

DINAN.

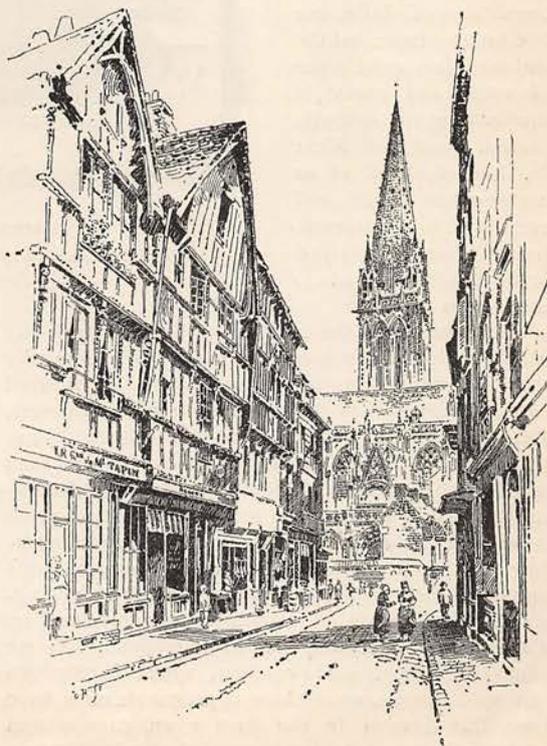
## ANOTHER EASY CONTINENTAL TRIP.

BY JAMES BAKER, AUTHOR OF "JOHN WESTACOTT," ETC.



ONCE more we board the Southampton steamer, and sail away in the night over the thickly studded Channel for St. Malo. We are bent on a westerly journey, amid scenes of high historical interest, of pleasant scenery, and genial people; and where amusements such as picture galleries, and music, and gay sea-side resort, will fall to our lot far more than in the quainter and wilder Bretagne trip. English, too, will be more spoken, for we are more in the track of the ordinary tourist. The little run from St. Malo across to Dinard is soon accomplished, and here we can linger for a day for some capital bathing on the soft, light brown sands. From Dinard to Dinan the route is charmingly picturesque, be road or river taken to arrive there. The country on all sides is thickly wooded, and very different to the flat, level plains and straight roads of Normandy, along which we shall soon be passing; and as the road rises and falls we can easily see how the Vendéans could hold their own against the armies of the republic, and admire the wisdom of the Prussians in leaving this district (although they swarmed over Normandy) untrod by their soldiers. The road entrance into Dinan was through the old Porte St. Malo, a fine specimen of a mediæval gateway; and if it be harvest-time men may even now be seen threshing their corn with the flail in the road over which carriages drive; the horses' hoofs treading out the corn. Or at the doorways may be seen sitting aged women spinning with the wheel, as our great-grandmothers did in England. The streets, in spite of some modern improvements, are still most pic-

turesque, the houses being built over the pavements and supported by pillars. A stroll out to the castle, and the Église des Moines; and then a calm, peaceful walk by the side of the little river Rance, out to the picturesque viaduct that spans wood, and river, and



CAEN.

charming Rance Valley, that is so well seen by those arriving by steamer; and then up the steep street to the centre of the town—will almost embrace the whole of the principal features of Dinan. This walk, too, may be made to include a visit to the abbey of Lehon, the picturesque situation of which reminds one of Tintern, but its walls are entered by a high Norman arch, although the greater part of the work is of the Late Pointed order. At Saint Esprit, above this village, the view of Dinan on its steep height, and the richly wooded country behind it, forms a charming landscape.

From Dinan to Dol is an easy walk of rather more than half a day, and the pedestrian would see much of the real peasant-life of the Norman. But there is not so much to interest him in these roads as in those of Brittany, and as the rail now supersedes the diligence, many who walked or drove will now go by steam.

