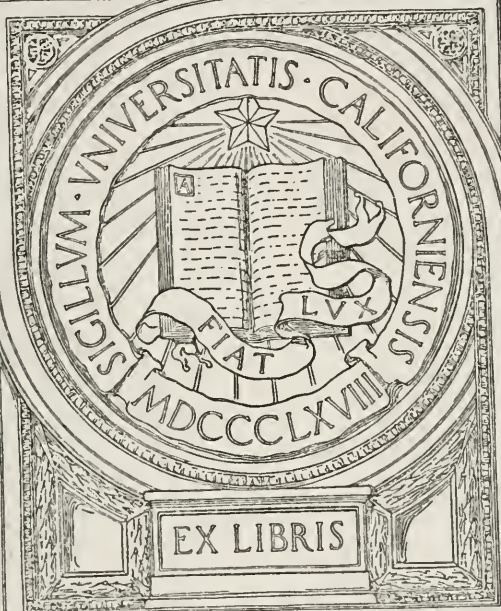




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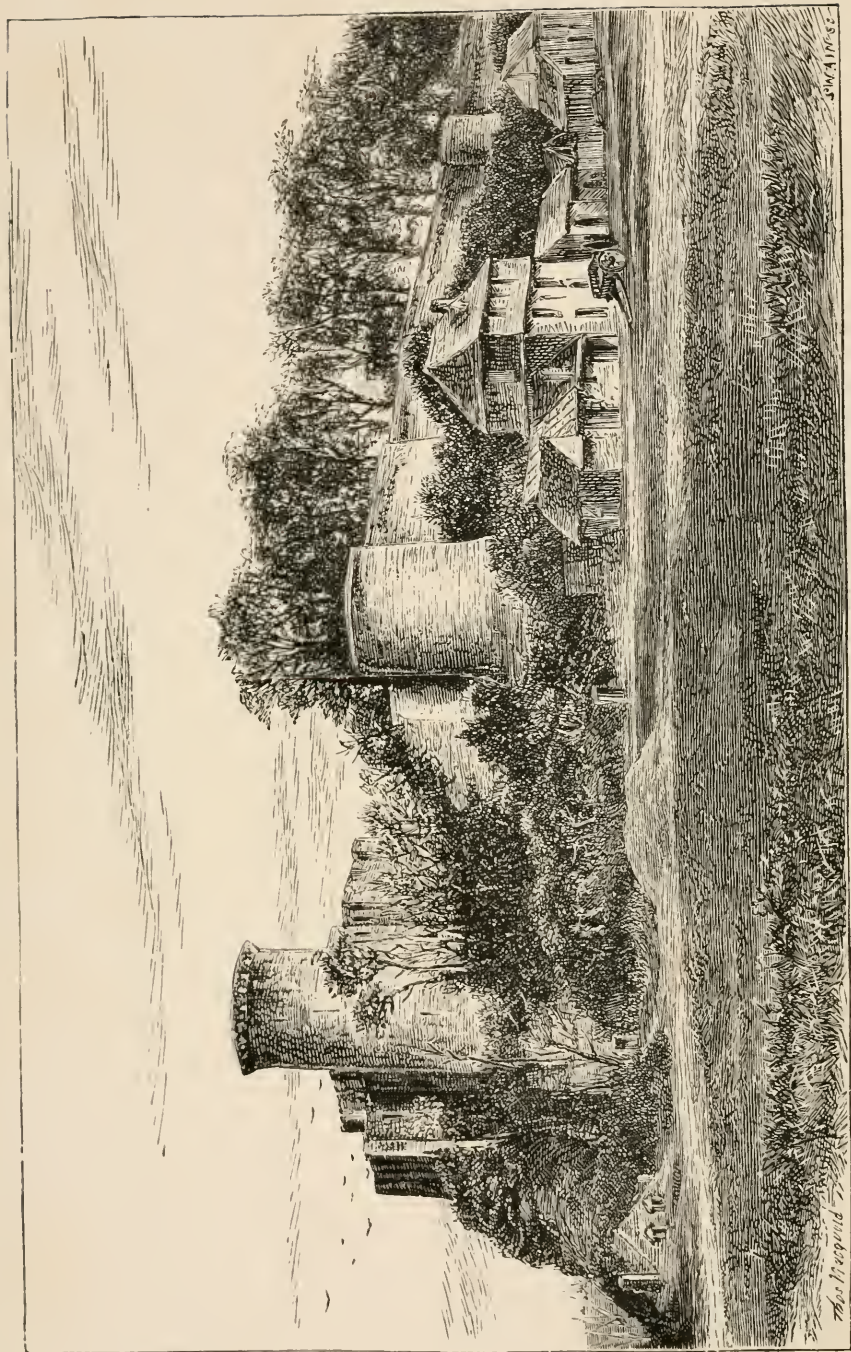
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The Birthplace of William the Conqueror, Falaise.

THROUGH NORMANDY

By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID

AUTHOR OF "THROUGH BRITTANY"

ILLUSTRATED BY THOMAS R. MACQUOID



London
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

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JAMES ROUSE, Esq.,
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND,
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The Illustrations marked * are drawn on wood by Percy Macquoid

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RAILWAY fares are not to be trusted or implicitly, as they seem to be frequently changed a few sous more or less. In the small towns a good bedroom may be had for two or three francs a night, except at Evreux, where all charges are rather higher. A notice of the ordinary is in the small towns of 30c. or 25c. The name of the best hotel only is given here. A bathing-cabin and a man to wash usually cost 30c. without a glass. A few charges for private vehicles are given with the distance as specimens, for it is better to make a bargain beforehand. Besides the price the driver expects a portmanteau. *F. mesur. francs, 2 centimes, 5 décimètres. 2 distance of eight kilomètres almost equals five English miles.*

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Hôtel Chariot d'Or. Omnibus, 25c.
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- ETRETAT** (Seine Inférieure), page 138.
Hôtel Blanquet. Hôtel Hauville, pension, 7f. per day ; table d'hôte, 10.30 A.M. and 6 P.M., 2f. and 3f. ; write beforehand.
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Diligences, Le Havre, 27k., 7.15 A.M., 4 P.M. Fécamp, 16k., starts twice a day from Hôtel Blanquet.
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TANCARVILLE (Seine Inférieure), page 180.

