Contemplating the beautiful and seemingly endless valleys of Normandy, Proust makes this observation about city life:

. . . a little slice of garden with a few trees, which would seem paltry in the country, acquires an extraordinary charm in the Avenue Gabriel or the Rue de Monceau, where only multi-millionaires can afford such a luxury. . . .—Sodom and Gomorrah 4: 543

Proust grew up near the Parc Monceau and the Avenue Gabriel and the gardens of the Champs-Elysées, all of which are the settings for a number of scenes in his novel.

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Marcel has this to say about an obscure character who tells him of his visit to Paris: “. . . he had that detailed knowledge of Paris only to be found in people who seldom go there.” —Sodom and Gomorrah 4: 662

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For Mme Verdurin on the Tour d’Argent and the Hôtel Meurice, see “Characters.”