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A GIRLS' TOUR IN BRITTANY.



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ST. MALO, FROM THE SANDS.



Our strong-minded sisters will be horrified to hear that it was with some misgivings Ruth and I set out to travel on the Continent, without the protection of a masculine relative.

Unfortunately

we are not strong-minded; we neither wear spectacles, carry walking-sticks, nor wish for votes; in fact (though it requires some moral courage to avow it), we prefer that our fathers, brothers, uncles, and cousins should attend to affairs of state unassisted by our maiden aunts.

Some friends, and neighbours too (of a very old-fashioned type, no doubt), were "shocked" that we should venture forth alone, especially into an unbeaten track in Brittany. What added to our perversity was the fact (patent to all) that we each possessed a brother, either or both of whom could have been laid under requisition to escort us. There was, however, an objection to this plan sufficient for us; we wished to sketch, and no one could sketch with a brother wandering round.

There are two sides to every question, often many more; we left our friends to discuss the theoretic side of this one, from their armchairs, while we put the practical side to the test of experience.

Having now returned safely, I do not mind confessing that it was not without some trepidation I abandoned myself to the adventure. Ruth sent me the papers which had roused her to such a pitch of enthusiasm about Brittany that no other place would do. They had the contrary effect on me. I noticed how the writers concurred in describing a grey and sombre landscape, men in keeping with it, melancholy, silent, unkind to animals, tyrannical to their wives, generally drunk; women, picturesque indeed, but dirty and superstitious; a pitiless sea and rock-bound coast; islands inhabited by the widows and children of seamen. And (most important to us) accommodation of a very rustic kind. One writer artlessly alluded to wolves which were held responsible for the disappearance of sheep dogs, and to a shrieking maniac who wandered at will among the Menhirs.

In the state between sleeping and waking, I had awful visions of two errant ladies driving towards nightfall on a lonely road—a wheel coming off, the driver, their only knight, riding to the nearest village for help, but stopping to drink, and wolves howling in the distance. However, my friend was firm, so I agreed (altering the historical order of things) to act Naomi to her Ruth, and to follow where she led; but I insisted that in compensation for the dangers and horrors of the long crossing to St. Malo, we should at least visit the Channel Islands in passing.

The first incident of our travels occurred at a London station, where Ruth, whose honesty I had never had reason to doubt, persisted in claiming a portmanteau which was not hers, and in the heat of the argument unconsciously appropriating an umbrella which its owner laid across it. Apparently nothing but the sudden appearance of her own possessions would have made her relinquish her claim. I was prepared to run the risk of being imprisoned for sketching abroad, but did not expect to have such a narrow escape on our native soil.

We went on board the Guernsey boat at Southampton at 10 p.m., and owing to a fog did not get through Southampton Water before 5 a.m. Dr. Watts must have been there in better weather when he wrote those familiar lines—

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green."

We were inclined to exclaim with the philosopher, "Life would be endurable but for its pleasures," as hour after hour passed in this snail's progress, while the dismal fog-horn sounded incessantly.

We reached Guernsey at last, eight hours late, and soon forgot our trials. "Every cloud has a silver lining," and when there is a fog at sea it is never rough.

The week spent at Guernsey seemed all too short, there is such freshness and originality about the place that one never tires of the quaint old town with its red roofs, tall spires, steep, irregular streets, and luxuriant semi-tropical vegetation. Among a population speaking French *patois*, it was strange to see groups of soldiers belonging to our Highland regiments.

Moulin Huet is one of the most charming bays, approached by a lovely water-lane, over-arched with trees and green with ferns. Round one side of the bay curve the jagged Hen and Chicken rocks; the fine white sand is delightful for bathers, who make dressing-rooms of the caves and rocky nooks.

Victor Hugo's house is one of the sights of Guernsey. His daughter-in-law (now married a second time) and his two grandchildren live in it, and allow visitors to see it every day. The walls are hung with tapestry, and the ceilings and banisters are covered with textures, giving a feeling of suffocation. The general effect is very harmonious, especially one bedroom which was prepared for the reception of Garibaldi. The study at the top of the house is not unlike a photographic studio, the roof and sides being partly glass. The view is fine and extensive, and mirrors are placed so as to reflect it, in case the occupant's back should be turned to the scene itself. It seems the last room in the world for concentration of thought. M. Hugo always wrote standing; immediately outside is a wooden gallery on which he often took exercise. His bedroom had a kind of letter-box in the door, in which he placed thoughts committed to paper during the night. His bed was a thick mattress placed on the floor across the end of the small room, the wall close round it being padded; it was more like a settee without legs than a bed. M. Hugo is said to have gone often at night to a lonely house on the coast in order to write "The Toilers of the Sea."

There is plenty of scope for sketching at Guernsey, in the changing scenes in the harbour, the picturesque disused forts, and the play of light and shade on the sea and islands.

In point of colour Sark is better still; the water in the harbour is of that lovely green seen off some parts of the Cornish coast, the seaweed on the rocks is of the richest yellow; boats are drawn up on the shore, or idly riding at anchor; while picturesque fishermen, speaking a strange tongue, hurry along the quay on the approach of the steamer.

We felt that a visit to the Channel Islands was an opportunity, not to be lost, of studying Free Trade and Home Rule on the spot. We came to the conclusion that some things may be too cheap, such as stimulants and tobacco, for drunkenness is very common, and small boys smoke cigars. Home Rule seems to answer very well, for only one man appears to have been hanged in historic times, and we

were constantly assured no serious crimes are committed. When an offender is convicted he is generally fined, as it is expensive to the community for him to go to prison, as he requires to be fed, and his guardians to be fed and paid.

They have, we were told, no receipt stamps, no dog-tax, no income-tax, no divorce in the Channel Islands; they make their own laws, and their system of land tenure is almost perfect. Hothouse grapes are 8d. per pound, good tea 1s. 6d. per pound. A man may live on the fat of the land at the best hotel for 8s. per day.

In Sark, things are still more Arcadian; there are no policemen there, but from among the inhabitants two constables are selected to serve two years. We had a long talk with an elderly man of whom we bought photographs. He told us how Sark was sold for fifty pounds in Elizabeth's reign, to its first owner, who, in order to protect his property, invited forty men to come and settle there, on condition of each providing himself with a gun and ammunition. The island has changed hands many times since—much of the land has become freehold, but there is still a titular owner called the Seigneur. One of the owners, finding himself in difficulties for ready money on his father's death, resolved to sell the place, ungratefully refusing the offer of two maiden aunts to pay the necessary sum—the condition being that he should reside with them. He was evidently considered a very sad character for abandoning his inheritance in favour of life at such a gay capital as St. Heliers.

There are some curious laws in Sark. For trespassing on property, whether harm is done or not, a fine may be imposed of about 3s. 4d. for each offence. Some tourists found themselves in an awkward dilemma, who trampled on a man's wheat, and when remonstrated with used their canes. After this valiant escapade they proceeded in triumph to the smaller island, which is attached to the larger one by a narrow precipitous isthmus. On their return they were met at this critical point by the two constables, who refused to let them embark until the man was compensated for the five-fold trespass and the assault. On their refusal to pay, preparations were made for opening the prison. Meanwhile it was discovered that the seneschal had gone over to Herme, whence he might return, weather permitting, in the course of a week. As until his arrival our heroes could not be tried (there being apparently no Habeas Corpus Act in Arcadia), they decided, rather late in the day, that "discretion is the better part of valour," and having paid their money, departed, wiser if sadder men.

Let no one suppose that a dweller in Sark is a man of few ideas, whose mental horizon does not extend beyond the limits of his rock-bound coast. For my part, I have never found that people living a natural primitive life, "far from the madding crowd," are specially narrow in their views, though they may be behind the age as to the latest Paris fashion and the last new novel.

Perhaps they have more leisure to cultivate "the inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude," than those of us who live in provincial towns and "genteel suburbs," and who unwittingly become slaves of the conventional and commonplace.

Our friend, who was descended from two of the first inhabitants of Sark, was thoughtful and intelligent, and a man of means in his way. Every year he and his wife travel. It was interesting to hear their impressions of the Fisheries, Healtheries, Colinderies, of St. Malo, Paris, and Switzerland. He was a little bit of a wag too. One day out walking he met a man who said—"Tell me, do these islands belong to England?" "No," was the reply.

"To France?" "Certainly not." "To whom, then?" "To no one; England belongs to us. We were part of the Duchy of Normandy when William Conquered England."

After visiting the lovely Seigneurie Gardens, we were fain to bid good-bye to Sark. It was rather rough on the return journey, and the straits between the jagged rocks which bristle all round these islands seemed very narrow.

We crossed to Jersey on a Tuesday (no boat goes that way on a Monday), and having heard so much in disparagement of that island as compared with Guernsey, we were agreeably surprised. The air is, doubtless, less bracing, and the scenery less varied. The railway line runs partly round the island, just at the edge of the sea. *Apropos* of our thirst for knowledge on the subject of Home Rule, we asked if the "Clameur de Haro" still survived. According to this custom, a man who had been wronged fell down in a public place, and cried, "Haro, haro, à l'aide mon prince, on me fait tort," upon which redress was speedily forthcoming. We were told that the last recorded instance was on the opening of the Jersey railway, when an enraged landowner threw himself on the metals, with the usual formula. Deaf to his cries, the train came steadily on. Strange things flash through the minds of drowning men, and he may have remembered that George Stephenson, when asked what would happen if a cow got on the line, replied, "It would be bad for the cow." Anyhow, the train went on, and we did not hear that this gentleman's remains were picked up in fragments afterwards. Our stay in Jersey was so short there was no opportunity of verifying this incident.

We went by train to Goray, and sketched Mount Orgeuil, an ancient Norman fortress. Fort Elizabeth, with its winding causeway, visible at low tide, is a most interesting object from St. Heliers.

The steamer in which we crossed to St. Malo had few English people on board. We watched with great interest a party of priests, who, from the faultlessness of their attire, appeared to be returning from a holiday expedition. We wondered at the unceasing talk and vivacity of a French party opposite. If only we could hear their conversation, how witty and full of *bon mots* it must be to cause such unceasing laughter, to require such gesticulation and shrugs! But would they never be tired, never want to rest and be quiet? It would certainly give most English people a headache to talk and laugh so vigorously for a whole three hours' journey. It spite of these foretastes of foreign life, we were sufficiently delighted and surprised when we steamed into St. Malo harbour. That ancient town is in no sense Anglicised by the constant arrival of steamers and the incursion of British tourists. We quite understood Horace Walpole's remark, after months of travel in Italy, "That Calais surprised him more than anything he had yet seen, and he still considered it the most wonderful city in the world."

We almost forgave the sour-faced woman from the custom-house, who pounced upon our travelling bags, for the sake of the white cap she wore. The blue-bloused men might hector over us as only French officials can, but we still gazed admiringly at them, and wished English porters were as picturesque.

Groups of soldiers dotted here and there reminded us irresistibly of the little tin soldiers of our childhood; but this probably implied no insult, but that truest form of flattery—imitation. Doubtless our climate and our smoke make the snowy headgear and bright colours of "Sunny France" unsuitable apparel for us, but certainly the first charm of a continental town is the difference of dress.

St. Malo is really an island, but is now connected with the land by a long causeway, called the Sillon. There is a splendid natural harbour, caused by its projection on the one hand, and that of St. Servan on the other, and several islands lie near, one being the lonely burial-place chosen by Châteaubriand.

The streets are narrow, and the houses have grown very tall in their efforts to look over the huge fortified walls which run all round the town. There could scarcely be a better specimen of a town of the Middle Ages.

We watched the bathers next morning, and were greatly amused with one party, consisting of an elderly monsieur, madame his wife, two big boys, a little girl, and a large dog; they all gambolled about in the water with infantine glee. Their costumes were elaborate, the lady wearing bracelets and earrings and having her hair fully dressed.

At twelve o'clock we sailed up the Rance to Dinan, gradually losing sight of the strong walls of St. Malo (which rise sheer from the water's edge), of the rocky islands in the delicate pale green bay, and of the blue line of the open sea, with the flash of white sails in the sunlight.

We were on the scene of one of Mr. Browning's most dramatic poems.

