

Seeing Europe with Famous Authors, Volume 4 eBook

Seeing Europe with Famous Authors, Volume 4

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IV

CATHEDRALS AND CHATEAUX

(Continued)

BAYEUX AND ITS FAMOUS TAPESTRIES[A]

[Footnote A: From "A Bibliographical Tour in France and Germany."]

BY THOMAS FROGNALL DIBDIN

The diligence brought me here from Caen in about two hours and a half. The country, during the whole route, is open, well cultivated, occasionally gently undulating, but generally denuded of trees. Many pretty little churches, with delicate spires, peeped out to the right and left during the journey; but the first view of the cathedral of Bayeux put all the others out of my recollection.

There is, in fact, no proper approach to this interesting edifice. The western end is suffocated with houses. Here stands the post-office; and with the most unsuspecting frankness, on the part of the owner, I had permission to examine, with my own hands, within doors, every letter—under the expectation that there were some for myself. Nor was I disappointed.

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But you must come with me to the cathedral, and of course we must enter together at the western front. There are five porticoes; the central one being rather large, and the two, on either side, comparatively small. Formerly, these were covered with sculptured figures and ornaments, but the Calvinists in the sixteenth, and the Revolutionists in the eighteenth century, have contrived to render their present aspect mutilated and repulsive in the extreme. On entering, I was struck with the two large transverse Norman arches which bestride the area, or square, for the bases of the two towers. It is the boldest and finest piece of masonry in the whole building. The interior disappointed me. It is plain, solid, and divested of ornament.

Hard by the cathedral stood formerly a magnificent episcopal palace. Upon this palace the old writers dearly loved to expatiate. There is now, however, nothing but a good large comfortable family mansion; sufficient for the purposes of such hospitality and entertainment as the episcopal revenues will afford.

It is high time that you should be introduced in proper form to the famous Bayeux tapestry. Know then, in as few words as possible, that this celebrated piece of tapestry represents chiefly the Invasion of England by William the Conqueror, and the subsequent death of Harold at the battle of Hastings. It measures about 214 English feet in length, by about nineteen inches in width; and is supposed to have been worked under the particular superintendence and direction of Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror. It was formerly exclusively kept and exhibited in the cathedral; but it is now justly retained in the Town Hall, and treasured as the most precious relic among the archives of the city.

There is indeed every reason to consider it as one of the most valuable historical monuments which France possesses. It has also given rise to a great deal of archeological discussion. Montfaucon, Ducarel, and De La Rue, have come forward successively—but more especially the first and last; and Montfaucon in particular has favored the world with copper-plate representations of the whole. Montfaucon's plates are generally much too small; and the more enlarged ones are too ornamental.

It is right, first of all, that you should have an idea how this piece of tapestry is preserved, or rolled up. You see it here, therefore, precisely as it appears after the person who shows it, takes off the cloth with which it is usually covered. The first portion of the needle-work, representing the embassy of Harold from Edward the Confessor to William Duke of Normandy, is comparatively much defaced—that is to say, the stitches are worn away, and little more than the ground, or fine close linen cloth remains. It is not far from the beginning—and where the color is fresh, and the stitches are, comparatively, preserved—that you observe the portrait of Harold.

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You are to understand that the stitches, if they may be so called, are threads laid side by side—and bound down at intervals by cross stitches, or fastenings—upon rather a fine linen cloth; and that the parts intended to represent flesh are left untouched by the needle. I obtained a few straggling shreds of the worsted with which it is worked. The colors are generally a faded or bluish green, crimson, and pink. About the last five feet of this extraordinary roll are in a yet more decayed and imperfect state than the first portion. But the designer of the subject, whoever he was, had an eye throughout to Roman art—as it appeared in its later stages. The folds of the draperies, and the proportions of the figures, are executed with this feeling.

I must observe that, both at top and at bottom of the principal subject, there is a running allegorical ornament, of which I will not incur the presumption to suppose myself a successful interpreter. The constellations, and the symbols of agriculture and of a rural occupation form the chief subjects of this running ornament. All the inscriptions are executed in capital letters of about an inch in length; and upon the whole, whether this extraordinary and invaluable relic be of the latter end of the eleventh, or the beginning or middle of the twelfth century seems to me a matter of rather a secondary consideration. That it is at once unique and important, must be considered as a position to be neither doubted nor denied.

I have learned even here, of what importance this tapestry roll was considered in the time of Bonaparte's threatened invasion of our country: and that, after displaying it at Paris for two or three months, to awaken the curiosity and excite the love of conquest among the citizens, it was conveyed to one or two sea-port towns, and exhibited upon the stage as a most important material in dramatic effect.

THE CHATEAU OF HENRI IV. AT PAU[A]

[Footnote A: From "A Tour Through the Pyrenees." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, Henry Holt & Co. Copyright, 1873.]

BY HIPPOLYTE ADOLPHE TAINE

Pau is a pretty city, neat, of gay appearance; but the highway is paved with little round stones, the side-walks with small sharp pebbles: so the horses walk on the heads of nails and foot-passengers on the points of them. From Bordeaux to Toulouse such is the usage, such the pavement. At the end of five minutes, your feet tell you in the most intelligible manner that you are two hundred leagues away from Paris....

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Here are the true countrymen of Henry IV. As to the pretty ladies in gauzy hats, whose swelling and rustling robes graze the horns of the motionless oxen as they pass, you must not look at them; they would carry your imagination back to the Boulevard de Gand, and you would have gone two hundred leagues only to remain in the same place. I am here on purpose to visit the sixteenth century; one makes a journey for the sake of changing, not place, but ideas.... It was eight o'clock in the morning; not a visitor at the castle, no one in the courts nor on the terrace; I should not have been too much astonished at meeting the Bearnais, "that lusty gallant, that very devil," who was sharp enough to get for himself the name of "the good king."

His chateau is very irregular; it is only when seen from the valley that any graces and harmony can be found in it. Above two rows of pointed roofs and old houses, it stands out alone against the sky and gazes upon the valley in the distance; two bell-turrets project from the front toward the west; the oblong body follows, and two massive brick towers close the line with their esplanades and battlements. It is connected with the city by a narrow old bridge, by a broad modern one with the park, and the foot of its terrace is bathed by a dark but lovely stream.

Near at hand, this arrangement disappears; a fifth tower upon the north side deranges the symmetry. The great egg-shaped court is a mosaic of incongruous masonry; above the porch, a wall of pebbles from the Gave, and of red bricks crossed like a tapestry design; opposite, fixt to the wall, a row of medallions in stone; upon the sides, doors of every form and age; dormer windows, windows square, pointed, embattled, with stone mullions garlanded with elaborate reliefs. This masquerade of styles troubles the mind, yet not unpleasantly; it is unpretending and artless; each century has built according to its own fancy, without concerning itself about its neighbor.

On the first floor is shown a great tortoise-shell, which was the cradle of Henry IV. Carved chests, dressing-tables, tapestries, clocks of that day, the bed and arm-chair of Jeanne d'Albret, a complete set of furniture in the taste of the Renaissance, striking and somber, painfully labored yet magnificent in style, carrying the mind at once back toward that age of force and effort, of boldness in invention, of unbridled pleasures and terrible toil, of sensuality and of heroism. Jeanne d'Albret, mother of Henry IV., crossed France in order that she might, according to her promise, be confined in this castle. "A princess," says D'Aubigne, "having nothing of the woman about her but the sex, a soul entirely given to manly things, a mind mighty in great affairs, a heart unconquerable by adversity."

She sang an old Bearnaise song when she brought him into the world. They say that the aged grandfather rubbed the lips of the new-born child with a clove of garlic, poured into his mouth a few drops of Jurancon wine, and carried him away in his dressing-gown. The child was born in the chamber which opens into the lower tower of Mazeres, on the southwest corner.

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His mother, a warm and severe Calvinist, when he was fifteen years old, led him through the Catholic army to La Rochelle, and gave him to her followers as their general. At sixteen years old, at the combat of Arnay-le-Duc, he led the first charge of cavalry. What an education and what men! Their descendants were just now passing in the streets, going to school to compose Latin verses and recite the pastorals of Massillon.

Those old wars are the most poetic in French history; they were made for pleasure rather than interest. It was a chase in which adventures, dangers, emotions were found, in which men lived in the sunlight, on horseback, amidst flashes of fire, and where the body, as well as the soul, had its enjoyment and its exercise. Henry carries it on as briskly as a dance, with a Gascon's fire and a soldier's ardor, with abrupt sallies, and pursuing his point against the enemy as with the ladies.

This is no spectacle of great masses of well-disciplined men, coming heavily into collision and falling by thousands on the field, according to the rules of good tactics. The king leaves Pau or Nerac with a little troop, picks up the neighboring garrisons on his way, scales a fortress, intercepts a body of arquebusiers as they pass, extricates himself pistol in hand from the midst of a hostile troop, and returns to the feet of *Mlle. de Tignonville*. They arrange their plan from day to day; nothing is done unless unexpectedly and by chance. Enterprises are strokes of fortune....

The park is a great wood on a hill, embedded among meadows and harvests. You walk in long solitary alleys, under colonnades of superb oaks, while to the left the lofty stems of the cypresses mount in close ranks upon the back of the hill. The fog was not yet lifted; there was no motion in the air; not a corner of the blue sky, not a sound in all the country. The song of a bird came for an instant from the midst of the ash-trees, then sadly ceased. Is that then the sky of the south, and was it necessary to come to the happy country of the Bearnais to find such melancholy impressions? A little by-way brought us to a bank of the Gave: in a long pool of water was growing an army of reeds twice the height of a man; their grayish spikes and their trembling leaves bent and whispered under the wind; a wild flower near by shed a vanilla perfume.

We gazed on the broad country, the ranges of rounded hills, the silent plain under the dull dome of the sky. Three hundred paces away the Gave rolls between marshaled banks, which it has covered with sand; in the midst of the waters may be seen the moss-grown piles of a ruined bridge. One is at ease here, and yet at the bottom of the heart a vague unrest is felt; the soul is softened and loses itself in melancholy and tender revery. Suddenly the clock strikes, and one is forced to go and prepare himself to eat his soup between two commercial travelers.

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To-day the sun shines. On my way to the Place Nationale, I remarked a poor, half-ruined church, which had been turned into a coach-house; they have fastened upon it a carrier's sign. The arcades, in small gray stones, still round themselves with an elegant boldness; beneath are stowed away carts and casks and pieces of wood; here and there workmen were handling wheels. A broad ray of light fell upon a pile of straw, and made the somber corners seem yet darker; the pictures that one meets with outweigh those one has come to seek.

From the esplanade which is opposite, the whole valley and the mountains beyond may be seen; this first sight of a southern sun, as it breaks from the rainy mists, is admirable; a sheet of white light stretches from one horizon to another without meeting a single cloud. The heart expands in this immense space; the very air is festal; the dazzled eyes close beneath the brightness which deluges them and which runs over, radiated from the burning dome of heaven. The current of the river sparkles like a girdle of jewels; the chains of hills, yesterday veiled and damp, extend at their own sweet will beneath the warming, penetrating rays, and mount range upon range to spread out their green robe to the sun.

In the distance, the blue Pyrenees look like a bank of clouds; the air that bathes them shapes them into aerial forms, vapory phantoms, the farthest of which vanish in the canescent horizon—dim contours, that might be taken for a fugitive sketch from the lightest of pencils. In the midst of the serrate chain the peak Midi d' Ossau lifts its abrupt cone; at this distance, forms are softened, colors are blended, the Pyrenees are only the graceful bordering of a smiling landscape and of the magnificent sky. There is nothing imposing about them nor severe; the beauty here is serene, and the pleasure pure.

The statue of Henry IV., with an inscription in Latin and in patois, is on the esplanade; the armor is finished so perfectly that it might make an armorer jealous. But why does the king wear so sad an air? His neck is ill at ease on his shoulders; his features are small and full of care; he has lost his gayety, his spirit, his confidence in his fortune, his proud bearing. His air is neither that of a great nor a good man, nor of a man of intellect; his face is discontented, and one would say that he was bored with Pau. I am not sure that he was wrong: and yet the city passes for agreeable, the climate is very mild, and invalids who fear the cold pass the winter in it.

CHATEAUX IN THE VALLEY OF THE LOIRE[A]

[Footnote A: From "Outre-Mer." Published by Houghton, Mifflin Co.]

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

In the beautiful month of October I made a foot excursion along the banks of the Loire, from Orleans to Tours. This luxuriant region is justly called the garden of France. From Orleans to Blois, the whole valley of the Loire is one continued vineyard. The bright green foliage of the vine spreads, like the undulations of the sea, over the landscape, with here and there a silver flash of the river, a sequestered hamlet, or the towers of an old chateau, to enliven and variegate the scene.

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The vintage had already commenced. The peasantry were busy in the fields—the song that cheered their labor was on the breeze, and the heavy wagon tottered by, laden with the clusters of the vine. Everything around me wore that happy look which makes the heart glad. In the morning I arose with the lark; and at night I slept where the sunset overtook me.... My first day's journey brought me at evening to a village, whose name I have forgotten, situated about eight leagues from Orleans. It is a small, obscure hamlet, not mentioned in the guide-book, and stands upon the precipitous banks of a deep ravine, through which a noisy brook leaps to turn the ponderous wheel of a thatch-roofed mill. The village inn stands upon the highway; but the village itself is not visible to the traveler as he passes. It is completely hidden in the lap of a wooded valley, and so embowered in trees that not a roof nor a chimney peeps out to betray its hiding-place.

When I awoke in the morning, a brilliant autumnal sun was shining in at my window. The merry song of birds mingled sweetly with the sound of rustling leaves and the gurgle of the brook. The vintagers were going forth to their toil; the wine-press was busy in the shade, and the clatter of the mill kept time to the miller's song. I loitered about the village with a feeling of calm delight. I was unwilling to leave the seclusion of this sequestered hamlet; but at length, with reluctant step, I took the cross-road through the vineyard, and in a moment the little village had sunk again, as if by enchantment, into the bosom of the earth.

I breakfasted at the town of Mer; and, leaving the high-road to Blois on the right, passed down to the banks of the Loire, through a long, broad avenue of poplars and sycamores. I crossed the river in a boat, and in the after part of the day I found myself before the high and massive walls of the chateau of Chambord. This chateau is one of the finest specimens of the ancient Gothic castle to be found in Europe. The little river Cosson fills its deep and ample moat, and above it the huge towers and heavy battlements rise in stern and solemn grandeur, moss-grown with age, and blackened by the storms of three centuries. Within, all is mournful and deserted. The grass has overgrown the pavement of the courtyard, and the rude sculpture upon the walls is broken and defaced....

My third day's journey brought me to the ancient city of Blois, the chief town of the department of Loire-et-Cher. This city is celebrated for the purity with which even the lower classes of its inhabitants speak their native tongue. It rises precipitously from the northern bank of the Loire; and many of its streets are so steep as to be almost impassable for carriages. On the brow of the hill, overlooking the roofs of the city, and commanding a fine view of the Loire and its noble bridge, and the surrounding country, sprinkled with cottages and chateaux, runs

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an ample terrace, planted with trees, and laid out as a public walk. The view from this terrace is one of the most beautiful in France. But what most strikes the eye of the traveler at Blois is an old, tho still unfinished, castle. Its huge parapets of hewn stone stand upon either side of the street; but they have walled up the wide gateway, from which the colossal drawbridge was to have sprung high in air, connecting together the main towers of the building, and the two hills upon whose slope its foundations stand. The aspect of this vast pile is gloomy and desolate. It seems as if the strong hand of the builder had been arrested in the midst of his task by the stronger hand of death; and the unfinished fabric stands a lasting monument both of the power and weakness of man—of his vast desires, his sanguine hopes, his ambitious purposes—and of the unlooked-for conclusion, where all these desires, and hopes, and purposes are so often arrested. There is also at Blois another ancient chateau, to which some historic interest is attached as being the scene of the massacre of the Duke of Guise.

On the following day, I left Blois for Amboise; and, after walking several leagues along the dusty highway, crossed the river in a boat to the little village of Moines, which lies amid luxuriant vineyards upon the southern bank of the Loire. From Moines to Amboise the road is truly delightful. The rich lowland scenery, by the margin of the river, is verdant even in October; and occasionally the landscape is diversified with the picturesque cottages of the vintagers, cut in the rock along the road-side, and overhung by the thick foliage of the vines above them.

At Amboise I took a cross-road, which led me to the romantic borders of the Cher and the chateau of Chenonceau. This beautiful chateau, as well as that of Chambord, was built by the gay and munificent Francis the First. One is a specimen of strong and massive architecture—a dwelling for a warrior; but the other is of a lighter and more graceful construction, and was designed for those soft languishments of passion with which the fascinating Diane de Poitiers had filled the bosom of that voluptuous monarch.

The chateau of Chenonceau is built upon arches across the river Cher, whose waters are made to supply the deep moat at each extremity. There is a spacious courtyard in front, from which a drawbridge conducts to the outer hall of the castle. There the armor of Francis the First still hangs upon the wall—his shield, and helm, and lance—as if the chivalrous but dissolute prince had just exchanged them for the silken robes of the drawing-room.... Doubtless the naked walls and the vast solitary chambers of an old and desolate chateau inspire a feeling of greater solemnity and awe; but when the antique furniture of the olden time remains—the faded tapestry on the walls, and the arm-chair by the fire-side—the effect upon the mind is more magical and delightful. The old inhabitants of the place, long gathered to their fathers, tho living still in history, seem to have left their halls for the chase or the tournament; and as the heavy door swings upon its reluctant hinge, one almost expects to see the gallant princes and courtly

dames enter those halls again, and sweep in stately procession along the silent corridors....

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A short time after candle-lighting, I reached the little tavern of the Boule d'Or, a few leagues from Tours, where I passed the night. The following morning was lowering and sad. A veil of mist hung over the landscape, and ever and anon a heavy shower burst from the overburdened clouds, that were driving by before a high and piercing wind. This unpropitious state of the weather detained me until noon, when a cabriolet for Tours drove up, and taking a seat within it, I left the hostess of the Boule d'Or in the middle of a long story about a rich countess, who always alighted there when she passed that way. We drove leisurely along through a beautiful country, till at length we came to the brow of a steep hill, which commands a fine view of the city of Tours and its delightful environs. But the scene was shrouded by the heavy drifting mist, through which I could trace but indistinctly the graceful sweep of the Loire, and the spires and roofs of the city far below me.

The city of Tours and the delicious plain in which it lies have been too often described by other travelers to render a new description, from so listless a pen as mine, either necessary or desirable. After a sojourn of two cloudy and melancholy days, I set out on my return to Paris, by the way of Vendome and Chartres. I stopt a few hours at the former place, to examine the ruins of a chateau built by Jeanne d'Albret, mother of Henry the Fourth. It stands upon the summit of a high and precipitous hill, and almost overhangs the town beneath. The French Revolution has completed the ruin that time had already begun; and nothing now remains, but a broken and crumbling bastion, and here and there a solitary tower dropping slowly to decay. In one of these is the grave of Jeanne d'Albret. A marble entablature in the wall above contains the inscription, which is nearly effaced, tho enough still remains to tell the curious traveler that there lies buried the mother of the "Bon Henri." To this is added a prayer that the repose of the dead may be respected.

Here ended my foot excursion. The object of my journey was accomplished; and, delighted with this short ramble through the valley of the Loire, I took my seat in the diligence for Paris, and on the following day was again swallowed up in the crowds of the metropolis, like a drop in the bosom of the sea.

AMBOISE[A]

[Footnote A: From "Old Touraine." Published by James Pott & Co.]

BY THEODORE ANDREA COOK

The Castle of Amboise stands high above the town, like another Acropolis above a smaller Athens; it rises upon the only height visible for some distance, and is in a commanding position for holding the level fields of Touraine around it, and securing the

passage of the Loire between Tours and Chaumont, which is the next link in the chain that ends at Blois.

The river at this point is divided in two by an island, as is so often the case where the first bridge-builders sought to join the wide banks of the Loire, and on this little spot between the waters Clovis is said to have met Alaric before he overthrew the power of the Visigoths in Aquitaine.

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Amboise gains even more from the river than the other chateaux of the Loire. The magnificent round tower that springs from the end of Charles VIII.'s facade completely commands the approaches of the bridge, and the extraordinary effect of lofty masonry, produced by building on the summit of an elevation and carrying the stone courses upward from the lower ground, is here seen at its best....

But Amboise has a history before the days of Charles VIII. There was without doubt a Roman camp here, but the traditions of the ubiquitous Caesar must be received with caution. The so-called "Greniers de Caesar," strange, unexplained constructions caved in the soft rock, are proved to be the work of a later age by that same indefatigable Abbe Chevalier to whom we have been already indebted for so much archeological research. A possible explanation of them is contained in an old Latin history of the castle, which goes down to the death of Stephen of England. According to this, the Romans had held Amboise from the days of Caesar till the reign of Diocletian; the Baugaredi or Bagaudee then put them to flight, but let the rest of the inhabitants remain who, "being afraid to live above ground, tunnelled beneath it, and made a great colony of subterranean dwellings in the holes they had dug out," a custom apparently common in Touraine from the earliest times. The Romans at any rate left unmistakable traces of their presence; many of their architectural remains still exist, and their fort is spoken of by Sulpicius Severus; but they can have built no bridge of alone, for in St. Gregory's time there were only boats available for crossing the river.

Not till the fifteenth century did the castle become royal property, when it was confiscated by Charles VII. as a punishment for treacherous dealings with the invading English very similar to the treason discovered at Chenonceaux just before. But beyond strengthening the fortification of the place this king did little for his new possession.

In a few years the castle is overshadowed by the cruel specter of Louis XI., whose memory has already spoiled several charming views for us. It was to Amboise that the father of this unfilial prince was carried from Chinon on his way north, when wearied out by the annoyance caused by the Dauphin's plots. The castle had become a royal residence, and soon after the whole town turns out to meet the new king with a "morality-play made by Master Etienne for the joyous occasion of his arrival," for Amboise was already famous for those dramatic performances always so dear to the French, and particularly to these citizens, in the old days at any rate. There is no trace of such frivolities now in the sleepy little town....

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The two great towers of Amboise with the inclined planes of brickwork, which wind upward in the midst instead of staircases, were the result of the work which Charles set on foot as a distraction of his grief. These strange ascents had been partially restored by the Comte de Paris, the present owner of Amboise, before his exile stopt the work of repairing the chateau, and it is still possible to imagine the “charrettes, mullets, et litieres,” of which Du Bellay speaks, mounting from the low ground to the chambers above, or the Emperor Charles V., in later years, riding up with his royal host Francis I., always fond of display, amid such a blaze of flambeaux “that a man might see as clearly as at mid-day.”

These great towers and the exquisite little chapel were the work of the “excellent sculptors and artists from Naples” who, as Commynes tells us, were brought back with the spoils of the Italian wars; for the young king “never thought of death” but only of collecting round him “all the beautiful things which he had seen and which had given him pleasure, from France or Italy or Flanders;” but death came upon him suddenly. At the end of a garden walk, fringed with a mossy grove of limes that rises from the river bank, is the little doorway through which Charles VIII. was passing when he hit his head, never a very strong one, against the low stone arch, and died a few hours afterward. The castle had been fortified before his time; he left it beautiful as well, and the traces of his work are those which are most striking at the present day...

Within the shadow of the lime trees on the terraced garden of Amboise is a small bust of Leonardo da Vinci, for it was near here he died. His remains are laid in the beautiful chapel at the corner of the castle court, and the romantic story of his last moments at Fontainebleau becomes the sad reality of a tombstone covering ashes mostly unknown and certainly indistinguishable; “among which” as the epitaph painfully records, “are supposed to be the remains of Leonardo da Vinci.” He had been brought to Paris a weak old man, by Francis, in pursuance of a certain fixt artistic policy, to which it may be noticed this forgotten and uncertain grave does but little credit.

To Francis I., rightly or wrongly, is given the glory of having naturalized in France the arts of Italy; to him is due the architecture built for ease and charm which turned the fortress into a beautiful habitation, which changed Chambord from a feudal stronghold to a country seat, and which left its traces at Amboise, as it did at Chaumont and at Blois. He found in France the highest and most beautiful expression of the work of “the great unnamed race of master-masons,” he found the traditions of a national school of painting, the work of Fouquet and the Clouets, but for these he cared not; for him the only schools were those of Rome and Florence, and tho by encouraging their imitation he weakened the vital sincerity of French art, yet from his first exercise of royal power the consistency always somewhat lacking in his politics was shown clearly and firmly in his taste for art.

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BLOIS[A]

[Footnote A: From "Castles and Chateaux of Old Touraine." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, L.C. Page & Co. Copyright, 1908.]

BY FRANCIS MILTOUN

Blois, among all the other cities of the Loire, is the favorite with the tourist. Here one first meets a great chateau of state; and certainly the Chateau de Blois lives in one's memory more than any other chateau in France.

Much has been written of Blois, its counts, its chateau, and its many and famous hotels of the nobility, by writers of all opinions and abilities, from those old chroniclers who wrote of the plots and intrigues of other days to those critics of art and architecture who have discovered—or think they have discovered—that Da Vinci designed the famous spiral staircase.

From this one may well gather that Blois is the foremost chateau of all the Loire in popularity and theatrical effect. Truly this is so, but it is by no manner of means the most lovable; indeed, it is the least lovable of all that great galaxy which begins at Blois and ends at Nantes. It is a show-place and not much more, and partakes in every form and feature—as one sees it to-day—of the attributes of a museum, and such it really is.

All of its former gorgeousness is still there, and all the banalities of the later period when Gaston of Orleans built his ugly wing, for the "personally conducted" to marvel at, and honeymoon couples to envy. The French are quite fond of visiting this shrine themselves, but usually it is the young people and their mammas, and detached couples of American and English birth that one most sees strolling about the courts and apartments where formerly lords and ladies and cavaliers moved and plotted.

The great chateau of the Counts of Blois is built upon an inclined rock which rises above the roof-tops of the lower town quite in fairy-book fashion. Commonly referred to as the Chateau de Blois, it is really composed of four separate and distinct foundations; the original chateau of the counts; the later addition of Louis XII.; the palace of Francis I., and the most unsympathetically and dismally disposed pavilion of Gaston of Orleans.

The artistic qualities of the greater part of the distinct edifice which go to make up the chateau as it stands to-day are superb, with the exception of that great wing of Gaston's, before mentioned, which is as cold and unfeeling as the overrated palace at Versailles.

The Comtes de Chatillon built that portion just to the right of the present entrance; Louis XII., the edifice through which one enters the inner court and which extends far to the

left, including also the chapel immediately to the rear; while Francois I., who here as elsewhere let his unbounded Italian proclivities have full sway, built the extended wing to the left of the inner court and fronting on the present Place du Chateau, formerly the Place Royale....

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As an architectural monument the chateau is a picturesque assemblage of edifices belonging to many different epochs, and, as such, shows, as well as any other document of contemporary times, the varying ambitions and emotions of its builders, from the rude and rough manners of the earliest of feudal times through the highly refined Renaissance details of the imaginative brain of Francois, down to the base concoction of the elder Mansart, produced at the commands of Gaston of Orleans.

In the earliest structure were to be seen all the attributes of a feudal fortress, towers and walls pierced with narrow loopholes, and damp, dark dungeons hidden away in the thick walls. Then came a structure which was less of a fortress and more habitable, but still a stronghold, tho having ample and decorative doorways and windows, with curious sculptures and rich framings. Then the pompous Renaissance with “escaliers” and “balcons a jour,” balustrades crowning the walls and elaborate cornices here, there, and everywhere—all bespeaking the gallantry and taste of the knightly king. Finally came the cold, classic features of the period of the brother of Louis XIII.

In plan the Chateau de Bois forms an irregular square situated at the apex of a promontory high above the surface of the Loire, and practically behind the town itself. The building has a most picturesque aspect, and, to those who know, gives practically a history of the chateau architecture of the time. Abandoned, mutilated and dishonored, from time to time, the structure gradually took on new forms until the thick walls underlying the apartment known to-day as the Salle des Etats—probably the most ancient portion of all—were overshadowed by the great richness of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

From the platform one sees a magnificent panorama of the city and the far-reaching Loire, which unrolls itself southward and northward for many leagues, its banks covered by rich vineyards and crowned by thick forests.

The building of Louis XII. presents its brick-faced exterior in black and red lozenge shapes, with sculptured window-frames, squarely upon the little tree-bordered place of to-day, which in other times formed a part of that magnificent terrace which looked down upon the roof of the Eglise St. Nicholas, and the Jesuit church of the Immaculate Conception, and the silvery bell of the Loire itself.

The murders and other acts of violence and treason which took place here are interesting enough, but one can not but feel, when he views the chimney-piece before which the Due de Guise was standing when called to his death in the royal closet, that the men of whom the bloody tales of Blois are told quite deserved their fates.

One comes away with the impression of it all stamped only upon the mind, not graven upon the heart. Political intrigue to-day, if quite as vulgar, is less sordid. Bigotry and ambition in those days allowed few of the finer feelings to come to the surface, except with regard to the luxuriance of surroundings. Of this last there can be no question, and

Blois is as characteristically luxurious as any of the magnificent edifices which lodged the royalty and nobility of other days throughout the valley of the Loire.

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The interior court is partly surrounded by a colonnade, quite cloister-like in effect. At the right center of the Francois I. wing is that wonderful spiral staircase, concerning the invention of which so much speculation has been launched.