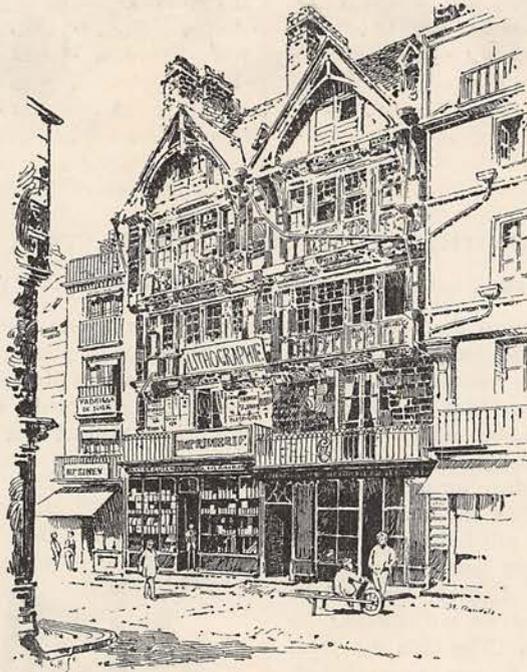
The country around Dol brings forcibly to mind the tors of Glastonbury and Wells; and the isolated eminence of Mont Dol is worth ascending to get a view of the whole district round. The town itself is a very dull one, consisting of little but one broad street; but the cathedral is a good piece of work, and many of the houses are quaintly carved. But with Mont St. Michel ahead of us we soon tire of Dol, and press on to Pontorson, from whence a road across the sands leads to the famous mount.

The drive across the sands on a hot summer's day is a fearfully dusty one, and to add to this, generally they are carting the sands away, and a slight wind carries them across the track in blinding showers. But ahead of us is the picturesque isolated mount, rising out of the sea; more peaked and conical than our Cornish St. Michael's Mount, and the walls that fortified it making it look more mediæval. Ere we reach it we must dismount from the land conveyance and be carried through the shallow water to a boat, in men's arms, and then be pulled across to the island landing-stage. This mode of arrival is now modified by a long dike stretching out to the island. As we climb the stony, narrow street, where hardly two can walk abreast, we see how impregnable must have been this fortress in the days when cannon was in its infancy; but the beauty of the building is

in the ecclesiastical part of it, and wonder succeeds to admiration as we rise slowly up through the successive chambers that are cut out of the solid rock; up through refectory and dormitory, and the glorious *Salle des Chevaliers*, up to the beautiful cloisters. The capitals of the pillars here are most delicately and richly carved, and the sensation of rising slowly up through dwelling-rooms, and knightly hall, and church, to these covered walks, is very strange and striking. One tiny carving of the Passion is very noteworthy; another is of the kiss of Judas. The one illustrating the Crucifixion has the souls of the two thieves issuing from their mouths as two children, the one being received by an angel, the other by a devil.

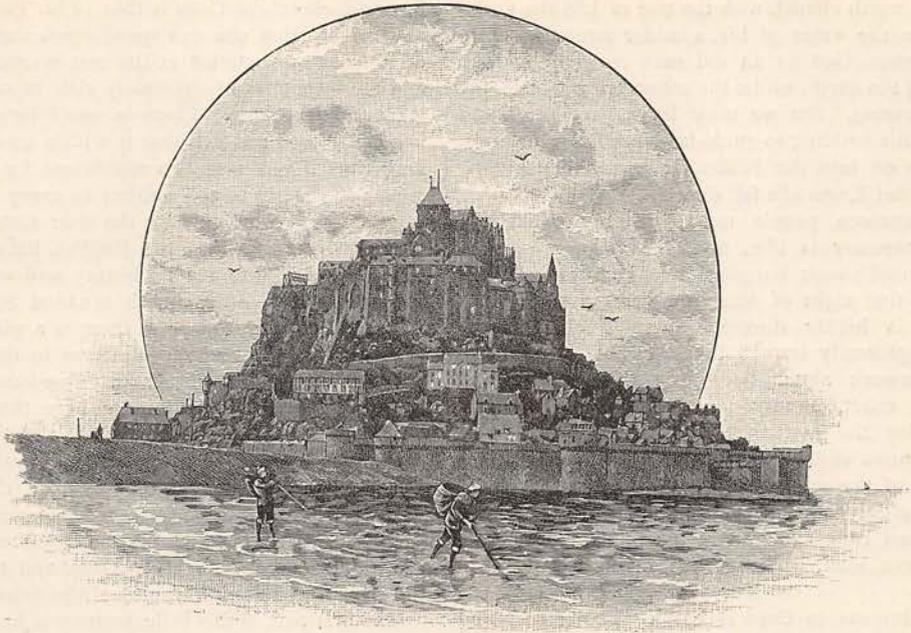
Far down beneath all this massive pile of careful architecture, where monk and knight prayed or caroused, or walked in calm meditation beneath the cloisters' arches, are dungeons, perhaps the most awful extant. Down into the solid rock to the sea-level one goes, into dens that are terrible in their cold, dank sliminess; but beneath these there is a more awful depth, and within this more awful depth are black *cachots* or holes in the rock, into which prisoners were forced, where they could neither lie, nor stand, nor sit. One half-hour in these awful dens was supposed to drive the prisoner mad; and yet so late as 1848 they were used, and one Barbay confined here. To put one's head voluntarily within them sends an awful chill and shudder