Hôtel du Havre, kept by M. Toutain, who keeps the key of the castle, and sends a guide with strangers. M. Toutain will send a carriage to St. Romain to meet travellers, if written to some days in advance. There are two comfortable bedrooms in the clean little inn.

LILLEBONNE (Seine Inférieure), page 189.

Hôtel du Commerce, not recommended.
Carriage to Caudebec, 12f.

CAUDEBEC (Seine Inférieure), page 203.

Hôtel de la Marine, tables d'hôte, 11 and 6.30, 2f. and 2f. 50c.
Diligence for Yvetôt, to meet the trains, 11½k., 70c. and 50c.
Rail, Yvetot to Rouen, 1st class, 5f. 50c.; 2nd class, 4f.; 3rd class, 3f.
Diligence to Rouen, 35k., 6.15 A.M., 3f.
Carriage to Jumièges, about 10f.
Rail, Rouen to Gaillon, 1st class, 6f.; 2nd class, 4f.; 3rd class, 3f. 25c.
Omnibus to Les Andelys and boat, 1f. 20c.

LE GRAND ANDELY (Eure), page 268.

Omnibus to Château Gaillard.
Hôtel du Grand Cerf, table d'hôte, 11 and 6.
Omnibus to St. Pierre de Vauvray, 1f. 50c.
Rail from St. Pierre to Louviers, 1st class, 1f. 25c.; 2nd class, 1f.; 3rd class, 75c.

LOUVIERS (Eure), page 278.

Omnibus, 25c.
Hôtel du Mouton.
Rail to Evreux, 1st class, 3f. 30c.; 2nd class, 2f. 45c.; 3rd class, 1f. 85c.

EVREUX (Eure), page 281.

Omnibus, day, 40c. ; night, 50c.

Hôtel du Grand Cerf, good ; table d'hôte, 2f. 50c. and 3f.

Rail to Bernay (it is possible to stop at Conches and to go on thence to Verneuil), 1st class, 6f. 50c. ; 2nd class, 5f. ; 3rd class, 3f. 50c.

CONCHES (Eure), page 287.

Hôtel de la Croix Blanche.

Diligence to Verneuil, 26k., four times a day.

BERNAY (Eure), page 289. Buffet at station.

Omnibus, day, 25c. ; night, 30c.

Hôtel du Cheval Blanc, clean and comfortable ; tables d'hôte, 11 and 6, 2f. 50c. and 3f.

Rail by Serquigny and Glos-Montfort (it is possible to stop at Brionne for Bec-Hellouin) to Pont-Audemer, 1st class, 5f. 50c. ; 2nd class, 4f. ; 3rd class, 3f.

PONT-AUDEMER (Eure), page 298.

Hôtel Pot d'Étain, not recommended ; Lion d'Or.

Diligence to Honfleur, 24k. ; to Rouen, twice a day.

Steamer every second day by the Rille to Le Havre.

Carriage to Honfleur, 15f.

HONFLEUR (Calvados), page 309.

Omnibus, 30c. ; with luggage, 50c.

Hôtel Cheval Blanc.

Diligences, Pont-Audemer, Trouville, 15 or 16k.

Steamers, Littlehampton, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 1st class, 15f. ; 2nd class, 12f. ; 3rd class, 8f. Southampton, Le Havre, and Rouen.

BATHING PLACES.

TROUVILLE (Calvados), page 316.

Hôtel des Roches Noires, and many others, all dear.

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Rail to Lisieux, 1st class, 4f. 75c. ; 2nd class, 3f. ; 3rd class, 2f. 50c.

Steamer for Le Havre twice daily.

VILLERS-SUR-MER (Calvados), page 320.

Hôtels du Casino, du Bras d'Or, board and lodging from 6f. to 8f. per day. A furnished house may be had here at a much cheaper rate than at Trouville.

LISIEUX (Calvados), page 323.

Omnibus, day, 40c. ; night, 50c.

Hôtel de France.

Rail to Caen, 1st class, 6f. 50c. ; 2nd class, 5f. ; 3rd class, 3f. 35c.

Diligences for Orbec, 22k., 7 A.M., 2 and 4 P.M. ; coupé, 2f. ;

intérieur, 1f. 60c. ; Vimoutiers, 28k., 1.40 A.M., 1 and 3 P.M., 3f. 50c.

CAEN (Calvados), page 338.

Omnibus, day, 50c. ; night, 70c.

Hôtel d'Angleterre, good and very comfortable ; table d'hôte, 6 P.M., 3f.

Théâtre, Place de la Préfecture.

Post Office, Hôtel de Ville, from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. ; Sundays, open till 5.

Telegraph, Rue Singer, open from 7 A.M. to 9 P.M.

Booksellers, Le Blanc-Hardel, Rue Froide ; and Lemonnier, Rue St. Jean.

Rail to Bayeux, 1st class, 4f. ; 2nd class, 3f. ; 3rd class, 2f. 25c.

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3.30 A.M., 3f. ; Honfleur, 56k., 4 P.M.

Steamboat for Le Havre, every day at high tide.

BATHING PLACES.

BEUZEVAL (Calvados), page 321.

Hôtel de la Mer ; breakfast 2f. ; dinner 3f.

CABOURG-LES-BAINS (Calvados), page 304.

Grand Hôtel de la Plage, breakfast 3f., dinner 4f. ; board and lodging, everything included, July and September, 8f. to 10f., August, 10f. to 15f. per day. There are three much cheaper hotels. Lodgings are to be had at Cabourg, and at almost all Norman bathing-places.

Diligences to Trouville and Caen.

LUC-SUR-MER (Calvados), page 409.

Hôtel de la Plage, and others. In all these hotels board and lodging are from 6f. to 7f. per day.

LANGRUNE (Calvados), page 412.

Hôtel de Belle Vue.

LION-SUR-MER (Calvados), page 409.

Hôtel du Calvados ; tables d'hôte, 2f. and 2f. 50c.

ST. AUBIN-SUR-MER (Calvados), page 401.

Hôtel de St. Aubin ; pension, 6f. per day.

FALAISE (Calvados), page 415.

Omnibus, day, 30c. ; night, 40c.

Hôtel de Normandie.

BAYEUX (Calvados), page 436, 442.

Omnibus, day, 30c. ; night, 40c.

Hôtel du Luxembourg ; table d'hôte, 6 P.M., 3f.