The apartments of Catherine de Medici were directly beneath the guard-room where the Balafre was murdered, and that event, taking place at the very moment when the queen-mother was dying, can not be said to have been conducive to a peaceful demise.

Here, on the first floor of the Francois I. wing, the queen-mother, held her court, as did the king his. The great gallery over-looked the town on the side of the present Place du Chateau. It was, and is, a truly grand apartment, with diamond-paned windows, and rich, dark wall decorations on which Catherine's device, a crowned C and her monogram in gold, frequently appears. There was, moreover, a great oval window, opposite which stood her altar, and a doorway led to her writing-closet, with its secret drawers and wall panels, which well served her purpose of intrigue and deceit.

A hidden stair-way led to the floor above, and there was a chambre-a-coucher, with a deep recess for the bed, the same to which she called her son Henri, as she lay dying, admonishing him to give up the thought of murdering Guise. "What," said Henri, on this embarrassing occasion, "spare Guise, when he, triumphant in Paris, dared lay his hand on the hilt of his sword. Spare him who drove me a fugitive from the capital. Spare them who never spared me. No, mother, I will not."

As the queen-mother drew near her end, and was lying ill at Blois, great events for France were culminating at the chateau. Henry III. had become King of France, and the Balafre, supported by Rome and Spain, was in open rebellion against the reigning house, and the word had gone forth that the Duc de Guise must die.

The States-General were to be immediately assembled, and De Guise, once the poetic lover of Marguerite, through his emissaries canvassed all France to ensure the triumph of the party of the church against Henri de Navarre and his queen—the Marguerite whom De Guise once profest to love—who soon were to come to the throne of France.

The uncomfortable Henri III. had been told that he would never be king in reality until De Guise had been made away with.

The final act of the drama between the rival houses of Guise and Valois came when the king and his council came to Blois for the assembly. The sunny city of Blois was indeed to be the scene of a momentous affair, and a truly sumptuous setting it was, the roof-tops of its houses sloping downward gently to the Loire, with its chief accessory, the coiffed and turreted chateau itself, high above all else.

Details had been arranged with infinite pains, the guard doubled, and a company of Swiss posted around the courtyard and up and down the gorgeous staircase. Every

nook and corner has its history in connection with this greatest event in the history of the chateau of Blois.

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As Guise entered the council chamber he was told that the king would see him in his closet, to reach which one had to pass through the guard-room below. The door was barred behind him that he might not return, when the trusty guards of the Forty-fifth, under Dalahaide, already hidden behind the wall-tapestry, sprang upon the Balafre and forced him back upon the closed door through which he had just passed. Guise fell stabbed in the breast by Malines, and “lay long uncovered until an old carpet was found in which to wrap his corpse.”

Below, in her own apartments, lay the queen-mother, dying, but listening eagerly for the rush of footsteps overhead, hoping and praying that Henri—the hitherto effeminate Henri who played with his sword as he would with a battledore, and who painted himself like a woman, and put rings in his ears—would not prejudice himself at this time in the eyes of Rome by slaying the leader of the church party....

It was under the regime of Gaston d’Orleans that the gardens of the Chateau de Blois came to their greatest excellence and beauty. In 1653, Abel Brunyer, the first physician of Gaston’s suite, published a catalog of the fruit and flowers to be found here in these gardens, of which he was also director. More than five hundred varieties were included, three-quarters of which belonged to the flora of France.

Among the delicacies and novelties of the time to be found here was the Prunier de Reine Claude, from which those delicious green plums known to all the world to-day as “Reine Claudes” were propagated, also another variety which came from the Prunier de Monsieur, somewhat similar in taste, but of a deep purple color. The potato was tenderly cared for and grown as a great novelty and delicacy long before its introduction to general cultivation by Parmentier. The tomato was imported from Mexico, and even tobacco was grown....

In 1793 all the symbols and emblems of royalty were removed from the chateau and destroyed. The celebrated bust of Gaston, the chief artistic attribute of that part of the edifice built by him, was decapitated, and the statue of Louis XII. over the entrance gateway was overturned and broken up. Afterward the chateau became the property of the “domaine” and was turned into a mere barracks. The pavilion of Queen Anne became a military magazine, the Tour de l’Observatoire, a powder-magazine, and all the indignities imaginable were heaped upon the chateau.

In 1814 Blois became the last capital of Napoleon’s empire, and the chateau walls sheltered the prisoners captured by the imperial army.

CHAMBORD[A]

[Footnote A: From “Old Touraine.” Published by James Pott & Co.]

BY THEODORE ANDREA COOK

The road that leads from Blois to Chambord crosses the Loire by a fine stone bridge, which the inscription sets forth to be the first public work of Louis Philippe.

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For some distance the rails of a small tramway followed the road by which our carriage was slowly rolling toward the level plains of the Cologne, but we gradually left such uncompromising signs of activity, and came into a flat country of endless vineyards, with here and there a small plaster tower showing its slated roof above the low green clusters of the vines. We passed through several villages, whose inhabitants that day seemed to have but one care upon their minds, like the famous Scilly Islanders, to gain a precarious livelihood by taking each other's washing. On every bush and briar fluttered the household linen and the family apparel, of various textures and in different states of despair; and with that strict observance of utility which is the chief characteristic of the French peasant, the inevitable blouses, of faded blue were blown into shapeless bundles even along the railings of the churchyard tombs.

At last we came to an old moss-grown wall, and through a broken gateway entered what is called the Park of Chambord. There is very little of it to be seen now, the trees have been ruthlessly cut down and mutilated, and of the wild boars, which Francis I. was so fond of hunting there is left only the ghostly quarry that Thibault of Champagne chases through the air, while the sound of his ghostly horn echoes down the autumn night as the fantom pack sweeps by to Montfauult.

It is impossible for the uninstructed mind to grasp the plan or method of this mass of architecture; yet it is unsatisfactory to give it up, with Mr. Henry James, "as an irresponsible, insoluble labyrinth." M. Viollet-le-Duc, with a sympathetic denial of any extreme and over-technical admiration, gives just that intelligible account of the chateau which is a compromise between the unmeaning adulation of its contemporary critics and the ignorance of the casual traveler.

"Chambord," says he, "must be taken for what it is; for an attempt in which the architect sought to reconcile the methods of two opposite principles, to unite in one building the fortified castle of the Middle Ages and the pleasure-palace of the sixteenth century." Granted that the attempt was an absurd one, it must be remembered that the Renaissance was but just beginning in France; Gothic art seemed out of date, yet none other had established itself to take its place. In literature, in morals, as in architecture, this particular phase in the civilization of the time has already become evident even in the course of these small wanderings in a single province, and if only this transition period is realized in all its meaning, with all the "monstrous and inform" characteristics that were inevitably a part of it, the mystery of this strange sixteenth century in France is half explained, of this "glorious devil, large in heart and brain, that did love beauty only" and would have it somewhere, somehow, at whatever cost.

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Francis I. had passed his early years at Cognac, at Amboise, or Romorantin, and when he first saw Chambord it was only the old feudal manor-house built by the Counts of Blois. He transformed it, not by the help of Primaticcio, with whose name it is tempting to associate any building of this king's, for the methods of contemporary Italian architecture were totally different; but, as Mr. de la Saussaye proves, by the skill of that fertile school of art particularly of one Maitre Pierre Trinquieu, or Le Nepveu, whose name is connected with more successful buildings at Amboise and Blois. The plan is that of the true French chateau; in the center is the habitation of the seigneur and his family, flanked by four angle towers; on three sides is a court closed by buildings, also with towers at each angle, and like most feudal dwellings the central donjon has one of its sides on the exterior of the whole ...

It may well be imagined that Chambord is the parody of the old castles, just as the Abbey of Theleme parodies the abbeys of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Both heaped a fatal ridicule upon the bygone age, but what Rabelais could only dream Francis could realize, yet not with the unfettered perfection that was granted to the vision of Gargantua; for surely never was the spirit of the time, seized and smitten into incongruous shapes of stone at so unfortunate a moment, just when the old Renaissance was striving to take upon itself the burden which was too heavy for the failing Gothic spirit, just when success was coming, but had not yet come.

It is only from within the court, where the great towers fling their shadows over the space, where pinnacles and gables soar into the air, and strange gargoyles and projectures shoot from the darkness into light, that it is possible to realize the admiration which Chambord roused when it was first created. Brantome waxes enthusiastic over its wonders, and describes how the king had drawn up plans (mercifully never carried out) to divert the waters of the Loire to his new palace, not content with the slender stream of Cosson, from which the place derived its name. Others compare it to a palace put of the Arabian Nights raised at the Prince's bidding by a Genie, or like Lippomano, the Venetian ambassador, to "the abode of Morgana or Alcinous"; but this topheavy barrack is anything rather than a "fairy monument"; it might with as much humor be called a "souvenir of first loves," as M. de la Saussaye has it. Both descriptions fit Chenonceaux admirably; when used of Chambord they are out of place.

CHENONCEAUX[A]

[Footnote A: From "Castles and Chateaux of Old Touraine." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, L.C. Page & Co. Copyright, 1906.]

BY FRANCIS MILTOUN

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Chenonceaux is noted chiefly for its chateau, but the little village itself is charming. The houses of the village are not very new, nor very old, but the one long street is most attractive throughout its length, and the whole atmosphere of the place, from September to December, is odorous with the perfume of red and purple grapes. The vintage is not equal to that of the Bordeaux region, perhaps, nor of Chinon, nor Saumur, but "vin du pays" of the Cher and the Loire, around Tours, is not to be despised.

Most tourists come to Chenonceaux by train from Tours; others drive over from Amboise, and yet others come by bicycle or automobile. They are not as yet so numerous as might be expected, and accordingly here, as elsewhere in Touraine, every facility is given for visiting the chateau and its park.

If you do not hurry off at once to worship at the abode of the fascinating Diane, one of the brightest ornaments of the court of Francois I. and his son Henri, you will enjoy your dinner at the Hotel du Bon Laboureur, tho most likely it will be a solitary one, and you will be put to bed in a great chamber over-looking the park, through which peep, in the moonlight, the turrets of the chateau, and you may hear the purling of the waters of the Cher as it flows below the walls.

Jean Jacques Rousseau, like Francois I., called Chenonceaux a beautiful place, and he was right. It is all of that and more. Here one comes into direct contact with an atmosphere which, if not feudal, or even medieval, is at least that of several hundred years ago.

Chenonceaux is moored like a ship in the middle of the rapidly running Cher, a dozen miles or more above where that stream enters the Loire. As a matter of fact, the chateau practically bridges the river, which flows under its foundations and beneath its drawbridge on either side, besides filling the moat with water. The general effect is as if the building were set in the midst of a stream and formed a sort of island chateau. Round about is a gentle meadow and a great park, which gives to this turreted, architectural gem of Touraine a setting equalled by no other chateau.

What the chateau was in former days we can readily imagine, for nothing is changed as to the general disposition. Boats came to the water-gate, as they still might do if such boats still existed, in true, pictorial legendary fashion. To-day the present occupant has placed a curiosity on the ornamental waters in the shape of a gondola. It is out of keeping with the grand fabric of the chateau, and it is a pity that it does not cast itself adrift some night. What has become of the gondolier, who was imported to keep the craft company, nobody seems to know. He is certainly not in evidence, or, if he is, has transformed himself into a groom or a chauffeur.

The chateau of Chenonceaux is not a very ample structure; not so ample as most photographs would make it appear. It is not tiny, but still it has not the magnificent proportions of Blois, of Chambord, or even of Langeais. It was more a habitation than it

was a fortress, a country house, as indeed it virtually became when the Connetable de Montmorency took possession of the structure in the name of the king, when its builder, Thomas Bohier, the none too astute minister of finance in Normandy, came to grief in his affairs.

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Francis I came frequently here to hunt, and his memory is still kept alive by the Chambre Francois I. Francois held possession till his death, when his son made it over to the “admired of two generations,” Diane de Poitiers.

Diane’s memory will never leave Chenonceaux. To-day it is perpetuated in the Chambre de Diane de Poitiers; but the portrait by Leonardo da Vinci, which was supposed to best show her charms, has now disappeared from the Long Gallery at the chateau. This portrait was painted at the command of Francois, before Diane transferred her affections to his son.

No one knows when or how Diane de Poitiers first came to fascinate Francois, or how or why her power waned. At any rate at the time Francois pardoned her father, the witless Comte de St. Vallier, for the treacherous part he played in the Bourbon conspiracy, he really believed her to be the “brightest ornament of a beauty-loving court.”

Certainly, Diane was a powerful factor in the politics of her time, tho Francois himself soon tired of her. Undaunted by this, she forthwith set her cap for his son Henri, the Duc d’Orleans, and won him, too. Of her beauty the present generation is able to judge for itself by reason of the three well-known and excellent portraits of contemporary times.

Diane’s influence over the young Henri was absolute. At his death her power was, of course, at an end and Chenonceaux, and all else possible, was taken from her by the orders of Catherine, the long-suffering wife, who had been put aside for the fascinations of the charming huntress.

It must have been some satisfaction, however, to Diane, to know that, in his fatal joust with Montgomery, Henri really broke his lance and met his death in her honor, for the records tell that he bore her colors on his lance, besides her initials set in gold and gems on his shield.

Catherine’s eagerness to drive Diane from the court was so great, that no sooner had her spouse fallen—even tho he did not actually die for some days—than she sent word to Diane “who sat weeping alone,” to quit the court instantly; to give up the crown jewels—which Henri had somewhat inconsiderately given her; and to “give up Chenonceaux in Touraine,” Catherine’s Naboth’s vineyard, which she had so long admired and coveted.

She had known it as a girl, when she often visited it in company with her father-in-law, the appreciative but dissolute Francois, and had ever longed to possess it for her own, before even her husband, now dead, had given it to “that old hag Diane de Poitiers, Duchesse de Valentinois.”

Diane paid no heed to Catherine's command. She simply asked: "Is the king yet dead?"

"No, madame," said the messenger, "but his wound is mortal; he can not live the day."

"Tell the queen, then." replied Diane, "that her reign is not yet come; that I am mistress still over her and the kingdom as long as the king breathes the breath of life."

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The chateau of Chenonceaux, so greatly coveted by Catherine when she first came to France, and when it was in the possession of Diane, still remains in all the regal splendor of its past. It lies in the lovely valley of the Cher, far from the rush and turmoil of cities and even the continuous traffic of great thoroughfares, for it is on the road to nowhere unless one is journeying crosscountry from the lower to the upper Loire. This very isolation resulted in its being one of the few monuments spared from the furies of the Revolution, and, "half-palace and half-chateau," it glistens with the purity of its former glory, as picturesque as ever, with turrets, spires, and roof-tops all mellowed with the ages in a most entrancing manner.

Even to-day one enters the precincts of the chateau proper over a drawbridge which spans an arm of the Loire, or rather, a moat which leads directly from the parent stream. On the opposite side are the bridge piers supporting five arches, the work of Diane when she was the fair chatelaine of the domain. This ingenious thought proved to be a most useful and artistic addition to the chateau. It formed a flagged promenade, lovely in itself, and led to the southern bank of the Cher, whence one got charming vistas of the turrets and roof-tops of the chateau through the trees and the leafy avenues which converged upon the structure.

When Catherine came she did not disdain to make the best use of Diane's innovation that suggested itself to her, which was simply to build the Long Gallery over the arches of this lovely bridge, and so make of it a veritable house over the water. A covering was made quite as beautiful as the rest of the structure, and thus the bridge formed a spacious wing of two stories. The first floor—known as the Long Gallery—was intended as a banqueting-hall, and possessed four great full-length windows on either side looking up and down the stream, from which was seen—and is to-day—an outlook as magnificently idyllic as is possible to conceive. Jean Goujon had designed for the ceiling one of those wonder-works for which he was famous, but if the complete plan was ever carried out, it has disappeared, for only a tiny sketch of the whole scheme remains to-day.

Catherine came in the early summer to take possession of her long-coveted domain. Being a skilful horsewoman, she came on horseback, accompanied by a little band of feminine charmers destined to wheedle political secrets from friends and enemies alike—a real "flying squadron of the queen," as it was called by a contemporary.

It was a gallant company that assembled here at this time—the young King Charles IX., the Duc de Guise, and the "two cardinals mounted on mules"—Lorraine, a true Guise, and D'Este, newly arrived from Italy, and accompanied by the poet Tasso, wearing a "gabardine and a hood of satin." Catherine showed the Italian great favor, as was due a countryman, but there was another poet among them as well, Ronsard, the poet laureate of the time. The Duc de Guise had followed in the wake of Marguerite, unbeknown to Catherine, who frowned down any possibility of an alliance between the houses of Valois and Lorraine.

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A great fete and water-masque had been arranged by Catherine to take place on the Cher, with a banquet to follow in the Long Gallery in honor of her arrival at Chenonceaux.

When twilight had fallen, torches were ignited and myriads of lights blazed forth from the boats on the river and from the windows of the chateau. Music and song went forth into the night, and all was as gay and lovely as a Venetian night's entertainment. The hunting-horns echoed through the wooded banks, and through the arches above which the chateau was built passed great highly colored barges, including a fleet of gondolas to remind the queen-mother of her Italian days—the ancestors perhaps of the solitary gondola which to-day floats idly by the river-bank just before the grand entrance to the chateau. From parterre and balustrade, and from the clipt yews of the ornamental garden, fairy lamps burned forth and dwindled away into dim infinity, as the long lines of soft light gradually lost themselves in the forest. It was a grand affair and idyllic in its unworldliness ...

Catherine bequeathed Chenonceaux to the wife of Henry III., Louise de Vaudemont, who died here in 1601. For a hundred years it still belonged to royalty, but in 1730 it was sold to M. Dupin, who, with his wife, enriched and repaired the fabric. They gathered around them a company so famous as to be memorable in the annals of art and literature. This is best shown by the citing of such names as Fontenelle, Montesquieu, Buffon, Bolingbroke, Voltaire, and Rousseau, all of whom were frequenters of the establishment, the latter being charged with the education of the Dupins' only son.

Chenonceaux to-day is no whited sepulcher. It is a real living and livable thing, and moreover, when one visits it, he observes that the family burn great logs in their fireplaces, have luxurious bouquets of flowers on their dining-table, and use wax candles instead of the more prosaic oil-lamps, or worse—acetyline gas.

FOIX[A]

[Footnote A: From "Castles and Chateaux of Old Navarre." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, L.C. Page & Co. Copyright, 1907.]

BY FRANCIS MILTOUN

Above the swift flowing Ariege in their superb setting of mountain and forest are the towers and parapets of the old chateau, in itself enough to make the name and fame of any city.... The actual age of the monument covers many epochs. The two square towers and the main edifice, as seen to-day, are anterior to the thirteenth century, as is proved by the design in the seals of the Comtes de Foix of 1215 and 1241 now in the

Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. In the fourteenth century these towers were strengthened and enlarged with the idea of making them more effective for defense and habitation.

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The escutcheons of Foix, Beam and Comminges, to be seen in the great central tower, indicate that it, too, goes back at least to the end of the fourteenth century, when Eleanore de Comminges, the mother of Gaston Phoebus, ruled the Comte. The donjon or Tour Ronde arises on the west to a height of forty-two meters; and will be remarked by all familiar with these sermons in stones scattered all over France as one of the most graceful. Legend attributes it to Gaston Phoebus; but all authorities do not agree as to this. The window-and door-openings, the moldings, the accolade over the entrance doorway, and the machicoulis all denote that they belong to the latter half of the fifteenth century. These, however, may be later interpolations.

Originally one entered the chateau from exactly the opposite side from that used to-day. The slope leading up to the rock and swinging around in front of the town is an addition of recent years. Formerly the plateau was gained by a rugged path which finally entered the precincts of the fortress through a rectangular barbican.

Finally, to sum it up, the pleasant, smiling, trim little city of Foix, and its chateau rising romantically above it, form a delightful prospect. Well preserved, well protected and forever free from further desecration, the chateau de Foix is as nobly impressive and glorious a monument of the Middle Ages as may be found in France, as well as chief record of the gallant days of the Comtes de Foix. Foix' Palais de Justice, built back to back with the rock foundation of the chateau, is itself a singular piece of architecture containing a small collection of local antiquities. This old Maison des Gouverneurs, now the Palais de Justice, is a banal, unlovely thing, regardless of its high-sounding titles....

It was that great hunter and warrior, Gaston Phoebus, who gave the Chateau de Foix its greatest lustre. It was here that this most brilliant and most celebrated of the counts passed his youth; and it was from here that he set out on his famous expedition to aid his brother knights of the Teutonic Order in Prussia. At Gaston's orders the Comte d'Armagnac was imprisoned here, to be released after the payment of a heavy ransom. As to the motive for this particular act, authorities differ as to whether it was the fortune of war or mere brigandage.

They lived high, the nobles of the old days, and Froissart recounts a banquet at which he had assisted at Foix, in the sixteenth century, as follows:

"And this was what I saw in the Comte de Foix: The Comte left his chamber to sup at midnight, the way to the great 'salle' being led by twelve varlets, bearing twelve illumined torches. The great hall was crowded with knights and equerries, and those who would supped, saying nothing meanwhile. Mostly game seemed to be the favorite viand, and the legs and wings only of fowl were eaten. Music and chants were the invariable accompaniment and the company remained at table until after two in the morning. Little or nothing was drunk."

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V

VARIOUS FRENCH SCENES

MONT ST. MICHEL[A]

[Footnote A: From "In and Out of Three Normandy Inns." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, Little Brown & Co. Copyright, 1892.]

BY ANNA BOWMAN DODD

The promised rivers were before us. So was the Mont, spectral no longer, but nearing with every plunge forward of our sturdy young Percheron. Locomotion through any new or untried medium is certain to bring with the experiment a dash of elation. Now, driving through water appears to be no longer the fashion in our fastidious century; someone might get a wetting, possibly, has been the conclusion of the prudent. And thus a very innocent and exciting bit of fun has been gradually relegated among the lost arts of pleasure.

We were taking water as we had never taken it before, and liking the method. We were as wet as ducks, but what cared we? We were being deluged with spray; the spume of the sea was spurting in our faces with the force of a strong wet breeze, and still we liked it. Besides, driving thus into the white foam of the waters, over the sand ridges, across the downs, into the wide plains of wet mud, this was the old classical way of going up to the Mont.

Surely, what had been found good enough as a pathway for kings, and saints and pilgrims should be good enough for lovers of old-time methods. The dike yonder was built for those who believe in the devil of haste, and for those who also serve him faithfully....

With our first toss upon the downs, a world of new and fresh experiences began. Genets was quite right; the Mont over yonder was another country; even at the very beginning of the journey we learned so much. This breeze blowing in from the sea, that had swept the ramparts of the famous rock, was a double extract of the sea-essence; it had all the salt of the sea and the aroma of firs and wild flowers; its lips had not kissed a garden in high air without the perfume lingering, if only to betray them.

Even this strip of meadow marsh had a character peculiar to itself; half of it belonged to earth and half to the sea. You might have thought it an inland pasture, with its herds of cattle, its flocks of sheep, and its colonies of geese patrolled by ragged urchins. But behold somewhere out yonder the pasture was lost in high sea-waves; ships with



bulging sails replaced the curve of the cattle's sides and instead of bending necks of sheep, there were sea-gulls swooping down upon the foamy waves.

As the incarnation of this dual life of sea and land, the rock stands. It also is both of the sea and the land. Its feet are of the waters—rocks and stones the sea-waves have used as playthings these millions of years. But earth regains possession as the rocks pile themselves into a mountain. Even from this distance, one can see the moving of great trees, the masses of yellow flower-tips that dye the sides of the stony hill, and the strips of green grass here and there.

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So much has nature done for this wonderful pyramid in the sea. Then man came and fashioned it to his liking. He piled the stones at its base into titanic walls; he carved about its sides the rounded breasts of bastions; he piled higher and higher up the dizzy heights a medley of palaces, convents, abbeys, cloisters, to lay at the very top the fitting crown of all, a jewelled Norman-Gothic cathedral.

Earth and man have thrown their gauntlet down to the sea—this rock is theirs, they cry to the waves and the might of the oceans. And the sea laughs—as strong men laugh when boys are angry or insistent. She has let them build and toil, and pray and fight; it is all one to her what is done on the rock—whether men carve its stones into lace, or rot and die in its dungeons; it is all the same to her whether each spring the daffodils creep up within the crevices and the irises nod to them from the gardens.

It is all one to her. For twice a day she recaptures the Mont. She encircles it with the strong arm of her tides; with the might of her waters she makes it once more a thing of the sea.

The tide was rising now.

The fringe of the downs had dabbled in the shoals till they became one. We had left behind the last of the shepherd lads, come out to the edge of the land to search for a wandering kid. We were all at once plunging into high water. Our road was sunk out of sight; we were driving through, waves as high as our cart wheels....

Our cart still pitched and tossed—we were still rocked about in our rough cradle. But the sun, now freed from the banks of clouds, was lighting our way with a great and sudden glory. And for the rest of our watery journey we were conscious only of that lighting. Behind the Mont lay a vast sea of saffron. But it was in the sky; against it the great rock was as black as if the night were upon it.

Here and there, through the curve of a flying buttress, or the apertures of a pierced parapet, gay bits of this yellow world were caught and framed. The sea lay beneath like a quiet carpet; and over this carpet ships and sloops swam with easy gliding motion, with sails and cordage dipt in gold. The smaller craft, moored close to the shore, seemed transfigured as in a fog of gold. And nearer still were the brown walls of the Mont making a great shadow, and in the shadow the waters were as black as the skin of an African. In the shoals there were lovely masses of turquoise and palest green; for here and there a cloudlet passed, to mirror its complexion in the translucent pools....

There was a rapid dashing beneath the great walls; a sudden night of darkness as we plunged through an open archway into a narrow village street; a confused impression of houses built into side-walls; of machicolated gateways; of rocks and roof-tops tumbling about our ears; and within the street was sounding the babel of a shrieking troop of men and women. Porters, peasants, and children were clamoring about our cartwheels like

so many jackals. The bedlam did not cease as we stopt before a brightly-lit open doorway.

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Then through the doorway there came a tall, finely featured brunette. She made her way through the yelling crowd as a duchess might cleave a path through a rabble. She was at the side of the cart in an instant. She gave us a bow and smile that were both a welcome and an act of appropriation. She held out a firm, soft, brown hand. When it closed on our own, we knew it to be the grasp of a friend, and the clasp of one who knew how to hold her world. But when she spoke the words were all of velvet, and her voice had the cadence of a caress.

"I have been watching you, 'cheres dames'—crossing the 'greve,' but how wet and weary you must be! Come in by the fire, it is ablaze now—I have been feeding it for you!"

And once more the beautifully curved lips parted over the fine teeth, and the exceeding brightness of the dark eyes smiled and glittered in our own. The caressing voice still led us forward, into the great gay kitchen; the touch of skilful, discreet fingers undid wet cloaks and wraps; the soft charm of a lovely and gracious woman made even the penetrating warmth of the huge fire-logs a secondary feature of our welcome.

To those who have never crossed a "greve;" who have had no jolting in a Normandy "char-a-banc;" who, for hours, have not known the mixed pleasures and discomfort of being a part of sea-rivers; and who have not been met at the threshold of an Inn on a Rock by the smiling welcome of Madame Poulard[A]—all such have yet a pleasant page to read in the book of traveled experience....

[Footnote A: An innkeeper of international fame. She is now dead, but her name and her omelet still survive at Mont St. Michel.]

Altho her people were waiting below, and the dinner was on its way to the cloth, Madame Poulard had plenty of time to give to the beauty about her. How fine was the outlook from the top of the ramparts! What a fresh sensation, this of standing-on a terrace in mid-air and looking down on the sea and across to the level shores. The rose vines—we found them sweet—"Ah"—one of the branches had fallen—she had full time to re-adjust the loosened support. And "Marianne, give these ladies their hot water, and see to their bags"—even this order was given with courtesy. It was only when the supple, agile figure had left us to fly down the steep rock-cut steps; when it shot over the top of the gateway and slid with the grace of a lizard into the street far below us, that we were made sensible of there having been any special need of madame's being in haste ...

The Mont proved by its appearance its history in adventure; it had the grim, grave, battered look that comes only to features—whether of rock or of more plastic human mold—that have been carved by the rough handling of experience.

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It is the common habit of hills and mountains, as we all know, to turn disdainful as they grow skyward; they only too eagerly drop, one by one, the things by which man has marked the earth for his own. To stand on a mountain top and to go down to your grave are alike, at least in this—that you have left everything, except yourself, behind you. But it is both the charm and the triumph of Mont St. Michael, that it carries so much of man's handiwork up into the blue fields of the air; this achievement alone would mark it as unique among hills. It appears as if for once man and nature had agreed to work in concert to produce a masterpiece in stone. The hill and the architectural beauties it carries aloft, are like a taunt flung out to sea and to the upper heights of air; for centuries they appear to have been crying aloud, "See what we can do, against your tempests and your futile tides—when we try" ... Rustic France along this coast still makes pilgrimages to the shrine of the Archangel St. Michael. No marriage is rightly arranged which does not include a wedding-journey across the "greve"; no nuptial breakfast is aureoled with the true halo of romance which is eaten elsewhere than on these heights in mid-air. The young come to drink deep of wonders; the old, to refresh the depleted fountains of memory; and the tourist, behold he is a plague of locusts let loose upon the defenseless hill!

