

shot. He is probably the best salmon-fisher in the United States, and he is an equally good hunter. I suppose there is no person in America who is more desirous to kill a moose than he. But he needlessly remarked, after he had ex-

amined the wound in the bear, that he had seen that kind of a shot made by a cow's horn. This sort of talk affected me not. When I went to sleep that night my last delicious thought was, "I've killed a bear."

Chalres Dudley Warner.

A LITTLE TOUR IN FRANCE.

It was a very little tour; but the charm of the three or four old towns and monuments that it embraced, the beauty of the brilliant autumn weather, the pleasure of reminding one's self how much of the interest, the strength, and dignity of France is outside of that huge, pretentious caravansary called Paris (a reminder often needed), — these things have given me a very grateful memory of it. I went down to Rheims to see the famous cathedral, and to reach Rheims I traveled through the early morning hours along the charming valley of the Marne. The Marne is a pretty little green river, the vegetation upon whose banks, otherwise unadorned, had begun to blush with the early frosts in a manner that suggested the autumnal tints of American scenery. The trees and bushes were positively scarlet and orange; the light was splendid and a trifle harsh; I could have fancied myself in the midst of a Western October, if at intervals some gray old large-towered church had not lifted a sculptured front above a railway station to dispel the fond illusion. One of these church fronts — I saw it only from the train — is particularly impressive: the little cathedral of Meaux, of which the great Bossuet was bishop, and along whose frigid nave he set his eloquence a-rolling with an impetus which it has not wholly lost to this day. It was entertaining, moreover, to enter the champagne country; for Rheims is in the ancient province whose later fame is syllabled, the world over, in popping

corks. A land of vineyards is not usually accounted picturesque; but the country about Epernay seemed to me to have a charm of its own. It stretched away in soft undulations that were pricked all over with little stakes muffled in leaves. The effect at a distance was that of vast surfaces — long, subdued billows — of pincushion; and yet it was very pretty. The deep blue sky was over the scene; the undulations were half in sun and half in shade; and here and there, among their myriad little bristles, were groups of vintagers, who, though they are in reality, doubtless, a prosaic and mercenary body of laborers, yet assumed, to a fancy that glanced at them in the cursory manner permitted by railway traveling, the appearance of joyous and disinterested votaries of Bacchus. The blouses of the men, the white caps of the women, were gleaming in the sunshine; they moved about crookedly among the tiny vine-poles. I thought them full of a charming suggestiveness. Of all the delightful gifts of France to the world, this was one of the most agreeable, — the keen, sweet liquid in which the finest flower of sociability is religiously dipped. It came from these sunny places; this little maze of curling-sticks supplied the world with half the world's gayety. I call it little only in relation to the immense number of bottles with gilded necks in which this gayety is annually stored up. The champagne country seemed to me, in fact, of great extent;

the bristling slopes went rolling away to new horizons in a manner that was positively reassuring. Making the hand-somest allowance for the wine manufactured from baser elements, it was apparent that this spacious section of a province represented a very large number of bottles.

As you draw near to Rheims the vineyards become sparser, and finally disappear,—a fact not to be regretted, for there is something incongruous in the juxtaposition of champagne and Gothic architecture. It may be said, too, that for the proper appreciation of a structure like the cathedral of Rheims you have need of all your head. As, after my arrival, I sat in my window at the inn, gazing up at the great façade, I found something dizzying in the mere climbing and soaring of one's astonished vision; and later, when I came to wander about in the upper regions of the church, and to peep down, through the rugged lace-work of the towers, at the little streets and the small spots of public places, I found myself musing upon the beauty of soberness. My window at the Lion d'Or was like a proscenium-box at the play; to admire the cathedral at my leisure, I had only to perch myself in the easement, with a good opera-glass. I sat there for a long time watching the great architectural drama. A drama I may call it, for no church front that I have seen is more animated, more richly figured. The density of the sculptures, the immense scale of the images, detract, perhaps, at first, in a certain sense, from the impressiveness of the cathedral of Rheims; the absence of large surfaces, of ascending lines, deceives you as to the elevation of the front, and the immense size of some of the upper statues brings them unduly near the eye. But little by little you perceive that this great figured and storied screen has a mass proportionate to its detail, and that it is the grandest part of a structure which, as a whole, is one of the noblest works of man's hands. Most people remember to have seen some print or some photograph of this heavily-charged façade of Rheims, which is usu-