It was in 1692 that twenty-two French ships of war, headed by the "Formidable," were chased by the English into St. Malo Roads. It was declared impossible, at ebb of tide, to pilot the squadron into the fortified harbour of Solidor, until a "simple Breton sailor, a poor coasting pilot," Hervé Riel, undertook the task and did it. For thus saving the honour of France he was told to name his own reward—

"Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still."
Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
'Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisie Point, what
is it but a run?
Since 'tis ask and have I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call
the Belle Aurore!'
That he asked, and that he got—nothing
more."

The boats go up with the tide, but in order to leave time for the return journey they start before the river is full. Our steamer had to thread its way through such a narrow channel, among sand-banks, that we expected every moment to go aground. However, just as things seemed at the worst we came to a lock, and above that the river was full, and we went merrily along.

The banks grew steeper and more wooded every moment, till Dinan suddenly appeared in view, the spire of St. Sauveur church crowning the precipitous hillside, a noble viaduct spanning the valley, and a fine old Norman bridge crossing the river.

A few houses nestle in the valley and climb up the steep and narrow Rue de Jersual, the joy of artists, but the principal part of the town is high up, out of sight.

Never did we hear such a babel of voices as greeted our arrival, scores of people vociferating and shouting, and trying to take possession of us and our luggage. Happily we had decided on our quarters, which proved very comfortable (Miss Waller's pension, 4, Place du Guesclin).

At Dinan we first came across two historical

personages who are so identified with the history of Brittany that they reappear at almost every turn.

First in point of time, though not of rank, is Bertrand du Guesclin, a man deformed in person, but nevertheless one of the most consummate generals and ablest men of the fourteenth century.

After being once or twice made prisoner by the English, he became Constable of France, and succeeded in driving the English from Normandy, Guienne, and Poitou. At Dinan his statue is erected on the spot where he defeated an English knight in single combat; it also commemorates his successful defence of the town against the Duke of Lancaster. His enemies recognised in him "a foeman worthy of their steel," for when he died of fever while besieging the Castle of Randam, the governor insisted on fulfilling his promise to capitulate (failing succour) on a fixed day. Declaring he would be as true to the warrior in death as in life, he marched, followed by the garrison, to the French camp, and placed the keys of the Castle upon his bier. Du Guesclin taught his soldiers never to treat priests, women, and children as enemies. Charles V. placed a magnificent monument to his memory in St. Denis, where his body was laid among those of kings. A lamp is said to have been kept burning there for centuries.

The second historical figure is that of Anne of Brittany, who might have been so much happier without her title of Duchess and her great possessions. The Dukedom of Brittany had its golden age under her father, Francis II., but when he died and a girl of thirteen succeeded, she became the innocent object of the greed of surrounding nations.

Certain sovereigns, regardless of previous ties, were anxious to marry her, while others, unable to appropriate her themselves, were determined Brittany should not be absorbed. The first person to cast envious eyes was the Duke of Orleans, who was married to Louis XI.'s deformed daughter, of whom he was heartily tired.

In the midst of the dispute Anne was married, by proxy, to Maximilian, the Holy Roman Emperor, whose daughter had come to France as the affianced bride of the young King Charles VIII. The virtual ruler of France was the Lady of Beaujeu, Louis XI.'s eldest daughter. Seeing the importance of absorbing Brittany, she determined that her young brother, Charles VIII., should disregard his previous contract with Margaret, and marry the Duchess Anne. So he was sent with an army to lay siege to the town of Rennes, where she held her court.

Maximilian, too poor or too indolent to avenge the double insult, did nothing, and although our Henry VII. taxed his subjects in order to defend Anne, whose father had sheltered him in exile, he did nothing effectual, except hoard the money.

The Bretons having stipulated for the preservation of their own laws and privileges, were eager for the match, and at length the marriage took place in 1491. Surely,

"Never was woman in such humour woo'd,
Never in such humour won."

In the course of seven years Charles died, and was succeeded by the aforementioned Duke of Orleans, as Louis XII., who lost no time in divorcing his unfortunate wife Joan, and in laying his crown at the feet of the young widowed queen, who had retired to Brittany. In the year 1499 she once more became Queen of France, being married to Louis XII. in the Château at Nantes. She died fifteen years later, leaving two daughters, one of whom married her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême, afterwards Francis I.

(To be continued.)

A GIRLS' TOUR IN BRITTANY.

CHAPTER II.



INAN is a delightful place for artists. Besides the steep Rue de Jersual, with its ancient porte, there are many interesting subjects in the town. The fronts of the houses are often supported on columns, forming a covered footway. The shelter thus afforded is chosen by market women, whose light caps and bright coloured wares light up the dark recesses.

Needless to say, the market once a week spreads all over the place, and one is in constant danger of stumbling over a pile of coarse, well-shaped pottery or into the midst of other merchandise, alive or dead.

There are two interesting churches. From the Place Anglaise, just behind the church of St. Sauveur, a splendid view is obtained from the old town walls. The Rance flows in a narrow and romantic valley at the foot of a precipitous descent of 250 feet. By moonlight, or in the early morning, its windings may be traced amid its wooded walls by a delicate line of mist.

We took a boat on the river one evening, and a man, walking on the path, towed us as far as Lehon. This little village, with its bridge, and its groups of women washing in the stream, is a favourite resort of artists. The abbey was undergoing restoration, so we could not visit it.

The neighbourhood abounds in interesting excursions. We went to St. Esprit, where there is a graceful granite crucifix, and to the Hospice des Aliénés, where the 600 lunatics are, if fit, employed in gardening and farming.

Having read the "Lady of la Garaye" by the Hon. Mrs. Norton, we were interested in visiting the ruined château. This lady, while in the bloom of youth and beauty, and with every advantage that a happy marriage and great wealth could bestow, was thrown from her horse, and incurably injured, disfigured, and crippled. After spending some time in a state of great despondency, her thoughts were diverted by her father confessor to the unalleviated sufferings of the poor. With her husband's full sympathy and consent their château was turned into a hospital, and their lives were devoted to the study of medicine and the care of the sick. The lady is said to have become an excellent oculist, and the marquis received marks of distinction from the king for his discoveries. The noble pair happily did not live to see the hospital they

had endowed destroyed by the Revolution in 1793.

The caps at Dinan would be very plain and flat but that their long side-flaps are turned up and pinned across the top of the head, thus producing a much more piquant effect. The dress is generally dark blue linen, with a narrow stripe.

After a week's stay we left Dinan with many regrets, and took the train to Guingamp, a journey of five hours. Guingamp is an ordinary old-fashioned French town, with old timber and stone houses, with curious angle turrets. It has the usual open squares with trees, a river with water-mills, and a fine church (Notre Dame de Bon Secours), containing recent stained glass, commemorative of the Franco-Prussian war. Here, as in all Breton towns, we were struck with the devoutness of the people. A little chapel outside the church, divided from the street by a fine iron grating, was crowded at all hours.

We were told that the first umbrella was made at Guingamp, also that gingham takes its name from this place. It occurred to us to wonder whether Mrs. Gamp derived her name, as well as her umbrella, from this source. Unless as a starting point for Paimpol and Tréguier, I should not advise a traveller to stay there. It is better to go on to Morlaix, which is a much prettier place, and serves as headquarters for St. Pol de Léon, Carhaix, and the Montagnes Noires. We purposely left this corner and the town of Brest unexplored, preferring to see them properly another time than just to "glance and nod and bustle by."

So from Guingamp we went to Quimper, stopping for two hours at Landerneau in passing. The whole journey to Quimper occupied about eight hours. The route was very picturesque, the railway line lying so high that we often looked down into deep ravines, as in Cornwall.

In passing Morlaix we seemed to be as high as the church spire, the river with its wide quays and tall-masted vessels lying far beneath. Sometimes we travelled through miles of moorland, bright with bell-heather and furze, and caught glimpses of the sea when an arm ran inland; or through forests of fir trees, or acres of brushwood. Now and then we came on a small village or considerable town like Morlaix or Landerneau, but there seemed few scattered houses to connect them.

We thought ourselves in the midst of moorland solitudes, when we suddenly caught sight of elaborate carpet-bedding of clumps of Pampas grass and other signs of horticulture, and found that the train was running into Quimper station. The town was a great surprise to us. After Guingamp it had quite a Parisian air, with its two rivers running through the principal streets, its endless bridges, its boulevards, cafés, gay shops, and the delicate spires of its cathedral.

It is cleaner, too, than many Brittany towns, for let us not attempt to disguise the dirty and undrained state of some of them. We heard many groans on this subject from our countrymen, more from our countrywomen, who perhaps in their secret hearts place cleanliness above godliness. They really believe in cleanliness, because they "live by it" (the literal meaning of believe). A lovely engraving of Quimper appeared in the October number (1886) of the "Portfolio." The view is of a "narrow street of over-hanging houses, timber-framed and gabled, with the bright fleches of the cathedral of St. Corentin to close the vista. These fleches are of quite recent date, having been added to the fifteenth-century towers in 1854. The money

was raised by a public subscription called the 'Sou de St. Corentin.'"

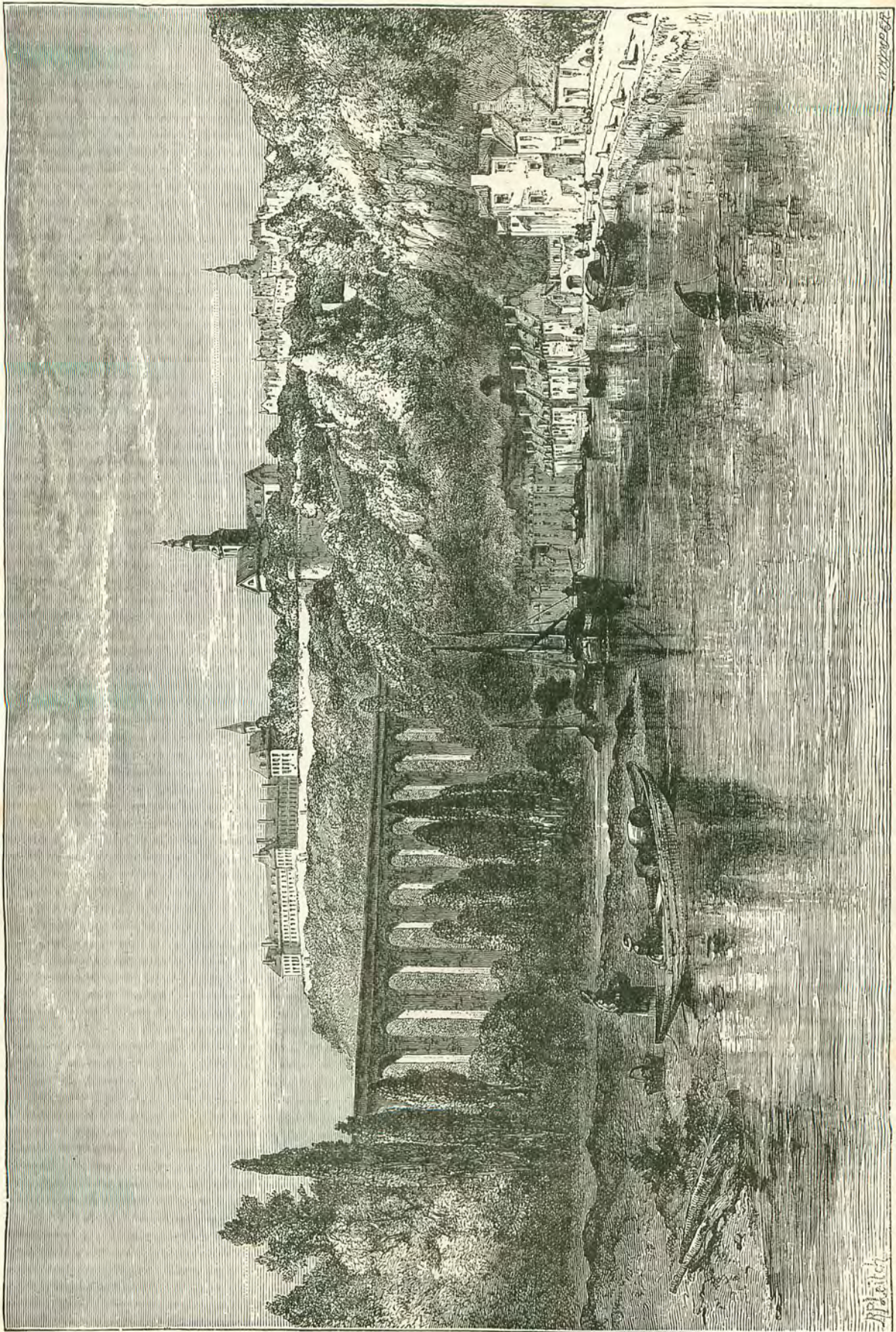
We went to high mass on Sunday morning. No sooner had we stepped inside the building than all the sensations a cathedral gives came over us—a sense of vastness, and of one's soul being drawn up with one's eyes. Far off in the Lady Chapel, through the apse, which bent slightly to the left, the stained glass gleamed like jewels. I first noticed a similar bend in one of the old churches in Coventry. Many ingenious theories have been suggested to account for the peculiarity, the favourite one being that it is emblematic of the droop of Our Saviour's head upon the cross. Others say that the east end of churches are so placed as to greet the rising sun on the festival of the saint to whom the building is dedicated. Perhaps it has been merely a fanciful device to break the uniformity of line, and to give more variety of light and shade, or it may have been a purely accidental circumstance, brought about by the dovetailing of new work on old. This last idea seems confirmed by the fact that the bend is never found, in any noticeable degree, in new cathedrals, or in those which have been built (comparatively speaking) all at one time. The nave was filled almost entirely with peasant women and school children, presided over by Sisters of Mercy in long cloaks and dresses of soft creamy white and dead white hoods. The eye rested upon them with a sense of relief; they were saintly characters, far removed from our hurrying, fractious, irritable world. Suddenly up jumped one of them, whose back we had contemplated with emotion, and seized one of the children, pulling it this way and pushing it that in such a manner as quite to break the spell of our enchantment. The aisles were filled with several hundred soldiers in long blue surtouts; they were returning from the autumn manoeuvres, and were there of their own accord, not on parade. The day before we noticed soldiers just returned from Tonquin, praying in the church. It is said that France draws almost all her priests and her bravest soldiers and sailors from Brittany. The Bretons have a manly gravity and a devout seriousness very much more suggestive of their Welsh and Cornish kinsfolk than of the typical Frenchman. Their language is not unlike Welsh, as is shown by such a name as "Rhuys."