It was impossible, after sojourning a certain time upon the hill, not to concede that there were two equally strong centers of attraction that drew the world hitherward. One remained, indeed, gravely suspended between the doubt and the fear, as to which of these potential units had the greater pull, in point of actual attraction. The impartial historian, given to a just weighing of evidence, would have been startled to find how invariably the scales tipped; how lightly an historical Mont, born of a miracle, crowned by the noblest buildings, a pious Mecca for saints and kings innumerable, shot up like feathers in lightness when overweighted by the modern realities of a perfectly appointed inn, the cooking and eating of an omelet of omelets, and the all-conquering charms of Madame Poulard.

The fog of doubt thickened as, day after day, the same scenes were enacted; when one beheld all sorts of conditions of men similarly affected; when, again and again, the potentiality in the human magnet was proved true. Doubt turned to conviction, at the last, that the holy shrine of St. Michael had, in truth, been violated; that the Mont had been desecrated; that the latter exists now solely as a setting for a pearl of an inn; and that within the shrine—it is Madame Poulard herself who fills the niche!...

Such a variety of brides as come up to the Mont! You could have your choice, at the midday meal, of almost any nationality, age, or color. The attempt among these bridal couples to maintain the distant air of a finished indifference only made their secret the more open. The British phlegm, on such a journey, did not always serve as a convenient mask; the flattering, timid glance, the ripple of tender whispers, and the furtive touching of fingers beneath the table, made even these English couples a part of the great human marrying family; their superiority to their fellows would return, doubtless, when the honey had dried out of their moon.

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The best of our adventures into this tender country were with the French bridal tourists; they were certain to be delightfully human. As we had had occasion to remark before, they were off, like ourselves, on a little voyage of discovery; they had come to make acquaintance with the being to whom they were mated for life. Various degrees of progress could be read in the air and manner of the hearty young “bourgeoises” and their paler or even ruddier partners, as they crunched their bread or sipped their thin wine. Some had only entered as yet upon the path of inquiry; others had already passed the mile-stone of criticism; and still others had left the earth and were floating in full azure of intoxication. Of the many wedding parties that sat down to breakfast, we soon made the commonplace discovery that the more plebeian the company, the more certain-orbed appeared to be the promise of happiness....

Madame Poulard’s air with this, her world, was as full of tact as with the tourists. Many of the older women would give her the Norman kiss, solemnly, as if the salute were a part of the ceremony attendant on the eating of a wedding breakfast at Mont St. Michel. There would be a three times’ clapping of the wrinkled or the ruddy peasant cheeks against the sides of Madame Poulard’s daintier, more delicately modeled face. Then all would take their seats noisily at the table. It was Madame Poulard who would then bring us news of the party. At the end of a fortnight Charm and I felt ourselves to be in possession of the hidden and secret reasons for all the marrying that had been done along the coast that year....

One morning, as we looked toward Pontorson, a small black cloud appeared to be advancing across the bay. The day was windy; the sky was crowded with huge white mountains—round, luminous clouds that moved in stately sweeps. And the sea was the color one loves to see in an earnest woman’s eye, the dark blue sapphire that turns to blue-gray. This was a setting that made that particular cloud, making such slow progress across from the shore, all the more conspicuous. Gradually, as the black mass neared the dike, it began to break and separate; and we saw plainly enough that the scattering particles were human beings.

It was, in point of fact, a band of pilgrims; a peasant pilgrimage was coming up to the Mont. In wagons, in market carts, in “char-a-bancs,” in donkey carts, on the backs of monster Percherons—the pilgrimage moved in slow processional dignity across the dike. Some of the younger black gowns and blue blouses attempted to walk across over the sands; we could see the girls sitting down on the edge of the shore, to take off their shoes and stockings and to tuck up their thick skirts. When they finally started they were like unto so many huge cheeses hoisted on stilts. The bare legs plunged boldly forward, keeping ahead of the slower-moving peasant lads; the girls’ bravery served them till they reached

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the fringe of the incoming tide; not until their knees went under water did they forego their venture. A higher wave came in, deluging the ones farthest out; and then ensued a scampering toward the dike and a climbing up of the stone embankment. The old route across the sands, that had been the only one known to kings and barons, was not good enough for a modern Norman peasant. The religion of personal comfort has spread even as far as the fields.

Other aspects of the hill, on this day of the pilgrimage, made those older dead-and-gone bands of pilgrims astonishingly real. On the tops of bastions, in the clefts on the rocks, beneath the glorious walls of La Merveille, or perilously lodged on the crumbling cornice of a tourelle, numerous rude altars had been hastily erected. The crude blues and scarlets of banners were fluttering, like so many pennants, in the light breeze. Beneath the improvised altar-roofs—strips of gay cloth stretched across poles stuck into the ground—were groups not often seen in these less fervent centuries.

High up, mounted on the natural pulpit, formed of a bit of rock, with the rude altar before him with its bits of scarlet cloth covered with cheap lace, stood or knelt the priest. Against the wide blue of the open heaven his figure took on an imposing splendor of mien and an unmodern impressiveness of action. Beneath him knelt, with bowed heads, the groups of the peasant pilgrims; the women, with murmuring lips and clasped hands, their strong, deeply-seamed faces outlined with the precision of a Francesco painting against the gray background of a giant mass of wall or the amazing breadth of a vast sea-view; children, squat and chubby, with bulging cheeks starting from the close-fitting French “bonnet”; and the peasant-farmers, mostly of the older varieties, whose stiffened or rheumatic knees and knotty hands made their kneeling real acts of devotional zeal.

There were a dozen such altars and groups scattered over the perpendicular slant of the hill. The singing of the choir boys, rising like skylark notes into the clear space of heaven, would be floating from one rocky-nested chapel, while below, in the one beneath which we, for a moment, were resting, there would be the groaning murmur of the peasant groups in prayer.

Three times did the vision of St. Michael appear to Saint Aubert, in his dream, commanding the latter to erect a church on the heights of Mont St. Michel to his honor. How many a time must the modern pilgrim traverse the stupendous mass that has grown out of that command before he is quite certain that the splendor of Mont St. Michel is real, and not part of a dream!

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Whether one enters through the dark magnificence of the great portals of the Chatelet; whether one mounts the fortified stairway, passing into the Salle des Gardes, passing onward from dungeon to fortified bridge to gain the abbatial residence; whether one leaves the vaulted splendor of oratories for aerial passageways, only to emerge beneath the majestic roof of the Cathedral—that marvel of the Early Norman, ending in the Gothic choir of the fifteenth century; or, as one penetrates into the gloom of the mighty dungeons where heroes, and brothers of kings, and saints, and scientists have died their long death—as one gropes through the black night of the crypt, where a faint, mysterious glint of light falls aslant the mystical face of the Black Virgin; as one climbs to the light beneath the ogive arches of the Aumonerie, through the wide-lit aisles of the Salle des Chevaliers, past the slender Gothic columns of the Refectory, up at last to the crowning glory of all the glories of La Merveille, to the exquisitely beautiful colonnades of the open Cloister—the impressions and emotions excited by these ecclesiastical and military masterpieces are ever the same, however many times one may pass them in review. A charm indefinable, but replete with subtle attractions, lurks in every one of these dungeons.

The great halls have a power to make one retrace their space I have yet to find under other vaulted chambers. The grass that is set, like a green jewel, in the arabesques of the cloister, is a bit of greensward the feet press with a different tread to that which skips lightly over other strips of turf. And the world, that one looks out upon through prison bars, that is so gloriously arched in the arm of a flying buttress, or that lies prone at your feet from the dizzy heights of the rock clefts, is not the world in which you, daily, do your petty stretch of toil, in which you laugh and ache, sorrow, sigh, and go down to your grave.

The secret of this deep attraction may lie in the fact of one's being in a world that is built on a height. Much, doubtless, of the charm lies, also, in the reminders of all the human life that, since the early dawn of history, has peopled this hill. One has the sense of living at a tremendously high mental pressure; of impressions, emotions, sensations crowding upon the mind; of one's whole meager outfit of memory, of poetic equipment, and of imaginative furnishing being unequal to the demand made by even the most hurried tour of the great buildings, or the most flitting review of the noble massing of the clouds and the hilly seas.

The very emptiness and desolation of all the buildings on the hill help to accentuate their splendor. The stage is magnificently set; the curtain, even, is lifted. One waits for the coming on of kingly shapes, for the pomp of trumpets, for the pattering of a mighty host. But, behold, all is still. And one sits and sees only a shadowy company pass and repass across that glorious mise-en-scene.

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For, in a certain sense, I know no other medieval mass of buildings as peopled as are these. The dead shapes seem to fill the vast halls. The Salle des Chevaliers is crowded, daily, with a brilliant gathering of knights, who sweep the trains of their white damask mantles, edged with ermine, over the dulled marble of the floor; two by two they enter the hall; the golden shells on their mantles make the eyes blink, as the groups gather about the great chimneys, or wander through the column-broken space.

Behind this dazzling cortege, up the steep steps of the narrow streets, swarm other groups—the medieval pilgrim host that rushes into cathedral aisles, and that climbs the ramparts to watch the stately procession as it makes its way toward the church portals.

There are still other figures that fill every empty niche and deserted watch-tower. Through the lancet windows of the abbatial gateways the yeomanry of the vassal villages are peering; it is the weary time of the Hundred Years' War, and all France is watching, through sentry windows, for the approach of her dread enemy. On the shifting sands below, as on brass, how indelibly fixt are the names of the hundred and twenty-nine knights whose courage drove, step by step, over that treacherous surface, the English invaders back to their island strongholds.

CAEN[A]

[Footnote A: From "A Bibliographical Tour in France and Germany."]

BY THOMAS FROGNALL DIBDIN

Let us begin, therefore, with the Abbey of St. Stephen; for it is the noblest and most interesting on many accounts. It is called by the name of that saint, inasmuch as there stood formerly a chapel, on the same site, dedicated to him. The present building was completed and solemnly dedicated by William the Conqueror, in the presence of his wife, his two sons Robert and William, his favorite, Archbishop Lanfranc; John, Archbishop of Rouen, and Thomas, Archbishop of York—toward the year 1080; but I strongly suspect, from the present prevailing character of the architecture, that nothing more than the west front and the towers upon which the spires rest remain of its ancient structure. The spires, as the Abbe De La Rue conjectures, and as I should also have thought, are about two centuries later than the towers.

The outsides of the side aisles appear to be of the thirteenth, rather than of the end of the eleventh, century. The first exterior view of the west front, and of the towers, is extremely interesting from the gray and clear tint, as well as excellent quality, of the stone, which, according to Huet, was brought partly from Vaucelle and partly from Allemagne. One of the corner abutments of one of the towers has fallen down and a

great portion of what remains seem to indicate rapid decay. The whole stands indeed greatly in need of reparation. Ducarel, if I

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remember rightly, has made, of this whole front, a sort of elevation as if it were intended for a wooden model to work by, having all the stiffness and precision of an erection of forty-eight hours' standing only. The central tower is of very stunted dimensions, and overwhelmed by a roof in the form of an extinguisher. This, in fact, was the consequence of the devastations of the Calvinists; who absolutely sapped the foundation of the tower, with the hope of overwhelming the whole choir in ruin—but a part only of their malignant object was accomplished. The component parts of the eastern extremity are strangely and barbarously miscellaneous. However, no good commanding exterior view can be obtained from the place, or confined square, opposite the towers.

But let us return to the west front; and, opening the unfastened green baize covered door, enter softly and silently into the venerable interior—sacred even to the feelings of Englishmen. Of this interior, very much is changed from its original character. The side aisles retain their flattened arched roofs and pillars; and in the nave you observe those rounded pilasters—or alorilievo-like pillars—running from bottom to top, which are to be seen in the Abbey of Jumieges. The capitals of these long pillars are comparatively of modern date.

To the left on entrance, within a side chapel, is the burial place of Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror. The tombstone attesting her interment is undoubtedly of the time. Generally speaking, the interior is cold, and dull of effect. The side chapels, of which not fewer than sixteen encircle the choir, have the discordant accompaniments of Grecian balustrades to separate them from the choir and nave.

To the right of the choir, in the sacristy, I think, is hung the huge portrait, in oil, within a black and gilt frame, of which Ducarel has published an engraving, on the supposition of its being the portrait of William the Conqueror. But nothing can be more ridiculous than such a conclusion. In the first place, the picture itself, which is a palpable copy, can not be older than a century; and in the second place, were it an original performance, it could not be older than the time of Francis I. In fact, it purports to have been executed as a faithful copy of the figure of King William, seen by the Cardinals in 1522, who were seized with a sacred frenzy to take a peep at the body as it might exist at that time. The costume of the oil painting is evidently that of the period of our Henry VIII.; and to suppose that the body of William—even had it remained in so surprisingly perfect a state as Ducarel intimates, after an interment of upward of four hundred years—could have presented such a costume, when, from Ducarel's own statement, another whole-length representation of the same person is totally different—and more decidedly of the character of William's time—is really quite a reproach to any antiquary who plumes himself upon the possession even of common sense.

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In the middle of the choir, and just before the high altar, the body of the Conqueror was entombed with great pomp; and a monument erected to his memory of the most elaborate and costly description. Nothing now remains but a flat, black marble slab, with a short inscription, of quite a recent date....

You must now attend me to the most interesting public building, perhaps all things considered, which is to be seen at Caen. I mean the Abbey of the Holy Trinity, or L'Abbaye aux Dames. This abbey was founded by the wife of the Conqueror, about the same time that William erected that of St. Stephen. Ducarel's description of it, which I have just seen in a copy of the "Anglo-Norman Antiquities," in a bookseller's shop, is sufficiently meager. His plates are also sufficiently miserable: but things are strangely altered since his time. The nave of the church is occupied by a manufactory for making cordage, or twine: and upward of a hundred lads are now busied in their flaxen occupations, where formerly the nun knelt before the cross, or was occupied in auricular confession.

The entrance at the western extremity is entirely stopt up; but the exterior gives manifest proof of an antiquity equal to that of the Abbey of St. Stephen. The upper part of the towers are palpably of the fifteenth or, rather, of the early part of the sixteenth century. I had no opportunity of judging of the neat pavement of the floor of the nave, in white and black marble, as noticed by Ducarel, on account of the occupation of this part of the building by the manufacturing children; but I saw some very ancient tombstones, one, I think, of the twelfth century, which had been removed from the nave or side aisles, and were placed against the sides of the north transept.

The nave is entirely walled up from the transepts, but the choir is fortunately preserved; and a more perfect and interesting specimen of its kind, of the same antiquity, is perhaps nowhere to be seen in Normandy. All the monuments as well as the altars, described by Ducarel, are now taken away. Having ascended a stone staircase, we got into the upper part of the choir, above the first row of pillars—and walked along the wall. This was rather adventurous, you will say; but a more adventurous spirit of curiosity had nearly proved fatal to me; for, on quitting daylight, we pursued a winding stone staircase, in our way to the central tower—to enjoy from hence a view of the town. I almost tremble as I relate it.

There had been put up a sort of temporary wooden staircase, leading absolutely to nothing; or, rather, to a dark void space. I happened to be foremost in ascending, yet groping in the dark—with the guide luckily close behind me. Having reached the topmost step, I was raising my foot to a supposed higher or succeeding step—but there was none. A depth of eighteen feet at least was below me. The guide caught my coat, as I was about to lose my balance, and roared out, "Wait—Stop!" The least balance or inclination, one way or the other, is sufficient, upon these critical occasions; when luckily, from his catching my coat, and pulling me, in consequence, slightly backward,

my fall and my life, were equally saved! I have reason from henceforth to remember the Abbey aux Dames at Caen.

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I gained the top of the central tower, which is not of equal altitude with those of the western extremity, and from hence surveyed the town, as well as the drizzling rain would permit. I saw enough, however, to convince me that the site of this abbey is fine and commanding. Indeed, it stands nearly upon the highest ground in the town. Ducarel had not the glorious ambition to mount to the top of the tower; nor did he even possess that most commendable of all species of architectural curiosity, a wish to visit the crypt. Thus, in either extremity, I evinced a more laudable spirit of enterprise than did my old-fashioned predecessor. Accordingly, from the summit, you must accompany me to the lowest depth of the building. I descended by the same somewhat intricate route, and I took especial care to avoid all “temporary wooden staircase.” The crypt, beneath the choir, is perhaps of yet greater interest and beauty than the choir itself. Within an old, very old, stone coffin—at the further circular end—are the pulverized remains of one of the earliest abbesses. I gazed around with mixed sensations of veneration and awe, and threw myself back into centuries past, fancying that the shrouded figure of Matilda herself glided by, with a look as if to approve of my antiquarian enthusiasm!

Having gratified my curiosity by a careful survey of the subterranean abode, I revisited the regions of daylight, and made toward the large building, now a manufactory, which in Ducarel’s time had been a nunnery. The revolution has swept away every human being in the character of a nun; but the director of the manufactory showed me, with great civility, some relics of old crosses, rings, veils, lacrimatories, etc., which had been taken from the crypt I had recently visited. These relics savored of considerable antiquity. Tom Hearne would have set about proving that they must have belonged to Matilda herself; but I will have neither the presumption nor the merit of attempting this proof. They seemed, indeed, to have undergone half a dozen decompositions. Upon the whole, if our Antiquarian Society, after having exhausted the cathedrals of their own country, should ever think of perpetuating the principal ecclesiastical edifices of Normandy, by means of the art of engraving, let them begin their labors with the Abbey aux Dames at Caen.

DOWN THE RIVER TO BORDEAUX[A]

[Footnote A: From “A Tour Through the Pyrenees.” By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, Henry Holt & Co. Copyright, 1873.]

BY HIPPOLYTE ADOLPHE TAINE

The river is so fine that, before going to Bayonne, I have come down as far as Royan. Ships heavy with white sails ascend slowly on both sides of the boat. At each gust of wind they incline like idle birds, lifting their long wings and showing their black bellies. They run slantwise, then come back; one would say that they felt the better for being in

this great fresh-water harbor; they loiter in it and enjoy its peace after leaving the wrath and inclemency of the ocean.

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The banks, fringed with pale verdure, glide right and left, far away to the verge of heaven; the river is broad like a sea; at this distance you might think you had seen two hedges; the trees dimly lift their delicate shapes in a robe of bluish gauze; here and there great pines raise their umbrellas on the vapory horizon, where all is confused and vanishing; there is an inexpressible sweetness in these first hues of the timid day, softened still by the fog which exhales from the deep river.

As for the river itself, its waters stretch out joyous and splendid; the rising sun pours upon its breast a long streamlet of gold; the breeze covers it with scales; its eddies stretch themselves, and tremble like an awaking serpent, and, when the billow heaves them, you seem to see the striped flanks, the tawny cuirass of a leviathan.

Indeed, at such moments it seems that the water must live and feel; it has a strange look, when it comes, transparent and somber, to stretch itself upon a beach of pebbles; it turns about them as if uneasy and irritated; it beats them with its wavelets; it covers them, then retires, then comes back again with a sort of languid writhing and mysterious lovingness; its snaky eddies, its little crests suddenly beaten down or broken, its wave, sloping, shining, then all at once blackened, resembles the flashes of passion in an impatient mother, who hovers incessantly and anxiously about her children, and covers them, not knowing what she wants and what fears.

Presently a cloud has covered the heavens, and the wind has risen. In a moment the river has assumed the aspect of a crafty and savage animal. It hollowed itself, and showed its livid belly; it came against the keel with convulsive starts, hugged it, and dashed against it, as if to try its force; as far as one could see, its waves lifted themselves and crowded together, like the muscles upon a chest; over the flank of the waves passed flashes with sinister smiles; the mast groaned, and the trees bent shivering, like a nerveless crowd before the wrath of a fearful beast. Then all was hushed; the sun had burst forth, the waves were smoothed, you now see only a laughing expanse; spun out over this polished back a thousand greenish tresses sported wantonly; the light rested on it, like a diaphanous mantle; it followed the supple movements and the twisting of those liquid arms; it folded around them, behind them, its radiant, azure robe; it took their caprices and their mobile colors; the river meanwhile, slumbrous in its great, peaceful bed, was stretched out at the feet of the hills, which looked down upon it, like it immovable and eternal.

The boat is made fast to a boom, under a pile of white houses; it is Royan. Here already are the sea and the dunes; the right of the village is buried under a mass of sand; there are crumbling hills, little dreary valleys, where you are lost as if in the desert; no sound, no movement, no life; scanty, leafless vegetation dots moving soil, and its filaments fall like sickly hairs; small shells, white and empty, cling to these in chaplets, and, wherever the foot is set, they crack with a sound like a cricket's chirp; this place is the ossuary of some wretched maritime tribe.

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One tree alone can live here, the pine, a wild creature, inhabitant of the forests and sterile coasts; there is a whole colony of them here; they crowd together fraternally, and cover the sand with their brown lamels; the monotonous breeze which sifts through them forever awakes their murmur; thus they chant in a plaintive fashion, but with a far softer and more harmonious voice than the other trees; this voice resembles the grating of the cicadas when in August they sing with all their heart among the stalks of the ripened wheat.

At the left of the village, a footpath winds to the summit of a wasted bank, among billows of standing grasses. The river is so broad that the other shore is not distinguishable. The sea, its neighbor, imparts its influence; its long undulations come one after another against the coast, and pour their little cascades of foam upon the sand; then the water retires, running down the slope until it meets a new wave coming up which covers it; these billows are never wearied, and their come and go remind one of the regular breathing of a slumbering child. For night has fallen, the tints of purple grow brown and fade away. The river goes to rest in the soft, vague shadow; scarcely, at long intervals, a remnant glimpse is reflected from a slanting wave; obscurity drowns everything in its vapory dust; the drowsy eye vainly searches in this mist some visible point, and distinguishes at last, like a dim star, the lighthouse of Cordouan.

The next evening a fresh sea-breeze has brought us to Bordeaux. The enormous city heaps its monumental houses along the river like bastions; the red sky is embattled by their coping. They on one hand, the bridge on the other, protect, with a double line, the port where the vessels are crowded together like a flock of gulls; those graceful hulls, those tapering masts, those sails swollen or floating, weave the labyrinth of their movements and forms upon the magnificent purple of the sunset. The sun sinks into the river; the black rigging, the round hulls, stand out against its conflagration, and look like jewels of jet set in gold.

Around Bordeaux are smiling hills, varied horizons, fresh valleys, a river people by incessant navigation, a succession of cities and villages harmoniously planted upon the declivities or in the plains, everywhere the richest verdure, the luxury of nature and civilization, the earth and man vying with each other to enrich and decorate the happiest valley of France. Below Bordeaux a flat soil, marshes, sand; a land which goes on growing poorer, villages continually less frequent, ere long the desert. I like the desert as well.

Pine woods pass to the right and to the left, silent and wan. Each tree bears on its side the scar of wounds where the woodmen have set flowing the resinous blood which chokes it; the powerful liquor still ascends into its limbs with the sap, exhales by its slimy shoots and by its cleft skin; a sharp aromatic odor fills the air.

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Beyond, the monotonous plain of the ferns, bathed in light, stretches away as far as the eye can reach. Their green fans expand beneath the sun which colors, but does not cause them to fade. Upon the horizon a few scattered trees lift their slender columns. You see now and then the silhouette of a herdsman on his stilts, inert and standing like a sick heron. Wild horses are grazing half hid in the herbage. As the train passes, they abruptly lift their great startled eyes and stand motionless, uneasy at the noise that has troubled their solitude.

Man does not fare well here—he dies or degenerates; but it is the country of animals, and especially of plants. They abound in this desert, free, certain of living. Our pretty, cut-up valleys are but poor things alongside of these immense spaces, leagues upon leagues of marshy or dry vegetation, a level country, where nature, elsewhere troubled and tortured by men, still vegetates, as in primeval days, with a calm equal to its grandeur. The sun needs these savannas in order properly to spread out its light; from the rising exhalation, you feel that the whole plain is fermenting under its force; and the eyes, filled by the limitless horizon, divine the secret labor by which this ocean of rank verdure renews and nourishes itself.

THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE[A]

[Footnote A: From a letter to his mother, written from the monastery in 1739.]

BY THOMAS GRAY

We took the longest road, which lies through Savoy, on purpose to see a famous monastery, called the Grande Chartreuse, and had no reason to think our time lost. After having traveled seven days very slow (for we did not change horses, it being impossible for a chaise to go fast in these roads), we arrived at a little village, among the mountains of Savoy, called Echelles; from thence we proceeded on horses, who are used to the way, to the mountain of the Chartreuse.

It is six miles to the top; the road runs winding up it, commonly not six feet broad; on one hand is the rock, with woods of pine-trees hanging overhead; on the other, a monstrous precipice, almost perpendicular, at the bottom of which rolls a torrent that, sometimes tumbling among the fragments of stone that have fallen from on high, and sometimes precipitating itself down vast descents with a noise like thunder, which is made still greater by the echo from the mountains on each side, concurs to form one of the most solemn, the most romantic, and the most astonishing scenes I ever beheld.

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Add to this the strange views made by the crags and cliffs on the other hand; the cascades that in many places throw themselves from the very summit down into the vale, and the river below; and many other particulars impossible to describe; you will conclude we had no occasion to repent our plans. This place St. Bruno chose to retire to, and upon its very top founded the aforesaid convent, which is the superior of the whole order. When we came there, the two fathers, who are commissioned to entertain strangers (for the rest must neither speak one to another nor to any one else) received us very kindly; and set before us a repast of dried fish, eggs, butter, and fruits, all excellent in their kind, and extremely neat. They prest us to spend the night there, and to stay some days with them; but this we could not do, so they led us about their house, which is, you must think, like a little city; for there are 100 fathers, besides 300 servants, that make their clothes, grind their corn, press their wine, and do everything among themselves.

The whole is quite orderly and simple; nothing of finery; but the wonderful decency, and the strange situation, more than supply the place of it. In the evening we descended by the same way, passing through many clouds that were then forming themselves on the mountain's side.

CARCASSONNE[A]

[Footnote A: From "A Little Tour in France." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, Houghton, Mifflin Co. Copyright, 1884.]

BY HENRY JAMES

When I say the town, I mean the towns; there being two at Carcassonne, perfectly distinct, and each with excellent claims to the title. They have settled the matter between them, however, and the elder, the shrine of pilgrimage, to which the other is but a stepping-stone, or even, as I may say, a humble doormat, takes the name of the Cite.

You see nothing of the Cite from the station; it is masked by the agglomeration of the "ville-basse," which is relatively (but only relatively) new. A wonderful avenue of acacias leads to it from the station—leads past it, rather, and conducts you to a little high-backed bridge over the Aude, beyond which, detached and erect, a distinct medieval silhouette, the Cite presents itself. Like a rival shop, on the invidious side of a street, it has "no connection" with the establishment across the way, altho the two places are united (if old Carcassonne may be said to be united to anything) by a vague little rustic faubourg. Perched on its solid pedestal, the perfect detachment of the Cite is what first strikes you.



To take leave, without delay, of the “ville-basse,” I may say that the splendid acacias I have mentioned flung a summerish dusk over the place, in which a few scattered remains of stout walls and big bastions looked venerable and picturesque. A little boulevard winds around the town, planted with trees and garnished with more benches than I ever saw provided by a soft-hearted municipality. This precinct had a warm, lazy, dusty, southern look, as if the people sat out-of-doors a great deal, and wandered about in the stillness of summer nights. The figure of the elder town, at these hours, must be ghostly enough on its neighboring hill.

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Even by day it has the air of a vignette of Gustave Dore, a couplet of Victor Hugo. It is almost too perfect—as if it were an enormous model, placed on a big green table at a museum. A steep, paved way, grass-grown like all roads where vehicles never pass, stretches up to it in the sun. It has a double enceinte, complete outer walls and complete inner (these, elaborately fortified, are the more curious); and this congregation of ramparts, towers, bastions, battlements, barbicans, is as fantastic and romantic as you please. The approach I mention here leads to the gate that looks toward Toulouse—the Porte de l'Aude. There is a second, on the other side, called, I believe, Porte Narbonnaise, a magnificent gate, flanked with towers thick and tall, defended by elaborate outworks; and these two apertures alone admit you to the place—putting aside a small sally-port, protected by a great bastion, on the quarter that looks toward the Pyrenees....

I should lose no time in saying that restoration is the great mark of the Cite. M. Viollet-le-Duc has worked his will upon it, put it into perfect order, revived the fortifications in every detail. I do not pretend to judge the performance, carried out on a scale and in a spirit which really impose themselves on the imagination. Few architects have had such a chance, and M. Viollet-le-Duc must have been the envy of the whole restoring fraternity. The image of a more crumbling Carcassonne rises in the mind, and there is no doubt that forty years ago the place was more affecting. On the other hand, as we see it to-day, it is a wonderful evocation; and if there is a great deal of new in the old, there is plenty of old in the new. The repaired crenellations, the inserted patches, of the walls of the outer circle sufficiently express this commixture.

Carcassonne dates from the Roman occupation of Gaul. The place commanded one of the great roads into Spain, and in the fourth century Romans and Franks ousted each other from such a point of vantage. In the year 436, Theodoric, King of the Visigoths, superseded both these parties; and it is during his occupation that the inner enceinte was raised upon the ruins of the Roman fortifications. Most of the Visigoth towers that are still erect are seated upon Roman substructions which appear to have been formed hastily, probably at the moment of the Frankish invasion. The authors of these solid defenses, tho occasionally disturbed, held Carcassonne and the neighboring country, in which they had established their kingdom of Septimania, till the year 713, when they were expelled by the Moors of Spain, who ushered in an unilluminated period of four centuries, of which no traces remain.