ally put forward as the great example of the union of the purity and the possible richness of Gothic. I must first have seen some such print in my earliest years, for I have always thought of Rheims as the great Gothic cathedral *par excellence*. I had vague associations with it; it seemed to me that I had already stood before it. One's literary associations with Rheims are indeed very vivid and impressive: they begin with the picture of the Maid of Orleans passing under the deeply sculptured portal, with a banner in her hand which she has no need to lower, and while she stands amid the incense and the chants, the glitter of arms and the glow of colored lights, asking leave of the young king whom she has crowned to turn away and tend her flocks. And after that there is the sense of all the kings of France having traveled down to Rheims, in their splendor, to be consecrated; the great groups on the front of the church must have looked down on groups almost as stately,—groups full of color and movement,—assembled in the little *Place*. (This little *Place*, it must be confessed, is rather shabby. It is singular that the august ceremony of the *sacre* should not have left its mark upon the disposition of the houses,—should not have kept them at a respectful distance. Louis XIV., smoothing his plumage before he entered the church, can hardly have had space to swing the train of his coronation robe.) But when in driving into the town I reached the little *Place*, such as it is, and saw the cathedral lift its spireless towers above the long rows of its carven saints, the huge wheel of its window, the three great caverns of its portals, with the high acute pediments above each arch, and the sides abutting outward like the beginning of a pyramid,—when I looked at all this I felt that I had carried it in my mind from my earliest years, and that the stately vision had been implanted there by some forgotten glimpse of an old-fashioned water-color sketch, in which the sky was washed in with great picturesqueness, the remoter parts of the church tinted with a kind of fasci-

nating indigo, and the foundations represented as encumbered with little gabled and cross-timbered houses, inhabited by women in red petticoats and curious caps.

I shall not attempt any regular enumeration of the great details of the façade of Rheims; I cannot profess even to have fully apprehended them. They are a glorious company, and here and there, on its high-hung pedestal, one of the figures detaches itself with peculiar effectiveness. Over the central portal sits the Virgin Mary, meekly submitting her head to the ponderous crown which her son prepares to place upon it; the attitude and movement of Christ are full of a kind of splendid politeness. The three great door-ways are in themselves a museum of imagery, disposed in each case in fine, close tiers, the statues in each of the tiers packed perpendicularly against their comrades. The effect of these great hollowed and chiseled caverns is extremely striking; they are a proper vestibule to the dusky richness of the interior. The cathedral of Rheims, more fortunate than many of its companions, appears not to have suffered from the iconoclasts of the Revolution. I noticed no absent heads or broken noses. But, like many of its companions, it is so pressed upon by neighboring houses that it is not easy to get a general view of the sides and the rear. You may walk round it and note your walk as a long one; you may observe that the choir of the church travels back almost into another quarter of the city; you may see the far-spreading mass lose itself for a while in parasitic obstructions, and then emerge again with all its buttresses flying; but you miss that wide margin of space and light which should enable it to present itself as a consistent picture. Pictures have their frames and poems have their margins; a great work of art, such as a Gothic cathedral, should at least have elbow-room. You may, however, stroll beneath the walls of Rheims, along a narrow, dark street, and look up at the mighty structure and see its upper parts foreshortened into all kinds of delusive