Post Office, Rue Royale.

Telegraph, near the Hotel de Ville.

Railway to St. Lô, 46k., 1st class, 6f. ; 2nd class, 5f. ; 3rd class, 3f. 50c.

Diligences, Arromanches, 12k., every two hours, 1f. from railway-station, 60c. from the town ; Asnelles, 12k., three times a day, 1f. 25c. ; Port-en-Bessin, 10k., every two hours ; Balleroy, 15k., 9 A.M., 3 and 7 P.M. This is on the way to St. Lô, to which town a carriage may be taken through Cerisy la Forêt, seeing the Abbey of Cerisy on the way.

ARROMANCHES (Calvados), page 437. Bathing.

Hôtel Etoile du Nord, Auberge Chrétien, about 5*f.* 50*c.* or 6*f.* per day. Rooms should be bespoken. Tents for the sands, 5*f.* per week. Lodgings are to be had.

ST. LÔ (Manche), page 461.

Omnibus, day, 30*c.*; 50*c.* with luggage.

Hôtel du Cheval Blanc.

Post Office, Place des Beaux Regards.

Telegraph, Rue du Neufbourg.

Diligences, Coutances, 28*k.*, 6 A.M., noon, 9 P.M., 3*f.* 50*c.* and 3*f.*;

Granville, by way of Coutances, 57*k.*, 6 A.M., 9 P.M., 7*f.* and 6*f.*;

Vire, 39*k.*, 10.45 A.M., 4*f.*; Avranches, 56*k.*, 6 A.M., noon, 6*f.*

COUTANCES (Manche), page 464.

Hôtels de France, d'Angleterre; not recommended.

Diligences for St. Lô, 28*k.*, 4.30 A.M., 2.30 P.M., 3*f.* 50*c.* and 3*f.*,

also at 4 P.M.; Carentan, 34*k.*, 4.30 A.M., 2.30 P.M., 3*f.* 50*c.* and

3*f.*; Granville, 29*k.*, half an hour after midnight, 10 A.M., 3

P.M., 3*f.* 50*c.* and 3*f.*

GRANVILLE (Manche), page 468. Bathing.

Omnibus, 40*c.*; with luggage, 50*c.*

Grand Hôtel du Nord, Rue Lecampion; write beforehand.

Post Office, Rue Lecampion.

Telegraph, Rue Lecampion.

Railway to Paris.

Diligences, Avranches, 26*k.*, 5 and 10 A.M., 4 P.M., 3*f.* 50*c.* and

2*f.* 50*c.*; Dol-de-Bretagne, 67*k.*, by Pontorson and Avranches,

10 A.M., 10*f.* 50*c.* and 9*f.* 75*c.*; Coutances, half an hour after

midnight, 11.30 A.M., 4 P.M., 3*f.* 50*c.*; St. Lô, 57*k.*, by way

of Coutances, twice a day; Carentan, by way of Coutances, twice

a day.

Steamboats for Jersey and the Channel Islands, every other day

at high tide, once a day, 1st class, 10*f.*; 2nd class, 6*f.* 25*c.*

AVRANCHES (Manche), page 473.

Hôtel de Londres, good.

Post Office, Rue Valhubert.

Telegraph, Rue Belle-Etoile.

Diligences, Dol-de-Bretagne, 41k., by Pontorson, for the St. Malo Railway, 8 A.M., 1 P.M., 6f. and 5f.; Granville, 7 A.M., noon, 4 P.M., 3f. and 2f. 50c.; Coutances, 47k., Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, 9 A.M., 5f.; Fougères, 40k., 2.30 P.M.; St. Lô, 56k., by Villedieu, 5.30 A.M., noon, 7f. and 6f.; Villedieu, 22k. (this is the best way of reaching Vire from Avranches), 5.30 A.M., noon, 4 P.M., 3f. and 2f. 50c. A carriage with one horse to Mont St. Michel should not cost more than 18f.

PONTORSON (Manche), page 480.

Hôtel de la Poste.

Diligences for Dol, 19k., 9.40 A.M., 3 P.M., 3f., 2f. 50c.; Avranches, Mont St. Michel, 10k., 10 A.M., 4 P.M., 2f. there and back.

VILLEDIEU-LES-POËLES (Manche), page 519.

Rail to Vire, 1st class, 7f. 75c.; 2nd class, 5f. 50c.; 3rd class, 3f. 25c.

VIRE (Calvados), page 521.

Omnibus, 30c., without luggage; 50c. with, to 30 kilogrammes.

Hôtel Saint Pierre.

Post Office, Rue Neufbourg.

Telegraph, Rue Chênedolle.

Rail to Argentan, 1st class, 9f. 25c.; 2nd class, 7f.; 3rd class, 5f. 85c.

Diligences to Mortain, 24k., 5 A.M., 3.30 P.M., 2f. 50c. and 2f.; St. Lô, 39k., 12.45, 4f.; Caen, 59k., by Villers-Bocage, 1.30 P.M., 5f.; Avranches, by the malle-poste, 5 A.M., 5f. (but this only takes a few passengers). Carriages for Mortain, &c., may be hired at Poupion's, just opposite the Hôtel du Cheval Blanc. A carriage to Mortain, 24k., may be had for 16f.

MORTAIN (Manche), page 534.

Hôtel de la Poste.

Diligences for Flers and Vire. A carriage may be had for Domfront.

DOMFRONT (Orne), page 540.

Hôtel de la Poste.

Diligences for Flers, 22k., 8 and 11 A.M., 6 P.M., 2f. 50c. and 2f.; Alençon, 62k., 2.30 P.M., 6f. and 5f.

FLERS (Orne), page 540.

Hôtel de l'Europe.

Diligences for Domfront and Mortain.

ARGENTAN (Orne), page 543.

Omnibus, 30c.

Hôtel des Trois Maries.

Rail to Alençon, 1st class, 6f. 25c.; 2nd class, 4f.; 3rd class,
2f. 45c.

ALENÇON (Orne), page 545.

Hôtel du Grand Cerf.

Rail to Paris, 1st class, 25f. 95c.; 2nd class, 19f. 50c.; 3rd class,
14f. 30c.

There are English Church services at

Avranches.

Caen.

Deauville.

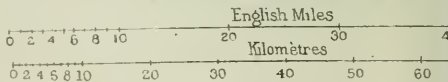
Dieppe.