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These facts I derived from a source no more recondite than a pamphlet by M. Viollet-le-Duc—a very luminous description of the fortifications, which you may buy from the accomplished custodian. The writer makes a jump to the year 1209, when Carcassonne, then forming part of the realm of the viscounts of Beziers and infected by the Albigensian heresy, was besieged, in the name of the Pope, by the terrible Simon de Montfort and his army of crusaders. Simon was accustomed to success, and the town succumbed in the course of a fortnight. Thirty-one years later, having passed into the hands of the King of France, it was again besieged by the young Raymond de Trincavel, the last of the viscounts of Beziers; and of this siege M. Viollet-le-Duc gives a long and minute account, which the visitor who has a head for such things may follow, with the brochure in hand, on the fortifications themselves.

The young Raymond de Trineavel, baffled and repulsed, retired at the end of twenty-four days. Saint Louis and Philip the Bold, in the thirteenth century, multiplied the defenses of Carcassonne, which was one of the bulwarks of their kingdom on the Spanish quarter; and from this time forth, being regarded as impregnable, the place had nothing to fear. It was not even attacked; and when, in 1355, Edward the Black Prince marched into it, the inhabitants had opened the gates to the conqueror before whom all Languedoc was prostrate. I am not one of those who, as I said just now, have a head for such things, and having extracted these few facts had made all the use of M. Viollet-le-Duc's pamphlet of which I was capable....

My obliging friend the “mad lover” [of la Cite] handed me over to the doorkeeper of the citadel. I should add that I was at first committed to the wife of this functionary, a stout peasant woman, who conducted me to a postern door and ushered me into the presence of her husband.

This brilliant, this suggestive warden of Carcassonne marched us about for an hour, haranguing, explaining, illustrating, as he went; it was a complete little lecture, such as might have been delivered at the Lowell Institute, on the manner in which a first-rate “place forte” used to be attacked and defended. Our peregrinations made it very clear that Carcassonne was impregnable; it is impossible to imagine, without having seen them, such refinements of immurement, such ingenuities of resistance. We passed along the battlements and “chemins de ronde,” ascended and descended towers, crawled under arches, peered out of loopholes, lowered ourselves into dungeons, halted in all sorts of tight places, while the purpose of something or other was described to us.

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It was very curious, very interesting; above all, it was very pictorial, and involved perpetual peeps into the little crooked, crumbling, sunny, grassy, empty Cite. In places, as you stand upon it, the great towered and embattled enceinte produces an illusion; it looks as if it were still equipped and defended. One vivid challenge, at any rate, it flings down before you; it calls upon you to make up your mind on the matter of restoration. For myself, I have no hesitation; I prefer in every case the ruined, however ruined, to the reconstructed, however splendid. What is left is more precious than what is added; the one is history, the other is fiction; and I like the former the better of the two—it is so much more romantic. One is positive, so far as it goes; the other fills up the void with things more dead than the void itself, inasmuch as they have never had life. After that I am free to say that the restoration of Carcassonne is a splendid achievement. The little custodian dismissed us at last, after having, as usual, inducted us into the inevitable repository of photographs.

After leaving it and passing out of the two circles of walls, I treated myself, in the most infatuated manner, to another walk round the Cite. It is certainly this general impression that is most striking—the impression from outside, where the whole place detaches itself at once from the landscape. In the warm southern dusk it looked more than ever like a city in a fairy-tale. To make the thing perfect, a white young moon, in its first quarter, came out and hung just over the dark silhouette. It was hard to come away—to incommode one's self for anything so vulgar as a railway train; I would gladly have spent the evening in revolving round the walls of Carcassonne.

BIARRITZ[A]

[Footnote A: From "Castles and Chateaux of Old Navarre." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, L.C. Page & Co. Copyright, 1907.]

BY FRANCIS MILTOUN

If Bayonne is the center of commercial affairs for the Basque country, its citizens must, at any rate, go to Biarritz if they want to live "the elegant and worldly life." The prosperity and luxury of Biarritz are very recent; it goes back only to the Second Empire, when it was but a village of a thousand souls or less, mostly fishermen and women.

The railway and the automobile omnibus make communication with Bayonne to-day easy, but formerly folk came and went on a donkey side-saddled for two, arranged back to back, like the seats of an Irish jaunting-car. If the weight were unequal, a balance was struck by adding cobblestones on one side or the other, the patient donkey not minding in the least.

This astonishing mode of conveyance was known as a “cacolet,” and replaced the “voitures” and “fiacres” of other resorts. An occasional example may still be seen, but the “jolies Basquaises” who conducted them have given way to sturdy, barelegged Basque boys—as picturesque, perhaps, but not so entrancing to the view. To voyage “en cacolet” was the necessity of our grandfathers; for us it is an amusement only.

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Napoleon III., or rather Eugenie, his spouse, was the faithful godfather of Biarritz as a resort. The Villa Eugenie is no more; it was first transformed into a hotel and later destroyed by fire; but it was the first of a great battery of villas and hotels which has made Biarritz so great that the popularity of Monte Carlo is steadily waning. Biarritz threatens to become even more popular; some sixteen thousand visitors came to Biarritz in 1899, but there were thirty-odd thousand in 1903; while the permanent population has risen from 2,700 in the days of the Second Empire to 12,800 in 1901. The tiny railway from Bayonne to Biarritz transported half a million travelers twenty years ago, and a million and a half, or nearly that number, in 1903; the rest, being millionaires, or gypsies, came in automobiles or caravans. These figures tell eloquently of the prosperity of this “villegiature imperiale.”

The great beauty of Biarritz is its setting. At Monte Carlo the setting is also beautiful, ravishingly beautiful, but the architecture, the terrace, Monaco's rock, and all the rest combine to make the pleasing “ensemble.” At Biarritz the architecture of its Casino and the great hotels is not of an epoch-making beauty, neither are they so delightfully placed. It is the surrounding stage setting that is so lovely. Here the jagged shore line, the blue waves, the ample horizon seaward, are what make it all so charming.

Biarritz as a watering-place has an all-the-year-round clientele; in summer the Spanish and the French, succeeded in winter by Americans, Germans, and English—with a sprinkling of Russians at all times. Biarritz, like Pau, aside from being a really delightful winter resort, where one may escape the rigors of murky November to March in London, is becoming afflicted with a bad case of “sport fever.” There are all kinds of sports, some of them reputable enough in their place, but the comic-opera fox-hunting which takes place at Pau and Biarritz is not one of them....

The picturesque “Plage des Basques” lies to the south of the town, bordered with high cliffs, which in turn are surmounted with terraces of villas. The charm of it all is incomparable. To the northwest stretches the limpid horizon of the Bay of Biscay, and to the south the snowy summits of the Pyrenees, and the adorable bays of Saint-Jean-de-Luz and Fontarabie, while behind, and to the eastward, lies the quaint country of the Basques, and the mountain trails into Spain in all their savage hardness.

The off-shore translucent waters of the Gulf of Gascony were the “Sinus Aquitanicus” of the ancients. A colossal rampart of rocks and sand dunes stretches all the way from the Gironde to the Bidassoa, without a harbor worthy of the name save at Bayonne and Saint-Jean-de-Luz. Here the Atlantic waves pound, in time of storm, with all the fury with which they break upon the rocky coasts of Brittany further north. Perhaps this would not be so, but for the fact that the Iberian coast to the southward runs almost at right angles with that of Gascony. As it is, while the climate is mild, Biarritz and the other cities on the coasts of the Gulf of Gascony have a fair proportion of what sailors, the world over, call “rough weather.”

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The waters of the Gascon Gulf are not always angry; most frequently they are calm and blue, vivid with a translucence worthy of those of Capri, and it is this that makes the beach at Biarritz one of the most popular sea-bathing resorts in France to-day. It is a fashionable watering-place, but it is also, perhaps, the most beautifully disposed city to be found in all the round of the European coast line, its slightly curving slope dominated by a background terrace, decorative in itself, but delightfully set off with its fringe of dwelling-houses, hotels, and casinos. Ostend is superbly laid out, but it is dreary; Monte Carlo is beautiful, but it is ultra; while Trouville is constrained and affected. Biarritz has the best features of all these.... Saint-Jean-de-Luz had a population of ten thousand two centuries ago; to-day it has three thousand, and most of these take in boarders, or in one way or another cater to the hordes of visitors who have made it—or would, if they could have suppress its quiet Basque charm of coloring and character—a little Brighton.

Not all is lost, but four hundred houses were razed in the mid-eighteenth century by a tempest, and the stable population began to creep away; only with recent years an influx of strangers has arrived for a week's or a month's stay to take their places—if idling butterflies of fashion or imaginary invalids can really take the place of a hardworking, industrious colony of fishermen, who thought no more of sailing away to the South Antarctic or the banks of Newfoundland in an eighty-ton whaler than they did of seining sardines from a shallop in the Gulf of Gascony at their doors.

DOWN THE SAONE TO LYONS[A]

[Footnote A: From “Pencilings by the Way.” Published by Charles Scribner, 1852.]

BY NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS

The Saone is about the size of the Mohawk, but not half so beautiful; at least for the greater part of its course. Indeed, you can hardly compare American with European rivers, for the charm is of another description, quite. With us it is nature only, here it is almost all art. Our rivers are lovely, because the outline of the shore is graceful, and particularly because the vegetation is luxuriant. The hills are green, the foliage deep and lavish, the rocks grown over with vines or moss, the mountains in the distance covered with pines and other forest-trees; everything is wild, and nothing looks bare or sterile. The rivers of France are crowned on every height with ruins, and in the bosom of every valley lies a cluster of picturesque stone cottages; but the fields are naked, and there are no trees; the mountains are barren and brown, and everything looks as if the dwellings had been deserted by the people, and nature had at the same time gone to decay.

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I can conceive nothing more melancholy than the views upon the Saone, seen, as I saw them, tho vegetation is out everywhere, and the banks should be beautiful if ever. As we approached Lyons the river narrowed and grew bolder, and the last ten miles were enchanting. Naturally the shores at this part of the Saone are exceedingly like the highlands of the Hudson above West Point. Abrupt hills rise from the river's edge, and the windings are sharp and constant. But imagine the highlands of the Hudson crowned with antique chateaux, and covered to the very top with terraces and summer-houses and hanging-gardens, gravel-walks and beds of flowers, instead of wild pines and precipices, and you may get a very correct idea of the Saone above Lyons.

You emerge from one of the dark passes of the river by a sudden turn, and there before you lies this large city, built on both banks, at the foot and on the sides of mountains. The bridges are fine, and the broad, crowded quays, all along the edges of the river, have a beautiful effect. There is a great deal of magnificence at Lyons, in the way of quays, promenades, and buildings.... I was glad to escape from the lower streets, and climb up the long staircases to the observatory that overhangs the town. From the base of this elevation the descent of the river is almost a precipice. The houses hang on the side of the steep hill, and their doors enter from the long alleys of stone staircases by which you ascend....

It was holy-week, and the church of Notre Dame de Fourvieres, which stands on the summit of the hill, was crowded with people. We went in for a moment, and sat down on a bench to rest. My companion was a Swiss captain of artillery, who was a passenger in the boat, a very splendid fellow, with a mustache that he might have tied behind his ears. He had address me at the hotel, and proposed that we should visit the curiosities of the town together. He was a model of a manly figure, athletic, and soldier-like, and standing near him was to get the focus of all the dark eyes in the congregation.

The new square tower stands at the side of the church, and rises to the height of perhaps sixty feet. The view from it is said to be one of the finest in the world. I have seen more extensive ones, but never one that comprehended more beauty and interest. Lyons lies at the foot, with the Saone winding through its bosom in abrupt curves; the Rhone comes down from the north on the other side of the range of mountains, and meeting the Saone in a broad stream below the town, they stretch off to the south, through a diversified landscape; the Alps rise from the east like the edges of a thunder-cloud, and the mountains of Savoy fill up the interval to the Rhone.

All about the foot of the monument lie gardens, of exquisite cultivation; and above and below the city the villas of the rich; giving you altogether as delicious a nucleus for a broad circle of scenery as art and nature could create, and one sufficiently in contrast with the barrenness of the rocky circumference to enhance the charm, and content you with your position. Half way down the hill lies an old monastery, with a lovely garden walled in from the world.

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The river was covered with boats, the bells were ringing to church, the glorious old cathedral, so famous for its splendor, stood piled up, with its arches and gray towers, in the square below; the day was soft, sunny, and warm, and existence was a blessing. I leaned over the balustrade, I know not how long, looking down upon the scene about me; and I shall ever remember it as one of those few unalloyed moments, when the press of care was taken off my mind, and the chain of circumstances was strong enough to set aside both the past and the future, and leave me to the quiet enjoyment of the present. I have found such hours “few and far between.”

LYONS[A]

[Footnote A: From a letter to his friend West.]

BY THOMAS GRAY

I take this opportunity to tell you that we are at the ancient and celebrated Lugdunum, a city situated upon the confluence of the Rhone and Saone (Arar, I should say) two people, who tho of tempers extremely unlike, think fit to join hands here, and make a little party to travel to the Mediterranean in company; the lady comes gliding along through the fruitful plains of Burgundy.... the gentleman runs all rough and roaring down from the mountains of Switzerland to meet her; and with all her soft airs she likes him never the worse; she goes through the middle of the city in state, and he passes incog, without the walls, but waits for her a little below.

The houses here are so high, and the streets so narrow, as would be sufficient to render Lyons the dismalest place in the world, but the number of people, and the face of commerce diffused about it, are, at least, as sufficient to make it the liveliest: between these two sufficiencies, you will be in doubt what to think of it; so we shall leave the city, and proceed to its environs, which are beautiful beyond expression; it is surrounded with mountains, and those mountains all bedropped and bespeckled with houses, gardens, and plantations of the rich bourgeois, who have from thence a prospect of the city in the vale below on one hand, on the other the rich plains of the Lyonnois, with the rivers winding among them, and the Alps, with the mountains of Dauphine, to bound the view.

All yesterday morning we were busied in climbing up Mount Fourviere, where the ancient city stood perched at such a height, that nothing but the hopes of gain could certainly ever persuade their neighbors to pay them a visit. Here are the ruins of the emperors' palaces, that resided here, that is to say, Augustus and Severus; they consist in nothing but great masses of old wall, that have only their quality to make them respected. In a vineyard of the Minims are remains of a theater; the Fathers, whom they belong to, hold them in no esteem at all, and would have showed us their sacristy

and chapel instead of them. The Ursuline Nuns have in their garden some Roman baths, but we having the misfortune to be men, they did not think proper to admit us.

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Hard by are eight arches of a most magnificent aqueduct, said to be erected by Antony, when his legions were quartered here. There are many other parts of it dispersed up and down the country, for it brought the water from a river many leagues off in La Forez. Here are remains too of Agrippa's seven great roads which met at Lyons; in some places they lie twelve feet deep in the ground.

MARSEILLES[A]

[Footnote A: From "Pictures from Italy," written in 1844]

BY CHARLES DICKENS

So we went on, until eleven at night, when we halted at the town of Aix (within two stages of Marseilles) to sleep. The hotel, with all the blinds and shutters closed to keep the light and heat out, was comfortable and airy next morning, and the town was very clean; but so hot, and so intensely light, that when I walked out at noon it was like coming suddenly from the darkened room into crisp blue fire. The air was so very clear, that distant hills and rocky points appeared within an hour's walk; while the town immediately at hand—with a kind of blue wind between me and it—seemed to be white hot, and to be throwing off a fiery air from its surface.

We left this town toward evening, and took the road to Marseilles. A dusty road it was; the houses shut up close; and the vines powdered white. At nearly all the cottage doors, women were peeling and slicing onions into earthen bowls for supper. So they had been doing last night all the way from Avignon. We passed one or two shady dark chateaux, surrounded by trees, and embellished with cool basins of water: which were the more refreshing to behold, from the great scarcity of such residences on the road we had traveled.

As we approached Marseilles, the road began to be covered with holiday people. Outside the public-houses were parties smoking, drinking, playing draughts and cards, and (once) dancing. But dust, dust, dust, everywhere. We went on, through a long, straggling, dirty suburb, thronged with people; having on our left a dreary slope of land, on which the country-houses of the Marseilles merchants, always staring white, are jumbled and heaped without the slightest order; backs, fronts, sides, and gables toward all points of the compass; until, at last, we entered the town.

I was there, twice, or thrice afterward, in fair weather and foul; and I am afraid there is no doubt that it is a dirty and disagreeable place. But the prospect, from the fortified heights, of the beautiful Mediterranean, with, its lovely rocks and islands, is most delightful. These heights are a desirable retreat, for less picturesque reasons—as an escape from a compound of vile smells perpetually arising from a great harbor full of

stagnant water, and befouled by the refuse of innumerable ships with all sorts of cargoes, which, in hot weather, is dreadful in the last degree.

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There were foreign sailors, of all nations, in the streets; with red shirts, blue shirts, buff shirts, tawny shirts, and shirts of orange color; with red caps, blue caps, green caps, great beards, and no beards; in Turkish turbans, glazed English hats, and Neapolitan headdresses. There were the townspeople sitting in clusters on the pavement, or airing themselves on the tops of their houses, or walking up and down the closest and least airy of boulevards; and there were crowds of fierce-looking people of the lower sort, blocking up the way, constantly.

In the very heart of all this stir and uproar, was the common madhouse; a low, contracted, miserable building, looking straight upon the street, without the smallest screen or courtyard; where chattering madmen and mad-women were peeping out, through rusty bars, at the staring faces below, while the sun, darting fiercely aslant into their little cells, seemed to dry up their brains, and worry them, as if they were baited by a pack of dogs.

We were pretty well accommodated at the Hotel du Paradis, situated in a narrow street of very high houses, with a hairdresser's shop opposite, exhibiting in one of its windows two full-length waxen ladies, twirling around and around: which so enchanted the hairdresser himself, that he and his family sat in armchairs, and in cool undresses, on the pavement outside, enjoying the gratification of the passers-by, with lazy dignity. The family had retired to rest when we went to bed, at midnight; but the hairdresser (a corpulent man, in drab slippers) was still sitting there, with his legs stretched out before him, and evidently couldn't bear to have the shutters put up.

Next day we went down to the harbor, where the sailors of all nations were discharging and taking in cargoes of all kinds: fruits, wines, oils, silks, stuffs, velvets, and every manner of merchandise. Taking one of a great number of lively little boats with gay-striped awnings, we rowed away, under the sterns of great ships, under tow-ropes and cables, against and among other boats, and very much too near the sides of vessels that were faint with oranges, to the "Marie Antoinette," a handsome steamer bound for Genoa, lying near the mouth of the harbor.

By and by, the carriage, that unwieldy "trifle from the Pantechnicon," on a flat barge, bumping against everything, and giving occasion for a prodigious quantity of oaths and grimaces, came stupidly alongside; and by five o'clock we were steaming out in the open sea. The vessel was beautifully clean; the meals were served under an awning on deck; the night was calm and clear; the quiet beauty of the sea and sky unspeakable.

THE LITTLE REPUBLIC OF ANDORRA[A]

[Footnote A: From "Castles and Chateaux of Old Navarre." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, L.C. Page & Co. Copyright, 1907.]

BY FRANCIS MILTOUN

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The little republic of Andorra, hidden away in the fastnesses of the Pyrenees between France and Spain, its allegiance divided between the bishop of Urgel in Spain and the French government, is a relic of medievalism which will probably never fall before the swift advance of twentieth century ideas of progress. At least it will never be overrun by automobiles.

From French or Spanish territory this little unknown land is to be reached by what is called a "wagon-way," but the road is so bad that the sure-footed little donkeys of the Pyrenees are by far the best means of locomotion, unless one would go up on foot, a matter of twenty kilometers or more from Hospitalet in Spanish or Porte in French territory.

The political status of Andorra is most peculiar, but since it has endured without interruption (and this in spite of wars and rumors of wars), for six centuries, it seems to be all that is necessary.

A relic of the Middle Ages, Andorra-Viella, the city, and its six thousand inhabitants live in their lonesome retirement much as they did in feudal times, except for the fact that an occasional newspaper smuggled in from France or Spain gives a new topic of conversation.

This paternal governmental arrangement which cares for the welfare of the people of Andorra, the city and the province, is the outcome of a treaty signed by Pierre d'Urg and Roger-Bernhard, the third Comte de Foix, giving each other reciprocal rights. There's nothing very strange about this; it was common custom in the Middle Ages for lay and ecclesiastical seigneurs to make such compacts, but the marvel is that it has endured so well with governments rising and falling all about, and grafters and pretenders and dictators ruling every bailiwick in which they can get a foot-hold. Feudal government may have had some bad features, but certainly the republics and democracies of to-day, to say nothing of absolute monarchies, have some, too.

The ways of access between France and Andorra are numerous enough; but of the eight only two—and those not all the way—are really practicable for wheeled traffic. The others are mere trails, or mule-paths.

The people of Andorra, as might be inferred, are all ardent Catholics; and for a tiny country like this to have a religious seminary, as that at Urgel, is remarkable of itself.

Public instruction is of late making headway, but half a century ago the shepherd and laboring population—perhaps nine-tenths of the whole—had little learning or indeed need for it. Their manners and customs are simple and severe and little has changed in modern life from that of their great-great-grandfathers. Each family has a sort of a chief or official head, and the eldest son always looks for a wife among the families of his own class. Seldom, if ever, does the married son quit the paternal roof, so large

households are the rule. In a family where there are only girls, the eldest is the heir, and she may only marry with a cadet of another family by his joining his name with hers. Perhaps it is this that originally set the fashion for hyphenated names.

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The Andorrans are generally robust and well built; the maladies of more populous regions are practically unknown among them. This speaks much for the simple life! Costumes and dress are rough and simple and of heavy woollens, clipt from the sheep and woven on the spot. Public officers, the few representatives of officialdom who exist, alone make any pretense at following the fashions. The women occupy a very subordinate position in public affairs. They may not be present at receptions and functions and not even at mass when it is said by the bishop. Crime is infrequent, and simple, light punishments alone are inflicted. Things are not so uncivilized in Andorra as one might think!

In need all men may be called upon to serve as soldiers, and each head of a family must have a rifle and ball at hand at all times. In other words, he must be able to protect himself against marauders. This does away with the necessity of a large standing police force.

Commerce and industry are free of all taxation in Andorra, and customs dues apply on but few articles. For this reason there is not a very heavy tax on a people who are mostly cultivators and graziers. There is little manufacturing industry, as might be supposed, and what is made—save by hand and in single examples—is of the most simple character. “Made in Germany” or “Tabrique en Belgique” are the marks one sees on most of the common manufactured articles.

The Andorrans are a simple, proud, gullible people, who live to-day in the past, of the past and for the past; “Les vallees et souverainetes de l’Andorre” are to them to-day just what they always were—a little world of their own.

GAVARNIE[A]

[Footnote A: From “A Tour Through the Pyrenees.” By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, Henry Holt & Co. Copyright, 1873.]

BY HIPPOLYTE ADOLPHE TAINE

From Luz to Gavarnie is eighteen miles.

It is enjoined upon every living creature able to mount a horse, a mule, or any quadruped whatever, to visit Gavarnie; in default of other beasts, he should, putting aside all shame, bestride an ass. Ladies and convalescents are there in sedan-chairs.

Otherwise, think what a figure you will make on your return.

“You come from the Pyrenees; you’ve seen Gavarnie?”

“No.”

What then did you go to the Pyrenees for?

You hang your head, and your friend triumphs, especially if he was bored at Gavarnie.

You undergo a description of Gavarnie after the last edition of the guide-book. Gavarnie is a sublime sight; tourists go sixty miles out of their way to see it; the Duchess d'Angouleme had herself carried to the furthest rocks. Lord Bute, when he saw it for the first time, cried: “If I were now at the extremity of India, and suspected the existence of what I see at this moment, I should immediately leave in order to enjoy and admire it!” You are overwhelmed with quotations and supercilious smiles; you are convinced of laziness, of dulness of mind, and, as certain English travelers say, of unesthetic insensibility.

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There are but two resources: to learn a description by heart, or to make the journey. I have made the journey, and am going to give the description.

We leave at six o'clock in the morning, by the road to Scia, in the fog, without seeing at first anything beyond confused forms of trees and rocks. At the end of a quarter of an hour, we hear along the pathway a noise of sharp cries drawing near; it was a funeral procession coming from Scia. Two men bore a small coffin under a white shroud; behind came four herdsmen in long cloaks and brown capuchons, silent, with bent heads; four women followed in black mantles. It was they who uttered those monotonous and piercing lamentations; one knew not if they were wailing or praying. They walked with long steps through the cold mist, without stopping or looking at any one, and were going to bury the poor body in the cemetery at Luz.

At Scia the road passes over a small bridge very high up, which commands another bridge, gray and abandoned. The double tier of arches bends gracefully over the blue torrent; meanwhile a pale light already floats in the diaphanous mist; a golden gauze undulates above the Gave; the aerial veil grows thin and will soon vanish.

Nothing can convey the idea of this light, so youthful, timid, and smiling, which glitters like the bluish wings of a dragon-fly that is pursued and is taken captive in a net of fog.

Beneath, the boiling water is engulfed in a narrow conduit and leaps like a mill-race. The column of foam, thirty feet high, falls with a furious din, and its glaucous waves, heaped together in the deep ravine, dash against each other and are broken upon a line of fallen rocks. Other enormous rocks, debris of the same mountain, hang above the road, their squared heads crowned with brambles for hair; ranged in impregnable line, they seem to watch the torments of the Gave, which their brothers hold beneath themselves crushed and subdued.

We turn a second bridge and enter the plain of Gedres, verdant and cultivated, where the hay is in cocks; they are harvesting; our horses walk between two hedges of hazel; we go along by orchards; but the mountain is ever near; the guide shows us a rock three times the height of a man, which, two years ago, rolled down and demolished a house.

We encounter several singular caravans: a band of young priests in black hats, black gloves, black cassocks tucked up, black stockings, very apparent, novices in horsemanship who bound at every step, like the Gave; a big, jolly, round man, in a sedan-chair, his hands crossed over his belly, who looks on us with a paternal air, and reads his newspaper; three ladies of sufficiently ripe age, very slender, very lean, very stiff, who, for dignity's sake, set their beasts on a trot as we draw near them. The cicisbeo is a bony cartilaginous gentleman, fixed perpendicularly on his saddle like a telegraph-pole. We hear a harsh clucking, as of a choked hen, and we recognize the English tongue.

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Beyond Gedres is a wild valley called Chaos, which is well named. After a quarter of an hour's journey there, the trees disappear, then the juniper and the box, and finally the moss. The Gave is no longer seen; all noises are hushed. It is a dead solitude peopled with wrecks. The avalanches of rocks and crushed flint have come down from the summit to the very bottom. The horrid tide, high and a quarter of a league in length, spreads out like waves its myriads of sterile stones, and the inclined sheet seems still to glide toward inundating the gorge. These stones are shattered and pulverized; their living fractures and thin, harsh points wound the eye; they are still bruising and crushing each other. Not a bush, not a spear of grass; the arid grayish train burns beneath a sun of brass; its debris are scorched to a dull hue, as in a furnace.

A hundred paces further on, the aspect of the valley becomes formidable. Troops of mammoths and mastadons in stone lie crouching over the eastern declivity, one above another, and heaped up over the whole slope. These colossal ridges shine with a tawny hue like iron rust; the most enormous of them drink the water of the river at their base. They look as if warming their bronzed skin in the sun, and sleep, turned over, stretched out on their side, resting in all attitudes, and always gigantic and frightful. Their deformed paws are curled up; their bodies half buried in the earth; their monstrous backs rest one upon another. When you enter into the midst of the prodigious band, the horizon disappears, the blocks rise fifty feet into the air; the road winds painfully among the overhanging masses; men and horses seem but dwarfs; these rusted edges mount in stages to the very summit, and the dark hanging army seems ready to fall on the human insects which come to trouble its sleep.

Once upon a time, the mountain, in a paroxysm of fever, shook its summits like a cathedral that is falling in. A few points resisted, and their embattled turrets are drawn out in line on the crest; but their layers are dislocated, their sides creviced, their points jagged. The whole shattered ridge totters. Beneath them the rock fails suddenly in a living and still bleeding wound. The splinters are lower down, strewn over the declivity. The tumbled rocks are sustained one upon another, and man to-day passes in safety amidst the disaster.

But what a day was that of the ruin: It is not very ancient, perhaps of the sixth century, and the year of the terrible earthquake told of by Gregory of Tours. If a man could without perishing have seen the summits split, totter and fall, the two seas of rock come bounding into the gorge, meet one another and grind each other amidst a shower of sparks, he would have looked upon the grandest spectacle ever seen by human eyes.