The women's costume at Quimper is very pretty. The cap is peaked, being indeed raised on cardboard. The front is plain white linen, the back beautiful lace, through which gleams the colour known as the Virgin's blue. The dress is of a dark thick cloth, with an incredible number of plaits round the waist, a small over-bodice very much cut out at the armholes and trimmed with black velvet. The bodice is cut square at the throat, displaying a white chemisette and low ruff. The children are dressed in the same way, except that their headdress is a pretty coloured skull cap.

The men's costume has something Spanish about it, and also reminds one of ancient worthies of the Stuart period. A wide-brimmed felt hat, with ribbon ends, a long blue vest, with a very short waistcoat over, profusely ornamented with buttons; generally blue trousers. On fête days beautiful gold or silver embroidery is worn by both men and women.

In the country districts the old men wear long hair and bragou brass—i.e., white cotton trunk hose, very fully plaited, gaiters and sabots.

As the vast congregation streamed out of the cathedral into the sunlight of the open "Place" an auction was going on, and



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women seated at stalls were eagerly proffering their wares.

In the afternoon we crossed the river and walked through a lovely wood to the top of a steep hill, whence a view is obtained of the windings of the Odet as its stream widens on approaching the sea.

Next day we rose before the sun and took the 6.30 a.m. train to Douarnenez, there took a carriage to Audierne (two and a half hours), and thence to the Pointe de Raz (one and a half hours), the Land's End of France, one of the extreme points of the Old World, spoken of by Ptolemy of Alexandria as Gobœnum Promontorium. We enjoyed the long drive immensely, as the day was exquisitely fine.

The scenery in the parts of Brittany we visited is not imposing nor wildly romantic, but it is well wooded and very pleasing. In September the face of the country glows with the rich colours of furze and heather, while the red stalk of the buckwheat makes a ruddy sheaf in the harvest field.

Perhaps one does less justice to the landscape from the charming scenes in peasant life which every turn of the road reveals.

It is always market day somewhere, and to our unaccustomed eyes every group on the roadside was a picture; even the cows are different from English cows, being smaller and generally black, or black-and-white, and allowing their white-capped mistresses to drive them along by a long cord attached to their horns. If the women share in the hard outdoor work, they also seem to take a leading part in the responsibilities of buying and selling, and have by no means a down-trodden look. On Sundays and holidays the men walk out with their wives, and generally carry the baby.

Occasionally on returning from market some of these "lords of creation" dismount from their ancient steeds, and deliberately seek out some shady place in which to sleep off the effect of too copious *pour boire*. But even in this respect we English are not in a position to reproach them.

At the little village of Confort we saw a rather modern "Calvary," and a church containing a remarkable arrangement of bells. A number of small bells are fixed round a wheel, called the wheel of fortune. At certain intervals in the service a statue called "Sautier-Rod" causes the wheel to turn. Our driver always slackened speed and raised his cap on passing the wayside crucifixes.

Audierne is a tiny seaport, with sardine and oyster fisheries. The heads of the sardines are used for tillage, and the tin shavings from the boxes glisten in all sorts of unexpected places, and form inexhaustible playthings for children.

After our own Land's End, the extreme point of Finisterre is rather disappointing. Not that it is a place to despise in a storm, far from it; but in ordinary weather there is nothing to rival the mighty billows which daily expend their force against our Cornish coast.

The awful "Baie des Trépassés" looked so exquisitely calm and blue, that it was difficult to recall the weird legends of the place; how the Druids were supposed to embark after death from that shore for interment in the "Ile des Seins;" how lost souls are said to wander about lamenting, while the bones of sailors shipwrecked on this dangerous coast knock at the doors of fishermen until they receive Christian burial.

Towards the Point of Brest there was such a lovely effect of pale blue sea contrasting with the deep nearer blue, such a hazy and mysterious mingling of sea and sky and land, that it was easy to picture King

Arthur sailing from this coast (as the legend describes)—

"To the island-valley of Avilion,
Where falls not hail, or rain, or snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard
lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer
sea."

(The French *Cornouaille* and the English Cornwall claim in common the legends of the Round Table.)

From the Pointe de Raz we also overlooked the site of the submerged city of Is, from which Paris takes its name, the word suggesting a humble attempt on its part to rival the glories of this ancient place. According to the legend old King Gradlon was weakly blind and indulgent to his beautiful, wicked daughter Dahut. She stole his keys, and by design or accident opened the sluice gate, which protected the city, thus admitting the intruding tide. Gradlon mounted his horse in flight, taking Dahut behind him, in spite of the advice of St. Corentin. The waters gained on them until the saint dragged her off, when they ceased to pursue the king, who reached Quimper safely. He made that place his seat of government, and his equestrian statue may be seen over the west front of the cathedral.

The "Ile des Seins" is inhabited chiefly by the widows of seamen; it is very barren, and contains not a single tree. The passage to the mainland is so dangerous that there is a saying, "Jamais homme n'a traversé le Raz sans avoir peur ou mal." There is also a touching Breton prayer, "Mon Dieu secourez moi pour traverser le Raz, car mon navire est petite, et la mer est grande."

On our return to Douarnenez in the evening, we saw the sardines lying out to dry in the sun, while girls and women from the "Usine," in small Quaker-like caps, sat about in groups laughing and chatting, and eating their supper out of tin cans.

We hope never to forget the first sight of Douarnenez Bay. The sun was setting in rosy colours on one side, while on the other was an effect of pale light, like the tender, pure silver of moonlight. The Isle of Tristram lay in the centre of the apparently land-locked bay; the red or white sails of fishing boats, dotted in every direction, caught the dying sunlight, while delicate sardine nets, hung out to dry near the shore, draped from the masts like finest lace. A windmill and a church tower stood out black against the sky, to be reflected like the rosy clouds, silver light, and ruddy sail in the calm waters.

Owing to a very wet day we were unable to make the excursion to Pont l'Abbé and Penmarch. We finally left our comfortable quarters at the Hôtel de l'Épée, Quimper, at six o'clock one morning, and started in heavy rain by train for Concarneau.

We were getting quite accustomed to start in the dark, and to see the sunrise from the train. Concarneau is a very ancient town, built on an island surrounded by strongly fortified walls, and connected with the mainland by a drawbridge. Only the roofs of the houses and the church spire are visible from the modern village which has grown up on the seashore. We longed to stay there a month, but a couple of hours having sufficed for a cursory glance, we inquired for a carriage to take us to Pont Aven.

After some difficulty we discovered the sole proprietor of such luxuries, and found ranged in a half open shed a number of vehicles,

which, from their venerable antiquity, might have been constructed by Noah's family on landing. One specially commended to our notice by its owner was more on the model of the original ark than the rest, and was of such ponderous size that we felt it would be cruelty to animals to take it out with less than a pair. So we chose a more humble vehicle, a kind of high, square waggonette with a covering like the canopy of a four-post bed, possessed of American leather curtains to be drawn at will. A *bon cheval* being promised, we left, fixing the hour of ten, and the price of ten francs.

We thought the equipage long in coming, until it was explained to us that at Concarneau the hour of day is twenty minutes later than the railway time. In due course it arrived, driven by a small boy, and drawn by an animal, a contemplation of whose body was an involuntary lesson in anatomy. However, his mettle was in inverse proportion to his flesh, and he took us along at an alarming speed. The iron rods of our canopy creaked and swayed, and we rolled about, while he tore down one hill in order to gain impetus to carry us up the next.

We were almost pitched out by an abrupt stop at the celebrated "Pierre Tremblante," and shocked our young driver by declining to alight and move it. We next turned aside to see a Menhir, and found it a much more beautiful object than we expected. It is an immense upright stone, roughly conical in shape, surmounted by a small stone cross, doubtless the attempt of some good Christian to neutralise the enchantments of a bygone age. On such a day there was nothing menacing or forbidding about this prehistoric relic; its colour was delicate grey, embroidered with white, yellow, and orange lichen. It stood surrounded by gorse and bell-heather in a veritable "Field of the Cloth of Gold." A clump of trees stood near, and in the distance stretched line after line of tree-covered hills.

The good roads in France make driving pleasant. It is true they are generally very straight, but in Brittany they seem never to be bordered with poplars, but generally with hedges, in which the richest and ripest blackberries hang in tantalizing profusion. The natives seldom consider them fit for food. We arrived at Pont Aven about twelve o'clock, and took up our quarters in the Hotel des Voyageurs, kept by Mademoiselle Julie Guillon. A great disappointment awaited us. A "pardon," which we would have given a good deal to see, was just over. For obvious reasons landlords in other places do not tell strangers when these village gatherings are likely to take place, and so we had understood that all of them were over. I afterwards ascertained the approximate date of one or two.

The Pardon of St. Barbe and Faut—last Sunday in June.

The Pardon des Oiseaux, Quimperlé—White Monday.

The Pardon de Notre Dame de l'Henriot, on the seacoast—8th September.

The Pardon Pont Aven—Sunday and Monday near 21st and 22nd September.

The Pardon des Fleurs—1st May.

Some of these pardons have a religious character, while others are evidently a survival of ancient heathen rites. The day ends with dancing and merrymaking. It is the best time to see the endless variety of Breton costumes, many of which have been handed down for generations.

(To be continued.)



near the earth at Christmas time. We shall easily find the door again; I know just where it is, and when once we are in the Cathedral the moonlight will show us the way."

"But there's the open grave," I whispered, in awe-struck tones. "I think we'd better stay where we are."

"Oh, dear, no! I'm not going to spend a night here. I'll grope about on my hands and knees till I reach the steps, and if you hold on to my skirts you can pull me back when I find I'm near any dangerous part."

So we set off on all fours. The comicalness of the situation drew forth every now and then from Mona little stifled bursts of laughter, but to me it was a very grim sort of joke. Our progress was very slow. We seemed to be perpetually edging up to some tombstone or other, and then retreating away from it, and I was seized with the horrible idea that all the time we might be going in the opposite direction to the entrance, and should never reach it.