Havre (Le).

Honfleur.



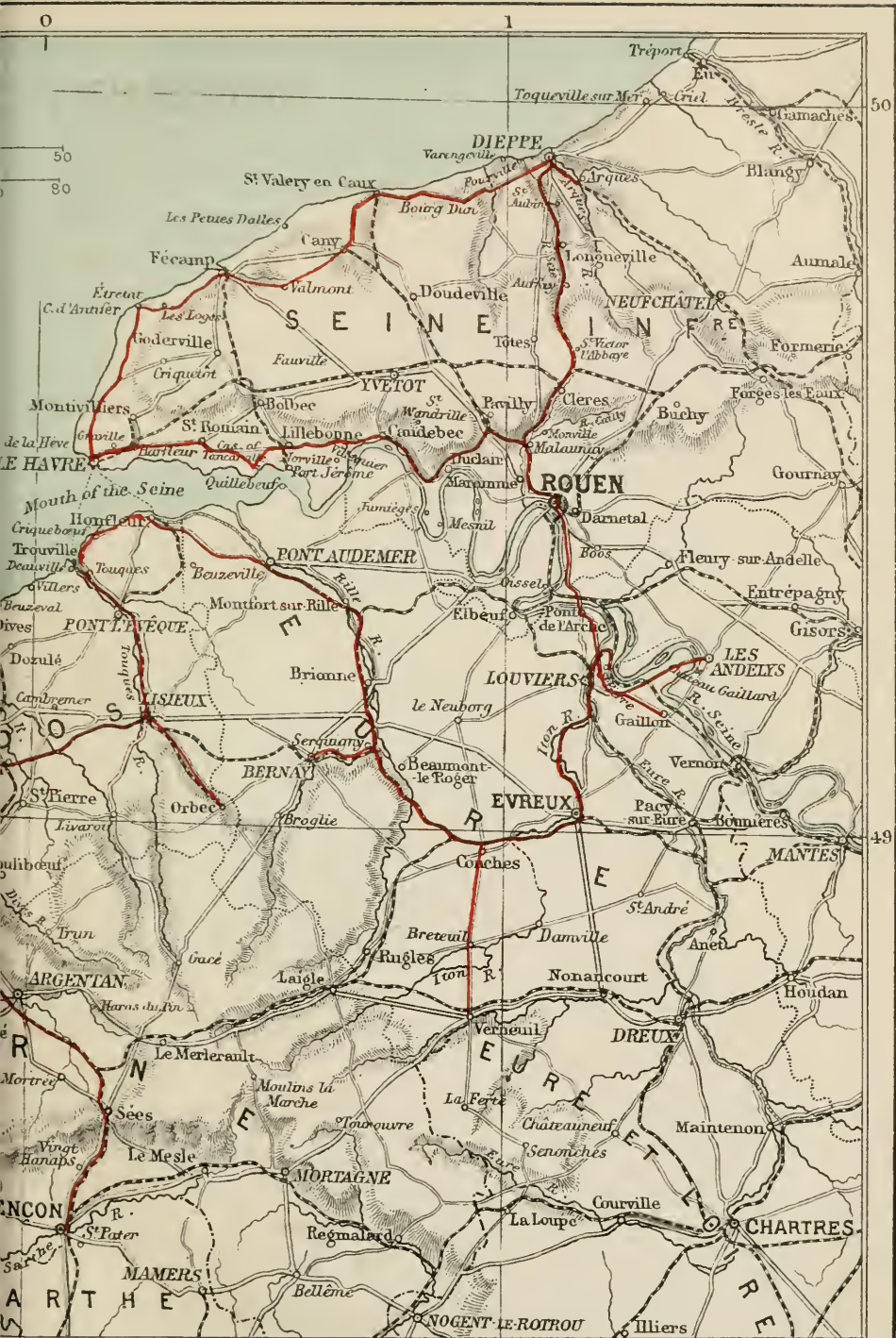
NORMANDY



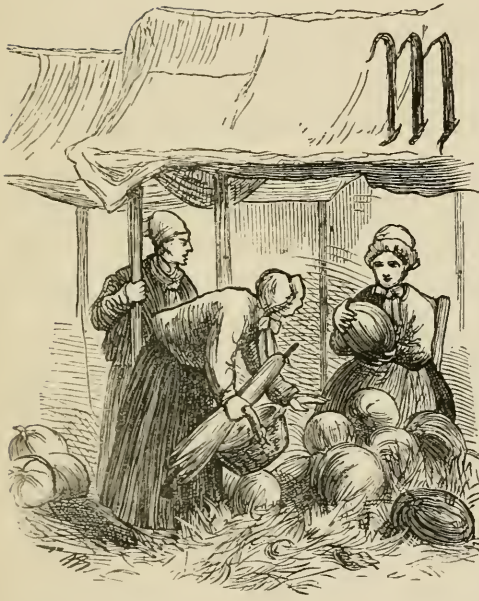
Railways, open 
" constructing 
Author's Route 

BAY OF THE SEINE





INTRODUCTION.



ANY English travellers have doubtless visited Normandy; that is to say, they have been to Dieppe or to Rouen, perhaps they may have stopped at both towns on their way to Paris; others have passed through Havre and Caen, and others have gone as far as Mont St. Michel, through the Bocage country, and

also through the Bessin, on their way to or from Cherbourg. But very few visit the smaller towns, and of late years Normandy seems to have been somewhat neglected. In comparison with the travellers who go eastward and southward on their autumn holiday, very few stop to visit the picturesque old towns and charming scenery of the ancient and beautiful province so closely linked with English sympathies, so nearly resembling some of the loveliest

landscape districts of England. Doctor Ducatel, who writes in 1767, says, "Indeed, Normandy doth so much resemble old England that I could hardly believe myself to be in France." We can go to Normandy any day, and so the day is deferred, and we live on in ignorance of some of the most interesting and picturesque towns, and some of the most exquisite river-scenery in Europe—for Normandy possesses all the charms of our green Devonshire and Kentish landscapes, with the addition of being much better watered. The lesser Norman rivers, from the Epte to the Sées, from the Arques to the Rille, are as numerous as they are lovely; and they meander through all the fair province.

The usual access to Normandy, either by Dieppe or Havre, is of course unpleasant for those who suffer at sea; but it takes very little longer time to go by way of Amiens from Folkstone, making Rouen a starting-point.

