A Bibliographical, Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany, Volume One eBook

A Bibliographical, Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany, Volume One by Thomas Frognall Dibdin

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PREFACE.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

If I had chosen to introduce myself to the greatest possible advantage to the reader, in this Preface to a Second Edition of the "*Bibliographical, Antiquarian, and Picturesque Tour*," I could not have done better than have borrowed the language of those Foreigners, who, by a translation of the Work (however occasionally vituperative their criticisms) have, in fact, conferred an honour upon its Author. In the midst of censure, sometimes dictated by spite, and sometimes sharpened by acrimony of feeling, it were in my power to select passages of commendation, which would not less surprise the Reader than they have done myself: while the history of this performance may be said to exhibit the singular phenomenon, of a traveller, usually lauding the countries through which he passes, receiving in return the reluctant approbation of those whose institutions, manners, and customs, have been praised by him. It is admitted, by the most sedulous and systematic of my opponents—M. CRAPELET—that "considering the quantity and quality of the ornaments and engravings of this Tour, one is surprised that its cost is so moderate."[1]

"Few books (says the Bibliographer of Dijon) have been executed with greater luxury. It is said that the expenses of printing and engraving amounted to 6000 l.—to nearly 140,000 franks of our money. It must be admitted that England is the only country in which such an undertaking could be carried into effect. Who in France would dare to risk such a sum—especially for three, volumes in octavo? He would be ruined, if he did."[2] I quote these passages simply to shew under what extraordinary obliquity of feeling those gentlemen must have set down to the task of translation and abuse—of THAT VERY WORK, which is here admitted to contain such splendid representations of the "bibliographical, antiquarian, and picturesque" beauties of their country.

A brief account of this foreign *travail* may be acceptable to the curious in literary history. MONS. LICQUET, the successor of M. Gourdin, as Chief Librarian to the Public Library at Rouen, led the way in the work of warfare. He translated the ninth Letter relating to that Public Library; of which translation especial mention is made at p. 99, post. This version was printed in 1821, for private, distribution; and only 100 copies were struck off. M. Crapelet, in whose office it was printed, felt the embers of discontent rekindled in his bosom as it passed through his press; and in the following year HE also stepped forward to discharge an arrow at the Traveller. Like his predecessor, he printed but a limited number; and as I have more particularly remarked upon the spirit of that version by way of "Introduction" to the original letter, in vol. ii. 209, &c. I shall not waste the time of the Reader by any notice of it in the present place. These two partial translators united their forces, about two years afterwards, and published the whole of the Tour, as it related to FRANCE, in four octavo volumes, in 1825. The ordinary copies were sold

for 48 francs, the large paper for 112 francs per copy. The wood-cuts only were republished by them. Of this conjoint, and more enlarged production, presently.

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Encouraged by the examples of Messrs. Licquet and Crapelet, a Bookbinder of the name of LESNE (whose poem upon his “Craft,” published in 1820, had been copiously quoted and *commended* by me in the previous edition) chose to plant his foot within this arena of controversy; and to address a letter to me; to which his model, M. Crapelet, was too happy to give circulation through the medium of his press.[3] To that letter the following metrical lines are prefixed; which the Reader would scarcely forgive me if I failed to amuse him by their introduction in this place. “*Lesne, Relieur Francais, a Mons. T.F. Dibdin, Ministre de la Religion, &c.*”

Avec un ris moqueur, je crois vous voir d’ici,
Dedaigneusement dire: Eh, que veut celui-ci?
Qu’ai-je donc de commun avec un vil artiste?
Un ouvrier francais, un *Bibliopegiste*?
Ose-t-on ravaler un Ministre a ce point?
Que me veut ce *Lesne*? Je ne le connais point.
Je crois me souvenir qu’a mon voyage en France,
Avec ses pauvres vers je nouai connaissance.
Mais c’est si peu de chose un poete a Paris!
Savez-vous bien, Monsieur, pourquoi je vous ecris?
C’est que je crois avoir le droit de vous ecrire.
Fussiez-vous cent fois plus qu’on ne saurait le dire,
Je vois dans un Ministre un homme tel que moi;
Devant Dieu je crois meme etre l’egal d’un roi.

The Letter however is in prose, with some very few exceptions; and it is just possible that the indulgent Reader may endure a specimen or two of the prose of M. Lesne, as readily as he has that of his poetry. These specimens are equally delectable, of their kind. Immediately after the preceding poetical burst, the French Bibliopegist continues thus:

D’apres cet exorde, vous pensez sans doute que, bien convaincu de ma dignite d’homme, je me crois en droit de vous dire franchement ma facon de penser; je vous la dirai, Monsieur. Si vous dirigiez un journal bibliographique; que vous fissiez, en un mot, le metier de journaliste, je serai peu surpris de voir dans votre Trentieme Lettre, une foule de choses hasardees, de mauvais calembourgs, de grossieretes, que nous ne rencontrons meme pas chez nos journalistes du dernier ordre, en ce qu’ils savent mieux leur monde, et que s’ils lancent une epigramme, fut-elle fausse, elle est au moins finement tournee. Mais vous etes ANGLAIS, et par cela seul dispense sans doute de cette politesse qui distingue si heureusement notre nation de la votre, et que vos compatriotes n’acquierent pour la plupart qu’apres un long sejour en France.” p. 6.

Towards the latter part of this most formidable “Tentamen Criticum,” the irritable author breaks out thus—“C’est une maladie Francaise de vouloir toujours imiter les Anglais;

ceux-ci, a leur tour, commencent a en etre atteints.” p. 19. A little farther it is thus: “Enfin c’est *en imitant* qu’on reussit presque toujours mal; vous en etes

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encore, une preuve evidente. J'ai vu en beaucoup d'endroits de votre Lettre, que vous avez voulu imiter *Sterne*;[4] qu'est-il arrive? Vous etes reste au-dessous de lui, comme tous les Imitateurs de notre bon La Fontaine sont restes en deca de l'immortel Fabuliste." p. 20. But most especially does the sensitive M. Lesne betray his surprise and apprehension, on a gratuitous supposition—thrown out by me, by way of pleasantry—that "Mr. Charles Lewis was going over to Paris, to establish there a modern School of Bookbinding." M. Lesne thus wrathfully dilates upon this supposition:
"Je me garderai bien de passer sous silence la derniere partie de votre Lettre; *un bruit assez etrange est venu jusqu'a vous*; et Charles Lewis doit vous quitter pour quelque temps pour etablir en France une ecole de reliure d'apres les principes du gout anglais; mais vous croyez, dites-vous, que ce projet est surement chimerique, ou que, si on le tentait, il serait de courte duree.Pour cette fois, Monsieur, votre pronostic serait tres juste; cette demarche serait une folie: il faudrait s'abuser sur l'engouement des amateurs francais, et ceux qui sont atteints de cette maladie ne sont pas en assez grand nombre pour soutenir un pareil etablissement. Oui, l'on aime votre genre de reliure; mais on aime les reliures, facon anglaise, faites par les Francais. Pensez-vous done, ou Charles Lewis pense-t-il, qu'il n'y ait plus d'esprit national en France?

> Allez, le sang Francaise coule encore dans nos veines;
> Nous pourrons eprouver des malheurs et des peines,
> Que nous devrons peut etre a vous autres Anglais;
> Mais nous voulons rester, nous resterons, Francais!

Ainsi, que Charles Lewis ne se derange pas; qu'il cesse, s'il les a commences, les preparatifs de sa descente; qu'il ne prive pas ses compatriotes d'un artiste soi-disant inimitable. Nous en avons ici qui le valent, et qui se feront un plaisir de perpeteur parmi nous le bon gout, l'elegance, et la noble simplicite. p. 25.[5]

So much for M. Lesne. I have briefly noticed M. Peignot, the Bibliographer of Dijon. That worthy wight has made the versions of my Ninth and Thirtieth Letters (First Edition) by M.M. Licquet and Crapelet, the substratum of his first brochure entitled *Varietes, Notices et Raretes Bibliographiques*, *Paris*, 1822: it being a supplement to his previous Work of *Curiosites Bibliographiques*."[6] It is not always agreeable for an Author to have his Works reflected through the medium of a translation; especially where the Translator suffers a portion, however small, of his *own* atrabiliousness, to be mixed up with the work translated: nor is it always safe for a third person to judge of the merits of the original through such a medium. Much allowance must therefore be made for M. Peignot; who, to say the truth, at the conclusion of his labours,

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seems to think that he has waded through a great deal of *dirt* of some kind or other, which might have been better avoided; and that, in consequence, some general declaration, by way of *wiping, off* a portion of the adhering mud, is due to the original Author. Accordingly, at the end of his analysis of M. Licquet's version, (which forms the second Letter in the brochure) he does me the honour to devote seven pages to the notice of my humble lucubrations:—and he prefaces this "*Notice des Ouvrages de M. Dibdin"*, by the following very handsome tribute to their worth:
Si, dans les deux Lettres ou nous avons rendu compte des traductions partielles du voyage de M.D., nous avons partage l'opinion des deux estimable traducteurs, sur quelques erreurs et quelques inconvenances echappees a l'auteur anglais, nous sommes bien eloigne d'envelopper dans le meme blame, tout ce qui est sorte de sa plume; car il y auroit injustice a lui refuser des connaissances tres etendues en histoire litteraire, et en bibliographie: nous le disons franchement, il faudroit fermer les yeux a la lumiere, ou etre d'une partialite revoltante, pour ne pas convenir que, juste appreciateur de tous les tresors bibliographiques qu'il a le bonheur d'avoir sous la main, M. Dibdin en a fait connoitre en detail toute la richesse dans de nombreux d'ouvrages, ou tres souvent le luxe d'erudition se trouve en harmonie avec le luxe typographique qu'il y a etale.

At the risk of incurring the imputation of vanity, I annex the preceding extract; because I am persuaded that the candid Reader will appreciate it in its proper light. I might, had I chosen to do so, have lengthened the extract by a yet more complimentary passage: but enough of M. Peignot—who, so far from suffering ill will or acerbity to predominate over a kind disposition, hath been pleased, since his publication, to write to me a very courteous Letter,[7] and to solicit a "continuance of my favours."

Agreeably to the intimation expressed in a preceding page, I am now, in due order, to notice the labours of my translators M.M. LICQUET and CRAPELET. Their united version appeared in 1825, in four octavo volumes, of which the small paper was but indifferently well printed.[8] The preface to the first two volumes is by M. Licquet: and it is not divested of point and merit. It begins by attacking the *Quarterly Review*, (June 1821, p. 147.) for its severity of animadversion on the supposed listlessness and want of curiosity of the French in exploring the architectural antiquities of their country; and that, in consequence of such supineness, the English, considering them as their own property, have described them accordingly. "The decision (says the French translator) is severe; happily it is without foundation." After having devoted several pages to observations by way of reply to that critical Journal, M. Licquet continues thus:—unless I have unintentionally misrepresented him.

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The Englishman who travels in Normandy, meets, at every step, with reminiscences of his kings, his ancestors, his institutions, and his customs. Churches yet standing, after the lapse of seven centuries; majestic ruins; tombs—even to the very sound of the clock—all unite in affecting, here, the heart of a British subject: every thing seems to tell him that, in former times, HERE was his country; here the residence of his sovereigns; and here the cradle of his manners. This was more than sufficient to enflame the lively imagination of Mr. D. and to decide him to visit, in person, a country already explored by a great number of his countrymen; but he conceived that his narrative should embody other topics than those which ordinarily appeared in the text of his predecessors.“His work then is not only a description of castles, towns, churches, public monuments of every kind:—it is not only a representation of the general aspect of the country, as to its picturesque appearances—but it is an extended, minute, though occasionally inexact, account of public and private libraries; with reflections upon certain customs of the country, and upon the character of those who inhabit it. It is in short the personal history of the author, throughout the whole length of his journey. Not the smallest incident, however indifferent, but what has a place in the letters of the Bibliographer. Thus, he mentions every Inn where he stops: recommends or scolds the landlord—according to his civility or exaction. Has the author passed a bad night? the reader is sure to know it on the following morning. On the other hand, has he had a good night’s rest in a comfortable bed? [dans un lit *comfortable*?] We are as sure to know this also, as soon as he awakes:—and thus far we are relieved from anxiety about the health of the traveller. Cold and heat—fine weather and bad weather—every variation of atmosphere is scrupulously recorded.

What immediately follows, is unworthy of M. Licquet; because it not only implies a charge of a heinous description—accusing me of an insidious intrusion into domestic circles, a violation of confidence, and a systematic derision of persons and things—but because the French translator, exercising that sense and shrewdness which usually distinguish him, MUST have known that such a charge *could* not have been founded in FACT. He must have known that any gentleman, leaving England with those letters which brought me in contact with some of the first circles on the Continent, MUST have left it without leaving his character *behind* him; and that such a character could not, in the natural order of things—seen even through the sensitive medium of a French critic—have been guilty of the grossness and improprieties imputed to me by M. Licquet. I treat therefore this “damnation in wholesale” with scorn and contempt: and hasten to impress the reader with a more favourable opinion of my Norman translator. He *will* have it that

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“the English Traveller’s imagination is lively and ardent—and his spirit, that of raillery and lightness. He examines as he runs along; that is to say, he does not give himself time to examine; he examines ill; he deceives himself; and he subjects his readers to be deceived with him. He traverses, at a hard trot, one of the most ancient towns in France; puts his head out of his carriage window—and boldly decides that the town is of the time of Francis I."![9] p. xviij.

There is pleasantry, and perhaps some little truth, in this vein of observation; and it had been better, perhaps, for the credit of the good taste and gentleman-like feeling of *Mons*. Licquet, if he had uniformly maintained his character in these respects. I have however, in the subsequent pages,[10] occasionally grappled with my annotator in proving the fallacy, or the want of charity, of many of his animadversions: and the reader probably may not be displeased, if, by way of “avant propos,” I indulge him here with a specimen of them—taken from his preface. M. Licquet says, that I “create scenes; arrange a drama; trace characters; imagine a dialogue, frequently in French—-and in what French—gracious God!—in assigning to postilions a ridiculous language, and to men of the world the language of postilions.” These be sharp words:[11] but what does the Reader imagine may be the probable “result” of the English Traveller’s inadvertencies?... A result, ("gracious Heaven!”) very little anticipated by the author. Let him ponder well upon the awful language which ensues. “What (says M. Licquet) will quickly be the result, with us, of such indiscretions as those of which M. Dibdin is guilty? The necessity of SHUTTING OUR PORTS, or at least of placing a GUARD UPON OUR LIPS!” There is some consolation however left for me, in balancing this tremendous denunciation by M. Licquet’s eulogy of my good qualities—which a natural diffidence impels me to quote in the original words of their author.

“A Dieu ne plaise, toutefois, que j’accuse ici LE COEUR de M. Dibdin. Je n’ai jamais eu l’honneur de le voir: je ne le connais que par ses ecrits; principalement par son *Splendid Tour*, et je ne balance pas a declarer que l’auteur doit etre doue d’une ame honnete, et de ces qualites fondamentales qui constituent l’homme de bien. Il prefere sa croyance; mais il respecte la croyance des autres; son erudition parait....[12] variee. Son amour pour les antiquites est immense; et par antiquites j’entends ici tout ce qui est *antique* ou seulement *ancien*, quellesque soient d’ailleurs la nature et la forme des objets.” Pref. p. xv. xvij.

Once more; and to conclude with M. Licquet. After these general observations upon the *Text* of the Tour, M. Licquet favours us with the following—upon the *Plates*. “These plates (says he) are intended to represent some of the principal monuments; the most beautiful landscapes, and the most remarkable

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persons, comprehending even the servants of an inn. If *talent* be sought in these Engravings, it will doubtless be found in them; but strangers must not seek for *fidelity* of representation from what is before their eyes. The greater number of the Designs are, in some sort, ideal compositions, which, by resembling every thing, resemble nothing in particular: and it is worthy of remark that the Artist, in imitation of the Author, seems to have thought that he had only to shew himself *clever*, without troubling himself to be *faithful*." To this, I reply in the very words of M. Licquet himself: "the decision is severe; luckily it is unjust." The only portions of the designs of their skilful author, which may be taxed with a tendency to extravagance, are the *groups*: which, when accompanied by views of landscapes, or of monuments, are probably too profusely indulged in; but the *individuals*, constituting those groups, belong precisely to the *country* in which they are represented. In the first and second volumes they are *French*; in the third they are *Germans*—all over. Will M. Licquet pretend to say that the churches, monasteries, streets, and buildings, with which the previous Edition of this Tour is so elaborately embellished, have the slightest tendency to IMAGINED SCENERY? If he do, his optics must be peculiarly his own. I have, in a subsequent page, (p. 34, note) slightly alluded to the cost and risk attendant on the Plates; but I may confidently affirm, from experience, that two thirds of the expense incurred would have secured the same sale at the same price. However, the die is cast; and the voice of lamentation is fruitless.

I now come to the consideration of M. Licquet's coadjutor, M. CRAPELET. Although the line of conduct pursued by that very singular gentleman be of an infinitely more crooked description than that of his Predecessor, yet, in this place, I shall observe less respecting it; inasmuch as, in the subsequent pages, (pp. 209, 245, 253, 400, &c.) the version and annotations of M. Crapelet have been somewhat minutely discussed. Upon the SPIRIT which could give rise to such a version, and such annotations, I will here only observe, that it very much resembles that of searchers of our street-pavements; who, with long nails, scrape out the dirt from the interstices of the stones, with the hope of making a discovery of some lost treasure which may compensate the toil of perseverance. The love of lucre may, or may not, have influenced my Parisian translator; but the love of discovery of latent error, and of exposure of venial transgression, has undoubtedly, from beginning to end, excited his zeal and perseverance. That carping spirit, which shuts its eyes upon what is liberal and kind, and withholds its assent to what is honourable and just, it is the distinguished lot—and, perhaps, as the translator may imagine, the distinguished felicity—of M. Crapelet to possess.

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Never was greater reluctance displayed in admitting even the palpable truths of a text, than what is displayed in the notes of M. Crapelet: and whenever a concurring sentiment comes from him, it seems to exude like his heart's life-blood. Having already answered, in detail, his separate publication confined to my 30th Letter[13]—(the 8th of the second volume, in *this* edition) and having replied to those animadversions which appear in his translation of the whole of the second volume, in this edition—it remains here only to consign the Translator to the careful and impartial consideration of the Reader, who, it is requested, may be umpire between both parties. Not to admit that the text of this Edition is in many places improved, from the suggestions of my Translators, by corrections of "Names of Persons, Places, and Things," would be to betray a stubbornness or obtuseness of feeling which certainly does not enter into the composition of its author.

I now turn, not without some little anxiety, yet not wholly divested of the hope of a favourable issue, to the character and object of the Edition HERE presented to the Public. It will be evident, at first glance, that it is greatly "shorn of its beams" in regard to graphic decorations and typographical splendour. Yet its garb, if less costly, is not made of coarse materials: for it has been the wish and aim of the Publishers, that this impression should rank among books worthy of the DISTINGUISHED PRESS from which it issues. Nor is it unadorned by the sister art of *Engraving*; for, although on a reduced scale, some of the repeated plates may even dispute the palm of superiority with their predecessors. Several of the GROUPS, executed on *copper* in the preceding edition, have been executed on *wood* in the present; and it is for the learned in these matters to decide upon their relative merits. To have attempted portraits upon wood, would have inevitably led to failure. There are however, a few NEW PLATES, which cannot fail to elicit the Purchaser's particular attention. Of these, the portraits of the *Abbe de la Rue* (procured through the kind offices of my excellent friend Mr. Douce), and the *Comte de Brienne*, the *Gold Medal of Louis XII*. the *Stone Pulpit of Strasbourg Cathedral,* and the *Prater near Vienna*—are particularly to be noticed.[14] This Edition has also another attraction, rather popular in the present day, which may add to its recommendation even with those possessed of its precursor. It contains fac-similes of the AUTOGRAPHS of several distinguished Literati and Artists upon the Continent;[15] who, looking at the text of the work through a less jaundiced medium than the Parisian translator, have continued a correspondence with the Author, upon the most friendly terms, since its publication. The accuracy of these fac-similes must be admitted, even by the parties themselves, to be indisputable. Among them, are several, executed by hands.. which now CEASE to guide the pen! I had long and fondly hoped to have been gratified by increasing testimonies of the warmth of heart which had directed several of the pens in question—hoped ... even against the admonition of a pagan poet ...

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"Vitae summa brevis SPEM nos vetat inchoare LONGAM."

But such hopes are now irretrievably cut off; and the remembrance of the past must solace the anticipations of the future.

So much respecting the *decorative* department of this new edition of the Tour. I have now to request the Reader's attention to a few points more immediately connected with what may be considered its *intrinsic* worth. In the first place, it may be pronounced to be an Edition both *abridged* and *enlarged*: abridged, as regards the lengthiness of description of many of the MSS. and Printed Books—and enlarged, as respects the addition, of many notes; partly of a controversial, and partly of an obituary, description. The "Antiquarian and Picturesque" portions remain nearly as heretofore; and upon the whole I doubt whether the amputation of matter has extended beyond *an eighth* of what appeared in the previous edition. It had long ago been suggested to me—from a quarter too high and respectable to doubt the wisdom of its decision—that the Contents of this Tour should be made known to the Public through a less costly medium:—that the objects described in it were, in a measure, new and interesting—but that the high price of the purchase rendered it, to the majority of Readers, an inaccessible publication. I hope that these objections are fully met, and successfully set aside, by the Work in its PRESENT FORM. To have produced it, *wholly divested* of ornament, would have been as foreign to my habits as repugnant to my feelings. I have therefore, as I would willingly conclude, hit upon the happy medium—between sterility and excess of decoration.

After all, the greater part of the ground here trodden, yet continues to be untrodden ground to the public. I am not acquainted with any publication which embraces all the objects here described; nor can I bring myself to think that a perusal of the first and third volumes may not be unattended with gratification of a peculiar description, to the lovers of antiquities and picturesque beauties. The second volume is rather the exclusive province of the Bibliographer. In retracing the steps here marked out, I will not be hypocrite enough to dissemble a sort of triumphant feeling which accompanies a retrospection of the time, labour, and money devoted.. in doing justice, according to my means, to the attractions and worth of the Countries which these pages describe. Every such effort is, in its way, a NATIONAL effort. Every such attempt unites, in stronger bonds, the reciprocities of a generous feeling between rival Nations; and if my reward has not been in *wealth*, it has been in the hearty commendation of the enlightened and the good: "Mea me virtute involvo."[16]

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I cannot boast of the commendatory strains of public Journals in my own country. No intellectual steam-engine has been put in motion to manufacture a review of unqualified approbation of the Work now submitted to the public eye—at an expense, commensurate with the ordinary means of purchase. With the exception of an indirect and laudatory notice of it, in the immortal pages of the Author of Waverley, of the Sketch book, and of Reginald Dalton, this Tour has had to fight its way under the splendour of its own banners, and in the strength of its own cause. The previous Edition is now a scarce and a costly book. Its Successor has enough to recommend it, even to the most fastidious collector, from the elegance of its type and decorations, and from the reasonableness of its price; but the highest ambition of its author is, that it may be a part of the furniture of every Circulating Library in the Kingdom. If he were not conscious that GOOD would result from its perusal, he would not venture upon such an avowal. "FELIX FAUSTUMQUE SIT!"

[1] M. Crapelet is of course speaking of the PREVIOUS edition of the Tour. He continues thus: "M. Dibdin, dans son voyage en France, a visite nos departemens de l'ouest et de l'est, toutes leurs principales villes, presque tous les lieux remarquables par les antiquites, par les monumens, par les beautes du site, ou par les souvenirs historiques. Il a visite les chateaux, les eglises, les chapelles; il a observe nos moeurs, nos coutumes; nos habitudes; il a examine nos Musees et nos premiers Cabinets de curiosite; il s'est concentre dans nos Bibliotheques. Il parle de notre litterature et des hommes de lettres, des arts et de nos artistes; il critique les personnes comme les choses; il loue quelquefois, il plaisante souvent; la vivacite de son esprit l'egare presque toujours." A careful perusal of the notes in THIS edition will shew that my veracity has not "almost always led me astray."

[2] GABRIEL PEIGNOT; *Varietes, Notices et Raretes Bibliographiques, 1822, 8vo. p. 4*.

[3] *Lettre d'un Relieur Francais a un Bibliographe Anglais; a Paris, de l'Imprimerie de Crapelet*, 1822, 8vo. p.p. 28.

[4] It is a little curious that M. Lesne has not been singular in this supposition. My amiable and excellent friend M. Schweighaeuser of Strasbourg had the same notion: at least, he told me that the style of the Tour very frequently reminded him of that of Sterne. I can only say—and say very honestly—that I as much thought of Sterne as I did of ... William Caxton!

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[5] Copious as are the above quotations, from the thoroughly original M. Lesne, I cannot resist the risking of the readers patience and good opinion, by the subjoining of the following passage—with which the brochure concludes. “D’apres la multitude de choses hasardees que contient votre Lettre, vous en aurez probablement recu quelques unes de personnes que vous aurez choquees plus que moi, qui vous devrais plutot des remercimens pour avoir pris la peine de traduire quelques pages de mon ouvrage; mais il n’en est pas de meme de bien des gens, et cela ne doit pas les engager a etre autant communicatif avec vous, si vous reveniez en France. Je souhaite, dans ce dernier cas, que tous les typographes, les bibliothecaires, les bibliognostes, les bibliographes, les bibliolathes, les bibliomanes, les biblophiles, les bibliopoles, ceux qui exercent la bibliuguiancie et les bibliopegistes meme, soient pour vous autant de bibliotaphes; vous ne seriez plus a meme de critiquer ce que vous sauriez et ce que vous ne sauriez pas, comme vous l’aviez si souvent fait inconsiderement:

Mais tous vos procedes ne nous etonnent pas,
C’est le sort des Francais de faire DES INGRATS;
On les voit servir ceux qui leur furent nuisibles;
Je crois que sur ce point ils sont incorrigibles.

Je vous avouerai cependant que je suis loin d’etre fache de vous voir en agir ainsi envers mes compatriotes: je desirerais que beaucoup d’Anglais fissent de meme; cela pourrait desangliciser ou desanglomaniser les Francais. Vous, Monsieur, qui aimez les mots nouveaux, aidez-moi, je vous prie, a franciser, a purifier celui-ci. Quant a moi

Je ne fus pas nourri de Grec et de Latin,
J’appris a veiller tard, a me lever matin,
La nature est le livre ou je fis mes etudes,
Et tous ces mots nouveaux me semblent long-temps rudes;
Je trouve qu’on ne peut tres bien les prononcer
Sans affectation, au moins sans grimacer;
Que tous ces mots tires des langues etrangeres,
Devraient etre l’objet de critiques severes.
Faites donc de l’esprit en depit du bon sens,
On vous critiquera; quant a moi j’y consens.

Je terminerai cette longue Lettre de deux manieres: a l’anglaise, en vous souhaitant le bon jour ou le bon soir, suivant l’heure a laquelle vous la recevrez; a la francaise, en vous priant de me croire,

Monsieur,

Votre tres humble serviteur,

LESNE.

[6] The above brochure consists of two Letters; each to an anonymous bibliographical “Confrere:” one is upon the subject of M. Crapelet’s version—the other, upon that of M. Licquet’s version—of a portion of the Tour. The notice of the Works of the Author of the Tour; a list of

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the prices for which the Books mentioned in it have been sold; a Notice of the “Hours of Charlemagne” (see vol. ii. 199) and some account of the late Mr. Porson “Librarian of the London Institution”—form the remaining portion of this little volume of about 160 pages. For the “Curiosites Bibliographiques,” consult the *Bibliomania*, pp. 90, 91, &c. &c.

[7] This letter accompanied another Work of M. Peignot, relating to editions and translations of the Roman Classics:—and as the reader will find, in the ensuing pages, that I have been sometime past labouring under the frightful, but popular, mania of AUTOGRAPHS, I subjoin with no small satisfaction a fac-simile of the Autograph of this enthusiastic and most diligent Bibliographer.

[Autograph: Votre tres humble et obeissant serviteur, G. Peignot]

[8] See page xviii.—ante.

[9] M. Licquet goes on to afford an exemplification of this precipitancy of conjecture, in my having construed the word *Allemagne*—a village near to Caen—by that of *Germany*. I refer the reader to p. 168 post, to shew with what perfect frankness I have admitted and corrected this “*hippopotamos*” error.

[10] More especially at pages 82, 100, 367.

[11] “Sharp” as they may be, they are softened, in some measure, by the admission of my bitterest annotator, M. Crapelet, that “I speak and understand the French language well.” vol. ii. p. 253. It is painful and unusual with me to have recourse to such apparently self-complimentary language; but when an adversary drives one into a corner, and will not allow of fair space and fair play, one must fight with feet as well as with hands ... “manibus pedibusque” ...

[12] This *hiatus* must not be filled by the Author: ... “haud equidem tali me dignor honore.”

[13] See vol. ii. p. 210-11.

[14] See vol. i. p. 186, vol. ii. pp. 49, 296, 392. The other fresh plates are, *Portrait of the Author*, frontispiece; Bird’s-eye views of the

Monasteries of St. Peter's, Salzburg, and of Molk: vol. iii. pp. 195, 248, 381, *Black Eagle Inn*, Munich, p. 156. But the Reader will be pleased to examine the *List of Plates prefixed*—in a preceding page.

[15] Among these distinguished Literati, I here enrol with peculiar satisfaction the names of the MARQUIS DE CHATEAUGIRON and *Mons*. DURAND DE LANCON. No opportunity having occurred in the subsequent pages to incorporate fac-similes of the Autographs of these distinguished *Bibliophiles*, they are annexed in the present place.

[Autographs: M. de Chateaugiron, D. de Lancon]

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[16] It is more than a negative consolation to me, to have lived to see the day, that, although comparatively impoverished, *others* have been enriched by my labours. When I noticed a complete set of my lucubrations on LARGE PAPER, valued at 250_l_. in a bookseller's catalogue, (Mr. Pickering's) and afterwards learnt that this set had found a PURCHASER, I had reason to think that I had "deserved well" of the Literature of my country: and I resolved to live "mihi carior" in consequence.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL

Antiquarian

AND

PICTURESQUE TOUR.

The Notes peculiar to THIS EDITION are distinguished by being inserted between brackets: as thus:—[]

*** The Index is placed at the end of the First Volume, for the purpose of equalising the size of the Volumes.

[Illustration]

LETTER I.

PASSAGE TO DIEPPE.

Dieppe, April 20, 1818.

At length then, my dear Friend, the long projected "*Bibliographical, Antiquarian*,[17] and *Picturesque Tour"* is carried into execution; and the Tourist is safely landed on the shores of Normandy. "Vous voila donc, Monsieur a Dieppe!"—exclaimed the landlord of the Grand Hotel d'Angleterre—as I made my way through a vociferating crowd of old and young, of both sexes, with cards of addresses in their hands; entreating me to take up my abode at their respective hotels.... But I know your love of method, and that you will be angry with me if I do not "begin at the beginning."

It was surely on one of the finest of all fine days that I left my home, on the 14th of this present month, for the land of castles, churches, and ancient chivalry. The wind from the south-east was blowing pretty smartly at the time; but the sky was without a cloud,

and I could not but look upon the brilliancy of every external object as a favourable omen of the progress and termination of my tour. Adverse winds, or the indolence or unwillingness of the Captain, detained us at Brighton two whole days—instead of sailing, as we were led to expect, on the day following our arrival. We were to form the first ship's company which had visited France this season. On approaching our gallant little bark, the *Nancy*,[18] commanded by Captain BLABER, the anchor was weighed, and hoisting sail, we stood out to sea. The day began to improve upon us. The gloomy appearances of the morning gradually brightened up. A host of black clouds rolled heavily away. The sun at length shone in his full meridian splendour, and the ocean sparkled as we cut through its emerald waves. As I supposed us to near the French coast, I strained my eyes to obtain an early glimpse of something in the shape of cliff or jettie. But the wind continued determinedly in the south east: the waves rose in larger masses; and our little vessel threw up a heavy shower of foam as we entered on the various tacks.

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It is a grand sight—that vast, and apparently interminable ocean—

.... maria undique et undique coelum!

We darted from Beechy Head upon a long tack for the French coast: and as the sun declined, we found it most prudent to put the Captain's advice, of going below, into execution. Then commenced all the miseries of the voyage. The moon had begun to assert her ascendancy, when, racked with torture and pain in our respective berths, a tremendous surge washed completely over the deck, sky-light, and binnacle: and down came, in consequence, drenched with the briny wave, the hardiest of our crew, who, till then, had ventured to linger upon deck. That crew was various; and not without a few of the natives of those shores which we were about to visit.

To cut short my ship-narrative, suffice it only farther to say, that, towards midnight, we heard our Captain exclaim that he saw "the lights of Dieppe"—a joyful sound to us miserable wretches below. I well remember, at this moment, looking up towards the deck with a cheerless eye, and perceiving the light of the moon still lingering upon the main-sail,—but I shall never forget how much more powerfully my sensations were excited, when, as the dawn of day made objects visible, I looked up, and saw an old wrinkle-visaged sailor, with a red night cap on begirt with large blue, puckered, short petticoats—in possession of the helm—about to steer the vessel into harbour![19]

About seven we were all upon deck. The sea was yet swoln and agitated, and of a dingy colour: while

.... heavily with clouds came on the day,

as we slowly approached the outward harbour of DIEPPE. A grey morning with drizzling rain, is not the best accompaniment of a first visit to a foreign shore. Nevertheless every thing was new, and strange, and striking; and the huge crucifix, to the right, did not fail to make a very forcible impression. As we approached the, inner harbour, the shipping and the buildings more distinctly presented themselves. The harbour is large, and the vessels are entirely mercantile, with a plentiful sprinkling of fishing smacks: but the manner in which the latter harmonized with the tint and structure of the houses—the bustle upon shore—the casks, deal planks, ropes, and goods of every description upon the quays,—all formed a most animated and interesting scene. The population seemed countless, and chiefly females; whose high caps and enormous ear-rings, with the rest of their paraphernalia, half persuaded me that instead of being some few twenty-five leagues only from our own white cliffs, I had in fact dropt upon the Antipodes! What a scene (said I to my companion) for our CALCOTT to depict![20] It was a full hour before we landed—saluted, and even assailed on all sides, with entreaties to come to certain hotels. We were not long however in fixing our residence at the *Hotel d'Angleterre*, of which the worthy *Mons*. De La Rue[21] is the landlord.

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[17] [Mons. Licquet, my translator, thinks, that in using the word "*Antiquaire*"—as appears in the previous edition of this work, incorporated in the gallicised sentence of "*Voyage Bibliographique Antiquaire*, &c."—I have committed an error; as the word "*Archeologique*" ought, in his opinion, to have been adopted—and he supposes that he best expresses my meaning by its adoption. Such a correction may be better French; but "Archaeological" is not exactly what is usually meant—in our language—by "Antiquarian."]

[18] This smart little vessel, of about 70 tons burden, considered to be the fastest sailing packet from Dieppe, survived our voyage only about eighteen months. Her end had nearly proved fatal to every soul on board of her. In a dark night, in the month of September, when bound for Dieppe, she was struck by a heavy London brig. The crew was with difficulty saved—and the vessel went down within about twenty-five minutes after the shock.

[19] The English are not permitted to bring their own vessels into harbour—for obvious reasons.

[20] [This "scene" has been, in fact, subsequently depicted by. the masterly pencil of J.M.W.TURNER, Esq. R. A: and the picture, in which almost all the powers of that surprising Artist are concentrated, was lately offered for sale by public auction. How it was suffered to be *bought in* for three hundred and eighty guineas, is at once a riddle and a reproach to public taste.]

[21] [I learn that he is since DECEASED. Thus the very first chapter of this second edition has to record an instance of the casualties and mutabilities which the short space of ten years has effected. *Mons*. De la Rue was a man of worth and of virtue.]

LETTER II.

DIEPPE. FISHERIES. STREETS. CHURCHES OF ST. JAQUES AND ST. REMY. DIVINE
WORSHIP. MILITARY MASS.

The town of Dieppe contains a population of about twenty-thousand souls.[22] Of these, by much the greater *stationary* part are females; arising from one third at least of the males being constantly engaged in the FISHERIES. As these fisheries are the main support of the inhabitants, it is right that you should know something about them. The *herring* fishery takes place twice a year: in August and October. The August fishery is

carried on along the shores of England and the North. From sixty to eighty vessels, of from twenty-five to thirty tons burthen each, with about fifteen men in each vessel, are usually employed. They are freighted with salt and empty barrels, for seasoning and stowing the fish, and they return about the end of October. The herrings caught in August are considerably preferable to those caught in October. The October fishery is carried on with smaller vessels, along the coast of France from Boulogne to Havre. From one hundred and twenty, to one hundred and thirty vessels, are engaged in this latter navigation; and the fish, which is smaller, and of inferior flavour to that caught upon the English coasts, is sent almost entirely to the provinces and to Paris, where it is eaten fresh. So much for the herring.[23]

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The *Mackarel* fishery usually commences towards the month of July, along the coast of Picardy; because, being a sort of fish of passage, it gets into the channel in the month of April. It then moves towards the straits of Dover, as summer approaches. For this fishery they make use of large decked-vessels, from twenty to fifty tons burthen, manned with from twelve to twenty men. There are however Dieppe boats employed in this fishery which go as far as the Scilly Islands and Ushant, towards the middle of April. They carry with them the salt requisite to season the fish, which are afterwards sent to Paris, and to the provinces in the interior of France. The *cod fishery* is divided into the fresh and dried fish. The former continues from the beginning of February to the end of April—and the vessels employed, which go as far as Newfoundland, are two deckers, and from one hundred to one hundred and fifty tons burthen—although, in fact, they rarely carry more than fifteen tons for fear of spoiling the fish. The dried-cod fishery is carried on in vessels of all sizes; but it is essential that they be of a certain depth, because the fish is more cumbersome than weighty. The vessels however usually set sail about the month of March or April, in order that they may have the advantage of the summer season, to dry the fish. There are vessels which go to Newfoundland laden with brandy, flour, beans, treacle, linen and woollen cloths, which they dispose of to the inhabitants of the French colonies in exchange for dried cod. This latter species of commerce may be carried on in the summer months—as late as July.

In the common markets for retail trade, they are not very nice in the quality or condition of their fish; and enormous conger eels, which would be instantly rejected by the middling, or even lower classes in England, are, at Dieppe, bought with avidity and relished with glee. A few francs will procure a dish of fish large enough for a dozen people. The quays are constantly crowded, but there seems to be more of bustle than of business. The town is certainly picturesque, notwithstanding the houses are very little more than a century old, and the streets are formal and comparatively wide. Indeed it should seem that the houses were built expressly for Noblemen and Gentlemen, although they are inhabited by tradesmen, mechanics, and artizans, in apparently very indifferent circumstances. I scarcely saw six private houses which could be called elegant, and not a gentleman's carriage has been yet noticed in the streets. But if the *Dieppois* are not rich, they seem happy, and are in a constant state of occupation. A woman sells her wares in an open shop, or in an insulated booth, and sits without her bonnet (as indeed do all the tradesmen's wives), and works or sings as humour sways her. A man sells gingerbread in an open shed, and in the intervals of his customer's coming, reads some popular history or romance.

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Most of the upper windows are wholly destitute of glass; but are smothered with clothes, rags, and wall flowers. The fragrance emitted from these flowers affords no unpleasing antidote to odors of a very different description; and here we begin to have a too convincing proof of the general character of the country in regard to the want of cleanliness. A little good sense, or rather a better-regulated police, would speedily get rid of such nuisances. The want of public sewers is another great and grievous cause of smells of every description. At Dieppe there are fountains in abundance; and if some of the limpid streams, which issue from them, were directed to cleansing the streets, (which are excellently well paved) the effect would be both more salubrious and pleasant—especially to the sensitive organs of Englishmen.

We had hardly concluded our breakfasts, when a loud and clattering sound was heard; and down came, in a heavy trot, with sundry ear-piercing crackings of the whip, the thundering *Diligence*: large, lofty, and of most unwieldy dimensions: of a structure, too, strong enough to carry a half score of elephants. The postilion is an animal perfectly *sui generis*: gay, alert, and living upon the best possible terms with himself. He wears the royal livery, red and blue; with a plate of the fleur de lis upon his left arm. His hair is tied behind, in a thick, short, tightly fastened queue: with powder and pomatum enough to weather a whole winter's storm and tempest.[24] As he never rises in his stirrups,[25] I leave you to judge of the merciless effects of this ever-beating club upon the texture of his jacket. He is however fond of his horses: is well known by them; and there is all flourish and noise, and no sort of cruelty, in his treatment of them. His spurs are of tremendous dimensions; such as we see sticking to the heels of knights in illuminated Mss. of the XVth century. He has nothing to do with the ponderous machine behind him. He sits upon the near of the two wheel horses, with three horses before him. His turnings are all adroitly and correctly made; and, upon the whole, he is a clever fellow in the exercise of his office.

You ought to know, that, formerly, this town was greatly celebrated for its manufactures in *Ivory*; but the present aspect of the ivory-market affords only a faint notion of what it might have been in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I purchased a few subordinate articles (chiefly of a religious character) and which I shall preserve rather as a matter of evidence than of admiration. There is yet however a considerable manufacture of *thread lace*; and between three and four thousand females are supposed to earn a comfortable livelihood by it.[26]

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My love of ecclesiastical architecture quickly induced me to visit the CHURCHES; and I set out with two English gentlemen to pay our respects to the principal church, St. JAQUES. As we entered it, a general gloom prevailed, and a sort of premature evening came on; while the clatter of the sabots was sufficiently audible along the aisles. In making the circuit of the side chapels, an unusual light proceeded from a sort of grated door way. We approached, and witnessed a sight which could not fail to rivet our attention. In what seemed to be an excavated interior, were several figures, cut in stone, and coloured after life, (of which they were the size) representing the *Three Maries, St. John, and Joseph of Arimathea*.. in the act of entombing Christ: the figure of our Saviour being half sunk into the tomb. The whole was partially illuminated by some two dozen of shabby and nearly consumed tallow candles; affording a striking contrast to the increasing darkness of the nave and the side aisles. We retired, more and more struck with the novelty of every object around us, to our supper and beds, which were excellent; and a good night's rest made me forget the miseries of the preceding evening.

The next morning, being Sunday, we betook ourselves in good time to the service of ST. JAQUES:[27] but on our way thither, we saw a waxen figure of Christ (usually called an "Ecce Homo") enclosed within a box, of which the doors were opened. The figure and box are the property of the man who plays on a violin, close to the box; and who is selling little mass books, supposed to be rendered more sacred by having been passed across the feet and hands of the waxen Christ. Such a mongrel occupation, and such a motley group, must strike you with astonishment—as a Sunday morning's recreation.

[Illustration]

By half past ten the congregation had assembled within the Church; and every side-chapel (I think about twelve in number) began to be filled by the penitent flocks: each bringing, or hiring, a rush-bottomed chair—with which the churches are pretty liberally furnished, and of which the *Tarif* (or terms of hire) is pasted upon the walls. There were, I am quite sure, full eighteen women to one man: which may in part be accounted for, by the almost uniform absence of a third of the male population occupied in the fisheries. I think there could not have been fewer than two thousand souls present. But what struck me as the most ludicrously solemn thing I had ever beheld, was a huge tall figure, dressed like a drum-major, with a large cocked hat and three white plumes, (the only covered male figure in the congregation,) a broad white sash upon a complete suit of red, including red stockings;—representing what in our country is called a *Beadle*. He was a sturdy, grim-looking fellow; bearing an halberd in his right hand, which he wielded with a sort of pompous swing, infusing terror into the young, and commanding the

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admiration of the old. I must not, however, omit to inform you, that half the service was scarcely performed when the preacher mounted a pulpit, with a black cap on, and read a short sermon from a printed book. I shall long have a distinct recollection of the figure and attitude of the *Verger* who attended the preacher. He followed him to the pulpit, fastened the door, became stationary, and rested his left arm over the railings of the stairs. Anon, he took out his snuff-box with his right hand, and regaled himself with a pinch of snuff in the most joyous and comfortably-abstracted manner imaginable. There he remained till the conclusion of the discourse; not one word of which seemed to afford him half the satisfaction as did the contents of his snuff-box.

Military Mass was performed about an hour after, at the church of ST. REMY, whither I strolled quietly, to witness the devotion of the congregation previous to the entry of the soldiers; and I will not dissemble being much struck and gratified by what I saw. There was more simplicity: a smaller congregation: softer music: a lower-toned organ; less rush of people; and in very many of the flock the most intense and unfeigned expression of piety. At the elevation of the host, from the end of the choir, (near which was suspended a white flag with the portrait of the present King[28] upon it) a bell was rung from the tower of the church; the sound, below, was soft and silver-toned—-accompanied by rather a quick movement on the organ, upon the diapason stop; which, united with the silence and prostration of the congregation, might have commanded the reverence of the most profane.

There is nothing, my dear friend, more gratifying, in a foreign land, than the general appearance of earnestness of devotion on a sabbath day; especially within the HOUSE OF GOD. However, I quickly heard the clangor of the trumpet, the beat of drums, the measured tramp of human feet, and up marched two or three troops of the national guard to perform military mass. I retired precipitately to the Inn, being well pleased to have escaped this strange and distracting sight: so little in harmony with the rites and ceremonies of our own church, and in truth so little accordant with the service which I had just beheld.

[22] [Mons. Licquet says that there were about 17,000 souls in 1824; so that the above number may be that of the amount of its *present* population. “Several changes (says my French translator) have taken place at Dieppe since I saw it: among the rest, there is a magnificent establishment of BATHS, where a crowd of people, of the first distinction, every year resort. Her Royal Highness, the Duchesse de Berri, may be numbered among these Visitors.]

[23] [The common people to this day call a *herring*, a *child of Dieppe.* LICQUET.]

[24] ["Sterne reproaches the French for their hyperbolical language: the air of the country had probably some influence on M. Dibdin when he adopted this phrase." LICQUET.]

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[25] ["Signifying, that the French postilions do not ride like the English." LICQUET.]

[26] ["Dieppe for a long time was the rival of Argentan and Caen in the lace-manufactory: at the present day, this branch of commerce is almost annihilated there."—LICQUET.]

[27] [In a note attached to the previous edition—I have said, "Here also, as well as at Rouen; they will have it that the ENGLISH built the Churches." Upon which M. Licquet remarks thus: "M. Dibdin's expression conveys too general an idea. It is true that *popular* opinion attributes the erection of our gothic edifices to the ENGLISH: but there exists *another* opinion, which is not deceptive upon this subject." What is meant to be here conveyed? Either the popular opinion is true or false; and it is a matter of perfect indifference to the author whether it be one or the other. For *Mons*. Licquet's comfort, I will freely avow that I believe it to be *false*.]

[28] [Louis XVIII.]

LETTER III.

VILLAGE AND CASTLE OF ARQUES. SABBATH AMUSEMENTS. MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.
BOULEVARDS.

As I had received especial injunctions from our friend P—— not to leave Dieppe without paying a visit to the famous *Chateau d'Arques*[29], in its neighbourhood, I resolved to seize the opportunity of a tolerably fair, or rather gray-looking day, to go and pay due homage to those venerable remains of antiquity. The road thither is completely rural: apple-trees, just beginning to burst their blossoms; hamlets, small farm-houses: a profusion of rich herbage of various kinds—delighted and regaled me as I pursued my tranquil walk. The country is of a gently-undulating character; but the flats or meadows, between the parallel ranges of hills, are subject to constant inundation from the sea; and in an agricultural point of view are consequently of little use, except for summer grazing of the cattle.

It was drawing on to vespers as I approached the *Village of Arques*. The old castle had frequently peeped out upon me, in my way thither, from its elevated situation; but being resolved to see "all that could be seen," a French village, for the first time, was not to be overlooked. For a country church, I know of few finer ones than that of Arques.[30]

The site of the castle is admirable. My approach was to the western extremity; which, as you look down, brings the village and church of Arques in the back ground. If the eye were to be considered as a correct judge, this venerable pile, composed of hard flint-stone, intermixed with brick, would perhaps claim precedence, on the score of antiquity, over most of the castles of the middle ages. A deep moat, now dry pasture land, with a bold acclivity before you, should seem to bid defiance, even in times of

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old, to the foot and the spear of the invader. There are circular towers at the extremities, and a square citadel or donjon within. To the north, a good deal of earth has been recently thrown against the bases of the wall. The day harmonised admirably with the venerable object before me. The sunshine lasted but for a minute: when afterwards a gloom prevailed, and not a single catch of radiant light gilded any portion of the building. All was quiet, and of a sombre aspect,—and what *you*, in your admiration of art, would call in perfectly "fine keeping."

I descended the hill, bidding a long adieu to this venerable relic of the hardihood of other times, and quickened my pace towards Dieppe. In gaining upon the town, I began to discern groups of rustics, as well as of bourgeoises, assembling and mingling in the dance. The women never think of wearing bonnets, and you have little idea how picturesquely the red and blue[31] (the colours of Raffaelle's Madonnas) glanced backwards and forwards amidst the fruit trees, to the sound of the spirit-stirring violin. The high, stiff, starched cauchoise, with its broad flappers, gave the finishing stroke to the novelty and singularity of the scene; and to their credit be it spoken, the women were much more tidily dressed than the men. The couples are frequently female, for want of a sufficient number of swains; but, whether correctly or incorrectly paired, they dance with earnestness, if not with grace. It was a picture a la Teniers, without its occasional grossness. This then, said I to myself, is what I have so often heard of the sabbath-gambols of the French—and long may they enjoy them! They are surely better than the brutal orgies of the pot-house, or the fanatical ravings of the tabernacle.[32]

A late plain dinner, with my favourite vin ordinaire, recruited my strength, and kept me in perfectly good humour with Dieppe.

The deportment of the *Dieppois*[33] towards the English, is, upon the whole, rather gracious than otherwise; because the town profits by the liberality and love of expense of the latter. Yet the young ones, as soon as they can lisp, are put in training for pronouncing the *G*—— *d*——; and a few horribly-deformed and importunate beggars are for ever assailing the doors of the hotels. But beggary is nothing like so frightful an evil as I had anticipated. The general aspect of the town seems to indicate the poverty of the inhabitants; their houses being too large to be entirely occupied. Bonaparte appears to have been anxious about the strengthening of the harbour; the navigation into which is somewhat difficult and intricate. The sides of the walls, as you enter, are lofty, steep, and strong; and raised batteries would render any hostile approach extremely hazardous to the assailants.

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There is no ship-building at this moment going on: the ribs of about half a dozen, half rotted, small merchant-craft, being all that is discernible. But much is projected, and much is hoped from such projects. Dieppe has questionless many local advantages both by land and by sea; yet it will require a long course of years to infuse confidence and beget a love of enterprise. In spite of all the *naval zeal*, it is here exhibited chiefly as affording means of subsistence from the fisheries. I must not however conclude my Dieppe journal without telling you that I hunted far and near for a good bookseller and for some old books—but found nothing worth the search, except a well-printed early *Rouen Missal*, and *Terence* by *Badius Ascensius*. The booksellers are supplied with books chiefly from Rouen; the local press being too insignificant to mention.

[29] The French Antiquaries have pushed the antiquity of this castle to the 11th century, supposing it to have been built by *William d'Arques*, Count of Tallon, son of the second marriage of Richard Duke of Normandy. I make no doubt, that, whenever built, the sea almost washed its base: for it is known to have occupied the whole of what is called the *Valley of Arques*, running as far as *Bouteilles*. Its position, in reference to the art of war, must have been almost impregnable. Other hypotheses assign its origin to the ninth or tenth century. Whenever built, its history has been fertile in sieges. In 1144, it was commanded by a Flemish Monk, who preferred the spear to the crosier, but who perished by an arrow in the contest. Of its history, up to the sixteenth century, I am not able to give any details; but in the wars of Henry IV. with the League, in 1589, it was taken by surprise by soldiers in the disguise of sailors: who, killing the centinels, quickly made themselves masters of the place. Henry caused it afterwards to be dismantled. In the first half of the eighteenth century it received very severe treatment from pillage, for the purpose of erecting public and private buildings at Dieppe. At present (in the language of the author of the *Rouen Itinerary*) "it is the abode of silence—save when that silence is interrupted by owls and other nocturnal birds." The view of it in Mr. Cotman's work is very faithful.

[30] The *Itineraire de Rouen*, 1816, p. 202, says, absurdly, that this church is of the XIth century. It is perhaps with more truth of the beginning of the XIVth century. A pleasing view of it is in Mr. Dawson Turner's elegant Tour in Normandy, 1818, 8vo. 2 vol. It possessed formerly a bust of Henry IV., which is supposed to have been placed there after the famous battle of Arques gained by Henry over the Duke of Mayenne in 1589.

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[31] The blue gown and red petticoat; or vice versa.

[32] [I am anxious that the above sentence should stand precisely as it appeared in the first edition of this work; because a circumstance has arisen from it, which could have been as little in the anticipation, as it is in the comprehension, of the author. A lady, of high connections, and of respectable character, conceived the passage in question to be somewhat indecorous; or revolting to the serious sense entertained by all Christians, and especially by CHRISTIAN MINISTERS, of the mode of devoting the Sabbath day. In consequence, being in possession of a copy of this work, she DIVIDED it into two; not being willing to sully the splendour of the plates by the supposed impurity of such a passage:—and the prints were accordingly bound APART. The passage—as applied to the FRENCH PEOPLE—requires neither comment nor qualification; and in the same unsophisticated view of religious duties, the *latter* part may be as strictly applied to the ENGLISH.]

[33] The dress of the *sailors* is the same as it was in the XIVth century; and so probably is that of the women. The illuminations in Froissard and Monstrelet clearly give us the Norman cauchoise.

LETTER IV.

ROUEN. APPROACH. BOULEVARDS. POPULATION. STREET SCENERY.

Here I am, my excellent good friend, in the most extraordinary city in the world. One rubs one's eyes, and fancies one is dreaming, upon being carried through the streets of this old-fashioned place: or that, by some secret talismanic touch, we are absolutely mingling with human beings, and objects of art, at the commencement of the sixteenth century: so very curious, and out of the common appearance of things, is almost every object connected with ROUEN. But before I commence my observations upon the *town*, I must give you a brief sketch of my *journey* hither. We had bespoke our places in the cabriolet of the Diligence, which just holds three tolerably comfortable; provided there be a disposition to accommodate each other. This cabriolet, as you have been often told, is a sort of a buggy, or phaeton seat, with a covering of leather in the front of the coach. It is fortified with a stiff leathern apron, upon the top of which is a piece of iron, covered with the leather, to fasten firmly by means of a hook on the perpendicular supporter of the head. There are stiffish leathern curtains on each side, to be drawn, if necessary, as a protection against the rain, &c. You lean upon the bar, or top of this leathern apron, which is no very uncomfortable resting-place. And thus we took leave of Dieppe, on the 4th day after our arrival there. As we were seated in the cabriolet, we could hardly refrain from loud laughter at the

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novelty of our situation, and the grotesqueness of the conveyance. Our Postilion was a rare specimen of his species, and a perfectly *unique copy*. He fancied himself, I suppose, rather getting “into the vale of years,” and had contrived to tinge his cheeks with a plentiful portion of rouge.[34] His platted and powdered hair was surmounted with a battered black hat, tricked off with faded ribband: his jacket was dark blue velvet, with the insignia of his order (the royal arms) upon his left arm. What struck me as not a little singular, was, that his countenance was no very faint resemblance of that of *Voltaire*, when he might have been verging towards his sixtieth year. Most assuredly he resembled him in his elongated chin, and the sarcastic expression of his mouth. We rolled merrily along—the horses sometimes spreading, and sometimes closing, according to the size of the streets through which we were compelled to pass. The reins and harness are of *cord*; which, however keep together pretty well. The postilion endeavours to break the rapidity of the descent by conducting the wheels over small piles of gravel or rubbish, which are laid at the sides of the road, near the ditch; so that, to those sitting in the cabriolet, and overlooking the whole process, the effect, with weak nerves, is absolutely terrific. They stop little in changing horses, and the Diligence is certainly well managed, and in general no accidents occur.

The road from Dieppe to Rouen is wide, hard, and in excellent condition. There are few or no hedges, but rows of apple-trees afford a sufficient line of demarkation. The country is open, and gently undulating; with scarcely any glimpses of what is called forest-scenery, till you get towards the conclusion of the first stage. Nothing particularly strikes you till you approach *Malaunai*, within about half a dozen miles of Rouen, and of course after the last change of horses. The environs of this beautiful village repay you for every species of disappointment, if any should have been experienced. The rising banks of a brisk serpentine trout stream are studded with white houses, in which are cotton manufactories that appear to be carried on with spirit and success. Above these houses are hanging woods; and though the early spring would scarcely have coated the branches with green in our own country, yet *here* there was a general freshness of verdure, intermingled with the ruddy blossom of the apple; altogether rejoicing the eye and delighting the heart. Occasionally there were delicious spots, which the taste and wealth of an Englishman would have embellished to every possible degree of advantage. But wealth, for the gratification of picturesque taste, is a superfluity that will not quickly fall to the lot of the French. The Revolution seems to have drained their purses, as well as daunted their love of enterprise. Along the road-side there were some few houses of entertainment; and we observed the emptied cabriolet and stationary voiture, by the side of the gardens, where Monsieur and Madame, with their families, tripped lightly along the vistas, and tittered as John Bull saluted them. Moving vehicles, and numerous riding and walking groups, increased upon us; and every thing announced that we were approaching a *great and populous city*.

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The approach to ROUEN is indeed magnificent. I speak of the immediate approach; after you reach the top of a considerable rise, and are stopped by the barriers. You then look down a strait, broad, and strongly paved road, lined with a double row of trees on each side. As the foliage was not thickly set, we could discern, through the delicately-clothed branches, the tapering spire of the CATHEDRAL, and the more picturesque tower of the ABBAYE ST. OUEN—with hanging gardens, and white houses, to the left—covering a richly cultivated ridge of hills, which sink as it were into the *Boulevards*, and which is called the *Faubourg Cauchoise*. To the right, through the trees, you see the river SEINE (here of no despicable depth or breadth) covered with boats and vessels in motion: the voice of commerce, and the stir of industry, cheering and animating you as you approach the town. I was told that almost every vessel which I saw (some of them of two hundred, and even of three hundred tons burthen) was filled with brandy and wine. The lamps are suspended from the centre of long ropes, across the road; and the whole scene is of a truly novel and imposing character. But how shall I convey to you an idea of what I experienced, as, turning to the left, and leaving the broader streets which flank the quay, I began to enter the *penetralia* of this truly antiquated town? What narrow streets, what overhanging houses, what bizarre, capricious ornaments! What a mixture of modern with ancient art! What fragments, or rather ruins, of old delicately-built Gothic churches! What signs of former and of modern devastation! What fountains, gutters, groups of never-ceasing men, women, and children, all gay, all occupied, and all apparently happy! The *Rue de la Grosse Horloge* (so called from a huge, clumsy, antiquated clock which goes across it) struck me as being not among the least singular streets of Rouen. In five minutes I was within the court-yard of the *Hotel Vatel*, the favourite residence of the English.

It was evening when I arrived, in company with three Englishmen. We were soon saluted by the *laquais de place*—the leech-like hangers-on of every hotel—who begged to know if we would walk upon the Boulevards. We consented; turned to the right; and, gradually rising, gained a considerable eminence. Again we turned to the right, walking upon a raised promenade; while the blossoms of the pear and apple trees, within a hundred walled gardens, perfumed the air with a delicious fragrance. As we continued our route along the *Boulevard Beauvoisine*, we gained one of the most interesting and commanding views imaginable of the city of Rouen—just at that moment lighted up by the golden rays of a glorious sun-set—which gave a breadth and a mellower tone to the shadows upon the Cathedral and the Abbey of St. Ouen. The situation of Rouen renders it necessarily picturesque, view it from what spot you will.