Hark! What's that? An eerie uncertain sound, which seemed to come from the other end of the crypt, had suddenly arrested us. My heart stood still. Now, then, the tragedy was going to be enacted. There it was again—more distinct still—a sort of weird rustling! We both started to our feet and strained our ears to listen.

"It does not come from the door. It sounds like someone getting out of a grave," I breathed into Mona's ear.

"I don't mind anything human, but I can't stand the supernatural!" she gasped out, with expiring heroism.

Three more seconds of tortured suspense—then a pale, cold gleam of unearthly light, and a tall phantom figure in a long white robe, with both hands outstretched, was advancing towards us. For one instant we stood transfixed. Then I gave a wild shriek that made the vaulted roof ring again. Mona's hand clasped in mine grew suddenly deadly cold, relaxed its hold, and she dropped down senseless at my feet.

* * * *

A very well-known human voice recalled me to myself, and the next moment the Minor Canon was bending over the prostrate form of Mona. He took her up in his arms as if she had been a baby, directing me to precede him with the relighted lantern, and before I had recovered from my surprise I found myself safely outside the dismal crypt. Mona was laid on the Cathedral floor, and the purer air and a little gentle chafing soon brought her round again. (She always averred that a pair of lips touched her brow. If so they were not mine!) Her first words on regaining consciousness were, "But we did cross the crypt by night."

As we re-traversed the Cathedral, leaning on either arm of the Minor Canon, he gave us the explanation of his timely appearance. It was simple enough. After the service he went back to supper with Dr. Wayland, and they lingered over musical scores till midnight. Then, as it was raining sharply, the organist sent him back in his long white macintosh. But in passing the outlet of the crypt he saw

a faint spark of light inside. Struck by the unusual occurrence, and remembering his conversation with Mona, he determined to satisfy himself on the subject. As he entered the vault by the very same door as ourselves, the moon at that moment breaking through the clouds gleamed in brightly through the grated aperture, and produced the sudden white light. Our heated imagination, and brains bewildered by the darkness, had done the rest.

When Mr. Morgan parted from us at the garden door, womanlike, Mona would have the last word.

"It was all your fault, Mr. Morgan. You dared me to cross the crypt at midnight!"

A dangerous light illumined his face, as he held her hand lingeringly in his and answered firmly—

"I never doubted *your* bravery, Miss Williams, but I shall think more highly of woman's courage after this."

Several years have passed since then, and Mona is now the wife of the Minor Canon. She refused him the first time he asked her.

"It was very pretty of him to come to our rescue and to say nothing about it afterwards," she said, naively; "but I can't see that I'm called upon to marry a fossil like that just out of gratitude." Nor I either. But when he repeated his request she changed her mind and accepted him. And she tells me she has never regretted the decision. She and I have had many a laugh over the adventures of that Christmas Eve; but neither of us has ever felt the least desire to repeat the experiment.

A GIRLS' TOUR IN BRITTANY.

CHAPTER III.

PONT Aven "may be described without much exaggeration as occupied, possessed, and dominated by foreign artists, with a sufficient number of the original race left to serve as models for the invaders." The reason of this is not at first sight evident. The houses which surround the village green are not specially quaint or characteristic, nor is the scenery strikingly beautiful. But there is a lovely river flowing swiftly through beech-woods, banked in with mossy rocks, now flecked with sunbeams, now lost in profound shadow; there are water-mills, rustic foot-bridges, and lower down, where the river widens, sailing boats come up, thus forming another class of subjects. The charming costumes of the peasants, and the ease and simplicity with which they pose, are also points of importance. The cap has long ends pinned on the top of the head, giving the effect of wings, if starched, but falling more gracefully if of a thick, soft twill. The collar is ten or twelve inches deep, finely plaited, and often edged with lace; the bodice, as usual, cut square at the throat, and filled in with white.

The animated scene at the washing stations is of unfailing interest to artists. This phase of Breton life is thus described by the author of "Guenn." "Going to the river was an event which took place two or three times a week at Plouvenec, but its frequency made it none the less delightful to Guenn. All the women clustered on the bank, kneeling and washing their linen, and spreading it out to dry on the clean grass, reeds, brambles, and tufts of heather and brake; and everything, positively everything, that had happened in Plouvenec since last time—with much that had not—related in stirring style by practised tongues. . . . Girls who had mothers rarely went to the river very young. Even here, where childhood is so unguarded, there was a tacit understanding that it was in a certain

sense a decided step in a girl's life, a crisis when she first went to the river."

The women kneel in wooden trays. We noticed one woman on a sort of fence or pier which ran into the centre of the stream, soaping, rubbing, pounding with a flat wooden paddle. She wore sabots, a black bodice, and a thick skirt of bright scarlet cloth; in kneeling her stiff collar turned up behind her head like an aureole. Some large white ducks were swimming about, and tiny children paddling on the stones.

An old woman, whom we found knitting outside her cottage door, and who allowed us to sketch her, invited us into her house, and gave us the opportunity of making acquaintance with a Breton interior. The room was small and dark, and the floor of uneven mud. Fowls walked about or perched on the furniture, which was massive and handsome, and polished to a degree which would have won even Mrs. Poyser's approval. There were two four-post beds, each with thick feather beds and thick goose-down coverlets, cupboards with handsome steel hinges, a quantity of good crockery arranged on shelves against the wall, an eight-day clock, a long oak table, and two benches with backs. In the open fireplace was set a mysterious witches' cauldron, over two or three bits of smouldering wood. It was only revealed to us by a shaft of sunlight coming down the chimney.

We had often noticed before in Brittany the incongruous combination of Irish squalor with north-country cleanliness and comfort. One sees a farmyard, ankle deep in mud, straw and manure, in which animals of various kinds are wallowing, and yet at the door may be set a brass pan, nearly a yard in diameter, gleaming like the sun, and through the window one catches a glimpse of snowy bed curtains. We often saw four beds in one room, sometimes arranged in two or three tiers like the berths of a ship. It occurred to us that the men

were lazy and uninventive, while the women did their very best in their department.

In the evening forty or fifty persons, chiefly artists of all nationalities, sat down to *table d'hôte* at the Hotel des Voyageurs. The panelled dining-room is covered with studies and spirited sketches executed by the artist visitors, and to their taste we attributed the good decorations in the large new salon.

We left Pont Aven after two days, feeling rather overpowered by the great artistic talent there. If we chose a secluded spot from which to sketch, we were sure to notice in a short time four or five real artists unfurling umbrellas, setting up easels, and establishing themselves in front of several square feet of canvas. Our feeble light was quenched by the fear that we were appropriating a "reserved seat," and thus retarding an immortal work of art. Mlle. Julie Guillon provided us with a carriage for Quimperlé (price 8frs.), where we established ourselves for four days at the Hotel de Lion d'Or. We were apparently the only ladies there; our landlord was most attentive, and very anxious to make us comfortable. He was constantly proposing excursions by river or carriage with himself and a "Monsieur Anglais," and was surprised that a day's sketching afforded us greater satisfaction.

We suffered more at Quimperlé than elsewhere from the unwelcome attentions and criticisms of street children. At length we discovered their school hours, and only went out when they were safely immured. When we saw them making for us with a triumphant halo, their hands and mouths crammed with the dinner they intended to devour while hanging over and pushing against us, we quietly folded our campstools and went indoors. Before devising this strategic movement we were almost driven to distraction, for the grown-up people did nothing to keep them in order, but gazed from their shop doors at the increasing crowd with the utmost apathy.

One boy was extremely amusing; with an inch of pencil which he sharpened with a huge hedger's knife and a copy-book, he proceeded to imitate all we did. We were sitting at the foot of a steep street of steps when a boy was seen tearing down these steps to join the crowd. Our special tormentor called out to him to stop at a certain point, saying we wanted to sketch him; insisted on his placing his foot or arm in a certain position, and kept the unfortunate victim in one place for five or ten minutes by crying out, "Elles sont à faire tes jambes," "Elles sont à faire ton bras." At last the deluded one was invited to resume his headlong career in order to see the result of our skill. Great was his chagrin at perceiving no vestige of himself in the sketch. Another victim would then be made, and the same far repeated time after time.

Quimperlé is charmingly situated at the junction of the rivers Elle and Isole, which flow in a united stream, the Latia, through steep wooded banks. The church of St. Michel stands on an eminence, surrounded by the old town. Except for the beauty of its position and of one lovely porch, it boasts no special attraction. On Sunday the church was so full two white-capped girls had knelt down in the porch, and were there joining in the service; they formed a perfect picture, wearing black dresses with the favourite trimming, broad black ribbon velvet; one of them had

on an apron of the colour of an autumn beech leaf, or bright rust, and against her lay a green cotton umbrella; as the other one knelt an underskirt of scarlet was visible, and round her waist was the band of her apron, the bright blue so often seen in the Virgin's robe.

The women are often very good-looking, almost always pleasing. The men are solemn; they wear a felt hat with ribbon ends, and a coat shorter than an Eton jacket, profusely ornamented with buttons. Being tall and thin, they look like overgrown schoolboys, while the boys look like dwarfed old men, for they are dressed just the same, and the probability of their growth has not been forgotten by the tailor.

We had not time to make the excursions to St. Barbe, Fauet, the Rochers du Diable, and the Forest of Carnoët.

We left Quimperlé at 2.15 on Sept. 27th for Auray. Through a foolish mistake we did not stop at Hennebont, a quaint old town, the scene of the exploits of the celebrated Duchess of Montfort, Jeanne la Flamme, who successfully defended the town, in the absence of her husband, until succour arrived from England.

Auray was in gala attire, some sort of agricultural show being in process. The women wear a most peculiar cap. It consists of a close-fitting crochet under-cap, over which is laid a square piece of fine net with a broad

hem; it is slightly caught together at the back, but towards the face falls plain and square. In walking the cap catches the wind, and the square corners blow back with a pretty effect. Delicate coloured cashmere shawls (pale blue, fawn, or grey) are worn round the shoulders, and tucked under the apron bibs. This rather trying costume suited extremely well the handsome Auray faces.

The church is ugly, with a vulgar gilt altarpiece and a painted ceiling. The view from the tower is very fine, commanding the distant Atlantic, Quiberon Point, St. Michael's Carnac, Lockmariaker, and the windings of the river.

Next day we woke up to find fine rain falling, but hoping the day might improve we started at 10.50 for Plouharnel, the station for Carnac. On arriving there we were taken possession of by Mlle. Gaillard, daughter of the proprietor of the Hotel de Commerce. Rather against our better judgment (as it still rained fast) we agreed to go to Lockmariaker as well as to Carnac. The Peninsula of Lockmariaker hems in the little Morbihan Sea on one side, as does the Peninsula of Rhys on the other. There is to be seen the largest menhir, 60 feet long, fallen and broken; and from thence one can go by boat to the Island of Gave Inis, where is a wonderful stone gallery covered with unexplained sculptures or engravings.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.



HOUSEKEEPING.

HOUSEMAID.—To clean straw matting you should not use soap. Dip a large coarse cloth in salt and water only, and rub it the way of the straw, not across it, and then wipe dry. The salt will prevent its turning yellow. No soap should be used in cleaning oil-cloth, neither should hot water nor a brush be employed, or the paint will come off. A large soft cloth dipped in plain cold water will serve to clean it well. Papier maché articles also will not bear soap nor hot water. Sponge them with cold water, dredge them with fine flour before

dry, and then polish with a soft flannel. But ask your mistress's leave before you touch these latter delicate articles, as she may prefer to clean them herself.

SARAH AND NURSE.—If you keep some camphor in the cupboard the ants will avoid it. They dislike strong scents, and if you do not keep food nor wearing apparel in the cupboard, you might dip a small sponge in tobacco-water or creosote, and leave it there, with the same result, having first washed the shelves with strong alum and water. "Nurse" should lock the cupboard while using these things, lest the children get at them.

MISCELLANEOUS.

M. A. C.—A crown-piece of William III. of England is worth about 15s., and a half-crown of George II. perhaps 5s.; that is if both be in good preservation. Modern foreign coins are of no extra value in this country, and you would probably get nothing more for them than their value in silver. It is impossible for us to be certain about the value of any coin, of course, unless we could see it, and we can only give their present values so far as they are known. A Washington "cent" would be worth about 2s. if in good condition.