There are several distinct points of interest to be considered by the traveller in Normandy.

The seaboard and its numerous charming bathing-places, which, thanks to the pictures of Isabey and others, and the writings of Alexandre Dumas, Alphonse Karr, &c., have become known to the Parisian world, and have sprung, in a very brief period, from fishing villages into delightful little nestling towns like Etretat, or into grand bathing-places like Trouville and Deauville; each, almost without exception, with its casino and *établissement des bains*, whether it belongs to the first or second order in point of luxury and grandeur. One does not always find a casino at those quiet, secluded nooks, so dear to Parisians of moderate means, and which are almost unknown to English travellers, such as

Pourville, Les Petites Dalles, Villerville, Beuzeval, St. Aubin, Courseulles, Lion, Langrune, Arromanches, Port-en-Bessin, Asnelle, and many others.

Another point of interest is in the towns, the names of which alone conjure up ancient and feudal historic associations, and make us English live again among our Norman and Plantagenet kings and warriors.

And then to the full as interesting—for it, too, is gemmed with historic memories—is the voyage up the river Seine from Graville Ste. Honorine, perched half-way up its lofty *côte*, to Château Gaillard, standing out so boldly on a projecting rock that it commands the river for miles. The subjoined route will show that all these objects of interest may be comprised in a single journey, with scarcely any need of going over the same ground twice.

The mistake often made is that of seeing only the principal towns—Rouen, Caen, Havre, Dieppe, and a few more, and then of fancying we have seen Normandy ; these are, indeed, full of interest, but the chief beauties of the old country lie in the less frequented places, along the banks of the Seine, where there is scanty communication between the villages ; and again in the west, the neighbourhood of Vire and Mortain. Vire, where the exquisite tree-shaded valleys, or Vaux, wander beside the brawling river, now, alas ! no longer left to play at will among the mossy stones in its bed or round the feet of the lofty hills which overshadow it, but forced to labour hard on every working day in the service of numerous factories and fulling mills. Ollivier Basselin was himself a mill-owner, but he could hardly have foreseen the stacks of tall red chimneys, and gaunt slate-roofed factories, that now disfigure the exquisite Vaux de Vire ;—and Mortain, which

trade has scarcely reached,—the Switzerland of France, as it is called—with its foaming cascades and frowning, pine-clad rocks.

There are towns, too, of great interest to the lovers of picturesque antiquity, in which we heard the English were rarely seen—Bernay, Pont Audemer, and others, and yet not only these towns, but the places of interest near them, are well worth a visit from lovers of the beautiful and the curious.

There have been many modern books written on Normandy, but only treating of parts of the country. Of these, the rather discursive “Rambles in Normandy,” by Mr. Musgrave, is perhaps the most faithful. Miss Costello, in her “Summer among the Bocages and the Vines,” gives an interesting account of Vire, Mortain, and several other places; and Mrs. Craik has a very faithful account of Mont St. Michel and its neighbourhood in “Fair France.”

Mr. Freeman, in his delightful and valuable “History of the Norman Conquest,” relates much that is most interesting about the Dukes of Normandy and their country; his History and Cotman and Gally Knight’s Norman books should all be studied by the lover of architectural antiquities. Wace’s “Roman de Rou” should also be read by those who see the tapestry at Bayeux. There are several modern French archæological works on the old châteaux, Jumièges, Bayeux, Evreux, &c., well worth reading; but these are best procured in Rouen, as they are mostly published by Le Brument, in the Rue Jeanne d’Arc. Some of the towns, however, have as yet found no special historian, and it has been difficult to learn much about them.

A thorough and exhaustive description of Normandy would of necessity fill several volumes; this book is only

meant as a guide to the towns best worth visiting, and to some parts of the country which seem to lie out of the ordinary track of the tourist.

The following line of route includes almost all that is worth seeing, except Cherbourg and the peninsula of the Cotentin; and these lie so completely out of the way, and require so much time for themselves, that it is better to leave them for a separate visit.

Formerly, when a diligence ran between Dieppe and Fécamp, the best starting-point for a traveller in Normandy was Rouen, and even now Rouen seems to hold the key to almost all that is interesting in the province, and for this reason, as well as for others, it is worth more than one visit; the statues and tombs and many of the buildings themselves, acquire a deeper interest when we have visited the actual places where the princes and bishops and barons, with whose memories they are associated, ruled, or fought, or died.

Rouen to Dieppe by rail—

Dieppe to

Fécamp by a carriage, or, which is simpler, to

Dieppe *viâ* Newhaven—rail to

Rouen—rail to

Fécamp—diligence twice a day, or carriage, to

Etretat—diligence to

Havre, Harfleur, &c.—rail from Havre to

St. Romain—carriage to

Tancarville and

Lillebonne—carriage to

Caudebec—carriage to Jumièges, St. Wandrille—rail by way of

Yvetôt; or diligence or steamer to

Rouen—rail to

Gaillon—omnibus to (rail from Gaillon to Vernon)

Les Andelys and to

Château Gaillard—rail from St. Pierre de Vauvray to

- Louviers—rail to
 Evreux—rail to (Verneuil and Conches)
 Bernay—rail to
 Pont Audemer—diligence or carriage to
 Honfleur—rail or diligence, or by way of Havre by steamer, or
 walk to
 Trouville—rail to
 Lisieux—rail to
 Caen—rail or carriage to
 Falaise, and back to Caen—rail to
 Bayeux—diligence to
 Arranches and back to Bayeux—rail to
 St. Lô—diligence to
 Coutances—diligence to
 Granville—diligence to
 Avranches—carriage to
 Mont St. Michel, and back to
 Avranches—diligence to Ville Dieu—rail to
 Vire—carriage to
 Mortain—diligence to (or carriage and back from Vire to Mortain,
 and from Vire by rail to Argentan)
 Domfront—diligence to
 Flers—rail to
 Argentan—rail to
 Alençon—to Paris, or, for those who wish to return by way of
 Brittany, from Alençon to the junction at Le Mans, and into
 the Breton line of railway.

This journey requires at least three months (it can, of course, be done in half the time), and to enjoy it thoroughly, and examine all the interesting ruins and ancient cities with which this province is literally sown, would occupy six months. But it is easy to do it at twice, to break off at the end of the Seine journey, and go from Les Andelys to Paris by way of Vernon and Mantes, and to begin the other half at Louviers at another time. Only, the plan to be avoided is that of leaving out the small towns, for some of these are unrivalled in some one special interest.