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On the west, a perpendicular mole, crannied like an old ruin, lifts itself straight up toward the sky. A leprosy of yellowish moss has incrustated its pores, and has clothed it all over with a sinister livery. This livid robe upon this parched stone has a splendid effect. Nothing is uglier than the chalky flints that are drawn from the quarry; just dug up, they seem cold and damp in their whitish shroud; they are not used to the sun; they make a contrast with the rest. But the rock that has lived in the air for ten thousand years, where the light has every day laid on and melted its metallic tints, is the friend of the sun, and carries its mantle upon its shoulders; it has no need of a garment of verdure; if it suffers from parasitic vegetations, it sticks them to its sides and imprints them with its colors. The threatening tones with which it clothes itself suits the free sky, the naked landscape, the powerful heat that environs it; it is alive like a plant; only it is of another age, one more severe and stronger than that in which we vegetate.

Gavarnie is a very ordinary village, commanding a view of the amphitheater we are come to see. After you have left it, it is still necessary to go three miles through a melancholy plain, half buried in sand by the winter inundations; the waters of the Gave are muddy and dull; a cold wind whistles from the amphitheater; the glaciers, strewn with mud and stones, are stuck to the declivity like patches of dirty plaster. The mountains are bald and ravined by cascades; black cones of scattered firs climb them like routed soldiers; a meager and wan turf wretchedly clothes their mutilated heads. The horses ford the Gave stumblingly, chilled by the water coming from the snows. In this wasted solitude you meet, all of a sudden, the most smiling parterre. A throng of the lovely iris crowds itself into the bed of a dried torrent; the sun stripes with rays of gold their velvety petals of tender blue; and the eye follows over the whole plain the folds of the rivulet of flowers.

We climb a last eminence, sown with iris and with stones. There is a hut where you breakfast and leave the horses. You arm yourself with a stout stick, and descend upon the glaciers of the amphitheater.

These glaciers are very ugly, very dirty, very uneven, very slippery; at every step you run the risk of falling, and if you fall, it is on sharp stones or into deep holes. They look very much like heaps of old plaster-work, and those who have admired them must have a stock of admiration for sale. The water has pierced them so that you walk upon bridges of snow. These bridges have the appearance of kitchen air-holes; the water is swallowed up in a very low archway, and, when you look closely, you get a distinct sight of a black hole.

After the glaciers we find a sloping esplanade; we climb for ten minutes bruising our feet upon fragments of sharp rock. Since leaving the hut we have not lifted our eyes, in order to restore for ourselves an unbroken sensation. Here at last we look.

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A wall of granite crowned with snow hollows itself before us in a gigantic amphitheater. This amphitheater is twelve hundred feet high, nearly three miles in circumference, three tiers of perpendicular walls, and in each tier thousands of steps. The valley ends there; the wall is a single block and impregnable. The other summits might fall, but its massive layers would not be moved. The mind is overwhelmed by the idea of a stability that can not be shaken and an assured eternity. There is the boundary of two countries and two races; this it is that Roland wanted to break, when with a sword-stroke he opened a breach in the summit. But the immense wound disappeared in the immensity of the unconquered wall. Three sheets of snow are spread out over the three tiers of layers.

The sun falls with all its force upon this virginal robe without being able to make it shine. It preserves its dead whiteness. All this grandeur is austere; the air is chilled beneath the noonday rays; great, damp shadows creep along the foot of the walls. It is the everlasting winter and the nakedness of the desert. The sole inhabitants are the cascades assembled to form the Gave. The streamlets of water come by thousands from the highest layer, leap from step to step, cross their stripes of foam, unite and fall by a dozen brooks that slide from the last layer in flaky streaks to lose themselves in the glaciers of the bottom.

The thirteenth cascade on the left is twelve hundred and sixty-six feet high. It falls slowly, like a dropping cloud, or the unfolding of a muslin veil; the air softens its fall; the eye follows complacently the graceful undulation of the beautiful airy veil. It glides the length of the rock, and seems to float rather than to fall. The sun shines, through its plume, with the softest and loveliest splendor. It reaches the bottom like a bouquet of slender waving feathers, and springs backward in a silver dust; the fresh and transparent mist swings about the rock it bathes, and its rebounding train mounts lightly along the courses. No stir in the air; no noise, no living creature in the solitude. You hear only the monotonous murmur of the cascades, resembling the rustle of the leaves that the wind stirs in the forest.

On our return, we seated ourselves at the door of the hut. It is a poor, squat little house, heavily supported upon thick walls; the knotty joists of the ceiling retain their bark. It is indeed necessary that it should be able to stand out alone against the snows of winter. You find everywhere the imprint of the terrible months it has gone through. Two dead fir-trees stand erect at the door. The garden, three feet square, is defended by enormous walls of piled-up slates. The low and black stable leaves neither foot-hold nor entry for the winds. A lean colt was seeking a little grass among the stones. A small bull, with surly air, looked at us out of the sides of his eyes; the animals, the trees and the site, wore a threatening or melancholy aspect. But in the clefts of a rock were growing some admirable buttercups, lustrous and splendid, which looked as if painted by a ray of sunshine.

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At the village we met our companions of the journey who had sat down there. The good tourists get fatigued, stop ordinarily at the inn, take a substantial dinner, have a chair brought to the door, and digest while looking at the amphitheater, which from there appears about as high as a house. After this they return, praising the sublime sight, and very glad that they have come to the Pyrenees.

VI

BELGIUM

BRUGES[A]

[Footnote A: From "Cities of Belgium."]

BY GRANT ALLEN

The Rhine constituted the great central waterway of medieval Europe; the Flemish towns were its ports and its manufacturing centers. They filled in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries much the same place that Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester, and Birmingham fill in the nineteenth. Many causes contributed to this result.

Flanders, half independent under its own counts, occupied a middle position, geographically and politically, between France and the Empire; it was comparatively free from the disastrous wars which desolated both these countries, and in particular it largely escaped the long smouldering quarrel between French and English, which so long retarded the development of the former. Its commercial towns, again, were not exposed on the open sea to the attacks of pirates or hostile fleets, but were safely ensconced in inland flats, reached by rivers or canals, almost inaccessible to maritime enemies. Similar conditions elsewhere early ensured peace and prosperity for Venice.

The canal system of Holland and Belgium began to be developed as early as the twelfth century (at first for drainage), and was one leading cause of the commercial importance of the Flemish cities in the fourteenth. In so flat a country, locks are all but unnecessary. The two towns which earliest rose to greatness in the Belgian area were thus Bruges and Ghent; they possess in the highest degree the combined advantages of easy access to the sea and comparative inland security.

Bruges, in particular, was one of the chief stations of the Hanseatic League, which formed an essentially commercial alliance for the mutual protection of the northern trading centers. By the fourteenth century Bruges had thus become in the north what Venice was in the south, the capital of commerce. Trading companies from all the

surrounding countries had their “factories” in the town, and every European king or prince of importance kept a resident minister accredited to the merchant republic.

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Some comprehension of the mercantile condition of Europe in general during the Middle Ages is necessary in order to understand the early importance and wealth of the Flemish cities. Southern Europe, and in particular Italy, was then still the seat of all higher civilization, more especially of the trade in manufactured articles and objects of luxury. Florence, Venice and Genoa ranked as the polished and learned cities of the world. Further east, again, Constantinople still remained in the hands of the Greek emperors, or, during the Crusades, of their Latin rivals. A brisk trade existed via the Mediterranean between Europe and India or the nearer East. This double stream of traffic ran along two main routes—one, by the Rhine, from Lombardy and Rome; the other, by sea, from Venice, Genoa, Florence, Constantinople, the Levant, and India.

On the other hand, France was still but a half civilized country, with few manufactures and little external trade; while England was an exporter of raw produce, chiefly wool, like Australia in our own time. The Hanseatic merchants of Cologne held the trade of London; those of Wisby and Luebeck governed that of the Baltic; Bruges, as head of the Hansea, was in close connection with all of these, as well as with Hull, York, Novgorod, and Bergen.

The position of the Flemish towns in the fourteenth century was thus not wholly unlike that of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston at the present day; they stood as intermediaries between the older civilized countries, like Italy or the Greek empire, and the newer producers of raw material, like England, North Germany, and the Baltic towns.

In a lost corner of the great lowland flat of Flanders, defended from the sea by an artificial dike, and at the point of intersection of an intricate network of canals and waterways, there arose in the early Middle Ages a trading town, known in Flemish as Brugge, in French as Bruges (that is to say, The Bridge), from a primitive structure that here crossed the river. A number of bridges now span the sluggish streams. All of them open in the middle to admit the passage of shipping.

Bruges stood originally on a little river, Reye, once navigable, now swallowed by canals; and the Reye flowed into the Zwin, long silted up, but then the safest harbor in the Low Countries. At first the capital of a petty Count, this land-locked internal harbor grew in time to be the Venice of the North, and to gather round its quays or at its haven of Damme, the ships and merchandise of all neighboring peoples. Already in 1200 it ranked as the central mart of the Hanseatic League.

It was the port of entry for English wool and Russian furs: the port of departure for Flemish broadcloths, laces, tapestries, and linens. Canals soon connected it with Ghent, Dunkirk, Sluys, Furnes and Ypres. Its nucleus lay in a little knot of buildings about the Grand Place and the Hotel de Ville, stretching out to the Cathedral and the Dyver; thence it spread on all sides till, in 1362, it filled the whole space within the

existing ramparts, now largely abandoned or given over to fields and gardens. It was the wealthiest town of Europe, outside Italy.

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The decline of the town was due partly to the break-up of the Hanseatic system; partly to the rise of English ports and manufacturing towns; but still more, and especially as compared with our Flemish cities, to the silting of the Zwin, and the want of adaption in its waterways to the needs of great ships and modern navigation. The old sea entrance to Bruges was through the Zwin, by way of Sluys and Kadzand; up that channel came the Venetian merchant fleet and the Flemish galleys, to the port of Damme. By 1470, it ceased to be navigable for large vessels.

The later canal is still open, but as it passes through what is now Dutch territory, it is little used; nor is it adapted to any save ships of comparatively small burden. Another canal, suitable for craft of 500 tons, leads through Belgian territory to Ostend; but few vessels now navigate it, and those for the most part only for local trade. The town has shrunk to half its former size, and has only a quarter of its medieval population.

The commercial decay of Bruges, however, has preserved its charm for the artist, the archeologist, and the tourist; its sleepy streets and unfrequented quays are among the most picturesque sights of bustling and industrial modern Belgium. The great private palaces, indeed, are almost all destroyed; but many public buildings remain, and the domestic architecture is quaint and pretty.

Bruges was the mother of arts in Flanders: Jan van Eyck lived here from 1428 to 1440. Memling, probably from 1477 till 1494. Caxton, the first English printer, lived as a merchant at Bruges, in the Domus Anglorum or English factory, from 1446 to 1476, and probably put in the press here the earliest English book printed, tho strong grounds have been adduced in favor of Cologne. Colard Mansion, the great printer of Bruges at that date, was one of the leaders in the art of typography....

The very tall square tower which faces you as you enter the Grand Place is the Belfry, the center and visible embodiment of the town of Bruges. The Grand Place itself was the forum and meeting place of the soldier citizens, who were called to arms by the chimes in the Belfry. The center of the place is therefore appropriately occupied by a colossal statue group, modern, of Pieter de Coninck and Jan Breidel, the leaders of the citizens of Bruges at the Battle of the Spurs before the walls of Courtrai in 1302, a conflict which secured the freedom of Flanders from the interference of the Kings of France. The group is by Devigne. The reliefs on the pedestal represent scenes from the battle and its antecedents.

The majestic Belfry itself represents the first beginnings of freedom in Bruges. Leave to erect such a bell-tower, both as a mark of independence and to summon the citizens to arms, was one of the first privileges which every Teutonic trading town desired to wring from its feudal lord. This brick tower, the pledge of municipal rights, was begun in 1291, to replace an earlier one of wood, and finished about a hundred years later; the octagon, in stone at the summit, which holds the bell, having been erected in 1393-96.

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It consists of three stories, the two lower of which are square and flanked by balconies with turrets; the windows below are of the simple early Gothic style, but show a later type of architecture in the octagon. The niche in the center contains the Virgin and Child, a group restored after being destroyed by the French revolutionists. Below it on either side are smaller figures holding escutcheons. From the balcony between these last, the laws and the rescripts of the counts were read aloud to the people assembled in the square.

The Belfry can be ascended by steps. Owing to the force of the wind, it leans slightly to the southeast. The view from the top is very extensive and striking. It embraces the greater part of the Plain of Flanders, with its towns and villages. The country, tho quite flat, looks beautiful when thus seen. In early times, however, the look-out from the summit was of practical use for purposes of observation, military or maritime. It commanded the river, the Zwin, and the sea approach by Sluys and Damme; the course of the various canals; and the roads to Ghent, Antwerp, Tournai, and Courtrai. The Belfry contains a famous set of chimes, the mechanism of which may be inspected by the visitor. He will have frequent opportunities of hearing the beautiful and mellow carillon, perhaps to excess. The existing bells date only from 1680: the mechanism from 1784.

A PEN PICTURE OF BRUGES[A]

[Footnote A: From "The Paris Sketch Book."]

BY WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

It is the quaintest and prettiest of all the quaint and pretty towns I have seen. A painter might spend months here, and wander from church to church, and admire old towers and pinnacles, tall gables, bright canals, and pretty little patches of green garden and moss-grown wall, that reflect in the clear quiet water. Before the inn-window is a garden, from which in the early morning issues a most wonderful odor of stocks and wallflowers; next comes a road with trees of admirable green; numbers of little children are playing in this road (the place is so clean that they may roll on it all day without soiling their pinafores), and on the other side of the trees are little old-fashioned, dumpy, whitewashed, red-tiled houses.

A poorer landscape to draw never was known, nor a pleasanter to see—the children especially, who are inordinately fat and rosy. Let it be remembered, too, that here we are out of the country of ugly women; the expression of the face is almost uniformly gentle and pleasing, and the figures of the women, wrapt in long black monk-like cloaks and hoods, very picturesque. No wonder there are so many children: the "Guide-book"

(omniscient Mr. Murray!) says there are fifteen thousand paupers in the town, and we know how such multiply.

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How the deuce do their children look so fat and rosy? By eating dirt-pies, I suppose. I saw a couple making a very nice savory one, and another employed in gravely sticking strips of stick betwixt the pebbles at the house-door, and so making for herself a stately garden. The men and women don't seem to have much more to do. There are a couple of tall chimneys at either suburb of the town, where no doubt manufactories are at work, but within the walls everybody seems decently idle.

We have been, of course, abroad to visit the lions. The tower in the Grand Place is very fine, and the bricks of which it is built do not yield a whit in color to the best stone. The great building round this tower is very like the pictures of the Ducal Palace at Venice; and there is a long market area, with columns down the middle, from which hung shreds of rather lean-looking meat, that would do wonders under the hands of Cattermole or Haghe.

In the tower there is a chime of bells that keep ringing perpetually. They not only play tunes of themselves, and every quarter of an hour, but an individual performs selections from popular operas on them at certain periods of the morning, afternoon, and evening. I have heard to-day "Suoni la Tromba," "Son Vergin Vezzosa," from the "Puritani," and other airs, and very badly they were played too; for such a great monster as a tower-bell can not be expected to imitate Madame Grisi or even Signor Lablache. Other churches indulge in the same amusement, so that one may come here and live in melody all day or night, like the young woman in Moore's "Lalla Rookh."

In the matter of art, the chief attractions of Bruges are the pictures of Memling, that are to be seen in the churches, the hospital, and the picture-gallery of the place. There are no more pictures of Rubens to be seen, and, indeed, in the course of a fortnight, one has had quite enough of the great man and his magnificent, swaggering canvases. What a difference is here with simple Memling and the extraordinary creations of his pencil! The hospital is particularly rich in them; and the legend there is that the painter, who had served Charles the Bold in his war against the Swiss, and his last battle and defeat, wandered back wounded and penniless to Bruges, and here found cure and shelter.

This hospital is a noble and curious sight. The great hall is almost as it was in the twelfth century; it is spanned by Saxon arches, and lighted by a multiplicity of Gothic windows of all sizes; it is very lofty, clean, and perfectly well ventilated; a screen runs across the middle of the room, to divide the male from the female patients, and we were taken to examine each ward, where the poor people seemed happier than possibly they would have been in health and starvation without it.

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Great yellow blankets were on the iron beds, the linen was scrupulously clean, glittering pewter-jugs and goblets stood by the side of each patient, and they were provided with godly books (to judge from the building), in which several were reading at leisure. Honest old comfortable nuns, in queer dresses of blue, black, white, and flannel, were bustling through the room, attending to the wants of the sick. I saw about a dozen of these kind women's faces; one was young,—all were healthy and cheerful. One came with bare blue arms and a great pile of linen from an out-house—such a grange as Cedric the Saxon might have given to a guest for the night. A couple were in a laboratory, a tall, bright, clean room, 500 years old at least.

"We saw you were not very religious," said one of the old ladies, with a red, wrinkled, good-humored face, "by your behavior yesterday in chapel."

And yet we did not laugh and talk as we used at college, but were profoundly affected by the scene that we saw there. It was a fete-day; a work of Mozart was sung in the evening—not well sung, and yet so exquisitely tender and melodious, that it brought tears into our eyes. There were not above twenty people in the church; all, save three or four, were women in long black cloaks. I took them for nuns at first. They were, however, the common people of the town, very poor indeed, doubtless, for the priest's box that was brought round was not added to by most of them, and their contributions were but two-cent pieces—five of these go to a penny; but we know the value of such, and can tell the exact worth of a poor woman's mite!

The box-bearer did not seem at first willing to accept our donation—we were strangers and heretics; however, I held out my hand, and he came perforce as it were. Indeed it had only a franc in it; but "que voulez vous?" I had been drinking a bottle of Rhine wine that day, and how was I to afford more? The Rhine wine is dear in this country, and costs four francs a bottle.

Well, the service proceeded. Twenty poor women, two Englishmen, four ragged beggars, cowering on the steps; and there was the priest at the altar, in a great robe of gold and damask, two little boys in white surplices serving him, holding his robe as he rose and bowed, and the money-gatherer swinging his censer, and filling the little chapel with smoke.

The music pealed with wonderful sweetness; you could see the prim white heads of the nuns in their gallery. The evening light streamed down upon old statues of saints and carved brown stalls, and lighted up the head of the golden-haired Magdalen in a picture of the entombment of Christ. Over the gallery, and, as it were, a kind protectress to the poor below, stood the statue of the Virgin.

GHENT[A]

[Footnote A: From “Cities of Belgium.”]

BY GRANT ALLEN

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Flanders owes everything to its water communications. At the junction of the Schelde with the Lys and Lei, there grew up in the very early Middle Ages a trading town, named Gent in Flemish, and Gand in French, but commonly Anglicized as Ghent. It lay on a close network of rivers and canals, formed partly by these two main streams, and partly by the minor channels of the Lieve and the Moere, which together intersect it into several islands.

Such a tangle of inland waterways, giving access to the sea and to Bruges, Courtrai, and Tournai, as well as less directly to Antwerp and Brussels, ensured the rising town in early times considerable importance. It formed the center of a radiating commerce. Westward, its main relations were with London and English wool ports; eastward with Cologne, Maastricht, the Rhine towns, and Italy.

Ghent was always the capital of East Flanders, as Bruges or Ypres were of the Western province; and after the Counts lost possession of Arras and Artois, it became in the thirteenth century their principal residence and the metropolis of the country....

Early in the fourteenth century, the burghers of Ghent, under their democratic chief, Jacob or Jacques Van Artevelde, attained practical independence. Till 1322, the counts and people of Flanders had been united in their resistance to the claims of France; but with the accession of Count Louis of Nevers, the aspect of affairs changed. Louis was French by education, sympathies, and interests, and aristocratic by nature; he sought to curtail the liberties of the Flemish towns, and to make himself despotic. The wealthy and populous burgher republics resisted and in 1337 Van Artevelde was appointed Captain of Ghent. Louis fled to France and asked the aid of Philip of Valois.

Thereupon, Van Artevelde made himself the ally of Edward III. of England, then beginning his war with France; but as the Flemings did not like entirely to cast off their allegiance—a thing repugnant to medieval sentiment—Van Artevelde persuaded Edward to put forward his trumped-up claim to the crown of France, and thus induced the towns to transfer their fealty from Philip to his English rival. It was therefore in his character as King of France that Edward came to Flanders. The alliance thus formed between the great producer of raw wool, England, and the great manufacturer of woollen goods, Ghent, proved of immense importance to both parties.

But as Count Louis sided with Philip of Valois, the breach between the democracy of Ghent and its nominal sovereign now became impassable. Van Artevelde held supreme power in Ghent and Flanders for nine years—the golden age of Flemish commerce—and was treated on equal terms by Edward, who stopt at Ghent as his guest for considerable periods. But he was opposed by a portion of the citizens, and his suggestion that the Black Prince, son of Edward III., should be elected Count of Flanders, proved so unpopular with his enemies that he was assassinated by one of them, Gerald Denys. The town and states immediately repudiated the murder; and the alliance which Van Artevelde had brought about still continued. It had far-reaching

results; the woolen industry was introduced by Edward into the Eastern Counties of England, and Ghent had risen meanwhile to be the chief manufacturing city of Europe.

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The quarrel between the democratic weavers and their exiled counts was still carried on by Philip van Artevelde, the son of Jacques, and godson of Queen Philippa of England, herself a Hainaulter. Under his rule, the town continued to increase in wealth and population. But the general tendency of later medieval Europe toward centralized despotisms as against urban republics was too strong in the end for free Ghent. In 1381, Philip was appointed dictator by the democratic party, in the war against the Count, son of his father's opponent, whom he repelled with great slaughter in a battle near Bruges.

He then made himself Regent of Flanders. But Count Louis obtained the aid of Charles VI. of France, and defeated and killed Philip van Artevelde at the disastrous battle of Roosebeke in 1382. That was practically the end of local freedom in Flanders. Tho the cities continued to revolt against their sovereigns from time to time, they were obliged to submit for the most part to their Count and to the Burgundian princes who inherited from him by marriage.

The subsequent history of Ghent is that of the capital of the Burgundian Dukes, and of the House of Austria. Here the German king, Maximilian, afterward Emperor, married Mary of Burgundy, the heiress of the Netherlands; and here Charles V. was born in the palace of the Counts. It was his principal residence, and he was essentially a Fleming....

The real interest of the Cathedral centers, not in St. Bavon, nor in his picture by Rubens, but in the great polyptych of the Adoration of the Lamb, the masterpiece of Jan van Eyck and his brother Hubert, which forms in a certain sense the point of departure for the native art of the Netherlands....

Stand before the west front at a little distance, to examine the simple but massive architecture of the tower and facade. The great portal has been robbed of the statues which once adorned its niches. Three have been "restored"; they represent, center, the Savior; at the left, the patron, St. Bavon, recognizable by his falcon, his sword as duke, and his book as monk; he wears armor, with a ducal robe and cap above it; at the right, St. John the Baptist, the earlier patron.

Then, walk to the right, round the south side, to observe the external architecture of the nave, aisles and choir. The latter has the characteristic rounded or apsidal termination of Continental Gothic, whereas English Gothic usually has a square end. Enter by the south portal.

The interior, with single aisles and short transepts (Early Gothic) is striking for its simple dignity, its massive pillars, and its high arches, tho the undeniably noble effect of the whole is somewhat marred to English eyes by the unusual appearance of the unadorned brick walls and vaulting. The pulpit, by Delvaux (1745), partly in oak, partly in marble, represents Truth revealing the Christian Faith to astonished Paganism,

figured as an old and outworn man. It is a model of all that should be avoided in plastic or religious art. The screen which separates the choir from the transepts is equally unfortunate. The apsidal end of the Choir, however, with its fine modern stained glass, forms a very pleasing feature in the general coup d'oeil....

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The sixth chapel (of the Vydt's family) contains the famous altar piece of the Adoration of the Lamb, by Hubert and Jan van Eyck, to study which is the chief object of a visit to Ghent. See it more than once, and examine it carefully. Ask the sacristan to let you sit before it for some time in quiet or he will hurry you on. You must observe it in close detail. Taking it in its entirety, then, the altar-piece, when opened, is a great mystical poem of the Eucharist and the Sacrifice of the Lamb, with the Christian folk, both Church and World, adoring. The composition contains over 200 figures. Many of them, which I have not here identified, can be detected by a closer inspection, which, however, I will leave to the reader.

Now, ask the sacristan to shut the wings. They are painted on the outer side (all a copy) mainly in grisaille, or in very low tones of color, as is usual in such cases, so as to allow the jewel-like brilliancy of the internal picture to burst upon the observer the moment the altar-piece is opened.

Old Ghent occupied for the most part the island which extends from the Palais de Justice on one side to the Botanical Gardens on the other. This island, bounded by the Lys, the Schelde, and an ancient canal, includes almost all the principal buildings of the town, such as the Cathedral, St. Nicholas, the Hotel-de-Ville, the Belfry, and St. Jacques, as well as the chief Places, such as the Marche aux Grains, the Marche aux Herbes, and the Marche du Vendredi. It also extends beyond the Lys to the little island on which is situated the church of St. Michael, and again to the islet formed between the Lieve and the Lys, which contains the chateau of the Counts and the Palace *Ste. Pharaïlde*.

In the later middle ages, however, the town had spread to nearly its existing extreme dimensions, and was probably more populous than at the present moment. But its ancient fortifications have been destroyed and their place has been taken by boulevards and canals. The line may still be traced on the map, or walked round through a series of shipping suburbs; but it is uninteresting to follow, a great part of its course lying through the more squalid portions of the town. The only remaining gate is that known as the Rabot (1489), a very interesting and picturesque object situated in a particularly slummy quarter.

Bruges is full of memories of the Burgundian Princes. At Ghent it is the personality of Charles V., the great emperor who cumulated in his own person the sovereignties of Germany, the Low Countries, Spain and Burgundy, that meets us afresh at every turn. He was born here in 1500 and baptized in a font, otherwise uninteresting, which still stands in the north transept of the Cathedral. Ghent was really, for the greater part of his life, his practical capital, and he never ceased to be at heart a Ghenter.

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That did not prevent the citizens from unjustly rebelling against him in 1540, after the suppression of which revolt Charles is said to have ascended the cathedral tower, while the executioner was putting to death the ringleaders in the rebellion, in order to choose with his brother Ferdinand the site for the citadel he intended to erect, to overawe the freedom loving city. He chose the Monastery of St. Bavon as its site, and, as we have seen, built there his colossal fortress, now wholly demolished. The palace in which he was born and which he inhabited frequently during life, was known as the Cour du Prince. It stood near the Ancient Grand Beguinage, but only its name now survives in that of a street.

BRUSSELS[A]

[Footnote A: From "The Belgians at Home." Published by Little, Brown & Co.]

BY CLIVE HOLLAND

The great commercial and material prosperity of the place dates from the commencement of the rule of the House of Burgundy. It was then, in the fifteenth century, that the most beautiful of its many fine buildings were erected. The Church of St. Michael and St. Gudule has its great nave and towers dating from this period; the Hotel de Ville, Notre Dame du Sablon, the Nassau Palace, the Palace of the Dukes of Brabant, and many other buildings were commenced then. Manufactures and commerce commenced to flourish, while the liberties of the municipality were extended considerably.

It was undoubtedly under the rule of Charles V. that Brussels reached its zenith of ancient prosperity. Then, with the era of Philip II. of Spain, came a long period of bloodshed, persecution, and misery. The religious disputes and troubles afflicting the Netherlands had their effect upon the life, prosperity, and happiness of the Bruxellois. The whole country was running with blood, and ruin stalked through the land. But during this tragic period of Netherlands' history Brussels saw several glorious events, and did as a city more than one noble deed. It was in Brussels that the compromise of the nobles took place, after which those who were rebelling against the cruelties of the Inquisition were given the name of "Gueux," which had been bestowed upon them contemptuously by the Comte de Barlaimont.... It was Brussels which led the revolt against the most bloodthirsty of the rulers sent to the Netherlands by Spain, the Duke of Alva, and successfully resisted the imposition of the notorious "twentieth denier" tax which it was sought to impose upon it, a tax which led ultimately to the revolt of the whole of the Belgian provinces.

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Certainly this ancient capital of the Province of Brabant, containing nowadays with its suburbs a population of upward of 600,000, which has quadrupled in sixty years, has come to take its place among the most beautiful and charming capital cities of Europe. It is undoubtedly healthy, and there is an engaging air about Brussels which soon impresses itself upon the foreign visitor. Added to all its many attractions of interesting museums—the homes of wonderful and in some cases unrivaled collections of works of art—and of historical associations with the past, it possesses the charm of being modern in the best sense and of being a place where one may find much that is finest in art and music. As a home of fashion it bids fair some day to rival Paris herself, and the shops of the Montagne de la Cour, Boulevard Anspach, and contiguous streets are scarcely less luxurious or exclusive than those of the Rue de la Paix or Boulevard des Italiens in the French capital. Brussels is a city of shady boulevards, open spaces, and pleasant parks as is Paris; and the beautiful Bois de la Cambre on its outskirts compares very favorably with the world-renowned Bois de Boulogne as regards rural charm and picturesqueness.

One impression that Brussels is almost certain to make upon the visitor is its compactness. Its population, including the outskirts, is nowadays rather over 600,000; but it is almost impossible to realize that nearly one-eleventh of the whole population of Belgium is concentrated in this one city, or, as might be said, in Greater Brussels. Perhaps the real reason of this apparent lack of size is because there are in reality two cities, Brussels interior and Brussels exterior. The one with a population of about 225,000; the latter with one of about 375,000. It is with the former, of course, that the tourist and casual visitor are chiefly concerned.