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The population of Rouen is supposed to be full one hundred thousand souls. In truth, there is no end to the succession of human beings. They swarm like bees, and like bees are busy in bringing home the produce of their industry. You have all the bustle and agitation of Cheapside and Cornhill; only that the ever-moving scene is carried on within limits one-half as broad. Conceive Bucklersbury, Cannon-street, and Thames-street,—and yet you cannot conceive the narrow streets of Rouen: filled with the flaunting cauchoise, and echoing to the eternal tramp of the sabot. There they are; men, women, and children—all abroad in the very centre of the streets: alternately encountering the splashing of the gutter, and the jostling of their townsmen—while the swift cabriolet, or the slow-paced cart, or the thundering *Diligence*, severs them, and scatters them abroad, only that they may seem to be yet more condensely united. For myself, it is with difficulty I believe that I am not living in the times of our Henry VIII. and of their Francis I.; and am half disposed to inquire after the residence of *Guillaume Tailleur* the printer—the associate, or foreign agent of your favourite *Pynson*.[35]

[34] [Mons. Licquet here observes, "This is the first time I have heard it said that our Postilions put on rouge." What he adds, shall be given in his own pithy expression.—"Ou la coquetterie va-t-elle se nicher?" What, however is above stated, was stated from a *conviction* of its being TRUE]

[35] [The third English Printer.] See the *Bibliographical Decameron*, vol. ii. p. 137, 8.

LETTER V.

ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE. CATHEDRAL. MONUMENTS. RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES. THE ABBEY OF ST. OUEN. THE CHURCHES OF ST. MACLOU, ST. VINCENT, ST. VIVIEN, ST. GERVAIS, AND ST. PAUL.

I have now made myself pretty well acquainted with the geography of Rouen. How shall I convey to you a summary, and yet a satisfactory, description of it? It cannot be done. You love old churches, old books, and relics of ancient art. These be my themes, therefore: so fancy yourself either strolling leisurely with me, arm in arm, in the streets—or sitting at my elbow. First for THE CATHEDRAL:—for what traveller of taste does not doff his bonnet to the *Mother Church* of the town through which he happens to be travelling—or in which he takes up a temporary abode? The west-front,[36] always the *forte* of the architect's skill, strikes you as you go down, or come up, the principal street—*La Rue des Carmes*,—which seems to bisect the town into equal parts. A small open space, (which however has been miserably encroached upon by petty shops) called the *Flower-garden*, is before this western front; so that it has some little breathing room in which to expand its beauties to the wondering eyes of the beholder. In my poor judgment,

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this western front has very few elevations comparable with it[37]—including even those of *Lincoln* and *York*. The ornaments, especially upon the three porches, between the two towers, are numerous, rich, and for the greater part entire:—in spite of the Calvinists,[38] the French revolution, and time. Among the lower and smaller basso-relievos upon these porches, is the subject of the daughter of Herodias dancing before Herod. She is manoeuvering on her hands, her feet being upwards. To the right, the decapitation of St. John is taking place.

The southern transept makes amends for the defects of the northern. The space before it is devoted to a sort of vegetable market: curious old houses encircle this space: and the ascent to the door, but more especially the curiously sculptured porch itself, with the open spaces in the upper part—light, fanciful and striking to a degree—produce an effect as pleasing as it is extraordinary. Add to this, the ever-restless feet of devotees, going in and coming out—the worn pavement, and the frittered ornaments, in consequence—seem to convince you that the ardour and activity of devotion is almost equal to that of business.[39]

As you enter the cathedral, at the centre door, by descending two steps, you are struck with the length and loftiness of the nave, and with the lightness of the gallery which runs along the upper part of it. Perhaps the nave is too narrow for its length. The lantern of the central large tower is beautifully light and striking. It is supported by four massive clustered pillars, about forty feet in circumference;[40] but on casting your eye downwards, you are shocked at the tasteless division of the choir from the nave by what is called a *Grecian screen*: and the interior of the transepts has undergone a like preposterous restoration. The rose windows of the transepts, and that at the west end of the nave, merit your attention and commendation. I could not avoid noticing, to the right, upon entrance, perhaps the oldest side chapel in the cathedral: of a date, little less ancient than that of the northern tower; and perhaps of the end of the twelfth century. It contains by much the finest specimens of stained glass—of the early part of the XVIth century. There is also some beautiful stained glass on each side of the Chapel of the Virgin,[41] behind the choir; but although very ancient, it is the less interesting, as not being composed of groups, or of historical subjects. Yet, in this, as in almost all the churches which I have seen, frightful devastations have been made among the stained-glass windows by the fury of the Revolutionists.[42]

Respecting the MONUMENTS, you ought to know that the famous ROLLO lies in one of the side-chapels, farther down to the right, upon entering; although his monument cannot be older than the thirteenth century. My attachment to the bibliomanical celebrity of JOHN, DUKE OF BEDFORD, will naturally lead me to the notice of his interment and monumental inscription. The latter is thus;

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Ad dextrum Altaris Latus

Jacet

IOANNES DUX BETFORDI

Normanniae pro Rex

Obiit Anno

MCCCCXXXV.

The Duke's tomb will be seen engraved in Sandford's Genealogical History,[43] p. 314; which plate, in fact, is the identical one used by Ducarel; who had the singularly good fortune to decorate his Anglo-Norman Antiquities without any expense to himself![44]

There is a curious chapter in Pommeraye's *Histoire de l'Eglise Cathedrale de Rouen*, p. 203, respecting the Duke's taking the habit of a canon of the cathedral. He attended, with his first wife, ANNE OF BURGUNDY, and threw himself upon the liberality and kindness of the monks, to be received by them as one of their order: "il les prioit d'etre receu parmy eux comme un de leurs freres, et d'avoir tous les jours distribution de pain et de vin, et pour marque de fraternite d'etre vetu du surplis et de l'aumusse: comme aussi d'etre associe, luy et sa tres genereuse et tres illustre epouse, aux suffrages de leur compagnie, et a la participation de tous les biens qu'il plaira a Dieu leur donner la grace d'operer," p. 204. A grand procession marked the day of the Duke's admission into the monkish fraternity. The whole of this, with an account of the Duke's superb presents to the sacristy, his dining with his Duchess, and receiving their portion of "eight loaves and four gallons of wine," are distinctly narrated by the minute Pommeraye.

As you approach the *Chapel of the Virgin*, you pass by an ancient monument, to the left, of a recumbent Bishop, reposing behind a thin pillar, within a pretty ornamented Gothic arch.[45] To the eye of a tasteful antiquary this cannot fail to have its due attraction. While however we are treading upon hallowed ground, rendered if possible more sacred by the ashes of the illustrious dead, let us move gently onwards towards the *Chapel of the Virgin*, behind the choir. See, what bold and brilliant monumental figures are yonder, to the right of the altar! How gracefully they kneel and how devoutly they pray! They are the figures of the CARDINALS D'AMBOISE—uncle and nephew:—the former, minister of Louis XII.[46] and (what does not necessarily follow, but what gives him as high a claim upon the gratitude of posterity) the restorer and beautifier of the glorious building in which you are contemplating his figure. This splendid monument is entirely of black and white marble, of the early part of the sixteenth century. The figures just mentioned are of white marble, kneeling upon cushions, beneath a rich canopy of Gothic fretwork. They are in their professional robes; their heads are bare, exhibiting the tonsure, with the hair in one large curl behind. A small whole-length figure of *St.*

George, their tutelary saint, is below them, in gilded marble: and the whole base, or lower frieze, of the monument, is surrounded by six delicately sculptured females, about three feet high, emblematic of the virtues for which these cardinals were so eminently distinguished. These figures, representing Faith, Charity, Prudence, Force, Justice, and Temperance, are flanked by eight smaller ones, placed in carved niches; while, above them, are the twelve Apostles, not less beautifully executed.[47]

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On gazing at this splendid monument of ancient piety and liberality—and with one's mind deeply intent upon the characters of the deceased—let us fancy we hear the sound of the GREAT BELL from the south-west tower ... called the *Amboise Tower* ... erected, both the bell and the tower, by the uncle and minister AMBOISE. Know, my dear friend, that there was *once* a bell, (and the largest in Europe, save one) which used to send forth its sound, for three successive centuries, from the said tower. This bell was broken about thirty years ago, and destroyed in the ravages of the immediately succeeding years.[48] The south-west tower remains, and the upper part of the central tower, with the whole of the lofty wooden spire:—the fruits of the liberality of the excellent men of whom such honourable mention has been made. Considering that this spire is very lofty, and composed of wood, *it is surprising that it has not been destroyed by tempest, or by lightning*.[49] The taste of it is rather capricious than beautiful.

I have not yet done with the monuments, or rather have only commenced the account of them.[50] Examine yonder recumbent figure, to the left of the altar, opposite the splendid monument upon which I have just been dilating. It is lying upon its back, with a ghastly expression of countenance, representing the moment when the last breath has escaped from the body. It is the figure of the Grand SENESCHAL DE BREZE,[51]—-Governor of Rouen, and husband of the celebrated DIANE DE POICTIERS—that thus claims our attention. This figure is quite naked, lying upon its back, with the right hand placed on the stomach, but in an action which indicates *life*—and therefore it is in bad taste, as far as truth is concerned; for the head being fallen back, much shrunken, and with a ghastly expression of countenance—indicating that some time has elapsed since it breathed its last—the hand could not rest in this position. The cenotaph is of black marble, disfigured by the names of idle visitors who choose to leave such impertinent memorials behind. The famous GOUJON is supposed to be the sculptor of the figure, which is painfully clever, but it strikes me as being too small. At any rate, the arms and body seem to be too strong and fleshy for the shrunken and death-stricken expression of the countenance. Above the Seneschal, thus prostrate and lifeless, there is another and a very clever representation of him, on a smaller scale, on horseback.

On each side of this figure (which has not escaped serious injury) are two females in white marble; one representing the VIRGIN, and the other DIANE DE POICTIERS:[52] they are little more than half the size of life. The whole is in the very best style of the sculpture of the time of Francis I. These precious specimens of art, as well as several other similar remains, were carried away during the revolution, to a place of safety. The choir is spacious, and well adapted

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to its purposes; but who does not grieve to see the Archbishop's stall, once the most curious and costly, of the Gothic order, and executed at the end of the XVth century, transformed into a stately common-place canopy, supported by columns of chestnut-wood carved in the Grecian style? The LIBRARY, which used to terminate the north transept, is—not gone—but transferred. A fanciful stair-case, with an appropriate inscription,[53] yet attest that it was formerly an appendage to that part of the edifice.

Before I quit the subject of the cathedral, I must not fail to tell you something relating to the rites performed therein. Let us quit therefore the dead for the living. Of course we saw, here, a repetition of the ceremonies observed at Dieppe; but previously to the feast of the *Ascension* we were also present at the confirmation of three hundred boys and three hundred girls, each very neatly and appropriately dressed, in a sort of sabbath attire, and each holding a lighted wax taper in the hand. The girls were dressed in white, with white veils; and the rich lent veils to those who had not the means of purchasing them. The cathedral, especially about the choir, was crowded to excess. I hired a chair, stood up, and gazed as earnestly as the rest. The interest excited among the parents, and especially the mothers, was very striking. "Voila la petite—qu'elle a l'air charmant!—le petit ange!"....A stir is made ... they rise... and approach, in the most measured order, the rails of the choir ... There they deposit their tapers. The priests, very numerous, extinguish them as dexterously as they can; and the whole cathedral is perfumed with the mixed scent of the wax and frankincense. The boys, on approaching the altar, and giving up their tapers, kneel down; then shut their eyes, open their mouths; and the priests deposit the consecrated wafer upon their tongues. The procession now took a different direction. They all went into the nave, where a sermon was preached to the young people, expressly upon the occasion, by a Monsieur Quillebeuf, a canon of the cathedral, and a preacher of considerable popularity. He had one of the most meagre and forbidding physiognomies I ever beheld, and his beard was black and unshaven. But he preached well; fluently, and even eloquently: making a very singular, but not ungraceful, use of his left arm—and displaying at times rather a happy familiarity of manner, wholly exempt from vulgarity, and well suited to the capacities and feelings of his youthful audience. His subject was "belief in Christ Jesus;" on which he gave very excellent proofs and evidences. His voice was thin, but clear, and distinctly heard.

And now, my dear Friend, if you are not tired with this detour of the CATHEDRAL, suppose we take a promenade to the next most important ecclesiastical edifice in the city of Rouen. What say you therefore to a stroll to the ABBEY of ST. OUEN? "Willingly," methinks I hear you reply. To the abbey therefore let us go.

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Leaving the Cathedral, you pass a beautifully sculptured fountain (of the early time of Francis I.) which stands at the corner of a street, to the right; and which, from its central situation, is visited the live-long day for the sake of its limpid waters. Push on a little further; then, turning to the right, you get into a sort of square, and observe the ABBEY —or rather the *west-front* of it, full in face of you. You gaze, and are first struck with its matchless window: call it rose, or marygold, as you please. I think, for delicacy and richness of ornament, this window is perfectly unrivalled. There is a play of line in the mullions, which, considering their size and strength, may be pronounced quite a master-piece of art. You approach, regretting the neglected state of the lateral towers, and enter, through the large and completely-opened centre doors, the nave of the Abbey. It was towards sun-set when we made our first entrance. The evening was beautiful; and the variegated tints of sun-beam, admitted through the stained glass of the window, just noticed, were perfectly enchanting. The window itself, as you look upwards, or rather as you fix your eye upon the centre of it, from the remote end of the Abbey, or the *Lady's Chapel*, was a perfect blaze of dazzling light: and nave, choir, and side aisles, seemed magically illumined ...

Seemed all on fire—within, around;
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound....

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

We declared instinctively that the ABBEY OF ST. OUEN could hardly have a rival;—-certainly not a superior.

[Illustration]

As the evening came on, the gloom of almost every side chapel and recess was rendered doubly impressive by the devotion of numerous straggling supplicants; and invocations to the presiding spirit of the place, reached the ears and touched the hearts of the bystanders. The grand western entrance presents you with the most perfect view of the choir—a magical circle, or rather oval—flanked by lofty and clustered pillars, and free from the surrounding obstruction of screens, &c. Nothing more airy and more captivating of the kind can be imagined. The finish and delicacy of these pillars are quite surprising. Above, below, around—every thing is in the purest style of the XIVth and XVth centuries. The central tower is a tower of beauty as well as of strength. Yet in regard to further details, connected with the interior, it must be admitted that there is very little more which is deserving of particular description; except it be *the gallery*, which runs within the walls of the nave and choir, and which is considerably more light and elegant than that of the cathedral. A great deal has been said about the circular windows at the end of the south transept, and they are undoubtedly elegant: but compared with the one at the extremity of the nave, they are rather to be noticed from the

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tale attached to them, than from their positive beauty. The tale, my friend, is briefly this. These windows were finished (as well as the larger one at the west front) about the year 1439. One of them was executed by the master-mason, the other by his apprentice; and on being criticised by competent judges, the performance of the *latter* was said to eclipse that of the former. In consequence, the master became jealous and revengeful, and actually poniarded his apprentice. He was of course tried, condemned, and executed; but an existing monument to his memory attests the humanity of the monks in giving him Christian interment.[54] On the whole, it is the absence of all obtrusive and unappropriate ornament which gives to the interior of this building that light, unencumbered, and faery-like effect which so peculiarly belongs to it, and which creates a sensation that I never remember to have felt within any other similar edifice.

Let me however put in a word for the *Organ*. It is immense, and perhaps larger than that belonging to the Cathedral. The tin pipes (like those of the organ in the Cathedral) are of their natural colour. I paced the pavement beneath, and think that this organ cannot be short of forty English feet in length. Indeed, in all the churches which I have yet seen, the organs strike me as being of magnificent dimensions.

You should be informed however that the extreme length of the interior, from the further end of the Chapel of the Virgin, to its opposite western extremity, is about four hundred and fifty English feet; while the height, from the pavement to the roof of the nave, or the choir, is one hundred and eight English feet. The transepts are about one hundred and forty feet in length. The central tower, upon the whole, is not only the grandest tower in Rouen, but there is nothing for its size in our own country that can compare with it. It rises upwards of one hundred feet above the roof of the church; and is supported below, or rather within, by four magnificent cluster-pillared bases, each about thirty-two feet in circumference. Its area, at bottom, can hardly be less than thirty-six feet square. The choir is flanked by flying buttresses, which have a double tier of small arches, altogether “marvellous and curious to behold.”

I could not resist stealing quietly round to the porch of the *south transept*, and witnessing, in that porch, one of the most chaste, light, and lovely specimens of Gothic architecture, which can be contemplated. Indeed, I hardly know any thing like it.[55] The leaves of the poplar and ash were beginning to mantle the exterior; and, seen through their green and gay lattice work, the traceries of the porch seemed to assume a more interesting aspect. They are now mending the upper part of the facade with new stone of peculiar excellence—but it does not harmonise with the old work. They merit our thanks, however, for the preservation of what remains of this precious pile. I should remark to you that the eastern and north-eastern sides of the abbey of St. Ouen are surrounded with promenades and trees: so that, occasionally, either when walking, or sitting upon the benches, within these gardens, you catch one of the finest views imaginable of the abbey.

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At this early season of the year, much company is assembled every evening in these walks: while, in front of the abbey, or in the square facing the western end, the national guard is exercised in the day time—and troops of fair nymphs and willing youths mingle in the dance on a sabbath evening, while a platform is erected for the instrumental performers, and for the exhibition of feats of legerdemain. You must not take leave of St. Ouen without being told that, formerly, the French Kings used occasionally to "make revel" within the Abbot's house. Henry II, Charles IX, and Henry III, each took a fancy to this spot—but especially the famous HENRI QUATRE. It is reported that that monarch sojourned here for four months—— and his reply to the address of the aldermen and sheriff of Rouen is yet preserved both in MS. and by engravings. "The King having arrived at St. Ouen (says an old MS.)[56] the keys of the tower were presented to him, in the presence of M. de Montpensier, the governor of the province, upon a velvet-cushion. The keys were gilt. The King took them, and replacing them in the hands of the governor, said—"Mon cousin, je vous les baille pour les rendre, qu'ils les gardent;"—then, addressing the aldermen, he added, "Soyez moi bons sujets et je vous serai bon Roi, et le meilleur Roi que vous ayez jamais eu."

Next to the Abbey of St. Ouen, "go by all means and see the church *St. Maclou*"—say your friends and your guides. The Abbe Turquier accompanied me thither. The great beauties of St. Maclou are its tower and its porch. Of the tower, little more than the lantern remains. This is about 160 English feet in height. Above it was a belfry or steeple, another 110 feet in height, constructed of wood and lead—but which has been nearly destroyed for the sake of the lead,—for the purpose of slaughter or resistance during the late revolution.[57] The exteriors of the porches are remarkable for their elaborate ornaments; especially those in the *Rue Martainville.* They are highly praised by the inhabitants, and are supposed to be after the models of the famous Goujon. Perhaps they are rather encumbered with ornament, and want that quiet effect, and pure good taste, which we see in the porches of the Cathedral and of the Abbey St. Ouen. However, let critics determine as they will upon this point—they must at least unite in reprobating the barbarous edict which doomed these delicate pieces of sculptured art to be deluged with an over-whelming tint of staring yellow ochre!

Of the remaining churches, I shall mention only four: two of them chiefly remarkable for their interior, and two for their extreme antiquity. Of the two former, that of *St. Vincent* presents you with a noble organ, with a light choir profusely gilded, and (rarer accompaniment!) in very excellent taste. But the stained glass is the chief magnet of attraction. It is rich, varied, and vivid to a degree; and, upon the whole, is the finest specimen of this species

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of art in the present ecclesiastical remains of the city. *St. Vivien* is the second of these two former. It is a fine open church, with a large organ, having a very curious wooden screen in front, elaborately carved, and, as I conceive, of the very earliest part of the sixteenth century. I ascended the organ-loft; and the door happening to be open, I examined this screen (which has luckily escaped the yellow-ochre edict) very minutely, and was much gratified by the examination. Such pieces of art, so situated, are of rare occurrence. For the first time, within a parish church, I stepped upon the pavement of the choir: walked gently forwards, to the echo of my own footsteps, (for not a creature was in the church) and, "with no unhallowed hand" I would hope, ventured to open the choral or service book, resting upon its stand. It was wide, thick, and ponderous: upon vellum: beautifully written and well executed in every respect, with the exception of the illuminations which were extremely indifferent. I ought to tell you that the doors of the churches, abroad, are open at all times of the day: the ancient or more massive door, or portal, is secured from shutting; but a temporary, small, shabby wooden door, covered with dirty green baize, opening and shutting upon circular hinges, just covers the vacuum left by the absence of the larger one.

Of the two ancient churches, above alluded to, that of *St. Gervais*, is situated considerably to the north of where the *Boulevards Cauchoise* and *Bouvreuil* meet. It was hard by this favourite spot, say the Norman historians, that the ancient Dukes of Normandy built their country-houses: considering it as a *lieu de plaisance.* Here too it was that the Conqueror came to breathe his last—desiring to be conveyed thither, from his palace in the city, for the benefit of the pure air.[58] I walked with M. Le Prevost to this curious church: having before twice seen it. But the *Crypt* is the only thing worth talking about, on the score of antiquity. The same accomplished guide bade me remark the extraordinary formation of the capitals of the pillars: which, admitting some perversity of taste in a rude, Norman, imitative artist, are decidedly of Roman character. "Perhaps," said M. Le Prevost, "the last efforts of Roman art previous to the relinquishment of the Romans." Among these capitals there is one of the perfect Doric order; while in another you discover the remains of two Roman eagles. The columns are all of the same height; and totally unlike every thing of the kind which I have seen or heard of.

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We descended the hill upon which *St. Gervais* is built, and walked onward towards *St. Paul*, situated at the further and opposite end of the town, upon a gentle eminence, just above the Banks of the Seine.[59] M. Le Prevost was still our conductor. This small edifice is certainly of remote antiquity, but I suspect it to be completely Norman. The eastern end is full of antiquarian curiosities. We observed something like a Roman mask as the centre ornament upon the capital of one of the circular figures; and Mr. Lewis made a few slight drawings of one of the grotesque heads in the exterior, of which the hair is of an uncommon fashion. The *Saxon whiskers* are discoverable upon several of these faces. Upon the whole, it is possible that parts of this church may have been built at the latter end of the tenth century, after the Normans had made themselves completely masters of this part of the kingdom; yet it is more probable that there is no vestige left which claims a more ancient date than that of the end of the eleventh century. I ought just to notice the church of *St. Sever*,[60] supposed by some to be yet more ancient: but I had no opportunity of taking a particular survey of it.

Thus much, or rather thus little, respecting the ECCLESIASTICAL ANTIQUITIES of Rouen. They merit indeed a volume of themselves. This city could once boast of upwards of *thirty parish churches*; of which very nearly a *dozen* have been recently (I mean during the Revolution) converted into *warehouses*. It forms a curious, and yet melancholy melange—this strange misappropriation of what was formerly held most sacred, to the common and lowest purposes of civil life! You enter these warehouses, or offices of business, and see the broken shaft, the battered capital, and half-demolished altar-piece—the gilded or the painted frieze—in the midst of bales of goods—casks, ropes, and bags of cotton: while, without, the same spirit of demolition prevails in the fractured column, and tottering arch way. Thus time brings its changes and decays—premature as well as natural: and the noise of the car-men and injunctions of the clerk are now heard, where formerly there reigned a general silence, interrupted only by the matin or evening chaunt! I deplored this sort of sacrilegious adaptation, to a respectable-looking old gentleman, sitting out of doors upon a chair, and smoking his pipe—“c’est dommage, Monsieur, qu’on a converti l’eglise a”—He stopped me: raised his left hand: then took away his pipe with his right; gave a gentle whiff, and shrugging up his shoulders, half archly and half drily exclaimed—“Mais que voulez vous, Monsieur?—ce sont des evenemens qu’on ne peut ni prevoir ni prevenir. Voila ce que c’est!” Leaving you to moralize upon this comfortable morceau of philosophy, consider me ever, &c.

[36] A most ample and correct view of this west front will be found in Mr. *Cotman’s Norman Antiquities*.

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[37] It is about 180 English feet in width, by about 150 in the highest part of its elevation. The plates which I saw at Mr. Frere's, bookseller, upon the Quai de Paris, from the drawings of Langlois, were very inadequate representations of the building.

[38] The ravages committed by the Calvinists throughout nearly the whole of the towns in Normandy, and especially in the cathedrals, towards the year 1560, afford a melancholy proof of the effects of RELIGIOUS ANIMOSITY. But the Calvinists were bitter and ferocious persecutors. Pommeraye, in his quarto volume, *Histoire de l'Eglise Cathedrale de Rouen*, 1686, has devoted nearly one hundred pages to an account of Calvinistic depredations.

[39] [Mr. Cotman has a plate of the elevation of the front of this south transept; and a very minute and brilliant one will be found in the previous edition of this Tour—by Mr. Henry le Keux: for which that distinguished Artist received the sum of 100 guineas. The remuneration was well merited.]

[40] [Mons. Licquet says each clustered pillar contains thirty-one columns.]

[41] This chapel is about ninety-five English feet in length, by thirty in width, and sixty in heighth. The sprawling painting by Philippe de Champagne, at the end of it, has no other merit than that of covering so many square feet of wall. The architecture of this chapel is of the XIVth century: the stained glass windows are of the latter end of the XVth. On completing the circuit of the cathedral, one is surprised to count not fewer than *twenty-five* chapels.

[42] [Mons. Licquet is paraphrastically warm in his version, here. He renders it thus: "les atteintes effroyables du vandalisme revolutionaire," vol. i. p. 64.]

[43] Sandford, after telling us that he thinks there "never was any portraiture" of the Duke, thus sums up his character. "He was justly accounted one of the best generals that ever blossomed out of the royal stem of PLANTAGENET. His valour was not more terrible to his enemies than his memory honourable; for (doubtful whether with more glory to him, or to the speaker) King Lewis the Eleventh being counselled by certain envious persons to deface his tomb (wherein with him, saith one, was buried all English men's good fortune in France) used these indeed princely words: 'What honour shall it be to us, or you, to break this monument, and to pull out of the ground the bones

of HIM, whom, in his life time, neither my father nor your progenitors, with all their puissance, were once able to make flie a foot backwarde? who, by his strength, policy and wit kept them all out of the principal dominions of France, and out of this noble duchy of

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Normandy? Wherefore, I say first, GOD SAVE HIS SOUL; and let his body now lie in rest, which when he was alive, would have disquieted the proudest of us all. And for THIS TOMB, I assure you it is not so worthy or convenient as his honour and acts have deserved.'" p. 314-5, Ed. 1707[A] The famous MISSAL, once in the possession of this celebrated nobleman, and containing the only authenticated portrait of him (which is engraved in the *Bibliog. Decameron*, vol. i. p. cxxxvii.) is now the property of John Milner, Esq. of York Place, Portman Square, who purchased it of the Duke of Marlborough. The Duke had purchased it at the sale of the library of the late James Edwards, Esq. for 687l. 15s.

[A] [Upon this, *Mons*. Licquet, with supposed shrewdness and success, remarks,—"All very well: but we must not forget that the innocent Joan of Arc was burnt alive—thanks to this said Duke of Bedford, as every one knows!"]

[44] [A different tale may be told of ONE of his Successors in the same Anglo-Norman pursuit. The expenses attending the graphic embellishments alone of the previous edition of this work, somewhat exceeded the sum of *four thousand seven hundred pounds.* The risk was entirely my own. The result was the loss of about 200l.: exclusively of the expences incurred in travelling about 2000 miles. The *copper-plates* (notwithstanding every temptation, and many entreaties, to *multiply* impressions of several of the subjects engraved) were DESTROYED. There may be something more than a mere negative consolation, in finding that the work is RISING in price, although its author has long ceased to partake of any benefit resulting from it.]

[45] A plate of this Monument is published in the Tour of Normandy by Dawson Turner, Esq.

[46] The Cardinal died in his fiftieth year only; and his funeral was graced and honoured by the presence of his royal master. Guicciardini calls him "the oracle and right arm of Louis." Of eight brothers, whom he left behind, four attained to the episcopal rank. His nephew succeeded him as Archbishop. See also *Historia Genealogica Magnatum Franciae*; vol. vii. p. 129; quoted in the *Gallia Christiana*, vol. xi. col. 96.

It was during the archiepiscopacy of the successor of the nephew of Amboise—namely, that of CHARLES of BOURBON—that the *Calvanistic persecution* commenced. "Tunc

vero coepit civitas, dioecesis, universaque provincia lamentabilem in modum conflictari, saevientibus ob religionis dissidia plusquam civilibus bellis," &c. But then the good Archbishop, however bountiful he might have been towards the poor at *Roncesvalles*, (when he escorted Philip II.'s

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first wife Elizabeth, daughter of Henry II. to the confines of Spain, after he had married her to that wretched monarch) should not have inflamed the irritated minds of the Calvinists, by BURNING ALIVE, in 1559, *John Cottin*, one of their most eminent preachers, by way of striking terror into the rest! Well might the Chronicler observe, as the result, "novas secta illa in dies acquirebat vires." About 1560-2, the Calvinists got the upper hand; and repaid the Catholics with a vengeance. Charles of Bourbon died in 1590: so that he had an arduous and agitated time of it.

[47] How long will this monument—(matchless of its kind)—continue unrepresented by the BURIN? If Mr. Henry Le Keux were to execute it in his best style, the world might witness in it a piece of Art entirely perfect of its kind. But let the pencils of Messrs. Corbould and Blore be first exercised on the subject. In the mean while, why is GALLIC ART inert?

[48] The choir was formerly separated from the surrounding chapels, or rather from the space between it and the chapels, by a superb brass grating, full of the most beautiful arabesque ornaments—another testimony of the magnificent spirit of the Cardinal and Prime Minister of Louis XII.: whose arms, as well as the figure of his patron, St. George, were seen in the centre of every compartment ... The Revolution has not left a vestige behind!

[49] [In this edition, I put the above passage in *Italics*,—to mark, that, within three years of writing it, the spire was consumed by LIGHTNING. The newspapers of both France and England were full of this melancholy event; and in the year 1823, Monsieur Hyacinthe Langlois, of Rouen, published an account of it, together with some views (indifferently lithographised) of the progress of the burning. "It should seem (says *Mons*. Licquet) that the author had a presentiment of what was speedily to take place:—for the rest, the same species of destruction threatens all similar edifices, for the want of conductors." I possess a fragment of the lead of the roof, as it was collected after a state of *fusion*—and sent over to me by some friend at Rouen. The fusion has caused portions of the lead to assume a variety of fantastic shapes—not *altogether* unlike a gothic building.]

[50] Let me add that the whole length of the cathedral is about four hundred and forty feet; and the transept about one hundred and seventy-five; English measure. The height of the nave is about ninety, and of the lantern one hundred and sixty-eight feet, English. The length of the nave is two hundred and twenty-eight feet.

[51] He died in 1531. Both the ancient and yet existing inscriptions are inserted by Gilbert, from Pommeraye and Farin; and formerly there was seen, in the middle of the monument, the figure of the Seneschal habited as a Count, with all the insignia of his dignity. But this did not outlive the Revolution.

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[52] It must be admitted that Diana, when she caused the verses

Indivulsa tibi quondam et fidissima conjux
Vt fuit in thalamo, sic erit in tumulo.

to be engraved upon the tomb of the Seneschal, might well have “moved the bile” of the pious Benedictine Pommeraye, and have excited the taunting of Ducarel, when they thought upon her subsequent connexion, in the character of mistress, with Henry the Second of France. Henry however endeavoured to compensate for his indiscretions by the pomp and splendor of his processions. Rouen, so celebrated of old for the entries of Kings and Nobles, seems to have been in a perfect blaze of splendor upon that of the Lover of Diana—“qui fut plus magnifique que toutes celles qu’on avoit vu jusqu’alors:” see *Farin’s Hist. de la Ville de Rouen*, vol. i. p. 121, where there is a singularly minute and gay account of all the orders and degrees of citizens—(with their gorgeous accoutrements of white plumes, velvet hats, rich brocades, and curiously wrought taffetas) of whom the processions were composed. It must have been a perfectly dramatic sight, upon the largest possible scale. It was from respect to the character or the memory of DIANA, that so many plaster-representations of her were erected on the exteriors of buildings: especially of those within small squares or quadrangles. In wandering about Rouen, I stumbled upon several old mansions of this kind.

[53] The inscription is this:

Si quem sancta tenet meditandi in lege voluntas,
Hic poterit residens, sacris intendere libris.

Pommeraye has rather an interesting gossiping chapter [Chap. xxii.] “De la Bibliotheque de la Cathedrale;” p. 163: to which FRANCOIS DE HARLAY, about the year 1630, was one of the most munificent benefactors.

[54] *Christian interment*.]—“Les Religieux de Saint Ouen touchez de compassion envers ce malheureux artisan, obtinrent son corps de la justice, et pour reconnoissance des bons services qu’il leur avoit rendus dans la construction de leur eglise, nonobstant sa fin tragique, ne laisserent pas de luy fair l’honneur de l’inhumer dans la chapelle de sainte Agnes, ou sa tombe se voit encore auec cet Epitaphe:

Cy gist M. ALEXANDRE DE BERNEUAL,
Maistre des oeuvres de Massonnerie.

[55] Even Dr. Ducarel became warm—on contemplating this porch! “The porch at the south entrance into the church (says he) is much more worthy of the spectator’s attention, being highly enriched with architectonic

ornaments; particularly two beautiful cul de lamps, which from the combination of a variety of spiral dressings, as they hang down from the vaulted roof, produce a very pleasing effect." p. 28.

[56] Consult the account given by M. Le Prevost in the "*Precis Analytique des Travaux de l'Academie, &c. de Rouen*," for the year 1816, p. 151, &c.

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[57] Farin tells us that you could go from the top of the lantern to the cross, or to the summit of the belfry, “outside, without a ladder; so admirable was the workmanship.” “Strangers (adds he) took models of it for the purpose of getting them engraved, and they were sold publicly at Rome.” *Hist. de la Ville de Rouen*, 1738, 4to. vol. ii. p. 154. There are thirteen chapels within this church; of which however the building cannot be traced lower than quite the beginning of the XVIth century. The extreme length and width of the interior is about 155 by 82 feet English. Even in Du Four’s time the population of this parish was very great, and its cemetery (adds he) was the first and most regular in Rouen. He gives a brief, but glowing description of it—“on va tout autour par des galeries couvertes et pavees; et, deux de ces galeries sont decorees de deux autels,” &c. p. 150.

Alas! time—or the revolution—has annihilated all this. Let me however add that M. COTMAN has published a view of the *staircase* in the church of which I am speaking.

[58] Ordericus Vitalis says, that the dying monarch requested to be conveyed thither, to avoid the noise and bustle of a populous town. Rouen is described to be, in *his* time, “populosa civitas.” Consult Duchesne’s *Historiae Normannor. Scrip. Antiq.* p.656.

[59] A view of it is published by M. Cotman.

[60] *St. Sever*. This church is situated in the southern fauxbourgs, by the side of the Seine, and was once surrounded by gardens, &c. As you cross the bridge of boats, and go to the race-ground, you leave it to the right; but it is not so old as *St. Paul*—where, Farin says, the worship of ADONIS was once performed!

LETTER VI.

HALLES DE COMMERCE. PLACE DE LA PUCELLE D’ORLEANS (JEANNE D’ARC.) BASSO-RILIEVO OF THE CHAMP DE DRAP D’OR. PALACE AND COURTS OF JUSTICE.

You must make up your mind to see a few more sights in the city of Rouen, before I conduct you to the environs, or to the summit of *Mont St. Catherine*. We must visit some relics of antiquity, and take a yet more familiar survey of the town, ere we strive

... superas evadere ad auras.

Indeed the information to be gained well merits the toil endured in its acquisition. The only town in England that can give you any notion of Rouen, is CHESTER; although the similitude holds only in some few particulars. I must, in the first place then, make especial mention of the HALLES DE COMMERCE. The *markets* here are numerous and abundant, and are of all kinds. Cloth, cotton, lace, linen, fish, fruit, vegetables, meat, corn, and wine; these for the exterior and interior of the body. Cattle,

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wood, iron, earthenware, seeds, and implements of agriculture; these for the supply of other necessities considered equally important. Each market has its appropriate site. For picturesque effect, you must visit the *Vieux Marche*, for vegetables and fish; which is kept in an open space, once filled by the servants and troops of the old Dukes of Normandy, having the ancient ducal palace in front. This is the fountain head whence the minor markets are supplied. Every stall has a large old tattered sort of umbrella spread above it, to ward off the rain or rays of heat; and, seen from some points of view, the effect of all this, with the ever-restless motion of the tongues and feet of the vendors, united to their strange attire, is exceedingly singular and interesting.

Leaving the old market place, you pass on to the *Marche Neuf*, where fruits, eggs, and butter are chiefly sold. At this season of the year there is necessarily little or no fruit, but I could have filled one coat pocket with eggs for less than half a franc. While on the subject of buying and selling, let us go to the *Halles* of *Rouen*; being large public buildings now exclusively appropriated to the sale of cloths, linen, and the varied *et-ceteras* of mercery. These are at once spacious and interesting in a high degree. They form the divisions of the open spaces, or squares, where the markets just mentioned are held; and were formerly the appurtenances of the palaces and chateaux of the old Dukes of Normandy: the *latter* of which are now wholly demolished. You must rise betimes on a Friday morning, to witness a sight of which you can have no conception in England: unless it be at a similar scene in *Leeds*. By six o'clock the busy world is in motion within these halls. Then commences the incessant and inconceivable vociferation of buying and selling. The whole scene is alive, and carried on in several large stone-arched rooms, supported by a row of pillars in the centre. Of these halls, the largest is about three hundred and twenty English feet in length, by fifty-five in width. The centre, in each division, contains tables and counters for the display of cloth, cotton, stuff, and linen of all descriptions. The display of divers colours—the commendations bestowed by the seller, and the reluctant assent of the purchaser—the animated eye of the former, and the calculating brow of the latter—the removal of one set of wares, and the bringing on of another—in short, the never-ceasing succession of sounds and sights astonishes the gravity of an Englishman; whose astonishment is yet heightened by the extraordinary good humour which every where prevails. The laugh, the joke, the equivoque, and reply, were worth being recorded in pointed metre;—and what metre but that of Crabbe could possibly render it justice? By nine of the clock all is hushed. The sale is over: the goods are cleared; and both buyers and sellers have quitted the scene.

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From *still*, let me conduct you to *active* life. In other words, let us hasten to take a peep at the *Horse and Cattle Market*; which is fixed in the very opposite part of the town; that is, towards the northern Boulevards. The horses are generally entire: and indeed you have scarcely any thing in England which exceeds the *Norman horse*, properly so understood. This animal unites the hardiness of the mule with the strength of his own particular species. He is also docile, and well trained; and a Norman, from pure affection, thinks he can never put enough harness upon his back. I have seen the face and shoulders of a cart-horse almost buried beneath a profusion of ornament by way of collar; and have beheld a farmer's horse, led out to the plough, with trappings as gorgeous and striking as those of a General's charger brought forward for a review. The carts and vehicles are usually balanced in the centre upon two wheels, which diminishes much of the pressure upon the horse. Yet the caps of the wheels are frightfully long, and inconveniently projecting: while the eternally loud cracking of the whip is most repulsive to nervous ears. On market days, the horses stand pretty close to each other for sale; and are led off, for shew, amidst boys, girls, and women, who contrive very dexterously to get out of the way of their active hoofs. The French seem to have an instinctive method of doing that, which, with ourselves, seems to demand forethought and deliberation.

Of the STREETS, in this extraordinary city, that of the *Great Clock—(Rue de la Grosse Horloge)* which runs in a straight line from the western front of the Cathedral, at right angles with the *Rue des Carmes*, is probably the most important, ancient, and interesting. When we were conveyed, on our entrance, (in the cabriolet of the Diligence) beneath the arch to the upper part of which this old fashioned clock is attached, we were lost in admiration at the singularity of the scene. The inhabitants saw, and enjoyed, our astonishment. There is a fountain beneath, or rather on one side of this arch; over which is sculptured a motley group of insipid figures, of the latter time of Louis XIV. The old tower near this clock merits a leisurely survey: as do also some old houses, to the right, on looking at it. It was within this old tower that a bell was formerly tolled, at nine o'clock each evening, to warn the inhabitants abroad to return within the walls of the city.[61]

Turning to the left, in this street, and going down a sharp descent, we observed a stand of hackney coaches in a small square, called *La Place de la Pucelle*: that is, the place where the famous JEANNE D'ARC[62] was imprisoned, and afterwards burnt. What sensations possess us as we gaze on each surrounding object!—although, now, each surrounding object has undergone a palpable change! Ah, my friend—what emotions were *once* excited within this small space!

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What curiosity, and even agony of mind, mingled with the tumults of indignation, the shouts of revenge, and the exclamations of pity! But life now goes on just the same as if nothing of the kind had happened here. The past is forgotten. This hapless Joan of Arc is one of the many, who, having been tortured as heretics, have been afterwards reverenced as martyrs. Her statue was, not very long after her execution, almost *adored* upon that very spot where her body had been consigned with execrations to the flames. The square, in which this statue stands, contains probably one of the very oldest houses in Rouen—and as interesting as it is ancient. It is invisible from without: but you open a wooden gate, and quickly find yourself within a small quadrangle, having three of its sides covered with basso-rilievo figures in plaster. That side which faces you is evidently older than the left: indeed I have no hesitation in assigning it to the end of the XVth century. The clustered ornaments of human figures and cattle, with which the whole of the exterior is covered, reminds us precisely of those numerous little wood-cut figures, chiefly pastoral, which we see in the borders of printed missals of the same period. The taste which prevails in them is half French and half Flemish. Not so is the character of the plaster figures which cover the *left* side on entering. These, my friend, are no less than the representation of the procession of Henry VIII. and Francis I. to the famous CHAMP DE DRAP D'OR: of which Montfaucon[63] has published engravings. Having carefully examined this very curious relic, of the beginning of the sixteenth century, I have no hesitation in pronouncing the copy of Montfaucon (or rather of the artist employed by him) to be most egregiously faithless. I visited it again and again, considering it to be worth all the "huge clocks" in Rouen put together. I hardly know how to take you from this interesting spot—from this exhibition of beautiful old art—-especially too when I consider that Francis himself once occupied the mansion, and held a Council here, with both English and French; that his bugles once sounded from beneath the gate way, and that his goblets once sparkled upon the chestnut tables of the great hall. I do hope and trust that the Royal Academy of Rouen, will not suffer this architectural relic to perish, without leaving behind a substantial and faithful representation of it.[64]

While upon the subject of ancient edifices, let me return; and, crossing the *Rue de la Grosse Horloge*, contrive to place you in the centre of the square which is formed by the PALAIS DE JUSTICE. The inhabitants consider this building as the principal *lion* in their city. It has indeed claims to notice and admiration, but will not bear the severe scrutiny of a critic in Gothic architecture. It was partly erected by Louis XII. at the entreaty of the provincial States, through the interest of the

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famous Cardinal d'Amboise, and partly by Francis I. This building precisely marks the restoration of Gothic taste in France, and the peculiar style of architecture which prevailed in the reign of Francis I. To say the truth, this style, however sparkling and imposing, is objectionable in many respects: for it is, in the first place, neither pure Gothic nor pure Grecian—but an injudicious mixture of both. Greek arabesque borders are running up the sides of a portal terminating in a Gothic arch; and the Gothic ornaments themselves are not in the purest, or the most pleasing, taste. Too much is given to parts, and too little to the whole. The external ornaments are frequently heavy, from their size and elaborate execution; and they seem to be *stuck on* to the main building without rhyme or reason.

The criminal offences are tried in the hall to the right, and the prisoners are confined in the lower part of the building to the left: above which you mount by a flight of stone steps, which conducts you to a singularly curious hall,[65] about one hundred and seventy-five English feet in length—roofed by wooden ribs, in the form of an arch, and displaying a most curious and exact specimen of carpenter's work. This is justly shewn and commented upon to the enquiring traveller. Parts of the building are devoted to the courts of assize, and to tribunals of audience of almost every description. The first Presidents of the Parliament lived formerly in the building which faces you upon entrance, but matters have now taken a very different turn. Upon the whole, this *Town Hall*, or call it what you will, is rather a magnificent structure; and certainly superior to most provincial buildings of the kind which we possess in England. I should tell you that the courts for commercial causes are situated near the quays, at the south part of the town: and Monsieur Riaux, who conducted me thither, (and who possesses the choicest library[66] of antiquarian books, of all descriptions, relating to Rouen, which I had the good fortune to see) carried me to the *Hall of Commerce*, which, among other apartments, contains a large chamber (contiguous to the Court of Justice) covered with *fleurs de lys* upon a light blue ground. It is now however much in need of reparation. Fresh lilies and a new ground are absolutely necessary to harmonise with a large oil-painting at one end of it, in which is represented the reception of Louis XVI. at Rouen by the Mayor and Deputies of the town, in 1786. All the figures are of the size of life, well painted after the originals, and appear to be strong resemblances. On enquiring how many of them were now living, I was told that—ALL WERE DEAD! The fate of the *principal* figure is but too well known. They should have this interesting subject—-interesting undoubtedly to the inhabitants—executed by one of their best engravers. It represents the unfortunate Louis quite in the prime of life; and is the best whole length portrait of him which I have yet seen in painting or in engraving.

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It is right however that you should know, that, in the Tribunal for the determination of commercial causes, there sits a very respectable Bench of Judges: among whom I recognised one that had perfectly the figure, air, and countenance, of an Englishman. On enquiry of my guide, I found my supposition verified. He *was* an Englishman; but had been thirty years a resident in *Rouen*. The judicial costume is appropriate in every respect; but I could not help smiling, the other morning, upon meeting my friend the judge, standing before the door of his house, in the open street—with a hairy cap on—-leisurely smoking his pipe—And wherein consisted the harm of such a *delassement*?

[61] [I apprehend this custom to be prevalent in fortified towns:—as Rouen *formerly* was—and as I found such custom to obtain at the present day, at Strasbourg. *Mons*. Licquet says that the allusion to the curfew—or *couvre-feu*—as appears in the previous edition—and which the reader well knows was established by the Conqueror with us—was no particular badge of the slavery of the English. It had been *previously* established by William in NORMANDY. Millot is referred to as the authority.]

[62] *the famous* JEANNE D'ARC.] Goube, in the second volume of his *Histoire du Duche de Normandie*, has devoted several spiritedly written pages to an account of the trial and execution of this heroine. Her history is pretty well known to the English—from earliest youth. Goube says that her mode of death had been completely prejudged; for that, previously to the sentence being passed, they began to erect "a scaffold of plaster, so raised, that the flames could not at first reach her—and she was in consequence consumed by a slow fire: her tortures being long and horrible." Hume has been rather too brief: but he judiciously observes that the conduct of the Duke of Bedford "was equally barbarous and dishonourable." Indeed it were difficult to pronounce which is entitled to the greatest abhorrence—the imbecility of Charles VII. the baseness of John of Luxembourg, or the treachery of the Regent Bedford?

The *identical* spot on which she suffered is not now visible, according to Millin; that place having been occupied by the late *Marche des Veaux*. It was however not half a stone's throw from the site of the present statue. In the *Antiquites Nationales* of the last mentioned author (vol. iii. art. xxxvi.) there are three plates connected with the History of JOAN of ARC. The *first* plate represents the *Porte Bouvreuil* to the left, and the circular old tower to the right—in which latter Joan was confined, with some houses before it; the middle ground is a complete representation of the rubbishing

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state by which many of the public buildings at Rouen are yet surrounded; and French taste has enlivened the foreground with a picture of a lover and his mistress, in a bocage, regaling themselves with a flagon of wine. The old circular tower ("qui vit gemir cette infortunee," says Millin) exists no longer. The second plate represents the fountain which was built in the market-place upon the very spot where the Maid suffered, and which spot was at first designated by the erection of a cross. From the style of the embellishments it appears to have been of the time of Francis I.Goube has re-engraved this fountain. It was taken down or demolished in 1755; upon the site of which was built the present tasteless production—resembling, as the author of the *Itineraire de Rouen* (p. 69) well observes, "rather a Pallas than the heroine of Orleans." The name of the author was STODTS. Millin's *third* plate—of this present existing fountain, is desirable; in as much as it shews the front of the house, in the interior of which are the basso-rilievos of the *Champ de drap d'Or*: for an account of which see afterwards.Millin allows that all PORTRAITS of her—whether in sculpture, or painting, or engraving—are purely IDEAL. Perhaps the nearest, in point of fidelity, was that which was seen in a painted glass window of the church of the *Minimes* at Chaillot: although the building was not erected till the time of Charles VIII. Yet it might have been a copy of some coeval production. In regard to oil paintings, I take it that the portrait of JUDITH, with a sword in one hand, and the head of Holofernes in the other, has been usually copied (with the omission of the latter accompaniment) as that of JEANNE D'ARC. I hardly know a more interesting collection of books than that which may be acquired respecting the fate of this equally brave and unfortunate heroine.

[63] Far be it from me to depreciate the labours of Montfaucon. But those who have not the means of getting at that learned antiquarian's *Monarchie Francoise* may possibly have an opportunity of examining precisely the same representations, of the procession above alluded to, in *Ducarel's Anglo-Norman Antiquities*, Plate XII. Till the year 1726 this extraordinary series of ornament was supposed to represent the *Council of Trent*; but the Abbe Noel, happening to find a salamander marked upon the back of one of the figures, supposed, with greater truth, that it was a representation of the abovementioned procession; and accordingly sent Montfaucon an account of the whole. The Abbe might have found more than one, two, or three salamanders, if he had looked closely into this extraordinary exterior; and possibly, in his time, the surfaces of the more delicate parts, especially of the human features, might not have sustained the injuries which time and accident now seem to have inflicted on them. [A beautiful effort in the graphic way representing the entire interior front of this interesting mansion, is said to be published at Rouen.]

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[64] In the previous edition of this work, there appeared a facsimile of a small portion of this bas-relief, representing—as I imagine—the setting out of Francis to meet Henry. Nothing, as far as correctness of detail goes, can give a more faithful resemblance of the PRECISE STATE in which the original appears: the defaced and the entire parts being represented with equal fidelity. *Mons*. Langlois has given a plate of the entire facade or front—in outline—with great ability; but so small as to give little or no notion of the character of the original.

[65] In Ducarel's time, "the ground story consisted of a great quadrangle surrounded with booksellers shops. On one side of it a stone staircase led to a large and lofty room, which, in its internal as well as external appearance, resembled, though in miniature, Westminster Hall. Here (continues Ducarel) I saw several gentlemen of the long robe, in their gowns and bands, walking up and down with briefs in their hands, and making a great show of business." *Anglo-Norman Antiquities*, p. 32. [According to *Mons*. Licquet, this "singularly curious hall" was begun to be built in 1493. It was afterwards, and is still called, *la Salle des Procureurs*.]

[66] *the choicest library*] Monsieur Riaux, Archiviste de la Chambre de Commerce. This amiable man unites a love of literature with that of architectural antiquities. The library of M. Le Prevost is however as copious as that of *Mons*. R.

LETTER VII.

THE QUAYS. BRIDGE OF BOATS. RUE DU BAC. RUE DE ROBEC. EAUX DE ROBEC ET
D'AUBETTE. MONT STE. CATHARINE. HOSPICES—GENERAL ET D'HUMANITE.

Still tarrying within this old fashioned place? I have indeed yet much to impart before I quit it, and which I have no scruple in avowing will be well deserving of your attention.

Just letting you know, in few words, that I have visited the famous chemical laboratory of M. Vitalis, (*Rue Beauvoisine*) and the yet more wonderful spectacle exhibited in M. Lemere's machine for sawing wood of all descriptions, into small or large planks, by means of water works—I must take you along THE QUAYS for a few minutes. These quays are flanked by an architectural front, which, were it finished agreeably to the original plan, would present us with one of the noblest structures in Europe. This stone front was begun in the reign of Louis XV. but many and prosperous must be the years of art, of commerce, and of peace, before money sufficient can be raised for the

successful completion of the pile. The quays are long, broad, and full of bustle of every description; while in some of the contiguous squares, ponderous bales of goods, shawls, cloth, and linen, are spread open to catch the observing eye. In the midst of this varied and animated scene, walks a well-known character, in his large cocked hat, and with his tin machine upon his back, filled with lemonade or coffee, surmounted by a bell—which “ever and anon” is sounded for the sake of attracting customers. He is here copied to the life.

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[Illustration]

As you pass along this animated scene, by the side of the rapid Seine, and its *Bridge of Boats*, you cannot help glancing now and then down the narrow old-fashioned streets, which run at right angles with the quays—with the innumerable small tile-fashioned pieces of wood, like scales, upon the roofs—which seem as if they would be demolished by every blast. The narrowness and gloom of these streets, together with the bold and overwhelming projections of the upper stories and roofs, afford a striking contrast to the animated scene upon the quays:—where the sun shines with full freedom, as it were; and where the glittering streamers, at innumerable mast-heads, denote the wealth and prosperity of the town. If the day happen to be fine, you may devote half a morning in contemplating, and mingling with, so interesting a scene.

We have had frequent thunder-storms of late; and the other Sunday evening, happening to be sauntering at a considerable height above the north-west Boulevards, towards the *Faubourg Cauchoise*, I gained a summit, upon the edge of a gravel pit, whence I looked down unexpectedly and precipitously upon the town below. A magnificent and immense cloud was rolling over the whole city. The Seine was however visible on the other side of it, shining like a broad silver chord: while the barren, ascending plains, through which the road to Caen passes, were gradually becoming dusk with the overshadowing cloud, and drenched with rain which seemed to be rushing down in one immense torrent. The tops of the Cathedral and of the abbey of St. Ouen were almost veiled in darkness, by the passing storm; but the lower part of the tower, and the whole of the nave of each building, were in one stream of golden light—from the last powerful rays of the setting sun. In ten minutes this magically-varied scene settled into the sober, uniform tint of evening; but I can never forget the rich bed of purple and pink, fringed with burnished gold, in which the sun of that evening set! I descended—absorbed in the recollection of the lovely objects which I had just contemplated—and regaled by the sounds of a thousand little gurgling streamlets, created by the passing tempest, and hastening to precipitate themselves into the Seine.

Of the different trades, especially retail, which are carried on in Rouen with the greatest success, those connected with the *cotton manufactories* cannot fail to claim your attention; and I fancied I saw, in some of the shop-windows, shawls and gowns which might presume to vie with our Manchester and Norwich productions. Nevertheless, I learnt that the French were extremely partial to British manufactures: and cotton stockings, coloured muslins, and what are called ginghams, are coveted by them with the same fondness as we prize their cambric and their lace. Their best articles in watches, clocks, silver ornaments, and trinkets, are obtained from Paris. But in

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respect to upholstery, I must do the Rouennois the justice to say, that I never saw any thing to compare with their *escrutoires* and other articles of furniture made of the walnut tree. These upright escrutoires, or writing desks, are in almost every bed-room of the more respectable hotels: but of course their polish is gone when they become stationary furniture in an inn—for the art of rubbing, or what is called *elbow-grease* with us—is almost unknown on either side of the Seine. You would be charmed to have a fine specimen of a side board, or an escrutoire, (the latter five or six feet high) made by one of their best cabinet-makers from choice walnut wood. The polish and tone of colour are equally gratifying; and resemble somewhat that of rose wood, but of a gayer aspect. The *or-molu* ornaments are tastefully put on; but the general shape, or contour, of the several pieces of furniture, struck me as being in bad taste.

He who wishes to be astonished by the singularity of a scene, connected with *trade*, should walk leisurely down the RUE DE ROBEC. It is surely the oddest, and as some may think, the most repulsive scene imaginable: But who that has a rational curiosity could resist such a walk? Here live the *dyers of clothes*—and in the middle of the street rushes the precipitous stream, called *L'Eau de Robec*[67]—receiving colours of all hues. To-day it is nearly jet black: to-morrow it is bright scarlet: a third day it is blue, and a fourth day it is yellow! Meanwhile it is partially concealed by little bridges, communicating with the manufactories, or with that side of the street where the work-people live: and the whole has a dismal and disagreeable aspect—especially in dirty weather: but if you go to one end of it (I think to the east—as it runs east and west) and look down upon the descending street, with the overhanging upper stories and roofs—-the foreshortened, numerous bridges—the differently-coloured dyed clothes, suspended from the windows, or from poles—the constant motion of men, women, and children, running across the bridges—with the rapid, *camelion* stream beneath—you cannot fail to acknowledge that this is one of the most singular, grotesque, and uncommon sights in the wonder-working city of Rouen. I ought to tell you that the first famous Cardinal d'Amboise (of whom the preceding pages have made such frequent honourable mention) caused the *Eau de Robec* to be directed through the streets of Rouen, from its original channel or source in a little valley near *St. Martin du Vivien*. Formerly there was a much more numerous clan of these "teinturiers" in the Rue de Robec—but they have of late sought more capacious premises in the fauxbourgs *de St. Hilaire* and *de Martainville*. The neighbouring sister-stream, *l'Eau d'Aubette*, is destined to the same purposes as that of which I have been just discoursing; but I do not at this

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moment recollect whether it be also dignified, in its course, by turning a few corn mills, ere it empties itself into the Seine. Indeed the thundering noise of one of these mills, turned by the Robec river, near the church of St. Maclou, will not be easily forgotten. Thus you see of what various, strange, and striking objects the city of Rouen is composed. Bustle, noise, life and activity, in the midst of an atmosphere unsullied by the fumes of sea coal:—hilarity and apparent contentment:—the spruce bourgeoise and the slattern fille de chambre:—attired in vestments of deep crimson and dark blue—-every thing flits before you as if touched by magic, and as if sorrow and misfortune were unknown to the inhabitants.

"Paullo majora canamus." In other words, let us leave the Town for the Country. Let us hurry through a few more narrow and crowded alleys, courts, and streets—and as the morning is yet beautiful, let us hasten onwards to enjoy the famous Panorama of Rouen and its environs from the MONT STE. CATHARINE.... Indeed, my friend, I sincerely wish that you could have accompanied me to the summit of this enchanting eminence: but as you are far away, you must be content with a brief description of our little expedition thither.[68] The Mont *Ste*. Catharine, which is entirely chalk, is considered the highest of the hills in the immediate vicinity of Rouen; or rather, perhaps, is considered the point of elevation from which the city is to be viewed to the greatest possible advantage. It lies to the left of the Seine, in your way from the town; and the ascent begins considerably beyond the barriers. Indeed it is on the route to Paris. We took an excellent *fiacre* to carry us to the beginning of the ascent, that our legs might be in proper order for scrambling up the acclivities immediately above; and leaving the main road to the right, we soon commenced our ambulatory operations in good earnest. But there was not much labour or much difficulty: so, halting, or standing, or sitting, on each little eminence, our admiration seemed to encrease—till, gaining the highest point, looking towards the west, we found ourselves immediately above the town and the whole of its environs....

"Heavens, what a goodly prospect spread around!"