proportions. There is a grand entertainment in the view of the church which you obtain from the furthest point which you may reach from it in the rear. I have never seen a cathedral so magnificently buttressed. The buttresses of Rheims are all double; they have a tremendous spring, and are supported upon pedestals surmounted by immense crocketed canopies containing statues of wide-winged angels. A great balustrade of Gothic arches connects these canopies one with another, and along this balustrade are perched strange figures of sitting beasts: unicorns and mermaids, griffins and monstrous owls. Huge, terrible gargoyles hang far over into the street, and doubtless some of them have a detail which I afterwards noticed at Laon. The gargoyle represents a grotesque beast,—a creature partaking at once of the shape of a bird, a fish, and a quadruped. At Laon, on either side of the main entrance, a long-bellied monster cranes forth into the air with the head of a hippopotamus; and under its belly crouches a little man, hardly less grotesque, making up a rueful grimace and playing some ineffectual trick upon his terrible companion. One of these little figures has plunged a sword, up to the hilt, into the belly of the monster above him, so that when he draws it forth there will be a leak in the great stone gutter; another has suspended himself to a rope that is knotted round the neck of the gargoyle, and is trying, in the same manner, to interrupt its functions by pulling the cord as tight as possible. There is certainly something sublime in an architectural conception that ranges from the combination of clustering towers and opposing fronts to this infinitely minute play of humor.

There is no great play of humor in the interior of Rheims, but there is a great deal of beauty and solemnity. This interior is a spectacle that excites the sensibility, as our forefathers used to say; but it is not an easy matter to describe. It is no description of it to say that it is four hundred and sixty-six feet in length and that the roof is one

hundred and twenty-four feet above the pavement; nor is there any very vivid portraiture in the statement that if there is no colored glass in the lower windows, there is, *per contra*, a great deal of the most gorgeous and most ancient in the upper ones. The long sweep of the nave, from the threshold to the point where the colored light-shafts of the choir lose themselves in the gray perspective, is grandly simple and a fresh reminder of the unwarrantable impertinence of those tall screens which in some churches, under one pretext or another, pretend to interpose themselves in this harmonious vista. The white light in the lower part of Rheims really contributes to the picturesqueness of the interior. It makes the gloom above look richer still, and throws that part of the roof which rests upon the gigantic piers of the transepts into mysterious remoteness. I wandered about for a long time: I sat first in one place and then in another; I attached myself to that most fascinating part of every great church, the angle at which the nave and transept divide. It was the better to observe this interesting point, I think, that I passed into the side gate of the choir, — the gate that stood ajar in the tall gilded railing. I sat down on a stool near the threshold; I leaned back against the side of one of the stalls; the church was empty, and I lost myself in the large perfection of the place. I lost myself, but the beadle found me; he stood before me, and with a silent, imperious gesture, motioned me to depart. I risked an argumentative glance, whereupon he signified his displeasure, repeated his gesture, and pointed to an old gentleman with a red cape who had come into the choir softly, without my seeing him, and had seated himself in one of the stalls. This old gentleman seemed plunged in pious thoughts; I was not, after all, very near him, and he did not look as if I disturbed him. A canon is at any time, I imagine, a more merciful man than a beadle. But of course I obeyed the beadle and eliminated myself from this peculiarly sacred precinct. I found another chair, and I fell to ad-

miring the cathedral again. But this time I think it was with a difference, — a difference which may serve as an excuse for the triviality of my anecdote. Other old gentlemen in red capes emerged from the sacristy and went into the choir; presently, when there were half a dozen, they began to chant, and I perceived that the impending vespers had been the reason of my expulsion. This was highly proper, and I forgave the beadle; but I was not as happy as before, for my thoughts had passed out of the architectural channel into — what shall I say? — into the political. Here they found nothing so sweet to feed upon. It was the 5th of October; ten days later the elections for the new Chamber were to take place, — the Chamber which was to replace the Assembly dissolved on the 16th of May by Marshal MacMahon, on a charge of “latent” radicalism. Stranger though one was, it was impossible not to be greatly interested in the triumph of the republican cause; it was impossible not to sympathize with this supreme effort of a brilliant and generous people to learn the lesson of national self-control and self-government. It was impossible, by the same token, not to have noted and detested the alacrity with which the Catholic party had rallied to the reactionary cause, and the unction with which the clergy had converted itself into the electioneering agents of Bonapartism. The clergy was giving daily evidence of its devotion to arbitrary rule and to every iniquity that shelters itself behind the mask of “authority.” These had been frequent and irritating reflections; they lurked in the folds of one’s morning paper. They came back to me in the midst of that tranquil grandeur of Rheims, as I listened to the droning of the old gentlemen in the red capes. Some of the canons, it was painful to observe, had not been punctual; they came hurrying out of the sacristy after the service had begun. They looked like amiable and venerable men; their chanting and droning, as it spread itself under the great arches, was not disagreeable to listen to; I could certainly bear them no grudge. But their presence there was distracting

