveaux Contes de la Maternelle), whereas, "L'Ecole Marraine" (in Bonnes Gens) shows clearly a tendency toward the introduction of sentiment which is to become a dominant trait of the final period.
CHAPTER IX.

SENTIMENTALIZING

Once again M. Frapié has turned to novel writing and this time he has concentrated on the social novel. This is not a new trend, for the years 1905 and 1908 have seen the publication of Les Obsédées and La Figurante respectively. Both are novels with a social theme, but it is not until the last division of his works that this type of novel becomes predominant. It may be just as well to dispose of these first, as they should be mentioned, but are of no importance in the development of the school teacher character. Mention is made of the social novels in order to give an adequate conception of the whole of M. Frapié's works, and thus to determine the proportionate value of the teacher character.

La Virginité (1923) has several resemblances to Les Obsédées. A principal character in each of them is an author and the situations of the plot are similar. Then comes Les Filles à Marier which is a sequel to La Virginité. The former proposes some radical social reforms and shows its author to be an advocate of feminism. The third novel of this series is La Diviniséé, published in 1927, which continues the story of Les Filles à Marier. One of the heroines of the latter who took up social service work in that book is made the her-
one of the more recent novel. Much extraneous material is introduced into *La Divinisée* and that detracts from its literary value. Moreover, the realism of the previous novels is carried to such a degree in *La Divinisée* that it is, at times, extreme. This novel has less to recommend it than the other social novels. These last novels indicate, if I am not mistaken, a progressive subsiding of M. Frapié's literary power.

Sentimentalizing is the term I have chosen to designate the emphasis put upon emotion which is found throughout the works of the most recent phase. It evidences itself in the predominence of the emotional side of the characters. They either figure in a love affair, or interest themselves in assisting the unfortunate or in uplifting moral conditions to new heights of goodness, kindness, and generosity.

The only collection of *contes* among them is *Les Amis de Juliette*. Although it belongs chronologically to the last group, in treatment it belongs to the third phase. Perhaps it should be considered the link between the two divisions. It appeared two years after *La Virginité* which had been preceded by a four-year pause, during which time M. Frapié had no novel nor collection of short stories published.

*Les Amis de Juliette* adds another type of teacher, two or three new ideas and the repetition of an old one. The new type is the inexperienced teacher who makes a mistake in management. She is a substitute who comes when the regular teacher is ill. It is during the war. The boys make noises with their feet, so she says that whoever is not well-behaved she will send to his father in the trenches. Thereupon, they
all make a terrific noise, all wanting to be sent. It is necessary for the principal to come to reestablish order. The substitute has made the mistake of threatening to do something as punishment that the children really desire. In contrast, there is the teacher who has natural discipline and who exerts an irresistible influence on those around her. Another of the teachers is a retired one who again finds her interest in life through being able to help one of her pupils. This is an idea M. Frapié has used before in a previous story of the second period.

An interesting angle of the teaching profession is brought out by a child's ideas about it. She says, "Vos yeux en font du chemin, dans une journée! depuis tout de suite que vous m'avez regardée, ils ont déjà fait le tour de la cour....Quel métier, hein? toujours l'air tranquille, jamais crier...et vous ne vivez pas!...Veiller à la casse, avec toute cette marmaille qu'est fragile comme du verre!"

M. Frapié says teachers want to be preferred by their pupils to other teachers. Certainly that is a very human and true-to-life desire and it is reminiscent of the realistic character of the third phase. Another such idea is that teachers do not always like best the well-behaved child, but rather the one with a strong personality.

The next work, *La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites)*, adds an emotional treatment to the development of the teacher char-

acter. In addition, M. Frapié revives in it the *femme de service* of the second period. This is the work, mentioned before, which is written in dramatic form. It is a collection of scenes which have a climax and a certain amount of coherence. It appeared twenty-one years after *La Maternelle* but the character, Rose, has not been changed very much. The later work seems merely the sequel to the other or leaves the impression that M. Frapié had too many ideas to use in *La Maternelle* and, not wishing to discard them entirely, thriftily made use of them in *La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites)*.