The prospect was indeed "goodly—" being varied, extensive, fertile, and luxuriant ... in spite of a comparatively backward spring. The city was the main object, not only of attraction, but of astonishment. Although the point from which we viewed it is considered to be exactly on a level with the summit of the spire of the Cathedral, yet we seemed to be hanging, as it were, in the air, immediately over the streets themselves. We saw each church, each public edifice, and almost each street; nay, we began to think we could discover almost every individual stirring in them. The soldiers, exercising on the parade in the Champ de Mars, seemed to be scarcely two stones' throw from us; while

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the sounds of their music reached us in the most distinct and gratifying manner. No "Diable boiteux" could ever have transported a "Don Cleophas Leandro Perez Zambullo" to a more favourable situation for a knowledge of what was passing in a city; and if the houses had been unroofed, we could have almost discerned whether the *escrutoires* were made of mahogany or walnut-wood! This wonder-working effect proceeds from the extraordinary clearness of the atmosphere, and the absence of sea-coal fume. The sky was perfectly blue—the generality of the roofs were also composed of blue slate: this, added to the incipient verdure of the boulevards, and the darker hues of the trunks of the trees, upon the surrounding hills—the lengthening forests to the left, and the numerous white "maisons de plaisance"[69] to the right—while the Seine, with its hundred vessels, immediately below, to the left, and in face of you—with its cultivated little islands—and the sweeping meadows or race-ground[70] on the other side—all, or indeed any, of these objects could not fail to excite our warmest admiration, and to make us instinctively exclaim "that such a panorama was perfectly unrivalled!"

We descended Mont *Ste*. Catharine on the side facing the *Hospice General*: a building of a very handsome form, and considerable dimensions. It is a noble establishment for foundlings, and the aged and infirm of both sexes. I was told that not fewer than twenty-five hundred human beings were sheltered in this asylum; a number, which equally astonished and delighted me. The descent, on this side the hill, is exceedingly pleasing; being composed of serpentine little walks, through occasional alleys of trees and shrubs, to the very base of the hill, not many hundred yards from the hospital. The architecture of this extensive building is more mixed than that of its neighbour the *Hospice d'Humanite*, on account of the different times in which portions of it were added: but, upon the whole, you are rather struck with its approach to what may be called magnificence of style. I was indeed pleased with the good order and even good breeding of its motley inhabitants. Some were strolling quietly, with their arms behind them, between rows of trees:—others were tranquilly sitting upon benches: a third group would be in motion within the squares of the building: a fourth appeared in deep consultation whether the *potage* of to day were not inferior to that of the preceding day?—"Que cherchez vous, Monsieur?" said a fine looking old man, touching, and half taking off, his cocked hat; "I wish to see the Abbe Turquier,"—rejoined I. "Ah, il vient de sortir—par ici, Monsieur." "Thank you." "Monsieur je vous souhaite le bon jour—au plaisir de vous revoir!" And thus I paced through the squares of this vast building. The "Portier" had a countenance which our Wilkie would have seized with avidity, and copied with inimitable spirit and fidelity.

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[67] Bourgueville describes this river, in the sixteenth century, as being "aucune fois iaulne, autrefois rouge, verte, bleuee, violee & autres couleurs, selon qu'vn grand nombre de teinturiers qui sont dessus, la diuersifient par interualles en faisant leurs maneures." *Antiquitez de Caen*, p. 36.

[68] *expedition thither*.]—When John Evelyn visited this neighbourhood, in 1644, "the country so abounded with *wolves*, that a shepherd, whom he met, told him that one of his companions was strangled by one of them the day before—and that, in the midst of the flock! The fields (continues he) are mostly planted with pears and apples and other cider fruits. It is plentifully furnished with quarries of stone and slate, and hath iron in abundance." *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of John Evelyn*, vol. i. p. 50. Edit. 1818. My friend Mr. J. H. Markland visited Mont St. Catharine the year after the visit above described. He was of course enchanted with the view; and told me, that a friend whom he met there, and who had travelled pretty much in Italy, assured him there was nothing like it on the banks of either the *Arno* or the *Po*. In short, it is quite peculiar to itself—and cannot be surpassed.

[69] It is thus prettily observed in the little *Itineraire de Rouen* —"Ces agreables maisons de plaisance appartiennent a des habitants de Rouen qui y viennent en famille, dans la belle saison, se delasser des embarras de la ville et des fatigues du commerce." p. 153.

[70] *race-ground*]—When the English cavalry were quartered here in 1814-5, the officers were in the frequent habit of racing with each other. These races were gaily attended by the inhabitants; and I heard, from more than one mouth, the warmest commendations bestowed upon the fleetness of the coursers and the skill of the riders.

LETTER VIII.

EARLY TYPOGRAPHY AT ROUEN. MODERN PRINTERS. CHAP BOOKS. BOOKSELLERS. BOOK COLLECTORS.

Now for a little gossip and chit-chat about *Paper, Ink, Books, Printing-Offices*, and curiosities of a GRAPHIC description. Perhaps the most regular method would be to speak of a few of the principal *Presses*, before we take the *productions* of these presses into consideration. And first, as to the antiquity of printing in Rouen.[71] The art of printing is supposed to have been introduced here, by a citizen of the name of

MAUFER, between the years 1470 and 1480. Some of the specimens of Rouen *Missals* and *Breviaries*, especially of those by MORIN, who was the second printer in this city, are very splendid. His device, which is not common, and rather striking, is here enclosed for your gratification.

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[Illustration]

Few provincial towns have been more fertile in typographical productions; and the reputation of TALLEUR, GUALTIER, and VALENTIN, gave great respectability to the press of Rouen at the commencement of the sixteenth century.

Yet I am not able to ascertain whether these presses were very fruitful in Romances, Chronicles, and Old Poetry. I rather think, however, that they were not deficient in this popular class of literature, if I am to judge from the specimens which are yet lingering, as it were, in the hands of the curious. The gravity even of an archiepiscopal see could never repress the natural love of the French, from time immemorial, for light and fanciful reading.

You know with what pertinacity I grope about old alleys, old courts, by-lanes, and unfrequented corners—in search of what is curious, or precious, or rare in the book way. But ere we touch that enchanting chord, let us proceed according to the plan laid down. First therefore for printing-offices. Of these, the names of PERIAUX, (*Imprimeur de l'Academie*,) BAUDRY, (*Imprimeur du Roi*) MEGARD, (*Rue Martainville*) and LECRENE-LABBEY, (*Imprimeur-Libraire et Marchand de Papiers*) are masters of the principal presses; but such is the influence of Paris, or of metropolitan fashions, that a publisher will sometimes prefer getting his work printed at the capital.[72] Of the foregoing printers, it behoves me to make some mention; and yet I can speak personally but of two: Messieurs Periaux and Megard. M. Periaux is printer to the *Academie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Rouen*, of which academy, indeed, he is himself an accomplished member. He is quick, intelligent, well-bred, and obliging to the last degree; and may be considered the *Henry Stephen* of the Rouen Printers. He urged me to call often: but I could visit him only twice. Each time I found him in his counting house, with his cap on—shading his eyes: a pen in his right hand, and a proof sheet in his left. Though he rejoiced at seeing me, I could discover (much to his praise) that, like Aldus, he wished me to "say my saying quickly,"[73] and to leave him to his *deles* and *stets*! He has a great run of business, and lives in one of those strange, old-fashioned houses, in the form of a square, with an outside spiral staircase, so common in this extraordinary city. He introduced me to his son, an intelligent young man—well qualified to take the labouring oar, either upon the temporary or permanent retirement of his parent.[74]

Of Monsieur MEGARD, who may be called the ancient *Jenson*, or the modern *Bulmer*, of Rouen, I can speak only in terms of praise—both as a civil gentleman and as a successful printer. He is doubtless the most elegant printer in this city; and being also a publisher, his business is very considerable. He makes his regular half yearly journeys among the neighbouring towns and villages, and as regularly brings

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home the fruits of his enterprise and industry. On my first visit, M. Megard was from home; but Madame, “son epouse, l’attendoit a chaque moment!” There is a particular class of women among the French, which may be said to be singularly distinguished for their intelligence, civility, and good breeding. I mean the wives of the more respectable tradesmen. Thus I found it, in addition to a hundred similar previous instances, with Madame Megard. “Mais Monsieur, je vous prie de vous asseoir. Que voulez vous?” “I wish to have a little conversation with your husband. I am an enthusiastic lover of the art of printing. I search every where for skilful printers, and thus it is that I come to pay my respects to Monsieur Megard.” We both sat down and conversed together; and I found in Madame Megard a communicative, and well-instructed, representative of the said ancient Jenson, or modern Bulmer. “Enfin, voila mon mari qui arrive”—said Madame, turning round, upon the opening of the door:—when I looked forward, and observed a stout man, rather above the middle size, with a countenance perfectly English—but accoutred in the dress of the *national guard*, with a grenadier cap on his head. Madame saw my embarrassment: laughed: and in two minutes her husband knew the purport of my visit. He began by expressing his dislike of the military garb: but admitted the absolute necessity of adopting such a measure as that of embodying a national guard. “Soyez le bien venu; Ma foi, je ne suis que trop sensible, Monsieur, de l’honneur que vous me faites—vu que vous etes antiquaire typographique, et que vous avez publie des ouvrages relatifs a notre art. Mais ce n’est pas ici qu’il faut en chercher de belles epreuves. C’est a Paris.”

I parried this delicate thrust by observing that I was well acquainted with the fine productions of *Didot*, and had also seen the less aspiring ones of himself; of which indeed I had reason to think his townsmen might be proud. This I spoke with the utmost sincerity. My first visit concluded with two elegant little book-presents, on the part of M. Megard—one being *Heures de Rouen, a l’usage du Diocese*, 1814, 12mo. and the other *Etrennes nouvelles commodes et utiles*; 1815, 12mo.—the former bound in green morocco; and the latter in calf, with gilt leaves, but printed on a sort of apricot-tinted paper—producing no unpleasing effect. Both are exceedingly well executed. My visits to M. Megard were rather frequent. He has a son at the College Royale, or Lycee, whither I accompanied him, one Sunday morning, and took the church of that establishment in the way. It is built entirely in the Italian style of architecture: is exceedingly spacious: has a fine organ, and is numerously attended. The pictures I saw in it, although by no means of first-rate merit, quite convince me that it is in churches of *Roman*, and not of *Gothic* architecture, that paintings produce the most harmonious effect. This college and church form a noble establishment, situated in one of the most commanding eminences of the town. From some parts of it, the flying buttresses of the nave of the Abbey of St. Ouen, with the Seine at a short distance, surmounted by the hills and woods of Canteleu as a back ground, are seen in the most gloriously picturesque manner.

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But the printer who does the most business—or rather whose business lies in the lower department of the art, in bringing forth what are called *chap books*—is LECRENE-LABBEY—*imprimeur-libraire et marchand de papiers*. The very title imports a sort of *Dan Newberry's* repository. I believe however that Lecrene-Labbey's business is much diminished. He once lived in the *Rue de la Grosse-Horloge*, No. 12: but at present carries on trade in one of the out-skirting streets of the town. I was told that the premises he now occupies were once an old church or monastery, and that a thousand fluttering sheets are now suspended, where formerly was seen the solemn procession of silken banners, with religious emblems, emblazoned in colours of all hues. I called at the old shop, and supplied myself with a dingy copy of the *Catalogue de la Bibliotheque Bleue*—from which catalogue however I could purchase but little; as the greater part of the old books, several of the *Caxtonian stamp*, had taken their departures. It was from this Catalogue that I learnt the precise character of the works destined for common reading; and from hence inferred, what I stated to you a little time ago, that *Romances, Rondelays*, and chivalrous stories, are yet read with pleasure by the good people of France. It is, in short, from this lower, or *lowest* species of literature—if it must be so designated—that we gather the real genius, or mental character of the ordinary classes of society. I do assure you that some of these *chap* publications are singularly droll and curious. Even the very rudiments of learning, or the mere alphabet-book, meets the eye in a very imposing manner—as in the following facsimile.

[Illustration]

Love, Marriage, and *Confession*, are fertile themes in these little farthing chap books. Yonder sits a fille de chambre, after her work is done. She is intent upon some little manual, taken from the *Bibliotheque Bleue*. Approach her, and ask her for a sight of it. She smiles, and readily shews you *Catechisme a l'usage des Grandes Filles pour etre Mariees; ensemble la maniere d'attirer les Amans*. At the first glance of it, you suppose that this is entirely, from beginning to end, a wild and probably somewhat indecorous manual of instruction. By no means; for read the *Litanies* and *Prayer* with which it concludes, and which I here send; admitting that they exhibit a strange mixture of the simple and the serious.

LITANIES.

Pour toutes les Filles qui desirent entrer en menage.

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Kyrie, je voudrois, *Christe*, etre mariee. *Kyrie*, je prie tous les Saints, *Christe*, que ce soin demain. *Sainte Marie*, tout le Monde se marie. *Saint Joseph*, que vous ai-je fait? *Saint Nicolas*, ne m'oubliez pas. *Saint Mederie*, que j'aie un bon mari. *Saint Matthieu*, qu'il craigne Dieu. *Saint Jean*, qu'il m'aime tendrement. *Saint Bruno*, qu'il soit juli & beau. *Saint Francois*, qu'il me soit fidele. *Saint Andre*, qu'il soit a mon gre. *Saint Didier*, qu'il aime a travailler. *Saint Honore*, qu'il n'aime pas a jouer. *Saint Severin*, qu'il n'aime pas le vin. *Saint Clement*, qu'il soit diligent. *Saint Sauveur*, qu'il ait bon coeur. *Saint Nicaise*, que je sois a mon aise. *Saint Josse*, qu'il me donne un carrosse. *Saint Boniface*, que mon mariage se fasse, *Saint Augustin*, des demain matin.

ORAISON.

Seigneur, qui avez forme Adam de la terre, et qui lui avez donne Eve pour sa compagne; envoyez-moi, s'il vous plait, un bon mari pour compagnon, non pour la volupte, mais pour vous honorer & avoir des enfants qui vous benissent. Ainsi soit il.

Among the books of this class, before alluded to, I purchased a singularly amusing little manual called "*La Confession de la Bonne Femme*." It is really not divested of merit. Whether however it may not have been written during the Revolution, with a view to ridicule the practice of auricular confession which yet obtains throughout France, I cannot take upon me to pronounce; but there are undoubtedly some portions of it which seem so obviously to satirise this practice, that one can hardly help drawing a conclusion in the affirmative. On the other hand it may perhaps be inferred, with greater probability, that it is intended to shew with what extreme facility a system of *self-deception* may be maintained.[75] Referring however to the little manual in question, among the various choice morceaus which it contains, take the following extracts: exemplificatory of a woman's *evading the main points of confession*.

Confesseur. Ne voulez vous pas me repondre; en un mot, combien y a-t-il de temps que vous ne vous etes confessee?

La Penitente. Il y a un mois tout juste, car c'etoit le quatrieme jour du mois passe, & nous sommes au cinquieme du mois courant; or comptez, mon pere, & vous trouverez justement que ...

C. C'est assez, ne parlez point tant, & dites moi en peu de mots vos peches.

Elle raconte les peches d'autrui.

La Penitente. J'ai un enfant qui est le plus mechant garcon que vous ayez jamais vu: il jure, bat sa soeur, il fuit l'ecole, derobe tout ce qu'il peut pour jouer; il suit de mechans fripons: l'autre jour en courant il perdit son chapeau. Enfin, c'est un mechant garcon, je veux vous l'amener afin que vous me l'endoctriniez un peu s'il vous plait.

C. Dites-moi vos peches.

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P. Mais, mon pere, j'ai une fille qui est encore pire. Je ne la peux faire lever le matin: Je l'appelle cent fois: *Marguerite: plait-il ma Mere? leve-toi promptement et descends: j'y vais*. Elle ne bouge pas. *Si tu ne viens maintenant, tu seras battue.* Elle s'en moque. Quand je l'envoie a la Ville, je lui dis *reviens promptement, ne t'amuse pas*. Cependant, elle s'arrete a toutes les portes comme l'ane d'un meunier, elle babille avec tous ceux qu'elle rencontre; & quand elle me fait cela, je la bats: ne fais-je pas bien, mon pere?

C. Dites-moi *vos* peches et non pas ceux de *vos enfans*.

P. Il se trouve, mon pere, que nous avons dans notre rue une voisine qui est la plus mechante de toutes les femmes: elle jure, elle querelle tous ceux qui passent, personne ne la peut souffrir, ni son mari, ni ses enfans, & bien souvent elle s'enivre, & vous me dites, mon pere, quelle est celle-la? c'est ...

C. Ah gardez-vous bien de la nommer; car a la confession il ne faut jamais fair connoitre les personnes dont vous declarez les peches.

P. C'est elle qui vient se confesser apres moi: grondez-la bien, car vous ne lui en sauriez trop dire.

C. Taisez-vous donc, & ne parlez que de *vos* peches, non pas de ceux *des autres*.

Elle s'accuse de ce qui n'est point peche.

Penitente.—Ah! mon pere, j'ai fait un grand peche, ah! le grand peche! Helas je serai damnee, quoique mon confesseur m'ait defendu de le dire j'amais, neanmoins mon pere je vais vous le declarer.

C. Ne le dites point, puisque votre confesseur vous l'a defendu, je ne veux point l'entendre.

P. Ah! n'importe; je veux vous le dire, c'est un trop grand peche: J'ai battu ma mere.

C. Vous avez battu votre mere! Ah! miserable, c'est un cas reserve & un crime qui merite la potence. Et quand l'avez-vous battue?

P. Quand j'etois petite de l'age de quatre ans.

C. Ah! simple, ne savez-vous pas que tout ce que les enfans font avant l'age de raison, qui est environ l'age de sept ans, ne sauroit etre un peche.

There is however one thing, which I must frankly declare to you as entitled to distinct notice and especial commendation. It is, the method of teaching “catechisms” of a different and higher order: I mean the CHURCH CATECHISMS. Both the Cathedral and the Abbey of St. Ouen have numerous side chapels. Within these side chapels are collected, on stated days of the week, the young of both sexes. They are arranged in a circle. A priest, in his white robes, is seated, or stands, in the centre of them. He examines, questions, corrects, or commends, as the opportunity calls for it. His manner is winning and persuasive. His action is admirable. The lads shew him great

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respect, and are rarely rude, or seen to laugh. Those who answer well, and pay the greater attention, receive, with words of commendation, gentle pats upon the head—-and I could not but consider the blush, with which this mark of favour was usually received, as so many presages of future excellence in the youth. I once witnessed a most determined catechetical lecture of girls; who might be called, in the language of their matrimonial catechism, “de grandes filles.” It was on an evening, in the Chapel of Our Lady in St. Ouen’s Abbey, that this examination took place. Two elderly priests attended. The responses of the females were as quick as they were correct; the eye being always invariably fixed on the pavement, accompanied with a gravity and even piety of expression. A large group of mothers, with numerous spectators, were in attendance. A question was put, to which a supposed incorrect response was given. It was repeated, and the same answer followed. The priest hesitated: something like vexation was kindling in his cheek, while the utmost calmness and confidence seemed to mark the countenance of the examinant. The attendant mothers were struck with surprise. A silence for one minute ensued. The question related to the “Holy Spirit.” The priest gently approached the girl, and softly articulated—“Mais, ma chere considerez un peu,”—and repeated the question. “Mon pere, (yet more softly, rejoined the pupil) j’ai bien consideree, et je crois que c’est comme je vous l’ai deja dit.” The Priest crossed his hands upon his breast ... brought down his eyebrows in a thoughtful mood ... and turning quickly round to the girl, addressed her in the most affectionate tone of voice—“Ma petite,—tu as bien dit; et j’avois tort.” The conduct of the girl was admirable: She curtsied, blushed... and with eyes, from which tears seemed ready to start, surveyed the circle of spectators ... caught the approving glance of her mother, and sunk triumphantly upon her chair—with the united admiration of teachers, companions, parents and spectators! The whole was conducted with the most perfect propriety; and the pastors did not withdraw till they were fairly exhausted. A love of truth obliges me to confess that this reciprocity of zeal, on the part of master and pupil, is equally creditable to both parties; and especially serviceable to the cause of religion and morality.

Let me here make honourable mention of the kind offices of *Monsieur Longchamp*, who volunteered his friendly services in walking over half the town with me, to shew me what he justly considered as the most worthy of observation. It is impossible for a generous mind to refuse its testimony to the ever prompt kindness of a well-bred Frenchman, in rendering you all the services in his power. Enquire the way,—and you have not only a finger quickly pointing to it, but the owner of the finger must also put himself in motion to accompany you a short distance upon the route, and that too uncovered! “Mais, Monsieur, mettez votre chapeau ... je vous en prie ... mille pardons.” “Monsieur ne dites pas un seul mot ... pour mon chapeau, qu’il reste a son aise.”

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Among book-collectors, Antiquaries, and Men of Taste, let me speak with becoming praise of the amiable and accomplished M. AUGUSTE LE PREVOST—who is considered, by competent judges, to be the best antiquary in Rouen.[76] Mr. Dawson Turner, (a name, in our own country, synonymous with all that is liberal and enlightened in matters of virtu) was so obliging as to give me a letter of introduction to him; and he shewed me several rare and splendid works, which were deserving of the commendations that they received from their owner.

M. Le Prevost very justly discredits any remains of Roman masonry at Rouen; but he will not be displeased to see that the only existing relics of the castle or town walls, have been copied by the pencil of a late travelling friend. What you here behold is probably of the fourteenth century.

[Illustration]

The next book-collector in commendation of whom I am bound to speak, is MONSIEUR DUPUTEL; a member, as well as M. Le Prevost, of the *Academy of Belles-Lettres* at Rouen. The Abbe Turquier conducted me thither; and I found, in the owner of a choice collection of books, a well-bred gentleman, and a most hearty bibliomaniac. He has comparatively a small library; but, withal, some very curious, scarce, and interesting volumes. M. Duputel is smitten with that amiable passion,—the love of printing for *private distribution*—thus meriting to become a sort of Roxburghe Associate. He was so good as to beg my acceptance of the “nouvelle edition” of his “*Bagatelles Poetiques,"* printed in an octavo volume of about 112 pages, at Rouen, in 1816. On taking it home, I discovered the following not infelicitous version of our Prior’s beautiful little Poem of *the Garland*.

La Guirlande.

Traduction de l’Anglais de Prior.

Pour orner de Chloe les cheveux ondoyans,
Parmi les fleurs nouvellement ecloses
J’avais choisi les lis les plus brillans,
Les oeillets les plus beaux, et les plus fraiches roses.

Ma Chloe sur son front les placa la matin:
Alors on vit ceder sans peine,
Leur vif eclat a celui de son teint,
Leur doux parfum a ceux de son haleine.

De ses attraits ces fleurs paraissaient s’embellir,
Et sur ses blonds cheveux les bergers, les bergeres

Les voyaient se faner avec plus de plaisir
Qu’ils ne les voyaient naitre au milieu des parterres.

  Mais, le soir, quand leur sein fletri
Eut cesse d’exhaler son odeur seduisante,
  Elle fixa, d’un regard attendri,
Cette guirlande, helas! n’agueres si brillante.

Des larmes aussi-tot coulent de ses beaux yeux.
  Que d’eloquence dans ces larmes!
Jamais pour l’exprimer, le langage des dieux,
Tout sublime qu’il est, n’aurait assez de charmes.

En feignant d’ignorer ce tendre sentiment;
  “Pourquoi,” lui dis-je, “o ma sensible amie,
Pourquoi verser des pleurs? et par quel changement
Abandonner ton ame a la melancholie?”

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“Vois-tu comme ces fleurs languissent tristement?”
Me dit, en soupirant, ce moraliste aimable,
  “De leur fraicheur, en un moment,
S’est eclipse le charme peu durable.

  Tel est, helas! notre destin;
Fleur de beaute ressemble a celles des prairies;
On les voit toutes deux naitre avec le matin,
  Et des le soir etre fletries.

Estelle hier encor brillait dans nos hameaux,
Et l’amour attirait les bergers sur ses traces;
De la mort, aujourd’hui, I’impitoyable faulx
  A moissonne sa jeunesse et ses graces.

Soumise aux memes lois, peut-etre que demain,
Comme elle aussi, Damon, j’aurai cesse de vivre....
Consacre dans tes vers la cause du chagrin
  Auquel ton amante se livre.”

p. 92.

The last and not the least of book-collectors, which I have had an opportunity of visiting, is MONSIEUR RIAUX. With respect to what may be called a ROUENNOISE LIBRARY, that of M. Riaux is greatly preferable to any which I have seen; although I am not sure whether M. Le Prevost’s collection contain not nearly as many books. M. Riaux is himself a man of first-rate book enthusiasm; and unites the avocations of his business with the gratification of his literary appetites, in a manner which does him infinite honour. A city like Rouen should have a host of such inhabitants; and the government, when it begins to breathe a little from recent embarrassments, will, I hope, cherish and support that finest of all patriotic feelings,—a desire to preserve the RELICS, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS of PAST AGES. Normandy is fertile beyond conception in objects which may gratify the most unbounded passion in this pursuit. It is the country where formerly the harp of the minstrel poured forth some of its sweetest strains; and the lay and the fabliaux of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which delight us in the text of Sainte Palaye, and in the versions of Way, owed their existence to the combined spirit of chivalry and literature, which never slumbered upon the shores of Normandy.

Farewell now to ROUEN.[77] I have told you all the tellings which I thought worthy of communication. I have endeavoured to make you saunter with me in the streets, in the cathedral, the abbey, and the churches. We have, in imagination at least, strolled together along the quays, visited the halls and public buildings, and gazed with rapture from Mont *Ste*. Catharine upon the enchanting view of the city, the river, and the neighbouring hills. We have from thence breathed almost the pure air of heaven, and

surveyed a country equally beautified by art, and blessed by nature. Our hearts, from that same height, have wished all manner of health, wealth, and prosperity, to a land thus abounding in corn and wine, and oil and gladness. We have silently, but sincerely prayed, that swords may for ever be “turned into plough-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks:”—that

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all heart-burnings, antipathies, and animosities, may be eternally extinguished; and that, from henceforth, there may be no national rivalries but such as tend to establish, upon a firmer footing, and upon a more comprehensive scale, the peace and happiness of fellow-creatures, of whatever persuasion they may be:—of such, who sedulously cultivate the arts of individual and of national improvement, and blend the duties of social order with the higher calls of morality and religion. Ah! my friend, these are neither foolish thoughts nor romantic wishes. They arise naturally in an honest heart, which, seeing that all creation is animated and upheld by ONE and the SAME POWER, cannot but ardently hope that ALL may be equally benefited by a reliance upon its goodness and bounty. From this eminence we have descended somewhat into humbler walks. We have visited hospitals, strolled in flower-gardens, and associated with publishers and collectors of works—both of the dead and of the living. So now, fare you well. Commend me to your family and to our common friends,—especially to the Gorburghers should they perchance enquire after their wandering Vice President. Many will be the days passed over, and many the leagues traversed, ere I meet them again. Within twenty-four hours my back will be more decidedly turned upon “dear old England”—for that country, in which her ancient kings once held dominion, and where every square mile (I had almost said *acre*) is equally interesting to the antiquary and the agriculturist. I salute you wholly, and am yours ever.

[71] The reader may possibly not object to consult two or three pages of the *Bibliographical Decameron*, beginning at page 137, vol. ii. respecting a few of the early Rouen printers. The name of MAUFER, however, appears in a fine large folio volume, entitled *Gaietanus de Tienis Vincentini in Quatt. Aristot. Metheor. Libros*, of the date of 1476—in the possession of Earl Spencer. See *AEd. Althorp*. vol. ii. p. 134. From the colophon of which we can only infer that Maufer was a *citizen of Rouen*. [According to M. Licquet, the first book printed at Rouen—a book of the greatest rarity—was entitled *Les Croniques de Normandie, par Guillaume Le Talleur*, 1487, folio.]

[72] [Since the publication of the first edition of this Tour, I have had *particular* reason to become further acquainted with the partiality of the Rouennois for Parisian printing. When M. Licquet did me the honour to translate my IXth Letter, subjoining notes, (which cut their own throats instead of that of the author annotated upon) he employed the press of *Mons*. Crapelet, at Paris: a press, as eminently distinguished for its beauty and accuracy, as its Director has proved himself to be for his narrow-mindedness and acrimony of feeling. M.L. (as I learnt from a friend who conversed with him, and as indeed I naturally expected) seemed to be sorry for what he had done.]

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[73] *like Aldus, "say my saying" quickly*.] Consult Mr. Roscoe's *Life of Leo X.* vol. i. p. 169-70, 8vo. edit. Unger, in his Life of Aldus, *edit. Geret.* p. xxxxii. has a pleasant notice of an inscription, to the same effect, put over the door of his printing-office by Aldus. [It has been quoted to satiety, and I therefore omit it here.]

[74] [Mons. Periaux has lately published a Dictionary of the Streets of Rouen, in alphabetical order; in two small, unostentatious, and useful octavo volumes.]

[75] [Mons. Licquet translates the latter part of the above passage thus:—"avec quelle facilite nous parvenons a nous abuser nous-memes,"—adding, in a note, as follows: "J'avais d'abord vu un tout autre sens dans la phrase anglaise. Si celui que j'adopte n'etait pas encore le veritable, j'en demande sincerement pardon a l'auteur." In turn, I may not be precisely informed of the meaning and force of the verb "*abuser*"—used by my translator: but I had been better satisfied with the verb *tromper*—as more closely conveying the sense of the original.]

[76] M. Le Prevost is a belles-lettres Antiquary of the highest order. His "Memoire faisant suite a l'Essai sur les Romans historiques du moyen age" may teach modern Normans not to despair when death shall have laid low their present oracle the ABBE DE LA RUE. [I am proud, in this second edition of my Tour, to record the uninterrupted correspondence and friendship of this distinguished Individual; and I can only regret, in common with several friends, that M. Le Prevost will not summon courage sufficient to visit a country, once in such close connexion with his own, where a HEARTY RECEPTION has long awaited him.]

[77] [The omission, in this place, of the entire IXth Letter, relating to the PUBLIC LIBRARY at Rouen, must be accounted for, and it is hoped, approved, on the principle laid down at the outset of this undertaking; namely, to omit much that was purely bibliographical, and of a secondary interest to the general Reader. The bibliography, in the original IXth Letter, being of a partial and comparatively dry description—as relating almost entirely to ancient volumes of Church Rituals—was thought to be better omitted than abridged. Another reason might be successfully urged for its omission.

This IXth Letter, which comprehends 22 pages in the previous impression, and about 38 pages in the version, having been translated and *separately* published in 1821, by

Mons. Licquet (who succeeded M. Gourdin as Principal Librarian of the Library in question) I had bestowed upon it particular attention, and entered into several points by way of answer to his remarks, and

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in justification or explanation of the original matter. In consequence, any *abridgement* of that original matter must have led to constant notice of the minute remarks, and pigmy attacks, of my critical translator: and the stream of intelligence in the text might have been diverted, or rendered unpalatable, by the observations, in the way of controversy, in the notes. If M. Licquet considers this avowal as the proclaiming of his triumph, he is welcome to the laurels of a Conqueror; but if he can persuade any COMMON FRIENDS that, in the translation here referred to, he has defeated the original author in one essential position—or corrected him in one flagrant inaccuracy—I shall be as prompt to thank him for his labours, as I am now to express my astonishment and pity at his undertaking. When M. Licquet put forth the brochure in question—(so splendidly executed in the press of M. Crapelet—to harmonise, in all respects, with the large paper copies of the original English text) he had but recently occupied the seat of his Predecessor. I can commend the zeal of the newly-appointed Librarian in Chief; but must be permitted to question alike his judgment and his motives.One more brief remark in this place. My translator should seem to commend what is only laudatory, in the original author, respecting his countrymen. Sensitively alive to the notice of their smallest defects, he has the most unbounded powers of digestion for that of their excellences. Thus, at the foot of the ABOVE PASSAGE, in the text, *Mons*. Licquet is pleased to add as follows—in a note: “Si M. Dibdin ne s’etait livre qu’a des digressions de cette nature, il aurait trouve en France un chorus universel, un concert de voeux unanimes:” vol. i. p. 239. And yet few travellers have experienced a more cordial reception, and maintained a more *harmonious* intercourse, than HE, who, from the foregoing quotation, is more than indirectly supposed to have provoked opposition and *discord!*]

LETTER IX.

DEPARTURE FROM ROUEN. ST. GEORGE DE BOSCHERVILLE. DUCLAIR. MARIVAUX. THE ABBEY OF JUMIEGES. ARRIVAL AT CAUDEBEC.

May, 1818.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

In spite of all its grotesque beauties and antiquarian attractions, the CITY OF ROUEN must be quitted—and I am about to pursue my route more in the character of an independent traveller. No more *Diligence*, or *Conducteur*. I have hired a decent cabriolet, a decent pair of horses, and a yet more promising postilion: and have already made a delightfully rural migration. Adieu therefore to dark avenues, gloomy courts, overhanging roofs, narrow streets, cracking whips, the never-ceasing noise of carts and carriages, and never-ending movements of countless masses of population:—Adieu!—-

and in their stead, welcome be the winding road, the fertile meadow, the thickly-planted orchard, and the broad and sweeping Seine!

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Accordingly, on the 4th of this month, between the hours of ten and eleven, A.M. the rattling of horses' hoofs, and the echoes of a postilion's whip, were heard within the court-yard of the *Hotel Vatel*. Monsieur, Madame, Jacques—and the whole fraternity of domestics, were on the alert—"pour faire les adieux a Messieurs les Anglois." This Jacques deserves somewhat of a particular notice. He is the prime minister of the Hotel Vatel.[78] A somewhat *uncomfortable* detention in England for five years, in the character of "prisoner of war," has made him master of a pretty quick and ready utterance of common-place phrases in our language; and he is not a little proud of his attainments therein. Seriously speaking, I consider him quite a phenomenon in his way; and it is right you should know that he affords a very fair specimen of a sharp, clever, French servant. His bodily movements are nearly as quick as those of his tongue. He rises, as well as his brethren, by five in the morning; and the testimonies of this early activity are quickly discovered in the unceasing noise of beating coats, singing French airs, and scolding the boot-boy. He rarely retires to rest before mid-night; and the whole day long he is in one eternal round of occupation. When he is bordering upon impertinence, he seems to be conscious of it—declaring that "the English make him saucy, but that naturally he is very civil." He always speaks of human beings in the *neuter* gender; and to a question whether such a one has been at the Hotel, he replies, "I have not seen *it* to-day." I am persuaded he is a thoroughly honest creature; and considering the pains which are taken to spoil him, it is surprising with what good sense and propriety he conducts himself.

About eleven o'clock, we sprung forward, at a smart trot, towards the barriers by which we had entered Rouen. Our postilion was a thorough master of his calling, and his spurs and whip seemed to know no cessation from action. The steeds, perfectly Norman, were somewhat fiery; and we rattled along the streets, (for the *chausse* never causes the least abatement of pace with the French driver) in high expectation of seeing a thousand rare sights ere we reached Havre—equally the limits of our journey, and of our contract with the owner of the cabriolet. That accomplished antiquary M. Le Prevost, whose name you have often heard, had furnished me with so dainty a bill of fare, or carte de voyage; that I began to consider each hour lost which did not bring us in contact with some architectural relic of antiquity, or some elevated position—whence the wandering Seine and wooded heights of the adjacent country might be surveyed with equal advantage.

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You have often, I make no doubt, my dear friend, started upon something like a similar expedition:—when the morning has been fair, the sun bright, the breeze gentle, and the atmosphere clear. In such moments how the ardour of hope takes possession of one! —How the heart warms, and the conversation flows! The barriers are approached; we turn to the left, and commence our journey in good earnest. Previously to gaining the first considerable height, you pass the village of *Bapeaume*. This village is exceedingly picturesque. It is studded with water-mills, and is enlivened by a rapid rivulet, which empties itself, in a serpentine direction, into the Seine. You now begin to ascend a very commanding eminence; at the top of which are scattered some of those country houses which are seen from Mont *Ste*. Catharine. The road is of a noble breadth. The day warmed; and dismounting, we let our steeds breathe freely, as we continued to ascend leisurely. Our first halting-place, according to the instructions of M. Le Prevost, was *St. George de Boscherville*; an ancient abbey established in the twelfth century, This abbey is situated about three French leagues from Rouen. Our route thither, from the summit of the hill which we had just ascended, lay along a road skirted by interminable orchards now in full bloom. The air was perfumed to excess by the fragrance of these blossoms. The apple and pear were beautifully conspicuous; and as the sky became still more serene, and the temperature yet more mild by the unobstructed sun beam, it is impossible to conceive any thing more balmy and genial than was this lovely day. The minutes seemed to fly away too quickly—when we reached the village of *Boscherville*; where stands the CHURCH; the chief remaining relic of this once beautiful abbey. We surveyed the west front very leisurely, and thought it an extremely beautiful specimen of the architecture of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; for certainly there are some portions more ancient than others. A survey of the chapter-house filled me with mingled sorrow and delight: sorrow, that the Revolution and a modern cotton manufactory had metamorphosed it from its original character; and delight, that the portions which remained were of such beautiful forms, and in such fine preservation. The stone, being of a very close-grained quality, is absolutely as white and sound as if it had been just cut from the quarry. The room, where a parcel of bare-legged girls and boys were working the respective machineries, had a roof of the most delicate construction.[79]

The very sound of a *Monastery* made me curious to examine the disposition of the building. Accordingly, I followed my guide through suites of apartments, up divers stone stair-cases, and along sundry corridors. I noticed the dormitories with due attention, and of course inquired eagerly for the LIBRARY:—but the shelves only remained—-either the fear or the fury of the Revolution having long ago dispossessed

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it of every thing in the shape of a *book*. The whole was painted white. I counted eleven perpendicular divisions; and, from the small distances between the upper shelves, there must have been a very considerable number of *duodecimos*. The titles of the respective classes of the library were painted in white letters upon a dark-blue ground, at top. *Bibles* occupied the first division, and the *Fathers* the second: but it should seem that equal importance was attached to the works of *Heretics* as to those called *Litterae Humaniores*—for each had a division of equal magnitude.

On looking out of window, especially from the back part of the building, the eye rests entirely upon what had once been fruitful orchards, abundant kitchen gardens, and shady avenues. Yet in England, this spot, rich by nature, and desirable from its proximity to a great city, would, ere forty moons had waned, have grown up into beauty and fertility, and expanded into luxuriance of condition.

The day was now, if possible, more lovely than before. On looking at my instructions I found that we had to stop to examine the remains of an old castle at *Delafontaine*—-about two English miles from *St. George de Boscherville*. These remains, however, are but the fragments of a ruin, if I may so speak; yet they are interesting, but somewhat perilous: for a few broken portions of a wall support an upper chamber, where appears a stone chimney-piece of very curious construction and ornament. On observing a large cavity or loop-hole, about half way up the outer wall, I gained it by means of a plentiful growth of ivy, and from thence surveyed the landscape before me. Here, having for some time past lost sight of the Seine, I caught a fine bold view of the sweep of that majestic river, now becoming broader and broader—while, to the left, softly tinted by distance, appeared the beautiful old church we had just quitted: the verdure of the hedges, shrubs, and forest trees, affording a rich variety to the ruddy blossoms of the apple, and the white bloom of the pear. I admit, however, that this delicious morceau of landscape was greatly indebted, for its enchanting effect, to the blue splendour of the sky, and the soft temperature of the air; while the fragrance of every distended blossom added much to the gratification of the beholder. But it is time to descend from this elevation; and to think of reaching Duclair.

DUCLAIR is situated close to the very borders of the Seine, which has now an absolute lake-like appearance. We stopped at the auberge to rest our horses; and I commenced a discourse with the master of the inn and his daughter; the latter, a very respectable-looking and well-behaved young woman of about twenty-two years of age. She was preparing a large crackling wood-fire to dress a fish called the *Alose*, for the passengers of the *diligence*—who were expected within half an hour. The French think they can

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never *butter* their victuals sufficiently; and it would have produced a spasmodic affection in a thoroughly bilious spectator, could he have seen the enormous piece of butter which this active young *cuisiniere* thought necessary to put into the pot in which the '*Alose*' was to be boiled. She laughed at the surprise I expressed; and added "qu'on ne peut rien faire dans la cuisine sans le beurre." You ought to know, by the by, that the *Alose*, something like our *mackerel* in flavour, is a large and delicious fish; and that we were always anxious to bespeak it at the table-d'hote at Rouen. Extricated from the lake of butter in which it floats, when brought upon table, it forms not only a rich, but a very substantial dish.

I took a chair and sat in the open air, by the side of the door—enjoying the breeze, and much disposed to gossip with the master of the place. Perceiving this, the landlord approached, and addressed me with a pleasant degree of familiarity. "You are from London, then, Sir?" "I am." "Ah Sir, I never think of London but with the most painful sensations." "How so?" "Sir, I am the sole heir of a rich banker who died in that city before the Revolution. He was in partnership with an English gentleman. Can you possibly advise and assist me upon the subject?" I told him that my advice and assistance were literally not worth a sous; but that, such as they were, he was perfectly welcome to both. "Your daughter Sir, is not married?"—"Non, Monsieur, elle n'est pas encore epousee: mais je lui dis qu'elle ne sera jamais *heureuse* avant qu'elle le soit." The daughter, who had overheard the conversation, came forward, and looking archly over her shoulder, replied—"ou *malheureuse*, mon pere!" A sort of truism, expressed by her with singular epigrammatic force, to which there was no making any reply.

Do you remember, my dear friend; that exceedingly cold winter's night, when, for lack of other book-entertainment, we took it into our heads to have a rummage among the *Scriptores Historiae Normannorum* of DUCHESNE?—and finding therein many pages occupied by *Gulielmus Gemeticensis*, we bethought ourselves that we would have recourse to the valuable folio volume yeleped *Neustria Pia*:—where we presently seemed to hold converse with the ancient founders and royal benefactors of certain venerable establishments! I then little imagined that it would ever fall to my lot to be either walking or musing within the precincts of the Abbey of Jumieges;—or rather, of the ruins of what was once not less distinguished, as a school of learning, than admired for its wealth and celebrity as a monastic establishment. Yes, my friend, I have seen and visited the ruins of this Abbey; and I seem to live "mihi carior" in consequence.

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But I know your love of method—and that you will be in wrath if I skip from *Duclair* to JUMIEGES ere the horses have carried us a quarter of a league upon the route. To the left of *Duclair*, and also washed by the waters of the Seine, stands *Marivaux*; a most picturesque and highly cultivated spot. And across the Seine, a little lower down, is the beautiful domain of *La Mailleraye*;—where are hanging gardens, and jets d'eaux, and flower-woven arbours, and daisy-sprinkled meadows—for there lives and occasionally revels *La Marquise*.... I might have been not only a spectator of her splendor, but a participator of her hospitality; for my often-mentioned valuable friend, M. Le Prevost, volunteered me a letter of introduction to her. What was to be done? One cannot be everywhere in one day, or in one journey:—so, gravely balancing the ruins of still life against the attractions of animated society, I was unchivalrous enough to prefer the former—and working myself up into a sort of fantasy, of witnessing the spectered forms of DAGOBERT and CLOVIS, (the fabled founders of the Abbey) I resolutely turned my back upon *La Mailleraye*, and as steadily looked forwards to JUMIEGES. We ascended very sensibly—then striking into a sort of bye-road, were told that we should quickly reach the place of our destination. A fractured capital, and broken shaft, of the late Norman time, left at random beneath a hedge, seemed to bespeak the vicinity of the abbey. We then gained a height; whence, looking straight forward, we caught the first glance of the spires, or rather of the west end towers, of the Abbey of Jumieges.[80] "La voila, Monsieur,"—exclaimed the postilion—increasing his speed and multiplying the nourishes of his whip—"voila la belle Abbaye!"

We approached and entered the village of Jumieges. Leaving some neat houses to the right and left, we drove to a snug auberge, evidently a portion of some of the outer buildings, or of the chapter-house, attached to the Abbey. A large gothic roof, and central pillar, upon entering, attest the ancient character of the place.[81] The whole struck us as having been formerly of very great dimensions. It was a glorious sun-shiny afternoon, and the villagers quickly crowded round the cabriolet. "Voila Messieurs les Anglois, qui viennent voir l'Abbaye—mais effectivement il n'y a rien a voir." I told the landlady the object of our visit. She procured us a guide and a key: and within five minutes we entered the nave of the abbey. I can never forget that entrance. The interior, it is true, has not the magical effect, or that sort of artificial burst, which attends the first view of *Tintern* abbey: but, as the ruin is larger, there is necessarily more to attract attention. Like Tintern also, it is unroofed—yet this unroofing has proceeded from a different cause: of which presently. The side aisles present you with a short flattened arch: the nave has none: but you observe a long pilaster-like, or alto-rilievo column, of slender dimensions, running from bottom to top, with a sort of Roman capital. The arched cieling and roof are entirely gone. We proceeded towards the eastern extremity, and saw more frightful ravages both of time and of accident. The latter however had triumphed over the former: but for *accident* you must read *revolution*.

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The day had been rather oppressive for a May morning; and we were getting far into the afternoon, when clouds began to gather, and the sun became occasionally obscured. We seated ourselves upon a grassy hillock, and began to prepare for dinner. To the left of us lay a huge pile of fragments of pillars and groinings of arches—the effects of recent havoc: to the right, within three yards, was the very spot in which the celebrated AGNES SOREL, Mistress of Charles VII, lay entombed:[82]—not a relic of mausoleum now marking the place where, formerly, the sculptor had exhibited the choicest efforts of his art, and the devotee had repaired to

Breathe a prayer for her soul—and pass on!

What a contrast to the present aspect of things!—to the mixed rubbish and wild flowers with which every spot is now well nigh covered! The mistress of the inn having furnished us with napkins and tumblers, we partook of our dinner, surrounded by the objects just described, with no ordinary sensations. The air now became oppressive; when, looking through the few remaining unglazed mullions of the windows, I observed that the clouds grew blacker and blacker, while a faint rumbling of thunder reached our ears. The sun however yet shone gaily, although partially; and as the storm neared us, it floated as it were round the abbey, affording—by means of its purple, dark colour, contrasted with the pale tint of the walls,—one of the most beautiful painter-like effects imaginable. In an instant almost—and as if touched by the wand of a mighty necromancer—the whole scene became metamorphosed. The thunder growled, but only growled; and the threatening phalanx of sulphur-charged clouds rolled away, and melted into the quiet uniform tint which usually precedes sun-set. Dinner being dispatched, I rose to make a thorough examination of the ruins which had survived ... not only the Revolution, but the cupidity of the present owner of the soil—who is a *rich* man, living at Rouen—and who loves to dispose of any portion of the stone, whether standing or prostrate, for the sake of the lucre, however trifling, which arises from the sale. Surely the whole corporation of the city of Rouen, with the mayor at their head, ought to stand between this ruthless, rich man, and the abbey—the victim of his brutal avarice and want of taste.[83]

The situation of the abbey is delightful. It lies at the bottom of some gently undulating hills, within two or three hundred yards of the Seine. The river here runs gently, in a serpentine direction, at the foot of wood-covered hills—and all seemed, from our elevated station, indicative of fruitfulness, of gaiety, and of prosperity,—all—save the mournful and magnificent remains of the venerable abbey whereon we gazed! In fact, this abbey exists only as a shell. I descended, strolled about the village, and mingled in the conversation of the villagers. It was a lovely approach of evening—and men, women, and children were seated, or sauntering,

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in the open air. Perceiving that I was anxious to gain information, they flocked around me—and from one man, in particular, I obtained exact intelligence about the havoc which had been committed during the Revolution upon the abbey, The roof had been battered down for the sake of the *lead*—to make bullets; the pews, altars, and iron-work, had been converted into other destructive purposes of warfare; and the great bell had been sold to some speculators in a cannon-foundery at Rouen.[84] The revolutionary mania had even brutalized the Abbot. This man, who must be considered as

....damned to everlasting fame,

had been a monk of the monastery; and as soon as he had attained the headship of it, he disposed of every movable piece of furniture, to gratify the revolutionary pack which were daily howling at the gates of the abbey for entrance! Nor could he plead *compulsion* as an excuse. He seemed to enjoy the work of destruction, of which he had the uncontrouled direction. But enough of this wretch.

The next resting-place was CAUDEBEC: a very considerable village, or rather a small town. You go down a steep descent, on entering it by the route we came. As you look about, there are singular appearances on all sides—of houses, and hanging gardens, and elaborately cut avenues—upon summits, declivities, and on the plain. But the charm of the view, at least to my old-fashioned feelings, was a fine old gothic church, and a very fine spire of what *appeared* to belong to another. As the evening had completely set in, I resolved to reserve my admiration of the place till the morrow.

[78] [I am ignorant of his present destination; but learn that he has quitted the above situation a long time.]

[79] [Mr. COTMAN has published views of the West Front, the South East, the West Entrance, and the South Transept, with sculptured capitals and basso-relievos, &c. In the whole, seven plates.]

[80] [Mr. Cotman has published etchings of the West Front: the Towers, somewhat fore-shortened; the Elevation of the Nave—and doorway of the Abbey: the latter an extremely interesting specimen of art. A somewhat particular and animated description of it will be found in *Lieut. Hall's Travels in France*, 8vo. p. 57, 1819. [In the first edition, I had called the west end towers of the Abbey—"small." *Mons*. Licquet has suggested that I must have meant "*comparatively*" small;—in contradistinction to the centre-tower, which would have been larger. We learn also from M. Licquet that the spire of this central tower was demolished in 1573, by the Abbe le Veneur, Bishop of Evreux. What earthly motive could have led to such a brutal act of demolition?]

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[81] ["I know perfectly well, says M. Licquet, the little Inn of which the author here speaks. I can assure him that it never formed any portion of the “chapter house.” It was nevertheless une *dependance exterieure* (I will not attempt a version of this phrase) of the abbey. Dare I venture to say it was the *cowhouse*? (etable aux vaches). Thank you, good *Mons*. Licquet; but what is a cow-house but “an *outer building* attached to the Abbey?” Vide supra.]

[82] [The heart and entrails only of this once celebrated woman were, according to M. Licquet, buried in the above spot. The body was carried to Loches: and BELLEFOREST *(Cosmog.* vol. i. Part ii. col. 31-32. edit. 1575, folio) gives a description of the mausoleum where it was there entombed: a description, adds M. Licquet, which may well serve for the mausoleum that was at Jumieges.]

[83] [Not the smallest portion or particle of a sigh escapes us, on being told, as my translator has told us, that the “soil” in question has become the property of another Owner. “Laius EST MORT”—are the emphatic words of M. Licquet.]

[84] [One of the bells of the Abbey of Jumieges is now in the Tower of that of St. Ouen, at Rouen. LICQUET.]

LETTER X.

CAUDEBEC. LILLEBONNE. BOLBEC. TANKARVILLE. MONTMORENCI CASTLE. HAVRE DE
GRACE.

My last concluded with our entrance into Caudebec. The present opens with a morning scene at the same place. For a miracle I was stirring before nine. The church was the first object of attraction. For the size of the place, it is really a noble structure: perhaps of the early part of the sixteenth, or latter part of the fifteenth century.[85] I speak of the exterior generally, and of a great portion of the interior. A little shabby green-baise covered door (as usual) was half open, and I entered with no ordinary expectations of gratification. The painted glass seemed absolutely to warm the place—so rich and varied were its colours. There is a great abundance of it, and especially of figures of family-groups kneeling—rather small, but with great appearance of portrait-like fidelity. They are chiefly of the first half of the sixteenth century: and I own that, upon gazing at these charming specimens of ancient painting upon glass, I longed to fix an artist before every window, to bear away triumphantly, in a portfolio of elephantine dimensions, a faithful copy of almost every thing I saw. In some of the countenances, I fancied I traced the pencil of LUCAS CRANACH—and even of HANS HOLBEIN.

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This church has numerous side chapels, and figures of patron-saints. The entombment of Christ in white marble, (at the end of the chapel of the Virgin,) is rather singular; inasmuch as the figure of Christ itself is ancient, and exceedingly fine in anatomical expression; but the usual surrounding figures are modern, and proportionably clumsy and inexpressive. I noted one mural monument, to the memory of *Guillaume Tellier*, which was dated 1484.[86] Few churches have more highly interested me than this at Caudebec.[87] From the church I strolled to the *Place*, where stood the caffe, by the banks of the Seine. The morning view of this scene perfectly delighted me. Nothing can be more picturesque. The river cannot be much less than a mile in width, and it makes a perfect bend in the form of a crescent. On one side, that on which the village stands, are walks and gardens through which peep numerous white villas—and on the other are meadows, terminating in lofty rising grounds—feathered with coppice-wood down to the very water's edge. This may be considered, in fact, only a portion of the vast *Forest de Brotonne*, which rises in wooded majesty on the opposite heights. The spirit and the wealth of our countrymen would make Caudebec one of the most enchanting summer-residences in the world. The population of the town is estimated at about five thousand.

Judge of my astonishment, when, on going out of doors, I saw the river in a state of extreme agitation: the whole mass of water rising perpendicularly, as it were, and broad rippling waves rolling over each other. It was the *coming in of the tide*.... and within a quarter of an hour it appeared to have risen upwards of three feet. You may remember that, in our own country, the Severn-tides exhibit the same phenomenon; and I have seen the river at Glocester rise *at once* to the height of eight or ten feet, throwing up a shower of foam from the gradually narrowing bed of the river, and causing all the craft, great and small, to rise up as if by magic, and to appear upon a level with the meadows. The tide at Caudebec, although similar in kind, was not so in degree; for it rose gradually yet most visibly—and within half an hour, the elevation could not have been less than *seven* or *eight* feet.

Having walked for some time on the heights of the town, with which I was much gratified, I returned to my humble auberge, ordered the cabriolet to be got ready, and demanded the reckoning:—which, considering that I was not quite at an hotel-royale, struck me as being far from moderate. Two old women, of similar features and age, presented themselves as I was getting into the carriage: one was the mistress, and the other the fille de chambre. "Mais, Monsieur (observed one of them) n'oubliez pas, je vous prie, la fille-de-chambre—rappellez-vous que vos souliers ont ete superieurement decrottes." I took out a franc to remunerate the supposed fille-de-chambre—but was told it was the *mistress*. "N'importe, Monsieur, c'est a ce moment que je suis fille-de-chambre—quand vous serez parti, je serai la maitresse." The postilion seemed to enjoy this repartee as much as ourselves.

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I was scarcely out of the town half a mile, when I began to ascend. I found myself quickly in the middle of those rising grounds which are seen from the promenade or *Place du Caffe*, and could not look without extraordinary gratification upon the beautiful character of spring in its advanced state. The larch was even yet picturesque: the hazel and nut trees were perfectly clothed with foliage, of a tender yet joyous tint: the chestnut was gorgeously in bloom; the lime and beech were beginning to give abundant promise of their future luxuriance—while the lowlier tribes of laburnum and box, with their richly clad branches, covered the ground beneath entirely from view. The apple and pear blossoms still continued to variegate the wide sweep of foliage, and to fill the air with their delicious perfume. It might be Switzerland in miniature—or it might not. Only this I know—that it seemed as though one could live embosomed and enchanted in such a wilderness of sweets—reading the *fabliaux* of the old Norman bards till the close of human existence!

I found myself on a hard, strait, chalky old road—evidently Roman: and in due time perceived and entered the town of LILLEBONNE. But the sky had become overcast: soft and small rain was descending, and an unusual gloom prevailed ... when I halted, agreeably to my instructions, immediately before the gate of the ancient *Castle*. Venerable indeed is this Norman castle, and extensive are the ruins which have survived. I have a perfect recollection how it peeped out upon me—through the light leaf of the poplar, and the pink blossom of the apple. It lies close to the road, on the left. An old round tower, apparently of the time of William the Conqueror, very soon attracts your attention. The stones are large, and the interstices are also very considerable. It was here, says a yet current report, that William assembled the Barons of Normandy, and the invasion of England was determined upon. Such a spot therefore strikes an English beholder with no ordinary emotions. I alighted; sent the cabriolet to the inn, and wished both postilion and horses to get their dinners without delay. For myself, I had resolved to reserve my appetite till I reached *Bolbec*; and there was food enough before me of a different description, to exercise my intellectual digestion for at least the next hour. Knocking at the massive portals, I readily obtained admittance.

The area, entirely a grass-plat, was occupied by several cows. In front, were evidently the ruins of a large chapel or church—perhaps of the XIVth century. The outer face of the walls went deeply and perpendicularly down to the bottom of a dry fosse; and the right angle portion of the building was covered with garden ground, where the owner showed us some peas which he boasted he should have at his table within five days. I own I thought he was very likely to carry his boast into execution; for finer

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vegetables, or a finer bed of earth, I had scarcely ever beheld. How things, my dear friend, are changed from their original character and destination! "But the old round tower," say you!—To "the old round tower" then let us go. The stair-case is narrow, dark, and decayed. I reached the first floor, or circular room, and noticed the construction of the window seats—all of rough, solid, and massive stone. I ascended to the second floor; which, if I remember rightly, was strewn with a portion of the third floor—that had fallen in from sheer decay. Great must have been the crash—as the fragments were huge, and widely scattered. On gaining a firm footing upon the outer wall; through a loop-hole window, I gazed around with equal wonder and delight. The wall of this castle could not be less than ten feet in thickness. A young woman, the shepherdess of the spot, attended as guide.

"What is that irregular rude mound, or wall of earth, in the centre of which children are playing?" "It is the *old Roman Theatre*, Sir." I immediately called to mind M. Le Prevost's instructions—and if I could have borrowed the wings of a spirit, I should have instantly alighted upon the spot—but it was situated without the precincts of the old castle and its appurtenances, and a mortal leap would have been attended with a mortal result. "Have you many English who visit this spot?" said I to my guide.—"Scarcely *any*, Sir—it is a frightful place—full of desolation and sadness.." replied she. Again I gazed around, and in the distance, through an aperture in the orchard trees, saw the little fishing village of *Quillebeuf*,[88] quite buried, as it were, in the waters of the Seine. An arm of the river meanders towards Lillebonne. Having gratified my picturesque and antiquarian propensities, from this elevated situation, I retrod, with more difficulty than toil, my steps down the stair-case. A second stroll about the area, and along the skirts of the wall, was sufficient to convince me only—how slight and imperfect had been my survey!

On quitting the portal through which I entered, and bidding adieu to my Shepherdess and guide, I immediately hastened towards the Roman Theatre.[89] The town of Lillebonne has a very picturesque appearance from the old mound, or raised terrace, along the outer walls of the castle. In five minutes I mingled with the school boys who were amusing themselves within the ruins of all that is left of this probably once vast and magnificent old theatre. It is only by clearing away a great quantity of earth, with which these ruins are covered, that you can correctly ascertain their character and state of preservation. M. Le Prevost bade me remark that the walls had much swerved from their original perpendicularity,—and that there was much irregularity in the laying of the bricks among the stones. But time, design, and accident, have each in turn (in all probability) so contributed to decompose, deface, and alter the original aspect of the building, that there is no forming a correct conjecture as to its ancient form. Earth, grass, trees, flowers, and weeds, have taken almost entire possession of some low and massive outer walls; so that the imagination has full play to supply all deficiencies which appear to the eye.