and vexatious; it had spoiled my enjoyment. It had set me thinking of the activity and vivacity of the great organization to which they belonged, and of all the odious things it would have done before the 15th of October. To what base uses do we come at last! It was this same organization that had erected the magnificent structure which I had just been admiring, and which had then seemed an image of generosity and benignant power. Such an edifice might at times make one feel tenderly sentimental toward the Catholic church, — make one remember how many of the great achievements of the past we owe to her. To lapse gently into this state of mind seemed indeed always, while one strolled about a great cathedral, a proper recognition of its hospitality; but now I had lapsed gently out of it, and it was one of the exasperating elements of the situation that I felt, in a manner, called upon to decide how far such a lapse was unbecoming. I found myself even extending the question a little and picturing to myself that conflict which must often occur at such a moment as the present — which is actually going on, doubtless, in many thousands of minds — between the actively, practically liberal instinct and what one may call the historic, æsthetic sense, the sense upon which old cathedrals lay a certain palpable obligation. How far should a lover of old cathedrals let his hands be tied by the sanctity of their traditions? How far should he let his imagination bribe him, as it were, from action? This of course is a question for each man to answer for himself; but as I sat listening to the drowsy old canons of Rheims, I was visited, I don't know why, by a kind of revelation of the wholesome enmity which an ardent European liberal must feel at the present moment to the Catholic church. I understood how he must be intent upon war to the death; how that must seem the most sacred of all duties. Can anything, in the line of action for such a man, be more sacred? I asked myself; and can any instruments be too trenchant? I raised my eyes again to the dusky splendor of the upper

aisles and measured their enchanting perspective, and it was with a sense of doing them full justice that I gave my fictive liberal my good wishes.

This little operation restored my equanimity, so that I climbed several hundred steps and wandered lightly over the roof of the cathedral. Climbing into cathedral towers and gazing at the size of the statues that look small from the street has always seemed to me a rather brutal pastime; it is not the proper way to treat a beautiful building; it is like holding one's nose so close to a picture that one sees only the grain of the canvas. But when once I had emerged into the upper wilderness of Rheims the discourse of a very urbane and appreciative old bell-ringer, whom I found lurking behind one of the gigantic knobs of the ornamentation, gave an æsthetic complexion to what would otherwise have been a rather vulgar feat of gymnastics. It was very well to see what a great cathedral is made of, and in these high places of the immensity of Rheims I found the matter very impressively illustrated. I wandered for half an hour over endless expanses of roof, along the edge of sculptured abysses, through hugely-timbered attics and chambers that were in themselves as high as great churches. I stood knee-high to strange images, of unsuspected proportions, and I followed the topmost staircase of one of the towers, which curls upward like the groove of a corkscrew and gives you at the summit a hint of how a sailor feels at the mast-head. The ascent was worth making to learn the fullness of beauty of the church, the solidity and perfection, the mightiness of arch and buttress, the latent ingenuity of detail. At the angles of the balustrade which ornaments the roof of the choir are perched a series of huge sitting eagles, which from below, as you look up at them, produce a great effect. They are immense, grim-looking birds, and the sculptor has given to each of them a pair of very neatly carved human legs, terminating in talons. Why did he give them human legs? Why did he indulge in this ridiculous conceit? I am unable to say, but the conceit afforded

me pleasure. It seemed to tell of an imagination always at play, fond of the unexpected and delighting in its labor.