M. L.—Martin, from whose name the feast called "Martinmas" was named, or rather who was himself the object of commemoration, was also distinguished as giving a name to a certain season of the year, fine weather setting in on the 11th of November being called "St. Martin's summer" in France and Switzerland. This saint was the Bishop of Tours (France), and died A.D. 400, having specially distinguished himself in destroying the heathen altars and images of false gods, which in his day still existed, and which he could not tolerate within his episcopate, held by him for upwards of twenty-six years. This year the Swiss have been enjoying a magnificent Eté de St. Martin, after a very changeable summer season, such as we have ourselves experienced.

MARIANNE.—The wearing of "châtelaines" is of very ancient date. Our own Saxon ladies wore them, and various appliances of the toilet were suspended to them, such as tweezers, nail-arrangers, etc. 2. Introduce the youngest to the elder of two persons who wish to be acquainted, the person of inferior rank to the superior, and a man to a woman. To explain, you should say "Allow me to introduce," or "to present, Mr. So-and-So," and then say, "Mrs. So-and-So," or whatever the prefix to the name may be.

ALICE BLANE.—The real name of "Robin Hood," the famous outlaw of the time of Henry II., A.D. 1160, was Fitzooth, the Earl, it is believed, of Huntingdon. He spent his fortune, and then took to the woods as a freebooter, having been outlawed. His companion (among others), nick-named "Little John," was one Nailor, a gigantic man. His

reputed grave, at a village in Derbyshire, was a subject of much speculation; and the local traditions respecting his residence and decease at that place were called in question. For the sake of the historical and archeological interest connected with it, the rector permitted the grave to be opened a few years ago. This settled the question, and confirmed the traditions of the place, for a gigantic skeleton was found to occupy it, it is said of fully seven (if not of upwards) feet in height. 2. Indigestion or acidity produce hiccup; swallowing a small piece of ice or taking a dose of magnesia may cure it.

A CAPE GIRL.—We were much interested in your letter. Do not listen to the conversation of those who would draw you away from the faith of Christ, and dishonour your blessed Redeemer; and unless very well taught in the answers to their infidel objections, do not attempt to argue with them. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," and "Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown." We are glad that the answers we give to others should so often be of service to you.

THE GIRLS' OWN CONVALESCENT HOME.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED.

Amount previously acknowledged in No. 464 of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, £383 17s. 2½d. A. Keller (Rome), 3s., Lennie, 5s., "Rag," £1 10s., "A Poor Girl," 6d., "Jattie," 6d., Fanny Buttle, 11s., A. E. U., 1s., F. C., 1s., M. L. S. (Clapham), £1, Mildred Harrison, 2s. 6d., A Tardy Subscriber, 1s., Florence Newbold, 1s., M. L. (Kensington), 1s., Lizzie Wilkes, 3s. 6d., Hatty Baker, 5s., Annie Divine (Vancouver), 12s. 3d., Fiddle-de-dee, 6d., C. A. W., 1s., Three Rata Blossoms, 3s., Maud C., 3s. 6d., M. Lawson (collected), 15s.

Total amount received to November 27th, £389 18s. 5½d.

** In consequence of the peremptory demands of the public, we have been compelled to reprint the first two parts of this volume, viz., the parts for November and December, which contain the opening chapters of the serial stories and the coloured plates from drawings by James Sant, R.A., and Birket Foster.



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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

A GIRLS' TOUR IN BRITTANY.

CHAPTER IV.

WHILE breakfast was being served, Mme. Gaillard showed us the most curious collection of antiquities found by her husband in connection with the menhirs and dolmens of this strange district. It has only comparatively lately been discovered with certainty, that these monuments of antiquity were used as burial-places, but now human skeletons have been discovered, together with weapons, drinking vessels, implements, gold ornaments and precious stones, all of which seem to have been laid in readiness for the soul's transit to the other world. The skeletons are found in the position in which the men died, there having been no attempt to straighten the limbs; in one case the hand was under the chin as in sleep.

Besides the prehistoric remains, there are the Gallic and also the Roman. M. Gaillard seems to have spent his whole life in the search, and his museum is arranged with great taste; his wife's vivid explanations give a double interest to the whole. We saw a very trumpery presentation to him from "l'Etat," consisting of two glass vases and a plaster bust of Sir Isaac Newton. It is to be hoped the State will make some more adequate recognition of his services in course of time.

The rain was heavier than ever when we started in our chariot (a canopied wagonette), with an inquisitive old French lady for companion. We parted with her at La Trinité, and continued our way towards Lockmariaker. We suddenly heard a shout, "Il n'y a pas moyen," and peeping out beheld a rough and uninviting-looking arm of the sea impeding our course. We were not sorry that the high tide prevented our adventuring ourselves on the ferry, for with the remarkable canopy of our carriage we might easily have been blown over on such a wild day, not to mention the fact that our horse later showed a talent for kicking. So there was nothing to be done but to turn back, and to visit Carnac only.

The rain and mist prevented our obtaining any view from St. Michael's Chapel; driving rain clouds and grey sky seem, however, rather in harmony than otherwise with the two fields of menhirs, which are not unlike graveyards filled with gigantic headstones. Delicately tinted lichens of grey, green, and burning gold, with yellow



A BRETON GIRL.

furze and bright bell-heather, have done their best to remove all trace of gloom; but for all that, the predominating feeling produced in the *mind of the visitor* to Carnac is one of solemnity and awe, which increase the more one wanders among the stones. At first one does not take in their vast size, extent, and number. They are now under the protection of the State as a "monument historique," and many of the once prostrate menhirs have been set up.

We had for guides a ragged little boy and girl, in whose merry blue eyes and black hair we thought we saw evidence of the cousinhood of the Irish and Breton races. Frequent Atlantic showers compelled us to seek the shelter of our curtained coach, from which we were turned out in a damp condition at various points to inspect dolmens. Perhaps it would be well to give by way of explanation the definition in Murray's handbook of these remains. "A menhir (long stone) is a monolith in the form of a rude obelisk set upright on one end, whose height much exceeds its breadth. A dolmen (stone table) is an arrangement of rude blocks, by which one or more upright stones are made to support a horizontal block or slab. Sometimes the supporting stones are wide slabs, so arranged as to fit close to one another, and so lofty as to allow a man to walk upright beneath the horizontal roofstone which they support. Some of them are sixty or eighty feet long."

We entered several by a long passage half underground, ending in a small square chamber.

But how can one dare to describe Carnac, when Mr. Matthew Arnold has felt and given to the world the very spirit of the place?

"Far on its rocky knoll descried,
Saint Michael's Chapel cuts the sky.
I climb'd; beneath me, bright and wide,
Lay the lone coast of Brittany.
"Bright in the sunset, weird and still,
It lay beside the Atlantic wave,
As though the wizard Merlin's will
Yet charm'd it from his forest grave.
"Behind me, on their grassy sweep,
Bearded with lichen, scrawl'd and grey,
The giant stones of Carnac sleep,
In the mild evening of the May.
"No priestly stern procession now
Streams through their rows of pillars
old;
No victims bleed, no Druids bow—
Sheep make the daisied aisles their fold.
"From bush to bush the cuckoo flies,
The orchis red gleams everywhere;
Gold furze with broom, in blossom vies,
The bluebells perfume all the air.
"And o'er the glistening, lonely land
Rise up all round the Christian spires;
The Church of Carnac by the Strand
Catches the westerling sun's last fires.
"And there, across the watery way,
See, low above the tide at flood,
The sickle sweep of Quiberon Bay,
Whose beach once ran with loyal blood!

"And beyond that the Atlantic wide!
All round, no soul, no boat, no hail;
But on the horizon's verge descried,
Hangs, touched with light, one snowy
sail."

We returned to Plouharnel, and after rest and refreshment spent the remaining hour or two, before the train for Auray was due, in looking into the church and a small chapel, in which our good landlady informed us there was (what sounded like) "a barrel-roof"; reflecting she would not have expressed herself so clearly in English, we inquired again, and came to the conclusion that she meant a "bas-relief." Having the key handed to us, we duly found two very small bas-reliefs in the lonely little chapel above the beach. They did not detain us long, nor did anything else in the bare little building, which, barring a few tawdry decorations about the altar, might have very well passed for a Methodist chapel.

A small door in the gallery led up into the belfry, and there we rested awhile, letting our eyes wander down Quiberon Peninsula into the mists of the distance where lay the town of Quiberon, Belle Isle, and the bay of the massacred royalists. The peninsula is so flat and so narrow that it seemed as if in a great storm it must be impassable. And yet there is a railway the whole of its ten miles length. Very much we regretted that we had not gone to the town of Quiberon, as was our first intention, and which by economy of time might have been managed in the same day.

We were turned from this intention by some tourists going in a contrary direction from ourselves, who said, "Why go to Quiberon? There is nothing on earth to see when you get there." Whether to anathematise those tourists or be grateful to them is an unsolved problem. Quiberon Peninsula now remains in our memory as a mysterious-looking, precarious roadway, to a misty distance, where is a sea-surrounded town.

In the deepening twilight we turned into the church; its lack of beauty and interest was not visible in the gloom, but the white caps of the kneeling peasant-women were, and just in front of us were three of the White Sisters, whose softly-hanging, cream-coloured robes had delighted us in many a Brittany town before.

On returning to Auray we found the town still *en fête*. The square was brilliantly illuminated and crowded with people gathered to watch a torchlight procession. Before leaving next morning we drove round by the quay and river, and afterwards to the Convent of the Chartreuse, and to the Champs des Martyrs.

We were rather afraid of missing the half-past nine train, so although Ruth kept exhorting me to feel the emotions suited to the occasion, our hurried scamper across the Champs must have horrified the beggar who was appropriately whining "Ave Marias" at the gate.

At the Convent of the Chartreuse the nuns were at mass, and we were not sorry when our repeated appeals to the bell were unanswered. Our driver was scandalised that we did not show more anxiety to see the deaf and dumb inmates, and the bones of the martyrs. These last were the 4,000 emigrés who were treacherously shot, after laying down arms under promise of their lives, on the collapse of the ill-fated expedition to Quiberon in 1795.

We reached Vannes in half an hour by train, and at once repaired to the Hotel de France, and asked for a carriage to take us to the Peninsula of Rhuys. The rain had now passed off, and the day promised to be lovely. We were strongly advised to take a pair of horses, for the distance there and back would be about forty-four miles. As our expenses so far had been very moderate, we thought we would indulge in this unwonted luxury, and pay the 25 francs asked. (In our thirty-one days' absence we had spent about £18 each.) We soon left the quaint old town of Vannes behind, and crossed the first arm of the Morbihan Sea, which runs inland like a river. We had read in Mrs.



A BRETON.

Macquoid's book that on our route we should pass a cemetery, where were to be seen the little skull-boxes into which, after a certain time, the skulls of interred persons are placed, with the inscription, "Ci-git la tête de Monsieur" So-and-So. Our driver knew of no cemetery, still less of the skull-boxes, but at the first sight of a graveyard we insisted on alighting. Instead of the boxes we discovered a repulsive bone-house. Our driver must have been horrified at the ghastly tastes of Les Anglaises when, on passing a little cemetery an hour later, we again renewed our quest, with the same result. Evidently the little boxes (described as being like tiny dogs' kennels) have become too costly a luxury for the present generation, though the bone-house is still used.

As we pursued our way we soon began to feel the fresh breeze of the Atlantic, and to catch glimpses of its exquisite blue waters. By-and-by the ruined castle of Sucinio appeared in sight, the ancient pleasure palace of the dukes of Brittany, as its name "Souey n'y ot" indicates. It has figured again and again in history since its construction in 1250. A century later an English garrison occupied it, and was put to the sword by Du Guesclin. It must have been a magnificent structure, but gains nothing by its position, which is little raised above the shore.

Two bare-footed girls conducted us by perilous paths along the walls and to the tops of two of the towers, from whose dizzy but unfenced heights we took furtive glances at the magnificent view. It was not only our exalted position that made us uncomfortable, but the fact that the remains of the machicolated walls are built with deep perpendicular openings at short intervals, through which one catches glimpses of the depths below, and down which it would be exceedingly easy to slip, while clinging to the crumbling ramparts

for support. It was through such apertures that Jeanne la Flamme and other heroines of history poured boiling oil on their assailants.

