

a series of subjects from the history of Alexander. The first of these, "Alexander and the Family of Darius," so delighted Louis XIV. that he ennobled Le Brun (December, 1662), who was also created first painter to his majesty with a pension of 12,000 livres, the same amount as he had yearly received in the service of the magnificent Fouquet. From this date all that was done in the royal palaces was directed by Le Brun. The works of the gallery of Apollo in the Louvre were interrupted in 1677 when he accompanied the king to Flanders (on his return from Lille he painted several compositions in the Château of St Germain), and finally—for they remained unfinished at his death—by the vast labours of Versailles, where he reserved for himself the Halls of War and Peace, the Ambassadors' Staircase, and the Great Gallery, other artists being forced to accept the position of his assistants. At the death of Colbert, Louvois, who succeeded him in the department of public works, showed no favour to Le Brun, and in spite of the king's continued support he felt a bitter change in his position. This contributed to the illness which on the 22nd of February 1690 ended in his death in the Gobelins. Besides his gigantic labours at Versailles and the Louvre, the number of his works for religious corporations and private patrons is enormous. He modelled and engraved with much facility, and, in spite of the heaviness and poverty of drawing and colour, his extraordinary activity and the vigour of his conceptions justify his claim to fame. Nearly all his compositions have been reproduced by celebrated engravers.

**LEBRUN, CHARLES FRANÇOIS**, duc de Plaisance (1739-1824), French statesman, was born at St-Sauveur-Lendelin (Manche) on the 19th of March 1739, and in 1762 made his first appearance as a lawyer at Paris. He filled the posts successively of *conseiller royal* (1766) and of inspector general of the domains of the crown (1768); he was also one of the chief advisers of the chancellor Maupeou, took part in his struggle against the parlements, and shared in his downfall in 1774. He then devoted himself to literature, translating Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1774), and the *Iliad* (1776). At the outset of the Revolution he foresaw its importance, and in the *Voix du citoyen*, which he published in 1789, predicted the course which events would take. In the Constituent Assembly, where he sat as deputy for Dourdan, he expressed liberal views, and was the proposer of various financial reforms. He then became president of the directory of Seine-et-Oise, and in 1795 was elected as a deputy to the Council of Ancients. After the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire in the year VIII. (9th November 1799), Lebrun was made third consul. In this capacity he took an active part in the reorganization of finance and of the administration of the departments of France. In 1804 he was appointed arch-treasurer of the empire, and in 805-1806 as governor-general of Liguria effected its annexation to France. He opposed Napoleon's restoration of the noblesse, and in 1808 only reluctantly accepted the title of duc de Plaisance (Piacenza). He was next employed in organizing the departments which were formed in Holland, of which he was governor-general from 1811 to 1813. Although to a certain extent opposed to the despotism of the emperor, he was not in favour of his deposition, though he accepted the *fait accompli* of the Restoration in April 1814. Louis XVIII. made him a peer of France; but during the Hundred Days he accepted from Napoleon the post of Grand Master of the university. On the return of the Bourbons in 1815 he was consequently suspended from the House of Peers, but was recalled in 1819. He died at St-Germain (Seine-et-Oise) on the 16th of June 1824. He had been made a member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in 1803.

See M. de Caumont la Force, *L'Administration de Lebrun* (Paris, 1907); M. Marie de Messimy, *Mémoires de la princesse L. Brion, duc de Plaisance* (Paris, 1828); *Opinions, rapports et notes d'écrivains politiques de C. F. Lebrun* (1829), edited, with a biographical notice, by his son Anne-Charles Lebrun.