Apart from its cathedral Rheims is not an interesting city. It has a prosperous, modern, mercantile air. The streets look as if at one time M. Haussmann, in person, may have taken a good deal of exercise in them; they prove, however, that a French provincial town may be a wonderfully fresh, clean, comfortable-looking place. Very different is the aspect of the ancient city of Laon, to which you may, by the assistance of the railway, transfer yourself from Rheims in a little more than an hour. Laon is full of history, and the place, as you approach it, reminds you of a quaint wood-cut in the text of an ancient folio. Out of the midst of a smiling plain rises a goodly mountain, and on the top of the mountain is perched the old feudal *commune*, from the centre of which springs, with infinite majesty, the many-towered cathedral. At Laon you are in the midst of old France; it is one of the most interesting chapters of the past. Ever since reading, in M. Guizot's History of Civilization, the story of the dramatic struggle for municipal independence waged by this ardent little city against its feudal and ecclesiastical lords, I had had the feeling that Laon was worthy of a visit. All the more so that her two hundred years of civic fermentation had been vainly spent, and that in the early part of the fourteenth century she had been disfranchised without appeal. M. Guizot's readers will remember the really thrilling interest of the story which he has selected as the most complete and typical among those of which the records of the mediæval communities are full; the complications and fluctuations of the action, its brilliant episodes, its sombre, tragic *dénoûment*. I did not visit Laon with M. Guizot's several volumes in my pockets, nor had I any other store of historic tests for reference; but a vague notion of the vigorous manner in which for a couple of centuries the stubborn little town had attested its individuality supplied my observations with a harmonious background. Noth-

ing can well be more picturesque than the position of this interesting city. If one has been something of a traveler one has learned to know a "good" place at a glance. The moment Laon became visible from the window of the train I perceived that Laon was good. And then I had the word for it of an extremely agreeable young officer of artillery, who shared my railway carriage in coming from Rheims, and who spoke with an authority borrowed from three years of garrison life on that windy hill-top. He affirmed that the only recreation it afforded was a walk round the ramparts which encircle the town; people went down the hill as little as possible, — it was such a dreadful bore to come up again. But he declared, nevertheless, that, as an intelligent tourist, I should be enchanted with the place; that the cathedral was magnificent, the view of the great surrounding country a perpetual entertainment, and the little town full of originality. After I had spent a day there I thought of this pleasant young officer and his familiar walk upon the city wall; he gave a point to my inevitable reflections upon the degree to which at the present hour, in France, the front of the stage is occupied by the army. Inevitable reflections, I say, because the net result of any little tour that one may make just now is a vivid sense of red trousers and cropped heads. Wherever you go you come upon a military quarter, you stumble upon a group of young citizens in uniform. It is always a pretty spectacle; they enliven the scene; they touch it here and there with a spot of color. But this is not the whole of the matter, and when you have admired the picturesqueness of a standing army of a million of men, you fall to wondering how a country can afford to wear so expensive an ornament. It must be a very uncomfortable bedfellow. How do the young men bear it; how does France bear it; how long will she be able to keep it up? Every young Frenchman, on reaching maturity, has to give up five years of his life to this bristling Minotaur of military service. (There are a few exceptions