A new element is found in the latter which did not appear in the former. The new element is the love interest theme. A sketch of the plot of *La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites)* will best illustrate this difference. Rose comes as *femme de service* to the school of which Mme. Marthelle is principal. Mme. Marthelle is best described by saying that she is a coquette and desires to be admired and complimented. She would like to attract M. Libois who is the district supervisor, but he falls in love with Rose and she with him although she will not admit it. Her jealousy aroused, Mme. Marthelle watches Rose closely, because she and her assistant, Mme. Paulin, suspect Rose of being unused to servitude. One day, Mme. Marthelle remarks to Rose that her fault is too great sensibility. Rose then admits that she is a *bourgeoise* and is well educated. Mme. Marthelle uses this as an excuse to dismiss Rose, saying that she has too many diplomas to hold the position of *femme de service* and must become a teacher. Libois, who is a doctor, gives up his position as supervisor, marries Rose and
establishes a clinic or dispensary. He and Rose agree to adopt Marie, Rose’s favorite pupil, who is an orphan.

In this work there is more emphasis on the love interest than in any other work considered at length in the present discussion. The tendency toward sentimentalizing is not found to any great extent previous to the last phase, but is a very predominant trait of all works of the last phase.

The heart interest theme is less important, than the interesting sidelights given on education. Again, there is the emphasis on moral teaching, the education of the heart by kindness, beauty, and goodness. This is an idea which M. Frapié has expressed before. Apparently it is one of his strongest convictions that the duty of the teacher is to encourage and develop whatever is good in the pupil. Rose is able to influence the pupils a great deal. They are fond of her from the start and this is the key to her power over them. She changes the spirit of the school so that instead of a meek flock to be led about wherever one wishes, the principal finds she has to deal with personalities, and she is not at all pleased with the change because it makes her feel as if she has lost some of her power. Mme. Marthelle is so blind that she feels she has done her duty best when she has made her pupils as nearly alike as possible. It is her mistaken idea of education that children should be put into a uniform mold.

Another false aim of a teacher is the desire to make a good impression when the inspector comes. The error lies in the fact that it is the impression and not reality itself that counts. The teachers do not give an ordinary lesson nor
act naturally. They use their best manner and put forward their best pupils, all of which is prompted, however, by the natural desire to please and is not done with any conscious intent to deceive. When the inspector arrives, the principal becomes excited. She wants to give a lesson which will be a model of perfection and to keep perfect order in the classroom. The principal considers the pupils' good behavior more important than adequate, thoughtful response to questions.

Once, the inspector asks that Mlle. Bord tell a certain story and use the illustrations with which he provides her. He explains that it is an experiment and that he visits schools everywhere to observe the salient features of the national temperament as revealed by the children in their reactions to this story. It is about sheep: the flock, the big ones, the little one who is lovable and who runs to his mother when afraid, and of the necessity to kill it for meat. When Mlle. Bord comes to the killing of the lamb the children become excited and shout, "Nous ne voulons pas" and "On dira plus qu'on a faim." The inspector and Libois are delighted with this response. They say it shows the generosity, kind disposition, and heroism of the French people. By heroism they mean defense of the weak, of the sacrificed. One wonders if there is not too much sentimentalizing in this story. And is it only French children who are so sympathetic?

There is much similarity between La Maternelle and La

2. Ibid., p. 97.
Maternelle (Scènes Inédites). Two of the characters are identical, Rose and Mlle. Bord. The setting for the stories is the same, the école maternelle. The heart interest which plays only a small part in the former becomes the chief interest in La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites), which seems to be another version of the first story. The element of sentiment also finds expression in another way, and that is in the character of the principal, Mme. Marthelle. No other teacher in M. Frapié's books is like her. She is a typical coquette whose vanity demands masculine attention and whose dress and manner are calculated to provide it.