Continuing our drive by way of Sarzeau to St. Gildas we noticed vineyards for the first time since coming into France. Buckwheat (*blé noir* or *sarazin*) was less frequent, and the roadside crucifix was supplanted by innumerable stone crosses. We saw a very primitive method of winnowing corn, which illustrated the phrase, "The chaff which the wind driveth away." A man and a girl were standing on a small common, where the corn had evidently been thrashed; the girl handed the corn to the man, who stood on a low stool with his back to the wind, holding in his hand a coarse sieve. As the corn dropped through, the chaff was blown away, and the good grain fell to the ground.

The spinning wheel and distaff are most familiar objects in Brittany, and all the women and girls seem able to do the most elaborate knitting as they walk along, or drive the cattle home.

Except for its associations there is nothing very striking about St. Gildas, but for all that we longed to spend a week or two at the convent, with the sweet-faced sisters, wandering in their ancient garden, and drinking in health and strength from the Atlantic wave. They entertained us with coffee and bread and butter, and told us that they take in boarders, five francs each per day, for sea bathing (ladies, children, and married couples). As one of the nuns showed us their graveyard with the ages eighty-five and eighty-seven occurring often on the small wooden crosses, she remarked, "On n'est pas souvent malade ici."

The convent was originally a monastery, founded in the sixth century by St. Gildas, one of the many emigrant saints sent by Great Britain to Brittany. At his death the Cornish monks tried to claim his bones, which were,

however, miraculously removed to prevent contention. In the twelfth century Abeldard became abbot, but his gentle rule was ineffectual in restraining the wild manners and vicious habits of the monks, and he had at length to escape for his life. He wrote to Heloise, "I inhabit a barbarous country, the language of which is unknown and horrible to me; I deal only with a savage people, my walks are by the inaccessible shores of a wild sea; my monks know no other rule than that of having none."

While Ruth sketched, I was taken into the one shop of the village by its vivacious proprietress. As she remarked, "Ici mademoiselle on trouve un peu de tout." She told me that St. Gildas has been a bathing-place for thirty years, and that since "les Bonnes Sœurs" had taken in pensionnaires "il venait beaucoup d'Anglais." One family came two years ago, who lived for several months in a carriage on the seashore. The old woman had been inside it, and described it as fitted up with every luxury. The family consisted of several persons, including the grandparents; they had as well a small carriage, drawn by one horse, and a boat of such length that the cart which brought it could not turn round in the "Place." When the procession first arrived, headed by the travelling carriage, with four horses, it caused the greatest excitement in the primitive village. As my informant said— "Moi, je croyais que c'était un cirque. Ah, c'était une famille bien, bien riche, les messieurs étaient jolis, et les dames très aimables; ils ont beaucoup acheté chez moi."

At the end of our chat I bought for three sous each two models of the beautifully-shaped jugs used in the north of Brittany, and on our way home we first saw the most classic shape of all borne on a woman's head.

On the return drive we called at Sarzeau to see the house where Le Sage was born in 1688. Its owner, the mayor, was away, so we could not obtain admittance; but we looked through the keyhole of the garden-door, and gained a general impression of a very old-fashioned house standing back in a high-walled garden.

The pleasantest part of our day was the drive home: The tide was in, and the Morbihan Sea looked much larger. As we drove along the low-lying peninsula, with the sun fast reaching its setting, we caught glimpses of the Atlantic on our right hand, while the little inland sea, bristling with islands, its shores fringed with salt-works, lay on our left. By-and-by we lost sight of the ocean, and came nearer the coast of the Morbihan. The sky was flaming with gold and crimson, subdued by heavy clouds, the islands lay dark and sombre amid the brilliant colours reflected in the water, and every now and then a clump of trees, a windmill, or a church spire broke the level lines of the shore.

We spent the next morning in wandering about the ancient town of Vannes, the history of which dates from the time when Cæsar came in person, his ships having leathern sails, to subdue the unruly Veneti (Vannetais). It has indeed been asserted by historians that at a still earlier period Vannes colonised the Adriatic, and gave her name to the Venetians. It occupied a prominent part in the stirring history of Brittany in later days.

The streets are narrow and irregular, parts of the old city walls with three gateways still exist, as well as the Tour du Connétable, where Oliver Clisson was treacherously imprisoned in 1387.

We left Vannes at three o'clock, and had our first uncomfortable journey—to Nantes. Having lost a sovereign during our travels, it occurred to us to recoup ourselves by "the negative process" of spending less; so we took third-class tickets, a mistake never to be repeated.

(To be continued.)

FEBRUARY THE FOURTEENTH.

By HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.



A MAIDEN went a-roaming
Arrayed in kirtle green,
With sunbeams bright illuming
Her hair of golden sheen;
And in the woodland mazes,
And in the meadow grass,
The buttercups and daisies
Woke up to see her pass.

An idle youth was strolling
Beside the grassy way,
In mellow accents troling
This sweet and tender lay—
"The little birds are mating
In every bower and tree;
I trow some lass is waiting
To be a mate for me!"

The lass in green came dancing
Adown the verdant glade,
And met the lad advancing—
Oh, happy youth and maid!
The last fair snowdrops waited
Their wedding bells to ring,
When gay young Love was mated
With sweet and smiling Spring!

draught from the scarcely closed door; it shone down on a young face with the ghastly pallor of approaching death stealing over it.

The dying man was so like his sister, so like, that had she been lying there instead of him, none could have told the difference. He opened his eyes when she knelt down by his side, and some strength seemed to come back.

"At last!" he gasped. "At last! and there is so little time left!"

"Darling!" she cried. "Have you no word of love for me? We have been parted so long. Have you forgiven me, Robbie? Oh, my darling, I could not help it. Robbie, do you love me still?"

"That depends," he answered, turning his great eyes on her with a look of strange mistrust. "I do not know whether I can trust you, and I must know, Nell."

She pressed her lips on his cold hands, on the dark hair lying on its rough pillow of straw. "I will die for you, darling; there is nothing in the whole wide world I would not do for you."

"Will you swear it?"

"Before God and man."

He grasped her hand with a marvellous force. "Nell," he said, "come closer. Listen! I cannot speak long. My men—

I have but three—the signal—Abel knows——"

He paused; every moment was increasing the difficulty of speech.

Abel came forward. "I know, Captain, I know," he said. "I can tell my lady."

"You will do it, Nell. You may save him!"

"The King?"

"Yes, yes; that valise—John Mowbray—we have information——"

"What are you asking me to do, Robbie?" cried Eleanor, her voice rising almost shrilly in her agony.

"To do—my work."

His voice gathered power; in his vehemence he raised himself up, with convulsive fingers clasping her hands.

"Nell! Nell! you will do it?"

Then the blood gushed from his mouth, and he fell back. Terrified, she strove to help him; but he was past all help—the fatal bullet had done its work too well. She answered the pleading of his eyes, which never left her face, long after the power of speech was gone.

"I will do it, Robbie. I will do what you would have done. God forgive me, Robbie, I will do it!"

Then came a wondrously sweet smile on his lips, his hands made a slight movement, his sister read his wish, and

with her own hand made the sign of the cross upon his breast.

The candle flickered and waned in its socket. Just overhead, through the low underground window of the cellar where he lay, the breaking of dawn shed a pale and ghastly light.

There was a long, long silence.

Old Abel drew near, he heard one trembling whisper. "Robbie darling, darling, speak to me, Robbie!"

Then silence again. The faithful old man came nearer still, and bent over them; with a gentle movement he laid his hand on Lady Newport's shoulder, and with the other hand drew a corner of the riding-cloak over the face of the dead.

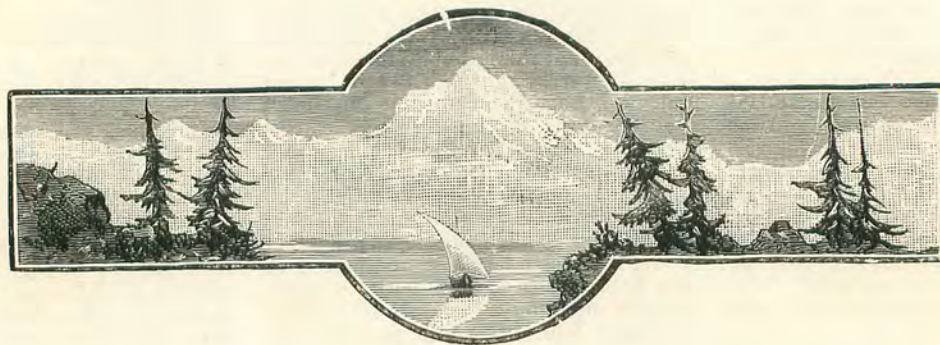
The candle flared up wildly, guttered, and went out; the cold grey dawn stole in. Presently something broke that terrible stillness—far away a distant sound, the church clock striking four.

Then Lady Newport rose from her knees, and Abel, glancing up at her, was astonished at the marble calm of her face.

"I must go," she said, with mechanical hands gathering up and fastening more tightly her long dark hair.

"Aye, dear heart, there is not a moment to lose," said the old man. "I will tell you all as we ride; but we must ride fast, for the day is breaking."

(To be continued.)



A GIRLS' TOUR IN BRITTANY.

CHAPTER V.

NANTES, with its brilliantly-lighted streets, its two rivers, numerous bridges, busy quays, gay shops, and handsome public buildings, was indeed a striking contrast to the old-world towns we had just left. The hostess of the Hotel des Voyageurs gave us a map, with which we started forth next morning, first visiting the Château, the birthplace of the Duchess Anne, the scene of her marriage with Louis XII., and the place where Henry IV. signed the Edict of Nantes, giving protection and toleration to the Protestants.

We next went to the cathedral, which has a fine unfinished west front. The interior is a strange mixture of elaborate detail in some parts, and utter want of finish in others. The effect of the lofty nave of pure flamboyant architecture is spoiled by a low, stunted Romanesque choir.

After visiting several churches, we rested for an hour in the "Jardin des Plantes," in a shady avenue of magnolia trees. Emerging by a gateway near the Loire, we took the tramcar towards the mouth of the river. We passed the Place Bouffay, where during the Revolution the guillotine did its deadly work, and came to the gloomy pile of buildings known as the "Salorges," where, during the infamous rule of Carrier, the victims of the "noyades"

were confined. The guillotine was too slow in its work for this monster, so he contrived, by sinking boats at the mouth of the river, to despatch his 500 or 600 victims a day. At this dreadful time every horror that the brutality or refinement of cruelty could suggest was forced on the unfortunate city, whose victims in one year amounted to 30,000. At this part of its course, so full of terrible associations, the various sections of the Loire unite, and it flows towards the sea—a noble stream. The banks were once lined with avenues of trees, but these have been cut down to make way for railway and tram-lines. This arrangement is a great disfigurement to the city, and a considerable source of danger to the inhabitants.

On our way back we alighted at the Bourse, and made our way to the hotel, by the Passage Pommeraye, a curious arcade of three storeys.