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From the whole of this interesting spot I retreated—with mixed sensations of melancholy and surprise—to the little auberge of the *Three Moors*, in the centre of the town. It had begun to rain smartly as we took shelter in the kitchen; where, for the first time since leaving England, I saw a display of utensils which might have vied with our own, or even with a Dutch interior, for neatness and order of disposition. Some of the dishes might have been as ancient as—not the old round Tower—but as the last English Duke of Normandy who might have banquetted there. The whole was in high polish and full display. On my complimenting the good *Aubergiste* upon so creditable a sight, she laughed, and replied briskly—"Ce n'est rien, ceci: Pentecote est tout pres, et donc vous verrez, Monsieur!"—It should seem that Whitsuntide was the season for a general household purification. Some of her furniture had once belonged to the Castle: but she had bought it, in the scramble which took place at the dispersion and destruction of the movables there, during the Revolution. I recommend all travellers to take a lunch, and enjoy a bottle of vin ordinaire, at *Les Trois-Negres.* I was obliged to summon up all my stock of knowledge in polite phraseology, in order to decline a plate of soup. "It was delicious above every thing"—"but I had postponed taking dinner till we got to Bolbec." "Bon—vous y trouverez un hotel superbe." The French are easily pleased; and civility is so cheap and current a coin abroad, that I wish our countrymen would make use of it a little more frequently than they appear to do. I started about two for Bolbec.

The rain continued during the whole of my route thither; but it did not prevent me from witnessing a land of plenty and of picturesque beauty on all sides. Indeed it is scarcely possible to conceive a more rich and luxuriant state of culture. To the left, about half a league from Lillebonne, I passed the domain of a once wealthy, and extremely extensive abbey. They call it the *Abbey of Valasse.* A long rambling bare stone wall, and portions of a deserted ruin, kept in sight for full half an English mile. The immediate approach to BOLBEC is that of the entrance to a modern and flourishing trading town, which seems to be beginning to recover from the effects of the Revolution. After Rouen, and even Caudebec, it has a stiff modernized air. I drove to the principal inn, opposite the church, and bespoke dinner and a bed. The church is perfectly, modern, and equally heavy and large. Crowds of people were issuing from *Vespers*, when, ascending a flight of steps, (for it is built on ground considerably above the ground-floor of the inn) I resolved to wait for the final departure of the congregation, and to take a leisurely survey of the interior, while dinner was getting ready.

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The sexton was a perfect character in his way; old, shrewd, communicative, and civil. There were several confessionals. “What—you confess here pretty much?” “Yes, Sir; but chiefly females, and among them many widows.” I had said nothing to provoke this ungallant reply. “In respect to the *sacrament*, what is the proportion between the communicants, as to sex?” “Sir, there are one hundred women to twelve men.” I wish I could say that this disproportion were confined to *France*.

Quitting this heavy and ugly, but large and commodious fabric, I sought the inn and dinner. The cook was in every respect a learned professor in his art, and the produce of his skill was equally excellent and acceptable. I had scarcely finished my repast, and the *Gruyere* cheese and nuts yet lingered upon the table, when the soft sounds of an organ, accompanied by a youthful voice, saluted my ears in a very pleasing manner. “C’est LE PAUVRE PETIT SAVOYARD, Monsieur”—exclaimed the waiter—“Vous allez entendre un air touchant! Ah, le pauvre petit!”—“Comment ca?” “Monsieur, il n’a ni pere ni mere; mais pour le chant—oh Dieu, il n’y a personne qui chante comme le pauvre petit Savoyard!” I was well disposed to hear the song, and to admit the truth of the waiter’s observation. The little itinerant stopped opposite the door, and sung the following air:—

Bon jour, Bon soir.

Je peindrai sans detour

Tout l’emploi de ma vie:
C’est de dire *bon jour*
Et *bon soir* tour-a-tour.
Bon Jour a mon amie,
Lorsque je vais la voir.
Mais au fat qui m’ennuie,

Bon soir. *Bon jour* franc troubadour,

Qui chantez la bombance;
La paix et les beaux jours;
Bacchus et les amours.
Qu’un rimeur en demence
Vienne avec vous s’asseoir,
Pour chanter la Romance,

Bon soir. *Bon jour*, mon cher voisin,

Chez vous la soif m’entraine:
Bonjour—si votre vin
Est de Beaune ou du Rhin;

Mon gosier va sans peine
Lui servir d'entonnoir;
Mais s'il est de Surene,

Bon soir.

I know not how it was, but had the "petit Savoyard" possessed the cultivated voice of a chorister, I could not have listened to his notes with half the satisfaction with which I dwelt upon his history, as stated by the waiter. He had no sooner concluded and made his bow, than I bought the slender volume from which his songs had been chanted, and had a long gossip with him. He slung his organ upon his back, and "ever and anon" touching his hat, expressed his thankfulness, as much for the interest I had taken in his welfare, as for the trifling piece of silver which I slipt into his hand at parting. Meanwhile all the benches, placed on the outsides of the houses,

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were occupied—chiefly by females—to witness, it should seem, so novel and interesting a sight as an Englishman holding familiar discourse with a poor wandering Savoyard! My friend the sexton was among the spectators, and from his voice and action, appeared especially interested. "Que le bon Dieu vous benisse!" exclaimed the Savoyard, as I bade him farewell. On pursuing my route for a stroll upon the heights near the town, I had occasion to pass these benches of spectators. The women, almost without any exception, inclined their heads by way of a gracious salute; and Monsieur *le Sacristain* pulled off his enormous cock'd hat with the consequence of a drum-major. He appeared not to have forgotten the donation which he had received in the church. Continuing my pursuit, I gained an elevated situation: whence, looking down upon the spot where I had left the Savoyard, I observed him surrounded by the females—each and every one of them apparently convulsed with laughter! Even the little musician appeared to have forgotten his "orphan state."

The environs of *Bolbec*, especially in the upper part, are sufficiently picturesque. At least they are sufficiently fruitful: orchards, corn and pasture land—intermixed with meadows, upon which cotton was spread for bleaching—produced altogether a very interesting effect. The little hanging gardens, attached to labourer's huts, contributed to the beauty of the scene. A warm crimson sun-set seemed to envelope the coppice wood in a flame of gold. The road was yet reeking with moisture—and I retraced my steps, through devious and slippery paths, to the hotel. Evening had set in: the sound of the Savoyard's voice was no longer heard: I ordered tea and candles, and added considerably to my journal before I went to bed. I rose at five; and before six the horses were harnessed to the cabriolet. Having obtained the necessary instructions for reaching *Tancarville*, (the ancient and proud seat of the MONTMORENCIS) I paid my reckoning, and left Bolbec. As I ascended a long and rather steep hill, and, looking to the right and left, saw every thing in a state of verdure and promise, I did all I could to persuade myself that the journey would be agreeable, and that the castle of Montmorenci could not fail to command admiration. I was now in the high and broad "*route royale*" to Havre le Grace; but had scarcely been a league upon it, when, looking at my instructions, we struck out of the high road, to the left, and followed a private one through flat and uninteresting arable land. I cannot tell how many turns were taken, or how many pretty little villages were passed—till, after a long and gradual ascent, we came upon a height, flanked the greater part by coppice wood, through one portion of which—purposely kept open for the view—was seen at a distance a marvellously fine group of perpendicular rocks (whose grey and battered sides were lighted up with a pink colour from

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the morning sun) in the middle, as it were, of the *Seine*—which now really assumed an ocean-like appearance. In fact, these rocks were at a considerable distance, and appeared to be in the broadest part of the embouchure of that river. I halted the cabriolet; and gazed with unfeigned delight on this truly magnificent and fascinating scene!... for the larks were now mounting all around, and their notes, added to those of the "songsters of the grove," produced an effect which I even preferred to that from the organ and voice of the "pauvre petit Savoyard." The postboy partook of my rapture. "Voila, Monsieur, des rochers terriblement perpendiculiers—eh, quelle belle vue de la riviere, et du paysage!"

Leaving this brilliant picture, we turned rather to the left, and then found our descent proportionably gradual with the ascent. The Seine was now right before us, as hasty glimpses of it, through partial vistos, had enabled us to ascertain. Still *Tancarville* was deemed a terrible way off. First we were to go up, and then we were to go down—now to turn to the right, and afterwards to the left—a sort of [Greek: polla d'ananta katanta] route—when a prepossessing young paysanne told the postilion, that, after passing through such a wood, we should reach an avenue, from the further end of which the castle of *Montmorenci* would be visible.. "une petite lieue de distance." Every thing is "une petite lieue!" It is the answer to every question relating to distance. Though the league be double a German one, still it is "une petite!" Here however the paysanne happened to be right. We passed through the wood, gained the avenue, and from the further end saw—even yet towering in imposing magnitude—the far-famed *Chateau de Montmorenci*. It might be a small league off. I gained spirits and even strength at the sight: told the postilion to mend his pace—of which he gave immediate and satisfactory demonstration, while the echoes of his whip resounded along the avenue. A closer road now received us. Knolls of grass interwoven with moss, on the summits of which the beech and lime threw up their sturdy stems, now enclosed the road, which began to widen and to improve in condition. At length, turning a corner, a group of country people appeared—"Est-ce ici la route de Tancarville?"—"Tancarville est tout pres: c'est la, ou on voit la fumee des cheminees." Joyful intelligence! The post-boy increased his speed: The wheels seemed to move with a readier play: and in one minute and a half I was upon the beach of the river Seine, and alighted at the door of the only auberge in the village.

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I know you to be both a lover of and connoisseur in Rembrandt's pictures: and especially of those of his *old* characters. I wish you could have seen the old woman, of the name of *Bucan*, who came out of this same auberge to receive us. She had a sharp, quick, constantly moving black eye; keen features, projecting from a surface of flesh of a subdued mahogany tint; about her temples, and the lower part of her cheeks, were all those harmonizing wrinkles which become old age—*upon canvas*—while, below her chin, communicating with a small and shrunken neck, was that sort of concavity, or dewlap, which painters delight to express with a minuteness of touch, and mellowness of tint, that contribute largely to picturesque effect! This good old woman received us with perfect elasticity of spirits and of action. It should seem that we were the first Englishmen who had visited her solitude this year. Her husband approached, but she soon ordered him "to the right about"—to prepare fuel, coffee, and eggs. I was promised the best breakfast that could be got in Normandy, in twenty minutes. The inn being sufficiently miserable, I was anxious for a ramble. The tide was now coming up, as at Caudebec; but the sweep and breadth of the river being, upon a considerably larger scale, its increase was not yet so obvious—although I am quite sure that all the flats, which I saw on my arrival as a bed of mud, were, within a quarter of an hour, wholly covered with the tide: and, looking up to the right, I perceived the perpendicular walls of *Montmorenci Castle* to be washed by the refluent wave. It was a sort of ocean in miniature before me. A few miserable fishing boats were moored upon the beach; while a small number of ill-clad and straggling villagers lingered about the same spot, and seemed to look upon the postboy and myself as beings dropt from the sky!

On ascending a considerable elevation, I had the gratification of viewing *Quillebeuf* a little more nearly. It was almost immediately opposite: while, to the right, contemplating the wide sweep of the river towards its embouchure, I fancied that I could see *Havre*. The group of rocks, which had so charmed us on our journey, now assumed a different character. On descending, I could discover, although at a considerable distance, the old woman standing at the door of the auberge—apparently straining her eyes to catch a glimpse of us; and she was almost disposed to scold for having put her reputation of giving good breakfasts to so hazardous a trial. The wood was blazing, and the room was almost filled by smoke—but a prolonged fast, and a stage of sixteen or eighteen miles, in a keen morning air, made Mr. Lewis and myself only think of allaying our hunger. In every public house, however mean, you see the white metal fork, and the napkin covering the plate. A dozen boiled eggs, and a coffee pot and cups of perfectly Brobdignagdian dimensions, with tolerable bread and indifferent butter, formed

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the *materiel* of our breakfast. The postboy, having stabled and refreshed his horses, was regaling himself in the kitchen—but-how do you think he was regaling himself?—-Truly, in stretching himself upon a bench, and reading, as old Ascham expresses it, “a merry tale in Boccace.” In other words, he was reading a French version of the Decameron of that celebrated author. Indeed, I had already received sufficient proof of the general propensity of the common people to *read*—whether good or bad books ... but let us hope and believe the former. I left the bibliomaniacal postboy to his Boccaccio, and prepared to visit the CASTLE... the once proud and yet commanding residence of the family of MONTMORENCI.

I ascended—with fresh energies imparted from my breakfast. The day grew soft, and bright, and exhilarating ... but alas! for the changes and chances of every thing in this transitory world. Where was the warder? He had ceased to blow his horn for many a long year. Where was the harp of the minstrel? It had perished two centuries ago, with the hand that had struck its chords. Where was the attendant guard?—or pursuivants—or men at arms? They had been swept from human existence, like the leaves of the old limes and beech trees by which the lower part of the building was surrounded. The moat was dry; the rampart was a ruin:—the rank grass grew within the area... nor can I tell you how many relics of halls, banqueting rooms, and bed-rooms, with all the magnificent appurtenances of old castellated architecture, struck the eager eye with mixed melancholy and surprise! The singular half-circular, and half square, corner towers, hanging over the ever-restless wave, interested me exceedingly. The guide shewed me where the prisoners used to be kept—in a dungeon, apparently impervious to every glimmer of day-light, and every breath of air. I cannot pretend to say at what period even the oldest part of the Castle of Montmorenci was built: but I saw nothing that seemed to be more ancient than the latter end of the fifteenth century.[90] Perhaps the greater portion may be of the beginning of the sixteenth; but, amidst the unroofed rooms, I could not help admiring the painted borders, chiefly of a red colour, which run along the upper part of the walls, or wainscoats—giving indication not only of a good, but of a splendid, taste. Did I tell you that this sort of ornament was to be seen in some parts of the eastern end of the Abbey of Jumieges? *Here*, indeed, they afforded evidence—an evidence, mingled with melancholy sensations on reflection—of the probable state of magnificence which once reigned throughout the castle. Between the corner towers, upon that part which runs immediately parallel with the Seine, there is a noble terrace, now converted into garden ground—which commands an immediate and extensive view of the embouchure of the river. It is the property of a speculator, residing at Havre.

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The cabriolet meeting me at the bottom of the mound upon which the castle is built, (having paid the reckoning before I left the inn), I had nothing to do but to step in, and push forward for *Havre*. Retracing the road through which we came, we darted into the *Route Royale*, and got upon one of the noblest high roads in France. Between *Tancarville* and *Havre* lie *Hocher* and *Harfleur*; each almost at the water's edge. I regretted I could not see the former; but on our approach to Harfleur I observed, to the right, some delightfully situated, and not inelegantly built, country villas or modern chateaux. The immediate run down to Harfleur is exceedingly pleasing; and though we trotted sharply through the town, the exquisite little porch of the church was not lost upon me. Few places, I believe, for its dimensions, have been more celebrated in the middle ages than Harfleur. The Seine to the left becomes broader and bolder; and, before you, beneath some wooded heights, lies HAVRE. Every thing gives indication of commerce and prosperity as you gain upon the town. The houses increase in number and respectability of appearance—"Voyez-vous la, Monsieur, a droite, ces belles maisons de plaisance?—(exclaimed the charioteer)—"C'est la ou demeurent Messieurs vos compatriotes: ma foi, ils ont un joli gout." The first glance upon these stone houses confirmed the sagacity of the postilion. They are gloriously situated—facing the ocean; while the surrounding country teems with fish and game of every species. Isaac Walton might have contrived to interweave a pretty ballad in his description of such trout-streams as were those before us.

But we approach the town. The hulls of hundreds of vessels are seen in the commodious docks; and the flags of merchantmen, from all quarters of the globe, appear to stream from the mast-heads. It is a scene of bustle, of business, and variety; and perfectly English. What a contrast to the gloomy solitude of Montmorenci! The outer and inner gates are passed. *Diligences* issue from every quarter. The centinels relieve guard. The sound of horns, from various packet-boats immediately about to sail, echoes on all sides.... Driving up the high street, we approached the hotel of the *Aigle d'Or,*[91] kept by Justin, and considered to be the best. We were just in time for the table d'hote, and to bespeak excellent beds. Travellers were continually arriving and departing. What life and animation!... We sat down upwards of forty to dinner: and a good dinner it was. Afterwards, I settled for the cabriolet, and bade the postboy adieu! —nor can I suppress my feelings in saying that, in wishing him farewell, I felt ten times more than I had ever felt upon taking leave of a postilion.

[85] The nave was begun in 1416. LICQUET.

[86] Corrected by *Mons*. Licquet: with thanks from the Author. It was, before, 1184.

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[87] Lieutenant Hall has well described it. I did not see his description till more than a twelvemonth after my own had been written. A part may be worth extracting.... "The principal object of attraction is the CHURCH, the gothic spire of which is encircled by fillets of roses, beautifully carved in stone, and continued to the very summit of the steeple. The principal portal too is sculptured with no less richness and delicacy than that of St. Maclou at Rouen. Its interior length is about 250 feet by 72 of width. The central aisle [nave] is flanked on either side by ten massive circular columns, the capitals of which represent vine leaves and other decorations, more fanciful, and not less rich, than the Corinthian acanthus.... In one of the chapels there is a rude monumental effigy of the original architect of this church. It consists of a small skeleton, drawn in black lines, against a tablet in the wall: a mason's level and trowel, with the plan of a building, are beside it, and an inscription in gothic characters, relating that the architect endowed the church he had built with certain lands, and died Anno 1484." *Travels in France*, p. 47, 1819, 8vo. I take this to be GUILLAUME TELLIER—mentioned above: but in regard to the lands with which Tellier endowed the church, the inscription says nothing. LICQUET.

[88] Small as may be this village, and insignificant as may be its aspect, it is one of the most important places, with respect to navigation, in the whole course of the river Seine. Seven years ago there were not fewer than *four-score* pilots settled here, by order of government, for the purpose of guarding against accidents which arise from a want of knowledge of the navigation of the river. In time of peace this number would necessarily be increased. In the year 1789 there were upwards of 250 English vessels which passed it—averaging, in the whole, 19,000 tons. It is from *Quillebeuf* to *Havre* that the accidents arise. The author of a pompous, but very instructive memoir, "*sur la Topographie et la Statistique de la Ville de Quillebeuf et de l'embouchure de la Seine, ayant pour objet-principal la navigation et la peche*," (published in the Transactions of the Rouen Society for the year 1812, and from which the foregoing information has been obtained) mentions three or four *wrecks* which have taken place in the immediate vicinity of Quillebeuf: and it should seem that a *calm* is, of all things, the most fatal. The currents are strong, and the vessel is left to the mercy of the tides in consequence. There are also rocks and sand banks in abundance. Among the wrecks, was one, in

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which a young girl of eighteen years of age fell a victim to the ignorance of the pilot. The vessel made a false tack between *Hode* and *Tancarville*, and running upon a bank, was upset in an instant. An English vessel once shared the same calamity. A thick fog suddenly came on, when the sloop ran upon a bank near the *Nez de Tancarville*, and the crew had just time to throw themselves into the boat and escape destruction. The next morning, so sudden and so decisive was the change wrought by the sand and current, that, of the sloop, there remained, at ebb-tide, only ten feet of her mast visible! It appears that the *Quillebois*, owing to their detached situation, and their peculiar occupations, speak a very barbarous French. They have a sort of sing-song method of pronunciation; and the *g* and *j* are strangely perverted by them. Consult the memoir here referred to; which occupies forty octavo pages: and which forms a sequel to a previous communication (in 1810) “upon the Topography and Medical properties of Quillebeuf and its adjacent parts.” The author is M. Boismare. His exordium is a specimen of the very worst possible taste in composition. One would suppose it to be a prelude to an account of the discovery of another America!

[89] ["The Roman Circus (says M. Licquet) is now departmental property. Many excavations have already taken place under the directions of *Mons*. Le Baron de Vanssay, the present Prefect of the Department. The most happy results may be anticipated. It was in a neighbouring property that an ANTIQUE BRONZE GILT STATUE, of the size of life, was lately found,” vol. i. 194. Of this statue, Mr. Samuel Woodburn, (with that spirit of liberality and love of art which have uniformly characterised his purchases) became the Owner. The sum advanced for it was very considerable; but, in one sense, Mr. W. may be said to have stood as the Representative of his country; for the French Government declining to give the Proprietor the sum which he asked, Mr. Woodburn purchased it—solely with the view of depositing it, on the same terms of purchase, in a NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, of which the bequest of Mr. Payne Knight’s ancient bronzes and coins, and the purchase of Mr. Angerstein’s pictures, might be supposed to lay the foundation.

This statue was accordingly brought over to England, and freely exhibited to the curious admirers of ancient art. It is the figure of an APOLLO—the left arm, extended to hold the lyre, being mutilated. A portion of the limbs is also mutilated; but the torso, head

and legs, are entire: and are, of their kind, of the highest class of art. Overtures were made for its purchase by government. The Trustees

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of the British Museum were unanimous both in their admiration and recommendation of it: it was indeed “strongly recommended” by them to the Treasury. Several months however elapsed before an answer could be obtained; and that answer, when it *did* come, was returned in THE NEGATIVE. The disappointment of reasonably indulged hopes of success, was the least thing felt by its owner. It was the necessity of transporting it, in consequence, to enrich a *rival capital*—which, were its means equal to its wishes and good taste, it must be confessed, makes us frequently blush for the comparative want of energy and liberality, at home, in matters relating to ANCIENT ART.]

[90] Mr. Cotman has a view of the gateway of Tancarville, or Montmorenci Castle.

[91] I am not sure whether this inn be called the *Armes de France*, or as above.

LETTER XI

HAVRE DE GRACE. HONFLEUR. JOURNEY TO CAEN.

Caen, May, 1818.

Well, my friend!... I have at length visited the interior of the Abbey of St. Stephen, and have walked over the grave of WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR and of MATHILDA his wife. But as you dearly love the gossip of a travelling journal, I shall take up the thread of my narrative from the place in which I last addressed you:—particularly as our route hither was marked by some circumstances worthy of recital. First, however, for *Havre*.

I staid there only long enough to express my regret that the time of my residence could not be extended. It happened to be a fine afternoon, and I took a leisurely stroll upon the docks and ramparts.[92] The town was full of animation—whether relating to business or to pleasure. For the former, you must visit the quays; for the latter, you must promenade the high street, and more especially the *Boulevards*, towards the heights. The sun shone merrily, as it were, upon the thousands of busy, bustling, and bawling human creatures.. who were in constant locomotion in this latter place.

What a difference between the respective appearances of the quays of Dieppe and Havre? Although even *here* things would assume a rubbishing and littered aspect compared with the quays at *Liverpool* or at *Hull*, yet it must be admitted, for the credit of Gallico-Norman commerce, that the quays of Havre make a very respectable appearance. You see men fiddling, dancing, sleeping, sitting, and of course talking *a pleine gorge*, in groups without end—but no drunkenness!.. not even an English oath

saluted my ear. The Southampton packets land their crews at Havre. I saw the arrival of one of these packets; and was cruel enough to contrast the animated and elastic spirits of a host of French *laqnais de place*, tradespeople, &c.—attacking the passengers with cards of their address—with the feeble movements and dejected countenances of the objects of their attack.

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From the quays, I sauntered along the ramparts, which are flanked by broad ditches—of course plentifully supplied with water; and passing over the drawbridge, by which all carriages enter the town—and which absolutely trembles as if about to sink beneath you, as the *diligence* rolls over it.—I made for the boulevards and tea-gardens; to which, business being well nigh over, the inhabitants of Havre flock by hundreds and by thousands. A fine afternoon throws every thing into "good keeping"—as the artists say. The trees, and meadows, and upper lands, were not only bright with the sun-beam, but the human countenance was lighted up with gladness. The occupations partook of this joyful character. Accordingly there was dancing and singing on all sides; a little beyond, appeared to sit a group of philosophers, or politicians, upon a fantastically cut seat, beneath laburnums streaming with gold; while, still further, gradually becoming invisible from the foliage and winding path, strolled pairs in more gentle discourse! Meanwhile the whoop and halloo of school-boys, in rapid and ceaseless evolutions, resounded through the air, and heightened the gratification of the scene....

And young and old came out to play
Upon a sun-shine holiday.

Gaining a considerable ascent, I observed knolls of rich verdure, with fine spreading trees, and elegant mansions, to be in the foreground—in the middle-ground, stood the town of Havre:—in the distance, rolled and roared the expansive ocean! The sun was visibly going to rest; but his departing beams yet sparkled upon the more prominent points of the picture. There was no time for finishing the subject. After a stroll of nearly a couple of hours, on this interesting spot, I retraced my steps over the draw-bridge, and prepared for objects of *still* life; in other words, for the examination of what might be curious and profitable in the shape of a *boke*.

The lamps were lighted when I commenced my *Bibliomaniacal Voyage* of discovery among the BOOKSELLERS. But what poverty of materials, for a man educated in the schools of Fust and Caxton! To every question, about rare or old books, I was told that I should have been on the Continent when the allies first got possession of Paris. In fact, I had not a single *trouvaille*.

The packet was to sail by nine the next morning, precisely. For a wonder, (or rather no wonder at all, considering what had occurred during the last twenty-four hours) I had an excellent night's rest, and was prepared for breakfast by eight. Having breakfasted, I accompanied my luggage to the inner harbour, and observed the *Honfleur* packet swarming with passengers, and crammed with every species of merchandize: especially tubs, casks, trunks, cordage, and earthenware. We went on board, and took our stations near the helm; and after experiencing a good deal of *uncomfortable* heaving of the ocean, got clear from the mouth of the

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harbour, and stood out to sea. The tide was running briskly and strongly into the harbour. We were in truth closely stowed; and as these packets are built with flattish bottoms, and low sides, a rough sea would not fail to give to a crew, thus exposed, the appearance of half-drowned rats. Luckily the wind began to subside, and by degrees old ocean wore a face of undisturbed serenity. Our crew was a motley one; but among them, an Abbess, with a visage of parchment-like rigidity, and with her broad streaming bands, seemed to experience particular distress. She was surrounded by some hale, hearty market women, whose robust forms, and copper-tinted countenances, formed a striking contrast to her own. A little beyond was an old officer or two, with cocked hats of the usually capacious dimensions. But the poor Abbess was cruelly afflicted; and in a gesture and tone of voice, of the most piteous woe, implored the steward of the vessel for accommodation below.

Fortunately, as I was not in the least annoyed by sickness, I had leisure to survey the heights of Honfleur before we landed; and looking towards the course of the River Seine, as it narrowed in its windings, I discovered *Harfleur* and *Hocher* nearly opposite; and, a good deal lower down, the little fishing town of *Quillebeuf*, apparently embedded in the water. Honfleur itself is surely among the most miserable of fishing towns[93]—or whatever be the staple commodity that supports it. But the environs make amends for the squalidness of the town. A few years of peace and plenty would work wonders even in the improvements of these environs. Perhaps no situation is more favourable for the luxury of a summer retirement.[94] I paid only eight sous for my passage; and having no passport to be *vised* (which indeed was the case at Havre,) we selected a stout lad or two, from the crowds of lookers on, as we landed, to carry our luggage to the inn from which the diligence sets off for CAEN. It surprised us to see with what alacrity these lads carried the baggage up a steep hill in their trucks, or barrows; but we were disgusted with the miserable forms, and miserable clothing, of both sexes, which we encountered as we proceeded. I was fortunate to be in time to secure my place in the Diligence. The horses were in the very act of being put to, as I paid my reckoning beforehand.

Judge of our surprise and gratification on seeing two well-dressed, and apparently well-bred Englishmen, securing their places at the same time. It is not always that, at first sight, Englishmen associate so quickly, and apparently so cordially, as did these gentlemen with ourselves. They were the Messrs. D*** of *L**** Hall* in Yorkshire: the elder brother an Oxford man of the same standing with myself. The younger, a Cantab. We were all bound for Caen; and right gladly did we coalesce upon this expedition.

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We proceeded at a good sharp pace; and as we ascended the very high hill on the direct road to Caen, with fine leafy trees on each side, and upon a noble breadth of road, I looked out of the diligence to enjoy the truly magnificent view of the Seine—with glimpses of *Harfleur* and *Havre* on the opposite coast. The cessation of the rain, and the quick movement of the vehicle, enabled me to do this in a tolerably commodious manner. The ground however seemed saturated, and the leaves glistened with the incumbent moisture. There was a sort of pungent freshness of scent abroad—and a rich pasture land on each side gave the most luxuriant appearance to the landscape. Nature indeed seemed to have fructified every thing in a manner at once spontaneous and perfect. The face of the country is pasture-land throughout; that is to say, there are comparatively few orchards and little arable. I was told to pay attention to the cattle, for that the farmers prided themselves on their property of this kind. They may pride themselves—if they please: but their pride is not of a lofty cast of character. I have been in Lincolnshire, Herefordshire, and Gloucestershire—and have seen and enjoyed, in these counties, groups of cattle which appeared calculated for the land and the table of giants, compared with the Lilliputian objects, of the bucoline species, which were straying, in thin flocks, through the luxuriant pastures of Normandy. That triumphant and immutable maxim of “small bone and large carcase” seems, alas! to be unknown in these regions.

However, on we rode—and gazed on all sides. At length we reached *Pont L’Eveque*, a pretty long stage; where we dined (says my journal) upon roast fowl, asparagus, trout, and an excellent omelette, with two good bottles of vin ordinaire—which latter, for four Englishmen, was commendably moderate. During dinner the rain came down again in yet heavier torrents—the gutters foamed, and the ground smoked with the unceasing fall of the water. In the midst of this aquatic storm, we toasted Old England right merrily and cordially; and the conducteur, seeing us in good humour, told us that “we need not hurry, for that he preferred a dry journey to a wet one.” We readily assented to this position; but within half an hour, the weather clearing, we remounted: and by four o’clock, we all got inside—and politics, religion, literature, and the fine arts, kept us in constant discourse and good humour as we rolled on for many a league. All the way to *Troarn* (the last stage on this side of Caen) the country presents a truly lovely picture of pasture land. There are occasionally some wooded heights, in which English wealth and English taste would have raised villas of the prettiest forms, and with most commanding views. Yet there is nothing to be mentioned in the same breath with the country about Rodwell in Glocestershire. Nor are the trees of the same bulk and luxuriant foliage as are

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those in our own country. A fine oak is as rare as an uncut *Wynkyn de Worde*:[95] but creeping rivulets, rich coppice wood, avenues of elms and limes, and meadows begemmed with butter-cups—these are the characteristics of the country through which we were passing. It is in vain however you look for neat villas or consequential farm houses: and as rarely do you see groups of villagers reposing, or in action. A dearth of population gives to French landscape a melancholy and solitary cast of character. It is in cities that you must look for human beings—and *for* cities the French seem to have been created.

It was at *Troarn*, I think, or at some halting place beyond, that our passports were demanded, and the examination of our trunks solicited. We surrendered our keys most willingly. The gentlemen, with their cocked hats and blue jackets—having a belt from which a sword was suspended—consulted together for a minute only—returned our keys—and telling us that matters would be thoroughly looked into at Caen, said they would give us no trouble. We were of course not sorry at this determination—and the Messrs. D——and myself getting once more into the cabriolet, (a postboy being secured for the leaders) we began to screw up our spirits and curiosity for a view of the steeples of CAEN. Unluckily the sun had set, and the horizon had become gloomy, when we first discovered the spires of *St. Stephen's Abbey*—the principal ecclesiastical edifice at Caen. It was hard upon nine o'clock; and the evening being extremely dusky, we had necessarily a very indistinct view of the other churches—but, to my eye, as seen in a lengthened view, and through a deceitful atmosphere, Caen had the appearance of OXFORD on a diminutive scale. The town itself, like our famous University, is built in a slanting direction; though the surrounding country is yet flatter than about Oxford. As we entered it, all the population seemed collected to witness our arrival. From solitude we plunged at once into tumult, bustle, and noise. We stopped at the *Hotel d'Espagne* —a large, but black and begrimed mansion. Here our luggage was taken down; and here we were assailed by garcons de place, with cards in their hands, intreating us to put up at their respective hotels. We had somehow got a recommendation to the *Hotel Royale, Place Royale*, and such a union of *royal* adjuncts was irresistible. Accordingly, we resolved upon moving thither. In a trice our trunks were placed upon barrows: and we marched behind, "in double quick time," in order to secure our property. The town appeared to improve as we made our different turnings, and gained upon our hotel. "Le voila, Messieurs"—exclaimed our guides and baggage-conductors—as we got into a goodly square, and saw a fair and comely mansion in front. The rush of landlord, waiting maids, and garcons de place, encountered us as we entered. "Messieurs, je vous salue,"—said a huge, ungracious looking figure:—which said figure was nothing less than the master of the hotel—Mons. Lagouelle. We were shown into a small room on the ground floor, to the right—and ordered tea; but had scarcely begun to enjoy the crackling blaze of a plentiful wood fire, when the same ungracious figure took his seat by the side of us ... to tell us "all about THE DUEL."

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I had heard (from an English gentleman in the packet boat from Havre to Honfleur) something respecting this most extraordinary duel between a young Englishman and a young Frenchman: but as I mean to reserve my *Caen budget* for a distinct dispatch, and as I have yet hardly tarried twenty hours in this place, I must bid you adieu; only adding that I dreamt, last night, about some English antiquaries trying to bend the bow of William the Conqueror!—Can this be surprising? Again farewell.

[92] Evelyn, who visited Havre in 1644, when the Duke de Richlieu was governor, describes the citadel as "strong and regular, well stored with artillery, &c. The works furnished with faire brass canon, having a motto, "*Ratio ultima Regum*." The haven is very spacious." *Life and Writings of John Evelyn*, edit. 1818, vol. i. p. 51. Havre seems always to have been a place of note and distinction in more senses than one. In Zeiller's *Topographia Galliae,* (vol. iii.) there is a view of it, about the period in which Evelyn saw it, by Jacques Gomboust, Ingenieur du Roy, from which it appears to have been a very considerable place. Forty-two principal buildings and places are referred to in the directions; and among them we observe the BOULEVARDS DE RICHELIEU.

[93] It was so in Evelyn's time: in 1644, "It is a poore fisher towne (says he) remarkable for nothing so much as the odd yet usefull habites which the good women weare, of beares and other skinns, as of raggs at Dieppe, and all along these coasts." *Life and Writings of J. Evelyn*; 1818, 4to. vol. i. p. 51.

[94] [It is near a chapel, on one of the heights of this town, that Mr. Washington Irving fixes one of his most exquisitely drawn characters, ANNETTE DELABRE, as absorbed in meditation and prayer respecting the fate of her lover; and I have a distinct recollection of a beautiful piece of composition, by one of our most celebrated artists, in which the *Heights of Honfleur*, with women kneeling before a crucifix in the foreground, formed a most beautiful composition. The name of the artist (was it the younger Mr. Chalon?) I have forgotten.]

[95] [My translator says, "un Wynkyn de Worde non coupe:" Qu. Would not the *Debure* Vocabulary have said "non rogne?"]

LETTER XII.

CAEN. SOIL. SOCIETY. EDUCATION. A DUEL. OLD HOUSES. THE ABBEY OF ST.
STEPHEN. CHURCH OF ST. PIERRE DE DARNETAL. ABBE DE LA SAINTE

TRINITE. OTHER
PUBLIC EDIFICES.

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I have now resided upwards of a week at Lagouelle's, the *Hotel Royale*, and can tell you something of the place and of the inhabitants of CAEN. Caen however is still-life after Rouen: but it has been, and yet is, a town exceedingly well-deserving the attention of the lounging traveller and of the curious antiquary. Its ecclesiastical edifices are more ancient, but less vast and splendid, than those of Rouen; while the streets and the houses are much more wide and comfortable. This place is the capital of the department of CALVADOS, or of LOWER NORMANDY: and its population is estimated at forty thousand souls. It has a public library, a school of art, a college, mayoralty, and all the adjuncts of a corporate society.[96] But I must first give you something in the shape of political economy intelligence. Caen with its arrondissemens of *Bayeux, Vire, Falaise, Lisieux, Pont L'Eveque*, is the country of pasturage and of cattle. It is also fertile in the apple and pear; and although at *Argences* there have been vineyards from time immemorial, yet the produce of the grape, in the character of *wine*,[97] is of a very secondary description. There are beautiful and most abundant market gardens about Caen; and for the last seventy years they have possessed a garden for the growth and cultivation of foreign plants and trees. It is said that more than nine hundred species of plants and trees are to be found in the department of CALVADOS, of which some (but I know not how many or how few) are considered as indigenous. Of forests and woods, the number is comparatively small; and upon that limited number great injuries were inflicted by the Revolution. In the arrondissement of Caen itself, there are only 344 *hectares*.[98] The truth is, that in the immediate neighbourhood of populous towns, the French have no idea of PLANTING. They suffer plain after plain, and hill after hill, to be denuded of trees, and make no provision for the supply of those who are to come after them. Thus, not only a great portion of the country about Rouen—(especially in the direction of the road leading to Caen—) is gradually left desolate and barren, but even here, as you approach the town, there is a dreary flatness of country, unrefreshed by the verdure of foliage: whereas the soil, kind and productive by nature, requires only the slightest attention of man to repay him a hundred fold. What they will do some fifty years hence for *fuel*, is quite inconceivable. It is true that the river Orne, by means of the tide, and of its proximity to the sea, brings up vessels of even 200 tons burthen, in which they may stow plenty of wood; but still, the expenses of carriage, and duties of a variety of description—together with the *dependence* of the town upon such accidental supply—would render the article of fuel a most expensive concern. It is also true that they pretend that the soil, in the department of Calvados, contains *coal*; but the experiments which were made some years ago at *Littry*, in the arondissement of *Bayeux*, should forbid the Caennois to indulge any very sanguine expectations on that score.

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In respect to the trade of the town, the two principal branches are *lace* and *cap* making. The former trade is divided with Bayeux; and both places together give occupation to about thirty thousand pairs[99] of hands. People of all ages may be so employed; and the annual gross receipts have been estimated at four millions of francs. In *cap* making only, at Caen, four thousand people have been constantly engaged, and a gross produce of two millions of francs has been the result of that branch of trade. A great part of this manufacture was consumed at home; but more than one half used to be exported to Spain, Portugal, and the colonies belonging to France. They pretend to say, however, that this article of commerce is much diminished both in profit and reputation: while that of *table linen* is gaining proportionably in both.[100] There were formerly great *tanneries* in Caen and its immediate vicinity, but lately that branch of trade has suffered extremely. The revolution first gave it a violent check, and the ignorance and inattention of the masters to recent improvements, introduced by means of chemistry, have helped to hasten its decay. To balance this misfortune, there has of late sprung up a very general and judiciously directed commercial spirit in the article of *porcelaine*; and if Caen be inferior to its neighbouring towns, and especially to Rouen and Lisieux, in the articles of cloth, stuffs, and lace, it takes a decided lead in that which relates to *pottery* and *china*: no mean articles in the supply of domestic wants and luxuries. But it is in matters of higher “pith and moment” that Caen may claim a superiority over the towns just noticed. There is a better spirit of *education* abroad; and, for its size, more science and more literature will be found in it.

This place has been long famous for the education of Lawyers. There are two distinct academies—one for “Science and the Belles-Lettres”—the other for agriculture and commerce. The *Lycee* is a noble building, close to the Abbey of St. Stephen: but I wish its facade had been Gothic, to harmonise with the Abbey. Indeed, Caen has quite the air of Oxford, from the prevalent appearance of *stone* in its public buildings. The environs of the town afford quarries, whence the stone is taken in great blocks, in a comparatively soft state—and is thus cut into the several forms required with the greatest facility. It is then exposed, and every succeeding day appears to add to its white tint and durable quality. I saw some important improvements making in the outskirts of the town,[101] in which they were finishing shafts and capitals of columns in a manner the most correct and gratifying. Still farther from the immediate vicinity of Caen, they find stone of a closer grain; and with this they make stair-cases, and pavements for the interior of buildings. Indeed the stone stair-cases in this place, which are usually circular, and projecting

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from the building, struck me as being equally curious and uncommon. It is asserted that they have different kinds of *marble* in the department of Calvados, which equal that of the south of France. At *Basly* and *Vieux* white marble is found which has been judged worthy of a comparison with Parian; but this is surely a little presumptuous. However, it is known that Cardinal Richelieu brought from Vieux all the marble with which he built the chapel in the college of the Sorbonne.

Upon the whole, as to general appearance, and as to particular society, Caen may be preferable to Rouen. The costume and manners of the common people are pretty much, if not entirely, the same; except that, as to dress, the *cauchoise* is here rather more simple than at Dieppe and Rouen. The upper fille-de-chambre at our hotel displays not only a good correct model of national dress, but she is well-looking in her person, and well-bred in her manners. Mr. Lewis prevailed upon this good-natured young woman to sit for her likeness, and for the sake of her costume. The girl's eyes sparkled with more than ordinary joy at the proposal, and even an expression of gratitude mingled itself in her manner of compliance. I send you the figure and dress of the fille-de-chambre at the *Hotel Royale* of Caen.[102]

[Illustration: FILLE DE CHAMBRE, CAEN.]

Caen is called the depot of the English.[103] In truth there is an amazing number of our countrymen here, and from very different causes. One family comes to reside from motives of economy; another from those of education; a third from those of retirement; and a fourth from pure love of sitting down, in a strange place, with the chance of making some pleasant connection, or of being engaged in seeking some strange adventure: Good and cheap living, and novel society, are doubtless the main attractions. But there is desperate ill blood just now between the *Caennois* (I will not make use of the enlarged term *Francois*) and the English; and I will tell you the cause. Do you remember the emphatic phrase in my last, "all about the duel?" Listen. About three weeks only before our arrival,[104] a duel was fought between a young French law-student, and a young Englishman; the latter the son of a naval captain. I will mention no names; and so far not wound the feelings of the friends of the parties concerned. But this duel, my friend, has been "THE DUEL OF DUELS"—on the score of desperation, and of a fixed purpose to murder. It is literally without precedent, and I trust will never be considered as one. You must know then, that Caen, in spite of all the "bouleversemens" of the Revolution, has maintained its ancient reputation of possessing a very large seminary, or college for students at law. These students amount to nearly 600 in number. Most young gentlemen under twenty years of age are at times riotous, or frolicsome, or foolish. Generally speaking, however, the students

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conduct themselves with propriety: but there had been a law-suit between a French and English suitor, and the Judge pronounced sentence in favour of our countryman. The hall was crowded with spectators, and among them was a plentiful number of law-students. As they were retiring, one young Frenchman either made frightful faces, or contemptible gestures, in a very fixed and insulting manner, at a young Englishman—-the son of this naval captain. Our countryman had no means or power of noticing or resenting the insult, as the aggressor was surrounded by his companions. It so happened that it was fair time at Caen; and in the evening of the same day, our countryman recognised, in the crowd at the fair, the physiognomy of the young man who had insulted him in the hall of justice. He approached him, and gave him to understand that his rude behaviour should be noticed at a proper time and in a proper place: whereupon the Frenchman came up to him, shook him violently by the arm, and told him to "fix his distance on the ensuing morning." Now the habit of duelling is very common among these law-students; but they measure twenty-five paces, fire, and of course ... MISS—and then fancy themselves great heroes ... and there is an end of the affair. Not so upon the present occasion. "Fifteen paces," if you please—said the student, sarcastically, with a conviction of the backwardness of his opponent to meet him. "FIVE, rather"—exclaimed the provoked Englishman—"I will fight you at FIVE paces:"—and it was agreed that they should meet and fight on the morrow, at five paces only asunder.

Each party was under twenty; but I believe the English youth had scarcely attained his nineteenth year. What I am about to relate will cause your flesh to creep. It was determined by the seconds, as *one* must necessarily *fall*, from firing at so short a distance, that only *one* pistol should be loaded with *ball*: the other having nothing but *powder*:—and that, as the Frenchman had challenged, he was to have the choice of the pistols. They parted. The seconds prepared the pistols according to agreement, and the fatal morning came. The combatants appeared, without one jot of abatement of spirit or of cool courage. The pistols lay upon the grass before them: one loaded only with powder, and the other with powder and ball. The Frenchman advanced: took up a pistol, weighed and balanced it most carefully in his hand, and then ... laid it down. He seized the other pistol, and cocking it, fixed himself upon the spot from whence he was to fire. The English youth was necessarily compelled to take the abandoned pistol. Five paces were then measured ... and on the signal being given, they both fired ... and the Frenchman fell ... DEAD UPON THE SPOT! The Frenchman had in fact *taken up*, but afterwards *laid down*, the very pistol which was loaded with the fatal *ball*—on the supposition that it was of too light a weight;

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and even seemed to compliment himself upon his supposed sagacity on the occasion. But to proceed. The ball went through his heart, as I understood. The second of the deceased on seeing his friend a reeking corpse at his feet, became mad and outrageous ... and was for fighting the survivor immediately! Upon which, the lad of mettle and courage replied, that he would not fight a man without a *second*—"But go," said he, (drawing his watch coolly from his fob). I will give you twenty minutes to come back again with your second." He waited, with his watch in his hand, and by the dead body of his antagonist, for the return of the Frenchman; but on the expiration of the time, his own second conjured him to consult his safety and depart; for that, from henceforth, his life was in jeopardy. He left the ground; obtained his passport, and quitted the town instantly ... The dead body of his antagonist was then placed on a bier: and his funeral was attended by several hundreds of his companions—who, armed with muskets and swords, threatened destruction to the civil and military authorities if they presumed to interfere. All this has necessarily increased the ill-blood which is admitted to exist between the English and French ... but the affair is now beginning to blow over.[105]

A truce to such topics. It is now time to furnish you with some details relating to your favourite subjects of ARCHITECTURAL ANTIQUITIES and BIBLIOGRAPHY. The former shall take precedence. First of the *streets*; secondly of the *houses*; and thirdly of the *public buildings*; ecclesiastical and civil.

To begin with the STREETS. Those of *St. Pierre, Notre Dame*, and *St. Jean* are the principal for bustle and business. The first two form one continuous line, leading to the abbey of St. Stephen, and afford in fact a very interesting stroll to the observer of men and manners. The shops are inferior to those of Rouen, but a great shew of business is discernible in them. The street beyond the abbey, and those called *Guilbert*, and *des Chanoines*, leading towards the river, are considered among the genteelest. Ducarel pronounced the *houses* of Caen "mean in general, though usually built of stone;" but I do not agree with him in this conclusion. The open parts about the *Lycee* and the *Abbey of St. Stephen*, together with the *Place Royale*, where the library is situated, form very agreeable spaces for the promenade of the ladies and the exercise of the National Guard. The *Courts* are full of architectural curiosities, but mostly of the time of Francis I. Of *domestic* architecture, those houses, with elaborate carvings in wood, beneath a pointed roof, are doubtless of the greatest antiquity. There are a great number of these; and some very much older than others.

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A curious old house is to the right hand corner of the street *St. Jean*: as you go to the Post Office. But I must inform you that the residence of the famous MALHERBE yet exists in the street leading to the Abbey of St. Stephen. This house is of the middle of the sixteenth century: and what Corneille is to *Rouen*, Malherbe is to *Caen*. "ICI NAQUIT MALHERBE," &c. as you will perceive from the annexed view of this house, inscribed upon the front of the building. Malherbe has been doomed to receive greater honours. His head was first struck, in a series of medals, to perpetuate the resemblances of the most eminent literary characters (male and female) in France: and it is due to the amiable Pierre-Aime Lair to designate him as the FATHER of this medallic project.

[Illustration]

In perambulating this town, one cannot but be surprised at the absence of *Fountains*—-those charming pieces of architecture and of street embellishment. In this respect, Rouen has infinitely the advantage of Caen: where, instead of the trickling current of translucent water, we observe nothing but the partial and perturbed stream issuing from ugly *wells*[106] as tasteless in their structure as they are inconvenient in the procuring of water. Upon one or two of these wells, I observed the dates of 1560 and 1588.

The PUBLIC EDIFICES, however, demand a particular and appropriate description: and first of those of the ecclesiastical order. 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 favourite Archbishop Lanfranc, John Archbishop of Rouen, and Thomas Archbishop of York—towards 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 grey and clear tint, as well as excellent quality, of the stone, which, according to Huet, was brought partly from Vaucelle and partly from Allemagne.[107] One of the corner abutments of one of the towers has fallen down; and a great portion of what remains seems to indicate rapid decay. The whole stands indeed greatly in need of reparation. Ducarel, if I remember rightly,[108] has made, of this whole front, a sort of elevation, as if it were intended for a wooden

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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 alto-rilievo-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. There is a good number of *Confessionals* within them; and at one of these I saw, for the first time, *two* women, kneeling, in the act of confession to the *same priest*. “C’est un peu fort,” observed our guide in an under-voice, and with a humourous expression of countenance! Meanwhile Mr. Lewis, who was in an opposite direction in the cathedral, was exercising his pencil in the following delineation of a similar subject.

[Illustration]

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, cannot 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:—when, 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 phrenzy 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 upwards 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.

In the present state of the abbey,[109] and even in that of Ducarel's time, there is, and was, a great dearth of sepulchral monuments. Indeed I know not whether you need be detained another minute within the interior; except it be, to add your share of admiration to that which has been long and justly bestowed on the huge organ[110] at the west end of the nave, which is considered to be the finest in all France. But Normandy abounds in church decorations of this kind. Leaving therefore this venerable pile, endeared to the British antiquary by a thousand pleasing associations of ideas, we strike off into an adjoining court yard, and observe the ruins of a pretty extensive pile of building, which is called by Ducarel the *Palace of the Conqueror*. But in this supposed palace, in its *present* state, most assuredly William I. *never* resided: for it is clearly not older than the thirteenth century: if so ancient. Ducarel saw a great deal more than is now to be seen; for, in fact, as I attempted to gain entrance into what appeared to be the principal room, I was stopped by an old woman, who assured me "qu'il n'y avoit rien que du chauffage." It was true enough: the whole of the untenanted interior contained nothing but wood fuel. Returning to the principal street, and making a slight digression to the right, you descend somewhat abruptly by the side of a church in ruins, called *St. Etienne le Vieil*. In Ducarel's time this church is described as entire. On the exterior of one of the remaining buttresses is a whole length figure, about four English feet in height (as far as I could guess by the eye) of a man on horseback—mutilated—-trampling upon another man at its feet.

It is no doubt a curious and uncommon ornament. But, would you believe it? this figure also, in the opinion of Bourgueville,[111] was intended for William the the Conqueror—-representing his triumphant entry into Caen! As an object of art, even in its present mutilated state, it is highly interesting; and I rejoice that Mr. Cotman is likely to preserve the little that remains from the hazard of destruction by the fidelity of his own copy of it.[112] It is quite clear that, close to the figure, you discover traces of style which are unequivocally of the time of Francis I. The interior of what remains of this consecrated edifice is converted "horresco referens" into a receptacle for ... carriages for hire. Not far from this spot stood formerly a magnificent CROSS—demolished during the memorable visit of the Calvinists.[113] In the way to the abbey of the Trinity, quite at the opposite or eastern extremity of the town, you necessarily pass along the *Rue*

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St. Pierre, and enter into the market-place, affording an opening before the most beautiful church in all Normandy. It is the church of *St. Pierre de Darnetal* of which I now speak, and from which the name of the street is derived. The tower and spire are of the most admirable form and workmanship.[114] The extreme delicacy and picturesque effect of the stone tiles, with which the spire is covered, as well as the lightness and imposing consequence given to the tower upon which the spire rests, are of a character peculiar to itself. The whole has a charming effect. But severe criticism compels one to admit that the body of the church is defective in fine taste and unity of parts. The style is not only florid Gothic, but it is luxuriant, even to rankness, if I may so speak. The parts are capriciously put together: filled, and even crammed, with ornaments of apparently all ages: concluding with the Grecian mixture introduced in the reign of Francis I. The buttresses are, however, generally, lofty and airy. In the midst of this complicated and corrupt style of architecture, the tower and spire rise like a structure built by preternatural hands; and I am not sure that, at this moment, I can recollect any thing of equal beauty and effect in the whole range of ecclesiastical edifices in our own country. Look at this building, from any part of the town, and you must acknowledge that it has the strongest claims to unqualified admiration.[115] The body of the church is of very considerable dimensions. I entered it on a Sunday morning, about eleven o'clock, and found it quite filled with a large congregation, in which the *cauchoise*, as usual, appeared like a broad white mass—from one end to the other. The priests were in procession. One of the most magnificent organs imaginable was in full intonation, with every stop opened; the voices of the congregation were lustily exercised; and the offices of religion were carried on in a manner which would seem to indicate a warm sense of devotion among the worshippers. There is a tolerably good set of modern paintings (the best which I have yet seen in the interior of a church) of the *Life of Christ*, in the side chapels. The eastern extremity, or the further end of *Our Lady's Chapel*, is horribly bedaubed and over-loaded with the most tasteless specimens of what is called Gothic art, perhaps ever witnessed! The great bell of this church, which has an uncommonly deep and fine tone, is for ever

Swinging slow with solemn roar!

that is to say:—it is tolling from five in the morning till ten at night; so incessantly, in one side-chapel or another, are these offices carried on within this maternal parish church.[116]

I saw, with momentary astonishment, the leaning tower of a church in the *Rue St. Jean*,[117] which is one of the principal streets in the town: and which is terminated by the *Place des Cazernes*, flanked by the river Orne. In this street I was asked, by a bookseller, two pounds two shillings, for a thumbed and cropt copy of the *Elzevir-Heinsius Horace* of 1629; but with which demand I did not of course comply. In fact, they have the most extravagant notions of the prices of Elzevirs, both here and at Rouen.

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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.[118] 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 meagre. 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 upwards 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 stopped 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 tomb-stones (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 no where 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 "Arretez—tenez!" 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 backwards, my fall ... and my LIFE ... were equally saved! I have reason from henceforth to remember the ABBAYE 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 thence 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 stair-cases." 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.[119] 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 this subterraneous abode, I revisited the regions of day-light, and made towards 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 shewed me, with great civility, some relics of old crosses, rings, veils, lachrymatories, &c. which had been taken from the crypt I had recently visited. These relics savoured 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 labours with the ABBAYE AUX DAMES at Caen.

The foregoing, my dear friend, are the principal ecclesiastical buildings in this place. There are other public edifices, but comparatively of a modern date. And yet I should be guilty of a gross omission were I to neglect giving you an account, however superficial, of the remains of an apparently CASTELLATED BUILDING, a little beyond the Abbaye aux Dames—or rather to the right, upon elevated ground, as you enter the town by the way we came. As far as I can discover, this appears to have escaped Ducarel.[120] It is doubtless a very curious relic. Running along the upper part of the walls, there is a series

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of basso-relievo heads, medallion-wise, cut in stone, evidently intended for portraits. They are assuredly not older than the reign of Francis I. and may be even as late as that of Henry II. Among these rude medallions, is a female head, with a ferocious-looking man on each side of it, either saluting the woman, or whispering in her ear. But the most striking objects are the stone figures of two men, upon a circular tower, of which one is in the act of shooting an arrow, and the other as if holding a drawn sword. I got admittance within the building; and ascending the tower, found that these were only the *trunks* of figures,—and removable at pleasure. I could only stroke their beards and shake their bodies a little, which was of course done with impunity. Whether the present be the *original* place of their destination may be very doubtful. The Abbe de la Rue, with whom I discoursed upon the subject yesterday morning, is of opinion that these figures are of the time of Louis XI.: which makes them a little more ancient than the other ornaments of the building. As to the interior, I could gather nothing with certainty of the original character of the place from the present remains. The earth is piled up, here and there, in artificial mounds covered with grass: and an orchard, and rich pasture land (where I saw several women milking cows) form the whole of the interior scenery. However the *Caennois* are rather proud of this building.

Leaving you to your own conclusions respecting the date of its erection, and “putting the colophon” to this disquisition respecting the principal public buildings at Caen, it is high time to assure you how faithfully I am always yours.

[96] ["Besides her numerous public schools, Caen possesses two Schools of Art—one for design, the other for Architecture and Ornament—where the Students are *gratuitously* instructed.” LICQUET.]

[97] It is called *Vin Huet*—and is the last wine which a traveller will be disposed to ask for. When Henry IV. passed through the town, he could not conceive why such excellent grapes should produce such execrable wine. I owe this intelligence to *Mons*. LICQUET.

[98] Somewhere about 150 English acres.

[99] [I had before said *twenty*—but *Mons*. Licquet observes, I might have said—thirty thousand pairs of hands.]

[100] Caen was celebrated for its table linen three centuries ago. Consult BOURGUEVILLE: *Antiquitez de Caen*; 1588, 8vo. p. 26.

[101] The fauxbourgs of Caen, in the present day, wear a melancholy contrast to what they appear to have done in the middle of the XVIth century. Consult the pleasantly penned description of these fauxbourgs

by the first topographer of the place, BOURGUEVILLE: in his *Antiquitez de Caen*, pp. 5, 6, 26.

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It may be worth subjoining, from the same interesting authority, that long after the time even of the publication just referred to, the town of Caen was surrounded by lofty and thick stone walls—upon the tops of which three men could walk a-breast: and from thence the inhabitants could discern, across those large and beautiful gardens, "the vessels sailing in the river Orne, and unloading their cargoes by the sides of walls." It appears indeed to have been a sort of lounge, or fashionable promenade—by means of various ladders for the purposes of ascent and descent.Among the old prints and bird's-eye views of Caen, which I saw in the collection of DE BOZE at the Royal Library at Paris, there is one accompanied by three pages of printed description, which begins with the lines of Guillaume Breton "Villa potens, opulenta, situ spatiosa decora." See First Edition, vol. i. p. 274. Evelyn, in 1644, thus describes the town of Caen. "The whole town is handsomely built of that excellent stone so well knowne by that name in England. I was lead to a pretty garden, planted with hedges of Alaternus, having at the entrance, at an exceeding height, accurately cut in topiary worke, with well understood architecture, consisting of pillars, niches, freezes, and other ornaments, with greate curiosity, &c. *Life and Writings of J. Evelyn*, 1818, 4to. vol. i. p. 52.

[102] See the OPPOSITE PLATE.

[103] It was a similar depot in Ducarel's time.

[104] The story was in fact told us the very first night of our arrival, by M. Lagouelle, the master of the hotel royale. He went through it with a method, emphasis, and energy, rendered the more striking from the obesity of his figure and the vulgarity of his countenance. But he frankly allowed that "Monsieur l'Anglois se conduisait bien."

[105] [The affair is now scarcely remembered; and the successful champion died a natural death within about three years afterwards. *Mons*. Licquet slenderly doubts portions of this tragical tale: but I have good reason to believe that it is not an exaggerated one. As to what occurred *after* the death of one of the combatants, I am unwilling to revive unpleasant sensations by its recapitulation.]

[106] Bourgueville seems bitterly to lament the substitution of wells for fountains. He proposes a plan, quite feasible in his own estimation, whereby this desirable object might be effected: and then retorts upon his townsmen by reminding them of the commodious fountains at *Lisieux, Falaise and Vire*—of which the inhabitants "n'ont rien espargne pour auoir ceste decoration et commodite en leurs villes."—spiritedly adding—"si j'estois encore en auctorite, j'y ferois mon pouuoir, et ie y offre de mes biens." p. 17.

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[107] [I am most prompt to plead guilty to a species of *Hippopotamos* error, in having here translated the word *Allemagne* into GERMANY! Now, although this translation, per se, be correct, yet, as applicable to the text, it is most incorrect—as the *Allemagne* in question happens to be a *Parish in the neighbourhood of Caen*! My translator, in turn, treats me somewhat tenderly when he designates this as "une meprise fort singuliere." vol. ii. p. 25.]

[108] The plate of Ducarel, here alluded to, forms the fourth plate in his work; affording, from the starch manner in which it is engraved, an idea of one of the most disproportioned, ugly buildings imaginable. Mr. Cotman has favoured us with a good bold etching of the West Front, and of the elevation of compartments of the Nave; The former is at once faithful and magnificent; but the lower part wants characteristic markings.