The outlying suburbs are, however, connected with the city proper by a splendid system of steam, electric, and other trams. In fact, it may be said that Brussels is in a sense surrounded by a group of small towns, which tho forming part of the great city are yet independent, and are governed very much like the various boroughs which make up Greater London, Curhegem, St. Gilles, Ixelles, St. Josse, Ten Noodle, Molenbeek, St. Jean, and Schaerbeek, still further out, are all in a sense separate towns, seldom visited by, and indeed almost unknown to the tourist.

The most fashionable quarters for residences of the wealthy classes are the broad and beautiful Avenue Louise and the streets and avenues of the Quartier Leopold. They in a sense correspond to the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, Avenue des Champs Elysees, and Boulevard St. Germain of Paris. There is another feature, too, that modern Brussels has in common with Paris of the immediate past and of to-day. It is being “Hausmannized,” and the older and more quaint and interesting portions of the city, as has been and is the case in Paris, are gradually but surely disappearing to make way for the onward march of progress and expansion. Almost on every hand, and especially in the Porte de Namur Quarter, old buildings are constantly falling victims to the house-wrecker, and new, in the shape of handsome mansions and lofty blocks of flats, are arising from their ashes.

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The last thirty—even twenty—years have seen many changes. During that period the sluggish little River Senne, which once meandered through the city, and upon whose banks stood many fine and picturesque old houses and buildings of past ages, has been arched over, and the fine Boulevard of the same name, and those of Hainaut and Anspach, have been built above its imprisoned waters. The higher portions of the city are undeniably healthy, and the climate of Brussels is less subject to extreme changes than that of Paris. It is not unbearably cold in winter, and tho hot in summer, is not so, we think, airless as either Paris or London, a fact accounted for by reason of its many open spaces, its height above sea-level, and comparative nearness to the North Sea.

Of its fine buildings, none excels the Hotel de Ville, which is certainly one of the most interesting and beautiful buildings of its kind in Belgium. It is well placed on one of the finest medieval squares in Europe, and is surrounded by quaint and historic houses. On this Grande Place many tragedies have from time to time been enacted, and some of the most ferocious acts of the inhuman Alva performed. In the spring of the terrible year, 1568, no less than twenty-five Flemish nobles were executed here, and in the June of the same year the patriots Lamoral, Count Egmont, Philip de Montmorency, and Count Hoorn were put to death. This atrocious deed is commemorated by a fountain with statues of the heroes, placed in front of the Maison du Roi, from a window of which the Duke of Alva watched his orders carried out.

This most beautiful Hotel de Ville, with its late Gothic facade approaching the Renaissance period, nearly 200 feet in length, was commenced, according to a well-known authority, either in 1401 or 1402, the eastern wing, or left-hand portion as one faces it across the Place, having been the first part to be commenced, the western half of the facade not having been begun until 1444. The later additions formed the quadrangle.

The Cathedral at Brussels is dedicated jointly to *Ste. Gudule* and *St. Michael*. The former is one of the luckiest saints in that respect, as probably but for this dedication, she would have remained among the many rather obscure saints of the early periods of Christianity.

It is to this church that most visitors to Brussels first wend their way after visiting the Grande Place and its delightful Flower Market, which is gay with blossoms on most days of the week all the year round. The natural situation of the church is a fine one, which was made the most of by its architects and builders of long ago. Standing, as it does, on the side of a hill reached from the Grande Place by the fine Rue de la Montagne and short, steep Rue *Ste. Gudule*, it overlooks the city with its two fine twin western towers dominating the neighboring streets. These towers have appeared to us when viewed up the Rue *Ste. Gudule* and other streets leading up from the lower town to the church, generally to be veiled by a mystic gray or ambient haze, and to gain much in impressiveness and grandeur from the coup d'oeil one obtains of them framed, as it were, in the end of the rising street.

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WATERLOO[A]

[Footnote A: From "Les Miserables." Translated by Lascelles Wraxall.]

BY VICTOR HUGO

The battle of Waterloo is an enigma as obscure for those who gained it as for him who lost it. To Napoleon it is a panic; Bluecher sees nothing in it but fire; Wellington does not understand it at all. Look at the reports; the bulletins are confused; the commentaries are entangled; the latter stammer, the former stutter.

Jomini divides the battle of Waterloo into four moments; Muffling cuts it into three acts; Charras, altho we do not entirely agree with him in all his appreciations, has alone caught with his haughty eye the characteristic lineaments of this catastrophe of human genius contending with divine chance. All the other historians suffer from a certain bedazzlement in which they grope about. It was a flashing day, in truth the overthrow of the military monarchy which, to the great stupor of the kings, has dragged down all kingdoms, the downfall of strength and the rout of war....

In this event, which bears the stamp of superhuman necessity, men play but a small part; but if we take Waterloo from Wellington and Bluecher, does that deprive England and Germany of anything? No. Neither illustrious England nor august Germany is in question in the problem of Waterloo, for, thank heaven! nations are great without the mournful achievements of the sword. Neither Germany, nor England, nor France is held in a scabbard; at this day when Waterloo is only a clash of sabers, Germany has Goethe above Bluecher, and England has Byron above Wellington. A mighty dawn of ideas is peculiar to our age; and in this dawn England and Germany have their own magnificent flash. They are majestic because they think; the high level they bring to civilization is intrinsic to them; it comes from themselves, and not from an accident. Any aggrandizement the nineteenth century may have can not boast of Waterloo as its fountainhead; for only barbarous nations grow suddenly after a victory—it is the transient vanity of torrents swollen by a storm. Civilized nations, especially at the present day, are not elevated or debased by the good or evil fortune of a captain, and their specific weight in the human family results from something more than a battle. Their honor, dignity, enlightenment, and genius are not numbers which those gamblers, heroes and conquerors, can stake in the lottery of battles. Very often a battle lost is progress gained, and less of glory, more of liberty. The drummer is silent and reason speaks; it is the game of who loses wins. Let us, then, speak of Waterloo coldly from both sides, and render to chance the things that belong to chance, and to God what is God's. What is Waterloo—a victory? No; a prize in the lottery, won by Europe, and paid by France; it was hardly worth while erecting a lion for it.

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Waterloo is the strangest encounter recorded in history; Napoleon and Wellington are not enemies, but contraries. Never did God, who delights in antitheses, produce a more striking contrast, or a more extraordinary confrontation. On one side precision, foresight, geometry, prudence, a retreat assured, reserves prepared, an obstinate coolness, an imperturbable method, strategy profiting by the ground, tactics balancing battalions, carnage measured by a plumb-line, war regulated watch in hand, nothing left voluntarily to accident, old classic courage and absolute correctness.

On the other side we have intuition, divination, military strangeness, superhuman instinct, a flashing glance; something that gazes like the eagle and strikes like lightning, all the mysteries of a profound mind, associated with destiny; the river, the plain, the forest, and the hill summoned, and, to some extent, compelled to obey; the despot going so far as even to tyrannize over the battlefield; faith in a star, blended with a strategic science, heightening, but troubling it.

Wellington was the Bareme of war, Napoleon was its Michelangelo, and this true genius was conquered by calculation. On both sides somebody was expected; and it was the exact calculator who succeeded. Napoleon waited for Grouchy, who did not come; Wellington waited for Bluecher, and he came.

Wellington is the classical war taking its revenge; Bonaparte, in his dawn, had met it in Italy, and superbly defeated it—the old owl fled before the young vulture. The old tactics had been not only overthrown, but scandalized. Who was this Corsican of six-and-twenty years of age? What meant this splendid ignoramus, who, having everything against him, nothing for him, without provisions, ammunition, guns, shoes, almost without an army, with a handful of men against masses, dashed at allied Europe, and absurdly gained impossible victories? Who was this new comet of war who possess the effrontery of a planet?

The academic military school excommunicated him, while bolting, and hence arose an implacable rancor of the old Caesarism against the new, of the old saber against the flashing sword, and of the chessboard against genius. On June 18, 1815, this rancor got the best; and beneath Lodi, Montebello, Montenotte, Mantua, Marengo, and Arcola, it wrote—Waterloo. It was a triumph of mediocrity, sweet to majorities, and destiny consented to this irony. In his decline, Napoleon found a young Suvarov before him—in fact, it is only necessary to blanch Wellington's hair in order to have a Suvarov. Waterloo is a battle of the first class, gained by a captain of the second.

What must be admired in the battle of Waterloo is England, the English firmness, the English resolution, the English blood, and what England had really superb in it, is (without offense) herself; it is not her captain, but her army. Wellington, strangely ungrateful, declares in his dispatch to Lord Bathurst that his army, the one which fought on June 18, 1815, was a “detestable army.”

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What does the gloomy pile of bones buried in the trenches of Waterloo think of this? England has been too modest to herself in her treatment of Wellington, for making him so great is making herself small. Wellington is merely a hero, like any other man. The Scots Greys, the Life Guards, Maitland's and Mitchell's regiments, Pack's and Kempt's infantry, Ponsonby's and Somerset's cavalry, the Highlanders playing the bagpipes under the shower of canister, Ryland's battalions, the fresh recruits who could hardly manage a musket, and yet held their ground against the old bands of Essling and Rivoli—all this is grand.

Wellington was tenacious; that was his merit, and we do not deny it to him, but the lowest of his privates and his troopers was quite as solid as he, and the iron soldier is as good as the iron duke. For our part, all our glorification is offered to the English soldier, the English army, the English nation; and if there must be a trophy, it is to England that this trophy is owing. The Waterloo column would be more just, if, instead of the figure of a man, it raised to the clouds the statue of a people....

But this great England will be irritated by what we are writing here; for she still has feudal illusions, after her 1688 and the French 1789. This people believes in inheritance and hierarchy, and while no other excels it in power and glory, it esteems itself as a nation and not as a people. As a people, it readily subordinates itself, and takes a lord as its head; the workman lets himself be despised; the soldier puts up with flogging. It will be remembered that, at the battle of Inkerman, a sergeant who, as it appears, saved the British army, could not be mentioned by Lord Raglan, because the military hierarchy does not allow any hero below the rank of officer to be mentioned in dispatches. What we admire before all, in an encounter like Waterloo, is the prodigious skill of chance. The night raid, the wall of Hougomont, the hollow way of Ohain, Grouchy deaf to the cannon, Napoleon's guide deceiving him, Bulow's guide enlightening him—all this cataclysm is marvelously managed.

There is more of a massacre than of a battle in Waterloo. Waterloo, of all pitched battles, is the one which had the smallest front for such a number of combatants. Napoleon's three-quarters of a league. Wellington's half a league, and seventy-two thousand combatants on either side. From this density came the carnage. The following calculation has been made and proportion established: loss of men, at Austerlitz, French, fourteen per cent.; Russian, thirty per cent.; Austrian, forty-four per cent.; at Wagram, French, thirteen per cent.; Austrian, fourteen per cent.; at Moscow, French, thirty-seven per cent.; Russian, forty-four per cent.; at Bautzen, French, thirteen per cent.; Russian and Prussian, fourteen per cent.; at Waterloo, French, fifty-six per cent.; allies, thirty-one per cent.—total for Waterloo, forty-one per cent., or out of one hundred and forty-four thousand fighting men, sixty thousand killed.

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The field of Waterloo has at the present day that calmness which belongs to the earth, and resembles all plains; but at night, a sort of a visionary mist rises from it, and if any traveler walk about it, and listen and dream, like Virgil on the mournful plain of Philippi, the hallucination of the catastrophe seizes upon him. The frightful June 18th lives again, the false monumental hill is leveled, the wondrous lion is dissipated, the battlefield resumes its reality, lines of infantry undulate on the plain; furious galloping crosses the horizon; the startled dreamer sees the flash of sabers, the sparkle of bayonets, the red lights of shells, the monstrous collision of thunderbolts; he hears like a death groan from the tomb, the vague clamor of the fantom battle.

These shadows are grenadiers; these flashes are cuirassiers; this skeleton is Napoleon; this skeleton is Wellington: all this is non-existent, and yet still combats, and the ravines are stained purple, and the trees rustle, and there is fury even in the clouds and in the darkness, while all the stern heights, Mont St. Jean, Hougoumont, Frischemont, Papelotte, and Plancenoit, seem confusedly crowned by hosts of specters exterminating one another.

WATERLOO: A VISIT TO THE FIELD[A]

[Footnote A: From "Two Months Abroad." Privately printed. 1878.]

BY THE EDITOR

The French wished to call it the battle of Mont St. Jean, but Wellington said "The Battle of Waterloo." The victor's wish prevailed. I know not why, except because he was the victor. The scene of the battle is four miles from the village of Waterloo and, besides Mont St. Jean, several villages from any one of which it might well have been named, are included in the field. Before the battle, however, the village of Waterloo had been the headquarters of the Duke and there he rested for two days after the battle was won.

I am now on this memorable spot as the solitary guest of a small hotel at the base of the Lion's Mound, after having made a night of it in crossing from Aix-la-Chapelle to Brussels and thence, through a storm of mist and rain to the little station of Braine-l'Alleud, which is a good mile from the battlefield. The train reached Braine-l'Alleud long before daybreak. When the morn had really dawned, I left the little waiting room, a solitary loiterer, and set out to find the battleground. From the platform of the station the eye surveyed a wide, thickly populated but rural plain, and in one direction afar off, clearly set against the dark rain-dripping sky, rose in solemn majesty a mound of earth, bearing on its lofty summit an indistinct figure of a lion.

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A small rustic gate from the station led in the direction of the Mound. From necessity, I began a tramp through the rain alone, no conveyance being obtainable. The soil of Belgium here being alluvial, a little rain soon makes a great deal of mud and little rains at this season (January) are frequent. Along a small unpaved mud-deep road, having meanwhile been joined by a peasant with a two wheeled cart drawn by a single mule, I was soon hastening onward toward the Mound which was growing more and more visible on the horizon. The road soon turned away, however, but a path led toward the mound. The peasant took the road and I the path, which led into a little clump of houses, where were boys about their morning duties, and dogs that barked vigorously until one of the boys to whom I had spoken silenced them.

Passing onward through streets not more than six feet wide, along neatly trimmed hedges and past small cottage doorways, I soon entered an open plain, but in a crippled state with heavy mud-covered shoes. Mud fairly obliterated all trace of leather. With this burden, and wet to the skin with rain, there rose far ahead of me that historic mound, and at last I stood at its base alone, there in the midst of one of the greatest battlefields history records, soon to forget in the momentary joys of a beefsteak breakfast that man had ever done anything in this world except eat and drink.

I must borrow an illustration—Victor Hugo's letter A. The apex is Mount St. Jean, the right hand base La Belle Alliance, the left hand base Hougoumont, the cross bar that sunken road which perhaps changed the future of Europe, the two sides broad Belgian roads, paved with square stones and bordered with graceful and lofty poplar trees, their proud heads waving in every breeze that drifts across this undulating plain. The Lion's Mound is just below the middle of this cross bar. Mont St. Jean, La Belle Alliance and Hougoumont, at the three angles of the triangle, are small villages—scarcely more than hamlets. All were important points in the fortunes of that memorable 18th of June, 1815. Hougoumont, with its chateau and wall, in some sense was like a fortress.

Go with me if you will in imagination to the summit of the Lion's Mound. A flight of 225 stone steps will take us there, a toilsome ascent in this chilling air and this persistent rain. Toward Mont St. Jean, the surface of the ground is rolling, the waves of it high enough to conceal standing men from view. Except the lofty poplars at the road sides, there are no trees. An admirable place for an army on the defensive, you will at once say, since reserves can be concealed behind the convolutions of the rolling plain. These convolutions may also serve in the fight as natural fortifications.

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Here at Mont St. Jean, Wellington pitched his tent. Hougoumont lay far off in front of his center, and had that morning a small garrison. Napoleon, with his army, was a mile away, his line extending to the right and left beyond La Belle Alliance. We must turn squarely around as we stand alongside the lion if we are to see in the distance the ground he occupied. Our place is nearly in the center of the field. Hougoumont we realize to have been worthy of the prodigious struggle the French made to capture it. Half a fortress then, it provided an admirable stand for artillery. A few men might hold it against superior numbers.

At Waterloo the Duke had about 67,000 men—some accounts say 70,000—but many, perhaps 15,000, fled in desertion at an early hour of the day. With these figures correct, the fighting forces of the Allies later in the day, would remain little more than 55,000 men. The Emperor's army has usually been placed at 70,000. His soldiers were probably better trained than the Duke's and combined with long service an abundance of enthusiasm for their old general, now restored to his imperial throne and confident of victory.

The night before the battle had been wet and stormy, but the morning gave some promise of clearing; the sky, however, remained overcast and some rain continued to fall. The French were weary after a long march, and the artillery moved with difficulty across this wet and muddy plain. Altogether they were in poor condition for a battle, in which all their fortunes were at stake. It was just such a morning as ours, except that it was then June and is now January. If the battle began at 8 o'clock, as one account reads, we are here on the Lion's Mound at that same hour. Even if this be January, daisies are in blossom at our feet.

Jerome Bonaparte, leading the attack, moves on Hougoumont, where the Allies, who have come down from Mont St. Jean, repulse him. He renews the attack "with redoubled fury," and a gallant resistance is made, but he forces a way into the outer enclosure of the chateau that crowns the hill. British howitzers are at once discharged upon the French and compel them to retreat. New assaults are then made. Overwhelming numbers seem to bear down upon the Allies. The stronghold is more than once nearly lost, but it is defended with "prodigies of valor" and firmly held to the last. Had Hougoumont been taken, the result of the battle "would probably have been very different."

Meanwhile, the Emperor has ordered a second attack elsewhere—this time against the left wing of Wellington. Marshal Ney sends forward six divisions, who encounter the Netherlandish troops and easily scatter them. Two brigades of British numbering 3,000 men then prepare to check the advancing French. A struggle, brief but fierce, ensues, in which the French are repulsed. They rally again, however, and Scotch Highlanders, their bagpipes sounding the cry, advance against them, along with an English brigade. These make an impetuous assault, while cavalry charge Napoleon's infantry, and force

a part of them back on La Belle Alliance. But here the pursuing British meet with a check in a scene of wild carnage that sweeps over the field.

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We may look down upon the scene of that frightful struggle. It lies just below us. Grass is growing there luxuriantly now. A north wind sweeps over the plain. A mournful requiem seems to whistle through the poplar trees.

If we look toward Hougoumont, French gunners are seen to have been slain. Many cannon are silent. With the chateau in flames, confusion reigns. Napoleon, ordering a new cavalry attack, directs Jerome to advance with his infantry. Immediately the Allies discharge grape and canister on the advancing host. But no Frenchman wavers. On the contrary, the French cavalry capture Wellington's outward battalion and press onward toward his hollow squares of infantry. All efforts to break these squares end in failure. For a time the French abandon the attack, but only to renew it and then follows a remarkable scene. The French charge with unprecedented fury, and the squares are partially broken, while friends and enemies, wounded or killed, are mingled in inextricable confusion.

Some of the Belgian troops take flight and in mad terror run back to Brussels, causing great consternation there by reporting a defeat for Wellington. The squares maintain their ground to the end admirably, and with severe losses the French retire. Hougoumont near by, all this time was not silent. The attack being continued, the commander is killed and at last its heights are gained. From elsewhere in the field, Wellington learns of his loss, places himself at the head of a brigade, and commands it to charge. Amid the utmost enthusiasm of the Allies the French are driven back from Hougoumont.

Napoleon now turns his efforts against La Haye Sainte, a small height forward from Mont St. Jean, occupied by the enemy's left wing. Ney, in a furious cannonade, begins the attack, in which the Allies are overwhelmed and their ammunition is exhausted. Masters of this point, the French again move on Hougoumont. It is seven o'clock in the evening, with Napoleon in fair way to succeed, but his men are already exhausted and their losses are heavy. Some of them plunge into that famous sunken road, unheeded of him and them, and still so great a mystery to historians. It was a charging cavalry column that plunged in, unknowingly, rider and horse together, in indescribable confusion and dismay. We may see that road to-day, for we have walked in a part of it when coming across the plain from the station—a narrow road cut many feet deep, its bed paved with little stones. Hugo's words on that frightful scene are these:

"There was the ravine, unlooked for, yawning at the very feet of the horses, two fathoms deep between its double slope. The second rank pushed in the first, the third pushed in the second; the horses reared, threw themselves over, fell upon their backs, and struggled with their feet in the air, piling up and overturning their riders; no power to retreat; the whole column was nothing but a projectile. The force acquired to crush the English crushed the French. The inexorable ravine could not yield until it was filled; riders and horses rolled in together pell-mell, grinding each other, making common flesh in this

dreadful gulf, and when this grave was full of living men, the rest marched over them and passed on. Almost a third of the Dubois' brigade sank into this abyss."

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Two hours before this, Bluecher, with his Prussians, had appeared—Bluecher who was to turn the tide of battle. He had promised Wellington to be there. His soldiers had complained bitterly on the long march over muddy ground, but he told them his word as a soldier must be kept. From far beyond La Belle Alliance had Bluecher come, a cow boy showing him the way—a boy who, if he had not known the way, or had lied, might have saved Napoleon from St. Helena. The ground where Bluecher entered the field is just visible to us from the mound as with strained eyes, we peer through the morning mist. During Ney's attack, Bluecher opens fire on La Haye Sainte. By six o'clock he has forty-eight guns in action and some of the guns send shot as far as La Belle Alliance. As the conflict deepens, Napoleon's fortunes are seen to be obviously in grave, if not critical, danger, but he strengthens his right wing and again hazards Hougoumont. Eight battalions are sent forward, an outlying stronghold is captured, but more Prussians advance and threaten to regain the point.

At seven o'clock while Ney is renewing the attack on Hougoumont other Prussians appear. The real crisis being at hand, Napoleon resolves on a final, concentrated movement against the enemy's center. His soldiers being worn out and discouraged, he gives out a false report that reinforcements are at last coming—that Grouchy has not failed him. A furious cannonade opens this new attack, causing "frightful havoc" among the Allies. The Prince of Orange holds back the French on the very ground where the lion is now elevated, but falls wounded. Napoleon, in an address to the Imperial Guard, rouses them to great enthusiasm. For a half hour longer the French bear down on the enemy, but British gunners make gaps in their ranks. With his horse shot from under him, Ney goes forward on foot.

The Duke now takes personal command. He sends a shower of grape and cannister against a column of French veterans, but they never waver. Reserves, suddenly called for, pour a fierce charge against the advancing French, rending them asunder. The attack is closely followed up and the French are driven down the hill. Elsewhere in the field the battle still rages. Bluecher continues his attack on Napoleon's right and forces it back. Reduced to despair, Napoleon now gives his final and famous order: "Tout est perdu! Sauve qui peut." But the Young Guard resists Bluecher. Wellington, descending from his height, follows the retreating enemy as far as La Belle Alliance. At eight o'clock, after a most sanguinary struggle, the Young Guard yields. The success of Bluecher elsewhere completes the victory of the Allies.

One man will never surrender—Cambronne. Who was Cambronne? No one can tell you more than this—he was the man at Waterloo who would not surrender. "The Old Guard dies, but never surrenders." "Among those giants then," says Hugo, "there was one Titan—Cambronne. The man who won the battle of Waterloo was not Napoleon, put to rout; not Wellington, giving way at four o'clock, desperate at five; not Bluecher, who did not fight. The man who won the battle of Waterloo was Cambronne. To fulminate at the thunderbolt which kills you, is victory."

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As we look over this field from our height and try to realize what mighty fortunes were here at stake, we note that the mementoes of that day are few. A Corinthian column and an obelisk are seen at the roadside as memorials of the bravery of two officers. This Lion's Mound, two hundred feet high and made from earth piled up by cart loads, commemorates the place where a prince was wounded. Colossal in size, the lion was cast from French cannon captured in the fight. On this broad plain upward of 50,000 men, who had mothers, sisters, and wives at home, gave up their lives. Poplar trees sigh forth perpetually their funeral dirge. Grass grows where their blood was poured out. Modern Europe can show few scenes of more sublime tragedy. Our visiting day, with its chilling air and penetrating rain, has been a fit day for seeing Waterloo. The old woman who served me with breakfast spoke English easily. It was well—doubly well. No other language than English should be spoken on the field of Waterloo. I passed a few French words with the boy who called off the dogs, but was afterward sorry for having done so.

ANTWERP[A]

[Footnote A: From "The Cathedrals and Churches of Belgium." Published by James Pott & Co.]

BY T. FRANCIS BUMPUS

Byzantium—Venice—Antwerp, these are the centers around which the modern world has revolved, for we must include its commercial with its social progress, and with those interests which develop with society. Indeed, the development of the arts has always run concurrently with commerce. One could wish to add that the converse were equally true.

Antwerp—the city on the wharf—became famous at the beginning of the sixteenth century under the reign of the enterprising Charles V. "Antwerp was then truly a leading city in almost all things, but in commerce it headed all the cities of the world," says an old chronicler. Bruges, the great banking center yielded her position, and the Hanseatic merchants removed to the banks of the Scheldt. "I was astonished, and wondered much when I beheld Antwerp," wrote an envoy of the Italian Republic, "for I saw Venice outdone."

In what direction Venice was outdone is not recorded. Not in her architecture, at least; scarcely in her painting. We can not concede a Tintoretto for a Rubens. Yet, as Antwerp was the home of Matsys, of Rubens, Van Dyck, and the Teniers, the home also of Christopher Plantin, the great printer, her glory is not to be sought in trade alone. She is still remembered as a mother of art and letters, while her mercantile preeminence belongs to a buried past.

It must, however, be confessed that the fortunes of Antwerp as a city, prospering in its connection with the Hanseatic League, were anything but advantageous to the student of architectural history. Alterations and buildings were the order of the day, and so lavish were the means devoted to the work that scarcely a vestige of architecture in the remains is of earlier date than the fourteenth century.

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The grandly dimensioned churches raised in every parish afford ample evidence of the zeal and skill with which the work of reconstruction was prosecuted, and as specimens of the style of their day can not fail to elicit our admiration by the nobility of their proportions, so that in the monuments the wealthy burghers of Antwerp have left us we have perhaps no reason to regret their zeal. At the same time, one is tempted to wish that they had spared the works of earlier date by raising their new ones on fresh ground, instead of such wholesale demolition of the labors of preceding generations.

Notre Dame at Antwerp, the most spacious church in the Netherlands, originated in a chapel built for a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin. This chapel was reconstructed in 1124, when the canons of St. Michel, having ceded their church to the Praemonstratensians, removed hither. Two centuries later, the canons of St. Michel, animated by the prevailing spirit, determined on rebuilding their church on a more magnificent scale, and they commenced the work in 1352 by laying the foundations for a new choir. But slow progress was made with this great undertaking, more than two centuries and a half elapsing before the church assumed that form with which we are familiar to-day. In 1520, the chapter, dissatisfied with its choir, started upon the erection of a new one, the first stone of which was laid in the following year by the Emperor Charles V., accompanied by King Christian II. of Denmark and a numerous retinue.

The new plan included a crypt, partly above ground, probably like that we see in St. Paul's in the same town, and the work was progressing when, in 1533, a disastrous fire did such damage to the western parts of the church that the project of enlargement was suspended, and the funds destined for its employment were applied to restoring the damaged portions. Had the design been realized, the eastern limb of the church would have been doubled in size.

As regards its dimensions, Notre Dame at Antwerp is one of the most remarkable churches in Europe, being nearly 400 feet long by 170 feet in width across the nave, which, inclusive of that covered by the western towers, has seven bays, and three aisles on either side. This multiplication of aisles gives a vast intricacy and picturesqueness to the cross views of the interior; but there is a poverty of detail, and a want of harmony among the parts and of subordination and proportion, sadly destructive of true architectural effect; so that, notwithstanding its size, it looks much smaller internally than many of the French cathedrals of far less dimensions. If there had been ten bays in the nave instead of only seven, and the central division had been at least ten feet wider, which could easily have been spared from the outermost aisles, the apparent size of the church would have been much greater. The outermost south aisle is wider than the nave, and equal in breadth to the two inner aisles; the northernmost aisle is not quite so broad.

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The transepts have no aisles, but they are continued beyond the line of the nave aisles, so that they are more than usually elongated. The two inner aisles of the nave open into the transepts, but the outer ones, which, it should be remarked, are continuous, and not divided into a series of chapels, are walled up at their eastern extremities.

The choir consists of three bays, but has only one aisle on either side. This is continued round the apse, and five pentagonal chapels radiate from it. Three chapels flank the north aisle of the choir, the first two opening, as does the north transept, into one large chapel of the same breadth as the southernmost aisle of the nave.... The facade is flanked by towers equal in width to the two inner aisles of the nave. The northern one has alone been completed, and altho it may seem to a severe judgment to possess some of the defects of the late Flemish style, it is rivaled for beauty of outline only by the flamboyant steeples of Chartres and Vienna. As might be expected from its late age—it was not finished until 1530—this northwestern spire of Notre Dame at Antwerp exhibits some extravagances in design and detail, but the mode in which the octagonal lantern of openwork bisects the faces of the solid square portion with its alternate angles, thus breaking the outline without any harsh or disagreeable transition, is very masterly, while the bold pinnacles, with their flying buttresses, which group around it, produce a most pleasing variety, the whole serving to indicate the appearance the steeple of Malines would have presented had it been completed according to the original design.

