



Fig. 2: Manuel removed from the "Chambre des députés" in 1823. Print taken from Dayot 1902. Note the hilt for the swords at the left side of the officers, and the curvature in the wall, indicating that the scene is at the extreme left of the chairman.

taken place, but we could find no reference to such an event.)

In December 1791, the Assembly had in the mean time moved to the "Salle du Manège" in Paris, again a decision was taken to refurbish the conference hall in order to make it better suited to its needs. The benches were put closer together (the Assembly now counted 760 members) and the chair was positioned slightly askew on the other side of the hall. In fact, the purpose was to do away with the very division between "côté gauche" and "côté droite," which was loathed by many. The restructuring resulted in the "left" benches becoming right, and most of the "right" ones becoming left of the chair. How did the delegates react? Where did they choose to sit down? They simply resumed their old places. But now confusion was born: what was to become of the former "right" and "left"? In June 1792, a few months after the refurbishing, the newspapers noted: "The extreme left side is filled, the rest of the hall is empty. The tribunes and the former left applaud." People tried to do away with such clumsy terms as "former left" and "former right" and replaced them with terms

with more content: "side of the people," and "side of the king," but to no avail. Six months later, the Assembly had in the meantime been followed by the Convention, the delegate Dulaure writes: "In the legislative meeting the patriots used to sit at the right-hand side of the chairman; on the extreme right is now the so-called Montagne. That place used to be called the left-hand side; but as the seat of the chairman had been replaced, the place is now at his right-hand side. The opposite side, where the Aristocrats attending the meeting used to sit, was the right-hand side. Now it is on the left-hand." The Aristocrats remained in those places at the end of the Legislative Assembly, when it was transformed into the Convention. Dulaure: "I do not want to indicate that the Montagne and its environment only consists of members of that party; I know some who do sit there but have no true allegiance to whatever party; they just are guided by general interest, but the power of habit makes that they stay there" (Dulaure 1793). This last remark answers the first question stated above. With regard to the second question: just by going back to one's old seat