[109] It should be noticed that, "besides the immense benefactions which William in his life time conferred upon this abbey, he, on his death, presented thereto the *crown* which he used to wear at all high festivals, together with his *sceptre and rod*: a cup set with precious stones; his candlesticks of gold, and all his regalia: as also the ivory bugle-horn which usually hung at his back." *Anglo-Norman Antiquities*, p. 51. note. The story of the breaking open of the coffin by the Calvinists, and finding the Conqueror's remains, is told by Bourgueville—who was an *eye witness* of these depredations, and who tried to "soften the obdurate hearts" of the pillagers, but in vain. This contemporaneous historian observes that, in his time "the abbey was filled with beautiful and curious stained-glass windows and harmonious organs, which were all broken and destroyed—and that the seats, chairs, &c. and all other wooden materials were consumed by fire," p.171. Huet observes that a "Dom Jean de Baillehache and Dom Matthieu de la Dangie," religious of St. Stephen's, took care of the monument of the Conqueror in the year 1642, and replaced it in the state in which it appeared in Huet's time." *Origines de Caen*; p.248. The revolution was still more terrible than the Calvinistic fury;—for no traces of the monument are now to be seen.

[110] The west window is almost totally obscured by a most gigantic organ built close to it, and allowed to be the finest in all France. This organ is so big, as to require eleven large bellows, &c. *Ducarel*, p.57. He then goes on to observe, that "amongst the plate preserved in the treasury of this church, is a curious SILVER SALVER, about ten inches in diameter, gilt,

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and inlaid with antique medals. Tradition assures us, that it was on this salver, that king William the conqueror placed the foundation charter of the abbey when he presented it, at the high altar, on the dedication of the church. The edges of this salver, which stands on a foot stalk of the same metal, are a little turned up, and carved. In the centre is inlaid a Greek medal; on the obverse whereof is this legend, [Greek: Ausander Aukonos] but it being fixed in its socket, the reverse is not visible. The other medals, forty in number, are set round the rim, in holes punched quite through; so that the edges of the holes serve as frames for the medals. These medals are Roman, and in the highest preservation."

[111] Yet Bourgueville's description of the group, as it appeared in his time, trips up the heels of his own conjecture. He says that there were, besides the two figures above mentioned, "vn autre homme et femme a genoux, comme s'ils demandoient raison de la mort de leur enfant, qui est vne antiquite de grand remarque dont je ne puis donner autre certitude de l'histoire." *Antiquitez de Caen*; p.39. Now, it is this additional portion of the group (at present no longer in existence) which should seem to confirm the conjecture of my friend Mr. Douce—that it is a representation of the received story, in the middle ages, of the Emperor Trajan being met by a widow who demanded justice against the murderer of her son. The Emperor, who had just mounted his horse to set out upon some hostile expedition, replied, that "he would listen to her on his return." The woman said, "What, if you never return?" "My successor will satisfy you"—he replied—"But how will that benefit you,"—resumed the widow. The Emperor then descended from his horse, and enquiring into the woman's case, caused justice to be done to her. Some of the stories say that the murderer was the Emperor's own son.

[112] [Since the publication of the first edition of this work, the figure in question has appeared from the pencil and burin of Mr. Cotman; of which the only fault, as it strikes me, is, that the surface is too rough—or the effect too sketchy.]

[113] Bourgueville has minutely described it in his *Antiquities*; and his description is copied in the preceding edition of this work.

[114] Bourgueville is extremely particular and even eloquent in his account of the tower, &c. He says that he had "seen towers at Paris, Rouen, Toulouse, Avignon, Narbonne, Montpelier, Lyons, Amiens, Chartres,

Angiers, Bayeux, Constances, (qu. Coutances?) and those of St. Stephen at Caen, and others, in divers parts of France, which are built in a pyramidal form—but

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THIS TOWER OT ST. PETER exceeded all the others, as well in its height, as in its curious form of construction." *Antiq. de Caen*; p.36. He regrets, however, that the *name of the architect* has not descended to us. [It is right to correct an error, in the preceding edition, which has been committed on the authority of Ducarel. That Antiquary supposed the tower and spire to have been built by the generosity of one NICHOLAS, an ENGLISHMAN." *Mons*. Licquet has, I think, reclaimed the true author of such munificence, as his *own* countryman.—NICOLAS LANGLOIS:—whose name thus occurs in his epitaph, preserved by Bourgueville.

Le Vendredi, devant tout droict
La Saint Cler que le temps n'est froit,
Trespassa NICOLLE L'ANGLOIS,
L'an Mil Trois Cens et Dix Sept.]
&c. &c.

Reverting, to old BOURGUEVILLE, I cannot take leave of him without expressing my hearty thanks for the amusement and information which his unostentatious octavo volume—entitled *Les Recherches et Antiquitez de la Ville et Universite de Caen, &c*. (a Caen, 1588, 8vo.) has afforded me.The author, who tells us he was born in 1504, lived through the most critical and not unperilous period of the times in which he wrote. His plan is perfectly artless, and his style as completely simple. Nor does his fidelity appear impeachable. Such ancient volumes of topography are invaluable—as preserving the memory of things and of objects, which, but for such record, had perished without the hope or chance of recovery.

[115] [Ten years have elapsed since this sentence was written, and the experience gained in those years only confirms the truth (according to the conception of the author) of the above assertion. Such a tower and spire, if found in England, must be looked for in Salisbury Cathedral; but though this latter be much loftier, it is stiff, cold, and formal, comparatively with that of which the text makes mention.]

[116] [For six months in the year—that is to say, from Lady Day till Michaelmas Day—this great Bell tolls, at a quarter before ten, as a curfew.]

[117] A plate of it may be found in the publication of Mr. Dawson Turner, and of Mr. Cotman.

[118] Of this building Mr. Cotman has published the West front, east end, exterior and interior; great arches under the tower; crypt; east side of south transept; elevation of the North side of the choir: elevation of the window; South side exterior; view down the nave, N.W. direction.

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[119] Bourgueville describes the havoc which took place within this abbey at the memorable visit of the Calvinists in 1562. From plundering the church of St. Stephen (as before described p. 172,) they proceeded to commit similar ravages here:—“sans auoir respect ni reuerence a la Dame Abbesse, ni a la religion et douceur feminine des Dames Religieuses.”—“plusieurs des officiers de la maison s’y trouucrent, vsans de gracieuses persuasions, pour penser flechir le coeur de ces plus que brutaux;” p. 174.

[120] Unless it be what he calls “the FORT OF THE HOLY TRINITY of Caen; in which was constantly kept a garrison, commanded by a captain, whose annual pay was 100 single crowns. This was demolished by Charles, king of Navarre, in the year 1360, during the war which he carried on against Charles the Dauphin, afterwards Charles V., &c.” *Anglo-Norman Antiquities*, p. 67. This castle, or the building once flanked by the walls above described, was twice taken by the English; once in 1346, when they made an immense booty, and loaded their ships with the gold and silver vessels found therein; and the second time in 1417, when they established themselves as masters of the place for 33 years. *Annuaire du Calvados*; 1803-4; p. 63.

LETTER XIII.

LITERARY SOCIETY. ABBE DE LA RUE. MESSRS. PIERRE-AIME LAIR AND LAMOUROUX.
MEDAL OF MALHERBE. BOOKSELLERS. MEMOIR OF THE LATE M. MOYSANT, PUBLIC
LIBRARIAN. COURTS OF JUSTICE.

From the dead let me conduct you to the living. In other words, prepare to receive some account of *Society*,—and of things appertaining to the formation of the intellectual character. Caen can boast of a public Literary Society, and of the publication of its memoirs.[121] But these “memoirs” consist at present of only six volumes, and are in our own country extremely rare.

[Illustration: ABBE DE LA RUE AEtat. LXXIV.]

Among the men whose moral character and literary reputation throw a sort of lustre upon Caen, there is no one perhaps that stands upon *quite* so lofty an eminence as the ABBE DE LA RUE; at this time occupied in publishing a *History of Caen*.[122] As an archaeologist, he has no superior among his countrymen; while his essays upon the *Bayeux Tapestry* and the *Anglo-Norman Poets*, published in our *Archaeologia*, prove that there are few, even among ourselves, who could have treated those interesting

subjects with more dexterity or better success. The Abbe is, in short, the great archaeological oracle of Normandy. He was pleased to pay me a Visit at Lagouelle's. He is fast advancing towards his seventieth year. His figure is rather stout, and above the mean height: his complexion is healthful, his eye brilliant, and

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a plentiful quantity of waving white hair adds much to the expression of his countenance.[123] He enquired kindly after our mutual friend Mr. Douce; of whose talents and character he spoke in a manner which did equal honour to both. But he was inexorable, as to—*not* dining with me; observing that his Order was forbidden to dine in taverns. He gave me a list of places which I ought to visit in my further progress through Normandy, and took leave of me more abruptly than I could have wished. He rarely visits Caen, although a great portion of his library is kept there: his abode being chiefly in the country, at the residence of a nobleman to whose son he was tutor. It is delightful to see a man, of his venerable aspect and widely extended reputation, enjoying, in the evening of life, (after braving such a tempest, in the noon-day of it, as that of the Revolution) the calm, unimpaired possession of his faculties, and the respect of the virtuous and the wise.

The study of *Natural History* obtains pretty generally at Caen; indeed they have an Academy in which this branch of learning is expressly taught—and of which MONSIEUR LAMOUROUX[124] is at once the chief ornament and instructor. This gentleman (to whom our friend Mr. Dawson Turner furnished me with a letter of introduction) has the most unaffected manners, and a countenance particularly open and winning. He is “a very dragon” in his pursuit. On my second call, I found him busied in unpacking some baskets of seaweed, yet reeking with the briny moisture; and which he handled and separated and classed with equal eagerness and facility. The library of M. Lamouroux is quite a workman-like library: filled with sensible, solid, and instructive books—and if he had only accepted a repeated and strongly-pressed invitation to dine with me at Lagouelle’s, to meet his learned brother PIERRE-AIME LAIR, nothing would have been wanting to the completion of his character!

You have just heard the name of Pierre-Aime Lair. Prepare to receive a sketch of the character to which that name appertains. This gentleman is not only the life and soul of the society—but of the very town—in which he moves. I walked with him, arm in arm, more than once, through very many streets, passages, and courts, which were distinguished for any relic of architectural antiquity. He was recognised and saluted by nearly one person out of three, in our progress. “Je vous salue”—“vous voila avec Monsieur l’Anglois”—“bon jour,”—“comment ca va-t-il:”—The activity of Pierre-Aime Lair is only equalled by his goodness of heart and friendliness of disposition. He is all kindness. Call when you will, and ask for what you please, the object solicited is sure to be granted. He never seems to rise (and he is a very early riser) with spleen, ill-humour, or untoward propensities. With him, the sun seems always to shine, and the lark to tune her carol. And this cheerfulness of feeling is carried by him into every abode however gloomy, and every society however dull.

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But more substantial praise belongs to this amiable man. Not only is Pierre-Aime Lair a lover and collector of tangible antiquities—such as glazed tiles, broken busts, old pictures, and fractured capitals—all seen in “long array”, up the windings of his staircase—but he is a critic, and a patron of the *literary* antiquities of his country. Caen (as I told you in my last despatch) is the birth-place of MALHERBE; and, in the character now under discussion, it has found a perpetuator of the name and merits of the father of French verse. In the year 1806 our worthy antiquary put forth a project for a general subscription “for a medal in honour of *Malherbe*,"[125] which project was in due time rewarded by the names of *fifteen hundred* efficient subscribers, at five francs a piece. The proposal was doubtless flattering to the literary pride of the French; and luckily the execution of it surpassed the expectations of the subscribers. The head is undoubtedly of the most perfect execution. Not only, however, did this head of Malherbe succeed—-but a feeling was expressed that it might be followed up by a *Series of Heads* of the most illustrious, of both sexes, in literature and the fine arts. The very hint was enough for Lair: though I am not sure whether he be not the father of the *latter* design also. Accordingly, there has appeared, periodically, a set of heads of this description, in bronze or other metal, as the purchaser pleases—which has reflected infinite credit not only on the name of the projector of this scheme, but on the present state of the fine arts in France.

Yet another word about Pierre-Aime Lair. He is not so inexorable as M. Lamouroux: for he *has* dined with me, and quaffed the burgundy and champagne of Lagouelle, commander in chief of this house. Better wines cannot be quaffed; and Malherbe and the Duke of Wellington formed the alternate subjects of discourse and praise. In return, I have dined with our guest. He had prepared an abundant dinner, and a very select society: but although there was no wand, as in the case of Sancho Panza, to charm away the dishes, &c. or to interdict the tasting of them, yet it was scarcely possible to partake of one in four... so unmercifully were they steeped and buried in *butter!* The principal topic of discourse, were the merits of the poets of the respective countries of France and England, from which I have reason to think that Pope, Thomson, and Young, are among the greatest favourites with the French. The white brandy of Pierre-Aime Lair, introduced after dinner, is hardly to be described for its strength and pungency. “Vous n’avez rien comme ca chez vous?” “Je le crois bien, (I replied) c’est la liquefaction meme du feu.” We broke up before eight; each retiring to his respective avocations—but did not dine till five. I borrowed, however, “an hour or twain” of the evening, after the departure of the company, to enjoy the more particular

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conversation of our host; and the more I saw and conversed with him; the greater was my gratification. At parting, he loaded me with a pile of pamphlets, of all sizes, of his own publication; and I ventured to predict to him that he would terminate his multifarious labours by settling into consolidated BIBLIOMANIACISM. “On peut faire pire!”—was his reply—on shaking hands with me, and telling me he should certainly meet me again at *Bayeux*, in my progress through Normandy.[126] My acquaintance with this amiable man seemed to be my security from insults in the streets.

Education here commences early, and with incitements as alluring as at Rouen. POISSON in the *Rue Froide* is the principal, and indeed a very excellent, printer; but BONNESERRE, in the same street, has put forth a vastly pretty manual of infantine devotion, in a brochure of eight pages, of which I send you the first, and which you may compare with the specimen transmitted in a former letter.[127]

[Illustration]

Chapolin, in the *Rue-Froide-Rue,* has recently published a most curious little manual, in the cursive secretary gothic, entitled “*La Civilite honnete pour les enfans qui commence par la maniere d’apprendre et bien lire, prononcer et ecrire*.” I call it “curious,” because the very first initial letter of the text, representing C, introduces us to the *bizarrerie* of the early part of the XVIth century in treatises of a similar character. Take this first letter, with a specimen also of those to which it appertains.

[Illustration]

This work is full of the old fashioned (and not a bit the worse on that account) precepts of the same period; such as we see in the various versions of the “De Moribus Juvenum,” of which the “*Contenance de la Table,"* in the French language, is probably the most popular. It is executed throughout in the same small and smudged gothic character; and, as I conceive; can have few purchasers. The printers of Caen must not be dismissed without respectful mention of the typographical talents of LE ROY; who ranks after Poisson. Let both these be considered as the Bulmer and Bensley of the place.

But among these venders of infantine literature, or of cheap popular pieces, there is no man who “drives such a trade” as PICARD-GUERIN, *Imprimeur en taille-douce et Fabricant d’Images*,” who lives in the *Rue des Teinturiers,* no.175. I paid him more than one visit; as, from, his “fabrication,” issue the thousands and tens of thousands of broadsides, chap-books, &c. &c. which inundate Lower Normandy. You give from *one* to *three* sous, according as the subject be simple or compound, upon wood or upon copper:—Saints, martyrs, and scriptural subjects; or heroes, chieftains, and monarchs, including the Duke of Wellington and Louis XVIII. le Desire—are among the taille-

douces specified in the imprints. Madame did me the honour of shewing me some of her

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choicest treasures, as her husband was from home. Up stairs was a parcel of mirthful boys and girls, with painting brushes in their hands, and saucers of various colours before them. Upon enquiry, I found that they received four sous per dozen, for colouring; but I will not take upon me to say that they were over or under paid—of so *equivocal* a character were their performances. Only I hoped to be excused if I preferred the plain to the coloured. In a foreign country, our notice is attracted towards things perhaps the most mean and minute. With this feeling, I examined carefully what was put before me, and made a selection sufficient to shew that it was the produce of French soil. Among the serious subjects were *two* to which I paid particular attention. The one was a metrical cantique of the *Prodigal Son,* with six wood cuts above the text, exhibiting the leading points of the Gospel-narrative. I will cut out and send you the *second* of these six: in which you will clearly perceive the military turn which seems to prevail throughout France in things the most minute. The Prodigal is about to mount his horse and leave his father's house, in the cloke and cock'd hat of a French officer.

[Illustration]

The *fourth* of these cuts is droll enough. It is entitled, "*L'Enfant Prodigue est chasse par ses maitresses."* The expulsion consists in the women driving him out of doors with besoms and hair-brooms. It is very probable, however, that all this character of absurdity attaches to some of our own representations of the same subject; if, instead of examining (as in Pope's time)

... the walls of Bedlam and Soho,

we take a survey of the graphic broadsides which dangle from strings upon the wall at Hyde Park Corner.

Another subject of a serious character, which I am about to describe to you, can rarely, in all probability, be the production of a London artist. It is called "*Notre-Dame de la bonne Delivrande*," and is necessarily confined to the religion of the country. You have here, first of all, a reduced form of the original: probably about one-third—and it is the more appropriate, as it will serve to give you a very correct notion of the dressing out of the figures of the VIRGIN and CHILD which are meant to grace the altars of the chapels of the Virgin in most of the churches in Normandy. Is it possible that one spark of devotion can be kindled by the contemplation of an object so grotesque and so absurd in the House of God?

[Illustration: SAINTE MARIE, MERE DE DIEU, priez pour nous]

To describe all the trumpery which is immediately around it, in the original, would be a waste of time; but below are two good figures to the right, and two wretched ones to the left. Beneath the whole, is the following *accredited* consoling piece of intelligence:

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L'AN 830, *des Barbares descendent dans les Gaules, massacrent les Fideles, profanent et brulent les Eglises. Raoul, Duc de Normandie, se joint a eux; l'image de la Ste. Vierge demeure ensevelie sous les ruines de l'ancienne chapelle jusqu'au regne de Henri I. l'an 1331. Beaudouin, Baron de Douvres, averti par son berger qu'un mouton de son troupeau fouillait toujours dans le meme endroit, fit ouvrir la terre, et trouva ce tresor cache depuis tant d'annees. Il fit porter processionnellement cette sainte image dans l'Eglise de Douvres: mais Dieu permit qu'elle fut transportee par un Ange dans l'endroit de la chapelle ou elle est maintenant reveree. C'est dans cette chapelle que, par l'intercession de Marie, les pecheurs recoivent leur conversion, les affliges leur consolation, les infirmes la sante, les captifs leur delivrance, que ceux qui sont en mer echappent aux tempetes et au naufrage, et que des miracles s'operent journellement sur les pieux Fideles*.

A word now for BIBLIOPOLISTS—including *Bouquinistes*, or venders of "old and second-hand books." The very morning following my arrival in Caen, I walked to the abbey of St. Stephen, before breakfast, and in the way thither stopped at a book stall, to the right,—and purchased some black letter folios: among which the French version of *Caesar's Commentaries,* printed by Verard, in 1488, was the most desirable acquisition. It is reserved for Lord Spencer's library;[128] at a price which, freight and duty included, cannot reach the sum of twelve shillings of our money. Of venders of second hand and old books, the elder and younger MANOURY take a decisive lead. The former lives in the *Rue Froide*; the latter in the *Rue Notre Dame.* The father boasts of having upwards of thirty thousand volumes, but I much doubt whether his stock amount to one half of that number. He unhesitatingly asked me two *louis d'or* for a copy of the *Vaudevires* of OLIVIER BASSELIN, which is a modern, but privately printed, volume; and of which I hope to give you some amusing particulars by and by. He also told me that he had formerly sold a paper copy of *Fust's Bible of 1462,* with many of the illuminated initials cut out, to the library of the Arsenal, at Paris, for 100 louis d'or. I only know that, if I had been librarian, he should not have had one half the money.

Now for Manoury the younger. Old and young are comparative terms: for be it known that the son is "age de soixante ans." Over his door you read an ancient inscription, thus:

"*Battu, perce, lie, Je veux changer de main*."

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This implies either (like Aladdin's old lamps for new) that he wishes to give new books in exchange for old ones, or that he can smarten up old ones by binding, or otherwise, and give them a renovated appearance. But the solution is immaterial: the inscription being as above. The interior of the younger Manoury's book repository almost appalled me. His front shop, and a corridor communicating with the back part of the house, are rank with moisture; and his books are consequently rotting apace. Upon my making as pitiable a statement as I was able of this melancholy state of things—and pleading with all my energies against the inevitable destruction which threatened the dear books—the obdurate bibliopolist displayed not one scintillation of sympathy. He was absolutely indifferent to the whole concern. In the back parlour, almost impervious to day-light, his daughter, and a stout and handsome bourgeoise, with rather an unusually elevated cauchoise, were regaling themselves with soup and herbs at dinner. I hurried through, in my way to the upper regions, with apologies for the intrusion; but was told that none were necessary—that I might go where, and stay as long, as I pleased—and that any explanation would be given to my interrogatories in the way of business. I expressed my obligations for such civility; and gaining an upper room, by the help of a chair, made a survey of its contents. What piles of interminable rubbish! I selected, as the only rational or desirable volume—half rotted with moisture—*Belon's Marine Fishes*, 1551, 4to; and placing six francs (the price demanded) upon the table, hurried back, through this sable and dismal territory, with a sort of precipitancy amounting to horrour. What struck me, as productive of a very extraordinary effect—was the cheerfulness and *gaiete de coeur* of these females, in the midst of this region of darkness and desolation. Manoury told me that the Revolution had deprived him of the opportunity of having the finest bookselling stock in France! His own carelessness and utter apathy are likely to prove yet more destructive enemies.

But let us touch a more "spirit-stirring" chord in the book theme. Let us leave the *Bouquiniste* for the PUBLIC LIBRARY: and I invite you most earnestly to accompany me thither, and to hear matters of especial import. This library occupies the upper part of a fine large stone building, devoted to the public offices of government. The plan of the library is exceedingly striking; in the shape of a cross. It measures one hundred and thirty-four, by eighty, French feet; and is supposed, apparently with justice, to contain 20,000 volumes. It is proportionably wide and lofty. M. HEBERT is the present chief librarian, having succeeded the late M. Moysant, his uncle. Among the more eminent benefactors and Bibliomaniacs, attached to this library, the name of FRANCOIS MARTIN is singularly conspicuous. He was, from all accounts, and especially from the

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information of M. Hebert, one of the most raving of book-madmen: but he displayed, withal, a spirit of kindness and liberality towards his favourite establishment at Caen, which could not be easily shaken or subdued. He was also a man of letters, and evinced that most commendable of all literary propensities—a love of the LITERATURE OF HIS COUNTRY. He amassed a very large collection of books, which was cruelly pillaged during the Revolution; but the public library became possessed of a great number of them. In those volumes, formerly belonging to him, which are now seen, is the following printed inscription: "*Franciscus Martin, Doctor Theologus Parisiensis, comparavit. Oretur pro co*." He was head of the convent of Cordeliers, and Prefect of the Province: but his mode of collecting was not always that which a public magistrate would call *legitimate*. He sought books every where; and when he could not *buy* them, or obtain them by fair means, he would *steal* them, and carry them home in the sleeves of his gown! He flourished about a century ago; and, with very few exceptions, all the best conditioned books in the library belonged to this magisterial book-robber. Among them I noted down with singular satisfaction the Aldine edition of *Stephanus de Urbibus*, 1502, folio—in its old vellum binding: seemly to the eye, and comfortable to the touch. Nor did his copy of the *Repertorium Statutorum Ordinis Cartusiensis*, printed by *Amerbach, at Basil*, in a glorious gothic character, 1510, folio, escape my especial notice—also the same Bibliomaniac's beautiful copy of the *Mentz Herbal*, of 1484, in 4to.

But the obliquities of Martin assume a less questionable aspect, when we contemplate a noble work, which he not only projected, but left behind ready for publication. It is thus entitled: *Athenae Normannorum veteres ac recentes, seu syllabus Auctorum qui oriundi e Normannia, &c.* It consists of one volume, in MS., having the authority of government, to publish it, prefixed. There is a short Latin preface, by Martin, followed by two pages of Latin verses beginning thus:

In Auctorum Normannicorum Syllabum.
Prolusio metrica.
En Syllabus prodit palam
Contextus arte sedula
Ex litteratae Neustriae
Auctoribus celebribus.
&c. &c.

Among the men, the memories of whom throw a lustre upon Caen,[129] was the famous SAMUEL BOCHART; at once a botanist, a scholar, and a critic of distinguished celebrity. He was a native of Rouen, and his books (many of them replete with valuable ms. notes) are among the chief treasures of the public library, here. Indeed there is a distinct catalogue of them, and the funds left by their illustrious owner form the principal

support of the library establishment. Bochart's portrait, with those of many other benefactors to the library, adorns the walls; suspended above the

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books: affording a very agreeable coup-d'oeil. Indeed the principal division of the library, the further end of which commands a pleasant prospect, is worthy of an establishment belonging to the capital of an empire. The kindness of M. Hebert, and of his assistant, rendered my frequent sojournings therein yet more delectable. The portrait of his uncle, M. MOYSANT, is among the ornaments of the chief room. Though Moysant was large of stature, his lungs were feeble, and his constitution was delicate. At the age of nineteen, he was appointed professor of grammar and rhetoric in the college of Lisieux. He then went to Paris, and studied under Beau and Batteux; when, applying himself more particularly to the profession of physic, he returned to Caen, in his thirtieth year, and put on the cap of Doctor of medicine; but he wanted either nerves or stamina for the successful exercise of his profession. He had cured a patient, after painful and laborious attention, of a very serious illness; but his patient chose to take liberties too soon with his convalescent state. He was imprudent: had a relapse; and was hurried to his grave. Moysant took it seriously to heart, and gave up his business in precipitancy and disgust. In fact, he was of too sanguine and irritable a temperament for the display of that cool, cautious, and patient conduct, which it behoveth all young physicians to adopt, ere they can possibly hope to attain the honours or the wealth of the *Halfords* and *Matons* of the day! Our Moysant returned to the study of his beloved belles-lettres. At that moment, luckily, the Society of the Jesuits was suppressed; and he was called by the King, in 1763, to fill the chair of Rhetoric in one of the finest establishments of that body at Caen. He afterwards successively became perpetual Secretary of the Academy of Sciences, and Vice-President of the Society of Agriculture. He was next dubbed by the University, Dean of the faculty of arts, and was selected to pronounce the public oration upon the marriage of the unfortunate Louis XVI. with Marie Antoinette. He was now a marked and distinguished public character. The situation of PUBLIC LIBRARIAN was only wanting to render his reputation complete, and *that* he instantly obtained upon the death of his predecessor. With these occupations, he united that of instructing the English (who were always in the habit of visiting Caen,) in the French language; and he obtained, in return, from some of his adult pupils, a pretty good notion of the laws and liberties of Old England.

The Revolution now came on: when, like many of his respectable brethren, he hailed it at first as the harbinger of national reformation and prosperity. But he had soon reason to find that he had been deceived. However, in the fervour of the moment, and upon the suppression of the monastic and other public libraries, he received a very wide and unqualified commission to search all the libraries in the department of *Calvados*,

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and to bring home to Caen all the treasures he might discover. He set forth upon this mission with truly public spirited ideas: resolving (says his nephew) to do for Normandy what Dugdale and Dodsworth had done for England—and a *Monasticum Neustriacum* was the commendable object of his ambition. He promised much, and perhaps did more than he promised. His curious collection (exclusively of the cart-loads of books which were sent to Caen) was shewn to his countrymen; but the guillotine was now the order of the day—when Moysant "resolved to visit England, and submit to the English nobility the plan of his work, as that nation always attached importance to the preservation of the monuments, or literary materials, of the middle ages."—He knew (continues the nephew) how proud the English were of their descent from the Norman nobles, and it was only to put them in possession of the means of preserving the unquestionable proofs of their origin. Moysant accordingly came over with his wife, and they were both quickly declared emigrants; their return was interdicted; and our bibliomaniac learnt, with heart-rending regret, that they had resolved upon the sale of the national property in France. He was therefore to live by his wits; having spiritedly declined all offer of assistance from the English government. In this dilemma he published a work entitled "*Bibliotheque des Ecrivains Francais, ou choix des meilleurs morceaux en prose et en vers, extraits de leurs ouvrages*,"—a collection, which was formed with judgment, and which was attended with complete success. The first edition was in four octavo volumes, in 1800; the second, in six volumes 1803; a third edition, I think, followed, with a pocket dictionary of the English and French languages. It was during his stay amongst us that he was deservedly admitted a member of the Society of Antiquaries; but he returned to France in 1802, before the appearance of the second edition of his *Bibliotheque*; when, hawk-like, soaring or sailing in suspense between the book-atmospheres of Paris and Caen, he settled within the latter place—and again perched himself (at the united call of his townsmen) upon the chair destined for the PUBLIC LIBRARIAN! It was to give order, method, and freedom of access, to the enormous mass of books, which the dissolution of the monastic libraries had caused to be accumulated at Caen, that Moysant and his colleagues now devoted themselves with an assiduity as heroic as it was unintermitting. But the health of our generalissimo, which had been impaired during his residence in England, began to give way beneath such a pressure of fatigue and anxiety. Yet it pleased Providence to prolong his life till towards the close of the year 1813: when he had the satisfaction of viewing his folios, quartos, octavos, and duodecimos, arranged in regular succession, and fair array; when his work was honestly done; and when future visitors had only to stretch forth their hands and gather the fruit which he had placed within their reach. His death (we are told)[130] was gentle, and like unto sleep. Religion had consoled him in his latter moments; and after having reposed upon its efficacy, he waited with perfect composure for the breathing of his last sigh! Let the name of MOYSANT be mentioned with the bibliomaniacal honours which, are doubtless its due!...

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From Librarians, revert we to books: to the books in the PUBLIC LIBRARY of Caen. The oldest printed volume contained in it, and which had been bound with a MS, on the supposition of its being a manuscript also, is Numeister's impression of *Aretinus de Bella adversus Gothos*, 1470, folio; the first book from the press of the printer. I undeceived M. Hebert, who had supposed it to be a MS. The lettering is covered with horn, and the book is bound in boards; "all proper." The oldest *Latin Bible* they possess, is of the date of 1485; but there is preserved one volume of Sweynheym and Pannartz's impression of *De Lyra's Commentary upon the Bible*, of the date of 1471-2, which luckily contains the list of books printed by those printers in their memorable supplicatory letter to Pope Sixtus IV. The earliest Latin Classic appears to be the *Juvenal* of 1474, with the *Commentary of Calderinus*, printed at Rome; unless a dateless impression of *Lucan*, in the earliest type of Gering, with the verses placed at a considerable distance from each other, claim chronological precedence. There is also a *Valerius Maximus* of 1475, by Caesaris and Stol, but without their names. It is a large copy, soiled at the beginning. Of the same date is Gering's impression of the *Legenda Sanctorum*; and among the Fifteeners I almost coveted a very elegant specimen of *Jehan du Pre's* printing (with a device used by him never before seen by me,) of an edition of *La Vie des Peres*, 1494, folio, in its original binding. I collected, from the written catalogue, that they had only FORTY-FIVE works printed in the FIFTEENTH CENTURY; and of these, none were of first-rate quality.

Among the MSS., I was much struck with the beautiful penmanship of a work, in three folio volumes, of the middle of the sixteenth century, entitled; *Divertissemens touchant le faict de la guerre, extraits des livres de Polybe, Frontin, Vegece, Cornazzan, Machiavel, et autres bons autheurs."* It has no illuminations, but the scription is beautiful. A *Breviary of the Church Service of Lisieux*, of the fifteenth century, has some pretty but common illuminations. It is not however free from injury. Of more intrinsic worth is a MS. entitled *Du Costentin*, (a district not far from Caen,) with the following prefix in the hand-writing of Moysant. "Ces memoires sont de M. Toustaint de Billy, cure du Mesnil au-parc, qui avoit travaille toute sa vie a l'histoire du Cotentin. Ils sont rares et m'ont ete accordes par M. Jourdan, Notaire, auquel ils appartenoient. Le p. (Pere) le Long et *Mons*. Teriet de fontette ne les out pas connu. Moysantz." It is a small folio, in a neat hand-writing. Another MS., or rather a compound of ms. and printed leaves, of yet considerably more importance, in 3 folio volumes, is entitled *Le Moreri des Normans, par Joseph Andrie Guiat de Rouen:* on the reverse of the title, we

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read, "*Supplement au Dictionnaire de Moreri pour ce qui concerne la province de Normandie, et ses illustres*." A short preface follows; then an ode "aux Grands Hommes de Normandie." It is executed in the manner of a dictionary, running in alphabetical order. The first volume extends to the letter I, and is illustrated with scraps from newspapers, and a few portraits. It is written pretty fully in double columns. The portrait and biography of *Bouzard* form an admirable specimen of biographical literary memoirs. The second volume goes to Z. The third volume is entitled "*Les trois Siecles palinodiques, ou Histoire Generale des Palinods de Rouen, Dieppe, &c.*—by the same hand, with an equal quantity of matter. It is right that such labours should be noticed, for the sake of all future BLISS-like editors of provincial literature. There is another similar work, in 2 folio ms. volumes, relating to *Coutance*.

Before we again touch upon printed books, but of a later period, it may be right to inform you that the treasures of this Library suffered materially from the commotions of the Calvinists. Those hot-headed interpreters of scripture destroyed every thing in the shape of ornament or elegance attached to book-covers; and piles of volumes, however sacred, or unexceptionable on the score of good morals, were consigned to the fury of the flames. Of the remaining volumes which I saw, take the following very rapid sketch. Of *Hours*, or *Church Services*, there is a prodigiously fine copy of an edition printed by *Vostre*, in 4to., upon paper, without date. It is in the original ornamented cover, or binding, with a forest of rough edges to the leaves—and doubtless the finest copy of the kind I ever saw. Compared with this, how inferior, in every respect is a cropt copy of *Kerver's* impression of a similar work, printed upon vellum! This latter is indeed a very indifferent book; but the rough usage it has met with is the sole cause of such inferiority. I was well pleased with a fair, sound copy of the *Speculum Stultorum*, in 4to., bl. letter, in hexameter and pentameter verses, without date. Nor did I examine without interest a rare little volume entitled "*Les Origines de quelques Coutumes anciennes, et de plusieurs facons de parler triviales. Avec un vieux Manuscrit en vers, touchant l'Origine des Chevaliers Bannerets*; printed at Caen in 1672, 12mo.: a curious little work. They have a fine (royal) copy of *Walton's Polyglot*, with an excellent impression of the head; and a large paper copy of *Stephen's Greek Glossary*; in old vellum binding, with a great number of ms. notes by Bochart. Also a fine large paper *Photius* of 1654, folio. But among their LARGE PAPERS, few volumes tower with greater magnificence than do the three folios of *La Sainte Bible*, printed by the Elzevirs at Amsterdam, in 1669. They are absolutely fine creatures; of the stateliest dimensions

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and most attractive forms. They also pretend that their large paper copy of the first edition of *Huet's Praeparatio Evangelica*, in folio, is unique. Probably it is, as the author presented it to the Library himself. The *Basil Eustathius* of 1559, in 3 volumes folio, is as glorious a copy as is Mr. Grenville's of the Roman edition of 1542.[131] It is in its pristine membranaceous attire—the vellum lapping over the fore-edges, in the manner of Mr. Heber's copy of the first Aldine Aristotle,—most comfortable to behold! There is a fine large paper copy of *Montaigne's Essays*, 1635, folio, containing two titles and a portrait of the author. It is bound in red morocco, and considered by M. Hebert a most rare and desirable book. Indeed I was told that one Collector in particular was exceedingly anxious to obtain it. I saw a fine copy of the folio edition of *Ronsard*, printed in 1584, which is considered rare. There is also a copy of the well known *Liber Nanceidos*, from Bochart's library, with a few ms. notes by Bochart himself. Here I saw, for the first time, a French metrical version of the works of *Virgil, by Robert and Anthony Chevaliers d'Agneaux freres, de Vire, en Normandie*; published at Paris in 1582, in elegant italic type; considered rare. The same translators published a version of Horace; but it is not here. You may remember that I made mention of a certain work (in one of my late letters) called *Les Vaudevires d'Olivier Basselin*. They preserve here a very choice copy of it, in 4to., large paper; and of which size only ten copies are said to be in existence. The entire title is "*Les Vaudevires Poesies du XVme. siecle, par Olivier Basselin, avec un Discours sur sa Vie et des Notes pour l'explication de quelques anciens Mots: Vire, 1811*." 8vo. There are copies upon pink paper, of which this is one—and which was in fact presented to the Library by the Editors. Prefixed to it, is an indifferent drawing, in india ink, representing the old castle of Vire, now nearly demolished, with Basselin seated at a table along with three of his boosing companions, chaunting his verses "a pleine gorge." This Basselin appears in short to have been the French DRUNKEN BARNABY of his day.

"What! (say you:) "not *one* single specimen from the library of your favourite DIANE DE POICTIERS? Can this be possible?"—No more of interrogatory, I beseech you: but listen attentively and gratefully to the intelligence which you are about to receive—and fancy not, if you have any respect for my taste, that I have forgotten my favourite Diane de Poictiers. On looking sharply about you, within this library, there will be found a magnificent copy of the *Commentaries of Chrysostom upon the Epistles of St. Paul*, printed by *Stephanus et Fratres a Sabio, at Verona*, in 1529, in three folio volumes. It is by much and by far the finest Greek work which I ever saw from the *Sabii* Press.[132] No wonder Colbert

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jumped with avidity to obtain such a copy of it: for, bating that it is “un peu rogne,” the condition and colour are quite enchanting. And then for the binding!—which either Colbert, or his librarian Baluze, had the good sense and good taste to leave *untouched*. The first and second volumes are in reddish calf, with the royal arms in the centre, and the half moon (in tarnished silver) beneath: the arabesque ornaments, or surrounding border is in gilt. The edges are gilt, stamped; flush with the fore edges of the binding. In the centre of the sides of the binding, is a large H, with a fleur de lis at top: the top and bottom borders presenting the usual D and H, united, of which you may take a peep in the *Bibliographical Decameron.* The third volume is in dark blue leather, with the same side ornaments; and the title of the work, as with the preceding volumes, is lettered in Greek capitals. The H and crown, and monogram, as before; but the edges of the leaves are, in this volume, stamped at bottom and top with an H, surmounted by a crown. The sides of the binding are also fuller and richer than in the preceding volumes. This magnificent copy was given to the Library by P. Le Jeune. It is quite a treasure in its way.

Another specimen, if you please, from the library of our favourite Diana. It is rather of a singular character: consisting of a French version of that once extremely popular work (originally published in the Latin language) called the *Cosmography of Sebastian Munster.* The edition is of the date of 1556, in folio. This copy must have been as splendid as it is yet curious. It contains two portraits of Henry the Second ("HENRICVS II. GALLIARVM REX INVICTISS. PP.”) and four of Holofernes ("OLOFARNE.”) on each side of the binding. In the centre of the sides we recognise the lunar ornaments of Diane de Poictiers; but on the back, are five portraits of her, in gilt, each within the bands—and, like all the other ornaments, much rubbed. Two of these five heads are facing a different head of Henry. There are also on the sides two pretty medallions of a winged figure blowing a trumpet, and standing upon a chariot drawn by four horses: there are also small fleur de lis scattered between the ornaments of the sides of the binding. The date of the medallion seems to be 1553. The copy is cruelly cropt, and the volume is sufficiently badly printed; which makes it the more surprising that such pains should have been taken with its bibliopegistic embellishments. Upon the whole, this copy, for the sake of its ornaments, is vehemently desirable.

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And now, my dear friend, you must make your bow with me to M. Hebert, and bid farewell to the PUBLIC LIBRARY at Caen. Indeed I am fully disposed to bid farewell to every thing else in the same town: not however without being conscious that very much, both of what I have, and of what I have not, seen, merits a detail well calculated to please the intellectual appetites of travellers. What I have seen, has been indeed but summarily, and even superficially, described; but I have done my best; and was fearful of exciting ennui by a more parish-register-like description. For the service performed in places of public worship, I can add nothing to my Rouen details—except that there is here an agreeable PROTESTANT CHURCH, of which M. MARTIN ROLLIN, is the Pastor. He has just published a "*Memoire Historique sur l'Etat Eclesiastique des Protestans Francois depuis Francois Ler jusqu'a Louis XVIII*:" in a pamphlet of some fourscore pages. The task was equally delicate and difficult of execution; but having read it, I am free to confess that M. Rollin has done his work very neatly and very cleverly. I went in company with Mrs. and Miss I—— to hear the author preach; for he is a young man (about thirty) who draws his congregation as much from his talents as a preacher, as from his moral worth as an individual. It was on the occasion of several young ladies and gentlemen taking the sacrament for the first time. The church is strictly, I believe, according to the Geneva persuasion; but there was something so comfortable, and to me so cheering, in the avowed doctrine of Protestantism, that I accompanied my friends with alacrity to the spot. Many English were present; for M. Rollin is deservedly a favourite with our countrymen. The church, however, was scarcely half filled. The interior is the most awkwardly adapted imaginable to the purposes either of reading or of preaching: for it consists of two aisles at right angles with each other. The desk and pulpit are fixed in the receding angle of their junction; so that the voice flies forth to the right and left immediately as it escapes the preacher. After a very long, and a very tediously sung psalm, M. Rollin commenced his discourse. He is an extemporaneous preacher. His voice is sweet and clear, rather than sonorous and impressive; and he is perhaps, occasionally, too metaphorical in his composition. For the first time I heard the words "*Oh Dieu!*" pronounced with great effect: but the sermon was made up of better things than mere exclamations. M. Rollin was frequently ingenious; logical, and convincing; and his address to the young communicants, towards the close of his discourse, was impressive and efficient. The young people were deeply touched by his powerful appeal, and I believe each countenance was suffused with tears. He guarded them against the dangers and temptations of that world upon which they were about to enter, by setting before them the consolations of the religion which they had professed, in a manner which indicated that he had really their interests and happiness at heart.

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A word only about COURTS OF JUSTICE. “A smack of the whip” will tingle in my ears through life;[133] and I shall always attend “*Nisi Prius*” exhibitions with more than ordinary curiosity. I strolled one morning to the *Place de Justice*—which is well situated, in an airy and respectable neighbourhood. I saw two or three barristers, en pleine costume, pretty nearly in the English fashion; walking quickly to and fro with their clients, in the open air before the hall; and could not help contrasting the quick eye and unconcerned expression of countenance of the former, with the simple look and yet earnest action of the latter. I entered the Hall, and, to my astonishment, heard only a low muttering sound. Scarcely fifteen people were present, I approached the bench; and what, think you, were the intellectual objects upon which my eye alighted? Three Judges ... all fast asleep! Five barristers, two of whom were nodding: one was literally addressing *the bench* ... and the remaining two were talking to their clients in the most unconcerned manner imaginable. The entire effect, on my mind, was ridiculous in the extreme. Far be it from me, however, to designate the foregoing as a generally true picture of the administration of Justice at Caen. I am induced to hope and believe that a place, so long celebrated for the study of the law, yet continues occasionally to exhibit proofs of that logic and eloquence for which it has been renowned of old. I am willing to conclude that all the judges are not alike somniferous; and that if the acuteness of our GIFFORDS, and the rhetoric of our DENMANS, sometimes instruct and enliven the audience, there will be found Judges to argue like GIBBS and to decide like SCOTT. [134] Farewell.

[121] *Memoires de l’Academie des Belles Lettres de Caen. Chez Jacques Manoury, 1757, 4 vols. crown 8vo. Rapport generale sur les travaux de l’Academie des Sciences, Arts, et Belles Lettres de la ville de Caen, jusqu’au premier Janvier, 1811. Par P.F.T. Delariviere, Secretaire. A Caen, chez Chalopin*. An. 1811-15. 2 vols. on different paper, with different types, and provokingly of a larger form than its precursor.

[122] [On consulting the Addenda of the preceding edition, it will be seen that this work appeared in the year 1820, under the title of *Essais Historiques sur la Ville de Caen et son Arondissement*, in 2 small octavo volumes. With the exception of two or three indifferent plates of relics of sculpture, and of titles with armorial bearings, this work is entirely divested of ornament. There are some useful historical details in it, taken from the examination of records and the public archives; but a HISTORY of CAEN is yet a desideratum.]

[123] [By the favour of our common friend Mr. Douce, I have obtained permission to enrich these pages with the PORTRAIT of this distinguished Archaeologist, from an original Drawing in the possession of the same friend. See the OPPOSITE PLATE.]

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[124] He has recently (1816) published an octavo volume entitled "*Histoire des Polypiers, Coralligenes Flexibles, vulgairement nommes Zoophytes. Par J.V.F. Lamouroux*. From one of his Epistles, I subjoin a fac-simile of his autograph.

[Illustration: Lamouroux]

[125] The medallic project here alluded to is one which does both the projector, and the arts of France, infinite honour; and I sincerely wish that some second SIMON may rise up among ourselves to emulate, and if possible to surpass, the performances of GATTEAUX and AUDRIEU. The former is the artist to whom we are indebted for the medal of Malherbe, and the latter for the series of the Bonaparte medals. [Has my friend Mr. Hawkins, of the Museum, abandoned all thoughts of his magnificent project connected with such a NATIONAL WORK?]

[126] See post—under the running title Bayeux.

[127] See page 172 ante.

[128] It is described in the 2d vol. of the AEDES ALTHORPIANAE; forming the Supplement to the BIBLIOTHECA SPENCERIANA: see page 94.

[129] Goube, in his *Histoire du Duche de Normandie*, 1815, 8vo. has devoted upwards of thirty pages to an enumeration of these worthies; vol. iii. p. 295. But in *Huet's Origines de la Ville de Caen;* p. 491-652, there will be found much more copious and satisfactory details.

[130] I am furnished with the above particulars from a *Notice Historique* of Moysant.

[131] [A copy of this Roman Edition of 1542, of equal purity and amplitude, is in the library of the Rev. Mr Hawtrey of Eton College: obtained of Messrs. Payne and Foss.]

[132] When I was at Paris in the year 1819, I strove hard to obtain from Messrs. Debure the copy of this work, UPON VELLUM, which they had purchased at the sale of the Macarthy Library. But it was destined for the Royal Library, and is described in the *Cat. des Livres Imp. sur Velin*, vol. i. p. 263.

[133] [Twenty-eight years have passed away since I kept my terms at Lincoln's Inn with a view of being called to THE BAR; and at this moment I have a perfect recollection of the countenances and manner of

Messrs. Bearcroft, Erskine, and Mingay,—the pitted champions of the King's Bench—whom I was in the repeated habit of attending within that bustling and ever agitated arena. Their wit, their repartee—the broad humour of Mingay, and the lightning-like quickness of Erskine, with the more caustic and authoritative dicta of Bearcroft—delighted and instructed me by turns. In the year 1797 I published, in one large chart, an *Analysis of the first volume of Blackstone's Commentaries*—called THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS. It was dedicated to

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Mr. (afterwards Lord) Erskine; and published, as will be easily conceived, with more zeal than discretion. I got out of the scrape by selling the copper plate for 50 shillings, after having given 40 guineas for the engraving of the Analysis. Some fifty copies of the work were sold, and 250 were struck off. Where the surplus have lain, and rotted, I cannot pretend to conjecture: but I know it to be a VERY RARE production!]

[134] [So in the preceding Edition. He who writes notes on his own performances after a lapse of ten years, will generally have something to add, and something to correct. Of the above names, the FIRST was afterwards attached to the *Master of the Rolls*, and to a *Peerage*: with the intervening honour of having been *Chief Justice of the Common Pleas*. My admiration of this rapid elevation in an honourable profession will not be called singular; for, after an acquaintance of twenty years with Lord Gifford, I can honestly say, that, while his reputation as a Lawyer, and his advancement in his profession, were only what his friends predicted, his character as a MAN continued the same:—kind hearted, unaffected, gentle, and generous. He died, 'ere he had attained his 48th year, in 1826.]

LETTER XIV.

BAYEUX. CATHEDRAL. ORDINATION OF PRIESTS AND DEACONS. CRYPT OF THE
CATHEDRAL.

Bayeux, May 16, 1818.

Two of the most gratifying days of my Tour have been spent at this place. The Cathedral (one of the most ancient religious places of worship in Normandy)[135] has been paced with a reverential step, and surveyed with a careful eye. That which scarcely warmed the blood of Ducarel has made my heart beat with an increased action; and although this town be even dreary, as well as thinly peopled, there is that about it which, from associations of ideas, can never fail to afford a lively interest to a British antiquary.

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. I was conveyed to the *Hotel de Luxembourg*, the best inn in the town, and for a wonder rather pleasantly situated. Mine hostess is a smart, lively, and shrewd woman; perfectly mistress of the art and craft of innkeeping, and seems to have never known sorrow or disappointment. Knowing that Mr. Stothard, Jun. had, the preceding year, been occupied in making a fac-simile of the “famous tapestry” for our Society of Antiquaries, I enquired if mine hostess had been acquainted with

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that gentleman: "Monsieur," "je le connois bien; c'est un brave homme: il demeura tout pres: aussi travailla-t-il comme quatre diables!" I will not disguise that this eulogy of our amiable countryman[136] pleased me "right well"—though I was pretty sure that such language was the current (and to me somewhat *coarse*) coin of compliment upon all occasions: and instead of "vin ordinaire" I ordered, rather in a gay and triumphant manner, "une bouteille du vin de Beaune"—"Ah! ca," (replied the lively landlady,) "vous le trouverez excellent, Monsieur, il n'y a pas du vin comme le vin de Beaune." Bespeaking my dinner, I strolled towards the cathedral.

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. But you must come with me to the cathedral: and of course we must enter together at the western front. There are five porticos: 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. A very large wooden crucifix is placed over the screen of the choir, which has an effect—of its kind: but the monuments, and mural ornaments, scarcely deserve mention. The richly ornamented arches, on each side of the nave, springing from massive single pillars, have rather an imposing effect: above them are Gothic ornaments of a later period, but too thickly and injudiciously applied. Let me now suppose that the dinner is over, and the "vin de Beaune" approved of—and that on a second visit, immediately afterwards, there is both time and inclination for a leisurely survey. On looking up, upon entering, within the side aisle to the left, you observe, with infinite regret, a dark and filthy green tint indicative of premature decay—arising from the lead (of that part of the roof,) having been stript for the purpose of making bullets during the Revolution. The extreme length of the interior is about 320 English feet, by 76 high, and the same number of feet in width. The transepts are about 125 feet long, by 36 wide. The western towers, to the very top of the spires, are about 250 English feet in height.

One of the most curious objects in the Cathedral, is the CRYPT; of which, singularly enough, all knowledge had been long lost till the year 1412. The circumstance of its discovery is told in the following inscription, cut in the Gothic letter, upon a brass plate, and placed just above the southern entrance:

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En lan mil quatre cens et douze Tiers iour d'Auril que pluye arrouse Les biens de la terre, la journee Que la Pasques fut celebree Noble homme et Reverend Pere Jehan de Boissey, de'la Mere Eglise de Bayeux Pasteur Rendi l'ame a son Createur Et lors enfoissant la place Devant la grand Autel de grace Trova l'on la basse Chapelle Dont il n'avoit ete nouvelle Ou il est mis en sepulture Dieu ueuille avoir son ame en cure. Amen.

It was my good fortune to visit this crypt at a very particular juncture. The day after my arrival at Bayeux, there was a grand *Ordination*. Before I had quitted my bed, I heard the mellow and measured notes of human voices; and starting up, I saw an almost interminable procession of priests, deacons, &c., walking singly behind each other, in two lines, leaving a considerable space between them. They walked bareheaded, chanting, with a book in their hands; and bent their course towards the cathedral. I dressed quickly; and, dispatching my breakfast with equal promptitude, pursued the same route. On entering the western doors, thrown wide open, I shall never forget the effect produced by the crimson and blue draperies of the Norman women:—a great number of whom were clustered, in groups, upon the top of the screen, about the huge wooden crucifix;—witnessing the office of ordination going on below, in the choir. They seemed to be suspended in the air; and considering the piece of sculpture around which they appeared to gather themselves—with the elevation of the screen itself—it was a combination of objects upon which the pencil might have been exercised with the happiest possible result. An ordination in a foreign country, and especially one upon such an apparently extensive scale, was, to a professional man, not to be slighted; and accordingly I determined upon making the most of the spectacle before me. Looking accidentally down my favourite crypt, I observed that some religious ceremony was going on there. The northern grate, or entrance, being open, I descended a flight of steps, and quickly became an inmate of this subterraneous abode. The first object that struck me was, the warm glow of day light which darted upon the broad pink cross of the surplice of an officiating priest: a candle was burning upon the altar, on each side of him: another priest, in a black vesture, officiated as an assistant; and each, in turn, knelt, and bowed, and prayed ... to the admiration of some few half dozen casual yet attentive visitors—while the full sonorous chant, from the voices of upwards of one hundred and fifty priests and deacons, from the choir above, gave a peculiar sort of solemnity to the mysterious gloom below.

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I now ascended; and by the help of a chair, took a peep at the ceremony through the intercolumniations of the choir: my diffidence, or rather apprehension of refusal, having withheld me from striving to gain admittance within the body. But my situation was a singularly good one: opposite the altar. I looked, and beheld this vast clerical congregation at times kneeling, or standing, or sitting: partially, or wholly: while the swell of their voices, accompanied by the full intonations of the organ, and the yet more penetrating notes of the *serpent*, seemed to breathe more than earthly solemnity around. The ceremony had now continued full two hours; when, in the midst of the most impressive part of it, and while the young candidates for ordination were prostrate before the high altar (the diapason stop of the organ, as at Dieppe,[137] sending forth the softest notes) the venerable Bishop placed the glittering mitre (apparently covered with gold gauze) upon his head, and with a large gilt crosier in his right hand, descended, with a measured and majestic step, from the floor of the altar, and proceeded to the execution of the more mysterious part of his office. The candidates, with closed eyes, and outstretched hands, were touched with the holy oil—and thus became consecrated. On rising, each received a small piece of bread between the thumb and forefinger, and the middle and third fingers; their hands being pressed together—and, still with closed eyes, they retired behind the high altar, where an officiating priest made use of the bread to rub off the holy oil. The Bishop is an elderly man, about three score and ten; he has the usual sallow tint of his countrymen, but his eye, somewhat sunk or retired, beneath black and overhanging eyebrows, is sharp and expressive. His whole mien has the indication of a well-bred and well-educated gentleman. When he descended with his full robes, crosier, and mitre, from the high altar, me-thought I saw some of the venerable forms of our WYKEHAMS and WAYNEFLETES of old—commanding the respect, and receiving the homage, of a grateful congregation! At the very moment my mind was deeply occupied by the effects produced from this magnificent spectacle, I strolled into *Our Lady's Chapel*, behind the choir, and beheld a sight which converted seriousness into surprise—bordering upon mirth. Above the altar of this remotely situated chapel, stands the IMAGE OF THE VIRGIN with the infant Jesus in her arms. This is the usual chief ornament of Our Lady's Chapel. But what drapery for the mother of the sacred child!—stiff, starch, rectangularly-folded, white muslin, stuck about with diverse artificial flowers—like unto a shew figure in Brook Green Fair! This ridiculous and most disgusting costume began more particularly at Caudebec. Why is it persevered in? Why is it endured? The French have a quick sensibility, and a lively apprehension of what is beautiful and brilliant in the arts of sculpture and painting ...

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but the terms “joli,” “gentil,” and “propre,” are made use of, like charity, to “cover a multitude of sins” ... or aberrations from true taste. I scarcely stopped a minute in this chapel, but proceeded to a side one, to the right, which yet affords proof of its pristine splendour. It is covered with gold and colours. Two or three supplicants were kneeling before the crucifix, and appeared to be so absorbed in their devotions as to be insensible of every surrounding object. To them, the particular saint (I have forgotten the name) to whom the little chapel was dedicated, seemed to be dearer and more interesting than the general voice of “praise and thanksgiving” with which the choir of the cathedral resounded. Before we quit the place you must know that fourscore candidates were ordained: that there are sixty clergy attached to the cathedral;[138] and that upwards of four hundred thousand souls are under the spiritual cognizance of the BISHOP OF BAYEUX. The treasures of the Cathedral were once excessive,[139] and the episcopal stipend proportionably large: but, of late years, things are sadly changed. The Calvinists, in the sixteenth century, began the work of havoc and destruction; and the Revolutionists in the eighteenth, as usual, put the finish to these devastations. At present, from a very respectable source of information, I learn that the revenues of the Bishop scarcely exceed 700_l_. per annum of our own money. I cannot take leave of the cathedral without commending, in strong terms of admiration, the lofty flying buttresses of the exterior of the nave. The perpendicular portions are crowned with a sculptured whole length figure, from which the semi-arch takes its spring; and are in much more elegant taste than any other part of the building.

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. I have not only seen, but visited, this episcopal residence. In other words, my friend Pierre-Aime Lair having promised to take his last adieu of me at Bayeux, as he had business with the Bishop, I met him agreeably to appointment at the palace; but his host, with a strong corps of visitors, having just sate down to dinner—it was only one o’clock—I bade him adieu, with the hope of seeing the Bishop on the morrow—to whom he had indeed mentioned my name. Our farewell was undoubtedly warm and sincere. He had volunteered a thousand acts of kindness towards me without any possible motive of self interest; and as he lifted up his right hand, exclaiming “adieu, pour toujours!” I will not dissemble that I was sensibly affected by the touching manner in which it was uttered ... and PIERRE AIME LAIR shall always claim from me the warmest wishes for his prosperity and happiness.[140]

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I hurried back through the court-yard—at the risk of losing a limb from the ferocious spring of a tremendous (chained) mastiff—and without returning the salute of the porter, shut the gate violently, and departed. For five minutes, pacing the south side of the cathedral, I was lost in a variety of painful sensations. How was I to see the LIBRARY?—where could I obtain a glimpse of the TAPESTRY?—and now, that Pierre Aime Lair was to be no more seen, (for he told me he should quit the place on that same evening) who was to stand my friend, and smooth my access to the more curious and coveted objects of antiquity?

Thus absorbed in a variety of contending reflections, a tall figure, clad in a loose long great coat, in a very gracious manner approached and addressed me. "Your name, Sir, is D——?" "At your service, Sir, that is my name." "You were yesterday evening at Monsieur Pluquet's, purchasing books?" "I was, Sir." "It seems you are very fond of old books, and especially of those in the French and Latin languages?" "I am fond of old books generally; but I now seek more particularly those in your language—and have been delighted with an illuminated, and apparently coeval, MS. of the poetry of your famous OLIVIER BASSELIN, which..." "You saw it, Sir, at Monsieur Pluquet's. It belonged to a common friend of us both. He thinks it worth..." "He asks *ten louis d'or* for it, and he shall have them with all my heart." "Sir, I know he will never part with it even for that large sum." I smiled, as he pronounced the word "large." "Do me the honour, Sir, of visiting my obscure dwelling, in the country—a short league from hence. My abode is humble: in the midst of an orchard, which my father planted: but I possess a few books, some of them curious, and should like to *read* double the number I *possess*." I thanked the stranger for his polite attention and gracious offer, which I accepted readily.... "This evening, Sir, if you please." "With all my heart, this very evening. But tell me, Sir, how can I obtain a sight of the CHAPTER LIBRARY, and of the famous TAPESTRY?" "Speak softly, (resumed the unknown) for I am watched in this place. You shall see both—but must not say that Monsieur —— was your adviser or friend. For the present, farewell. I shall expect you in the evening." We took leave; and I returned hastily to the inn, to tell my adventures to my companion.