If size were any real test of beauty, the interior of Notre Dame at Antwerp ought to be one of the finest in Belgium. Unfortunately, altho it was begun at a time when the pointed style had reached the full maturity of perfection, a colder and more unimpressive design than is here carried out it would be difficult to find. Still, notwithstanding the long period that elapsed between its commencement and completion, there is a congruity about the whole building which is eminently pleasing, and to some extent redeems the defects in its details and proportions, while the views afforded in various directions by the triple aisles on either side of the nave are undeniably picturesque.

The high altarpiece, placed on the chord of the apse, is a noble and sumptuous example of early Renaissance taste and workmanship, but like the stallwork, its dimensions are such as to diminish the scale of the choir, the five arches opening to the procession path being completely obscured by it. Of the numerous creations of Rubens' pencil none perhaps more thoroughly declares to us his comprehension of religious decorative art than the "Assumption" which fills the arched compartment in the lower portion of this altarpiece. It was finished in 1625, and, of twenty repetitions of the subject, is the only example still preserved at the place it was intended by the painter to occupy. In spirit we are reminded of Titian's "Assumption" in the cathedral at Verona, but Rubens' proves perhaps a higher conception of the subject. The work is seen a considerable way off, and every outline is bathed in light, so that the Virgin is elevated to dazzling glory with a power of accession scarcely, if ever, attained by any master.

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In the celebrated “Descent from the Cross,” which hangs in the south transept, the boldness of the composition, the energy in the characters, the striking attitudes and grouping, the glowing, vigorous coloring, are astonishing proofs of Rubens’ power. The circumstances which gave rise to this wondrous effort of art are interesting. It is said that Rubens, in laying the foundations of his villa near Antwerp, had unwittingly infringed on some ground belonging to the Company of Gunsmiths (arquebusiers). A law suit was threatened, and Rubens prepared to defend it, but, being assured by one of the greatest lawyers of the city that the right lay with his opponents, he immediately drew back, and offered to paint a picture by way of recompense. The offer was accepted, and the company required a representation of its patron saint, St. Christopher, to be placed in its chapel in the cathedral, which at that time Notre Dame was.

Rubens, with his usual liberality and magnificence, presented to his adversaries, not merely a single representation of the saint, but an elaborate illustration of his name—The Christ-bearer. The arquebusiers were at first disappointed not to have their saint represented in the usual manner, and Rubens was obliged to enter into an explanation of his work. Thus, without knowing it, they had received in exchange for a few feet of land a treasure which neither money nor lands can now purchase. The painting was executed by Rubens soon after his seven years’ residence in Italy, and while the impression made by the work of Titian and Paul Veronese were yet fresh in his mind. The great master appeared in the fulness of his glory in this work—it is one of the few which exhibits in combination all that nature had given him of warmth and imagination—with all that he acquired of knowledge, judgment and method, and in which he may be considered fully to have overcome the difficulties of a subject which becomes painful, and almost repulsive, when it ceases to be sublime.

VII

HOLLAND

HOW THE DUTCH OBTAINED THEIR LAND[A]

[Footnote A: From “Holland and Its People.” Translated by Caroline Tilton. By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, G.P. Putnam’s Sons. Copyright, 1880.]

BY EDMONDO DE AMICIS

The first time that I crossed the old Rhine, I had stopt on the bridge, asking myself whether that small and humble stream of water was really the same river that I had seen rushing in thunder over the rocks at Schaffhausen, spreading majestically before

Mayence, passing in triumph under the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, beating in sonorous cadence at the foot of the Seven Mountains; reflecting in its course Gothic cathedrals, princely castles, fertile hills, steep rocks, famous ruins, cities, groves, and gardens; everywhere covered with vessels of all sorts, and saluted with music and song; and thinking of these things, with my gaze fixt upon the little stream shut in between two flat and desert shores, I had repeated, "Is this that Rhine?"

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The vicissitudes which accompany the agony and death of this great river in Holland, are such as really to excite a sense of pity, such as is felt for the misfortunes and inglorious end of a people once powerful and happy. From the neighborhood of Emmerich, before reaching the Dutch frontier, it has lost all the beauty of its banks, and flows in great curves through vast and ugly flats, which seem to mark the approach to old age. At Millingen it runs entirely in the territory of Holland; a little farther on it divides. The main branch shamefully loses its name, and goes to throw itself into the Meuse: the other branch, insulted by the title of the Dannerden canal, flows nearly to the city of Arnhem, when it once more divides into two branches. One empties into the Gulf of Zuyder-Zee; the other still called, out of compassion, the Lower Rhine, goes as far as the village of Durstede, where it divides for the third time; a humiliation now of old date.

One of these branches, changing its name like a coward, throws itself into the Meuse near Rotterdam; the other still called the Rhine, but with the ridiculous surname of "curved," reaches Utrecht with difficulty, where for the fourth time it again divides; capricious as an old man in his dotage. One part, denying its old name, drags itself as far as Muiden, where it falls into the Zuyder-Zee; the other, with the name of Old Rhine, or simply the Old, flows slowly to the city of Leyden, whose streets it crosses almost without giving a sign of movement, and is finally gathered into one canal by which it goes to its miserable death in the North Sea.

But it is not many years since this pitiful end was denied it. From the year 839, in which a furious tempest had accumulated mountains of sand at its mouth, until the beginning of the present century, the Old Rhine lost itself in the sand before reaching the sea, and covered a vast tract of country with pools and marshes. Under the reign of Louis Bonaparte the waters were collected into a large canal protected by three enormous sluiceways, and from that time the Rhine flows directly to the sea. These sluices are the greatest monument in Holland and, perhaps, the most admirable hydraulic work in Europe.

The dikes which protect the mouth of the canal, the walls, pillars, and gates, present altogether the aspect of a Cyclopaean fortress, against which it seems that not only that sea, but the united forces of all seas, must break as against a granite mountain. When the tide rises the gates are closed to prevent the waters from invading the land; when the tide recedes they are opened to give passage to the waters of the Rhine which have accumulated behind them; and then a mass of three thousand cubic feet of water passes through them in one minute. On days when storms prevail, a concession is made to the sea, and the most advanced of the sluiceways is left open; and then the furious billows rush into the canal, like an enemy entering by a breach, but they break upon the formidable barrier of the second gate, behind which Holland stands and cries, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther!" That enormous fortification which, on a desert shore, defends a dying river and a fallen city from the ocean, has something of solemnity which commands respect and admiration....

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Napoleon said that it [Holland] was an alluvion of Trench rivers—the Rhine, the Scheldt, and the Meuse—and with this pretext he added it to the empire. One writer has defined it as a sort of transition between land and sea. Another, as an immense crust of earth floating on water. Others, an annex of the old continent, the China of Europe, the end of the earth, and the beginning of the ocean, a measureless raft of mud and sand; and Philip II. called it the country nearest to hell.

But they all agreed upon one point, and all express it in the same words:—Holland is a conquest made by man over the sea—it is an artificial country—the Hollanders made it—it exists because the Hollanders preserve it—it will vanish whenever the Hollanders shall abandon it.

To comprehend this truth, we must imagine Holland as it was when first inhabited by the first German tribes that wandered away in search of a country. It was almost uninhabitable. There were vast tempestuous lakes, like seas, touching one another; morass beside morass; one tract covered with brushwood after another; immense forests of pines, oaks, and alders, traversed by herds of wild horses; and so thick were these forests that tradition says one could travel leagues passing from tree to tree without ever putting foot to the ground. The deep bays and gulfs carried into the heart of the country the fury of the northern tempests. Some provinces disappeared once every year under the waters of the sea, and were nothing but muddy tracts, neither land nor water, where it was impossible either to walk or to sail. The large rivers, without sufficient inclination to descend to the sea, wandered here and there uncertain of their day, and slept in monstrous pools and ponds among the sands of the coasts. It was a sinister place, swept by furious winds, beaten by obstinate rains, veiled in a perpetual fog, where nothing was heard but the roar of the sea, and the voice of wild beasts and birds of the ocean.

Now, if we remember that such a region has become one of the most fertile, wealthiest and best regulated of the countries of the world, we shall understand the justice of the saying that Holland is a conquest made by man. But, it must be added, the conquest goes on forever.

To drain the lakes of the country the Hollanders prest the air into their service. The lakes, the marshes, were surrounded by dikes, the dikes by canals; and an army of windmills, putting in motion force-pumps, turned the water into the canals, which carried it off to the rivers and the sea. Thus vast tracts of land buried under the water, saw the sun, and were transformed, as if by magic, into fertile fields, covered with villages, and intersected by canals and roads. In the seventeenth century, in less than forty years, twenty-six lakes were drained. At the beginning of the present century, in North Holland alone, more than six thousand hectares, or fifteen thousand acres, were thus redeemed from the waters;

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in South Holland, before 1844, twenty-nine thousand hectares; in the whole of Holland, from 1500 to 1858, three hundred and fifty-five thousand hectares. Substituting steam-mills for windmills, in thirty-nine months was completed the great undertaking of the draining of the lake of Haarlem, which measured forty-four-kilometers in circumference, and for ever threatened with its tempests the cities of Haarlem, Amsterdam, and Leyden. And they are now meditating the prodigious work of drying up the Zuyder-Zee, which embraces an area of more than seven hundred square kilometers.

But the most tremendous struggle was the battle with the ocean. Holland is in great part lower than the level of the sea; consequently, everywhere that the coast is not defended by sand-banks, it has to be protected by dikes. If these interminable bulkwarks of earth, granite, and wood were not there to attest the indomitable courage and perseverance of the Hollanders, it would not be believed that the hand of man could, even in many centuries have accomplished such a work. In Zealand alone the dikes extend to a distance of more than four hundred kilometers. The western coast of the island of Walcheren is defended by a dike, in which it is computed that the expense of construction added to that of preservation, if it were put out at interest, would amount to a sum equal in value to that which the dike itself would be worth were it made of massive copper.

Around the city of Helder, at the northern extremity of North Holland, extends a dike ten kilometers long, constructed of masses of Norwegian granite, which descends more than sixty meters into the sea. The whole province of Friesland, for the length of eighty-eight kilometers, is defended by three rows of piles sustained by masses of Norwegian and German granite. Amsterdam, all the cities of the Zuyder Zee, and all the islands—fragments of vanished lands—which are strung like beads between Friesland and North Holland, are protected by dikes. From the mouths of the Ems to those of the Scheldt Holland is an impenetrable fortress, of whose immense bastions the mills are the towers, the cataracts are the gates, the islands the advanced forts; and like a true fortress, it shows to its enemy, the sea, only the tops of its bell-towers and the roofs of its houses, as if in defiance and derision.

Holland is a fortress, and her people live as in a fortress on a war-footing with the sea. An army of engineers, directed by the Minister of the Interior, spread over the country, and ordered like an army, continually spy the enemy, watch over the internal waters, foresee the bursting of the dikes, order and direct the defensive works. The expenses of the war are divided; one part to the State, one part to the provinces; every proprietor pays, besides the general imposts, a special impost for the dikes, in proportion to the extent of his lands and their proximity to the water. An accidental rupture, an inadvertence, may cause a flood; the peril is unceasing; the sentinels are at their posts upon the bulwarks at the first assault of the sea; they shout the war-cry, and Holland

sends men, material, and money. And even when there is not a great battle, a quiet, silent struggle is for ever going on.

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The innumerable mills, even in the drained districts, continue to work unresting, to absorb and turn into the canals the water that falls in rain and that which filters in from the sea.

But Holland has done more than defend herself against the waters; she has made herself mistress of them, and has used them for her own defense. Should a foreign army invade her territory, she has but to open her dikes and unchain the sea and the rivers, as she did against the Romans, against the Spaniards, against the army of Louis XIV., and defend the land cities with her fleet. Water was the source of her poverty, she has made it the source of wealth. Over the whole country extends an immense network of canals which serve both for the irrigation of the land and as a means of communication. The cities, by means of canals, communicate with the sea; canals run from town to town, and from them to villages, which are themselves bound together by these watery ways, and are connected even to the houses scattered over the country; smaller canals surround the fields and orchards, pastures and kitchen-gardens, serving at once as boundary-wall, hedge, and roadway; every house is a little port. Ships, boats, rafts move about in all directions, as in other places carts and carriages. The canals are the arteries of Holland, and the water her life-blood.

But even setting aside the canals, the draining of the lakes, and the defensive works, on every side are seen the traces of marvelous undertakings. The soil, which in other countries is a gift of nature, is in Holland a work of men's hands. Holland draws the greater part of her wealth from commerce; but before commerce comes the cultivation of the soil; and the soil had to be created. There were sand-banks, interspersed with layers of peat, broad downs swept by the winds, great tracts of barren land apparently condemned to an external sterility. The first elements of manufacture, iron and coal, were wanting; there was no wood, because the forests had already been destroyed by tempests when agriculture began; there was no stone, there were no metals.

Nature, says a Dutch poet, had refused all her gifts to Holland; the Hollanders had to do everything in spite of nature. They began by fertilizing the sand. In some places they formed a productive soil with earth brought from a distance, as a garden is made; they spread the siliceous dust of the downs over the too watery meadows; they mixed with the sandy earth the remains of peat taken from the bottoms; they extracted clay to lend fertility to the surface of their lands; they labored to break up the downs with the plow; and thus in a thousand ways, and continually fighting off the menacing waters, they succeeded in bringing Holland to a state of cultivation not inferior to that of more favored regions. That Holland, the sandy, marshy country that the ancients considered all but uninhabitable, now sends out yearly from her confines agricultural products to the value of a hundred millions of francs, possesses about one million three hundred thousand head of cattle, and, in proportion to the extent of her territory, may be accounted one of the most populous of European states.

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But however wonderful may be the physical history of Holland, her political history is still more so. This small territory invaded from the beginning by different tribes of the Germanic races, subjugated by the Romans and the Franks, devastated by the Normans and by the Danes, desolated by centuries of civil war with all its horrors, this small people of fisherman and traders, saves its civil liberty and its freedom of conscience by a war of eighty years against the formidable monarchy of Philip II., and founds a republic which becomes the ark of salvation to the liberties of all the world, the adopted country of science, the Exchange of Europe, the station for the commerce of the world; a republic which extends its domination to Java, Sumatra, Hindustan, Ceylon, New Holland, Japan, Brazil, Guiana, the Cape of Good Hope, the West-Indies, and New York; a republic which vanquished England on the sea, which resists the united arms of Charles II. and Louis XIV., and which treats on equal terms with the greatest nations, and is, for a time, one of the three Powers that decide the fate of Europe.

ROTTERDAM AND THE HAGUE[A]

[Footnote A: From "Holland and Its People." By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, S.P. Putnam's Sons. Copyright, 1880.]

BY EDMONDO DE AMICIS

It is a singular thing that the great cities of Holland, altho built upon a shifting soil, and amid difficulties of every kind, have all great regularity of form. Amsterdam is a semicircle, the Hague square, Rotterdam an equilateral triangle. The base of the triangle is an immense dike, which defends the city from the Meuse, and is called the Boompjes, signifying, in Dutch, small trees, from a row of little elms, now very tall, that were planted when it was first constructed.

The whole city of Rotterdam presents the appearance of a town that has been shaken smartly by an earthquake, and is on the point of the falling ruin. All the houses—in any street one may count the exceptions on their fingers—lean more or less, but the greater part of them so much that at the roof they lean forward at least a foot beyond their neighbors, which may be straight, or not so visibly inclined; one leans forward as if it would fall into the street; another backward, another to the left, another to the right, at some points six or seven contiguous houses all lean forward together, those in the middle most, those at the ends less, looking like a paling with a crowd pressing against it. At another point, two houses lean together as if supporting one another. In certain streets the houses for a long distance lean all one way, like trees beaten by a prevailing wind; and then another long row will lean in the opposite direction, as if the wind had changed.

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Sometimes there is a certain regularity of inclination that is scarcely noticeable; and again, at crossings and in the smaller streets, there is an indescribable confusion of lines, a real architectural frolic, a dance of houses, a disorder that seems animated. There are houses that nod forward as if asleep, others that start backward as if frightened, some bending toward each other, their roofs almost touching, as if in secret conference; some falling upon one another as if they were drunk, some leaning backward between others that lean forward, like malefactors dragged onward by their guards; rows of houses that curtsy to a steeple, groups of small houses all inclined toward one in the middle, like conspirators in conclave.

Broad and long canals divide the city into so many islands, united by drawbridges, turning bridges, and bridges of stone. On either side of every canal extends a street, flanked by trees on one side and houses on the other. All these canals are deep enough to float large vessels, and all are full of them from one end to the other, except a space in the middle left for passage in and out. An immense fleet imprisoned in a city.

When I arrived it was the busiest hour, so I planted myself upon the highest bridge over the principal crossing. From thence were visible four canals, four forests of ships, bordered by eight files of trees; the streets were crammed with people and merchandise; droves of cattle were crossing the bridges; bridges were rising in the air, or opening in the middle, to allow vessels to pass through, and were scarcely replaced or closed before they were inundated by a throng of people, carts, and carriages; ships came and went in the canals, shining like models in a museum, and with the wives and children of the sailors on the decks; boats darted from vessel to vessel; the shops drove a busy trade; servant-women washed the walls and windows; and all this moving life was rendered more gay and cheerful by the reflections in the water, the green of the trees, the red of the houses, the tall windmills, showing their dark tops and white sails against the azure of the sky, and still more by an air of quiet simplicity not seen in any other northern city.

From canal to canal, and from bridge to bridge, I finally reached the dike of the Boompjes upon the Meuse, where boils and bubbles all the life of the great commercial city. On the left extends a long row of small many-colored steamboats, which start every hour in the day for Dordrecht, Arnhem, Gonda, Schiedam, Brilla, Zealand, and continually send forth clouds of white smoke and the sound of their cheerful bells. To the right lie the large ships which make the voyage to various European ports, mingled with fine three-masted vessels bound for the East Indies, with names written in golden letters—Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Samarang—carrying the fancy to those distant and savage countries like the echoes of distant voices. In front the Meuse, covered with boats and barks, and the distant shore with a forest of beech trees, windmills, and towers; and over all the unquiet sky, full of gleams of light, and gloomy clouds, fleeting and changing in their constant movement, as if repeating the restless labor on the earth below.

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Rotterdam, it must be said here, is, in commercial importance, the first city in Holland after Amsterdam. It was already a flourishing town in the thirteenth century. Ludovico Guicciardini, in his work on the Low Countries, adduces a proof of the wealth of the city in the sixteenth century, saying that in one year nine hundred houses that had been destroyed by fire were rebuilt. Bentivoglio, in his history of the war in Flanders, calls it “the largest and most mercantile of the lands of Holland.” But its greatest prosperity did not begin until 1830, or after the separation of Holland and Belgium, when Rotterdam seemed to draw to herself everything that was lost by her rival, Antwerp.

Her situation is extremely advantageous. She communicates with the sea by the Meuse, which brings to her ports in a few hours the largest merchantmen; and by the same river she communicates with the Rhine, which brings to her from the Swiss mountains and Bavaria immense quantities of timber—entire forests that come to Holland to be transformed into ships, dikes, and villages. More than eighty splendid vessels come and go, in the space of nine months, between Rotterdam and India. Merchandise flows in from all sides in such great abundance that a large part of it has to be distributed through the neighboring towns....

Rotterdam, in short, has a future more splendid than that of Amsterdam, and has long been regarded as a rival by her elder sister. She does not possess the wealth of the capital; but is more industrious in increasing what she has; she dares, risks, undertakes like a young and adventurous city. Amsterdam, like a merchant grown cautious after having made his fortune by hazardous undertakings, begins to doze over her treasures. At Rotterdam fortunes are made; at Amsterdam they are consolidated; at the Hague they are spent....

In the middle of the market-place, surrounded by heaps of vegetables, fruit, and earthenware pots and pans, stands the statue of Desiderius Erasmus, the first literary light of Holland; that Gerrit Gerritz—for he assumed the Latin name himself, according to the custom of writers in his day—that Gerrit Gerritz belonged, by his education, his style, and his ideas, to the family of the humanists and erudite of Italy; a fine writer, profound and indefatigable in letters and science, he filled all Europe with his name between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; he was loaded with favors by the popes, and sought after and entertained by princes; and his “Praise of Folly,” written in Latin like the rest of his innumerable works, and dedicated to Sir Thomas More, is still read. The bronze statue, erected in 1622, represents Erasmus dressed in a furred gown, with a cap of the same, a little bent forward as if walking, and in the act of reading a large book, held open in the hand; the pedestal bears a double inscription, in Dutch and Latin, calling him, “The Foremost Man of His Century,” and “The Most Excellent

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of All Citizens.” In spite of this pompous eulogium, however, poor Erasmus, planted there like a municipal guard in the market-place, makes but a pitiful figure. I do not believe that there is in the world another statue of a man of letters that is, like this, neglected by the passer-by, despised by those about it, commiserated by those who look at it. But who knows whether Erasmus, acute philosopher as he was, and must be still, be not contented with his corner, the more that it is not far from his own house, if the tradition is correct? In a small street near the market-place, in the wall of a little house now occupied as a tavern, there is a niche with a bronze statuette representing the great writer, and under it the inscription: “This is the little house in which the great Erasmus was born.” ...

Rotterdam in the evening presents an unusual aspect to the stranger’s eye. While in other northern cities at a certain hour of the night all the life is concentrated in the houses, at Rotterdam at that hour it expands into the streets. The Hoog-straat is filled until far into the night with a dense throng, the shops are open, because the servants make their purchases in the evening, and the cafes crowded. Dutch cafes are peculiar. In general there is one long room, divided in the middle by a green curtain, which is drawn down at evening and conceals the back part, which is the only part lighted; the front part, closed from the street by large glass doors, is in darkness, so that from without only dark shadowy forms can be seen, and the burning points of cigars, like so many fireflies. Among these dark forms the vague profile of a woman who prefers darkness to light may be detected here and there....

Walking through Rotterdam in the evening, it is evident that the city is teeming with life and in process of expansion; a youthful city, still growing, and feeling herself every year more and more pressed for room in her streets and houses. In a not far distant future, her hundred and fourteen thousand inhabitants will have increased to two hundred thousand.[A] The smaller streets swarm with children; there is an overflow of life and movement that cheers the eye and heart; a kind of holiday air. The white and rosy faces of the servant-maids, whose white caps gleam on every side; the serene visages of shopkeepers slowly imbibing great glassfuls of beer; the peasants with their monstrous ear-rings; the cleanliness; the flowers in the windows; the tranquil and laborious throng; all give to Rotterdam an aspect of healthful and peaceful content, which brings to the lips the chant of “Te Beata,” not with the cry of enthusiasm, but with the smile of sympathy....

[Footnote A: The population now (1914) is 418,000, as stated in the New Standard Dictionary.]

The Hague—in Dutch, s’Gravenhage, or s’Hage—the political capital, the Washington of Holland, Amsterdam being the New York—is a city half Dutch and half French, with broad streets and no canals; vast squares full of trees, elegant houses, splendid hotels,

and a population mostly made up of the rich, nobles, officials, artists, and literati, the populace being of a more refined order than that of the other Dutch cities.

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In my first turn about the town what struck me most were the new quarters, where dwells the flower of the wealthy aristocracy. In no other city, not even in the Faubourg St. Germain at Paris, did I feel myself such a very poor devil as in those streets. They are wide and straight, flanked by palaces of elegant form and delicate color, with large shutterless windows, through which can be seen the rich carpets and sumptuous furniture of the first floors. Every door is closed; and there is not a shop, nor a placard, nor a stain, nor a straw to be seen if you were to look for it with a hundred eyes. The silence was profound when I passed by. Only now and then I encountered some aristocratic equipage rolling almost noiselessly over the brick pavement, or the stiffest of lackeys stood before a door, or the blonde head of a lady was visible behind a curtain. Passing close to the windows and beholding my shabby traveling dress ruthlessly reflected in the plate-glass I experienced a certain humiliation at not having been born at least a Cavaliere, and imagined I heard low voices whispering disdainfully: "Who is that low person?"

Of the older portion of the city, the most considerable part is the Binnenhof, a group of old buildings of different styles of architecture, which looks on two sides upon vast squares, and on the third over a great marsh. In the midst of this group of palaces, towers, and monumental doors, of a medieval and sinister aspect, there is a spacious court, which is entered by three bridges and three gates. In one of these buildings resided the Stadtholders, and it is now the seat of the Second Chamber of the States General; opposite is the First Chamber, with the ministries and various other offices of public administration. The Minister of the Interior has his office in a little low black tower of the most lugubrious aspect, that hangs directly over the waters of the marsh.

The Binnenhof, the square to the west, called the Binten Hof, and another square beyond the marsh, called the Plaats, into which you enter by an old gate that once formed part of a prison, were the theaters of the most sanguinary events in the history of Holland.

In the Binnenhof was decapitated the venerated Van Olden Barneveldt, the second founder of the republic, the most illustrious victim of that ever-recurring struggle between the burgher aristocracy and the Statholderate, between the republican and the monarchical principle, which worked so miserably in Holland. The scaffold was erected in front of the edifice where the States General sat. Opposite is the tower from which it is said that Maurice of Orange, himself unseen, beheld the last moments of his enemy.

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The finest ornament of the Hague is its forest; a true wonder of Holland, and one of the most magnificent promenades in the world. It is a wood of alder-trees, oaks, and the largest beeches that are to be found in Europe, on the eastern side of the city, a few paces from the last fringe of houses, and measuring about one French league in circuit; a truly delightful oasis in the midst of the melancholy Dutch plains. As you enter it, little Swiss chalets find kiosks, scattered here and there among the first trees, seem to have strayed and lost themselves in an endless and solitary forest. The trees are as thickly set as a cane-brake, and the alleys vanish in dark perspective.

There are lakes and canals almost hidden under the verdure of their banks; rustic bridges, deserted paths, dim recesses, darkness cool and deep, in which one breathes the air of virgin nature, and feels oneself far from the noises of the world. This wood, like that of Haarlem, is said to be the remains of an immense forest that covered, in ancient times, almost all the coast, and is respected by the Dutch people as a monument of their national history.

HAARLEM[A]

[Footnote A: From "Holland of To-day."]

BY AUGUSTUS J.C. HARE

A few minutes bring us from Leyden to Haarlem by the railway. It crosses an isthmus between the sea and a lake which covered the whole country between Leyden, Haarlem, and Amsterdam till 1839, when it became troublesome, and the States-General forthwith, after the fashion of Holland, voted its destruction. Enormous engines were at once employed to drain it by pumping the water into canals, which carried it to the sea, and the country was the richer by a new province.

Haarlem, on the river Spaarne, stands out distinct in recollection from all other Dutch towns, for it has the most picturesque market-place in Holland—the Groote Markt—surrounded by quaint houses of varied outline, amid which rises the Groote Kerk of S. Bavo, a noble cruciform fifteenth-century building. The interior, however, is as bare and hideous as all other Dutch churches. It contains a monument to the architect Conrad, designer of the famous locks of Katwijk, "the defender of Holland against the fury of the sea and the power of tempests." Behind the choir is the tomb of the poet Bilderijk, who only died in 1831, and near this the grave of Laurenz Janzoom—the Coster or Sacristan—who is asserted in his native town, but never believed outside it, to have been the real inventor of printing, as he is said to have cut out letters in wood, and taken impressions from them in ink, as early as 1423. His partizans also maintain that while he was attending a midnight mass, praying for patience to endure the ill-treatment of his

enemies, all his implements were stolen, and that when he found this out on his return he died of grief.

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It is further declared that the robber was Faust of Mayence, the partner of Gutenberg, and that it was thus that the honor of the invention passed from Holland to Germany where Gutenberg produced his invention of movable type twelve years later. There is a statue of the Coster in front of the church, and, on its north side, his house is preserved and adorned with his bust.

Among a crowd of natives with their hats on, talking in church as in the market-place, we waited to hear the famous organ of Christian Muller (1735-38), and grievously were we disappointed with its discordant noises. All the men smoked in church, and this we saw repeatedly; but it would be difficult to say where we ever saw a Dutchman with a pipe out of his mouth. Every man seemed to be systematically smoking away the few wits he possessed.

Opposite the Groote Kerk is the Stadhuis, an old palace of the Counts of Holland remodeled. It contains a delightful little gallery of the works of Franz Hals, which at once transports the spectator into the Holland of two hundred years ago—such is the marvelous variety of life and vigor imprest into its endless figures of stalwart officers and handsome young archers pledging each other at banquet tables and seeming to welcome the visitor with jovial smiles as he enters the chamber, or of serene old ladies, “regents” of hospitals, seated at their council boards. The immense power of the artist is shown in nothing so much as in the hands, often gloved, dashed in with instantaneous power, yet always having the effect of the most consummate finish at a distance. Behind one of the pictures is the entrance to the famous “secret-room of Haarlem,” seldom seen, but containing an inestimable collection of historic relics of the time of the famous siege of Leyden.

April and May are the best months for visiting Haarlem, which is the bulb nursery garden of the world. “Oignons a fleurs” are advertised for sale everywhere. Tulips are more cultivated than any other flower, as ministering most of the national craving for color; but times are changed since a single bulb of the tulip “L’Amiral Liefkenshoek” sold for 4,500 florins, one of “Viceroy” for 4,200, and one of “Semper Augustus” for 13,000.

SCHEVENINGEN[A]

[Footnote A: From “Holland of To-Day.” By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the author and of the publishers, Moffat, Yard & Co. Copyright, 1909.]