The heart interest theme and the tendency to sentimentalize are also the dominant characteristics of the novel Gamins de Paris. The former appears in the development of the plot and the latter is represented by the Ligue de Bonté. The story of Gamins de Paris is as follows: Paul Dorbigny, a magistrate connected with the police department, has a wife, Martha, and a daughter, Fabienne, who listen with much emotion to his sad cases. Fabienne is a tender-hearted girl who is very sympathetic toward the unfortunates who are brought to trial in the police court. One case is that of a school teacher who pleads in behalf of rather than against a man who is accused of entering her apartment and stealing from her. The man is a former pupil of hers, so she protects him from the law for she thinks she will be able to cure his criminal propensities through kindness. Kindness is the first principle of the Ligue de Bonté.

Fabienne belongs to one of these "leagues" which originated
with Mme. Guéret, principal of the school that Fabienne has attended. Mme. Guéret is described as elderly, but alert, loquacious, and giving the impression of experience, penetration, and strong watchful authority. Her panacea for the ills and crimes of the world is a Ligue de Bonté to which the school children belong. They pledge themselves to do an act of kindness every day. In the morning they promise themselves to do a good deed that day and in the evening they write the results in a notebook or on an unsigned slip of paper which is put in a box at school. Occasionally, the papers are read for a moral lesson. The object of the society is to uplift morals and foster an interest in the welfare of others. Mme. Guéret believes it will assist in the suppression of crime. She is of the opinion that it should be introduced into all schools. It has since been introduced into the French schools.

When she is fifteen Fabienne, having taken these moral lessons much to heart, teaches Valérie, a maid in their house, to read and write. The idea comes to Fabienne after some of her guests have humiliated Valérie by showing up her ignorance while she is serving them. Valérie's mind is very keen and she soon learns all that Fabienne can teach her. Without realizing it Fabienne has taught her the ideals of the Ligue de Bonté along with the other lessons. When Valérie has the opportunity to take revenge on the rude girls who have made fun of her she refuses. M. Frapié considers this one of the highest types of teaching. The teacher transmits moral qualities in addition to giving mental instruction. The former comes through the personality and character of the teacher. Now, romance and sentimentalizing are merged in a Ligue de Bonté.
which Fabienne starts for adults. Three of the members are or have been school teachers. Fabienne's parents are also members. She is now eighteen and the special act of kindness which this league undertakes is a secret plot to find her a husband. Naturally, Fabienne knows nothing of their intention. The better educated and morally endowed a girl is, the harder it is to find a suitable husband for her. Fabienne is of this class. A husband should be equal or superior to the woman, therefore, the superior type of woman has fewer possibilities. At last, when a suitable young man is found, the young people are made to admire qualities in each other before they meet. The result is that when they are introduced each sees in the other the personification of his and her ideal, and love is awakened in their hearts. The teachers prove to be very clever matchmakers. These new types of teachers and the plot of this novel are more evidences of the tendency to think in terms of emotion which is characteristic of the last phase of Frapié's work.

The Ligue de Bonté had an influence which extended beyond the school in which it began but it seems too much to expect it to prevent most crimes. That does not mean to imply that it did no good, for it undoubtedly did. Is that not indicated by Fabienne's willingness to teach Valérie and Valérie's refusal to take revenge? Fabienne is a teacher if the term may apply to anyone who teaches. She is not a certified teacher and she has only one pupil, yet, she like the ideal Louise, fulfilled the highest purpose of the teacher, that of imparting moral instruction together with subject matter.
The most noteworthy contribution of the last phase to the development of the school teacher character is the introduction of the sentimental element. It appears in all works of this period. Those teachers influenced by it are Rose, Mme. Marthelle, Fabienne, Mme. Guéret, and the three former teachers who help find a husband for Fabienne. In my opinion, M. Frapié's last works are not his best ones, and his earlier works without the love interest are his best claims to individuality. The introduction of the love theme and the excess of sentiment brings a strong character to a commonplace level.