There is something so charmingly mysterious in this little anecdote, that I would not for the world add a syllable of explanation. Leaving you, therefore, in full possession of it, to turn and twist it as you please, consider me as usual, Yours.

[135] [Mons. Licquet supposes the crypt and the arcades of the nave to be of the latter end of the eleventh century,—built by Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and Brother of William the Conqueror; and that the other portions were of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. I have very great doubts indeed of any portion being of a date even so early as 1170.]

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[136] [Another demonstration of the fickleness and changeableness of all mundane affairs. Mr. Stothard, after a successful execution of his great task, has ceased to be among us. His widow published his life, with an account of his labours, in a quarto volume in 1823. Mr. Stothard's *Monumental Effigies*, now on the eve of completion, is a work which will carry his name down to the latest posterity, as one of the most interesting, tasteful, and accurate of antiquarian productions. See a subsequent note.]

[137] See page 12, ante.

[138] ["That was true, when M. Dibdin wrote his account; now, the number must be reduced one half." LICQUET, vol. ii. p. 121.]

[139] Cette eglise ... etoit sans contredit une des plus riches de France en vases d'or, d'argent, et de pierreries; en reliques et en ornemens. Le proces-verbal qui avoit ete dresse de toutes ses richesses, en 1476, contient un detail qui va presque a l'infini." Bezieres, *Hist. Sommaire*, p. 51.

[140] [But ONE letter has passed between us since this separation. That letter, however, only served to cement the friendliness of our feelings towards each other. M. Pierre Aime Lair had heard of the manner in which his name had been introduced into these pages, and wished a copy of the work to be deposited in the public library at Caen. Whether it be so deposited, I have never learnt. In 1827, this amiable man visited England; and I saw him only during the time of an ordinary morning visit. His stay was necessarily short, and his residence was remote. I returned his visit—but he was away. There are few things in life more gratifying than the conviction of living in the grateful remembrance of the wise and the good; and THAT gratification it is doubtless my happiness to enjoy—as far as relates to *Mons*. PIERRE AIME LAIR!]

LETTER XV.

VISIT NEAR ST. LOUP. M. PLUQUET, APOTHECARY AND BOOK-VENDER. VISIT TO THE BISHOP. THE CHAPTER LIBRARY. DESCRIPTION OF THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY. TRADE AND MANUFACTURE.

Well, my good friend! the stranger has been visited: his library inspected: his services accepted: and his character partly unfolded. To this I must add, in the joy of my heart, (as indeed I mentioned slightly in my last) that both the Chapter LIBRARY and the famous TAPESTRY have been explored and examined in a manner, I trust, worthy of British curiosity. I hardly know what sort of order to adopt in this my second and last epistle from Bayeux; which will be semi-bibliomaniacal and semi-archaeological: and sit down, almost at random, to impart such intelligence as my journal and my memory supply.

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The last was almost a purely *ecclesiastical* dispatch: as I generally first take off my cap to the towers and turrets of a cathedral. Now then for THE STRANGER! ... for it would be cruel to prolong the agony of expectation. Mr. Lewis having occupied himself, almost exclusively, with his pencil during the whole morning, I persuaded him to accompany me to *St. Loup*. After dinner we set out upon our expedition. It had rained in the interim, and every tree was charged with moisture as we passed them ... their blossoms exhaling sweets of the most pungent fragrance. The road ran in a straight line from the west front of the cathedral, which, on turning round, as we saw it irradiated by partial glimpses of sunshine, between masses of dark clouds, assumed a very imposing and venerable aspect. I should tell you, however, that the obliging Monsieur —— came himself to the Hotel de Luxembourg, to conduct us to his humble abode: for "humble" it is in every sense of the word. About two-thirds of the way thither, we passed the little church of *St. Loup*: a perfect Gothic toy of the XIIth century—with the prettiest, best-proportioned tower that can be imagined.[141] It has a few slight clustered columns at the four angles, but its height and breadth are truly pigmy. The stone is of a whitish grey. We did not enter; and with difficulty could trace our way to examine the exterior through the high grass of the church yard, yet *laid* with the heavy rain. What a gem would the pencil of BLORE make of this tiny, ancient, interesting edifice! At length we struck off, down a lane slippery with moisture—when, opening a large swinging gate—-"here (exclaimed our guide)—lived and died my father, and here his son hopes to live and die also. Gentlemen, yonder is my hermitage." It was a retirement of the most secluded kind: absolutely surrounded by trees, shrubs, hay-stacks, and corn-stacks—-for Monsieur —— hath a fancy for farming as well as for reading. The stair-case, though constructed of good hard Norman stone, was much worn in the middle from the frequent tread of half a century. It was also fatiguingly steep, but luckily it was short. We followed our guide to the left, where, passing through one boudoir-like apartment, strewn with books and papers, and hung with a parcel of mean ornaments called *pictures*, we entered a second—of which portions of the wainscoat were taken away, to shew the books which were deposited behind. Row after row, and pile upon pile, struck my wondering eye. Anon, a closet was opened—and there again they were stowed, "thick and threefold." A few small busts, and fractured vases, were meant to grace a table in the centre of the room. Of the books, it is but justice to say that *rarity* had been sacrificed to *utility*. There were some excellent, choice, critical works; a good deal of Latin; some Greek, and a sprinkle of Hebrew—for Monsieur —— is both a general and a sound scholar. On pointing to *Houbigant's*

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Hebrew Bible, in four folio volumes, 1753, “do you think this copy dear at fourteen francs?” said he!—“How, Sir,” (replied I, in an exstacy of astonishment)—you mean to say fourteen *louis*?” “Not at all, Sir. I purchased it at the price just mentioned, nor do I think it too dear at that sum”—resumed he, in the most unsuspecting manner. I then told him, as a sort of balsamic consolation, that a late friend (I alluded to poor Mr. Ormerod) rejoiced on giving L12. for a copy by no means superior. “Ah, le bon Dieu!....” was his only observation thereupon.

When about to return to the boudoir, through which we had entered, I observed with mingled surprise and pleasure, the four prettily executed English prints, after the drawings of the present Lady Spencer, called “*New Shoes”—“Nice Supper*” &c. Monsieur —— was pleased at my stopping to survey them. “Ce sont la, Monsieur (observed he), les dames qui me font toujours compagnie:”—nor can you conceive the very soft and gentlemanly manner, accompanied by a voice subdued even to sadness of tone, with which he made this, and almost every observation. I found, indeed, from the whole tenor of his discourse, that he had a mind in no ordinary a state of cultivation: and on observing that a great portion of his library was THEOLOGICAL, I asked him respecting the general subjects upon which he thought and wrote. He caught hold of my left arm, and stooping (for he is much taller than myself, ... which he easily may be, methinks I hear you add...) “Sir, said he, I am by profession a clergyman ... although now I am designated as an *ex-Cure*. I have lived through the Revolution... and may have partaken of some of its irregularities, rather, I should hope than of its atrocities. In the general hue-and-cry for reform, I thought that our church was capable of very great improvement, and I think so still. The part I took was influenced by conscientious motives, rather than by a blind and vehement love of reform;... but it has never been forgiven or forgotten. The established clergy of the place do not associate with me; but I care not a farthing for that—since I have here (pointing to his books) the very best society in the world. It was from the persuasion of the clergy having a constantly-fixed eye upon me, that I told you I was watched ... when walking near the precincts of the cathedral. I had been seeking you during the whole of the office of ordination.” In reply to my question about his *archaeological* researches, he said he was then occupied in writing a disquisition upon the *Bayeux Tapestry*, in which he should prove that the Abbe de la Rue was wrong in considering it as a performance of the XIIth century. “He is your great antiquarian oracle”—observed I. “He has an over-rated reputation”—replied he—-“and besides, he is too hypothetical.” Monsieur —— promised to send me a copy of his dissertation, when printed; and then let our friend N—— be judge “in

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the matter of the Bayeux Tapestry." From the open windows of this hermitage, into which the branches absolutely thrust themselves, I essayed, but in vain, to survey the surrounding country; and concluded a visit of nearly two hours, in a manner the most gratifying imaginable to honest feelings. A melancholy, mysterious air, seemed yet, however, to mark this amiable stranger, which had not been quite cleared up by the account he had given of himself. "Be assured (said he, at parting) that I will see you again, and that every facility shall be afforded you in the examination of the Bayeux Tapestry. I have an uncle who is an efficient member of the corporation."

On my way homeward from this ramble, I called again upon M. Pluquet, an apothecary by profession, but a book lover and a book vender[142] in his heart. The scene was rather singular. Below, was his *Pharmacopeia*; above were his bed-room and books; with a broken antique or two, in the court-yard, and in the passage leading to it. My first visit had been hasty, and only as a whetter to the second. Yet I contrived to see from a visitor, who was present, the desirable MS. of the vulgar poetry of OLIVIER BASSELIN, of which I made mention to M.——. The same stranger was again present. We all quietly left the drugs below for drugs of a different description above—books being called by the ancients, you know, the "MEDICINE OF THE SOUL." We mounted into the bed-room. M. Pluquet now opened his bibliomaniacal battery upon us. "Gentlemen you see, in this room, all the treasures in the world I possess: my wife—my child—my books—my antiquities. "Yes, gentlemen, these are my treasures. I am enthusiastic, even to madness, in the respective pursuits into which the latter branch out; but my means are slender—and my aversion to my *business* is just about in proportion to my fondness for *books*. Examine, gentlemen, and try your fortunes."

I scarcely needed such a rhetorical incitement: but alas! the treasures of M. Pluquet were not of a nature quite to make one's fortune. I contrived, with great difficulty, to pick out something of a *recherche* kind; and expended a napoleon upon some scarce little grammatical tracts, chiefly Greek, printed by Stephen at Paris, and by Hervagius at Basil: among the latter was the *Bellum grammaticale* of E. Hessus. M. Pluquet wondered at my rejecting the folios, and sticking so closely to the duodecimos; but had he shewn me a good *Verard Romance* or a *Eustace Froissart*, he would have found me as alert in running away with the one as the other. I think he is really the most enthusiastic book-lover I have ever seen: certainly as a Bibliopolist. We concluded a very animated conversation on all sides: and upon the whole, this was one of the most variously and satisfactorily spent days of my "voyage bibliographique."

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On the morrow, the mysterious and amiable M. —— was with me betimes. He said he had brought a *basket of books*, from his hermitage, which he had left at a friend's house, and he entreated me to come and examine them. In the mean while, I had had not only a peep at the Tapestry, but an introduction to the mayor, who is chief magistrate for life: a very Caesar in miniature. He received me stiffly, and appeared at first rather a priggish sort of a gentleman; observing that "my countryman, Mr. STOTHARD,[143] had been already there for six months, upon the same errand, and what could I want further?" A short reply served to convince him "that it would be no abuse of an extended indulgence if he would allow another English artist to make a fac-simile of a different description, from a very small portion only."[144]

I now called upon the Abbe Fetit, with a view to gain admission to the *Chapter Library*, but he was from home—dining with the Bishop. In consequence, I went to the palace, and wrote a note in pencil to the Bishop at the porter's lodge, mentioning the name of M. Lair, and the object of my visit. The porter observed that they had just sat down to dinner—but would I call at three? It seemed an age to that hour; but at length three o'clock came, and I was punctual to the minute. I was immediately admitted into the premises, and even the large mastiff seemed to know that I was not an unexpected visitor—for he neither growled, nor betrayed any symptoms of uneasiness. In my way to the audience chamber I saw the crosier and robes which the Bishop had worn the preceding day, at the ceremony of ordination, lying picturesquely upon the table. The audience chamber was rather elegant, adorned with Gobeleins tapestry, quite fresh, and tolerably expressive: and while my eyes were fastened upon two figures enacting the parts of an Arcadian shepherd and shepherdess, a servant came in and announced the approach of MONSEIGNEUR l'EVEQUE. I rose in a trice to meet him, between doubt and apprehension as to the result. The Bishop entered with a sort of body-guard; being surrounded by six or seven canons who had been dining with him, and who peeped at me over his shoulder in a very significant manner. The flush of good cheer was visible in their countenances—but for their Diocesan, I must say that he is even more interesting on a familiar view. He wore a close purple dress, buttoned down the middle from top to bottom. A cross hung upon his breast. His countenance had lost nothing of its expression by the absence of the mitre, and he was gracious even to loquacity. I am willing to hope that I was equally prudent and brief in the specification of the object I had in view. My request was as promptly as it was courteously granted. "You will excuse my attending you in person; (said the Bishop) but I will instantly send for the Abbe Fetit, who is our librarian; and who will have nothing to do but to wait upon you, and facilitate your researches." He then dispatched a messenger for the Abbe Fetit, who quickly arrived with two more trotting after him—and enlivened by the jingling music of the library keys, which were dangling from the Abbe's fingers, I quickened my steps towards the Chapter Library.

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We were no sooner fairly within the library, than I requested my chief conductor to give me a brief outline of its history. “Willingly” he replied. “This library, the remains of a magnificent collection, of from 30, to 40,000 volumes, was originally placed in the Chapter-house, hard by. Look through the window to your left, and you will observe the ruins of that building. We have here about 5000 volumes: but the original collection consisted of the united libraries of defunct, and even of living, clergymen—for, during the revolution, the clergy, residing both in town and country, conveyed their libraries to the Chapter-house, as a protection against private pillage. Well! in that same Chapter-house, the books, thus collected, were piled one upon another, in layers, flat upon the floor—reaching absolutely, to the cieling ... and for ten long years not a creature ventured to introduce a key into the library door. The windows also were rigidly kept shut. At length the Revolutionists wanted lead for musket balls, and they unroofed the chapter-house with their usual dexterity. Down came the rain upon the poor books, in consequence; and when M. Moysant received the orders of government to examine this library, and to take away as many books as he wanted for the public library at Caen... he was absolutely horror-struck by the obstacles which presented themselves. From the close confinement of every door and window, for ten years, the rank and fetid odour which issued, was intolerable. For a full fortnight every door and window was left open for ventilation, ere M. Moysant could begin his work of selection. He selected about 5000 volumes only; but the infuriated Revolutionists, on his departure, wantonly plundered and destroyed a prodigious number of the remainder ... “et enfin (concluded he) vous voyez, Monsieur, ce qu’ils nous out laisse.” You will give me credit for having listened to every word of such a tale.

The present library, which is on the first floor, is apparently about twenty-five feet square. The Abbe made me observe the XIIIth. volume of the *Gallia Christiana*,[145] in boards, remarking that “it was of excessive rarity;” but I doubt this. On shewing me the famous volume of *Sanctius* or *Sanches de Matrimonio Sacramentario*, 1607, folio, the Abbe observed—“that the author wrote it, standing with his bare feet upon marble.” I was well pleased with a pretty *illuminated ms. Missal*, in a large thick quarto volume, with borders and pictures in good condition; but did not fail to commend right heartily the proper bibliomaniacal spirit of M. Fetit in having kept concealed the second volume of *Gering’s Latin Bible*—being the first impression of the sacred text in France—when M. Moysant came armed with full powers to carry off what treasures he pleased. No one knows what has become of the first volume, but this second is cruelly imperfect—it is otherwise a fair copy. Upon the whole, although it is almost a matter of *conscience*, as well as of character, with me, to examine every thing in the shape of a library, and especially of a public one, yet it must be admitted that the collection under consideration is hardly worthy of a second visit: and accordingly I took both a first and a final view of it.

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From the Chapter I went to the COLLEGE LIBRARY. In other words, there is a fine public school, or Lycee, or college, where a great number of lads and young men are educated “according to art.” The building is extensive and well-situated: the play-ground is large and commodious; and there is a well-cultivated garden “tempting with forbidden fruit.” Into this garden I strolled in search of the President of the College, who was not within doors. I found him in company with some of the masters, and with several young men either playing, or about to play, at skittles. On communicating the object of my visit, he granted me an immediate passport to the library—“mais, Monsieur, (added he) ce n’est rien: il y avoit autrefois *quelque chose*: maintenant, ce n’est qu’un amas de livres tres communs.” I thanked him, and accompanied the librarian to the Library; who absolutely apologized all the way for the little entertainment I should receive. There was indeed little enough. The room may be about eighteen feet square. Of the books, a great portion was in vellum bindings, in wretched condition. Here was *Jay’s Polyglot*, and the matrimonial *Sanctius* again! There was a very respectable sprinkling of *Spanish and French Dictionaries*; some few not wholly undesirable *Alduses*; and the rare Louvain edition of *Sir Thomas More’s Works*, printed in 1566, folio.[146] I saw too, with horror-mingled regret, a frightfully imperfect copy of the *Service of Bayeux Cathedral*, printed in the Gothic letter, UPON VELLUM. But the great curiosity is a small brass or bronze crucifix, about nine inches high, standing upon the mantlepiece; very ancient, from the character of the crown, which savours of the latter period of Roman art—and which is the only crown, bereft of thorns, that I ever saw upon the head of our Saviour so represented. The eyes appear to be formed of a bright brown glass. Upon the whole, as this is not a book, nor a fragment of an old illumination, I will say nothing more about its age. I was scarcely three quarters of an hour in the library; but was fully sensible of the politeness of my attendant, and of the truth of his prediction, that I should receive little entertainment from an examination of the books.

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 superintendance 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

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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 archaeological discussion. Montfaucon, Ducarel, and De La Rue, have come forward successively—but more especially the first and last: and Montfaucon in particular has favoured 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 shews it, takes off the cloth with which it is usually covered.

[Illustration]

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 colour is fresh, and the stitches are, comparatively, preserved—that you observe the PORTRAIT OF HAROLD. [147]

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 colours 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;[148] of which I will not incur the presumption to suppose myself a successful interpreter. The constellations, and the symbols of agriculture and of 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 XIth, or of the beginning or middle of the XIIth century[149] 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 learnt, 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 *materiel* in dramatic effect.[150]

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I think you have now had a pretty good share of Bayeux intelligence; only that I ought not to close my despatches without a word or two relating to habits, manners, trade, and population. This will scarcely occupy a page. The men and women here are thoroughly Norman. Stout bodies, plump countenances, wooden shoes, and the cauchoise—even to exceedingly *tall copies* of the latter! The population may run hard upon ten thousand. The chief articles of commerce are *butter* and *lace*. Of the former, there are two sorts: one, delicate and well flavoured, is made during winter and spring; put up into small pots, and carried from hence in huge paniers, not only to all the immediately adjacent parts of the country, but even to Paris—and is shipped in large quantities for the colonies. They have made as much as 120,000 lb. weight each season; but *Isigny*, a neighbouring village, is rather the chief place for its production. The other sort of butter, which is eaten by the common people, and which in fact is made throughout the whole of Lower Normandy, (the very butter, in short, in which the huge *alose* was floating in the pot of the lively cuisiniere at Duclair[151]) is also chiefly made at Isigny; but instead of a delicate tint, and a fine flavour, it is very much the contrary: and the mode of making and transporting it accords with its qualities. It is salted, and packed in large pots, and even barrels, for the sake of exportation; and not less than 50,000 lb. weight is made each week. The whole profit arising from butter has been estimated at not less than two millions of francs: add to which, the circulation of specie kept up by the payment of the workmen, and the purchase of salt. As to *lace*, there are scarcely fewer than three thousand females constantly employed in the manufacture of that article.

The mechanics here, at least some of them, are equally civil and ingenious. In a shop, in the high or principal street, I saw an active carpenter, who had lost the fore finger of his right hand, hard at work—alternately whistling and singing—over a pretty piece of ornamental furniture in wood. It was the full face of a female, with closely curled hair over the forehead, surmounted by a wreath of flowers, having side curls, necklace, and platted hair. The whole was carved in beech, and the form and expression of the countenance were equally correct and pleasing. This merry fellow had a man or two under him, but he worked double tides, compared with his dependants. I interrupted him singing a French air, perfectly characteristic of the taste of his country. The title and song were thus:

TOU JOURS.

TOUJOURS, toujours, je te serai fidele;
Disait Adolphe a chaque instant du jour;
Toujours, toujours je t'aimerai, ma belle,
Je veux le dire aux echos d'alentour;
Je graverai sur l'ecorce d'un hetre,
Ce doux serment que le dieu des amours,
Vient me dieter, en me faisant connaitre;
Que mon bonheur est de t'aimer toujours. *Bis*.

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Toujours, toujours, lui repondit Adele,
Tu regneras dans le fond de mon coeur;
Toujours, toujours, comme une tourterelle,
Je promets bien t'aimer avec ardeur;
Je pense a toi quand le soleil se leve,
J'y pense encore a la tin de son cours;
Dans le sommeil si quelquefois je reve,
C'est au bonheur de te cherir toujours.

He was a carver on wainscoat wood: and if I would give myself "la peine d'entrer," he would shew me all sorts of curiosities. I secured a favourable reception, by purchasing the little ornament upon which he was at work—for a napoleon. I followed the nimble mechanic (ci-devant a soldier in Bonaparte's campaigns, from whence he dated the loss of his finger) through a variety of intricate passages below and up stairs; and saw, above, several excellently well finished pieces of furniture, for drawers or clothes-presses, in wainscoat wood:—the outsides of which were carved sometimes with clustered roses, surrounding a pair of fond doves; or with representations of Cupids, sheep, bows and arrows, and the various *emblemata* of the tender passion. They would have reminded you of the old pieces of furniture which you found in your grandfather's mansion, upon taking possession of your estate: and indeed are of themselves no despicable ornaments in their way. I was asked from eight to twelve napoleons for one of these pieces of massive and elaborately carved furniture, some six or seven feet in height.

In all other respects, this is a town deserving of greater antiquarian research than appears to have been bestowed upon it; and I cannot help thinking that its ancient ecclesiastical history is more interesting than is generally imagined. In former days the discipline and influence of its See seem to have been felt and acknowledged throughout nearly the whole of Normandy. Adieu. In imagination, the spires of COUTANCES CATHEDRAL begin to peep in the horizon.

[141] [Mr. Cotman has an excellent engraving of it.]

[142] He has since established himself at Paris, near the Luxembourg palace, as a *bookseller*; and it is scarcely three months since I received a letter from him, in which he told me that he could no longer resist the more powerful impulses of his heart—and that the phials of physic were at length abandoned for the volumes of Verard and of Gourmont. My friend, Mr. Dawson Turner, who knew him at Bayeux, has purchased books of him at Paris. [The preceding in 1820.]

[143] Mr. Stothard, Jun. See page 221 ante. Mr. S's own account of the tapestry may be seen in the XIXth volume of the Archaeologia. It is brief, perspicuous, and satisfactory. His fac-simile is one half the

size of the original; executed with great neatness and fidelity; but probably the touches are a *little* too artist-like or masterly.

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[144] [The facsimile of that portion of the tapestry which is supposed to be a portrait of Harold, and which Mr. Lewis, who travelled with me, executed, is perhaps of its kind, one of the most perfect things extant. In saying this, I only deliver the opinions of very many competent judges. It must however be noticed, that the Society of Antiquaries published the whole series of this exceedingly curious and ancient Representation of the Conquest of our Country by William I. Of this publication, the figures measure about four inches in height: but there is also a complete, and exceedingly successful fac-simile of the first two figures of this series—of the size of the originals (William I. and the Messenger coming to announce to him the landing of Harold in England) also published from the same quarter. The whole of these Drawings were from the pencil of the late ingenious and justly lamented THOS. STOTHARD, Esq. Draftsman to the Society of Antiquaries.]

[145] A complete copy is of rarity in our own country, but not so abroad. It is yet, however, an imperfect work.

[146] There have been bibliographers, and there are yet knowing book-collectors, who covet this edition in preference to the Leipsic impression of Sir T. More's Works of 1698; in folio. But this must proceed from sheer obstinacy; or rather, perhaps, from ignorance that the latter edition contains the *Utopia*—whereas in the former it is unaccountably omitted to be reprinted—which it might have been, from various previous editions.

[147] This figure is introduced with pursuivants and dogs: but great liberties, as a nice eye will readily discern, have been taken by Montfaucon, when compared with the original—of which the fac-simile, in the previous edition of this work, may be pronounced to be PERFECT.

[148] Something similar may be seen round the border of the baptismal vase of St. Louis, in Millin's *Antiquites Nationales*. A part of the border in the Tapestry is a representation of subjects from Aesop's Fables.

[149] Of a monument, which has been pronounced by one of our ablest antiquaries to be "THE NOBLEST IN THE WORLD RELATING TO OUR OLD ENGLISH HISTORY," (See *Stukely's Palaeog. Britan.* Number XI. 1746, 4to. p. 2-3) it may be expected that some archaeological discussion should be here subjoined. Yet I am free to confess that, after the essays of Messrs. Gurney, Stothard, and Amyot, (and more especially that of the latter gentleman) the matter—as to the period

of its execution—may be considered as well nigh, if not wholly, at rest. These essays appear in the XVIIIth and XIXth volumes of the Archaeologia. The Abbe

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de la Rue contended that this Tapestry was

> worked in the time of the second Matilda, or the Empress Maud, which would bring it to the earlier part of the XIIth century. The antiquaries above mentioned contend, with greater probability, that it is a performance of the period which it professes to commemorate; namely, of the defeat of Harold at the battle of Hastings, and consequently of the acquiring of the Crown of England, by conquest, on the part of William. This latter therefore brings it to the period of about 1066, to 1088—so that, after all, the difference of opinion is only whether this Tapestry be fifty years older or younger, than the respective advocates contend.

But the most copious, particular, and in my humble judgment the most satisfactory, disquisition upon the date of this singular historical monument, is entitled, "*A Defence of the early Antiquity of the Bayeux Tapestry*," by Thomas Amyot, Esq. immediately following Mr. Stothard's communication, in the work just referred to. It is at direct issue with all the hypotheses of the Abbe de la Rue, and in my opinion the results are triumphantly established. Whether the *Normans* or the *English* worked it, is perfectly a secondary consideration. The chief objections, taken by the Abbe, against its being a production of the XIth century, consist in, first, its not being mentioned among the treasures possessed by the Conqueror at his decease:—secondly, that, if the Tapestry were deposited in the church, it must have suffered, if not have been annihilated, at the storming of Bayeux and the destruction of the Cathedral by fire in the reign of Henry I., A.D. 1106:—thirdly, the silence of *Wace* upon the subject,—who wrote his metrical histories nearly a century after the Tapestry is supposed to have been executed." The latter is chiefly insisted upon by the learned Abbe; who, which ever champion come off victorious in this archaeological warfare, must at any rate receive the best thanks of the antiquary for the methodical and erudite manner in which he has conducted his attacks.At the first blush it cannot fail to strike us that the Abbe de la Rue's positions are all of a *negative* character; and that, according to the strict rules of logic, it must not be admitted, that because such and such writers have *not* noticed a circumstance, therefore that circumstance or event cannot have taken place. The first two grounds of objection have, I think, been fairly set aside by Mr. Amyot. As to the third objection, Mr. A. remarks—"But it seems that Wace has not only *not* quoted the tapestry, but has varied from it in a manner which proves that he had never seen it. The instances given of this variation are, however, a little unfortunate. The first of them is very unimportant, for the difference merely consists in placing a figure

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at the *stern* instead of the *prow* of a ship, and in giving him a bow instead of a trumpet. From an authority quoted by the Abbe himself, it appears that, with regard to this latter fact, the Tapestry was right, and Wace was wrong; and thus an argument is unintentionally furnished in favour of the superior antiquity of the Tapestry. The second instance of variation, namely, that relating to Taillefer's sword, may be easily dismissed; since, after all, it now appears, from Mr. Stothard's examination, that neither Taillefer nor his sword is to be found in the Tapestry," &c. But it is chiefly from the names of AELFGYVA and WADARD, inscribed over some of the figures, that I apprehend the conclusion in favour of the Tapestry's being nearly a contemporaneous production, may be safely drawn.It is quite clear that these names belong to persons living when the work was in progress, or within the recollection of the workers, and that they were attached to persons of some particular note or celebrity, or rather perhaps of *local* importance. An eyewitness, or a contemporary only would have introduced them. They would not have lived in the memory of a person, whether mechanic or historian, who lived a *century* after the event. No antiquary has yet fairly appropriated these names, and more especially the second. It follows therefore that they would not have been introduced had they not been in existence at the time; and in confirmation of that of WADARD, it seems that Mr. Henry Ellis (Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries) "confirmed Mr. Amyot's conjecture on that subject, by the references with which he furnished him to *Domesday Book*, where his name occurs in no less than six counties, as holding lands of large extent under *Odo*, Bishop of Bayeux, the tenant in capite of those properties from the crown. That he was not a *guard* or *centinel,* as the Abbe de la Rue supposes, but that he held an *office of rank* in the household of either William or Odo, seems now decided beyond a doubt." Mr. Amyot thus spiritedly concludes:—-alluding to the successful completion of Mr. Stothard's copy of the entire original roll.—-"Yet if the BAYEUX TAPESTRY be not history of the first class, it is perhaps something better. It exhibits general traits, elsewhere sought in vain, of the costume and manners of that age, which, of all others, if we except the period of the Reformation, ought to be the most interesting to us;—that age, which gave us a new race of monarchs, bringing with them new landholders, new laws, and almost a new language."Mr. Amyot has subjoined a specimen of his own poetical powers in describing "the Minstrel TAILLEFER'S achievements," in the battle of Hastings, from the old Norman lays of GAIMAR and WACE. I can only find room for the first few verses. The poem is entitled,

THE ONSET OF TAILLEFER.

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Foremost in the bands of France,
Arm'd with hauberk and with lance,
And helmet glittering in the air,
As if a warrior knight he were,
Rush'd forth the MINSTREL TAILLEFER
Borne on his courser swift and strong,
  He gaily bounded o'er the plain,
And raised the heart-inspiring song
(Loud echoed by the warlike throng)
  Of *Roland* and of *Charlemagne*,
Of *Oliver*, brave peer of old,
  Untaught to fly, unknown to yield,
And many a Knight and Vassal bold,
Whose hallowed blood, in crimson flood,
  Dyed *Roncevalle's* field.

[150] M. Denon told me, in one of my visits to him at Paris, that by the commands of Bonaparte, he was charged with the custody of this Tapestry for three months; that it was displayed in due form and ceremony in the Museum; and that after having taken a hasty sketch of it, (which he admitted could not be considered as very faithful) he returned it to Bayeux—as it was considered to be the peculiar property of that place.

[151] See p. 109 ante.

LETTER XVI.

BAYEUX TO COUTANCES. ST. LO. THE CATHEDRAL OF COUTANCES.
ENVIRONS.
AQUEDUCT. MARKET-DAY. PUBLIC LIBRARY. ESTABLISHMENT FOR THE CLERGY.

I send you this despatch close to the very Cathedral, whose spires, while yet at Bayeux, were already glimmering in the horizon of my imagination. The journey hither has been in every respect the most beautiful and interesting that I have experienced on *this* side the Seine. I have seen something like undulating pasture-lands, wooded hills, meandering streams, and well-peopled villages; and an air of gaiety and cheerfulness, as well as the charm of picturesque beauty, has accompanied me from one cathedral to the other.

I left the *Hotel de Luxembourg*, at Bayeux, in a hired cabriolet with a pair of horses, about five in the afternoon, pushing on, at a smart trot, for ST. LO: which latter place I

entered by moon-light. The road, as usual, was broad and bold, and at times undulating; flanked by beech, elm, and fir. As I just observed to you, I entered St. Lo by moon-light: the double towers of the great cathedral-like looking church having a grand and even romantic effect on approaching the town. An old castle, or rather a mere round-tower relic of one, appeared to the left, upon entering it. Passing the porch, or west end of the church, sometimes descending, at others ascending—midst close streets and overhanging roofs of houses, which cast a deep and solemn shadow, so as to shut out the moon beams for several hundred yards—and pursuing a winding route, I at length stopped at the door of the principal hotel—*au Grand Coq!* I laughed heartily when I heard its name; for with the strictest adherence to truth the adjective ought to have been *petit!*

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However, the beds seemed to be in good order, and the coffee, with which I was quickly served, proved to be excellent. I strolled out, on a *reconnoissance*, about half-past nine; but owing to the deep shadows from the moon, arising from the narrowness of the streets, I could make out nothing satisfactory of the locale. The church, however, promised a rich treat on the morrow. As soon as the morrow came, I betook myself to the church. It was Sunday morning. The square, before the west front of the church, was the rendezvous both of townsmen and countryfolks: but what was my astonishment on observing in one corner of it, a quack doctor vending powder for the effectual *polishing of metals*. He had just beaten his drum, in order to collect his audience; and having got a good assemblage, was full of the virtues of his wares—-which were pronounced to be also "equally efficacious for *complaints in the stomach!*"

This man had been preceded, in the situation which he occupied, by a rival charlatan, on horseback, with *powders to kill rats*. The latter stood upon the same eminence, wearing a hat, jacket, and trowsers, all white—upon which were painted *black rats* of every size and description; and in his harangue to the populace he took care to tell them that the rats, painted upon his dress, were *exact portraits* of those which had been destroyed by means of his powders! This, too, on a Sunday morning. But remember Dieppe.[152]

Having despatched my breakfast, I proceeded to survey the church, from which the town takes its name. First, for the exterior. The *attached* towers demand attention and admiration. They are so slightly attached as to be almost separated from the body or nave; forming something of that particular character which obtains more decidedly at the cathedral of Coutances. I am not sure whether this portion of the church at St. Lo be not preferable, on the score of regularity and delicacy, to the similar portion at this latter place. The west front is indeed its chief beauty of exterior attraction; and it was once rendered doubly interesting by a profusion of alto-rilievo statues, which *disappeared* during the commotions of the revolution. You ascend rather a lofty flight of steps to this entrance; and into which the whole town seemed to be pouring the full tide of its population. I suffered myself to be carried away along, with the rest, and almost startled as I entered the nave.[153] To the left, is a horribly-painted statue of the Virgin, with the child in her arms. The countenance is even as ugly, old, and repulsive, as the colouring is most despicable. I never saw such a daub: and what emotions, connected with tenderness of feeling, or ardour of devotion, can the contemplation of such an object excite? Surely the parish must have lost its wits, as well as its taste, to endure such a monstrous exhibition of art.

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As I advanced towards the choir, I took especial notice of the very singular, and in my opinion very ugly, formation both of the pillars and arches which sustain the roof. These pillars have *no capitals*, and the arch springs from them in the most abrupt manner. The arch itself is also very short and sharp pointed; like the tops of lancet windows. This mode obtains pretty generally here; but it should be noted that, in the right side aisle, the pillars have capitals. There is something unusual also in the row of pillars which spring up, flanking the choir, half way between the walls of the choir and the outward wall of the church. Nor am I sure that, destitute of a graceful, superadded arch, such massive perpendicular lines have either meaning or effect. Whether St. Lo were the *first* church upon which the architect, who built both *that* and the cathedral at *Coutances*, tried his talents—or whether, indeed, both churches be the effort of the same hand—I cannot pretend to determine; but, both outwardly and inwardly, these two churches have a strong resemblance to each other. Like many other similar buildings in France, the church of St. Lo is closely blocked up by surrounding houses.

I prepared to leave St. Lo about mid-day, after agreeing for a large heavy machine, with a stout pair of horses, to conduct me to this place. There are some curious old houses near the inn, with exterior ornaments like those of the XVIth century, in our own country. But on quitting the town, in the road to Coutances,—after you come to what are called the old castle walls, on passing the outer gate—your eye is struck by rather an extraordinary combination of objects. The town itself seems to be built upon a rock. Above, below, every thing appears like huge scales of iron; while, at the bottom, in a serpentine direction, runs the peaceful and fruitful river *Aure*.[154] The country immediately around abounds in verdant pasture, and luxuriantly wooded heights. Upon the whole, our sortie from St. Lo, beneath a bright blue sky and a meridian sun, was extremely cheerful and gratifying.

A hard road (but bold and broad, as usual) soon convinced me of the uncomfortableness of the conveyance; which, though roomy, and of rather respectable appearance, wanted springs: but the increasing beauty of the country, kept my attention perfectly occupied, till the beautiful cathedral, of COUTANCES caught my notice, on an elevated ground, to the left. The situation is truly striking, gaze from what quarter you will. From that of St. Lo, the immediate approach to the town is rendered very interesting from the broad *route royale*, lined with birch, hazel, and beech. The delicacy, or perhaps the peculiarity of the western towers of the cathedral, struck me as singularly picturesque; while the whole landscape was warmed by the full effulgence of an unclouded sun, and animated by the increasing numbers and activity of the *paysannes* and *bourgeoises* mingling in their sabbath-walks. Their bright dark *blues* and *crimsons* were put on upon the occasion; and nought but peace, tranquillity, and fruitfulness seemed to prevail on all sides. It was a scene wherein you might have placed Arcadian shepherds—worthy of being copied-by the pencil of Claude.

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We entered the town at a sharp trot. The postilion, flourishing his whip, and causing its sound to re-echo through the principal street, upon an ascent, drove to the chief inn, the *Hotel d'Angleterre*, within about one hundred yards of the cathedral. Vespers were just over; and I shall not readily forget the rush and swarm of the clergy who were pouring out, from the north door, and covering the street with one extensive black mass. There could not have been fewer than two hundred young Ecclesiastics—thus returning from vespers to their respective homes; or rather to the College, or great clerical establishment, in the neighbourhood. This College, which has suffered from violence and neglect, through the revolution and Bonaparte's dynasty, is now beginning to raise its head in a very distinguished and commanding manner. It was a singular sight—to see such a crowd of young men, wearing cocked hats, black robes, and black bands with white edging! The women were all out in the streets; sitting before their doors, or quietly lounging or walking. The afternoon was indeed unusually serene.

I ordered a late dinner, and set out for the cathedral. It was impossible to visit it at a more favorable moment. The congregation had departed; and a fine warm sun darted its rays in every surrounding direction. As I looked around, I could not fail to be struck with the singular arrangement of the columns round the choir: or rather of the double aisle between the choir and the walls, as at St. Lo; but here yet more distinctly marked. For a wonder, an *unpainted* Virgin and child in Our Lady's chapel, behind the choir! There is nothing, I think, in the interior of this church that merits particular notice and commendation, except it be some beautifully-stained glass windows; with the arms, however, of certain noble families, and the regal arms (as at Bayeux) obliterated. There is a deep well in the north transept, to supply the town with water in case of fire. The pulpit is large and handsome; but not so magnificent as that at Bayeux. The organ is comparatively small. Perhaps the thirteenth century is a period sufficiently remote to assign for the completion of the interior of this church, for I cannot subscribe to the hypothesis of the Abbe de la Rue, that this edifice was probably erected by Tancred King of Sicily at the end of the eleventh, or at the beginning of the twelfth century.

The exterior of this Church is indeed its chief attraction.[155] Unquestionably the style of architecture is very peculiar, and does not, as far as I know, extend beyond St. Lo, in Normandy. My great object was to mount upon the roof of the central tower, which is octagonal, containing fine lofty lancet windows, and commanding from its summit a magnificent panorama. Another story, one half the height of the present erection from the roof of the nave, would put a glorious finish to the central tower of NOTRE DAME at COUTANCES.

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As I ascended this central tower, I digressed occasionally into the lateral galleries along the aisles. To look down, was somewhat terrific; but who could help bewailing the wretched, rotten, green-tinted appearance of the roof of the north aisle?—which arose here, as at Bayeux, from its being stripped of the lead (during the Revolution) to make *bullets*—and from the rain's penetrating the interior in consequence. As I continued to ascend, I looked through the apertures to notice the fine formation and almost magical erection of the lancet windows of the western towers: and the higher I mounted, the more beautiful and magical seemed to be that portion of the building. At length I reached the summit; and concentrating myself a little, gazed around.

The view was lovely beyond measure. Coutances lies within four miles of the sea, so that to the west and south there appeared an immense expanse of ocean. On the opposite points was an extensive landscape, well-wooded, undulating, rich, and thickly studded with farm-houses. *Jersey* appeared to the north-west, quite encircled by the sea; and nearly to the south, stood out the bold insulated little rock of *Granville*, defying the eternal washing of the wave. Such a view is perhaps no where else to be seen in Normandy; certainly not from any ecclesiastical edifice with which I am acquainted. The sun was now declining apace, which gave a wanner glow to the ocean, and a richer hue to the landscape. It is impossible to particularize. All was exquisitely refreshing and joyous. The heart beats with a fuller pulsation as the eye darts over such an expansive and exhilarating scene! Spring was now clad in her deepest-coloured vesture: and a prospect of a fine summer and an abundant harvest infused additional delight into the beholder. Immediately below, stood the insulated and respectable mansion or Palace of *the Bishop*; in the midst of a formal garden—begirt with yet more formally clipt hedges. As the Prelate bore a good character, I took a pleasure in gazing upon the roof which contained an inhabitant capable of administering so much good to the community. In short, I shall always remember the view from the top of the central tower of the cathedral of Coutances!

I quitted such a spot with reluctance; but time was flying away, and the patience of the cuisinier at the Hotel d'Angleterre had already been put somewhat to the test. In twenty minutes I sat down to my dinner, in a bed-room, of which the furniture was chiefly of green silk. The females, even in the humblest walks, have generally fine names; and *Victorina* was that of the fille de chambre at the Hotel d'Angleterre. After dinner I walked upon what may be called the heights of Coutances; and a more delightful evening's walk I never enjoyed. The women of every description—ladies, housekeepers, and servant maids—were all abroad; either sitting upon benches, or standing in gossiping groups, or straying in friendly pairs. The comeliness of the women was remarkable; a certain freshness of tint, and prevalence of the embonpoint, reminded me of those of our own country; and among the latter, I startled—as I gazed upon a countenance which afforded but too vivid a resemblance to that of a deceased relation! Certainly the Norman women are no where more comely and interesting than they are at Coutances.

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The immediate environs of this place are beautiful and interesting: visit them in what direction you please. But there is nothing which so immediately strikes you as the remains of an *ancient Aqueduct*; gothicised at the hither end, but with three or four circular arches at the further extremity, where it springs from the opposite banks. Fine as was yesterday, this day has not been inferior to it. I was of course glad of an opportunity of visiting the market, and of mingling with the country people. The boulevards afforded an opportunity of accomplishing both these objects. Corn is a great article of trade; and they have noble granaries for depositing it. Apparently there is a great conflux of people, and much business stirring. I quickly perceived, in the midst of this ever-moving throng, my old friend the vender of rat-destroying powders—busied in the exercise of his calling, and covered with his usual vestment of white, spotted or painted with black rats. He found plenty of hearers and plenty of purchasers. All was animation and bustle. In the midst of it, a man came forward to the edge of a bank—-below which a great concourse was assembled. He beat a drum, to announce that a packet boat, would sail to Jersey in the course of the afternoon; but the people seemed too intent upon their occupations and gambols to attend to him. I sat upon a bench and read one of the little chap books—*Richard sans peur*—which I had purchased the same morning.

While absorbed in reflections upon the heterogeneous scene before me—and wishing, for some of my dearest friends in England to be also spectators of it—the notes of an hand-organ more and more distinctly stole upon my ear. They were soft; and even pleasing notes. On looking round, I observed that the musician preceded a person, who carried aloft a Virgin, with the infant Jesus, in wax; and who, under such a sign, exhorted the multitude to approach and buy his book-wares. I trust I was too thorough-bred a *Roxburgher* to remain quiet on the bench: and accordingly starting up, and extending two sous, I became the fortunate purchaser of a little *chap* article—of which my friend BERNARDO will for ever, I fear, envy me the possession! The vender of the tome sang through his nose, as the organ warbled the following

Cantique Spirituelle.

EN L'HONNEUR DU TRES-SAINT SACREMENT,

Qui est expose dans la grande Eglise cathedrale de St. Pierre et St. Paul de Rome, pour implorer la misericorde de Dieu.

Air: du Theodore Francais.

APPROCHEZ-VOUS, Chretiens fideles,
Afin d'entendre reciter:
Ecoutez tous avec un grand zele,
Avec ferveur et piete,
Le voeu que nous avons fait,

D’aller au grand Saint Jacques;
Grace a Dieu nous l’avons accompli,
Pour l’amour de Jesus Christ.

Dieu crea le ciel et la terre,
Les astres et le firmament;
Il fit la brillante lumiere,
Ainsi que tous les autres elemens,
Il a tire tout du neant,
Ce qui respire sur la terre:
Rendons hommage a la grandeur
De notre divin Createur.

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[156]Tous les jours la malice augmente, Il y a tres-peu de religion; La jeunesse est trop petulante, Les enfans jurent le saint Nom. Et comment s'etonneroit-on Si tant de fleaux nous tourmentent? Et si l'on voit tant de malheurs, C'est Dieu qui punit les pecheurs.Souvent on assiste a l'Office, C'est comme une maniere d'acquit, Sans penser au saint Sacrifice; Ou s'est immole Jesus Christ. On parle avec ses amis, De ses affaires temporelles, Sans faire aucune attention Aux mysteres de la religion.Reflechissez bien, peres et meres, Sur ces morales et verites: C'est la loi de Dieu notre Pere; C'est lui qui nous les a dictees: Il faut les suivre et les pratiquer, Tant que nous serons sur la terre. N'oublions point qu'apres la mort, Nos ames existeront encore.

The day was beginning to wear away fast, and I had not yet accomplished the favourite and indispensable object of visiting the PUBLIC LIBRARY. I made two unsuccessful attempts; but the third was fortunate. I had no letter of introduction, and every body was busied in receiving the visits of their country friends. I was much indebted to the polite attention of a stranger: who accompanied me to the house of the public librarian, his friend, who, not being at home, undertook the office of shewing me the books. The room in which they are contained—wholly detached—and indeed at a considerable distance from the cathedral—is about sixty English feet long, low, and rather narrow. It is absolutely crammed with books, in the most shameful state of confusion. I saw, for the first time in Normandy, and with absolute gladness of heart, a copy of the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*; of which the four latter volumes, in vellum binding, were tall and good: the earlier ones, in calf, not so desirable. For the first time too, since treading Norman soil, I saw a tolerably good sprinkle of *Italian* books. But the collection stands in dreadful need of weeding. Indeed, this observation may apply to the greater number of public collections throughout Normandy. I thanked my attendant for his patient and truly friendly attention, and took my leave.

In my way homewards, I stopped at M. Joubert's, the principal bookseller, and "beat about the bush" for bibliographical game. But my pursuit was not crowned with success. M.J. told me, in reply to black-letter enquiries, that a Monsieur A——, a stout burly man, whom he called "un gros papa"—was in the habit of paying yearly visits from Jersey, for the acquisition of the same black-letter treasures; and that he swept away every thing in the shape of an ancient and *equivocal* volume, in his annual rounds. I learnt pretty nearly the same thing from Manoury at Caen. M. Joubert is a very sensible and respectable man; and is not only "*Seul Imprimeur de Monseigneur l'Eveque"* (PIERRE DUPONT-POURSAT), but is in fact almost the only bookseller worth consulting in the place. I bought of him

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a copy of the *Livre d'Eglise ou Nouveau Paroissien a l'usage du Diocese de Coutances*, or the common prayer book of the diocese. It is a very thick duodecimo, of 700 double columned pages, printed in a clear, new, and extremely legible character, upon paper of sufficiently good texture. It was bound in sheepskin, and I gave only *thirty sous* for it new. How it can be published at such a price, is beyond my conception. M. Joubert told me that the compositor or workman received 20 francs for setting up 36 pages, and that the paper was 12 francs per ream. In our own country, such prices would be at least doubled.

It is impossible not to be struck here with the great number of YOUNG ECCLESIASTICS. In short, the establishment now erecting for them, will contain, when completed, (according to report) not fewer than four hundred. It is also impossible not to be struck with the extreme simplicity of their manners and deportment. They converse with apparent familiarity with the very humblest of their flock: and seem, from the highest to the lowest, to be cordially received. They are indifferent as to personal appearance. One young man carries a bundle of linen to his laundress, along the streets: another carries a round hat in his hand, having a cocked one upon his head: a kitchen utensil is seen in the hand of a third, and a chair, or small table, in that of a fourth. As these Clergymen pass, they are repeatedly saluted. Till the principal building be finished, many of them are scattered about the town, living quite in the upper stories. In short, it is the *profession*, rather than the particular candidate, which seems to claim the respectful attention of the townsmen.

[152] See page 13 ante.

[153] Mr. Cotman has a view of this church, in his work on Normandy.

[154] I suspect that the "peaceful" waters of this stream were frequently died with the blood of Hugonots and Roman Catholics during the fierce contests between MONTGOMERY and MATIGNON, towards the latter half of the sixteenth century. At that period St. Lo was one of the strongest towns in the Bocage; and the very pass above described, was the avenue by which the soldiers of the captains, just mentioned, alternately advanced and retreated in their respective attacks upon St. Lo: which at length surrendered to the victorious army of the *latter*; the leader of the Catholics. SEGUIN: *Histoire Militaire des Bocains*; *p. 340-384*; 1816, *12 mo*.

[155] The reader will be doubtless gratified by the artist-like view of this cathedral, by Mr. Cotman, in his *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*.

[156] It cannot fail to be noticed that the following sentences are in fact *rhyming verse*, though printed prose-wise.

LETTER XVII.

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JOURNEY TO GRANVILLE. GRANVILLE. VILLE DIEU. ST. SEVER. TOWN AND CASTLE OF
VIRE.

Vire.

Since my last, I have been as much gratified by the charms of nature and of art, as during any one period of my tour. Prepare, therefore, for miscellaneous intelligence; but such as, I will make bold to predict, cannot fail to afford you considerable gratification. Normandy is doubtless a glorious country. It is fruitful in its soil, picturesque in the disposition of its land and water, and rich in the architectural relics of "the olden time." It is also more than ordinarily interesting to an Englishman. Here, in the very town whence I transmit this despatch—within two hundred and fifty yards of the hotel of the *Cheval Blanc*, which just now encloses me within its granite walls—here, I say, lived and revelled the illustrious family of the DE VERES.[157] Hence William the Conqueror took the famous AUBREY DE VERE to be a spectator of his prowess, and a sharer of his spoils, in his decisive subjugation of our own country. It is from this place that the De Veres derive their name. Their once-proud castle yet towers above the rushing rivulet below, which turns a hundred mills in its course: but the warder's horn has long ceased to be heard, and the ramparts are levelled with the solid rock with which they were once, as it were, identified.

I left Coutances with something approaching to reluctance; so completely *anglicised* seemed to be the scenery and inhabitants. The evening was beautiful in the extreme: and upon gaining the height of one of the opposite hills, within about half a league of the town, on the high Granville route, I alighted—walked, stopped, and gazed, alternately, upon the lovely landscape around—the cathedral, in the mean time, becoming of one entire golden tint from the radiance of the setting sun. It was hardly possible to view a more perfect picture of its kind; and it served as a just counterpart to the more expansive scene which I had contemplated, but the preceding evening, from the heights of that same cathedral. The conducteur of the Diligence rousing me from my rapturous abstraction, I remounted, and descended into a valley; and ere the succeeding height was gained, a fainter light floated over the distant landscape ... and every object reminded me of the accuracy of those exquisite lines of Collins—descriptive of the approach of evening's

... gradual, dusky veil.

For the first time, I had to do with a drunken conducteur. Luckily the road was broad, and in the finest possible condition, and perfectly well known to the horses. Every turning was successfully made; and the fear of upsetting began to give way to the annoyance experienced from the roaring and shouting of the conducteur. It was almost dark when I reached GRANVILLE—about twelve miles from Coutances; when I learnt that the horses had run six miles before they started with

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us. On entering the town, the road was absolutely solid rock: and considering what a *house* we carried behind us (for so the body of the *diligence* seemed) and the uncertain footing of the horses, in consequence of the rocky surface of the road, I apprehended the most sinister result. Luckily it was moon-light; when, approaching one of the sorriest looking inns imaginable, whither our conducteur (in spite of the better instructions of the landlord of the Hotel d'Angleterre at Coutances) had persuaded us to go, the passengers alighted with thankful hearts, and bespoke supper and beds.

Granville is fortified on the land side by a deep ravine, which renders an approach from thence almost impracticable. On every other side it is defended by the ocean, into which the town seems to have dropt perpendicularly from the clouds. At high water, Granville cannot be approached, even by transports, nearer than within two-thirds of a league; and of course at low water it is surrounded by an extent of sharply pointed rock and chalk: impenetrable—terrific—and presenting both certain failure and destruction to the assailants. It is a GIBRALTAR IN MINIATURE. The English sharply cannonaded it a few years since, but it was only a political diversion. No landing was attempted. In the time of the civil wars, and more particularly in those of the League, Granville, however, had its share of misery. It is now a quiet, dull, dreary, place; to be visited only for the sake of the view from thence, looking towards *St. Malo*, and *Mont St. Michel*; the latter of which I give up—as an hopeless object of attainment. Granville is in fact built upon rock;[158] and the houses and the only two churches are entirely constructed of granite. The principal church (I think it was the principal) is rather pretty within, as to its construction; but the decidedly gloomy effect given to it by the tint of the *granite*—the pillars being composed of that substance—renders it disagreeable to the eye. I saw several confessionals; and in one of them, the office of confession was being performed by a priest, who attended to two penitents at the same time; but whose physiognomy was so repulsively frightful, that I could not help concluding he was listening to a tale which he was by no means prepared to receive.

An hour's examination of the town thoroughly satisfied me. There was no public conveyance to *Vire*, whither I intended immediately departing, and so I hired a voiture to be drawn by one sturdy Norman horse. To a question about springs, the conducteur replied that I should find every thing "tres propre." Having paid the reckoning, I set my face towards VIRE. The day, for the season of the year, turned out to be gloomy and cold beyond measure: and the wind (to the east) was directly in my face. Nevertheless the road was one of the finest that I had seen in France, for breadth and general soundness of condition. It had all the

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characteristics, in breadth and straitness, of a Roman route; and as it was greatly undulating, I had frequently some gratifying glimpses of its bold direction. The surrounding country was of a quietly picturesque but fruitful aspect; and had my seat been comfortable, or after the fashion of those in my own country, my sensations had been more agreeable. But in truth, instead of *springs*, or any thing approximating to "tres propre," I had to encounter a *hard plank*, suspended at the extremities, by a piece of leather, to the sides; and as the road was but too well bottomed, and the conveyance was open in front to the bitter blast of the east, I can hardly describe (as I shall never forget) the misery of this conveyance.

Fortunately the first stage was *Ville Dieu*. Here I ordered a voiture and post horses: but the master of the Poste Royale, or rather of the inn, shook his head—"Pour les chevaux, vous en aurez des meilleurs: mais, pour la voiture il n'y en a pas. Tenez, Monsieur; venez voir." I followed, with miserable forebodings—and entering a shed, where stood an old tumble-down-looking phaeton—"la voila, c'est la seule que je possede en ce moment"—exclaimed the landlord. It had never stirred from its position since the fall of last years' leaf. It had been—within and without—the roosting place for fowls and other of the feathered tribe in the farm yard; and although literally covered with the *evidences* of such long and undisturbed possession, yet, as there was no appearance of rain, and as I discovered the wished for "*ressorts*" (or *springs*) I compromised for the repulsiveness of the exterior, and declared my intention of taking it onward. Water, brooms, brushes, and cloths, were quickly put in requisition; and two stately and well fed horses, which threatened to fly away with this slender machine, being fastened on, I absolutely darted forward at a round rattling gallop for *St. Sever*. Blessings ever wait upon the memory of that artisan who invented ... *springs*!

The postilion had the perfect command of his horses, and he galloped, or trotted, or ambled, as his fancy—or rather our wishes—directed. The approach to our halting place was rather imposing. What seemed to be a monastery, or church, at St. Sever, had quite the appearance of Moorish architecture; and indeed as I had occasional glimpses of it through the trees, the effect was exceedingly picturesque. This posting town is in truth very delightfully situated. While the horses were being changed, I made our way for the monastery; which I found to be in a state rather of dilapidation than of ruin. It had, indeed, a wretched aspect. I entered the chapel, and saw lying, transversely upon a desk, to the left—a very clean, large paper, and uncut copy of the folio *Rouen Missal* of 1759. Every thing about this deserted and decaying spot had a melancholy appearance: but the surrounding country was rich, wooded, and picturesque. In former days of prosperity—such as St. Sever had seen before the Revolution—there had been gaiety, abundance, and happiness. It was now a perfect contrast to such a state.

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On returning to the "*Poste Royale*" I found two fresh lusty horses to our voiture—but the postilion had sent a boy into the field to catch a *third*. Wherefore was this? The tarif exacted it. A third horse "reciproquement pour l'annee"—parce qu'il faut traverser une grande montagne avant d'arriver a Vire"—was the explanatory reply. It seemed perfectly ridiculous, as the vehicle was of such slender dimensions and weight. However, I was forced to yield. To scold the postboy was equally absurd and unavailing: "parce que la tarif l'exigea." But the "montagne" was doubtless a reason for this additional horse: and I began to imagine that something magnificently picturesque might be in store. The three horses were put a-breast, and off we started with a phaeton-like velocity! Certainly nothing could have a more ridiculous appearance than my pigmy voiture thus conveyed by three animals—strong enough to have drawn the diligence. I was not long in reaching this "huge mountain," which provoked my unqualified laughter—from its insignificant size—and upon the top of which stands the town of VIRE. It had been a *fair*-day; and groups of men and women, returning from the town, in their blue and crimson dresses, cheered somewhat the general gloom of the day, and lighted up the features of the landscape. The nearer I approached, the more numerous and incessant were these groups.

Vire is a sort of *Rouen* in miniature—if bustle and population be only considered. In architectural comparison, it is miserably feeble and inferior. The houses are generally built of granite, and look extremely sombre in consequence. The old castle is yet interesting and commanding. But of this presently. I drove to the "*Cheval Blanc*," and bespoke, as usual, a late dinner and beds. The first visit was to the *castle,* but it is right that you should know, before hand, that the town of Vire, which contains a population of about ten thousand souls, stands upon a commanding eminence, in the midst of a very beautiful and picturesque country called the BOCAGE. This country was, in former times, as fruitful in civil wars, horrors, and devastations, as the more celebrated Bocage of the more western part of France during the late Revolution. In short, the Bocage of Normandy was the scene of bloodshed during the Calvinistic or Hugonot persecution. It was in the vicinity of this town, in the parts through which I have travelled—from Caen hitherwards—that the hills and the dales rang with the feats of arms displayed in the alternate discomfiture and success of COLIGNY, CONDE, MONTMOGERY, and MATIGNON.[159]

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But for the Castle. It is situated at the extremity of an open space, terminated by a portion of the boulevards; having, in the foreground, the public library to the left, and a sort of municipal hall to the right: neither of them objects of much architectural consequence. Still nearer in the foreground, is a fountain; whither men, women, and children—but chiefly the second class, in the character of *blanchisseuses*—regularly resort for water; as its bason is usually overflowing. It was in a lucky moment that Mr. Lewis paid a visit to this spot; which his ready pencil transmitted to his sketch-book in a manner too beautiful and faithful not to be followed up by a finished design. I send you a portion of this prettily grouped picture; premising, that the woman to the right, in the foreground, begged leave purposely to sit—or rather stand—for her portrait. The artist, in a short time, was completely surrounded by spectators of his graphic skill.

[Illustration]

The "*Cheval Blanc*"—the name of the hotel at which I reside—should be rather called the "*Cheval Noir*;" for a more dark, dingy, and even dirty residence, for a traveller of any *nasal* or *ocular* sensibility, can be rarely visited. My bed room is hung with tapestry; which, for aught I know to the contrary, may represent the daring exploits of MONTGOMERY and MATIGNON: but which is so begrimed with filth that there is no decyphering the subjects worked upon it.