to this rule: some young men may serve but a year if they choose to anticipate their term and pay a certain sum of money; others — a few in number — may draw lots entailing but a year's service. But there remains, for all alike, the long term of service in the reserve.) It is hard for Americans to understand how life is arranged among people who come into the world with this heavy mortgage upon the freshest years of their strength; it seems like drinking the wine of life from a vessel with a great leak in the bottom. Is such a *régime* inspiring, or is it demoralizing? Is the effect of it to quicken the sentiment of patriotism, the sense of the dangers to which one's country is exposed and of what one owes to the common cause, or to take the edge from all ambition that is not purely military, to force young men to say that there is no use trying, that nothing is worth beginning, and that a young fellow condemned to pay such a tax as that has a right to refund himself any way he can? Reminded as one is at every step of the immensity of the military burden of France, the most interesting point seems to me not its economical but its moral bearing. Its effect upon the finances of the country may be accurately computed; its effect upon the character of the young generation is more of a mystery. As a sentimental tourist wanders of an autumn afternoon upon the planted rampart of an ancient town and meets young soldiers strolling in couples or leaning against the parapet and looking off at the quiet country, he is apt to take the more genial view of the dreadful trade of arms. He feels like saying that it teaches its votaries something that is worth knowing and yet is not learned in several other trades, — the hardware, say, or the dry goods business. Five years is a good deal to ask of a young life as a sacrifice; but the sacrifice is in some ways a gain. Certainly, apart from the question of material defense, it may be said that no European nation, at present, can afford, morally, not to pass her young men, the hope of the country, through the military mill. It does for them something

indispensable: it toughens, hardens, solidifies them; gives them an ideal of honor, of some other possibility in life than making a fortune. A country in which the other trades I spoke of have it all their own way appears, in comparison, less rich in the stuff her sons are made of.

So I mused, as I strolled in the afternoon along the charming old city wall at Laon; and if my meditations seem a trifle cynical, I must say in justice that I had been a good while coming to them. I had done a great many things first. I had climbed up the long straight staircase which has been dropped like a scaling-ladder from one of the town-gates to the bottom of the hill. Laon still has her gates as she still has her wall, and one of these, the old Porte d'Ardon, is a really precious relic of mediæval architecture. I had repaired to the sign of the *Hure* — a portrait of this inhospitable beast is swung from the front of the inn — and bespoken a lodging; I had spent a long time in the cathedral, in it and before it, beside it, behind it; I had walked all over the town, from the citadel, at one end of the lofty plateau on which it stands, to the artillery barracks and the charming old church of St. Martin at the other. The cathedral of Laon has not the elaborate grandeur of that of Rheims; but it is a very noble and beautiful church. Nothing can be finer than its position; it would set off any church to stand on such a hill-crest. Laon has also a façade of many sculptures, which, however, has suffered greater violence than that of Rheims, and is now being carefully and delicately restored. Whole figures and bas-reliefs have lately been replaced by exact imitations in that fresh white French stone which looks at first like a superior sort of plaster. They were far gone, and I suppose the restorer's hand was imperiously called for. I do not know that it has been too freely used. But half the charm of Laon is the magnificent coloring of brownish, weather-battered gray which it owes to the great exposure of its position, and it will be many a year before the chalky scars and

patches will be wrought into dusky harmony with the rest of the edifice. Fortunately, however, they promise to be not very numerous; the principal restorations have taken place inside. I know not what all this labor costs; but I was interested in learning from the old bell-ringer at Rheims that the sum voted by the Chamber for refurbishing up his own church was two millions of francs, to be expended during ten years. That is what it is to have "national monuments" to keep up. One is apt to think of the fourteenth century as a rather ill-appointed and comfortless period; but the fact that at the present time the mere repairs of one of its buildings cost forty thousand dollars a year would indicate that the original builders had a great deal of money to spend. The cathedral of Laon was intended to be a wonderful cluster of towers, but only two of these ornaments — the couple above the west front — have been carried to a great altitude; the pedestals of the rest, however, detach themselves with much vigor, and contribute to the complicated and somewhat fantastic look which the church wears at a distance, and which makes its great picturesqueness. The finished towers are admirably light and graceful; with the sky shining through their large interstices they suggest an imitation of timber in masonry. They have one very quaint feature: from their topmost portions, at each angle, certain carved heads of oxen peep forward with a startling naturalness, — a tribute to the patient, powerful beasts who dragged the material of the building up the long zigzags of the mountain. We perhaps treat our dumb creatures better to-day than was done five hundred years ago; but I doubt whether a modern architect, in settling his accounts, would have "remembered," as they say, the oxen.