**LEBRUN, PIERRE ANTOINE** (1785-1873), French poet, was born in Paris on the 29th of November 1785. An *Ode à la grande armée*, mistaken at the time for the work of Ecouchard Lebrun, attracted Napoleon's attention, and secured for the

author a pension of 1200 francs. Lebrun's plays, once famous, are now forgotten. They are: *Ulysse* (1814), *Marie Stuart* (1820), which obtained a great success, and *Le Cid d'Andalousie* (1825). Lebrun visited Greece in 1820, and on his return to Paris he published in 1822 an ode on the death of Napoleon which cost him his pension. In 1823 he was the guest of Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford. The coronation of Charles X. in that year inspired the verses entitled *La Vallée de Champrosy*, which have, perhaps, done more to secure his fame than his more ambitious attempts. In 1828 appeared his most important poem, *La Grèce*, and in the same year he was elected to the Academy. The revolution of 1830 opened up for him a public career; in 1831 he was made director of the Imprimerie Royale, in subsequently filled with distinction other public offices, becoming senator in 1853. He died on the 27th of May 1873.

See Sainte-Beuve, *Portraits contemporains*, vol. ii.

**LEBRUN, PONCE DENIS ÉCOUCHARD** (1729-1807), French lyric poet, was born in Paris on the 11th of August 1729, in the house of the prince de Conti, to whom his father was valet. Young Lebrun had among his schoolfellows a son of Louis Racine whose disciple he became. In 1755 he published an *ode sur les désastres de Lisbon*. In 1759 he married Marie Anne de Surcourt, addressed in his *Élégies* as Fanny. To the early years of his marriage belongs his poem *Nature*. His wife suffered an action against him to obtain a separation, she was supported by Lebrun's own mother and sister. He had been *secrétaire des commandements* to the prince de Conti, and on his patron's death was deprived of his occupation. He suffered a further misfortune in the loss of his capital by the bankruptcy of the prince de Guéméné. To this period belongs a long and beautiful *Veillée des Muses*, which remained unfinished, and his ode to Buffon, which ranks among his best works. Dependent on government pensions he changed his politics with the times. Calonne he compared to the great Sully, and Louis XVI. to Henry IV., but the Terror nevertheless found in him its official poet. He occupied rooms in the Louvre, and fulfilled his obligations by shameless attacks on the unfortunate king and queen. His excellent ode on the *Vengeur* and the *Ode nationale contre Anglèterre* on the occasion of the projected invasion of England are in honour of the power of Napoleon. This "versatility" has so much injured Lebrun's reputation that it is difficult to appreciate his real merit. He had a genius for epigram, and the quatrains and distiches directed against his many enemies have a verve generally lacking in his odes. The one directed against La Harpe (written by Sainte-Beuve) the "queen of epigrams." La Harpe said that the poet, called by his friends, perhaps with a spice of irony, Lebrun-Pindare, had written many fine strophes but not one good ode. The critic exposed mercilessly the obscurities and unlucky images which occur even in the ode to Buffon, and advised the author to imitate the simplicity and energy that adorned Buffon's prose. Lebrun died in Paris on the 31st of August 1807.

His works were published by his friend P. L. Ginguéné in 1811. The best of them are included in Prosper Poitevin's "*Petits poètes français*," which forms part of the "*Panthéon littéraire*."

**LE CARON, HENRI** (whose real name was THOMAS MILLER BEACH) (1841-1894), British secret service agent, was born at Colchester, on the 26th of September 1841. He was of an adventurous character, and when nineteen years old went to Paris, where he found employment in business connected with America. Infected with the excitement of the American Civil War, he crossed the Atlantic in 1861 and enlisted in the Northern Army, taking the name of Henri Le Caron. In 1864 he married a young lady who had helped to escape from some Confederate marauders, and by the end of the war he rose to be major. In 1865, through a companion in arms named O'Neill, he was brought into contact with Fenianism, and having learnt of the Fenian plot against Canada, he mentioned the designs when writing home to his father. Mr Beach told his local M.P., who in turn told the Home Secretary, and the latter asked Mr Beach to arrange for further information. Le Caron, inspired (as all the evidence shows) by genuinely patriotic feeling, from that