On leaving the inn—and making your way to the top of the street—you turn to the left; but on looking down, again to the left, you observe, below you, the great high road leading to *Caen*, which has a noble appearance. Indeed, the manner in which this part of Normandy is intersected with the "*routes royales*" cannot fail to strike a stranger; especially as these roads run over hill and dale, amidst meadows, and orchards, equally abundant in their respective harvests. The immediate vicinity of the town is as remarkable for its picturesque objects of scenery as for its high state of cultivation; and a stroll upon the heights, in whatever part visited, will not fail to repay you for the certain disappointment to be experienced within the streets of the town. Portions of the scenery, from these heights, are not unlike those in Derbyshire, about Matlock. There is plenty of rock, of shrubs, and of fern; while another *Derwent*, less turbid and muddy, meanders below. Thus much for a general, but hasty sketch of the town of Vire. My next shall give you some detail of the *interior* of a few of the houses, of which I may be said to have hitherto only contemplated the *roofs*.

And yet I must not close my despatch without performing my promise about the CASTLE; of which indeed (as you will see by the subjoined miniature view) only a sort of ruinous shell remains. Its age may be a little towards the end of the thirteenth century. The stone is of a deep reddish tint: and although what remains is only a portion of the *keep*, yet I can never suppose it, even in its state of original integrity, to have been of very capacious dimensions. Its site is most commanding.

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[Illustration]

[157] The reader will find the fullest particulars relating to this once-distinguished family, in *Halstead's Genealogical Memoirs of Noble Families, &c*.: a book it is true, of extreme scarcity. In lieu of it let him consult *Collin's Noble Families*.

[158] [Mons. Licquet tells us, that in 1439, a Seigneur of Gratot, ceded the rock of Granville to an English Nobleman, on the day of St. John the Baptist, on receiving the homage of a hat of red roses. The Nobleman intended to build a town there; but Henry VI. dispossessed him of it, and built fortifications in 1440. Charles VII. in turn, dispossessed Henry; but the additional fortifications which he built were demolished by order of Louis XIV. &c.]

[159] An epitomised account of these civil commotions will be found in the *Histoire Militaire des Bocains, par* M. RICHARD SEGUIN; *a Vire*, 1816; 12mo. of which work, and of its author, some notice will be taken in the following pages.

LETTER XVIII.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. MONSIEUR ADAM. MONSIEUR DE LARENAUDIERE. OLIVIER BASSELIN. M.
SEGUIN. THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

It is a sad rainy day; and having no temptation to stir abroad, I have shut myself up by the side of a huge wood fire—(surrounded by the dingy tapestry, of which my last letter did not make very honourable mention) in a thoroughly communicative mood—to make you acquainted with all that has passed since my previous despatch. Books and the Bibliomania be the chief "burden of my present song!" You may remember, in my account of the public library at Caen, that some mention was made of a certain OLIVIER BASSELIN—whom I designated as the DRUNKEN BARNABY *of Normandy*. Well, my friend—I have been at length made happy, and comforted in the extreme, by the possession of a copy of the *Vaudevires* of that said Olivier Basselin—and from the hands, too, of one of his principal editors ... Monsieur Lanon de Larenaudiere, Avocat, et Maire, de Tallevende-le-Petit. This copy I intend (as indeed I told the donor) for the beloved library at Althorp. But let me tell my tale my own way.

Hard by the hotel of the *Cheval Blanc*, (the best, bad as it is—and indeed the only one in the town) lives a printer of the name of ADAM. He is the principal, and the most respectable of his brethren in the same craft. After discoursing upon sundry desultory topics—and particularly examining the *books of Education*, among which I was both

surprised and pleased to find the *Distichs of Muretus*[160]—I expressed my regret at having travelled through so many towns of Normandy without meeting with one single copy of the *Vaudevires of Olivier Basselin* for sale. “It is not very surprising, Sir, since it is a privately printed book, and was never intended for sale.

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The impression too is very limited. You know, Sir, that the book was published here—-and—" "Then I begin to be confident about obtaining it"—replied I. "Gently, Sir;—" resumed Monsieur Adam—"it is not to be bought, even here. But do you know no one...?" "Not a creature." "Well, Sir, take courage. You are an Englishman. One of its principal editors—a very gallant *Bibliomaniac*—who is a great collector and lover of the literature of your country—(here I picked up courage and gaiety of heart) lives in this town. He is President of the Tribunal. Go to him." Seeing me hesitate, in consequence of not having a letter of introduction—"Ce n'est rien (said he) allez tout-droit. Il aime vos compatriotes; et soyez persuade de l'accueil le plus favorable." Methought Monsieur Adam spake more eloquently than I had yet heard a Norman speak.[161]

In two seconds I quitted his shop, (promising to return with an account of my reception) and five minutes brought me into the presence of Monsieur Lanon de Larenaudiere, President du Tribunal, &c. It is not possible for me to convey to you a notion of the warmth, cordiality, and joyousness of heart, that marked the reception which this gentleman instantly gave me: and I will frankly own that I was as much "abashed" as ever our ancient friend Caxton had been—in the presence of his patroness the Duchess of Burgundy. I followed my new bibliomaniacal acquaintance rapidly up stairs; and witnessed, with extreme pleasure, a few bundles of books (some of them English) lying upon the window seats of the first landing-place; much after the fashion followed in a certain long, rambling, and antique residence, not quite three quarters of a mile from the towers of Westminster Abbey.

On gaining the first floor, mine host turned the keys of the doors of two contiguous rooms, and exclaimed, "VOILA MA BIBLIOTHEQUE!" The air of conscious triumph with which these words were uttered, delighted me infinitely; but my delight was much increased on a leisurely survey of one of the prettiest, most useful, and commendable collections of books, chiefly in the department of the Belles-Lettres, which I had ever witnessed. Monsieur de Larenaudiere has a library of about 9000 volumes, of which *eight hundred are English*. But the owner is especially fond of poetical archaeology; in other words, of collecting every work which displays the progress of French and English poetry in the middle and immediately following ages; and talks of *Trouveurs* and *Troubadours* with an enthusiasm approaching to extacy. Meanwhile he points his finger to our Warton, Ellis, Ritson, and Southey; tells you how dearly he loves them; but yet leads you to conclude that he *rather* prefers *Le Grand, Ginguene, Sismondi*, and *Raynouard*. Of the venerable living oracle in these matters, the Abbe de la Rue, he said he considered him as "un peu trop systematique." In short, M. de Larenaudiere has almost a complete critical collection,

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in our tongue, upon the subject of old poetry; and was most anxious and inquisitive about the present state of cultivation of that branch of literature in England: adding, that he himself meditated a work upon the French poetry of the XIIth and XIIIth centuries. He said he thought his library might be worth about 25,000 francs: nor did I consider such a valuation overcharged. He talks rapidly, earnestly, and incessantly; but he talks well: and spoke of the renown of a certain library in *St. James's Place*, in a manner which could not fail to quicken the pulse and warm the blood of its Librarian. I concluded an interview of nearly two hours, by his compliance with my wish to dine with me on the following day: although he was quite urgent in bargaining for the previous measure of my tasting his *potage* and *vol au vent*. But the shortness and constant occupation of my time would not allow me to accede to it. M. de Larenaudiere then went to a cabinet-like cupboard, drew forth an uncut copy, stitched in blue spotted paper, of his beloved *Vaudevires* of OLIVIER BASSELIN:[162] and presenting it to me, added "Conservez le, pour l'amour de moi." You may be assured that I received such a present in the most gracious manner I was capable of—but instantly and honestly added—"permettez qu'il soit depose dans la bibliotheque de Milord S...? "C'est la meme chose"—rejoined he; and giving me the address of the public librarian, we separated in the most cordial manner till the morrow.

I posted back to Monsieur Adam, the printer and bookseller, and held aloft my blue-covered copy of the *Vaudevires* as an unquestionable proof of the successful result of my visit to Monsieur La Renaudiere. Leaving the precious cargo with him, and telling him that I purposed immediately visiting the public library, he seemed astonished at my eagerness about books—and asked me if I had ever *published* any thing *bibliographical*? "Car enfin, Monsieur, la pluspart des *Virois* ne savent rien de la literature angloise"—concluded he ... But I had just witnessed a splendid exception to this sweeping clause of censure. I then sought the residence of the Abbe Du MORTUEUX, the public librarian. That gentleman was from home, at a dinner party. I obtained information of the place where he might be found; and considering *two* o'clock to be rather too early an hour (even in France) to disturb a gentleman during the exercise of so important a function, I strolled in the neighbourhood of the street, where he was regaling, for a full hour and half: when, at the expiration of that time, I ventured to knock at the door of a very respectable mansion, and to enquire for the bibliographical Abbe. "He is here, Sir, and has just done dinner. May I give him your name?" "I am a stranger: an Englishman; who, on the recommendation of Monsieur Larenaudiere, wishes to see the public library. But I will call again in about an hour."

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“By no means: by no means: the Abbe will see you immediately.” And forthwith appeared a very comely, tall, and respectable-looking gentleman, with his hair en plein costume, both as to form and powder. Indeed I had rarely before witnessed so prepossessing a figure. His salutation and address were most gracious and winning; and he told me that I had nothing to do but to accompany him to the place which I wished to visit. Without even returning to his friends, he took his hat—and in one minute, to my surprise, I found myself in the street with the Abbe de Mortueux, in the high way to the PUBLIC LIBRARY. In our way thither our discourse was constant and unrestrained. “You appear here; Monsieur l’Abbe, to be partial to literature;... but allow me first to congratulate you on the beautiful environs of your town.” “For literature in general, we are pretty well disposed. In regard to the beauties of the immediate neighbourhood of Vire, we should be unworthy inhabitants indeed, if we were not sensible of them.” In five minutes we reached the Library.

The shutters of the room were fastened, but the worthy Abbe opened them in a trice; when I saw, for the first time in Normandy, what appeared to be a genuine, old, unmutilated, unpillaged library. The room could be scarcely more than twenty-two feet square. I went instantly to work, with eyes and hands, in the ardent hope, and almost full persuasion, of finding something in the shape of a good old Greek or Roman Classic, or French Chronicle, or Romance. But, alas, I looked, and handled the tomes in vain! The history of the library is this:—The founder was a Monsieur PICHON; who, on being taken prisoner by the English, at the capture of Louisburg in 1758, resided a long time in England under the name of TYRREL, and lived in circumstances of respectability and even of opulence. There—whether on the dispersion of the libraries of our Meads, Foulkes’, and Rawlinsons, I know not—he made his collection; took his books over with him to Jersey, where he died in 1780: and bequeathed them, about 3000 in number, to his native town of Vire. M. du Mortueux, who gave me these particulars, has drawn up a little memorial about Pichon. His portrait, executed by an English artist, (whilst he lived among us) adorns the library; with which I hope it will go down to a distant and grateful posterity. The colouring of this portrait is faded: but it is evident that Monsieur Pichon had an expressive and sensible physiognomy.

Wonderful to relate, this collection of books was untouched during the Revolution; while the neighbouring library of the *Cordeliers* was ransacked without mercy. But I regret to say that the books in the cupboards are getting sadly damp. Do not expect any thing very marvellous in the details of this collection; The old-fashioned library doors, of wood, are quite in character with what they protect. Among the earlier printed books, I saw a very bad copy of *Sweynheym*

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and Pannartz's edition of the *De Civitate Dei* of St. Austin, of the date of 1470; and a large folio of *Gering's* impression of the *Sermons of Leonard de Utino* printed about the year 1478. This latter was rather a fine book. A little black-letter Latin Bible by Froben, of the date of 1495, somewhat tempted me; but I could not resist asking, in a manner half serious and half jocose, whether a napoleon would not secure me the possession of a piquant little volume of black-letter tracts, printed by my old friend Guido Mercator? [163] The Abbe smiled: observing—"mon ami, on fait voir les livres ici; on les lit meme: mais on ne les vend pas." I felt the force of this pointed reply: and was resolved never again to ask an Ecclesiastic to part with a black-letter volume, even though it should be printed by "my old friend Guido Mercator."

Seeing there was very little more deserving of investigation, I enquired of my amiable guide about the "LIBRARY OF THE CORDELIERS," of which he had just made mention. He told me that it consisted chiefly of canon and civil law, and had been literally almost destroyed: that he had contrived however to secure a great number of "rubbishing theological books," (so he called them!) which he sold for *three sous* a piece—and with the produce of which he bought many excellent works for the library. I should like to have had the sifting of this "theological rubbish!" It remained only to thank the Abbe most heartily for his patient endurance of my questions and searches, and particularly to apologise for bringing him from his surrounding friends. He told me, beginning with a "soyez tranquille," that the matter was not worth either a thought or a syllable; and ere we quitted the library, he bade me observe the written entries of the numbers of students who came daily thither to read. There were generally (he told me) from fifteen to twenty "hard at it"—and I saw the names of not fewer than *ninety-two* who aspired to the honour and privilege of having access to the BIBLIOTHECA PICHONIANA.

For the third time, in the same day, I visited Monsieur Adam; to carry away, like a bibliomaniacal Jason, the fleece I had secured. I saw there a grave, stout gentleman—-who saluted me on my entrance, and who was introduced to me by Monsieur A. by the name of SEGUIN. He had been waiting (he said) full three quarters of an hour to see me, and concluded by observing, that, although a man in business, he had aspired to the honour of authorship. He had written, in fact, two rather interesting—but wretchedly, and incorrectly printed—duodecimo volumes, relating to the BOCAGE,[164] in the immediate vicinity of Vire; and was himself the sole vender and distributer of his publications. On my expressing a wish to possess these books, he quitted the premises, and begged I would wait his return with a copy or two of them. While he was gone, M. Adam took the opportunity of telling me that he was a rich, respectable

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tradesman; but that, having said some severe things of the manufactures of Vire in his *first* publication,[165] relating to the *civil* history of the Bocains, his townsmen sharply resented what they considered as reflections thrown out against them; and M. Seguin was told that perhaps his personal safety was endangered ... He wanted not a second hint—but fled from home with precipitancy: and in his absence the populace suspended his effigy, and burnt it before the door of his house. This, however, did not *cool* the ardour of authorship in M. Seguin. He set about publishing his *military* history of the Bocains; and in the introductory part took occasion to retort upon the violence of his persecutors. To return to M. Seguin. In about ten minutes he appeared, with two copies in his hand—which I purchased, I thought dearly, at five francs each volume; or a napoleon for the four books. After the adventures of this day, I need hardly tell you that I relished a substantial dinner at a late hour, and that I was well satisfied with Vire.

Yesterday M. de Larenaudiere made good his engagement, and dined with me at five, in the salle a manger. This is a large inn; and if good fare depended upon the number and even elegance of female cooks, the traveller ought to expect the very best at the *Cheval Blanc*. The afternoon was so inviting—and my guest having volunteered his services to conduct me to the most beautiful points of view in the immediate neighbourhood—that we each seemed to vie with the other in quickly dispatching what was placed before us; and within thirty-five minutes, from the moment of sitting down, we were in the outskirts of Vire. Never shall I forget that afternoon's ramble. The sun seemed to become more of a golden hue, and the atmosphere to increase in clearness and serenity. A thousand little songsters were warbling in the full-leaved branches of the trees; while the mingled notes of the *blanchisseuses* and the milk-maids, near the banks of the rippling stream below, reached us in a sort of wild and joyous harmony—as we gazed down from the overhanging heights. The meadows were spotted with sheep, and the orchards teemed with the coming fruit. You may form some notion of the value of this rich and picturesque scenery, when I tell you that M. de Larenaudiere possesses land, in the immediate vicinity of Vire, which lets per acre at the rate of *6l. 6s.* English. My guide was all gaiety of heart, and activity of step. I followed him through winding paths and devious tracks, amidst coppice-wood and fern—not however till I had viewed, from one particular spot upon the heights, a most commanding and interesting panorama of the town of Vire.

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In our perambulation, we discoursed of English poetry; and I found that THOMSON was as great a favourite with my guide as with the rest of his countrymen. Indeed he frankly told me that he had translated him into French verse, and intended to publish his translation. I urged him to quote specimens; which he did with a readiness and force, and felicity of version, that quite delighted me. He thoroughly understands the original; and in the description of a cataract, or mountain torrent, from the Summer, he appeared to me almost to surpass it. My guide then proceeded to quote Young and Pope, and delivered his opinion of our two great Whig and Tory Reviews. He said he preferred the politics and vivacity of the *Edinburgh*, but thought the *Quarterly* more instructive and more carefully written. "Enfin (he concluded) j'aime infiniment votre gouvernement, et vos ecrivains; mais j'aime moins le peuple Anglois." I replied that he had at least very recently shewn an exception to this opinion, in his treatment of *one* among this *very* people. "C'est une autre chose"—replied he briskly, and laughingly—"vous allez voir deux de vos compatriotes, qui sont mes intimes, et vous en serez bien content!" So saying, we continued our route through a delightful avenue of beech-trees, upon the most elevated part within the vicinity of the town; and my companion bade me view from thence the surrounding country. It was rich and beautiful in the extreme; and with perfect truth, I must say, resembled much more strongly the generality of our own scenery than what I had hitherto witnessed in Normandy. But the sun was beginning to cast his shadows broader and broader, and where was the residence of Monsieur and Madame S——?

It was almost close at hand. We reached it in a quarter of an hour—but the inmates were unluckily from home. The house is low and long, but respectable in appearance both within and without. The approach to it is through a pretty copse, terminated by a garden; and the surrounding grounds are rather tastefully laid out. A portion of it indeed had been trained into something in the shape of a labyrinth; in the centre of which was a rocky seat, embedded as it were in moss—and from which some fine glimpses were caught of the surrounding country. The fragrance from the orchard trees, which had not yet quite shed their blossoms, was perfectly delicious; while the stillness of evening added to the peculiar harmony of the whole. We had scarcely sauntered ten minutes before Madame arrived. She had been twelve years in France, and spoke her own language so imperfectly, or rather so unintelligibly, that I begged of her to resume the French. Her reception of us was most hospitable: but we declined cakes and wine, on account of the lateness of the hour. She told us that her husband was in possession of from fourscore to a hundred acres of the most productive land; and regretted that he was from home, on a visit

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to a neighbouring gentleman; assuring us, if we could stay, that he would be heartily glad to see us—"especially any of his *countrymen*, when introduced by Monsieur de Larenaudiere." It was difficult to say who smiled and bowed with the greater complacency, at this double-shotted compliment. I now pressed our retreat homewards. We bade this agreeable lady farewell, and returned down the heights, and through the devious paths by which we had ascended,

While talk of various kind deceived the road.

A more active and profitable day has not yet been devoted to Norman objects, whether of art or of nature. Tomorrow I breakfast with my friend and guide, and immediately afterwards push on for FALAISE. A cabriolet is hired, but doubts are entertained respecting the practicability of the route. My next epistle will be therefore from Falaise —where the renowned William the Conqueror was born, whose body we left entombed at Caen. The day is clearing up; and I yet hope for a stroll upon the site of the castle.

[160] "*Les Distiques de Muret, traduits en vers Francais, par Aug. A*. Se vend a Vire, chez Adam imprimeur-lib. An. 1809. The reader may not be displeased to have a specimen of the manner of rendering these distichs into French verse:

1.
Dum tener es, MURETE, avidis haec auribus hauri:
Nec memori modo conde animo, sed et exprime factis.

2. Imprimis venerare Deum; venerare parentes: Et quos ipsa loco tibi dat natura parentum. &c.

1.
Jeune encore, o mon fils! pour etre homme de bien,
Ecoute, et dans ton coeur grave cet entretien.

2. *Sers, honors le Dieu qui crea tous les etres; Sois fils respectueux, sois docile a tes maitres. &c*.

[161] [Smartly and felicitously rendered by my translator *Mons*. Licquet; "Jamais bouche Normande ne m'avait paru plus eloquente que celle de M. Adam." vol. ii. p. 220.]

[162] The present seems to be the proper place to give the reader some account of this once famous Bacchanalian poet. It is not often that France rests her pretensions to poetical celebrity upon such claims. Love, romantic adventures, gaiety of heart and of disposition, form

the chief materials of her minor poems; but we have here before us, in the person and productions of OLIVIER BASSELIN, a rival to ANACREON of old; to our own RICHARD BRAITHWAIT, VINCENT BOURNE, and THOMAS MOORE.

As this volume may not be of general notoriety, the reader may be prepared to receive an account of its contents with the greater readiness and satisfaction. First, then, of the life and occupations of Olivier Basselin; which, as Goujet has entirely passed over all notice of him, we can gather only from the editors of the present

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> edition of his works. Basselin appears to have been a *Virois*; in other words, an inhabitant of the town of Vire. But he had a strange propensity to rusticating, and preferred the immediate vicinity of Vire—its quiet little valleys, running streams, and rocky recesses—to a more open and more distant residence. In such places, therefore, he carried with him his flasks of cider and his flagons of wine. Thither he resorted with his “boon and merry companions,” and there he poured forth his ardent and unpremeditated strains. These “strains” all savoured of the jovial propensities of their author; it being very rarely that tenderness of sentiment, whether connected with friendship or love, is admitted into his compositions. He was the thorough-bred Anacreon of France at the close of the fifteenth century.

The town of Vire, as the reader may have already had intimation, is the chief town of that department of Normandy called the BOCAGE; and in this department few places have been, of old, more celebrated than the *Vaux de Vire*; on account of the number of manufactories which have existed there from time immemorial. It derives its name from two principal valleys, in the form of a T, of which the base (if it may be so called—-“jambage”) rests upon the *Place du Chateau de Vire*. It is sufficiently contiguous to the town to be considered among the fauxbourgs. The rivers *Vire* and *Virene*, which unite at the bridge of Vaux, run somewhat rapidly through the valleys. These rivers are flanked by manufactories of paper and cloth, which, from the XVth century, have been distinguished for their prosperous condition. Indeed, BASSELIN himself was a sort of cloth manufacturer. In this valley he passed his life in fulling his cloths, and “in composing those gay and delightful songs which are contained in the volume under consideration.” *Discours Preliminaire*, p. 17, &c. Olivier Basselin is the parent of the title *Vaudevire*—which has since been corrupted into *Vaudeville*. From the observation of his critics, Basselin appears to have been the FATHER of BACCHANALIAN POETRY in France. He frequented public festivals, and was a welcome guest at the tables of the rich; where the Vaudevire was in such request, that it is supposed to have superseded the “Conte, or Fabliau, or the Chanson d’Amour."[B] p. xviij: Sur ce point-la, soyez tranquille: Nos neveux, j’en suis bien certain, Se souviendront de BASSELIN, *Pere joyeux du Vaudeville:* p. xxiij.

I proceed to submit a few specimens of the muse of this ancient ANACREON of France; and must necessarily begin with a few of those that are chiefly of a bacchanalian quality.

VAUDEVIRE II.

AYANT le doz au feu et le ventre a la table,
Estant parmi les pots pleins de vin delectable,
Ainsi comme ung poulet
Je ne me laisseray morir de la pepie,
Quant en debvroye avoir la face cramoisie
Et le nez violet;

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QUANT mon nez devendra de couleur rouge ou perse,
Porteray les couleurs que cherit ma maitresse.
Le vin rent le teint beau.
Vault-il pas mieulx avoir la couleur rouge et vive,
Riche de beaulx rubis, que si pasle et chetive
Ainsi qu'ung beuveur d'eau.

VAUDEVIRE XI.

CERTES *hoc vinum est bonus*:
Du maulvais latin ne nous chaille,
Se bien congru n'estoit ce jus,
Le tout ne vauldroit rien que vaille.
Escolier j'appris que bon vin
Aide bien au maulvais latin.

CESTE sentence praticquant,
De latin je n'en appris guere;
Y pensant estre assez scavant,
Puisque bon vin aimoye a boire.
Lorsque maulvais vin on a beu,
Latin n'est bon, fust-il congru.
Fy du latin, parlons francois,
Je m'y recongnois davantaige.
Je vueil boire une bonne fois,
Car voicy ung maistre breuvaige;
Certes se j'en beuvoye soubvent,
Je deviendroye fort eloquent.

VAUDEVIRE XXII.

HE! qu'avons-nous affaire
Du Turc ny du Sophy,
Don don.
Pourveu que j'aye a boire,
Des grandeurs je dis fy.
Don don.
Trincque, Seigneur, le vin est bon:
Hoc acuit ingenium.

QUI songe en vin ou vigne,
Est ung presaige heureux,
Don don.
Le vin a qui rechigne

Rent le coeur tout joyeux,
Don don.
Trincque, Seigneur, le vin est bon:
Hoc acuit ingenium.
&c.

The poetry of Basselin is almost wholly devoted to the celebration of the physical effects of wine upon the body and animal spirits; and the gentler emotions of the TENDER PASSION are rarely described in his numbers. In consequence, he has not invoked the Goddess of Beauty to associate with the God of Wine: to

"Drop from her myrtle one leaf in his bowl;"

or, when he does venture to introduce the society of a female, it is done after the following fashion—which discovers however an extreme facility and melody of rhythm. The burden of the song seems wonderfully accordant with a Bacchanalian note.

VAUDEVIRE XIX.

En ung jardin d'ombraige tout couvert,
Au chaud du jour, ay treuve Madalaine,
Qui pres le pie d'ung sicomorre vert
Dormoit au bort d'une claire fontaine;
Son lit estoit de thin et marjolaine.
Son tetin frais n'estoit pas bien cache:
D'amour touche,
Pour contempler sa beaute souveraine
Incontinent je m'en suys approche.
Sus, sus, qu'on se resveille,
Voicy vin excellent
Qui faict lever l'oreille;
Il faict mol qui n'en prent.

Je n'eus pouvoir, si belle la voyant,
De m'abstenir de baizotter sa bouche;
Si bien qu'enfin la belle s'esveillant,
Me regardant avec ung oeil farouche,
Me dit ces mots: Biberon, ne me touche.
Belle fillette a son aize ne couche
Avecq celuy qui ne faict qu'yvrongner,

&c. &c.

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The preceding extracts will suffice. This is a volume in every respect interesting—both to the literary antiquary and to the Book-Collector. A NEW EDITION of this work has appeared under the editorial care of M. Louis Dubois, published at Caen in 1821, 8vo. obtainable at a very moderate price.[B] The host, at these public and private festivals, usually called upon some one to recite or sing a song, chiefly of an amatory or chivalrous character; and this custom prevailed more particularly in Normandy than in other parts of France:

> Usaige est en Normandie,
> Que qui hebergiez est qu'il die
> Fable ou Chanson a son oste.

See the authorities cited at page XV, of this Discours preliminaire.

[163] Some account of this printer, together with a fac-simile of his device, may be seen in the *Bibliographical Decameron*, vol. ii. p. 33-6.

[164] The first publication is entitled "*Essai sur l'Histoire de l'Industrie du Bocage en General et de la Ville de Vire sa capitale en particulier, &c.*" Par M. RICHARD SEGUIN. *A Vire, chez Adam, Imprimeur, an* 1810, 12mo. It is not improbable that I may have been the only importer of this useful and crowdedly-paged duodecimo volume; which presents us with so varied and animated a picture of the manners, customs, trades, and occupations of the Bocains and the Virois.

[165] I subjoin an extract which relates to the

DRESS AND CHARACTER OF THE WOMEN.

"Quant au COSTUME DES FEMMES d'aujourd'hui, comme il faudrait un volume entier pour le decrire, je n'ai pas le courage de m'engager dans ce labyrinte de ridicules et de frivolites. Ce que j'en dirai seulement en general, c'est qu'autant les femmes du temps passe, etaient decentes et chastes, et se faisaient gloire d'etre graves et modestes, autant celles de notre siecle mettent tout en oeuvre pour paraitre cyniques et voluptueuses. Nous ne sommes plus au temps ou les plus grandes dames se faisaient honneur de porter la cordeliere.[C] Leurs habillemens etaient aussi larges et fermes, que celui des femmes de nos jours sont ouverts et legers, et d'une finesse que les formes du corps, au moindre mouvement, se dessinent, de maniere a ne laisser rien ignorer. A peine se couvrent-elles le sein d'un voile transparent tres-leger ou de je ne sais quelle palatine qu'elles nomment point-a-jour, qui, en couvrant tout, ne cache rien; en sorte que si elles n'etalent pas tous leurs charmes a decouvert, c'est que les hommes les moins scrupuleux, qui se contentent de les persifler, en seraient revoltes

tout-a-fait. D’ailleurs, c’est que ce n’est pas encore la mode; plusieurs poussent meme l’impudence jusqu’a venir dans nos temples sans coiffure, les cheveux herisses comme des furies; d’autres, par une bizarrerie qu’on ne peut expliquer se

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depouillent, autant qu'il est en leur pouvoir, des marques de leur propre sexe, sembleut rougir d'etre femmes, et deviennent ridicules en voulant paraitre demi-hommes."Apres avoir deshonore l'habit des femmes, elles ont encore voulu prostituer CELUI DES HOMMES. On les a vues adopter successivement les chapeaux, les redingotes, les vestes, les gilets, les bottes et jusqu'aux boutons. Enfin si, au lieu de jupons, elles avaient pu s'accommoder de l'usage de la culotte, la metamorphose etait complette; mais elles ont prefere les robes trainantes; c'est dommage que la nature ne leur ait donne une troisieme main, qui leur serait necessaire pour tenir cette longue queue, qui souvent patrouille la boue ou balaye la poussiere. Plut a Dieu que les anciennes lois fussent encore en vigueur, ou ceux et celles qui portaient des habits indecent etaient obliges d'aller a Rome pour en obtenir l'absolution, qui ne pouvait leur etre accordee que par le souverain pontife, &c."Les femmes du Bocage, et sur-tout les Viroises, joignent a un esprit vif et enjoue les qualites du corps les plus estimables. Blondes et brunes pour le plus grand nombre, elles sont de la moyenne taille, mais bien formees: elles ont le teint frais et fleuri, l'oeil vif, le visage vermeil, la demarche leste, un air etoffe et tres elegantes dans tout leur maintien. Si on dit avec raison que les Bayeusines sont belles, les filles du Bocage, qui sont leurs voisines, ne leur cedent en aucune maniere, car en general le sang est tres-beau en ce pays. Quant aux talens spirituels, elles les possedent a un degre eminent. Elles parlent avec aisance, ont le repartie prompte, et outre les soins du menage, ou elles excellent de telle sorte qu'il n'y a point de contrees ou il y ait plus de linge, elles entendent a merveille, et font avec succes tout le detail du commerce." p. 238.

> These passages, notwithstanding the amende honorable of the concluding paragraph, raised a storm of indignation against the unsuspecting author! Nor can we be surprised at it.

This publication is really filled with a great variety of curious historical detail—throughout which is interspersed much that relates to "romaunt lore" and romantic adventures. The civil wars between MONTGOMERY and MATIGNON form alone a very important and interesting portion of the volume; and it is evident that the author has exerted himself with equal energy and anxiety to do justice to both parties—except that occasionally he betrays his antipathies against the Hugonots.[D] I will quote the concluding passage of this work. There may be at least half a score readers who may think it something more than merely historically curious: "Je finirai donc ici mon Histoire. Je n'ai point parle d'un grand nombre des faits d'armes et d'actions glorieuses, qui se sont passes dans la guerre de l'independance des Etats-Unis d'Amerique ou beaucoup

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de Bocains ont eu part; mais mon principal dessein a ete de traiter des guerres qui ont eu lieu dans le Bocage; ainsi je crois avoir atteint mon but, qui etait d'ecrire l'Histoire Militaire des Bocains par des faits et non par des phrases, je ne peux cependant omettre une circonstance glorieuse pour le Bocage; c'est la visite que le bon et infortune Louis XVI. fit aux Bocains en 1786. Ce grand Monarque dont les vues etaient aussi sages que profondes, avait resolu de faire construire le beau Port de Cherbourg, ouvrage vraiment Royal, qui est une des plus nobles entreprises qui aient ete faites depuis l'origine de la Monarchie. Les Bocains sentirent l'avantage d'un si grand bienfait. Le Roi venant visiter les travaux, fut accueilli avec un enthousiasme presqu'impossible a decrire, ainsi que les Princes qui l'accompagnaient. Sa marche rassemblait a un triomphe. Les peuples accouraient en foule du fond des campagnes, et bordaient la route, faisant retentir les airs de chants d'alegresse et des cris millions de fois repetes de Vive le Roi! Musique, Processions, Arcs de triomphe, Chemins jonches de fleurs; tout fut prodigue. Les villes de Caen, de Bayeux, de Saint-Lo, de Carentan, de Valognes, se surpasserent dans cette occasion, pour prouver a S.M. leur amour et leur reconnaissance; mais rien ne fut plus brillant que l'entree de ce grand Roi a Cherbourg. Un peuple immense, le clerge, toute la noblesse du pays, le son des cloches, le bruit du canon, les acclamations universelles prouverent au Monarque mieux encore que la pompe toute Royale et les fetes magnifiques que la ville ne cessa de lui donner tous les jours, que les coeurs de tous les Bocains etaient a lui." p. 428.[C] "Ceinture alors regardee comme le symbole de la continence. La reine de France en decorait les femmes titrees dont la conduite etait irreprochable." *Hist. de la reun. de Bretagne a la France par l'abbe Irail*.[D] "Les soldats Huguenots commirent dans cette occasion, toutes sortes de cruautes, d'infamies et de sacrileges, jusqu'a meler les Saintes Hosties avec l'avoine qu'ils donnaient a leurs chevaux: mais Dieu permit qu'ils n'en voulurent pas manger." p. 369.

LETTER XIX.

DEPARTURE FROM VIRE. CONDE. PONT OUILLY. ARRIVAL AT FALAISE. HOTEL OF THE GRAND TURC. THE CASTLE OF FALAISE. BIBLIOMANIACAL INTERVIEW.

Falaise.

Here I am—or rather, here I have been—my most excellent friend, for the last four days—and from hence you will receive probably the last despatch from NORMANDY——from the "land (as I told you in my first epistle) of "castles, churches, and ancient chivalry." An old, well-situated, respectably-inhabited, and even flourishing, town—the birth-place too of our renowned FIRST WILLIAM:—weather, the most serene and inviting—and hospitality, thoroughly hearty, and after the English fashion:—these have all conspired to put me in tolerably good spirits. My health, too, thank God, has been of

late a little improved. You wish me to continue the thread of my narrative unbroken; and I take it up therefore from the preparation for my departure from Vire.

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I breakfasted, as I told you I was about to do, with my friend and guide *Mons*. de Larenaudiere; who had prepared quite a sumptuous repast for our participation. Coffee, eggs, sweetmeats, cakes, and all the comfortable paraphernalia of an inviting breakfast-table, convinced us that we were in well-furnished and respectable quarters. Madame did the honours of the meal in perfectly good taste; and one of the loveliest children I ever saw—a lad, of about five or six years of age—with a profusion of hair of the most delicate quality and colour, gave a sort of joyous character to our last meal at Vire. The worthy host told me to forget him, when I reached my own country;[166] and that, if ever business or pleasure brought me again into Normandy, to remember that the Maire de Tallevende-le-Petit would-be always happy to renew his assurances of hospitality. At the same time, he entreated me to pay attention to a list of English books which he put into my hands; and of which he stood considerably in need. We bade farewell in the true English fashion, by a hearty shake of the hands; and, mounting our voiture, gave the signal for departure. “Au plaisir de vous revoir!”—’till a turning of the carriage deprived us of the sight of each other. It is not easy—and I trust it is not natural—for me to forget the last forty-eight hours spent in the interesting town of VIRE!

Our route to this place was equally grand and experimental; grand, as to the width of the road, and beauty of the surrounding country—but experimental, inasmuch as a part of the *route royale* had been broken up, and rendered wholly impassable for carriages of any weight. Our own, of its kind, was sufficiently light; with a covering of close wicker-work, painted after the fashion of some of our bettermost tilted carts. One Norman horse, in full condition of flesh, with an equal portion of bone and muscle, was to convey us to this place, which cannot be less than twenty-two good long English miles from Vire. The carriage had no springs; and our seat was merely suspended by pieces of leather fastened at each end. At *Conde*, about one-third of the distance, we baited, to let both man and horse breathe over their dinners; while, strolling about that prettily situated little town, we mingled with the inhabitants, and contemplated the various faces (it being market-day) with no ordinary degree of gratification. Amidst the bustle and variety of the scene, our ears were greeted by the air of an itinerant ballad-singer: nor will you be displeased if I send you a copy of it:—since it is gratifying to find any thing like a return to the good old times of the sixteenth century.

VIVE LE ROI, VIVE L’AMOUR.

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Francois Premier, nous dit l'histoire, Etoit la fleur des Chevaliers, Pres d'Etampes aux champs de gloire Il recueillit myrtes et lauriers; Sa maitresse toujours fidele, Le payant d'un tendre retour, Lui chantant cette ritournelle; *Vive le Roi, vive l'Amour*.Henri, des princes le modele, Ton souvenir est dans nos coeurs, Par la charmante Gabrielle Ton front fut couronne de fleurs; De la Ligue domptant la rage, Tu sus triompher tour-a-tour, Par la clemence et ton courage: *Vive le Roi, vive l'Amour*.Amant cheri de la Valliere, Des ennemis noble vainqueur, LOUIS savoit combattre et plaire, Guide par l'Amour et l'honneur; A son retour de la Victoire, Entoure d'une aimable cour, Il entendoit ce cri de gloire: *Vive le Roi, vive l'Amour*.

&c.

There was a freshness of tint, and a comeliness of appearance, among the bourgeoises and common people, which were not to be eclipsed even by the belles of Coutances. Our garcon de poste and his able-bodied quadruped having each properly recruited themselves, we set forward—by preference—to walk up the very long and somewhat steep hill which rises on the other side of Conde towards *Pont Ouilly*—in the route hither. Perhaps this was the most considerable ascent we had mounted on foot, since we had left Rouen. The view from the summit richly repaid the toil of using our legs. It was extensive, fruitful, and variegated; but neither rock nor mountain scenery; nor castles, nor country seats; nor cattle, nor the passing traveller—served to mark or to animate it. It was still, pure nature, upon a vast and rich scale: and as the day was fine, and my spirits good, I was resolved to view and to admire.

Pont Ouilly lies in a hollow; with a pretty winding river, which seems to run through its centre. The surrounding hills are gently undulating; and as we descended to the Inn, we observed, over the opposite side of the town, upon the summit of one of the hills, a long procession of men and women—headed by an ecclesiastic, elevating a cross—-who were about to celebrate, at some little distance, one of their annual festivals. The effect—as the procession came in contact with a bright blue sky, softened by distance—was uncommonly picturesque ... but the day was getting on fast, and there was yet a considerable distance to perform,—while, in addition, we had to encounter the most impassable part of the road. Besides, I had not yet eaten a morsel since I had left Vire. Upon holding a consultation, therefore, it was resolved to make for the inn, and to dine there. A more sheltered, rural, spot cannot be conceived. It resembled very many of the snug scenes in South Wales. Indeed the whole country was of a character similar to many parts of Monmouthshire; although with a miserable draw-back in respect to the important feature of *wood*. Through the whole of Normandy, you miss those grand

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and overshadowing masses of oak, which give to Monmouthshire, and its neighbouring county of Glocester, that rich and majestic appearance which so decidedly marks the character of those counties. However, we are now at the inn at Pont Ouilly. A dish of river fish, gudgeons, dace, and perch, was speedily put in requisition. Good wine, “than which France could boast no better!” and a roast fowl, which the daughter of the hostess “knew how to dress to admiration” ... was all that this humble abode could afford us.” “But we were welcome:”—that is, upon condition that we paid our reckoning....

The dinner would be ready in a “short half hour.” Mr. Lewis, went to the bridge, to look around, for the purpose of exercising his pencil: while I sauntered more immediately about the house. Within five minutes a well-looking, and even handsome, young woman—of an extremely fair complexion—her hair cut close behind—her face almost smothered in a white cap which seemed of crape—and habited in a deep black—-passed quickly by me, and ascended a flight of steps, leading to the door of a very humble mansion. She smiled graciously at the *aubergiste* as she passed her, and quickly disappeared. On enquiry, I was told that she was a nun, who, since the suppression of the convent to which she had belonged, earned her livelihood by teaching some of the more respectable children in the village. She had just completed her twentieth year. I was now addressed by a tall, bluff, shabby-looking man—who soon led me to understand that he was master of the inn where my “suite” was putting up;—that I had been egregiously deceived about the nature of the road—for that it was totally impossible for *one* horse:—even the very best in Normandy—(and where will you find better? added he, parenthetically—as I here give it to you) to perform the journey with such a voiture and such a weight of luggage behind.” I was struck equally with amazement and woe at this intelligence. The unpitying landlord saw my consternation. “Hark you, sir... (rejoined he) if you *must* reach Falaise this evening, there is only one method of doing it. You must have *another horse*.” “Willingly,” I replied. “Yes, sir—but you can have it only upon *one* condition.” “What is that?” “I have some little business at Falaise myself. Allow me to strap about one hundred weight of loaf-sugar at the back of your conveyance, and I myself will be your garcon de poste thither.” I own I thought him about the most impudent fellow I had yet seen in Normandy: but there was no time for resistance. Necessity compelled acquiescence. Accordingly, the dinner being dispatched—which, though good, was charged at six francs a-head—we prepared for our departure.

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But judge of my surprise and increased consternation, when the fellow ordered forth a little runt of a quadruped—in the shape of a horse—which was hardly higher than the lower part of the chest of the animal which brought us from Vire! I remonstrated. The landlord expostulated. I resisted—but the fellow said it was a bargain; and proceeded quietly to deposit at least *two* hundred weight of his refined sugar at the back of the carriage. This Lilliputian horse was made the leader. The landlord mounted on the front seat, with our Vire post-boy by the side of him; and sounding his whip, with a most ear-piercing whoop and hollow, we sprung forward for Falaise—which we were told we should reach before sunset. You can hardly conceive the miseries of this cross-road journey. The route royale was, in fact, completely impassable; because they were repairing it. Alarmed at the ruggedness of the cross-road, where one wheel was in a rut of upwards of a foot deep, and the other elevated in proportion—we got out, and resolved to push on a-foot. We walked for nearly two leagues, before our conveyance overtook us—so harassing and so apparently insurmountable seemed to be the road. But the cunning aubergiste had now got rid of his leader. He said that it was only necessary to use it for the first two or three leagues—which was the most difficult part of the route—and that, for the remainder, about five English miles, our "fine Norman horse" was perfectly sufficient. This fine Norman horse was treated most unmercifully by him. He flogged, he hallooed, he swore ... the animal tript, stumbled, and fell upon his knees—more than once—from sheer fatigue. The charioteer hallooed and flogged again: and I thought we must have taken up our night quarters in the high-way;—when suddenly, to the left, I saw the fine warm glow of the sun, which had set about twenty minutes, lighting up one of the most perfect round towers, of an old castle, that I had yet seen in Normandy. Voila FALAISE!—exclaimed the ruthless charioteer; ... and in a quarter of an hour we trotted hard down a hill (after the horse had been twice again upon his knees) which terminated in this most interesting place.

It will be difficult for me to forget—after such a long, wearisome, and in part desperate journey—our approach to Falaise:—and more especially the appearance of the castle just mentioned. The stone seemed as fresh, and as perfectly cemented, as if it had been the work of the preceding year. Moreover, the contiguous parts were so fine and so thoroughly picturesque—and the superadded tradition of its being, according to some, the birth place—and according to others, the usual residence—of WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR ... altogether threw a charm about the first glimpse of this venerable pile, which cannot be easily described. I had received instructions to put up at the "*Grand Turc*"—as the only hotel worthy an Englishman's notice. At the door of the Grand Turk, therefore, we were safely deposited: after having got rid of our incumbrances of two postilions, and two hundred weight of refined sugar. Our reception was gracious in the extreme. The inn appeared "tout-a-fait a la mode Anglaise"—and no marvel ... for Madame the hostess was an Englishwoman. Her husband's name was *David*.

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Bespeaking a late cup of tea, I strolled through the principal streets,—delighted with the remarkably clear current of the water, which ran on each side from the numerous overcharged fountains. Day-light had wholly declined; when, sitting down to my souchong, I saw, with astonishment—a *pair of sugar-tongs* and a *salt-spoon*—the first of the kind I had beheld since I left England! Madame David enjoyed my surprise; adding, in a very droll phraseology, that she had "not forgotten good English customs." Our beds and bed rooms were perfectly comfortable, and even elegant.

The moat which encircles, not only the castle, but the town—and which must have been once formidable from its depth and breadth, when filled with water—is now most pleasingly metamorphosed. Pasture lands, kitchen gardens, and orchards, occupy it entirely. Here the cattle quietly stray, and luxuriously feed. But the metamorphosis of the *castle* has been, in an equal degree, unfortunate. The cannon balls, during the wars of the League—and the fury of the populace, with the cupidity or caprice of some individuals, during the late revolution—helped to produce this change. After breakfast, I felt a strong desire to survey carefully the scite and structure of the castle. It was a lovely day; and in five minutes I obtained admission at a temporary outer gate. The first near view within the ramparts perfectly enchanted me. The situation is at once bold, commanding, and picturesque. But as the opposite, and immediately contiguous ground, is perhaps yet a little higher, it should follow that a force, placed upon such eminence—as indeed was that of Henry the Fourth, during the wars of the League—-would in the end subdue the garrison, or demolish the castle. I walked here and there amidst briars and brushwood, diversified with lilacs and laburnums; and by the aid of the guide soon got within an old room—of which the outer walls only remained—and which is distinguished by being called the *birth-place* of WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Between ourselves, the castle appears to be at least a century later than the time of William the Conqueror; and certainly the fine round tower, of which such frequent mention has been made, is rather of the fourteenth, if not of the beginning of the fifteenth century;[167] but it is a noble piece of masonry. The stone is of a close grain and beautiful colour, and the component parts are put together with a hard cement, and with the smallest possible interstices. At the top of it, on the left side, facing the high road from Vire,—and constructed within the very walls themselves, is a *well*—which goes from the top apparently to the very bottom of the foundation, quite to the bed of the moat. It is about three feet in diameter, measuring with the eye; perhaps four: but it is doubtless a very curious piece of workmanship. We viewed with an inquisitive eye what remained of the *Donjon*:

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sighed, as we surveyed the ruins of the *chapel*—a very interesting little piece of ecclesiastical antiquity: and shuddered as we contemplated the enormous and ponderous portcullis—which had a *drop of* full twenty feet ... to keep out the invading foe. I was in truth delighted with this first reconnoissance of FALAISE—beneath one of the brightest and bluest skies of Normandy! and—within walls, which were justly considered to be among the most perfect as well as the most ancient of those in Normandy.

Leaving my companion to take a view of the upper part of this venerable building, I retreated towards the town—resolved to leave no church and no street unexplored. On descending, and quitting the gate by which I had entered, a fine, robust, and respectable figure, habited as an Ecclesiastic, met and accosted me. I was most prompt to return the salutation. "We are proud, Sir, of our castle, and I observe you have been visiting it. The English ought to take an interest in it, since it was the birth-place of William the Conqueror." I readily admitted it was well worth a minute examination: but as readily turned the conversation to the subject of LIBRARIES. The amiable stranger (for he was gaining upon me fast, by his unaffected manners and sensible remarks) answered, that "their *own* public library existed no longer—having been made subservient to the inquisitorial visit of M. Moysant of Caen[168]: that he had himself procured for the Bishop of Bayeux the *Mentz Bible* of 1462—and that the Chapter-Library of Bayeux, before the Revolution, could not have contained fewer than 40,000 volumes. "But you are doubtless acquainted, Sir, with the COMTE DE LA FRESNAYE, who resides in yonder large mansion?"—pointing to a house upon an elevated spot on the other side of the town. I replied that I had not that honour; and was indeed an utter stranger to every inhabitant of Falaise. I then stated, in as few and precise words as possible, the particular object of my visit to the Continent. "Cela suffit"—resumed the unknown—"nous irons faire visite a Monsieur le Comte apres le dine; a ce moment il s'occupe avec le potage—car c'est un jour maigre. Il sera charme de vous recevoir. Il aime infiniment les Anglois, et il a reste long-temps chez vous. C'est un brave homme—et meme un grand antiquaire."

My pulse and colour increased sensibly as the stranger uttered these latter words: and he concluded by telling me that he was himself the Cure of *Ste. Trinite* one of the two principal churches of the town—and that his name was MOUTON. Be assured that I shall not lose sight of the Comte de la Fresnaye, and Monsieur Mouton.

[166] [Only ONE letter has passed between us since my departure; and that enables me to subjoin a fac-simile of its author's autograph.

[Autograph: de Larenaudiere]

[167] [It was in fact built by the famous Lord Talbot, about the year 1420. A similar castle, but less strong and lofty, may be seen at Castor, near Yarmouth in Norfolk—once the seat of the famous Sir JOHN FASTOLF, (a contemporary with Talbot) of whom Anstis treats so fully in his *Order of the Garter*, vol.i. p.142.]

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[168] See p. 205 ante.

LETTER XX.

MONS. MOUTON. CHURCH OF STE. TRINITE. COMTE DE LA FRESNAYE. GUIBRAY CHURCH. SUPPOSED HEAD OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR. M. LANGEVIN, HISTORIAN OF FALAISE. PRINTING OFFICES.

I lose no time in the fulfilment of my promise. The church of SAINTE TRINITE, of which Monsieur Mouton is the Cure, is the second place of worship in rank in the town. During the Revolution, *Mons*. Mouton was compelled, with too many of his professional brethren, to fly from the general persecution of his order. One solitary and most amiable creature only remained; of the name of LANGEVIN—of whom, by and by, Monsieur Mouton did me the honour of shewing me the interior of his church. His stipend (as he told me) did not exceed 1500 francs per annum; and it is really surprising to observe to what apparent acts of generosity towards his flock, this income is made subservient. You shall hear. The altar consists of two angels of the size of life, kneeling very gracefully, in white glazed plaister: in the centre, somewhat raised above, is a figure of the Virgin, of the same materials; above which again, is a representation of the TRINITY —in a blaze of gilt. The massive circular columns surrounding the choir—probably of the fourteenth century—were just fresh painted, at the expense of the worthy Cure, in alternate colours of blue and yellow—imitative of marble;—that is to say, each column, alternately, was blue and yellow. It was impossible to behold any thing more glaring and more tasteless. I paid my little tribute of admiration at the simplicity and grace of the kneeling figure of the Virgin—but was stubbornly silent about every thing else. Monsieur Mouton replied that “he intended to grace the brows of the angels by putting a *garland* round each.” I felt a sort of twinge upon receiving this intelligence; but there is no persuading the French to reject, or to qualify, their excessive fondness for flower ornaments.

Projecting from the wall, behind the circular part of the choir, I observed a figure of *St. Sebastian*—precisely of that character which we remark in the printed missals of the fifteenth century,—and from which the engravers of that period copied them: namely, with the head large, the body meagre, and the limbs loose and muscular. It was plentifully covered, as was the whole surface of the wall, with recent white wash. On observing this, my guide added: “oui, et je veux le faire couvrir d’une teinte encore plus blanche!” Here I felt a second twinge yet more powerful than the first. I noticed, towards the south-side door, a very fine crucifix, cut in wood, about three feet high; and apparently of the time of Goujon. It was by much the finest piece of sculpture, of its kind, which I had seen in Normandy; but it was rather in a decaying state. I wished to know whether such an object of art—apparently of no earthly importance, where it was situated—might be obtained for some honourable and adequate compensation. Monsieur Mouton replied that he desired to part with it—but that it must be replaced by

another “full six feet high!” There was no meeting this proposition, and I ceased to say another word upon the subject.

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Upon the whole, the church of the Holy Trinity is rather a fine and capacious, than a venerable edifice; and although I cannot conscientiously approve of the beautifying and repairing which are going on therein, yet I will do the *planner* the justice to say, that a more gentlemanly, liberally-minded, and truly amiable clergyman is perhaps no where to be found,—within or without the diocese to which he belongs. Attached to the north transept or side door, parallel with the street, is a long pole. "What might this mean?" "Sir, this pole was crowned at the top by a garland, and by the white flag of *St. Louis*, [169]—which were hoisted to receive me on my return from my long expatriation"—and the eyes of the narrator were suffused with tears, as he made the answer! It is of no consequence how small the income of an unmarried minister, may be, when he thus lives so entirely in the HEARTS OF HIS FLOCK. This church bears abundant evidence, within and without, of what is called the restoration of the Gothic order during the reign of Francis I.: although the most essential and the greater portion is evidently of the latter part of the fourteenth century.[170] Having expressed my admiration of the manufacture of wax candles (for religious purposes) which I had frequently observed in the town, Monsieur Mouton, upon taking me into the sacristy (similar to our vestry-room) begged I would do him the honour to accept of any which might be lying upon the table. These candles are made of the purest white wax: of a spiral, or twisted, or square, or circular form; of considerable length and width. They are also decorated with fillagree work, and tinsel of various colours. Upon that which I chose, there were little rosettes made of wax. The moderate sum for which they are obtained, startles an Englishman who thinks of the high price of this article of trade in his own country. You see frequently, against the walls and pillars of the choir, fragments of these larger wax candles, guttering down and begrimed from the uses made of them in time of worship. In this sacristy there were two little boys swinging *wooden* censers, by way of practice for the more perfect use of them, when charged with frankincense, at the altar. To manage these adroitly—as the traveller is in the constant habit of observing during divine worship—is a matter of no very quick or easy attainment.

From the Cure we proceed to the Comte DE LA FRESNAYE; whose pleasantly situated mansion had been pointed out to me, as you may remember, by the former. Passing over one of the bridges, leading towards *Guibray*, and ascending a gentle eminence to the left, I approached the outer lodge of this large and respectable-looking mansion. The Count and family were at dinner: but at *three* they would rise from table. "Meanwhile," said the porter, it might give me pleasure to walk in the garden." It was one of the loveliest days imaginable. Such a sky—blue, bright, and cloudless—I

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had scarcely before seen. The garden was almost suffocated with lilacs and laburnums, glittering in their respective liveries of white, purple, and yellow. I stepped into a berceau—and sitting upon a bench, bethought me of the strange visit I was about to make—as well as of all the pleasing pastoral poetry and painting which I had read in the pages of De Lille, or viewed upon the canvas of Watteau. The clock of the church of *St. Gervais* struck three; when, starting from my reverie, I knocked at the hall-door, and was announced to the family, (who had just risen from dinner) above stairs. A circle of five gentlemen would have alarmed a very nervous visitor; but the Count, addressing me in a semi-British and semi-Gallic phraseology, immediately dissipated my fears. In five minutes he was made acquainted with the cause of this apparent intrusion.

Nothing could exceed his amiable frankness. The very choicest wine was circulated at his table; of which I partook in a more decided manner on the following day—when he was so good as to invite me to dine. When I touched upon his favourite theme of Norman Antiquities, he almost shouted aloud the name of INGULPH,—that "cher ami de Guillaume le Conquerant!" I was unwilling to trespass long; but I soon found the advantage of making use of the name of "Monsieur Mouton—l'estimable Cure de la Sainte Trinite."

[Illustration]

In a stroll to Guibray, towards sunset the next day, I passed through a considerable portion of the Count's property, about 300 acres, chiefly of pasture land. The evening was really enchanting; and through the branches of the coppice wood the sun seemed to be setting in a bed of molten gold. Our conversation was animated and incessant. In the old and curious church of Guibray, the Count shewed us his family pew with the care and particularity of an old country squire. Meanwhile Mr. Lewis was making a hasty copy of one of the very singular ornaments—representing *Christ bearing his cross*—which was suspended against the walls of the altar of a side chapel. You have it here. It is frightfully barbarous, and characteristic of the capricious style of art which frequently prevailed about the year 1520: but the wonder is, how such a wretched performance could obtain admission into the sanctuary where it was deposited. It was however the pious gift of the vestry woman—who shewed us the interior—and who had religiously rescued it, during the Revolution, from the demolition of a neighbouring abbey. The eastern end of this church is perhaps as old as any ecclesiastical edifice in Normandy;[171] and its exterior (to which we could only approach by wading through rank grass as high as our knees) is one of the most interesting of its kind. During our admiration of all that was curious in this venerable edifice, we were struck by our old friends, the *penitents*,—busy in making confession. In more than one confessional there were two penitents; and towards one of these, thus doubly attended, I saw a very large, athletic, hard-visaged priest hastening, just having slipt on his surplice in the

vestry. Indeed I had been cursorily introduced to him by the Count. It was Saturday evening, and the ensuing Sunday was to be marked by some grand procession.

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The village-like town of Guibray presents a most singular sight to the eye of a stranger. There are numerous little narrow streets, with every window closed by wooden shutters, and every door fastened. It appears as if the plague had recently raged there, and that the inhabitants had quitted it for ever. Not a creature is visible: not a sound is heard: not a mouse seems to be stirring. And yet Guibray boasts of the LARGEST FAIR in France, save one![172] This, my friend, precisely accounts for the aspect of desolation just described. During the intervals of these *triennial* fairs, the greater part of the village is uninhabited: venders and purchasers flocking and crowding by hundreds when they take place. In a short, narrow street—where nothing animated was to be seen—the Count assured me that sometimes, in the course of one morning, several millions of francs were spent in the purchase of different wares. We left this very strange place with our minds occupied by a variety of reflections: but at any rate highly pleased and gratified by the agreeable family which had performed the part of guides on the occasion. In the evening, a professor of music treated us with some pleasing tunes upon the guitar—which utterly astonished the Count—and it was quite night-fall when we returned homewards, towards our quarters at the hotel of the *Grand Turc*.

A memorable incident occurred in our way homewards; which, when made known, will probably agitate the minds and shake the faith of two-thirds of the members of our Society of Antiquaries. You may remember that I told you, when at Caen, that the Abbe De la Rue had notified to me what were the objects more particularly deserving of attention in my further progress through Normandy. Among these, he particularly mentioned a figure or head of William the Conqueror at Falaise. In the *Place St. Gervais*, this wonderful head was said to exist—and to exist there only. It was at the house of an Innkeeper—certainly not moving in the highest circle of his calling. I lost little time in visiting it; and found it situated at the top of a dark narrow staircase, projecting from the wall, to the right, just before you reach the first floor. Some sensation had been excited by the enquiries, which I had previously set on foot; and on a second visit, several people were collected to receive us. Lights, warm water, towels, soap and brushes, were quickly put in requisition. I commenced operations with a kitchen knife, by carefully scraping away all the layers of hardened white and ochre washes, with which each generation had embedded and almost obliterated every feature. By degrees, the hair became manifest: then followed the operation of soap and water—which brought out the features of the face; and when the eyes fully and distinctly appeared, the exclamation of "*Mon Dieu*!" by the spectators, was loud and unremitting. The nose had received a serious injury by having its end broken off. Anon, stood forth the mouth; and when the "whiskered majesty" of the beard became evident, it was quite impossible to repress the simultaneous ejaculation of joy and astonishment ... "*Voila le vrai portrait de Guillaume le Conquerant*!

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The whiskers apparently denote it to be rather *Saxon* than *Norman*. The head is nearly eleven inches in length, by seven and a half in width: is cut upon a very coarse, yet hard-grained stone—and rests upon a square, unconnected stone:—embedded within the wall. If it ever had shoulders and body, those shoulders and body were no part of the present appendages of the head. What then, is the Abbe de la Rue in error? The more liberal inference will be, that the Abbe de la Rue had never seen it. As to its antiquity, I am prepared to admit it to be very considerable; and, if you please, even before the period of the loves of the father and mother of the character whom it is supposed to represent. In the morning, Madame Rolle seemed disposed to take ten louis (which I freely offered her) for her precious fragment: but the distinct, collected view of whiskers, mouth, nose, eyes, and hair, instantaneously raised the quicksilver of her expectations to "*quinze* louis pour le moins!" That was infinitely "trop fort"—and we parted without coming to any terms. Perhaps you will laugh at me for the previous offer.