The other important development of the last period is the Ligue de Bonté. Mme. Guéret, its originator, is by far the best teacher character of this last period. Mlle. Bord and Rose are old friends, not products of this period but of an earlier one. Fabienne is a very sensitive person and in this she resembles the ideal of the first period. Mme. Marthelle is a new and less admirable character. In conclusion, the last period produces no one school teacher character which is outstanding. It brings to a close the development of a type of character which is by turns typical and unusual, but always interestingly delineated in M. Frapié's sensitive manner.
CHAPTER X.
CONCLUSION

Our study has led us to conclude that M. Frapié's women characters are his finest and strongest. His dual temperament may partly account for this, but it is also due to his deep understanding of feminine psychology. When he sets down the thoughts of one of the women characters it is as if she thought aloud. The maternal instinct is stressed somewhat too much, in my opinion. The teacher characters frequently give their pupils the affection they would have given to children of their own. Thwarted mother love is a theme found in L'Institutrice de Province, Les Obsédés, La Figurante, La Virginité, and others. Fully one-third of M. Frapié's heroines are school teachers. The majority of the others are domestics. Generally speaking, the house-maids are ignorant, weak characters and the teachers are strong, forceful characters. The former are crushed by the circumstances of their lives and the latter adapt themselves to the situation or overcome it.

The teachers have some traits in common, usually traits of character, for they are greatly diversified in physical appearance. Nevertheless, there are similarities even here, as many of them are described as "statuesque" or "with regular features," or "blond and fragile." They are usually sensi-

tive, kindly, and so devoted to their work that they make it their whole life. M. Frapie feels that the maternelle teacher must radiate joy. It is an indispensable professional virtue because of the miserable environment in which the children live. They see in their teacher a good comrade, a beautiful person. When the pupils grow up, their teacher does not forget them and if they need her assistance of help them out of difficulty she does not refuse it. The teachers are self-sacrificing to an astonishing degree. Teaching saps their youth, strength, and vitality. M. Frapie's teacher puts herself unstintedly into her work, permitting her pupils to absorb into themselves that intangible part of herself which she loses in her work. Louise Chardon is the perfect example of the ultimate in self-sacrifice.

Through his feminine characters M. Frapie argues for equal rights for women in professional life and in society where the conventions favor the men. His feminism began with his first novel and has continued, in varying degrees, through all the others. His novels also set forth his ideas on education which are very modern. For instance, his idea of educating is to develop the child's best abilities and restrain his harmful tendencies. This theory condemns the prevalent memory system and recognizes that children are not uniform and ought not to be. In other words, education to be effective should allow for individual differences. The necessity for moral instruction is also stressed.

The stories which have their setting in the school are the most enjoyable, to my way of thinking, and show the most individuality. Also, he seems to handle the short story form
even better than the novel. The larger part of his work deals with the so-called common class of people, especially their children whom he finds pathetic and appealing. He understands these people and makes his reader understand them. No doubt this is accomplished by his actual knowledge coupled with an unusually sympathetic nature. One of the strongest impressions made by M. Frapié's works is that the man who wrote them had much sympathy for his fellow beings.

Such are the best points of M. Frapié's writing. If I were looking for faults I should point out the fact that now and then his realism slips into coarseness. One could point out passages where the degree of realism is rather inexcusable, especially in the later novels. Then too, there is considerable repetition, both of ideas and situations. Several instances have already been mentioned. A more welcome repetition is that of characters. The characters of La Virginité are continued in Les Filles à Marier and further continued in La Divinisée. Rose and Mlle. Bord also reappear from time to time.

To summarize the development of the teacher character it is necessary to consider in perspective those characters previously studied in detail. M. Frapié's first heroine is a school teacher, Louise Chardon. She seems to have been created to embody more fine qualities and virtues than an ordinary mortal usually possesses. They and her freedom from human faults make her represent an ideal, never equalled in any of the works which follow. When the pupils enter her class they see in her the most gracious teacher one could imagine. A glowing description of her follows this state-
ment in the book. Always heroic in the face of hardships or injustices, faithful to the requirements of teaching, this perfect teacher sacrifices everything to her profession for she says she has espoused the profession of school teaching. She is a composite character in whom the best attributes of other teachers are combined and is, therefore, Frapie's ideal. This idea is expressed by an inspector who, after visiting her class, carried away the impression that he has seen, not simply a teacher, but The Teacher.