There is so much worth visiting in every part of the country, and it offers such a variety of interest in its world-famous cities, its churches, cathedrals, and old buildings, so closely linked to the history and domestic life of our Norman and Plantagenet kings ; its lovely wooded valleys and castle-crowned hills ; its silver-grey rivers, winding round lofty c^otes, sometimes chalky, sometimes half clothed with graceful beech or birch trees, or taking a straighter course through bright green meadows and orchards full of fruit-jewelled trees ; its charming villages, where the vines cluster round the windows and climb even to the many-coloured thatched roof above, that one wonders at the absence of English travellers, in out-of-the-way nooks and corners.

In England one is eager to visit a real old Norman church, and yet within a few hours of our homes, often nestling out of sight in these little, outlying Norman villages, such churches are frequent ; and some of them contain treasures as yet overlooked by the people who frequent them.

The last few years have done a great deal for Normandy in the way of research. M. de Caumont, the Abbé Cochet, the late Frère Piel of Lisieux, M. Deville, M. Pottier, and many others, have worked hard to rescue much that is valuable from neglect and destruction. But it would be well if some power could check the ignorant progress of restoration. Many of the French clergy, in their zeal against whitewash, have with it suffered delicate stone-carving to be scraped away. In the cathedral of William the Conqueror, at Caen, some sculptured corbels have been scraped into the form of the cap of a leaden water-pipe !

Normandy abounds in quaint legends and superstitions (these are still more plentiful in Brittany) ; in the Bessin and

Bocage country of Normandy there are legends attached to most of the old castles and manor-houses, besides the current fables of the Fourolle and Létiche, Loupgarou, &c.

The costumes of Normandy have almost entirely disappeared, except at Granville and Vire, and a few of the western towns, but there are still quaint caps to be seen westward of Caen on fêtes and at the grand Easter fairs; at a baptism too, when some old country farmer's wife drives into town to fulfil the important office of god-mother, she is most likely to appear in the lofty glory of a *bavolette* or a *bonnet rond*. Among very poor women the snowy *bonnet de coton* is universal, and among others a close-fitted dimity-cap, with large round ears, fastened by strings going round the head, and pinned or tied in a bow in front; or the Caennais cap, close-fitting and short-eared, with a cockscomb frill over the forehead, are the most often seen.

But, although the quaintness of form in costume is passing away, there is always a wonderful feeling for fitness of colour in the Norman peasant-woman; and this shows itself not only in the harmony of the greys and blacks, and browns and yellows of her clothing, but in the piling up of fruit and vegetables in even the smallest Grande Place on market-day.

It is pitiful, in the way of taste, to visit Covent Garden when we come home, and picture to ourselves the effect which a handful of Norman peasants would have produced with such a wealth of material. In their markets the piles of golden carrots, with their lovely tender green fringe, are made to contrast so admirably with the snowy turnips, just freshly washed at the fountain hard by, and the rich crimson of cabbages and radish, the glowing *citrouilles* gashed and showing golden flesh, beside tufts of silver leeks with delicate

green stripes, cauliflowers with creamy heads placed temptingly in rows, garnished with scarlet tomatoes and heaps of the white satin-skinned beans, which we know are such good eating in France.

It is a great mistake to travel on market-day, for on market-day a private carriage is hardly to be had, and a most



Market Vegetables, &c.

picturesque scene is lost sight of. Market-day is usually on Saturday in the smaller towns. Meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, clothing, sabots, hardware, crockery, are all offered for sale chiefly by laughing, chattering, merry-faced women, who will cheat you if they can, but who give you plenty of amusement in return. One notices here, as well as in other parts of France, the universal employment of women. At railway-stations, in the fields, in the shops, they seem to do the work of men. In some towns they sweep the streets, and along much of the line of railway the Norman signal-woman is an institution.

The Norman peasant is very intelligent; he is much

more reserved than most of his countrymen, but he is remarkably well-informed, and he has considerable depth of feeling; in many ways he is far more like an Englishman than a Parisian. But in driving a bargain he is unrivalled; he will fight over a sou; and he not only gets the better of his customer, but he makes him feel for the time that he is laid under an obligation. But the Norman is confiding withal—he will trust an Englishman implicitly; and if he is treated with courtesy, his kindness and obligingness are very great. The traveller who mixes with the people as he journeys on from town to town, in the streets, at the markets, at railway stations, and who enters into conversation with his fellow-passengers on the banquette of a diligence, and above all with the driver, will learn more about the real nature of the French people in a few weeks than he will by years of reading, or by the rapid transit from one large town to another, which is too often the custom of most English people.

The simple kindness of even the very poor, the happy leisure of their lives, and, above all, their perfect freedom from discontent, are a sure panacea for worry; the round, often unmeaning browned faces, have kept a permanent hold on some of the sunshine which has so bronzed them. It is easy to provoke a merry smile on the most wrinkled, toil-worn face; only one regrets, as they are so given to mirth, the almost total absence or else disfigurement of teeth both in men and women throughout Normandy. They attribute this defect to the cider; whatever may be the cause, it is rare to find a Norman of the lower ranks with a good set of teeth. But for this they are rather English than French in looks, well-grown, blue-eyed and fair-haired, especially in the Pays de Caux, the western

half of the department of the Lower Seine, and in the Bessin. The women of Caen and of Granville are very attractive and well-featured, and both men and women are much better grown than Parisians are. The Norman accent in speaking is detestable—so very harsh and broad.

It is better to go to the best hotels, for there is almost always a choice. Some corners of Normandy are still in want of civilisation, but all through the province good beds and good cookery are to be had. Living is very reasonable at Caen and in the smaller towns, although much dearer than it was before the war; except in Rouen, cider is always placed on the table without charge for those who drink it, but it is universally thin and bad.

