

At the bottom of Lafayette Street is a little square dotted with magnolias and lime trees. It is called the Place des Beaux Gens because in former days ladies and gentlemen in silk and calico would promenade here on fine evenings before the performance at The Marigold.

This was a famous little theatre in its heyday — the best place in town to hear ballads or watch a dance troupe. But now its limestone facing has begun to crumble. Stonecrop grows between the paving slabs of the Place des Beaux Gens. Only the litter man comes here, zigzagging after brown paper bags, or a page of *Le Monde* drifting in the warm breeze.