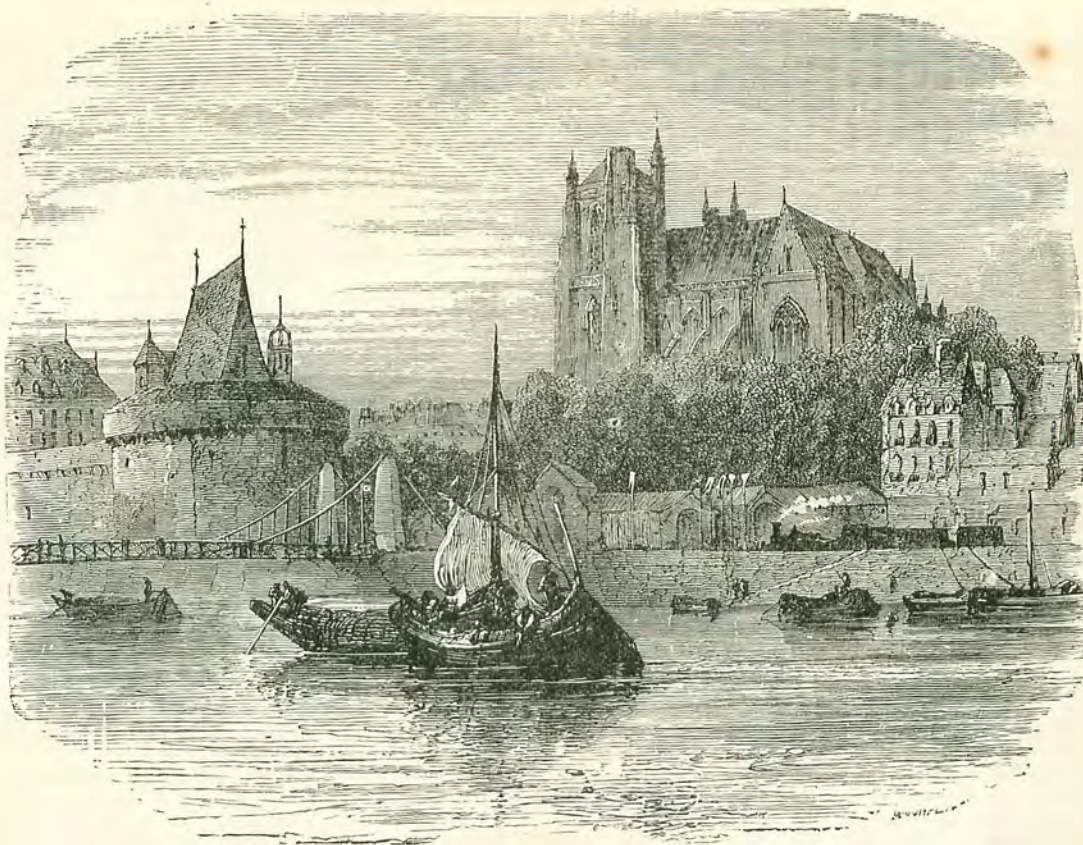
We left for Le Mans at three o'clock, and seemed in danger of having another unpleasant journey, for a tipsy man got into our carriage by mistake. His intentions seemed most amiable, but as he held in his hand a sharp-pointed compass (or some such implement of his craft), his frequent lurches were very alarming.

We descended at the Hotel du Dauphin, Le Mans, in pouring rain, and received a voluble welcome from the landlord, who persisted in talking to us in the most unintelligible English. Determined, apparently, that the money spent on his education in languages should not be thrown away, he insisted on making the most unnecessary remarks, and in offering us all sorts of things we were not in the least likely to require.

At dinner, the waiter twice made a remark which we could not understand, and we began to think it would be awkward if both English and French were alike unintelligible. At length it dawned upon us that the day was Friday, and that he said "*Vous dînez maigre ou gras?*" Some ladies near were dining "*maigre*" (fasting), but they had as many courses as we had, and wine and cheese as well. Our host kept coming up to us with his one formula, "You al' right?"

The heavy rain of the night made everything delightfully cool and fresh, and Saturday morning rose bright and lovely. We got up at six o'clock, had early coffee, and went out.

Le Mans is a charming place with wide open squares, narrow streets, with clear water running down them, a river (the Sarthe), numerous bridges, traces of the old city walls, and shady



NANTES ON THE LOIRE.

walks. It, too, dates from Cæsar's time, but most of the very old parts are swept away. Prince Frederick Charles had his quarters there in the last war, when the army of the Loire was finally dispersed, and all hope of relieving Paris abandoned.

Our first view of the cathedral filled us with delight and astonishment. We entered by a tiny door among the deep buttresses at the east end, just where the arches are most compressed, and found ourselves at once in the *chevet* or aisles of the choir, amid groups of worshippers paying their devotions at one or other of the eleven apsidal chapels.

The outer pillars encircling the choir are plain, massive circular columns with rich capitals, giving a sense of rest and strength, and contrasting with the inner circle, which are fluted, and which send up their shafts to an almost impossible height. The great ambition of French architects has been to obtain height. Sometimes they have sacrificed proportion to height, but in the choir and transepts of Le Mans they seem to have attained their end without any sense of loss.

The fine stained glass causes an indescribable play of light and shade among the arches; from whatever point of view one looks, a lovely broken perspective meets the eye, suggesting ideas of mystery and of unexplored recesses. The transepts are still higher than the choir. As we looked up a swallow circled over our heads; it had not, indeed, like the lark, "become a sightless song," but its diminished size showed at what an altitude it soared. A monument to Berengaria, queen of Richard Cœur de Lion, stands in the south transept, which also boasts a fine Romanesque porch.

A sudden change awaited us in turning from the gorgeous intricacy of the eastern end of the cathedral, with its rich colouring, burning tapers, smell of incense, scattered worshippers, and monotonous chanting of magnificently dressed priests, to the solitude, pale

light, white walls, and simple lines of the nave. There was an air of Puritan tranquillity about this part of the edifice, and one could fancy it was built at a time when the ritual of the church was less ornate than it afterwards became; and so it was, for whereas the choir is of the thirteenth century, "the period of perfection of pointed Gothic," the nave is Romanesque, a period which corresponds to our Norman.

The west front, which has happily been allowed to stand in its original plainness, is said to be of the eleventh, and the side aisles, with an arcade of very simple design, even of the tenth and eleventh centuries.

A clerestory has been added to the nave, and it is very easy to see where the new work joins the old.

After visiting two churches, and wandering about the town, we left Le Mans at noon, and reached Châtres about three o'clock. Since leaving Vannes we noticed many changes both in the landscape and people, which were not all improvements. In the Loire valley the poplar tree, either tall or pollard, became a frequent object, and the delicious blackberry hedges were seen no more.

When we entered churches the worshippers stared at us, telling their beads all the time, instead of being oblivious of our presence as heretofore. People at *table d'hôte* stared too. On leaving our hotel, waiters, for the first time (since we crossed the Channel), posed in picturesque attitudes, expectant of tips.

When we spoke people did not always listen, but concluded at once they could not understand. Strangers interposed, speaking a strange tongue, which proved to be their idea of the English language, "as she is spoke," but if we replied in our native tongue they were utterly confounded. (French being a foreign language to the Bretons, they always listened attentively, and an accent more or less strange did not affect them in the least.)

The peasant women did not now invariably

wear caps, though, to do them justice, the bonnets and dresses which made them seem to us so commonplace, were in reality very simple and in good taste.

As we pushed open the heavy door of Châtres Cathedral at eleven o'clock next day, a gorgeous procession of over one hundred men was filing down the central aisle. It was composed of the officiating priests, variously attired, the acolytes in scarlet gowns and skull caps, and a number of young priests from an adjoining seminary. After going round the church they went to fetch Monseigneur L'Evêque, a very infirm old gentleman of eighty-six, arrayed in purple velvet, with a tunic of white lace. High mass was performed, during which both string and wind instruments were used, while ever and anon the organ, perched high up in the nave, gave forth heavenly sounds.

When the "office" was over we hastened to the northern aisle of the choir, and were just in time to see the bishop pass out. Ladies, richly dressed, were kneeling on the pavement, while their children kissed his hand and received his blessing. Low mass was then said in a side chapel, the quiet tones of the priest mingling with the chanting still going on at the high altar. The black dresses of most of the groups of worshippers were relieved here and there by the immense white caps of the Bonnes Sœurs. Dim oil lamps burned in some of the side chapels, while hundreds of candles flared in the one dedicated to the Virgin. From our seats we could count twelve windows, but such is the maze and intricacy of the arches as they curve round the apse, that only one window was visible to us in its whole length.

The dark, rich stained glass gives an effect of indescribable mystery, which is now and again suddenly pierced by a shaft of the "light of common day" coming through a pane of clear glass. The choir of Châtres is not unlike that of Le Mans, but is still finer.

It is encircled by a double row of pillars, and the space between the buttresses is filled in with chapels. A lovely screen surrounds the altar; on its inner side are marble bas-reliefs, and on its outer side is carved work (representing scenes in the life of Christ) so rich and minute in detail as to deserve the description of "point lace in stone." Mr. Ruskin bids us remember "that the part of a building in which the Divine presence was believed to be constant, as that in the Jewish Holy of Holies, was only the enclosed choir; in front of which the aisles and transepts might become the king's hall of justice, as in the presence-chamber of Christ, and whose high altar was guarded always from the surrounding eastern aisles by a screen of the most finished workmanship; while from those surrounding aisles branched off a series of radiating chapels or cells, each dedicated to some separate saint. This conception of Christ and His saints was at the root of the entire disposition of the apse, with its supporting and dividing buttresses and piers; and the architectural form can never be well delighted in unless in some sympathy with the spiritual imagination out of which it rose. We talk foolishly and feebly of symbols and types; in old Christian architecture every part is literal; the cathedral is for its builders the house of God, and is surrounded like an earthly king's with minor lodgings for the servants."

The cathedral of Châtres is in such perfect proportion, and in parts so massive, that at first one does not realise its immense height and size. We liked best to sit in the sacristan's chair at the extreme western end, there losing the restless sense produced by the enormous mass of detail of the choir, and taking in the simple beauty and rich colouring of the church as a whole.

The stained glass of Châtres is of world-wide renown, and to see it is to realise its loveliness and the warmth and richness it gives to a building. At the west end are three plain lancet windows of the twelfth century, one of them containing a "tree of Jesse." Of these windows Lassus said, "Châtres possède trois magnifiques verrières, qui font pâlir tous les vitraux dont le 13^e siècle a enrichi cette magnifique cathédrale."

At the end of each transept and of the nave is an exquisite rose window, with plate tracery; the one in the north transept, being the gift of Saint Louis, is called the "Rose of France."

The outside of the cathedral is perhaps of the most unique and unrivalled interest. Of the nine spires contemplated in the design of Châtres only two are completed, and these are of different periods and of unequal heights. The older and less lofty spire is considered by good judges to be one of the most admirable and perfect products of French architecture.

The west front, which is of the twelfth century, is profusely ornamented with figures, and the north and south entrances are covered by triple projecting Gothic porticoes, resting on small bundles of pillars, the sides and vaults lined with statues, or filled with niches where statues have once been. Without counting figures simply ornamental, such as birds, gargoyles, etc., there are 1,800 statues of symbolic or historic interest on the exterior of the cathedral; the north porch alone contains over 700 statues and statuettes relating to the life of Christ, the precursors of the Messiah, the tree of Jesse, the creation, the wise and foolish virgins, the beatitudes, and the royal benefactors of the church. A flight of seventeen steps leads to the south porch, where is depicted the Last Judgment, Christ being surrounded by apostles, angels, martyrs, confessors, prophets, and virgins.

When sitting on some steps that hot day in a shady corner of the cathedral square waiting

for Ruth to join me, I marvelled at the extraordinary faith and self-abnegation of the first architects and builders. They seem not to have cared even that their names should be perpetuated, and they must have planned and built, laid stone on stone, knowing that neither they nor their children's children would see a tithe of the work completed. How they toiled on, generation after generation, nothing daunted, even when fire (as at Châtres) three times destroyed their handiwork! "They dreamt not of a perishable home who thus could build."

It is beautiful to read of the neighbouring kings and princes sending presents, while the people from Rouen came and encamped in tents to assist in the stupendous work. Yet admitting that each workman was animated by religious zeal, still the marvel grows, that men with few models, few means of travel, and few mechanical contrivances, could produce such lasting monuments of skill. I wonder if the faith is wanting now-a-days, that our ever hastening, never resting age is incapable of undertaking anything the completion of which is not within measurable distance. We have special need to learn

"One lesson of two duties kept at one,

Though the loud world proclaim their enmity

Of toil unsevered from tranquillity,

Of labour, that in lasting fruit outgrows

Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,

Too great for haste, too high for rivalry."

These meditations were cut short by the sight of Ruth crossing the bright sunshine of the square; her appearance was the signal for us to visit the crypt of the cathedral, the Church of "Notre Dame Sous Terre." It is the largest crypt in France, and the oldest part of the building, having been constructed by Bishop Fulbert, in the eleventh century. It is a weird place, in one chapel, dedicated to the Virgin, over a thousand metal hearts hang from the ceiling, while hundreds of feebly glimmering lamps are visible down the whole length of the aisle.

At four o'clock we again visited the cathedral, and were just in time to see pass round a procession of young girls with banners and lighted tapers. The stately pile never looked more beautiful than that one moment when the central aisle was filled from end to end by the white-robed, white-veiled figures.