No one should travel in Normandy without Joanne's pocket or *diamant* guide, "La Normandie." It can be had in English, and is entirely to be trusted for its recommendation of hotels—except that at Pont Audemer we cannot recommend the Pot d'Étain, and that at Caudebec we can heartily recommend the Hôtel de la Marine, rough in some of its ways, but kept by such kind, honest people. M. Joanne's information about diligences, steamboats, *voitures*, &c., is entirely trustworthy; altogether it is a most useful little book. The two best hotels in Normandy are the Hôtel de France in Rouen, and the Hôtel d'Angleterre in Caen. There is an hotel at Havre which is very comfortable and clean, and which has an excellent table d'hôte, and is moderate in its charges; but as it is in a street behind the Rue de Paris, it is overlooked by English travellers—it is the Hôtel des Armes de la Ville.

The hotels at Dieppe, Trouville, &c., are all dear alike, and at any of these fashionable bathing-places it is necessary

during the month of August to write for rooms several days in advance, or you may have to sleep in a *grenier*!

Some readers may be interested in tracing out the origin and early history of the ancient province of Normandy, overrun by so many hordes of conquerors, preserving traces of nearly all the races that have in turn ruled it, and yet keeping through all its Celtic identity, and keeping those cities as some of its chief towns which, centuries before Christ, composed the Armorican confederacy, and of some of which the names still retain a stamp of antiquity. In some instances, notably at Lillebonne, the Roman remains are still substantial, and have outlasted the work of William the Conqueror.

The first people who seem to have inhabited Normandy are the Galls. All that is known about them is that, like all primitive Western races, they came from Upper Asia. They called their country Armorica. It comprehended Normandy and Brittany, and extended along the sea-coast southward as far as the Gironde.

About eleven centuries before the Christian era, it is supposed that some bands of the wandering hordes of Cymri, which at that period passed like a tribe of destroying locusts over the greater part of Europe, always on the wing, brought the first mixture of race into the north-western part of France.

But in the seventh century before Christ, a sudden wave of eastern tribes came rolling westward, pushing before it, with the force of an avalanche, Scythians and Teutons, till they in their turn forced westward the Cymri, who had established themselves in Europe, in the territory lying between the Crimea and Denmark. The Cymri again

spread westward, crossed the Rhine, and specially directed their invasion against Armorica, where they finally settled, driving most of the original inhabitants southward.

The Cymri, then, is the real original people of Neustria—the Celt, as he was called by ancient writers to distinguish him from the Belgæ, the tribes of Cymri who remained beyond the Rhine. The Belgæ, however, crossed the Rhine in the fourth century B.C., and invaded Gaul, but the Cymri, or Celts, opposed so powerful a resistance, that they kept the invaders beyond the Seine and the Marne.

During the three centuries which intervened between this last invasion and the conquest of Gaul by the Romans, Armorica, which at this time comprised strictly the country between the Seine and the Loire, was inhabited by seven tribes.

The Unelli, who inhabited the country of the Cotentin, and whose capital was first Alauna, near Valognes, and then Constantia, now Coutances.

The Abrincatui; chief city, Legedia, now Avranches.

The Sagii, or Saii, first capital unknown, unless Oximum, afterwards the present Sées.

The Bajocasses, who inhabited the Bessin country, capital Aregena, since replaced by Bayeux.

The Viducasses, near neighbours of the Bajocasses, with whom they seem to have been confounded, capital city on the banks of the Orne, rather above Caen, on the site of the village of Vieux.

The Lexovii, occupying the territory near the mouth of the Seine on its southern side; capital city, Neomagus, or Noviomagus, now Lisieux.

On this side of the Seine was a seventh tribe—the Ebu-rovices ; capital city, Mediolanum Aulerorum, which, after being placed for many years by the learned at Vieil Evreux, is now considered to have been Evreux itself. This people formed part of the Confederation of the Aulerques, which reached from Evreux to Le Mans.

These seven districts, all lying south of the Seine, were inhabited by Celtic Gauls ; but Neustria, north of the Seine, was inhabited by two tribes of Belgic Gauls—the Caleti, inhabitants of the Pays de Caux, whose capital city was first Caletum, then Julia-bona, now Lillebonne ; and the Velocasses, who bordered the Seine as far as the mouth of the Oise, and part of whose territory represented the Norman Vexin, chief city Rotumacus, Rothomagus—Rouen.

In the year 58 B.C. Julius Cæsar resolved to conquer Gaul, but he met with so fierce a resistance that the conquest occupied eight years. Augustus, when he divided Gaul into provinces, seems to have included the Celtic tribes north of the Seine with those between the Seine and the Loire, and to have called the province Lugdunensis, or La Lyonnaise, with Lyons for capital ; but at the beginning of the fourth century Diocletian divided it into two, Première and Seconde Lyonnaise, and of this last Rouen was capital. At the end of the fourth century came another subdivision, which reduced the Seconde Lyonnaise very nearly to the Normandy of the feudal epoch. About the period of this division came Christianity, and Rouen became an archbishopric. Several of the other Armorican towns then erected into bishoprics are still the suffragan dioceses of the metropolitan see of Rouen.

At this time the other ancient cities changed their names

for those which they now bear, except Rouen, which continued to be Rothomagus.

In the fifth century after Christ, two new scourges poured destruction over Normandy. First, the Franks, under their warlike chief, Clodion; and then the Huns, under Attila. But the sagacious Roman general Aëtius repulsed both attacks, and succeeded in uniting against the savage Huns even the unsubmissive tribes of Armorica, the turbulent inhabitants of the peninsula of the Cotentin, and the Saxon tribe of Otlings, who, about the middle of the fourth century, coming from the Elbe and the Rhine, had made incursions into the Lyonnaise, and had destroyed the cities of Vieux (which was never rebuilt), Avranches, Lisieux, and Lillebonne. They had now been for some time masters of the Bessin, and of the land along the coast, from the mouth of the Seine to the Vire.

But after this repulse, the power of Rome no longer asserts itself in Gaul. The tribes seem to recover independence, and the chief power is in the hands of the bishops.

About this time, in a tribe of Franks inhabiting the territory since called Flanders, was a young ambitious chief called Clovis, who proposed to himself to conquer Celtic Gaul. He began by invading the Soissonnais and the Vermandois. He was at last successful in establishing a kingdom extending from the Seine to the Loire, and he made Paris his chief city. But the seafaring inhabitants of the western part of Armorica refused to submit to a pagan prince, and it was not until Clovis consented to receive Christian baptism that they acknowledged him as their sovereign.