BY GEORGE WHARTON EDWARDS

Let us go down to the North Sea and see how the Dutch people enjoy themselves in the summer. Of course the largest of the watering-places in the Netherlands is Scheveningen, and it has a splendid bathing beach which makes it an attractive resort

for fashionable Germans and Hollanders, and for summer travelers from all over the world. At the top of the long dyke is a row of hotels and restaurants, and when one reaches this point after passing through the lovely old wood of stately trees one is ushered into the twentieth century, for here all is fashion and gay life, yet with a character all its own.

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Along the edge of the beach are the bathing machines in scores, and behind them are long lines of covered wicker chairs of peculiar form, each with its foot-stool, where one may sit, shaded, from the sun and sheltered from the wind, and read, chat or doze by the hour. Bath women are seen quaintly clad with their baskets of bathing dresses and labeled with the signs bearing their names, such as Trintje or Netje; everywhere there are sightseers, pedlers calling their wares, children digging in the sand, strolling players performing and the sound of bands of music in the distance. So there is no lack of amusement here during the season.

The spacious Kurhaus with its verandas and Kursaal, which is large enough to accommodate 2,500 people, is in the center of the dike. There are concerts every evening, and altho the town is filled with hotels, during the months of June, July, August, and September they are quite monopolized by the Hollanders and the prices are very high.

The magnificent pier is 450 yards long. The charges for bathing are very moderate, varying from twenty cents for a small bathing box to fifty cents for a large one, including the towels. Bathing costumes range from five to twenty-five cents. The tickets are numbered, and as soon as a machine is vacant a number is called by the "bath man" and the holder of the corresponding number claims the machine. The basket chairs cost for the whole day twenty cents, Dutch money. One may obtain a subscription to the "Kurhaus" at a surprisingly reasonable rate for the day, week or season. There is a daily orchestra; ballet and operatic concerts once a week; dramatic performances and frequent hops throughout the season.

There is a local saying that when good Dutchmen die they go to Scheveningen, and this is certainly their heaven. To stand on the pier on a fine day during the season looking down on these long lines of wicker chairs, turned seaward, is an astonishing sight. They are shaped somewhat like huge snail-shells, and around these the children delight to dig in the sand, throwing up miniature dunes around one. Perhaps no seashore in the world has been painted so much as Scheveningen. Mesdag, Maris, Alfred Stevens, to name only a few of the artists, have found here themes for many paintings, and the scene is a wonderful one when the homing fleet of "Boms," as the fishing-boats are called, appears in the offing to be welcomed by the fisherwomen. There are other smaller watering-places on the coast, but Scheveningen is unique.

In the little fishing town itself, the scene on the return of the men is very interesting. Women and children are busily hurrying about from house to house, and everywhere in the little streets are strange signs chalked up on the shutters, such as "water en vuur te koop," that is water and fire for sale; and here are neatly painted buckets of iron, each having a kettle of boiling water over it and a lump of burning turf at the bottom.

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Fish is being cleaned and the gin shops are well patronized, for it seems a common habit in this moist northern climate frequently to take “Een sneeuw-balletje” of gin and sugar, which does not taste at all badly, be it said. All sorts of strange-looking people are met in the little narrow street, and all doing strange-looking things, but with the air of its being in no wise unusual with them. All in all, Scheveningen is an entertaining spot in which to linger.

DELFT[A]

[Footnote A: From “Sketches in Holland and Scandinavia.”]

BY AUGUSTUS J.C. HARE

An excursion must be made to Delft, only twenty minutes distant from The Hague by rail. Pepys calls it “a most sweet town, with bridges and a river in every street,” and that is a tolerably accurate description. It seems thinly inhabited, and the Dutch themselves look upon it as a place where one will die of ennui. It has scarcely changed with two hundred years. The view of Delft by Van der Meer in the Museum at The Hague might have been painted yesterday. All the trees are dipt, for in artificial Holland every work of Nature is artificialized. At certain seasons, numbers of storks may be seen upon the chimney-tops, for Delft is supposed to be the stork town par excellence. Near the shady canal Oude Delft is a low building, once the Convent of St. Agata, with an ornamental door surmounted by a relief, leading into a courtyard. It is a common barrack now, for Holland, which has no local histories, has no regard whatever for its historic associations or monuments. Yet this is the greatest shrine of Dutch history, for it is here that William the Silent died.

Philip II. had promised 25,000 crowns of gold to any one who would murder the Prince of Orange. An attempt had already been made, but had failed, and William refused to take any measures for self-protection, saying, “It is useless: my years are in the hands of God; if there is a wretch who has no fear of death, my life is in his hand, however I may guard it.”

At length, a young man of seven-and-twenty appeared at Delft, who gave himself out to be one Guyon, a Protestant, son of Pierre Guyon, executed at Besancon for having embraced Calvinism, and declared that he was exiled for his religion. Really he was Balthazar Gerard, a bigoted Catholic, but his conduct in Holland soon procured him the reputation of an evangelical saint.

The Prince took him into his service and sent him to accompany a mission from the States of Holland to the Court of France, whence he returned to bring the news of the death of the Duke of Anjou to William. At that time the Prince was living with his court in the convent of St. Agata, where he received Balthazar alone in his chamber. The moment was opportune, but the would-be assassin had no arms ready. William gave him a small sum of money and bade him hold himself in readiness to be sent back to France.

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With the money Balthazar bought two pistols from a soldier (who afterward killed himself when he heard the use which was made of the purchase). On the next day, June 10, 1584, Balthazar returned to the convent as William was descending the staircase to dinner, with his fourth wife, Louise de Coligny (daughter of the Admiral who fell in the massacre of St. Bartholomew), on his arm. He presented his passport and begged the Prince to sign it, but was told to return later. At dinner the Princess asked William who was the young man who had spoken to him, for his expression was the most terrible she had ever seen.

The Prince laughed, said it was Guyon, and was as gay as usual. Dinner being over, the family party were about to remount the staircase. The assassin was waiting in a dark corner at the foot of the stairs, and as William passed he discharged a pistol with three balls and fled. The Prince staggered, saying, "I am wounded; God have mercy upon me and my poor people." His sister Catherine van Schwartz-bourg asked, "Do you trust in Jesus Christ?" He said, "Yes," with a feeble voice, sat down upon the stairs, and died.

Balthazar reached the rampart of the town in safety, hoping to swim to the other side of the moat, where a horse awaited him. But he had dropt his hat and his second pistol in his flight, and so he was traced and seized before he could leap from the wall.

Amid horrible tortures, he not only confest, but continued to triumph in his crime. His judges believed him to be possest of the devil. The next day he was executed. His right hand was burned off in a tube of red-hot iron; the flesh of his arms and legs was torn off with red-hot pincers; but he never made a cry. It was not till his breast was cut open, and his heart torn out and flung in his face, that he expired. His head was then fixt on a pike, and his body, cut into four quarters, exposed on the four gates of the town.

Close to the Prinsenhof is the Oude Kerk with a leaning tower. It is arranged like a very ugly theater inside, but contains, with other tombs of celebrities, the monument of Admiral van Tromp, 1650—"Martinus Harberti Trompius"—whose effigy lies upon his back, with swollen feet. It was this Van Tromp who defeated the English fleet under Blake, and perished, as represented on the monument, in an engagement off Scheveningen. It was he who, after his victory over the English, caused a broom to be hoisted at his mast-head to typify that he had swept the Channel clear of his enemies.

LEYDEN[A]

[Footnote A: From "Holland and Its People." Translated by Caroline Tilton. By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, G.P. Putnam's Sons. Copyright, 1880.]

BY EDMONDO DE AMICIS

Leyden, the antique Athens of the north, the Saragossa of the Low Countries, the oldest and most illustrious of the daughters of Holland, is one of those cities which make you thoughtful upon first entering them, and are remembered for a long time afterward with a certain impression of sadness.

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I had hardly arrived when the chill of a dead city seemed to fall upon me. The old Rhine, which crosses Leyden, dividing it into many islets joined together by one hundred and fifty stone bridges, forms wide canals and basins which contain no ship or boat, and the city seems rather invaded by the waters than merely crossed by them. The principal streets are very broad and flanked by rows of old blockhouses with the usual pointed gables, and the few people seen in the streets and squares are like the survivors of a city depopulated by the plague.

In the smaller streets you walk upon long tracts of grass, between houses with closed doors and windows, in a silence as profound as that of those fabled cities where all the inhabitants are sunk in a supernatural sleep. You pass over bridges overgrown with weeds, and long canals covered with a green carpet, through small squares that seem like convent courtyards; and then, suddenly, you reach a broad thoroughfare, like the streets of Paris; from which you again penetrate into a labyrinth of narrow alleys. From bridge to bridge, from canal to canal, from island to island, you wander for hours seeking for the life and movement of the ancient Leyden, and finding only solitude, silence, and the waters which reflect the melancholy majesty of the fallen city.

In 1573 the Spaniards, led by Valdez, laid siege to Leyden. In the city there were only some volunteer soldiers. The military command was given to Van der Voets, a valiant man, and a Latin poet of some renown. Van der Werf was burgomaster. In brief time the besiegers had constructed more than sixty forts in all the places where it was possible to penetrate into the city by sea or land, and Leyden was completely isolated. But the people of Leyden did not lose heart. William of Orange had sent them word to hold out for three months, within which time he would succor them, for on the fate of Leyden depended that of Holland; and the men of Leyden had promised to resist to the last extremity....

The Prince of Orange received the news of the safety of the city at Delft, in church, where he was present at divine service. He sent the message at once to the preacher, and the latter announced it to the congregation, who received it with shouts of joy. Altho only just recovered from his illness, and the epidemic still raging at Leyden, William would see at once his dear and valorous city. He went there; his entry was a triumph; his majestic and serene aspect put new heart into the people; his words made them forget all they had suffered. To reward Leyden for her heroic defense, he left her her choice between exemption from certain imposts or the foundation of a university. Leyden chose the university.

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How this university answered to the hopes of Leyden, it is superfluous to say. Everybody knows how the States of Holland with their liberal offers drew learned men from every country; how philosophy, driven out of France, took refuge there; how Leyden was for a long time the securest citadel for all men who were struggling for the triumph of human reason; how it became at length the most famous school in Europe. The actual university is in an ancient convent. One can not enter without a sentiment of profound respect the great hall of the Academic Senate, where are seen the portraits of all the professors who have succeeded each other from the foundation of the university up to the present day.

DORTRECHT[A]

[Footnote A: From "Sketches in Holland and Scandinavia."]

BY AUGUSTUS J.C. HARE

Our morning at Dortrecht was very delightful, and it is a thoroughly charming place. Passing under a dark archway in a picturesque building of Charles V., opposite the hotel, we found ourselves at once on the edge of an immense expanse of shimmering river, with long, rich meadows beyond, between which the wide flood breaks into three different branches. Red and white sails flit down them. Here and there rises a line of pollard willows or clipt elms, and now and then a church spire. On the nearest shore an ancient windmill, colored in delicate tints of gray and yellow, surmounts a group of white buildings.

On the left is a broad esplanade of brick, lined with ancient houses, and a canal with a bridge, the long arms of which are ready to open at a touch and give a passage to the great yellow-masted barges, which are already half intercepting the bright red house-fronts ornamented with stone, which belong to some public buildings facing the end of the canal. With what a confusion of merchandise are the boats laden, and how gay is the coloring, between the old weedy posts to which they are moored!

It was from hence that Isabella of France, with Sir John de Hainault and many other faithful knights set on their expedition against Edward II. and the government of the Spencers.

From the busy port, where nevertheless they are dredging, we cross another bridge and find ourselves in a quietude like that of a cathedral close in England. On one side is a wide pool half covered with floating timber, and, in the other half, reflecting like a mirror the houses on the opposite shore, with their bright gardens of lilies and hollyhocks, and trees of mountain ash, which bend their masses of scarlet berries to the still water. Between the houses are glints of blue river and of inevitable windmills on the opposite



shore. And all this we observe standing in the shadow of a huge church, the Groote Kerk, with a nave of the fourteenth century, and a choir of the fifteenth and a gigantic trick tower, in which three long Gothic arches, between octagonal tourelles, enclose several tiers of windows. At the top is a great clock, and below the church a grove of elms, through which fitful sunlight falls on the grass and the dead red of the brick pavement (so grateful to feet sore with the sharp stones of other Dutch cities), where groups of fishermen are collecting in their blue shirts and white trousers.

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There is little to see inside this or any other church in Holland; travelers will rather seek for the memorials at the Kloveniers Doelen, of the famous Synod of Dort, which was held 1618-19, in the hope of effecting a compromise between the Gomarists, or disciples of Calvin, and the Arminians who followed Zwingli, and who had recently obtained the name of Remonstrants from the "remonstrance" which they had address eight years before in defense of their doctrines. The Calvinists held that the greater part of mankind was excluded from grace, which the Arminians denied; but at the Synod of Dort the Calvinists proclaimed themselves as infallible as the Pope, and their resolutions became the law of the Dutch Reformed Church. The Arminians were forthwith outlawed; a hundred ministers who refused to subscribe to the dictates of the Synod were banished; Hugo Grotius and Rombout Hoogerbeets were imprisoned for life at Loevestein; the body of the secretary Ledenberg, was hung; and Van Olden Barneveldt, the friend of William the Silent, was beheaded in his seventy-second year....

Through the street of wine—Wijnstraat—built over stonehouses used for the staple, we went to the museum to see the pictures. There were two schools of Dortrecht. Jacob Geritee Cuyp (1575); Albert Cuyp (1605), Ferdinand Bol (1611), Nicolas Maas (1632), and Schalken (1643) belonged to the former; Arend de Gelder, Arnold Houbraken, Dirk Stoop, and Ary Scheffer are of the latter. Sunshine and glow were the characteristics of the first school, grayness and sobriety of the second. But there are few good pictures at Dort now, and some of the best works of Cuyp are to be found in our National Gallery, [London] executed at his native place and portraying the great brick tower of the church in the golden haze of evening, seen across rich pastures, where the cows are lying deep in the meadow grass. The works of Ary Scheffer are now the most interesting pictures in the Dortrecht Gallery. Of the subject, "Christus Consolator," there are two representations. In the more striking of these the pale Christ is seated among the sick, sorrowful, blind, maimed, and enslaved, who are all stretching their hands to Him. Beneath is the tomb which the artist executed for his mother, Cornelia Scheffer, whose touching figure is represented lying with outstretched hands, in the utmost abandonment of repose.

THE ZUYDER ZEE[A]

[Footnote A: From "Holland and Its People." Translated by Caroline Tilton. By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, G.P. Putnam's Sons. Copyright, 1880.]

BY EDMONDO DE AMICIS

This great basin of the North Sea, which bathes five provinces and has an extent of more than seven hundred square kilometers, six hundred years ago was not in existence. North Holland touched Friesland, and where the gulf now extends there was

a vast region sprinkled with fresh-water lakes, the largest of which, the Flevo, mentioned by Tacitus, was separated from the sea by a fertile and populous isthmus. Whether the sea by its own force broke through the natural dikes of the region, or whether the sinking of the land left it free to invasion, is not certainly known. The great transformation was completed during the course of the thirteenth century.

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About the formation of this gulf there has collected a varied and confused history of cities destroyed and people drowned, to which has been added in later times another history, of new cities rising on new shores, becoming powerful and famous, and being in their turn reduced to poor and mean villages, with streets overgrown with grass, and sand-choked ports. Records of great calamities, wonderful traditions, fantastic horrors, strange usages and customs, are found upon the waters and about the shores of this peculiar sea, born but yesterday, and already encircled with ruins and condemned to disappear; and a month's voyage would not suffice to gather up the chief of them; but the thought alone of beholding from a distance those decrepit cities, those mysterious islands, those fatal sand-banks, excited my imagination....

Marken is as famous among the islands of the Zuyder Zee as Broek is among the villages of Holland; but with all its fame, and altho distant but one hour by boat from the coast, few are the strangers, and still fewer the natives who visit it. So said the captain as he pointed out the lighthouse of the little island, and added that in his opinion the reason was, that when a stranger arrived at Marken, even if he were a Dutchman, he was followed by a crowd of boys, watched, and commented upon as if he were a man fallen from the moon. This unusual curiosity is explained by a description of the island. It is a bit of land about three thousand meters in length and one thousand in width, which was detached from the continent in the thirteenth century, and remains to this day, in the manners, and customs of its inhabitants, exactly as it was six centuries ago.

The surface of the island is but little higher than the sea, and it is surrounded by a small dike which does not suffice to protect it from inundation. The houses are built upon eight small artificial elevations, and form as many boroughs, one of which—the one which has the church—is the capital, and another the cemetery. When the sea rises above the dike, the spaces between the little hills are changed into canals, and the inhabitants go about in boats. The houses are built of wood, some painted, some only pitched; one only is of stone, that of the pastor, who also has a small garden shaded by four large trees, the only ones on the island. Next to this house are the church, the school, and the municipal offices. The population is about one thousand in number, and lives by fishing. With the exceptions of the doctor, the pastor, and the school-master, all are native to the island; no islander marries on the continent; no one from the mainland comes to live on the island.

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They all profess the reformed religion, and all know how to read and write. In the schools more than two hundred boys and girls are taught history, geography, and arithmetic. The fashion of dress, which has not been changed for centuries, is the same for all, and extremely curious. The men look like soldiers. They wear a dark gray cloth jacket ornamented with two rows of buttons which are in general medals, or ancient coins, handed down from father to son. This jacket is tucked into the waistband of a pair of breeches of the same color, very wide about the hips and tight around the leg, fastening below the knee; a felt hat or a fur cap, according to the season; a red cravat, black stockings, white wooden shoes, or a sort of slipper, complete the costume.

That of the women is still more peculiar. They wear on their heads an enormous white cap in the form of a miter, all ornamented with lace and needlework, and tied under the chin like a helmet. From under the cap, which completely covers the ears, fall two long braided tresses, which hang over the bosom, and a sort of visor of hair comes down upon the forehead, cut square just above the eyebrows. The dress is composed of a waist without sleeves, and a petticoat of two colors. The waist is deep red, embroidered in colors and costing years of labor to make, for which reason it descends from mother to daughter, from generation to generation. The upper part of the petticoat is gray or blue striped with black, and the lower part dark brown. The arms are covered almost to the elbow with sleeves of a white chemise, striped with red. The children are drest in almost the same way, tho there is some slight difference between girls and women, and on holidays the costume is more richly ornamented.

THE ART OF HOLLAND[A]

[Footnote A: From "Holland and Its People." Translated by Caroline Tilton. By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, G.P. Putnam's Sons. Copyright, 1880.]

BY EDMONDO DE AMICIS

The Dutch school of painting has one quality which renders it particularly attractive to us Italians; it is of all others the most different from our own, the very antithesis, or the opposite pole of art. The Dutch and Italian schools are the two most original, or, as has been said, the only two to which the title rigorously belongs; the others being only daughters, or younger sisters, more or less resembling them. Thus, even in painting Holland offers that which is most sought after in travel and in books of travel; the new.

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Dutch painting was born with the liberty and independence of Holland. As long as the northern and southern provinces of the Low Countries remained under the Spanish rule and in the Catholic faith, Dutch painters painted like Belgian painters; they studied in Belgium, Germany, and Italy; Heemskerk imitated Michael Angelo; Bloemart followed Correggio, and “Il Moro” copied Titian, not to indicate others; and they were one and all pedantic imitators, who added to the exaggerations of the Italian style a certain German coarseness, the result of which was a bastard style of painting, still inferior to the first, childish, stiff in design, crude in color, and completely wanting in chiaroscuro, but not, at least, a servile imitation, and becoming, as it were, a faint prelude to the true Dutch art that was to be....

After depicting the house, they turned their attention to the country. The stern climate allowed but a brief time for the admiration of nature, but for this very reason Dutch artists admired her all the more; they saluted the spring with a livelier joy, and permitted that fugitive smile of heaven to stamp itself more deeply on their fancy. The country was not beautiful, but it was twice dear because it had been torn from the sea and from the foreign oppressor. The Dutch artist painted it lovingly; he represented it simply, ingenuously, with a sense of intimacy which at that time was not to be found in Italian or Belgian landscape.

The flat, monotonous country had, to the Dutch painter’s eyes, a marvelous variety. He caught all the mutations of the sky, and knew the value of the water, with its reflections, its grace and freshness, and its power of illuminating everything. Having no mountains, he took the dikes for background; and with no forests, he imparted to a simple group of trees all the mystery of a forest; and he animated the whole with beautiful animals and white sails.

The subjects of their pictures are poor enough—a windmill, a canal, a gray sky;—but how they make one think! A few Dutch painters, not content with nature in their own country, came to Italy in search of hills, luminous skies, and famous ruins; and another band of select artists is the result. Both, Swanevelt, Pynaeker, Breenberg, Van Laer, Asselyn. But the palm remains with the landscapists of Holland, with Wynants the painter of morning, with Van der Neer the painter of night, with Rusydael the painter of melancholy, with Hobbema the illustrator of windmills, cabins, and kitchen gardens, and with others who have restricted themselves to the expression of the enchantment of nature as she is in Holland.

Simultaneously with landscape art was born another kind of painting, especially peculiar to Holland—animal painting. Animals are the wealth of the country; and that magnificent race of cattle which has no rival in Europe for fecundity and beauty. The Hollanders, who owe so much to them, treat them, one may say, as part of the population; they wash them, comb them, dress them, and love them dearly. They are to be seen everywhere; they are reflected in all the canals, and dot with points of black and white the immense fields that stretch on every side; giving an air of peace and

comfort to every place, and exciting in the spectator's heart a sentiment of patriarchal serenity.

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The Dutch artists studied these animals in all their varieties, in all their habits, and divined, as one may say, their inner life and sentiments, animating the tranquil beauty of the landscape with their forms. Rubens, Luyders, Paul de Vos, and other Belgian painters, had drawn animals with admirable mastery, but all these are surpassed by the Dutch artists, Van der Velde, Berghum, Karel der Jardin, and by the prince of animal painters, Paul Potter, whose famous “Bull,” in the gallery of The Hague, deserves to be placed in the Vatican beside the “Transfiguration” by Rafael.

In yet another field are the Dutch painters great—the sea. The sea, their enemy, their power, and their glory, forever threatening their country, and entering in a hundred ways into their lives and fortunes; that turbulent North Sea, full of sinister colors, with a light of infinite melancholy beating forever upon a desolate coast, must subjugate the imagination of the artist. He, indeed, passes long hours on the shore, contemplating its tremendous beauty, ventures upon its waves to study the effects of tempests, buys a vessel and sails with his wife and family, observing and making notes, follows the fleet into battle, and takes part in the fight, and in this way are made marine painters like William Van der Velde the elder, and William the younger, like Backhuysen, Dubbels, and Stork.

Another kind of painting was to arise in Holland, as the expression of the character of the people and of republican manners. A people that without greatness had done so many great things, as Michelet says, must have its heroic painters, if we call them so, destined to illustrate men and events. But this school of painting—precisely because the people were without greatness, or, to express it better, without form of greatness, modest, inclined to consider all equal before the country, because all had done their duty, abhorring adulation, and the glorification in one only of the virtues and the triumph of many—this school has to illustrate not a few men who have excelled, and a few extraordinary facts, but all classes of citizenship gathered among the most ordinary and pacific of burgher life.

From this come the great pictures which represent five, ten, thirty persons together, arquebusiers, mayors, officers, professors, magistrates, administrators, seated or standing around a table, feasting and conversing, of life size, most faithful likenesses, grave, open faces, expressing that secure serenity of conscience by which may be divined rather than seen the nobleness of a life consecrated to one's country, the character of that strong, laborious epoch, the masculine virtues of that excellent generation; all this set off by the fine costume of the time, so admirably combining grace and dignity; those gorgets, those doublets, those black mantles, those silken scarves and ribbons, those arms and banners. In this field stand preeminent Van der Heist, Hals, Covaert, Flink, and Bol....

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Finally, there are still two important excellences to be recorded of this school of painting—its variety, and its importance as the expression, the mirror, so to speak, of the country. If we except Rembrandt with his group of followers and imitators, almost all the other artists differ very much from one another; no other school presents so great a number of original masters. The realism of the Dutch painters is born of their common love of nature; but each one has shown in his work a kind of love peculiarly his own; each one has rendered a different impression which he has received from nature and all, starting from the same point, which was the worship of material truth, have arrived at separate and distinct goals.

THE TULIPS OF HOLLAND[A]

[Footnote A: From “Holland and Its People.” Translated by Caroline Tilton. By special arrangement with, and by permission of, the publishers, G.P. Putnam’s Sons. Copyright, 1880.]

BY EDMONDO DE AMICIS

The word “tulip” recalls one of the strangest popular follies that has ever been seen in the world, which showed itself in Holland toward the middle of the seventeenth century. The country at that time had reached the height of prosperity; antique parsimony had given place to luxury; the houses of the wealthy, very modest at the beginning of the century, were transformed into little palaces; velvet, silk, and pearls replaced the patriarchal simplicity of the ancient costume; Holland had become vain, ambitious, and prodigal.

After having filled their houses with pictures, hangings, porcelain, and precious objects from all the countries of Europe and Asia, the rich merchants of the large Dutch cities began to spend considerable sums in ornamenting their gardens with tulips—the flower which answers best to that innate avidity for vivid colors which the Dutch people manifest in so many ways. This taste for tulips promoted their rapid cultivation; everywhere gardens were laid out, studies promoted, new varieties of the favorite flower sought for. In a short time the fever became general; on every side there swarmed unknown tulips, of strange forms, and wonderful shades or combinations of colors, full of contrasts, caprices, and surprises. Prices rose in a marvelous way; a new variegation, a new form, obtained in those blest leaves was an event, a fortune. Thousands of persons gave themselves up to the study with the fury of insanity; all over the country nothing was talked of but petals; bulbs, colors, vases, seeds.

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The mania grew to such a pass that all Europe was laughing at it. Bulbs of the favorite tulips of the rarer varieties rose to fabulous prices; some constituted a fortune; like a house, an orchard, or a mill; one bulb was equivalent to a dowry for the daughter of a rich family; for one bulb were given, in I know not what city, two carts of grain, four carts of barley, four oxen, twelve sheep, two casks of wine, four casks of beer, a thousand pounds of cheese, a complete dress, and silver goblet. Another bulb of a tulip named "Semper Augustus" was bought at the price of thirteen thousand florins. A bulb of the "Admiral Enkhuysen" tulip cost two thousand dollars. One day there were only two bulbs of the "Semper Augustus" left in Holland, one at Amsterdam and the other at Haarlem, and for one of them there were offered, and refused, four thousand six hundred florins, a splendid coach, and a pair of gray horses with beautiful harness. Another offered twelve acres of land, and he also was refused. On the registers of Alkmaar it is recorded that in 1637 there were sold in that city, at public auction, one hundred and twenty tulips for the benefit of the orphanage, and that the sale produced one hundred and eighty thousand francs.

Then they began to traffic in tulips, as in State bonds and shares. They sold for enormous sums bulbs which they did not possess, engaging to provide them for a certain day; and in this way a traffic was carried on for a much larger number of tulips than the whole of Holland could furnish. It is related that one Dutch town sold twenty millions of francs' worth of tulips, and that an Amsterdam merchant gained in this trade more than sixty-eight thousand florins in the space of four months. These sold that which they had not, and those that which they never could have; the market passed from hand to hand, the differences were paid, and the flowers for and by which so many people were ruined or enriched, flourished only in the imagination of the traffickers. Finally matters arrived at such a pass that, many buyers having refused to pay the sums agreed upon, and contests and disorders following, the government decreed that these debts should be considered as ordinary obligations, and that payment should be exacted in the usual legal manner; then prices fell suddenly, as low as fifty florins for the "Semper Augustus," and the scandalous traffic ceased.

Now the culture of flowers is no longer a mania, but is carried on for love of them, and Haarlem is the principal temple. She still provides a great part of Europe and South America with flowers. The city is encircled by gardens, which, toward the end of April and the beginning of May, are covered with myriads of tulips, hyacinths, carnations, auriculas, anemones, ranunculuses, camelias, primroses, and other flowers, forming an immense wreath about Haarlem, from which travelers from all parts of the world gather a bouquet in passing. Of late years the hyacinth has risen into great honor; but the tulip is still king of the gardens, and Holland's supreme affection.

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I should have to change my pen for the brush of Van der Huysem or Menedoz, if I were to attempt to describe the pomp of their gorgeous, luxuriant, dazzling colors, which, if the sensation given to the eye may be likened to that of the ear, might be said to resemble a shout of joyous laughter or a cry of love in the green silence of the garden; affecting one like the loud music of a festival. There are to be seen the “Duke of Toll” tulip, the tulips called “simple precocious” in more than six hundred varieties; the “double precocious”; the late tulips, divided into unicolored, fine, superfine, and rectified; the fine, subdivided into violet, rose, and striped; then the monsters or parrots, the hybrids, the thieves; classified into a thousand orders of nobility and elegance; tinted with all the shades of color conceivable to the human mind: spotted, speckled, striped, edged, variegated, with leaves fringed, waved, festooned; decorated with gold and silver medals; distinguished by names of generals, painters, birds, rivers, poets, cities, queens, and a thousand loving and bold adjectives, which recall their metamorphoses, their adventures, and their triumphs, and leave in the mind a sweet confusion of beautiful images and pleasant thoughts.

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