The whole precinct of the cathedral of Laon is picturesque. There is a charming Palais de Justice beside it, separated from it by a pleasant, homely garden, in which, as you walk about, you have an excellent view of the towering back and sides of the great church. The Palais de Justice, which is an an-

cient building, has a fine old Gothic arcade, and on the other side, directly upon the city wall, a picturesque, irregular rear, with a row of painted windows, through which, from the *salle d'audience*, the judge on the bench and the prisoner in the dock may enjoy a prospect, admonitory, inspiring, or depressing, as the case may be, of the expanded country. This great sea-like plain that lies beneath the town on all sides constitutes, for Laon, a striking resemblance to those Italian cities — Siena, Volterra, Perugia — which the traveler remembers so fondly as a dark silhouette lifted high against a glowing sunset. There is something Italian, too, in the mingling of rock and rampart in the old foundations of the town, and in the generous verdure in which these are muffled. At one end of the hill-top the plateau becomes a narrow ridge, — the slope makes a deep indentation which contributes to the effect of a thoroughly Italian picture. A line of crooked little red-roofed houses stands on the edge of this indentation, with their feet in the tangled verdure that blooms in it; and above them rises a large, florid, deserted-looking church, which you may be sure has a little empty, grass-grown, out-of-the-way Place before it. Almost opposite, on another spur of the hill, the gray walls of a suppressed convent peep from among the trees. I fancied I was at Perugia.

There came in the evening to the inn of the Hure a very worthy man who had vehicles to hire. The Hure was a decidedly provincial hostelry, and I compared it mentally with certain English establishments of a like degree, of which I had lately had observation. In England I should have had a waiter in an old evening suit and a white cravat, who would have treated me to cold meat and bread and cheese. There would have been a musty little inn parlor and probably a very good fire in the grate, and the festally-attired waiter would have been my sole entertainer. At Laon I was in perpetual intercourse with the landlord and his wife and a large body of easy-going, conversational domestics.

Our intercourse was carried on in an old darksome stone kitchen, with shining copper vessels hanging all over the walls, in which I was free to wander about and take down my key in one place and rummage out my candlestick in another, while the domestics sat at table eating *pot au feu*. The landlord cooked the dinner; he wore a white cap and apron; he brought in the first dish at the *table d'hôte*. Of course there was a table d'hôte, with several lamps and a long array of little dessert-dishes, for the benefit of two commercial travelers, who tucked their napkins into their necks, and the writer of these lines. Every country has its manners. In England the benefits — whatever they are — represented by the evening dress of the waiter would have been most apparent; in France one was more sensible of the blessings of which the white cap and apron of the host were a symbol. In England, certainly, one is treated more like a gentleman. It is true that in traveling, sometimes, all that one asks is to be treated simply as a person with an appetite. But I am forgetting my dispenser of vehicles, concerning whom, however, and whose large red cheeks and crimson cravat, I have left myself room to say no more than that they were witnesses of a bargain that I should be driven early on the morrow morning, in an "Américaine," to the Château de Coucy. The Américaine proved to be a vehicle of which I should not have been eager to claim the credit for my native land; but with the aid of a ragged but resolute little horse, and a driver so susceptible as regards his beast's appearance that, referring to the exclamation of dismay with which I had greeted it, he turned to me at the end of each successive kilometre with a rancorous "Now do you say he can't go?" — with these accessories, I say, it conveyed me more than twenty miles. It was entertaining to wind down the hill-side from Laon in the early morning of a splendid autumn day; to dip into the glistening plain, all void of hedges and fences and sprinkled with light and dew; to jog along the straight white roads, between the tall,

thin poplars; to rattle through the half-waked villages and past the orchards heavy with sour-looking crimson apples. The Château de Coucy is a well-known monument; it is one of the most considerable ruins in France, and it is in some respects the most extraordinary. As you come from Laon a turn in the road suddenly, at last, reveals it to you. It is still at a distance; you will not reach it for half an hour; but its huge white donjon stands up like some gigantic lighthouse at sea. Coucy is altogether on a grand scale, but this colossal central tower is a real architectural phenomenon. As M. Viollet-le-Duc says, it seems to have been built by giants for a race of giants. The very quaint little town of Coucy-le-Château nestles at the foot of this strange, half-substantial, half-spectral structure; it was, together with a goodly part of the neighboring country, the feudal appanage of those terrible lords who erected the present indestructible edifice, and whose "boastful motto" (I quote from Murray) was

"Roi je ne suis
Prince ni comte aussi;
Je suis le Sire de Coucy."