through the whole frame. The chains that held the prisoner to his doom still lie on the rock-floor, nevermore to be used, let us hope. To ascend from these torture-cells, up above all the buildings, and to look out over the wide view to be seen from the platform above the cloisters, gives one a piercing idea of the value of light and freedom. The view is very extensive, and includes the Îles de Chaussey, Point de Galles, Avranches, and the whole surrounding country. Those who do not stay on the island for the night must not miss the tide for their return. It flows so quickly that the fisher-folk are often overtaken by it, and on one visit there we saw two poor women caught by it and surrounded, and rescued only by being sighted in their danger from the walls of St. Michel. If the water was out, a guide waded in front of vehicles to show the driver the route lest he should drive into the



MAISON DUPOIS.

(From a Photograph by Messrs. F. Frith & Co.)



MONT ST. MICHEL.

quicksands. So it was before the dique, now just completed, was built. But if the approach is improved, there is not the same care bestowed on preserving the building from decay.

From Pontorson to Avranches is but a short ride, or now the rail may be taken; but the drive or walk is an agreeable one, and the climb up the hill gives a lovely retrospect of the country just passed through; all the coast-line is seen, and the blue sea beyond; a river winds through a thickly wooded country to lose itself in the sands, out beyond which, in the clear water, rise up the walls and church of the holy mount. This little town of Avranches is very pleasant, and a great resort of English people, quite a little colony residing here. A pleasant promenade is on the height in front of the Prefecture, covering the same view we have seen in entering the town. In the open place at this spot is a tiny heap of carved stones, and pieces of pillars; and this is all that is left of the once cathedral of Avranches, as an inscription upon it states. At another corner of this place is a small piece of a granite pillar, said to be the spot where our Henry II., on his knees, received the Pope's Legate, after the murder of Thomas à Becket. It is pleasant to walk from here around the old walls of the town, that speak of its former importance, and to note the contrast in the gay, light life that now peoples it.

The little journey from Avranches to St. Lo may quickly be made. St. Lo itself is a quiet town, without the gaiety and the English element of Avranches. The one thing here to be seen is the cathedral, but the surrounding neighbourhood is very pleasant and pastoral, and a quiet walk, or a row along the river

Vire, gives a good view of the town lying on the hill crowned by the two spires of the cathedral. As we pull away from the town the calm increases, and we are soon amid quiet green fields; a row of trees on one side reflected in the stream, on the other cattle quietly browsing. Scarcely a sound breaks the stillness, save that now and then the note of a church bell calling to prayer is borne along the breeze.

The building of the cathedral is interesting, and has been rich in coloured glass, some good remnants of which still remain. The west front is sadly disfigured; at one time it must have been very rich, but every statuette is broken to pieces; in fact it looks as though every fine bit had been carefully gone over and destroyed. On the exterior of this building is a curious external pulpit built in the flamboyant order with a canopy reared above it. There is a good deal to occupy one in and about the cathedral, and to those who like a quiet French life St. Lo will have many attractions. But as English tourists we are now in too close proximity to an important relic of our own history to linger longer here.

The railway soon runs into the quaint old town of Bayeux, where, until very lately, oil lamps still swung across the street in lieu of modern gas, and many another sign of eighteenth-century life might be seen. We will keep the visit to the Bibliothèque as a *bonne bouche*, and pay a first visit to the cathedral, that, like that of St. Lo, has suffered terribly from mutilation. The richness of the work and its grotesqueness deserve much time to be given to it, and this remark applies to both interior and exterior; to the decoration of the fine Norman pillars in the nave, and to the Gothic

choir. There is a quaint bit of cast work over an altar in a north chapel, with the tree of life, the apple, a well for the water of life, a ladder stretched up to heaven, where God as an old man crowned holds in one hand the earth, whilst the other He raises in the act of blessing. But we must leave particulars and dates of this building to guide-books or fuller histories, and pass on into the Bibliothèque, where lies "the tapestry that England's fall depicts."