The church of St. Gervais is called the mother church of the town: and it is right that you should have some notion of it. It stands upon a finely elevated situation. Its interior is rather capacious: but it has no very grand effect-arising from simplicity or breadth of architecture. The pillars to the right of the nave, on entering from the western extremity, are doubtless old; perhaps of the beginning of the thirteenth century. The arches are a flattened semicircle; while those on the opposite side are comparatively sharp, and of a considerably later period. The ornaments of the capitals of these older pillars are, some of them, sufficiently capricious and elaborate; while others are of a more exceptionable character on the score of indelicacy. But this does not surprise a man who has been accustomed to examine ART, of the middle centuries, whether in sculpture or in painting. The side aisles are comparatively modern. The pillars of the choir have scarcely any capitals beyond a simple rim or fillet; and are surmounted by sharp low arches, like what are to be seen at St. Lo and Coutances. The roof of the left side aisle is perfectly green from damp: the result, as at Coutances, of thereof having been stripped for the sake of the lead to make bullets, &c. during the Revolution. I saw this large church completely filled on Sunday, at morning service—about eleven: and, in the congregation, I observed several faces and figures, of both sexes, which indicated great intelligence and respectability. Indeed there was much of the air of a London congregation about the whole.

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From the Church, we may fairly make any thing but a digression—in discoursing of one of its brightest ornaments, in the person of Monsieur LANGEVIN:—a simple priest—as he styles himself in an octavo volume, which entitles him to the character of the best living HISTORIAN OF FALAISE. He is a mere officiating minister in the church of *Mons*. Mouton; and his salary, as he led me to infer, could be scarcely twenty louis per annum. Surely this man is among the most amiable and excellent of God's creatures! But it is right that you should know the origin and progress of our acquaintance. It was after dinner, on one of the most industriously spent of my days here—and the very second of my arrival,—that the waiter announced the arrival of the Abbe Langevin, in the passage, with a copy of his History beneath his arm. The door opened, and in walked the stranger—habited in his clerical garb—with a physiognomy so benign and expressive, and with manners so gentle and well-bred,—that I rose instinctively from my seat to give him the most cordial reception. He returned my civility in a way which shewed at once that he was a man of the most interesting simplicity of character. "He was aware (he said) that he had intruded; but as he understood "Monsieur was in pursuit of the antiquities of the place, he had presumed to offer for his acceptance a copy of a work upon that subject—of which he was the humble author." This work was a good sized thick crown octavo, filling five hundred closely and well-printed pages; and of which the price was *fifty sous*! The worthy priest, seeing my surprise on his mentioning the price, supposed that I had considered it as rather extravagant. But this error was rectified in an instant. I ordered *three copies* of his historical labours, and told him my conscience would not allow me to pay him less than *three francs* per copy. He seemed to be electrified: rose from his seat:—and lifting up one of the most expressive of countenances, with eyes apparently suffused with tears—raised both his hands, and exclaimed.... "Que le bon Dieu vous benisse—les Anglois sont vraiement genereux!"

For several seconds I sat riveted to my seat. Such an unfeigned and warm acknowledgment of what I had considered as a mere matter-of-course proposition, perfectly astounded me: the more so, as it was accompanied by a gesture and articulation which could not fail to move any bosom—not absolutely composed of marble. We each rallied, and resumed the conversation. In few but simple words he told me his history. He had contrived to weather out the Revolution, at Falaise. His former preferment had been wholly taken from him; and he was now a simple assistant in the church of *Mons*. Mouton. He had yielded without resistance; as even *remonstrance* would have been probably followed up by the guillotine. To solace himself in his afflictions, he had recourse to his old favourite studies of *medicine* and

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music;—and had in fact practised the former. “But come, Sir, (says he) come and do me the honour of a call—when it shall suit you.” I settled it for the ensuing day. On breaking up and taking leave, the amiable stranger modestly spoke of his History. It had cost him three years’ toil; and he seemed to mention, with an air of triumph, the frequent references in it to the *Gallia Christiana*, and to *Chartularies* and *Family Records* never before examined. On the next day I carried my projected visit into execution—towards seven in the evening. The lodgings of M. Langevin are on the second floor of a house belonging to a carpenter. The worthy priest received me on the landing-place, in the most cheerful and chatty manner. He has three small rooms on the same floor. In the first, his library is deposited. On my asking him to let me see what *old books* he possessed, he turned gaily round, and replied—“Comment donc, Monsieur, vous aimez les vieux livres? A ca, voyons!” Whereupon he pulled away certain strips or pieces of wainscot, and shewed me his book-treasures within the recesses. On my recognising a *Colinaeus* and *Henry Stephen*, ere he had read the title of the volumes, he seemed to marvel exceedingly, and to gaze at me as a conjuror. He betrayed more than ordinary satisfaction on shewing his *Latin Galen* and *Hippocrates*; and the former, to the best of my recollection, contained Latin notes in the margin, written by himself. These tomes were followed up by a few upon *alchymy* and *astrology*; from which, and the consequent conversation, I was led to infer that the amiable possessor entertained due respect for those studies which had ravished our DEES and ASHMOLES of old.

In the second room stood an upright piano forte—the *manufacture*, as well as the property, of Monsieur Langevin. It bore the date of 1806; and was considered as the first of the kind introduced into Normandy. It was impossible not to be struck with the various rational sources of amusement, by means of which this estimable character had contrived to beguile the hours of his misfortunes. There was a calm, collected, serenity of manner about him—a most unfeigned and unqualified resignation to the divine will—-which marked him as an object at once of admiration and esteem. There was no boast—no cant—no formal sermonising. You *saw* what religion had done for him. Her effects *spake* in his discourse and in his life.... Over his piano hung a portrait of himself; very indifferently executed—and not strongly resembling the original. “We can do something more faithful than this, sir, if you will allow it”—said I, pointing to Mr. Lewis: and it was agreed that he should give the latter a sitting on the morrow. The next day M. Langevin came punctually to his appointment, for the purpose of having his portrait taken.

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On telling this original that the pencil drawing of Mr. Lewis (which by the bye was executed in about an hour and a half) should be *engraved*—inasmuch as he was the modern *Historian of Falaise*—he seemed absolutely astonished. He moved a few paces gently forwards, and turning round, with hands and eyes elevated, exclaimed, in a tremulous and heart-stricken tone of voice, “Ah, mon Dieu!” I will not dissemble that I took leave of him with tears, which were with difficulty concealed. “Adieu, pour toujours!”—were words which he uttered with all the sincerity, and with yet more pathos, than was even shewn by Pierre Aime Lair at Caen. The landlord and landlady of this hotel are warm in their commendations of him: assuring me that his name is hardly ever pronounced without the mention of his virtues. He has just entered his sixty-second year.[173]

It remains only to give an account of the progress of Printing and of Literature in this place: although the latter ought to precede the former. As a literary man, our worthy acquaintance the Comte de la Fresnaye takes the lead: yet he is rather an amateur than a professed critic. He has written upon the antiquities of the town; but his work is justly considered inferior to that of Monsieur Langevin. He quotes *Wace* frequently, and with apparent satisfaction; and he promises a French version of his beloved *Ingulph*. Falaise is a quiet, dull place of resort, for those who form their notions of retirement as connected with the occasional bustle and animation of Caen and Rouen. But the situation is pleasing. The skies are serene: the temperature is mild, and the fruits of the earth are abundant and nutritious. Many of the more respectable inhabitants expressed their surprise to me that there were so few English resident in its neighbourhood—so much preferable, on many accounts to that of Caen. But our countrymen, you know, are sometimes a little capricious in the objects of their choice. Just now, it is the *fashion* for the English to reside at Caen; yet when you consider that the major part of our countrymen reside there for the purpose of educating their children—and that Caen, from its numerous seminaries of education, contains masters of every description, whose lessons are sometimes as low as a frank for each—it is not surprising that Falaise is deserted for the former place. For myself—and for all those who love a select society, a sweet country, and rather a plentiful sprinkle of antiquarian art,—for such, in short, who would read the fabliaux of the old Norman bards in peace, comfort, and silence—there can be no question about the preference to be given to the spot from which I send this my last Norman despatch.

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I have before made mention of the fountains in this place. They are equally numerous and clear. The inn in which we reside has not fewer than three fountains—or rather of *jets d'eau*—constantly playing. Those in the *Place St. Trinite Grand Rue*, and *Place St. Gervais*, are the largest; but every gutter trickles with water as if dissolved from the purest crystal. It has been hot weather during the greater part of our stay; and the very sight of these translucent streams seems to refresh one's languid frame. But I proceed chiefly to the productions of the PRESS. They do a good deal of business here in the way of ephemeral publications. Letellier, situated in the Grande Rue, is the chief printer of *chap books*: and if we judge from the general character of these, the *Falaisois* seem to be marvellously addicted to the effusions of the muse. Indeed, their ballads, of all kinds, are innumerable. Read a few—which are to be found in the very commonest publications. There is something rather original, and of a very pleasingly tender cast, in the first two:

LE BAISER D'ADIEUX.

Pres de toi l'heure du mystere
Ne m'appellera plus demain,
Vers ta demeure solitaire
Mes pas me guideront en vain;
J'ai respire ta douce haleine,
Et des pleurs ont mouille mes yeux,
J'ai tout senti, plaisir et peine,)
J'ai recu ton baiser d'adieux.) *bis.*

Tu pars, et malgre ta promesse
Rien ne m'assure de ta foi,
Nul souvenir de ta tendresse
Ne vient me dire: Pense a moi.
Ton amour qu'envain je reclame
Ne me laisse, en quittant ces lieux,
Que Phumide et brulante flamme
De ton dernier baiser d'adieux.

Puisse au moins ton indifference
Te garder d'un nouvel amour.
Et le veuvage de l'absence
Hater ton fortune retour!
Puisse alors l'amant qui t'adore,
Te revoyant aux memes lieux,
Sur tes levres vierges encore
Retrouver son baiser d'adieux!

* * * * *

L’IMAGE DE LA VIE.

Nous naissons et dans notre coeur,
A peine aux portes de la vie,
Tout au plaisir, tout au bonheur,
Et nous invite et nous convie;
D’abord, simples amusements
Savent contenter notre enfance;
Mais bientot aux jeux innocens,
L’amour nous prend ... sans qu’on y pense.

Fillette a l’age de quinze ans,
Offre l’image de la rose,
Qui des l’approche du printemps,
Entr’ouvre sa feuille mi-close;
Bientot l’aiguillon du desir
Vient ouvrir fleur d’innocence,
Et sous la bouche du plaisir,
Elle s’eclot ... sans qu’elle y pense.

Vous, qui pendant vos jeunes ans,
Ne courtisez pas la folie,
Songez donc que cet heureux temps
Ne dure pas toute la vie,
Assez vite il nous faut quitter
Tendres ardeurs, vives jouissances;
Et dans uu coeur qui sait aimer,
La raison vient ... sans qu’on y pense.

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Mais enfin, sur l'aile du temps,
On arrive au but du voyage,
Et l'on voit la glace des ans,
Couronner nos fronts a cet age;
S'il fut sensible a la pitie,
S'il cultiva la bienfaisance,
Entre les bras de l'amitie
L'homme finit ... sans qu'il y pense

You must know that they are here great lovers of royalty, and of course great supporters of the Bourbon Family. The King's printer is a *Mons*. BREE l'Aine. He is a very pleasant, well-bred man, and lives in the *Place Trinite*. I have paid him more than one visit, and always felt additional pleasure at every repetition of it. My first visit was marked with a somewhat ludicrous circumstance. On entering the compositors' room, I observed, pasted upon the walls, in large capital letters, the following well known words:

GOD SAVE THE KING.

Both Monsieur Bree l'Aine—and his workmen were equally gratified by my notice and commendation of this sentiment. "It is the favourite sentiment, Sir, of your country,"—-remarked the master. To this I readily assented. "It is also, Sir, the favourite one of our own," replied M. Bree l'Aine—and his men readily attested their concurrence in the same reply. "Ah, Sir, if you would only favour us by *singing the air*, to which these words belong, you would infinitely oblige us all" ... said a shrewd and intelligent-looking compositor. "With all my heart"—rejoined I—"but I must frankly tell you, that I shall sing it rather with heart than with voice—being neither a vocal nor an instrumental performer." "No matter: give us only a notion of it." They all stood round in a circle, and I got through two stanzas as gravely and as efficiently as I was able. The usual "charmant!" followed my exertions. It was now my turn to ask a favour. "Sing to me your favourite national air of ROBERT and ARLETTE." "Most willingly, Sir," replied the forementioned "shrewd and intelligent-looking compositor." "Tenez: un petit moment: je vais chercher mon violon. Ca ira mieux."

He left the house in search of his violin. The tune of the National air which he sung was both agreeable and lively: and upon the whole it was difficult to say which seemed to be the better pleased with the respective national airs. M. Bree shewed me his premises in detail. They had been formerly a portion of an old church; and are situated on the edge of the great fosse which encircles the town. A garden, full of sweet blooming flowers, is behind them; and the view backwards is cheerful and picturesque. There are generally five presses at work; which, for a provincial printing office, shews business to be far from slack. *Mons*. B. sells a great number of almanacks, and prints all the leading publications connected with the town. In fact, his title, as *Imprimeur du*

Roi, supposes him to take the principal lead as a printer. This agreeable man has a brother who is professor of rhetoric in the College Royale at Paris.

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Of *Bouquinistes*, or dealers in old books, there are scarcely any. I spent three or four fruitless hours in a search after old chronicles and old poetry: and was compelled, almost from pure civility, to purchase of DUFOURS a *Petit's Virgil* of 1529, folio—which will be hardly worth the carriage. I tried hard for a fine copy of *Fauchet's Origines de la Poesie Francoise*, 1581, 4to. with the head of the author, but in vain; yet endeavoured to console myself by an old blue morocco copy of *Les regrets et tristes lamentations du Comte de Montgomery*, by *Demorenne*, Rouen, 1574, 8vo. as well as a clean, fresh, and almost crackling copy of *Amoureuses occupations de la Taysonniere*, Lyon, 1555, 8vo.—for two francs each—and both destined for the rich and choice library of our friend....

Thus much for FALAISE: for a spot, which, from the uniform serenity of the weather since I have been here—from the comfort of the inn—from the extreme civility and attention of the townspeople—and from the yet more interesting society of the Comte de la Fresnaye, the *Cures* Mouton and Langevin—together with the amenity of the surrounding country, and the interesting and in part magnificent remains of antiquity—-can never be erased from my recollection. It is here that the tourist and antiquary may find objects for admiration and materials for recording. I have done both: admired and recorded—happy, if the result of such occupations shall have contributed to the substantial gratification of yourself and of our common friends. And now, farewell; not only to Falaise, but to NORMANDY. I shall leave it, from this delightful spot, in the most thorough good humour, and with more than ordinary regret that my stay has necessarily been short. I have taken my place in the Diligence, direct for PARIS. "Il n'y a qu'un Paris"—said the Comte de la Fresnaye to me the other day, when I told him I had never been there—to which I replied, "Are there then TWO Londons?" Thirty-six hours will settle all this. In the mean time, adieu.

[169] On the return of Louis the XVIII. the town of Falaise manifested its loyalty in the most unequivocal manner.

COUPLETS

Chantes par les Eleves du College de Falaise, en arborant le Drapeau Blanc.

Air: *Un Soldat par un coup funeste*.

Loin de nous la sombre tristesse,
Mars a depose sa fureur;
Enfin la foudre vengeresse
Vient de terrasser *l'opresseur,*
L'aigle sanguinaire
Succombe a l'aspect de ces LYS.

Peuple francais, tu vas revoir ton Pere!
Vive le Roi! Vive LOUIS!

Drapeau, que d'horribles tempetes
Avoient eloigne de ces lieux,
Tu reviens embellir nos Fetes,
Plus brillant et plus radieux!
Ta douce presence
Ramene les jeux et les ris;
Sois a jamais l'Etendard de la France,
Vive le Roi! vive LOUIS!

O Dieu! vengeur de l'innocence,
Protege ces LYS glorieux!
Conserve long-temps a la France
LE ROI que tu rends a nos voeux!
Si la perfidie
De nouveau troubloit ton bonheur
Viens nous guider, o Banniere cherie!
Nous volerons au champ d'honneur.

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[170] The worthy historian of Falaise, quoted in a preceding page, is exceedingly anxious to make us believe that there are portions of this church—namely, four stones—in the eastern and western gable ends—which were used in the consecration of it, by MATHILDA, the wife of our first William. Also, that, at the gable end of the south transept, outside, an ancient grotto,—in which the Gallic priests of old purified themselves for the mysteries of their religion—is now converted into the sacristy, or vestry, or robing room. But these are surely mere antiquarian dreams. The same author more sagaciously informs us that the exact period of the commencement of the building of the nave, namely in 1438, is yet attested by an existing inscription, in gothic letters, towards the chief door of entrance. The inscription also testifies that in the same year, "there reigned DEATH, WAR, and FAMINE." The *chancel of the choir*, with the principal doors of entrance, &c. were constructed between the years 1520, and 1540. It may be worth remarking that the stalls of the choir were brought from the Abbey of St. John—on the destruction of that monastic establishment in 1729; and that, according to the *Gallia Christiana*, vol. xi. p. 756, these stalls were carved at the desire of Thomas II. de Mallebiche, abbot of that establishment in 1506-1516. In a double niche of the south buttress are the statues of HERPIN and his WIFE; rich citizens of Falaise, who, by their wealth, greatly contributed to the building of the choir. (Their grandson, HERPIN LACHENAYE, together with his mistress were killed, side by side, in fighting at one of the gates of Falaise to repel the successful troops of Henry IV.) The *Chapel of the Virgin*, behind the choir, was completed about the year 1631. LANGEVIN, p. 81-128-131.

[171] We have of course nothing to do with the first erection of a place of worship at Guibray in the VIIIth century. The story connected with the earliest erection is this. The faubourg of Guibray, distant about 900 paces from Falaise, was formerly covered with chestnut and oak trees. A sheep, scratching the earth, as if by natural instinct (I quote the words of M. Langevin the historian of Falaise) indicated, by its bleatings, that something was beneath. The shepherd approached, and hollowing out the earth with his crook, discovered a statue of the Virgin, with a child in its arms. The first church, dedicated to the Virgin, under the reign of Charles Martel, called the Victorious, was in consequence erected—on this very spot—in the centre of this widely spreading wood of chestnut and oak. I hasten to the construction of a second church,

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on the same site, under the auspices of Mathilda, the wife of the Conqueror: with the statue of a woman with a diadem upon her head—near one of the pillars: upon which statue Langevin discourses learnedly in a note. But neither this church nor the statue in question are now in existence. On the contrary, the oldest portions of the church of Guibray, now existing—according to the authors of the *Gallia Christiana*, vol. xi. p. 878, and an ancient MS. consulted by M. Langevin—are of about the date of 1222; when the church was consecrated by the Bishop of Coutances. The open space towards the south, now called *La Place aux Chevaux*, was the old burying ground of the church. There was also a chapel, dedicated to St. Gervais, which was pillaged and destroyed by the Hugonots in 1562. I should add, that the South-East exterior (behind the chancel) of this very curious old church at Guibray, resembles, upon a small scale, what M. Cotman has published of the same portion of St. Georges de Bocherville. *Recherches sur Falaise*, p. 49-53. Monsieur le Comte de la Fresnaye, in his *Notice Historique sur Falaise*, 1816, 8vo. will have it, that "the porch of this church, the only unmutilated portion remaining of its ancient structure, demonstrates the epoch of the origin of Christianity among the Gauls." "At least, such is the decision of M. Deveze, draftsman for Laborde; the latter of whom now Secretary to the Count d'Artois, instituted a close examination of the whole fabric." p. 5-6. I hope there are not many such conclusions to be found in the magnificent and meritorious productions of LABORDE.

[172] This fair lasts full fifteen days. The first eight days are devoted to business of a more important nature—which they call the GREAT WEEK: that is to say, the greatest number of merchants attend during the earlier part of it; and contracts of greater extent necessarily take place. The remaining seven days are called the LITTLE WEEK—in which they make arrangements to carry their previous bargains into effect, and to return home. Men and merchandise, from all quarters, and of all descriptions, are to be seen at this fair. Even Holland and Germany are not wanting in sending their commercial representatives. Jewellery and grocery seem to be the chief articles of commerce; but there is a prodigious display of silk, linen, and cotton, &c.: as well as of hides, raw and tanned; porcelaine and earthen ware. The live cattle market must not be forgotten. Langevin says that, of horses alone, they sometimes sell full four thousand. Thus much for the buyer and seller. But this fair is regularly enlivened by an immense

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confluence of nobility and gentry from the adjacent country—to partake of the amusements, which, (as with the English,) form the invariable appendages of the scene. Langevin mentions the minor fairs of *Ste. Croix, St. Michel*, and *St. Gervais*, which help to bring wealth into the pockets of the inhabitants. *Recherches Historiques sur Falaise*; p. 199, &c.

[173] [Since the publication of this Tour, the amiable *Mons*. Langevin has published "additions" to his historical account of Falaise; and in those additions, he has been pleased to notice the account which is HERE given of his labours and character. It would be bad—at least hardly justifiable—taste, to quote that notice: yet I cannot dissemble the satisfaction to find that there is *more* than ONE sympathising heart in Normandy, which appreciates this record of its excellence. I subjoin, therefore, with the greatest satisfaction, a fac-simile of the autograph of this amiable and learned man, as it appears written (at my request) in the title-page of a copy of his "Researches."

[Illustration: Langevin ptre.]

LETTER XXI.

JOURNEY TO PARIS. DREUX. HOUDAN. VERSAILLES. ENTRANCE INTO PARIS.

Paris, Rue Faubourg Poissoniere, May 30, 1819.

"Time and the hour runs through the roughest day." They must be protacted miseries indeed which do not, at some period or other, have something like a termination. I am here, then my good friend—safe and sound at last; comfortably situated in a boarding house, of which the mistress is an agreeable Englishwoman and the master an intelligent Swiss. I have sauntered, gazed, and wondered—and exchanged a thousand gracious civilities! I have delivered my epistolary credentials: have shaken hands with Monsieur Van Praet; have paced the suite of rooms in which the renowned BIBLIOTHEQUE DU ROI is deposited: have traversed the *Thuileries* and the *Louvre*; repeatedly reconnoitred the *Boulevards*; viewed the gilt dome of the *Hotel des Invalides*, and the white flag upon the bronze-pillar in the *Place Vendome*; seen crowds of our countrymen at *Meurice's* and in the hotels about the *Rue de la Paix;* partaken of the rival ices of *Tortoni* and the *Caffe des Mille Colonnes*; bought old French poetry at a

Bouquiniste's: and drank Chambertin and Champagne at the richly garnished table of our ——. These are what may be called good *foreground objects* in the composition of a Parisian picture. Now for the filling up of the canvas with appropriate and harmonizing detail.

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A second reflection corrects however the precipitancy of such a proposal; for it cannot be, in this my *first* despatch, that you are to receive any thing like an adequate notion of the topics thus hastily thrown together on the first impulse of Parisian inspiration. Wait patiently, therefore: and at least admire the methodical precision of my narrative. My last letter left me on the eve of departure from Falaise; and it is precisely from that place that I take up the thread of my journal. We were to leave it, as I told you, in the Diligence—on the evening of the Sunday, immediately following the date of the despatch transmitted. I shall have reason to remember that journey for many a day to come; but, "post varios casus, &c." I am thankful to find myself safely settled in my present comfortable abode. The Sabbath, on the evening of which the Diligence usually starts for Paris, happened to be a festival. Before dawn of day I heard incessant juvenile voices beneath the window of my bedroom at the Grand Turc; What might this mean? Between three and four, as the day began to break, I rose, and approaching the window, saw, from thence, a number of little boys and girls busied in making artificial flower-beds and sand-borders, &c. Their tongues and their bodily movements were equally unintermitting. It was impossible for a stranger to guess at the meaning of such a proceeding; but, opening the window, I thought there could be no harm in asking a very simple question—which I will confess to you was put in rather an irritable manner on my part ... for I had been annoyed by their labours for more than the last hour. "What are you about, there?" I exclaimed—"Ha, is it you Sir?" replied a little arch boy—-mistaking me for some one else. "Yes, (resumed I) tell me what you are about there?" "in truth, we are making *Reposoirs* for the FETE-DIEU: the Host will pass this way by and bye. Is it not a pretty thing, Sir?" exclaimed a sweetly modulated female voice. All my irritability was softened in a moment; and I was instantly convinced that Solomon never delivered a wiser sentiment than when he said—"A soft answer turneth away wrath!" I admitted the prettiness of the thing without comprehending a particle of it: and telling them to speak in a lower key, shut the window, and sought my bed. But sleep had ceased to seek me: and the little urchins, instead of lowering their voices, seemed to break forth in a more general and incessant vociferation. In consequence, I was almost feverish from restlessness—when the fille de chambre announced that "it was eight o'clock, and the morning most beautiful."

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These *reposoirs* are of more importance than you are aware of. They consist of little spots, or spaces in the streets, garnished with flowers, and intersected by walks, marked with fine gravel, in the centre of which the Host rests, on its passing to and fro from the several parishes. When I rose to dress, I observed the work of art—which had been in progress during the night—perfectly complete. Passengers were forbidden to trespass by pieces of string fastened to different parts by way of a fence—or, whoever chose to walk within, considered themselves bound to deposit a sous as the condition of gratifying their curiosity. Upon the whole, this reposoir might be about sixteen feet square. Towards eleven o'clock the different religious ceremonies began. On one side the noise of the drum, and the march of the national guard, indicated that military mass was about to be performed; on the other, the procession of priests, robed and officiating—the elevation of banners—and the sonorous responses of both laity and clergy—put the whole town into agitation, and made every inmate of every mansion thrust his head out of window, to gaze at the passing spectacle. We were among the latter denomination of lookers on, and recognised, with no small gratification, our clerical friends Messieurs Mouton, Langevin, and the huge father confessor at Guibra, followed by a great number of respectable citizens, among whom the Comte de la Fresnaye and his amiable and intelligent son (recently married) made most respectable figures; They approached the reposoir in question. The priests, with the Host, took their station within it; silence followed; one officiating clergyman then knelt down; shut, what seemed to be, the wooden covers of a book,—with, considerable violence—rose—turned round, and the procession being again put in motion—the whole marched away to the church of the Holy Trinity;—whither I followed it; and where I witnessed what I was unable to comprehend, and what I should not feel much disposed to imitate. But let every country be allowed to reverence and respect its own particular religious ceremonies. We may endure what we cannot commend ... and insult and disrespect are among the last actions which a well regulated mind will shew in its treatment of such matters. I should add, that these reposoirs, a few hours after the performance of the ceremony just described, are indiscriminately broken up: the flowers and the little sand banks falling equally a prey to the winds and the feet of the passenger.

Opposite to the inn was an hospital for the female sick. It had been formerly an establishment of very considerable extent and celebrity; but whether it was originally connected with the hospital of the *Leproserie de Saint Lasare*, (about which the Abbe Langevin's History of Falaise is rather curious) the *Hotel-Dieu*, or the *Hopital General*, I cannot take upon me to pronounce. Certain it is, however, that this establishment does great credit

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to those who have the conduct of it. As foreigners, and particularly as Englishmen, we were permitted to see the whole, without reserve. On my return from witnessing the ceremony at the church of the Trinity, I visited this hospital: my companion having resumed his graphic operations before the Castle. I shall not easily forget the face and figure of the matron. To a countenance of masculine feature, and masculine complexion—including no ordinary growth of beard, of a raven tint—she added a sturdy, squat, muscular figure—which, when put into action, moved in a most decided manner. A large bunch of massive keys was suspended from a girdle at her side; and her dress, which was black, was rendered more characteristic and striking, by the appearance of, what are yet called, *bustles* above her hips. As she moved, the keys and the floor seemed equally to shake beneath her steps. The elder Smirke would have painted this severe Duenna-like looking matron with inimitable force and truth. But ... she no sooner opened her mouth, than all traits of severity vanished. Her voice was even musical, and her "facon de parler" most gracious. She shewed me the whole establishment with equal good humour and alertness; and I don't know when I ever made such a number of bows (to the several female patients in the wards) within such limited time and space. The whole building has the air of a convent; and there were several architectural relics, perhaps of the end of the fifteenth century, which I only regretted were not of portable dimensions; as, upon making enquiry, little objection seemed to be made to the gratuitous disposal of them.

The hour for departure, after sun-set, having arrived, we were summoned to the Diligence when, bidding adieu to the very worthy host and hostess of the *Grand Turc*, (whom I strongly recommend all Englishmen to visit) I made up my mind for a thirty-six hour's journey—as I was to reach Paris on Tuesday morning. The day had been excessively hot for the season of the year; and the night air was refreshing. But after a few snatches of sleep—greatly needed—there appeared manifest symptoms of decay and downfall in the gloomy and comfortless machine in which we took our departure. In other words, towards daylight, and just as we approached *L'Aigle*, the left braces (which proved to be thoroughly rotted leather) broke in two: and down slid, rather than tumbled, the Falaise Diligence! There were two French gentlemen, and an elderly lady, besides ourselves in the coach. While we halted, in order to repair the machine, the Frenchmen found consolation in their misfortune by running to a caffe, (it was between four and five in the morning), rousing the master and mistress, and as I thought, peremptorily and impertinently asking for coffee: while they amused themselves with billiards during its preparation. I was in no humour for eating, drinking, or playing: for here was a second sleepless night! Having

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repaired this crazy vehicle, we rumbled on for *Verneuil*; where it was exchanged for a diligence of more capacious dimensions. Here, about eleven o'clock, we had breakfast; and from henceforth let it not be said that the art of eating and drinking belongs exclusively to our country:—for such manifestations of appetite, and of attack upon substantials as well as fluids, I had scarcely ever before witnessed. I was well contented with coffee, tea, eggs, and bread—as who might not well be?... but my companions, after taking these in flank, cut through the centre of a roast fowl and a dish of stewed veal: making diversions, in the mean while, upon sundry bottles of red and white wine; the fingers, during the meal, being as instrumental as the white metal forks.

We set off at a good round trot for *Dreux*: and, in the route thither, we ascended a long and steep hill, having *Nonancourt* to the left. Here we saw some very pretty country houses, and the whole landscape had an air of English comfort and picturesque beauty about it. Here, too, for the first time, I saw a VINEYARD. At this early season of the year it has a most stiff and unseemly look; presenting to the eye scarcely any thing but the brown sticks, obliquely put into the ground, against which the vine is trained. But the sloping banks, on each side of the ascending road, were covered with plantations of this precious tree; and I was told that, if the *autumn* should prove as auspicious as appeared the *spring*, there would be a season of equal gaiety and abundance. I wished it with all my heart. Indeed I felt particularly interested in the whole aspect of the country about *Nonancourt*. The sun was fast descending as we entered the town of *Dreux*—where I had resolved upon taking leave both of the diligence and of my companions; and of reaching Paris by post. At seven we dined, or rather perhaps made an early supper; when my fellow travellers *sustained* their reputation for their powers of attack upon fish, flesh, and fowl. Indeed the dinner was equally plentiful and well cooked; and the charge moderate in proportion. But there is nothing, either on the score of provision of reasonableness of cost, like the *table d'hote* throughout France; and he who cannot accommodate himself to the hour of dining (usually about one) must make up his mind to worse fare and treble charges.

After dinner we strolled in the town, and upon the heights near the castle. We visited the principal church, *St. Jean*, which is very spacious, and upon the whole is a fine piece of architecture. I speak more particularly of the interior—where I witnessed, however, some of the most horrible devastations, arising from the Revolution, which I had yet seen. In one of the side chapels, there *had been* a magnificent monument; perhaps from sixteen to twenty feet in height—crowded with figures as large as life, from the base to the summit. It appeared

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as if some trenchant instrument of an irresistible force, had shaved away many of the figures; but more especially the heads and the arms. This was only one, but the most striking, specimen of revolutionary Vandalism. There were plenty of similar proofs, on a reduced scale. In the midst of these traces of recent havoc, there was a pleasure mingled with melancholy, in looking up and viewing some exceedingly pretty specimens of old stained glass:—which had escaped the destruction committed in the lower regions, and had preserved all their original freshness. Here and there, in the side chapels, the priests were robing themselves to attend confession; while the suppliants, in kneeling attitudes, were expecting them by the side of the confessionals. From the church I bent my steps to the principal bookseller of the place, whom I found to be an intelligent, civil, and extremely good-natured tradesman. But his stock was too modern. "Donnez vous la peine de monter"—exclaimed he precipitately; begging me to follow him. His up-stairs collection was scarcely of a more ancient character than that below. There were more copies of *Voltaire* and *Rousseau* than I should have supposed he could sell in six years—but "on the contrary" (said he) "in six months' time, not a single copy will remain unsold!" I marvelled and grieved at such intelligence; because the poison was not extracted from the nourishment contained in these works. To an enquiry about my old typographical friends, *Verard, Pigouchet*, and *Eustace*, the worthy bibliopole replied "qu'il n'avoit jamais entendu parler de ces gens-la!" Again I marvelled; and having no temptation to purchase, civilly wished him good evening.

Meanwhile Mr. L. had attained the castle heights, and was lost in a sort of extacy at the surrounding scene. On entering the outer walls, and directing your steps towards the summit, you are enchanted with a beautiful architectural specimen—in the character of a zigzag early Norman arch—which had originally belonged to a small church, recently taken down: The arch alone stands insulated ... beyond which, a new, and apparently a very handsome, church is erecting, chiefly under the care and at the expence of the present Duke of Orleans;—as a mausoleum for his family—and in which, not many days before our arrival, the remains of one of his children had been deposited. I wished greatly for a perfect drawing of this arch ... but there was no time ... and my companion was exercising his pencil, on the summit, by a minute, bird's eye of the sweep of country to be seen from this elevated situation—through the greater part of which, indeed, the diligence from *Verneuil* had recently conducted us. I should add, that not a relic of that CASTLE, which had once kept the town and the adjacent country in awe, is now to be seen: but its outer walls enclose a space hardly less than twenty acres:—the most considerable area which I had yet witnessed. To give a more interesting

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character to the scenery, the sun, broad and red, was just hiding the lower limb of his disk behind the edge of a purple hill. A quiet, mellow effect reigned throughout the landscape. I gazed on all sides; and (wherefore, I cannot now say) as I sunk upon the grass, overwhelmed with fatigue and the lassitude of two sleepless nights, wished, in my heart, I could have seen the effect of that glorious sun-set from, the heights of Dover. Now and then, as when at school, one feels a little home-sick; but the melancholy mood which then possessed me was purely a physical effect from a physical cause. The shadows of evening began to succeed to the glow of sun-set—-when, starting from my recumbent position, (in which sleep was beginning to surprise me) I hastened down the heights, and by a nearer direction sought the town and our hotel. We retired betimes to rest—but not until, from an opposite coach maker, we had secured a phaeton-like carriage to convey us with post horses, the next day, to Paris.

Excellent beds and undisturbed slumber put me in spirits for the grand entree into the metropolis of France. Breakfasting a little after nine—before ten, a pair of powerful black horses, one of which was surmounted by a sprucely-attired postilion—with the phaeton in the rear—were at the door of the hotel. Seeing all our baggage properly secured, we sprung into the conveyance and darted forward at a smart gallop. The animals seemed as if they could fly away with us—and the whip of the postilion made innumerable circular flourishes above their heads. The sky was beautifully clear: and a briskly-stirring, but not unpleasantly penetrating, south-east wind, played in our faces as we seemed scarcely to be sensible of the road. What a contrast to the heat, vexation, and general uncomfortableness of the two preceding days of our journey! We felt it sensibly, and enjoyed it in proportion. Our first place of halting, to change horses, was at HOUDAN; which may be about four leagues from Dreux; and I verily believe we reached it in an hour. The route thither is through a flat and uninteresting country; except that every feature of landscape (and more especially in our previous journeys through Normandy) seems to be thrown to a greater distance, than in England. This may account for the flatness of views, and the diminutiveness of objects. Houdan is a village-like town, containing a population of about 2000 inhabitants; but much business is done on market days; and of *corn*, in particular, I was told that they often sold several thousand sacks in a day. Its contiguity to Paris may account for the quantity of business done. In the outskirts of the town,—and flanked, rather than surrounded, by two or three rows of trees, of scarcely three years growth—stands the “stiff and stower” remains of the *Castle of Houdan*. It is a very interesting relic, and to our eyes appeared of an unusual construction. The corner towers are small and circular; and the

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intermediate portion of the outer wall is constructed with a swell, or a small curvature outwards. I paced the outside, but have forgotten the measurement. Certainly, it is not more than forty feet square. I tried to gain admittance into the interior, but without success, as the person possessing the key was not to be found. I saw enough, however, to convince me that the walls could not be less than twelve feet in thickness.

The horses had been some time in readiness, and the fresh postilion seemed to be lost in amazement at the cause of our loitering so long at so insignificant a place. The day warmed as we pushed on for the far-famed “proud Versailles.” The approach, from Houdan, is perhaps not the most favourable; although we got peeps of the palace, which gave us rather elevated notions of its enormous extent. We drove to the *Hotel de Bourbon*, an excellent, clean mansion, close to the very facade of the palace, after passing the Hotel de Ville; and from whence you have an undisturbed view of the broad, wide, direct road to Paris. I bespoke dinner, and prepared to lounge. The palace—of which I purposely declined visiting the interior—reserving Versailles for a future and entire day’s gratification—is doubtless an immense fabric—of which the facade just mentioned is composed of brick, and assumes any thing but a grand and imposing air: merely because it wants simplicity and uniformity of design. I observed some charming white stone houses, scattered on each side of this widely extended chaussee—or route royale—and, upon the whole, Versailles appeared to us to be a magnificent and rather interesting spot. Two or three rows of trees, some forty or fifty generations more ancient than those constituting the boulevards at Houdan, formed avenues on each side of this noble road; and all appeared life and animation—savouring of the proximity of the metropolis. Carriages without number—chiefly upon hire, were going and returning; and the gaits and dresses of individuals were of a more studied and of a gayer aspect. At length, we became a little impatient for our dinner, and for the moment of our departure. We hired one of these carriages; which for nine francs, would convey us to the place of our destination. This appeared to me very reasonable; and after being extravagant enough to drink Champagne at dinner, to commemorate our near approach to the metropolis, we set forward between five and six o’clock, resolving to strain our eyes to the utmost, and to be astonished at every thing we saw!—especially as *this* is considered the most favourable approach to the capital.

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The *Ecole Militaire*, to the left, of which Marshal Ney had once the chief command, struck me as a noble establishment. But it was on approaching *Sevre* that all the bustle and population, attendant upon the immediate vicinity of a great metropolis, became evident. Single-horsed vehicles—in many of which not fewer than nine persons were pretty closely stowed—three upon a bench, and three benches under the roof—fiacres, barouches, and carriages of every description, among which we discovered a great number from our own country—did not fail to occupy our unremitting attention. *Sevre* is a long, rambling, and chiefly single-street town; but picturesquely situated, on a slope, and ornamented to the left by the windings of the Seine. We were downright glad to renew our acquaintance with our old, and long-lost friend, the river Seine; although it appeared to be sadly shorn of its majestic breadth since we had parted with it before the walls of Montmorenci castle, in our route to Havre. The new nine-arch bridge at Sevre is a sort of Waterloo bridge in miniature. Upon the heights, above it, I learnt that there was a beautiful view of the river in the foreground with Paris in the distance. We passed over the old bridge, and saw *St. Cloud* to the left: which of course interested us as the late residence of Bonaparte, but which, in truth, has nothing beyond the air of a large respectable country-gentleman's mansion in England. We pushed on, and began to have distinct perceptions of the great city. Of all the desirable places of retreat, whether for its elevated situation, or respectable appearance, or commodious neighbourhood, nothing struck me more forcibly than the village of PASSY, upon a commanding terrace, to the left; some three or four English miles from Paris—and having a noble view both of the river and of the city. It is also considered to be remarkably healthy; and carriages of every description, are constantly passing thither to and from Paris.

The dome of the *Pantheon*, and the gilded one of the *Hotel des Invalides*, together with the stunted towers of *Notre Dame*, were among the chief objects to the right: while the accompaniment of the Seine, afforded a pleasing foreground to this architectural picture in the distance. But, my friend, I will frankly own to you, that I was disappointed ... upon this first glimpse of the GREAT city. In the first place, the surrounding country is flat; with the exception of *Mount Calvary,* to the left, which has nothing to do with the metropolitan view from this situation. In the second place, what are the *Pantheon* and *Notre Dame* compared with *St. Paul's* and *Westminster Abbey*?—to say nothing of the vicinity of London, as is connected with the beautifully undulating ground about Camberwell, Sydenham, Norwood, and. Shooter's Hill—and, on the other side of the water, Hampstead, Highgate and Harrow: again, Wimbledon and Richmond!... What lovely

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vicinities are these compared with that of *Mont Martre*? And if you take river scenery into the account, what is the *Seine*, in the neighbourhood of Paris, compared with the *Thames* in that of London? If the almost impenetrable smoke and filth from coal-fires were charmed away—shew me, I beseech you, any view of Paris, from this, or from any point of approach, which shall presume to bear the semblance of comparison with that of London, from the descent from *Shooter's Hill*! The most bewitched Frenchified-Englishman, in the perfect possession of his eye sight, will not have the temerity to institute such a comparison. But as you near the barriers, your admiration increases. Having got rid of all background of country—as you approach the capital—the foregoing objections vanish. Here the officers of police affected to search our luggage. They were heartily welcome, and so I told them. This disarmed all suspicion. Accordingly we entered Paris by one of the noblest and one of the most celebrated of its Boulevards—-the *Champs Elysees*. As we gained the *Place Louis Quinze*, with the *Thuileries* in front, with the *Hotel des Invalides* (the gilded dome of which latter reflected the strong rays of a setting sun) to the right—we were much struck with this combination of architectural splendour: indisputably much superior to any similar display on the entrance into our own capital.[174] Turning to the left, the *Place Vendome* and the *Rue de la Paix*, with the extreme height of the houses, and the stone materials of their construction, completed our admiration. But the *Boulevards Italiens*—after passing the pillars of the proposed church of *Ste. Madelaine*, and turning to the right—helped to prolong our extreme gratification, till we reached the spot whence I am addressing you. Doubtless, at first glance, this is a most splendid and enchanting city. A particular detail must be necessarily reserved, for the next despatch. I shall take all possible pains to make you acquainted with the treasures of PAST TIMES—in the shape of Manuscripts and printed Books. THE ROYAL LIBRARY has as much astonished me, as the CURATORS of it have charmed me by their extreme kindness and civility.[175]

[174] [The above was written in 1818-19. Now, what would be said by a foreigner, of his first drive from Westminster Bridge, through Regent Street to the stupendous Pantheon facing the termination of Portland Place?]

[175] At this point, the labours of *Mons*. LICQUET, as my translator, cease; and I will let him take leave of his task of translation in his own words. "Ici se termine la tache qui m'a ete confiee. Apres avoir refute franchement tout ce qui m'a semble digne de letre, je crois devoir declarer, en finissant, que mes observations n'ont jamais eu *la personne* pour objet. Je reste persuade, d'ailleurs, que le coeur

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de M.D. est tout-a-fait innocent des ecarts de son esprit. Si l'on peut le condamner pour le fait, il faudra toujours l'absoudre pour l'intention...." The *concluding*-sentence need not be copied: it is bad taste to re-echo the notices of one's own good qualities.

My Norman translator at least takes leave of me with the grace of a gentleman: although his thrusts have been occasionally direct and severely intended. The foil which he has used has not always had the button covered. The candid reader will, however, judge how these thrusts have been parried; and if the "hits" on the part of my adversary, have been sometimes "palpable," those of the original author will not (it is presumed) be deemed feeble or unimpressive. After all, the sum total of "Errata" scarcely includes THREE of *substantial moment*: and wishing Mons Licquet "a very good day," I desire nothing better than to renew our critical coqueting on the floor of that Library of which he is the "Bibliothecaire en Chef."

END OF VOL. I.

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SUPPLEMENT TO VOL. I.

OLD POEM ON THE SIEGE OF ROUEN.

The city of Rouen makes too considerable a figure in the foregoing pages, and its history, as connected with our own country in the earlier part of the fifteenth century, is too interesting, to require any thing in the shape of apology for the matter which the Reader is about to peruse. This "matter" is necessarily incidental to the *present* edition of the "Tour;" as it is only recently made public. An "*Old English Poem*" on our Henry the Fifth's "*Siege of Rouen*" is a theme likely to excite the attention of the literary Antiquary on *either* side of the Channel.

The late erudite, and ever to be lamented Rev. J.J. Conybeare, successively Professor of the Saxon language, and of English Poetry in the University of Oxford, discovered, in the exhaustless treasures of the Bodleian Library, a portion of the Old English Poem in question: but it was a portion only. In the 21st. vol. of the Archaeologia, Mr. Conybeare gave an account of this fortunate discovery, and subjoined the poetical fragment. Mr. Frederick Madden, one of the Librarians attached to the MS. department in the British Museum, was perhaps yet more fortunate in the discovery of the portion which was lost: and in the 22d. vol. of the *Archaeologia*, just published, (pp. 350-398), he has

annexed an abstract of the remaining fragment, with copious and learned notes. This fragment had found its way, in a prose attire, into the well-known English MS. Chronicle, called the BRUTE:—usually (but most absurdly) attributed to Caxton. It is not however to be found in *all* the copies of this Chronicle. On the contrary, Mr. Madden,

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after an examination of several copies of this MS. has found the poem only in four of them: namely, in two among the Harleian MSS. (Nos. 753; 2256—from which *his* transcript and collation have been made) in one belonging to Mr. Coke of Holkham, and in a fourth belonging to the *Cotton* Collection:—Galba E. viii. This latter MS. has a very close correspondence with the *second* Harl. MS. but is often faulty from errors of the Scribe, See *Gentleman's Magazine, May*, 1829.

So much for the history of the discovery of this precious old English Poem—which is allowed to be a contemporaneous production of the time of the Siege—namely, A.D. 1418. A word as to its intrinsic worth—from the testimony of the Critic most competent to appreciate it. "It will be admitted, I believe, (says Mr. Madden) by all who will take the trouble to compare the various contemporary narratives of the Siege of Rouen, that in point of simplicity, clearness, and minuteness of detail, there is NO existing document which can COMPARE with the Poem before us. Its authenticity is sufficiently established, from the fact of the Author's having been an EYEWITNESS of the whole. If we review the names of those Historians who lived at the same period, we shall have abundant reason to rejoice at so valuable an accession to our present stock of information on the subject." *Archaeologia*, vol. xxii. p. 353. The reader shall be no longer detained from a specimen or two of the poem itself, which should seem fully to justify the eulogy of the Critic.

"On the day after the return of the twelve delegates sent by the City of Rouen to treat with Henry, the Poet proceeds to inform us, that the King caused two tents to be pitched, one for the English Commissioners, and the other for the French. On the English side were appointed the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Salisbury, the Lord Fitzhugh, and Sir Walter Hungerford, and on the French side, twelve discreet persons were chosen to meet them. Then says the writer,

'It was a sight of solempnity,
For to behold both party;
To see the rich in their array,
And on the walls the people that lay,
And on our people that were without,
How thick that they walked about;
And the heraudis seemly to seene,
How that they went ay between;
The king's heraudis and pursuivants,
In coats of arms *amyantis*.
The English a beast, the French a flower,
Of Portyngale both castle and tower,
And other coats of diversity,
As lords bearen in their degree.'

“As a striking contrast to this display of pomp and splendour is described the deplorable condition of those unfortunate inhabitants who lay starving in the ditches without the walls of the City, deprived both of food and clothing. The affecting and simple relation of our Poet, who was an eye-witness, is written with that display of feeling such a scene must naturally have excited, and affords perhaps one of the most favourable passages in the Poem to compare with the studied narratives of Elmham or Livius. In the first instance we behold misery literally in rags, and hiding herself in silence and obscurity, whilst in the other she is ostentatiously paraded before our eyes:

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’There men might see a great pity,
A child of two year or three
Go about, and bid his bread,
For Father and mother both lay dead,
And under them the water stood,
And yet they lay crying after food.
Some *storven* to the death,
And some stopped both eyen and breath,
And some crooked in the knees,
And as lean as any trees,
And women holding in their arm
A dead child, and nothing warm,
And children sucking on the pap
Within a dead woman’s lap.’

On Friday the 20th of January, King Henry V. made his public entry into Rouen. His personal appearance is thus described:

’He rode upon a brown steed,
Of black damask was his weed,
A *Peytrelle* of gold full bright
About his neck hung down right,
And a pendant behind him did honge
Unto the earth, it was so long.
And they that never before him did see,
They knew by the cheer which was he.’

“With the accustomed, but mistaken, piety for which Henry was ever distinguished, he first proceeded to the monastery, where he alighted from his charger, and was met by the chaplains of his household, who walked before him, chanting *Quis est magnus Dominus?* After the celebration of mass, the king repaired to the Castle, where he took up his abode. By this termination of a siege, which, for its duration and the horrors it produced, is perhaps without a parallel in ancient or modern times, the city was again plentifully supplied with provisions, and recovered the shock so tedious and afflicting a contest had occasioned:

’And thus our gracious liege
Made an end of his siege;
And all that have heard this reading,
To his bliss Christ you bring,
That for us died upon a tree,
Amen say we all, *pur charite!*’

The Duke of Exeter is appointed Governor of the City, and ordered by Henry to take possession of it the same night. The Duke mounts his horse, and rides strait to the Port de Bevesyne or Beauvais, attended by a retinue, to carry the commands of his sovereign into execution. His Entre, and the truly miserable condition of the besieged, together with the imposing appearance of Henry, shall now be described in the language of the poet.

Thanne the duke of Excestre withoute bode
Toke his hors and forth he rode,
To bevesyne[E] that porte so stronge,
That he hadde ley bifore so longe,
To that gate sone he kam,[F]
And with hym many a worthy[G] manne.
There was neying of many a stede,
And schynyng of many a gay wede,
There was many a getoun[H] gay,
With mychille[I] and grete aray.
And whanne the gate was openyd there,
And thay weren[J] redy into fare,
Trumpis[K] blewgh her bemys[L] of bras,
Pipis and clarionys forsothe ther was,
And as thay entrid thay gaf a schowte
With her[M] voyce that was fulle stowte,

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‘Seint George! seint George!’ thay criden[N] on height,
And seide, ‘welcome oure kynges righte.’
The Frensshe pepulle of that Cite
Were gederid by thousandes, hem to see.
Thay criden[N] alle welcome in fere,
’In siche tyme mote ye entre here,
Plesyng to God that it may be,
And to vs pees and vnyte.’
And of that pepulle, to telle the trewthe,
It was a sighte of fulle grete ruthe.
Mykelle of that folke therynne
Thay weren[O] but verrey bonys and skynne.
With eyen holowgh and[P] nose scharpe,
Vnnethe thay myght brethe or carpe,
For her colowris was[Q] wan as lede,
Not like to lyue but sone ben dede.
Disfigurid pateronys[R] and quaynte,
And as[S] a dede kyng thay weren paynte.
There men myght see an[T] exampleyre,
How fode makith the pepulle faire.[U]
In euery strete summe lay dede,
And hundriddis krying aftir brede.
And aftir long many a day,
Thay deyde as[V] faste as[W] they myght be lad away.
Into[X] that way God hem wisse,
That thay may come to his blisse! amen.
Now[Y] wille y more spelle,
And of the duke of exestre to[Z] telle.
To that Castelle firste he rode,
And sythen[AA] the Cite alle abrode;
Lengthe and brede he it mette,
And rich baneris he[AB] vp sette.
Vpon the porte seint Hillare
A Baner of the Trynyte.
And at[AC] the port Kaux he sette evene
A baner of the quene of heven.
And at[AD] port martvile he vppyght Of seint George a baner bryght.
He sette vpon the Castelle to[AE] stonde
The armys of Fr[a]unce and Englond.
And on the Friday in the mornynge

Into that Cite come oure kynge.
And alle the Bisshoppis in her aray,
And vij. abbottis with Crucchis[AF] gay;
xlij.[AG] crossis ther were of Religioune[AH],
And seculere, and alle thay went a precessioun,
Agens that prince withoute the toune,
And euery Cros as thay stode
He blessid hem with milde mode,
And holy water with her hande
Thay gaf the prince of oure lande.
And at[AI] the porte Kaux so wide
He in passid withoute[AJ] pride;
Withoute pipe or bemys blaste,
Our kyng worthyly he in paste.
And as a conquerour in his righte
Thankyng[AK] euer god almyghte;
And alle the pepulle in that Citie
'Wilcome our[AL] lorde,' thay seide, 'so fre!
Wilcome into[AM] thyne owne righte,
As it is the[AN] wille of[AO] god almyght.'
With that thay kryde alle *'nowelle!'*
Os[AP] heighe as thay myght yelle.
He rode vpon a browne stede,
Of blak damaske was his wede.
A peytrelle[AQ] of golde fulle bryght
Aboute his necke hynge[AR] doun right,
And a pendaunte behynd him dide[AS] honge
Vnto the erthe, it was so longe,
And thay that neuer before hym dide[AT] see,
Thay knew by chere[u] wiche was he.

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To the mynster dide he fare,
And of his horse he lighte there.
His chapelle[AU] mette hym at[AV] the dore there,
And wente bifore[AW] hym alle in fere,
And songe a response[AX] fulle glorivs,
Quis est magnus dominus.
Messe he hirde and offrid thoo,
And thanne to the Castelle dide he goo.
That is a place of rialte,
And a paleis of grete beaute.
There he hym[AY] loggid in the Toune,
With rialle and grete renoune.
And the[AZ] cite dide faste encrece
Of brede and wyne, fisshe, and fflesshe.[BA]
And thus oure gracious liege
Made an ende of his seege.
And alle that[BB] haue hirde this redynge[BC]
To his[BD] blisse criste you brynge,
That for vs deide vpon[BE] a tre,
Amen sey[BF] we alle, pur cherite!

There was many a getoun gay.] The following particulars relative to the *getoun* appear in MS. Harl. 838. "Euery baronet euery estat aboue hym shal have hys baner displeyd in y'e field yf he be chyef capteyn, euery knyght his penoun, euery squier or gentleman hys *getoun* or standard." "Item, y'e meyst lawfully fle fro y'e standard and *getoun*, but not fro y'e baner ne penon.". "Nota, a stremer shal stand in a top of a schyp or in y'e fore-castel: a stremer shal be slyt and so shal a standard as welle as a *getoun*: a *getoun* shal berr y'e length of ij yardes, a standard of iii or 4 yardes, and a stremer of xii. xx. xl. or lx. yardes longe."

This account is confirmed by MS. Harl. 2258, and Lansd. 225. f. 431. as quoted by Mr. Nicholas, in the Retrosp. Rev. vol. i. N.S. The former of these MSS. states: Euery standard and *Guydhome* [whence the etymology of the word is obvious] to have in the chief the crosse of St. George, to be slitte at the ende, and to conteyne the creste or supporter, with the posey, worde, and devise of the owner." It adds, that "a guydhome must be two yardes and a halfe, or three yardes longe." This rule may sometimes have been neglected, at least by artists, for in a bill of expences for the Earl of Warwick, dated July 1437, and printed by Dugdale, (Warw. p. 327.) we find the following entry; "Item, a *gyton* for the shippe of viij. yerdis long, poudrid full of raggid staves, for the lymnyng and workmanship, ijs." The Grant of a *guydon* made in 1491 to Hugh

Vaughan, is preserved in the College of Arms. It contains his crest placed longitudinally. *Retrospective Review, New Series*, vol. i. p. 511.

[E] *bewesyns*.

[F] *came*.

[G] *worthy* deest.

[H] A species of banner or streamer. See Note.

[I] *noble*.

[J] *were*.

[K] Trumpeters.

[L] Trumpets.

[M] *that*.

[N] cryed.

[O] *were*.

[P] *with nose*.

[Q] *were*.

[R] *patrons*.—Workmens' models or figures. *Patrone*, forme to werke by. *Prompt. Parvul*. MS. Harl. 221. There is probably here an allusion to the waxen or wooden effigies placed on the hearse of distinguished personages.

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[S] *as dede thyng they were peynte*.

[T] *in*.

[U] *to fare*.

[V] as *deest*.

[W] *as cartes led awey*.

[X] *Vnto*.

[Y] In MS. Harl. 753, a break is here made, and a large capital letter introduced.

[Z] *to* deest.

[AA] *sithe*.

[AB] *vp he*.

[AC] *atte porte kauxoz*.

[AD] *atte* porte.

[AE] *that stounde*.

[AF] Crosses.

[AG] xliiij.

[AH] *religiouns*.

[AI] *atte porte hauxoz*.

[AJ] The remainder, of this, and the two following lines are omitted.

[AK] *Thanked*.

[AL] *they seyde our lord so free*.

[AM] *vnto*.

[AN] *the* deest.

[AO] *to*.

[AP] *As*.

[AQ] Poitrell, breast plate.

[AR] *hangyng*.

[AS] *dide* deest.

[AT] *the* chere.

[AU] The chaplains of his household. Lat. *capella*.

[AV] *atte* dore, *there* deest.

[AW] *afore*.

[AX] *respon.*

[AY] *logged hym.*

[AZ] *his cite fast encrest*.

[BA] *beste*.

[BB] *that* deest.

[BC] *tydyng*.

[BD] *his* deest.

[BE] on.

[BF] *seyde all for charitee*.

BRONZE GILT ANTIQUE STATUE AT LILLEBONNE, p. 127-8.

This Statue, as the above reference will testify, is now in the possession of Mr. Samuel Woodburn, of St. Martin's Lane. When the note relating to it was written, I could, not place my hand upon a Brochure (in my possession) published at Rouen in 1823,[176] containing an archaeological description of this Statue by M. Revet, and a scientific account of its component parts, by M. Houton La Billardiere, Professor of Chemistry at Rouen. The former embodied his remarks in two letters addressed to the Prefect of the Lower Seine. A print of the figure in its then extremely mutilated state, is prefixed; but its omission would have been no great drawback to the publication—which, in its details, appears to be ingenious, learned, and satisfactory. The highest praise is given to the Statue, as a work of art of the second century.[177] Its *identity* seems to be yet a subject of disputation:—but M. Revet considers it as "the representation of some idolatrous divinity." The opinion of its being a representation of Bacchus, or of Apollo, or of a Constellation, he thinks might be regulated by a discovery of some emblem, or

attribute, found in the vicinity of the Statue. Two other plates—lithographised—relating to explanations of the pieces of the Statue, close this interesting performance.

[176] "*Description de la, Statue Fruste, en Bronze Dore, trouvee a Lillebonne &c. Suivie de l'Analyse du Metal, avec le dessein de la Statue, et les Traces de quelques particularites relatives a la Confection de cette Antique." Rouen,* 1823. pp. 56.

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[177] Other details induce me to fix the period of its completion towards the end of the second century: and after the unheard of difficulties which the artist had to overcome, one would scarcely be believed if one said that every thing is executed in a high state of perfection." p. 34.

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[178] In the page referred to, I have conjectured it to be printed by Ulric Han-or Reisinger. To these names I add the above.

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