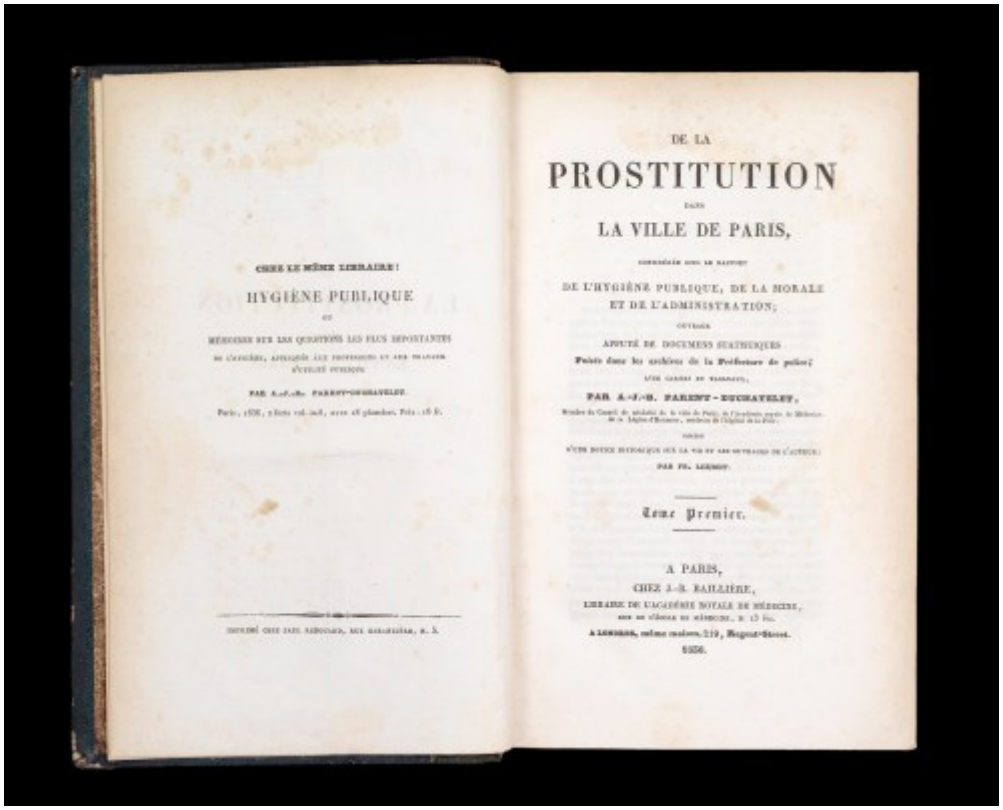


Two volumes, (210 by 130mm), xxiv, 624pp, two fold-out maps, and a fold-out graph, [2] 580pp, original green quarter morocco over green buckram boards, spine in five compartments, gilt.

A GROUND-BREAKING WORK ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROSTITUTION

De la Prostitution dans la ville de Paris...

Author
PARENT-DUCHATELET, Alexandre J.B.

Publication date
1836.

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Publication place
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Physical description
Two volumes, (210 by 130mm), xxiv, 624pp, two fold-out maps, and a fold-out graph, [2] 580pp, original green quarter morocco over green buckram boards, spine in five compartments, gilt.

Dimensions

Notes
Alexandre Parent-Duchâtelet (1790-1835) was one of the most important public health advocates of the nineteenth century. Born in Paris, he qualified in 1814, with his doctoral thesis concentrating on cholera. Having failed to set up a private practice, he devoted himself to public health, on which he published extensively, including works on Paris’s sewers, the effect of tobacco on tobacco factory

workers, and the sanitation of operation theatres. In 1829, Parent-Duchâtelet became one of the founders of ‘Annales d’Hygiène et de Médecine Légale’, which is still one of the most authoritative journals in the world on hygiene. He was physician to the Hôpital de la Pitié and member of the Conseil de Salubrité, of which he became vice-president three months before his untimely death, at the age of 45.

The manuscript of the present work was completed by Parent-Duchâtelet just before his death, in 1835, to be published posthumously in both Paris and London, in 1836. The work deals with prostitution in Paris, its effects on public health, its morality, and its administration. The work would be seen as pioneering in the nineteenth century, treating the subject in an often human and compassionate way. In his extensive investigations he visited hospitals and brothels, interviewing doctors, surgeons, guards, champlains, and the prostitutes themselves. He even went so far as to name several of the prostitutes that he spoke to, giving their pseudonym or “nom de guerre”. Prostitutes of the “classe inférieure” would use more descriptive terms, like “Belle-Cuisse” (“Beautiful Thigh”), “Parfaite” (“Perfect”), or “Faux-Cul” (“False Bum”), so that clients had a sense of what to expect. Those of the “classe élevée”, meanwhile, tended to use floral names, or names of notably beautiful women from literature or history.

Before Parent-Duchâtelet’s research, it was generally believed that moral failings such as laziness, vanity, and a lack of morals were the driving factors in women becoming prostitutes. However, his work would dispel these myths, instead laying the blame at poverty, false promises of marriage, and the break up of the family unit, whether that be the loss of one of both parents, or expulsion from the family. The work also includes two maps detailing the number of prostitutes in France by département, and the distribution of prostitutes in Paris.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price: £1500

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