Ask nineteen people out of twenty what the Bayeux tapestry is like, and the answer will be, "Why, needlework hanging from the wall;" and thus the first sight of this interesting and precious tapestry is highly disappointing. For it is not what is generally termed tapestry, but a long strip of needlework about two-thirds of a yard deep—to be exact, twenty inches wide by 227 feet long. But the fact that this is a rude pictorial representation of the conquest of England, worked at the time of the event by the wife of the Conqueror, makes it a unique historical relic of the highest value. Quaint and rude enough are the pictures, fifty-eight in all, here seen, each marked off in a square to itself.

From Bayeux to Caen is but a "little step," and after studying this tapestry that portrays the valour of William, it is a fitting sequel to visit the church where his remains were buried. Caen is the most important town in this trip, and here the tourist will be enlivened by good music, and amusements, and he will also find in Caen a very good picture-gallery. But the churches here also will probably be the first places visited, for Caen is very rich in beautiful churches. The church that once held the remains of the Conqueror is that of St. Etienne, or the Abbaye aux Hommes; but nought rests there now, as twice the grave has been violated, and one can only stand before the stone that marks the spot where once lay William the Conqueror. The *coup d'œil* of the nave, with its three tiers of fine pure Norman arches, is very effective; but the details of work will not detain one

so long as in the cathedral of Bayeux. The most beautiful church in Caen is that of St. Pierre; and in and around this one can spend much time; the view of it from the exterior at the east is especially good, and the interior is exceptionally rich in carving, both good and grotesque. There is one little church that has lately been restored that is a little gem; but for a long time it was used as a storehouse for the paving-stones of the town, and subject to every desecration. A grand rose window over the west door is said to have been destroyed by the English, but enough was left of the design to see its beauty and wherewith to restore it. This little church is called St. Etienne le Vieux. The main square of Caen is a pleasant open space full of life, and very different to the calm and quiet of Bayeux or the other towns we have been visiting; and there is much more here than we have hinted at to entice the traveller to remain for many days; but we have yet to reach Havre, where we end this "easy trip," and so, by way of a change from walking, or riding, or railway carriage, we take a passage in the early morning on the steamboat that runs down the canal and the river Orne, and then crosses the "rough and tumble" mouth of the Seine for Havre.

The first part of this little journey is between fields and lines of trees; and soon after starting a capital view is had on looking back of Caen and its many spires and towers. Then the river becomes wider, and we soon gain the mouth of the Orne, and pass the little port with the Saxon name of Ouistreham, and the little steamer is quickly in the roll and lift of the on-sweeping Channel billows that are breaking on the Seine bar, and soon make the tender traveller feel qualms of *mal de mer*, and many of the French lady passengers to talk volubly of the horrors of the sea. But with the journey from Havre to Southampton in store for us, this little passage in the bright sunshine is enjoyable; and we feel a pang of regret when we set foot on Havre jetty and look out for the English steamer that in a few hours lands us once more on English earth.

---



---

## THE STRONGER WILL.

By EVELYN EVERETT GREEN, Author of "Monica," &c.

### CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

#### THE MARCHWOOD POST-BAG.



ILLNESS is a master that teaches us many things; and the sharp attack that had prostrated Mr. Cadwaller in the early spring had left its traces upon him in many visible ways.

During the time that he had lain in bed, unable to read, unwilling to talk or exert himself in any way, shut up with his adopted daughter as his sole companion, he had had much time to think and to weigh matters in a fashion

somewhat new to him; and with the natural softening which weakness and sickness produce, these musings had taken a new complexion, and one that surprised him not a little.

When he gained a little strength, it was the children who were oftenest admitted to his room, and they were never long without introducing the name of "Brother" into the conversation; and upon the smallest encouragement would pour out strings of stories, all illustrative of his kindness and their love for him, and Ethel would end up with a long sigh, and an ardent wish that he would come and see them again.