There are a few other teacher characters who appear in the same novel or period of writing in which Louise appears, but they are, for the most part, below the average. The contrast between them and Louise only emphasizes the latter's perfection. She is more nearly perfect in her teaching, more devoted to the profession, and has a more affectionate nature than any other teacher character. Around this character M. Frapié has written a complete novel, her life story being given in its entirety. All the other characters in L'Institutrice de Province are subordinated to this central figure which is at once heroic and pathetic.

By the time M. Frapié came to the writing of La Maternelle he had found his literary stride. He had abandoned the tendency to idealize and continued in the vein of realism. Rose, the next character, is highly educated but conceals the fact in order to become la bonne in a maternelle school. Her associates there are Mme. Galant and Mlle. Bord. The former is a large, coarse woman who does not in the least resemble a typical teacher. She is more devoted to
the process of teaching than to the objects of the teaching. Another fault is that she punishes severely and without consideration of the circumstances. She is somewhat jealous of Mlle. Bord because the latter has been trained in a normal school and, therefore, thinks herself superior. Mlle. Bord is just, and a good teacher, but her lessons are not practical because she is not interested in the home life of her pupils. Rose is interested in them but she is frequently disgusted by their poverty and misery. At last she decides to resume her rightful place in society. All three of these characters are portrayed with realism. Their faults and human weaknesses are revealed so that the reader sees them as ordinary people. There is a wide variety of realistic characters following these. The strict disciplinarian, the frivolous teacher, the one who helped a former pupil, and the indigent teacher will be remembered.

After the war stories, M. Frapié again wrote of teachers. This group is not as large as the preceding one but the characters are varied and are of the same realistic type. However, they are not as vivid nor as outstanding as those of the second division. In the creation of one of the teacher characters of the third division can be seen an indication of a new trend which dominates the final group of works.

With the reappearance of Rose and the introduction of Mme. Marthelle and Mme. Guéret comes a new factor in the development of the teacher character. Sentimentalizing becomes the keynote of the last period. Rose's story is retold as a
love story, Mme. Marthelle is a coquette, and Mme. Guéret a matchmaker. The originality and interest in the teacher character diminishes to considerable extent in the later works due to the emphasis on sentiment.

Undoubtedly, the first teacher character is M. Frapié's most original one. Into the creation of her, he poured an enthusiasm which he never equalled again. After an interval, he turned toward realism and created natural characters unlike the ideal Louise but equally good. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, there comes a decline in these realistic characters during the third group. Another interim, and we find the school teacher character involved in sentimental situations. The development of the school teacher character begins, as we have noted, with idealization, then turns to realism, and closes with the addition of a sentimental aspect and a gradual decline in the quality of character.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. M. Léon Frapié's Works Studied


Preface.


La Maternelle. Albin Michel, Paris, 1908.

La Maternelle (Scènes Inédites). Librairie Baudinière, Paris, 1925.


II. M. Frapié’s Other Works

La Proscrite.
M'me Précisat.
La Mère Croquemitaine.
Les Contes de la Guerre.

III. Critical Studies Consulted.

A. Books.


Bédier, Joseph and Hazard, Paul, editors. Histoire de la
Littérature Française (Illustrée). Librairie Larousse, 
Paris, 1924, p. 296.

Fage, André. Anthologie des Conteurs d'aujourd'hui. Li-

Lanson, Gustave, editor. Histoire Illustrée de la Littérature 
Française. Vol. II. Librairie Hachette, Paris, 1923, 
p. 417.

Lanson, René and Desseignet, Jules. La France et Sa Civil-

Larousse du XXe Siècle. Vol. III. Librairie Larousse, 

Montfort, Eugène, editor. Vingt-Cinq Ans de Littérature 
Française. (Jan. 1895-Jan. 1920.) Librairie de France, 
(F. Sant'Andrea, L. Marceron et Cie.), Paris, n.d., 
pp. 47, 50, 270.

Mornet, Daniel. Histoire de la Littérature et de la Pensée


B. Articles.