On Monday we climbed up the less ancient and higher spire of Châtres, and were just in time to see the bells rung, which is done by the feet and not by ropes. The bell-ringers had a violent altercation, which was rather alarming in their perilous position above the bells.

Our guide told us that when the Germans were in possession of the city, one of them was always stationed in the spire. The ringers were only allowed ten minutes to climb the immense height, and ring the bells and descend. This precaution was used lest they should signal to the French camp. He spoke well of the Germans, saying they supplied the poor with food, even with brandy and tobacco, and they insisted on every respect being paid to the cathedral and to the religious services. Anyone attempting to keep his hat on in church, or otherwise misbehaving, was assisted in his exit by the point of a bayonet.

On Monday morning at eight o'clock we drove round the town, through the Porte Guillaume (the last remnant of the old walls), to the river with its crowded wooden wash-houses and its picturesque old gables. There is another branch of the river, a sluggish stream, with pretty villas and gardens, each with its little bridge leading to a shady avenue.

We were well repaid for a visit to the church of St. Pierre. It dates from the tenth to the thirteenth century, and its stained glass

is little inferior to that of the cathedral. The triforium of the lantern-shaped choir is glazed, and gives a charming effect of lightness and grace. There are three side chapels, vulgarly decorated, and a few windows with modern glass, which reminded us of nothing so much as of a Highland tartan or a Paisley shawl. We wondered less every day at Mr. Ruskin's anathemas on all attempts at restoration. One would have thought that to spend a week, still more a lifetime, near such a building as Châtres Cathedral was education enough for the least artistic soul.

A worse shock was in store for us at the church of St. Aignan, a fine enough building in itself, and containing some gems of stained glass. In an evil hour in the year 1842 that church was restored and decorated, and converted into a miracle of bad taste. The marvel is how any human brain could conceive such monstrosities of colour and design. The chief idea has been to portray vivid green cloth covered with stars, the shadows of the folds being indicated by straight black lines. The roof, a wagon ceiling in wood, is covered with a meaningless design of white dots. It is a pitiable spectacle. The author of it ought long ago to have been put under restraint for life, to prevent his committing further barbarities.

We went to see "l'Escalier Reine Berthe," an old oak spiral staircase outside a house. The next house is a crèche; they take in twenty children. The little things were out in the garden, crawling about in the warm sunshine on a piece of matting.

From Châtres we went to Paris, and spent nearly a week in a private hotel or pension, which I can well recommend to ladies travelling alone, as comfortable and moderate in charges—Hotel Villa Lord Byron, 16, Rue Lord Byron, Champs Elysées. We drove in the Bois, visited churches, went to Fontainebleau, studied pictures at the Louvre, and worshipped at the shrine of the Venus of Milo. We also shopped, *cela va sans dire*.

Having a vague remembrance of Mr. Ruskin's indignation with travellers who rush *pêle mêle* to the buffet at Amiens, and who never dream of breaking their journey to visit the cathedral, we determined to go there on Saturday and spend our last Continental Sunday in its precincts. We were anxious to compare it with Châtres and Le Mans while the remembrance of these was fresh in our minds.

On approaching the east end we noticed the usual apsidal form, the flying buttresses, and a delicate spire over the cross centre, "the pretty caprice of a village carpenter." The west front has two massive towers and three recessed doorways, which in beauty and elaborateness rivalled anything we had seen. On entering the church our first impression was of the lightness of the building, both in point of colour and architecture. There is less stained glass than in Châtres, and what there is, is of lighter tone. Then the tracery of the windows being bar tracery, with every corner and angle filled with glass instead of the stonework being left, there is little to impede the entrance of daylight.

The choir is enclosed by a single eastern aisle, which branches off as usual into radiating chapels; there is therefore an absence of the extreme intricacy and multiplicity of arches and pillars at this part which were so charming at Châtres and Le Mans. All round the choir and at the end of the transepts the triforium is glazed (as it once was all round the cathedral), admitting floods of light. Mr. Ruskin says, "If you have no wonder in you for that choir and its encompassing circlet of light when you look up into it from the cross centre, you need not travel further in search of cathedrals, for the waiting-room of any station is a better place for you."

At the end of each transept is the most lovely rose or wheel window it is possible to imagine—one of the thirteenth and one of the fourteenth century.

The oldest piece of glass of all is a narrow lancet window at the extreme east end, with a most exquisitely delicate round window over it. In all these windows a celestial blue predominates, suggesting the expression, "The blue vitrailed gate of Heaven."

The pulpit and altar-piece are ugly productions of modern days.

Amiens Cathedral is larger than any other in France, and is indeed only surpassed in size by Cologne Cathedral and St. Peter's at Rome. It was built about the same time as Salisbury (1220), "under the orders of two successive bishops, one of whom directed the foundations of the edifice, and the other gave thanks in it for its completion." It is called by M. Violet le Duc "The Parthenon of Gothic Architecture." Whewell says: "The interior is one of the most magnificent spectacles that architectural skill can ever have produced. The mind is filled and elevated by its enormous height (140 feet), its lofty clerestory, its grand proportions, its noble simplicity. The proportion of height to breadth is almost double that to which we are accustomed in English cathedrals."

In Mr. Ruskin's opinion the "apse is not only the best, but the first thing done perfectly by Northern Europe." In the "Bible of Amiens" he gives this advice: "Whatever you wish to see, or are forced to leave unseen at Amiens, if the overwhelming responsibilities of your existence and the inevitable necessities

of precipitate locomotion in their fulfilment have left you so much as one quarter of an hour—not out of breath—for the contemplation of the capital of Picardy, give it wholly to the cathedral choir. Aisles and porches, lancet windows and roses, you can see elsewhere as well as here, but such carpenters' work you cannot. It is late—fully developed Flamboyant, just past the fifteenth century—and has some Flemish stolidity, mixed with the playing French fire of it; but wood-carving was the Picard's joy from his youth up, and, so far as I know, there is nothing else so beautiful cut out of the goodly trees of the world.

"Sweet and young-grained wood it is: oak, trained and chosen for such work, sound now as four hundred years since. Under the carver's hand it seems to cut like clay, to fold like silk, to grow like living branches, to leap like living flame.

"Canopy crowning canopy, pinnacle piercing pinnacle—it shoots and wreaths itself into an enchanted glade, inextricable, imperishable, fuller of leafage than any forest, and fuller of story than any book."

At the conclusion of a long morning service we climbed up into the triforium, and made the whole tour of the cathedral, sometimes inside and sometimes outside the building. We were surprised to find High Mass commencing. The faint sound of the bell and the monotonous chanting of the priests sounded most strange as we wandered round, sometimes catching glimpses of the service that was going on in miniature below.

Then we went up into the spire, and saw the city, with its churches, forts, houses, and

its river (dividing into twelve canals), laid out like a child's toy city far below.

We walked on the roof of the nave, and our guide opened a ventilator and let us look down. Two old men were sitting just beneath (very liliputian in size), little dreaming of the temptation to unregenerate hearts to try "if marbles would bounce on their bald heads." Truly we had never been so high in life before, and never expect to be again.

We stood in a narrow ledge high over the organ, above the clerestory, and looked down the whole length of the church. We did not disturb anybody, for we can only have looked like big flies to the people below. Our guide told us that the nave is one metre wider in the upper part than in the lower; but whether this is intentional or owing to a giving way of the building, caused by its vast height, he did not know. In any case we felt it was unwise to add our ponderous weight to that part of the edifice, so descended with all convenient speed.

We attended an afternoon service, and saw the bishop and other gorgeous beings. We lingered about until the deepening twilight produced that air of mystery we had missed at noonday. A feeble glimmer from a candle or an oil-lamp was all the light there was when at length we tore ourselves away. After dinner we went again, hoping to see the effect of moonlight, but the moon was obscured by clouds. A very simple service was going on in the nave.

We reached London at three o'clock next day, crossing by Calais, and thus ended a delightful six weeks' holiday, which cost us each about £31.

[THE END.]

NEW MUSIC AND MUSICAL EVENTS.

MANY events of interest to our musical girls have already taken place this year, or are about to do so. We think it may be of assistance to our readers if, from time to time, we give them notice of any performances or publications of high class music, by the hearing or studying of which their perception of the divine art may be quickened, and their enjoyment of it enhanced. What we must strive to do above all things is to persuade you all to help on the music of native composers, by finding out what is good and hopeful in their compositions, rather than by cynically comparing them to their more experienced foreign brethren, and by encouraging their efforts with your attendance at their concerts and your purchase of their best works. It is satisfactory to find that the appreciation of native efforts is by no means confined to England—nay, more, it is almost a reproach that keener interest should be shown in them in Germany than at home. We must blush to think that in January last the best musicians in Leipzig attended an orchestral concert, of which every item was composed by Dr. Villiers Stanford, our most able professor at Cambridge University. The audience not only attended, but applauded and enjoyed that collection of British compositions, all by one hand. At the celebrated Saturday Concerts in the Crystal Palace British music always meets with a kind helping hand from Mr. August Manns; on the 15th of February the entire concert was devoted to a performance of Mr. Hamish MacCunn's new cantata, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." So far, Mr. MacCunn has wisely illustrated scenes and subjects belonging to his native Scotland.

On 23rd February Dr. Stanford's third and latest symphony was heard for the first time in England (the Germans already know it!), and at succeeding concerts we are to have overtures by Dr. Bridge and Mr. Prout, and a serenade by that very clever musician, Mr. Wingham.

The plays of Shakespeare which are being represented in London at the present time have musical interpolations by Sir Arthur Sullivan, and, in every way, there seem to be hope and encouragement for British music and musicians. This state of things can be best developed by combined exertion, but every individual, in however small a way, may assist in the advancement of what is best in our native productions, either, as I have already suggested, by the purchase of the best and purest compositions, irrespective of the amount of advertisement, which is as a rule anything but a guide to good music, or by the attendance and attention at concerts where new and standard works by fellow-countrymen are to be heard. This alone would encourage our people to make music rather than to import it.

Amongst events of interest, we note the return to this country of little Otto Hegner. You will probably have taken the opportunity of seeing and hearing the youthful genius, and will, we hope, have been able to discover in him all those makings of a Mozart or Mendelssohn, all that firm foundation and good purpose, without which a terrible affliction, "the infant prodigy," stands unmasked, a skeleton of wretchedness, and quite as much a case for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals as the Baldwin pony!

Mr. Henschel's excellent Symphony Concerts came to an end in February with a performance of the ninth symphony of Beethoven, known as the "Choral," being the only symphony in the last movement of which voices are employed, and followed the "Walpurgis Night" of Mendelssohn, for the interpretation of which the celebrated Leeds Choir came to London for the first time. These splendid northern singers should be heard. If we can show them delicacy in chorus singing, they can teach

us firmness of attack, and enthusiasm, such enthusiasm as is altogether wanting in our apathetic meetings in the south.

The Philharmonic Concerts recommenced in March, but the conductor, Mr. Cowen, did not return from Australia until after the first concert, at which Dr. Mackenzie most kindly took his place; but the reason for Mr. Cowen's absence is a very important one. At the Melbourne Exhibition he has preached to our colonies the crusade of good music, he has introduced to the thousands of our brethren out there very many works and composers, well known here in London, but never before heard in Australia; and best of all, he has the gratification of knowing that the good seed sown is even now taking root and springing upwards. The importance of this cannot be over-estimated.

Think of the life, the rough bush life, the hard-working life, and picture all the hardships softened, all the troubles comforted, all the hopes revived, and the latent good feelings brought out by this glorious art of music. Most of the new English work has been published at a cheap rate, and may be obtained at the various well-known music establishments. We hope to speak more fully about some of it next month.

NOVELLO AND CO.

Monsieur de Pachmann's clever wife, Margaret de Pachmann, contributes a *Thème et Variations*, and a *Rêverie du Lac*, two piano pieces fairly full of difficulties, but most musician-like and worthy of all the toil they demand.

Twelve Songs, by Schumann (Op. 35), not published in the older sets, and written to words by Kerner, will be welcome to all singers of good music.

We can also recommend some books of soft voluntaries for the organ, composed by George Calkin, and a toccata, by W. G. Wood, the latter rather difficult.