Coucy is a sleepy little borough, still girdled with its ancient wall, entered by its old gate-ways, and supported on the verdurous flanks of a hill-top. I interviewed the host of the Golden Apple in his kitchen; I breakfasted — *ma foi, fort bien*, as they would say in the indigenous tongue — in his parlor; and then I visited the château, which is at five minutes' walk. This very interesting ruin is the property of the state, and the state is represented by a very civil and intelligent woman, who divests the trade of custodian of almost all its grossness. Any feudal ruin is a charming affair, and Coucy has much of the sweet melancholy of its class. There are four great towers, connected by a massive curtain and inclosing the tremendous donjon of which I just now spoke. All this is very crumbling and silvery; the inclosure is a tangle of wild verdure, and the pigeons perch upon the inaccessible battlements as picturesquely as could be desired. But the place lacked, to my sense, the

peculiar softness and venerableness, the ivied mellowness, of a great English ruin. At Coucy there is no ivy to speak of; the climate has not caressed and embroidered the rugged masses of stone. This is what I meant by speaking of the famous donjon as spectral; the term is an odd one to apply to an edifice whose walls are thirty-four feet thick; its vast, pale surface has not a speck or stain, not a clinging weed or a creeping vine. It looks like a tower of ivory.

I took my way from Coucy to the ancient town of Soissons, where I found another cathedral, from which I think I extracted all the entertainment it could legitimately yield. There is little other to be had at Soissons, in spite of the suggestiveness of its name, which is redolent of history and local color. The truth is, I suppose, that Soissons looks so new precisely because she is so old. She is in her second youth; she has renewed herself. The old city was worn out; it could no longer serve; it has been replaced. The new one is a quiet, rather aristocratic-looking little *ville de province*, — a collection of well - condi-

tioned, sober-faced abodes of gentility, with high-walled gardens behind them and very carefully closed *porte-cochères* in front. Occasionally a *porte-cochère* opens; an elderly lady in black emerges and paces discreetly away. An old gentleman has come to the door with her. He is comfortably corpulent; he wears gold spectacles and embroidered slippers. He looks up and down the dull street, and sees nothing at all; then he retires, closing the *porte-cochère* very softly and firmly. But he has stood there long enough to give an observant stranger the impression of a cautious provincial *bourgeoisie* that has a solid fortune well invested, and that marries its daughters only for a rigidly measured equivalent. This latter ceremony, however, whenever it occurs, probably takes place in the cathedral, and though resting on a prosaic foundation must borrow a certain grace from that charming building. The cathedral of Soissons has a statueless front and only a single tower; but it is full of something that I was on the point of calling natural elegance.

Henry James, Jr.

DETMOLD: A ROMANCE.

PART II.

III.

DETMOLD.

It was true, as gayly intimated by Hyson on the evening of the *rencontre* at the Café Dante, that another motive than interest in the Old World for its own sake had brought Detmold to Europe. Not that this interest was not genuine and powerful, but he had his own way to make; and unless his cooler judgment had been overborne by an impulse too strong to resist, he would not have yield-

ed to it and postponed by just so much his progress towards an established standing in the profession he had chosen. This impulse was at first only an unceasing desire to be again within sight and sound of a beautiful girl who had taken his fancy captive. He was not willing that Alice should add to the countless respects in which she was already his superior that of foreign travel, in which upon her return he could have no sympathetic associations in common with her. There would also be a satisfaction, even if a painful one, in observ-