



GATE OF DORDRECHT, HOLLAND.

DORDRECHT.

HOLLAND, though now but a secondary European state, still retains somewhat of its old importance. As an independent republic in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it rose to the first rank of commercial and maritime power, and was remarkable for the industry, economy, and enterprise of its people. When James the First of England expatriated the Puritans, they found a home and a welcome in Holland; when James II. aroused the indignation of his subjects, it was to Dutch William they appealed, and from Holland came the required help. This northern

Venice—this country rescued from the sea—is consequently very closely allied to the sympathies of thoughtful Englishmen.

Some time ago (vol. iii., New Series, p. 297), we gave an illustrated sketch of a Dutch canal, with a promise to introduce some other scenes in Holland on future occasions. In pursuance of this plan, we present our readers with a view of the Old Gate of Dort, or more correctly Dordrecht—Dort being the diminutive for the proper name.

Dordrecht is erected on an island formed by the terrible floods of 1421. It is about ten miles distant from Rotterdam, and the journey thither is made by

steamboat. There is some talk—at present nothing more—of building a railway to connect the two cities—a highly desirable project, and one perfectly easy to the engineering skill of the nineteenth century. The town itself is old; the ponderous gates, overhanging storeys, quaintly carved fronts, coloured bricks, and grotesque windows, all proclaim its antiquity, for Dowager Dordrecht does not conceal her age with rouge and pearl powder. There is the old Gothic church with its old monuments, which the Dutch so ingeniously preserved by plastering them over during the French occupation; there is the old town hall; and there are on one side some tolerably strong fortifications, and on the other a good harbour and extensive quays. But the principal feature of interest in Dort is no more to be seen—the hall in which the famous Synod met (1618), famous in its way as the Council of Trent. After being employed for a variety of ignoble purposes, it has at last disappeared altogether.

Dordrecht carries on a good trade in flax, corn, salt fish, train oil, and timber. About the town flax is grown in considerable quantities; there are also in its immediate vicinity a large number of manufactories, and immense rafts of timber are floated down for shipment from the upper Rhine. Dordrecht is tolerably well built, and has a population of about twenty-five thousand; but its present importance is not to be compared with its former glory, when it was the state residence of the court of Holland, and the seat of the first meeting of the Seven United Provinces.

The old gate represented in our engraving is of red brick with a yellow cornice. It was erected in 1618. It is enriched with several bas-reliefs and two mottoes, "PAX CIVIUM ET CONCORDIA TUTISSIME URBEM MUNIUNT,"* and "CUSTOS ESTO MIHI DEUS MEUS JEHOVAH."† The fine trees seen to the left of the engraving have recently been felled, and replaced by a young plantation; but at times groups of phlegmatic Dutchmen may be seen lounging about the gate, drinking beer and smoking tobacco. The vehicle seen at the front of the sketch is the only one known in Dort, and is used for the transport of the sick to the hospital.

The landscape scenery about Dort is marked by those striking features of all Dutch prospects—windmills; windmills enough to challenge a score or two of Quixotes. These mills are chiefly employed in sawing deals.

* Peace and concord amongst citizens is the surest defence of the city.

† Be thou my guardian, O Lord my God.