After this Neustria, as it was called, became the favourite residence of the Merovingian kings. They founded, too, or aided in the founding of, more than forty monasteries, among which were St. Ouen, Jumièges, St. Wandrille, Fécamp, St. Evroult, Montivilliers, Ste. Croix, St. Taurin d'Evreux, Cerisy, Mont St. Michel.

Thierry, the last titular king of the line of Clovis, finished his days in the cloister of St. Wandrille.

There is little trace of Neustrian history under the Carolingian kings; but in 841, Danish pirates sailed up the Seine, plundered and demolished Jumièges, and burned and pillaged Rouen. In 859 or 890 they again appeared, and ravaged all the country of the Bessin. The following year they came back, and again sailed up the Seine and took Paris. Charles le Chauve, too feeble to resist them, bought their departure with 7,000 livres of silver.

From this time the invasions of these northern pirates seem to have been frequent, and the province was one continual field of battle and plunder. There was a notable invasion in 885, but we get no certain mention of Rollo, or Rolf, till 912, when Charles the Simple, King of Paris, seems to have ceded the province to him entirely. It is also said that he gave him his daughter Gisela in marriage, but it is certain that Charles could not at that time have had a marriageable daughter. It may be well here to append a table of the Dukes of Normandy, from the time of Rolf till the cession of the province to France, in the time of Philip Augustus.

Normandy is now divided into five departments—

Seine Inférieure, comprising the Pays de Caux—chief town, Rouen, and the Pays de Bray.

Eure—chief town, Evreux. These nearly represent La Haute Normandie.

OF THE

1st Duke

unnor, a Dane.

4th—990. Edward, King of England, 1002; Two other daughters.
d, Cnut.

Hardyknute, King of England.

5th—1027. Edward the Confessor of
die England.

Nicholas,
Abbot of
at Rouen

8th—1087. Matilda, Abbess of the Abbaye
Dames. Constance. Alice.
Agatha. Adela.

Count of Anjou, and 10th Duke of Normandy.

Count of Normandy.

[To face page 16.]

Calvados—chief town, Caen.

Manche—chief town, St. Lô.

Orne—chief town, Alençon. These comprise La Basse Normandie.

My best thanks are due to the authorities of the Reading-room in the British Museum, and also to those of the Public Library of Rouen, for much ready courtesy and help. This book also owes much to the light thrown on the character of William the Conqueror by Mr. Freeman in his "History of the Norman Conquest of England."

It has been suggested to me that a traveller sometimes likes to form an estimate of his expenses before he sets out on a journey. A single traveller may, by travelling rapidly, visit all the places named in this journey, in a space of six weeks, for the sum of £40, staying at the best inns. It is always cheaper and pleasanter to travel by diligence than by railway; but a private carriage is best of all, for, although it costs more money, it really saves time, as so much can be seen *en route*.

ROUEN.

CHAPTER I.

Entry into Rouen.

Its History.

Bureau des Finances.

The Cathedral.

Place de la Vieille Tour.

Les Halles.

Old Streets.

St. Maclou and the Aitre.

St. Vivien and St. Nicaise.

The Museum of Antiquities.



HE best first impression that a traveller can get within Rouen is, supposing him to have come by way of Amiens, to walk into the city from the railway station in the Faubourg Martainville—first sending on his luggage to the hotel he means to lodge at.

We will hope that the air is full of sunshine, and of that sparkling atmosphere which makes each overhanging gable and clustering vine-leaf and crocketed pinnacle stand out crisp and clear against the

blue sky above, and the mouldering grey stone and wood below.

It is quite possible to enter Rouen and to remain for several hours blind to its wonderfully picturesque beauty. The approach to the city from the Rue Verte station down the Rue Jeanne d'Arc, spite of occasional glimpses of towers and spires that point to hidden treasures, is so intensely modern that it is hard to believe that the Rouen painted by Samuel Prout and extolled by so many travellers, is still in existence. Very much of the ancient city has been removed to make room for the large modern streets which run northward from the Seine, and for others which intersect these, traversing the city from east to west. But the traveller who starts from the Gare d'Amiens will find enough to take him back centuries, and to enable him to picture Rouen to himself much as she must have appeared to the knights and dames of the Middle Ages.

Some little time before our arrival, we had got a glorious peep at the old grey city, and had recognised the spires and towers of the Cathedral and of St. Maclou, but quickly after this the hills conceal it; and when we left the station, and crossed the Boulevard to the top of the Rue d'Amiens, we seemed to get quite a fresh view of the towers and spires of St. Ouen and the Cathedral grouped together, the tower of St. Ouen relieved white against the lofty iron *flèche* of the Cathedral. We saw on our right a square garden planted with trees, and we went straight down the Rue d'Amiens, passing the Hospice Général and the Caserne. This hospital receives in all two thousand persons; it is for the aged and infirm, and also for foundlings. Five or six hundred infants are deposited here every year.

Just beyond the Caserne, through the trees, we see in the distance a beautiful central church-tower, with a triple crown of pierced masonry, and twin spires rising in front. We recognise these as St. Ouen, but the general effect is injured by a factory chimney which rises up almost in front. On the right, at the bottom of the Rue Ambroise Fleury, is a picturesque group of old houses, half-timbered, with nodding gables atop.

And now right and left we come to narrow streets of old houses, the roofs closing over on either side, so that the sky scarcely appears between. Rue Ruissel, on the left, is a very characteristic old street, full of shops of chiffoniers, with fruit and vegetable-sellers sitting out at the doors. The Rue Ruissel leads into the Rue Martainville, and a little way on is the Rue des Arpents, about the quaintest and most curious of the streets of Rouen. There is hardly a horizontal line among the massive moulded beams which divide the first floor from the ground floor, some go up, some down, and the nodding gables above hang their heads now a little on one side, now on the other, and sometimes so far forward that it seems perilous to walk in the street below. There are numerous half-timbered houses both here and in the Rue Martainville; and, indeed, we found afterwards, in all the little, narrow, dirty-looking streets that abound in this the oldest quarter of Rouen.

We have strayed out of our course, tempted by the glimpses of old houses; let us go back to the Rue d'Amiens, noting for future exploration the Rue Martainville, which runs almost parallel with it from east to west, and the Rue des Arpents, which runs from north to south, and ends on the Quai Napoléon.

A little beyond the Rue Ruissel, along the Rue d'Amiens, a mountain ash full of scarlet berries groups richly with the distant tower and spires of St. Ouen; and indeed all the way, this church makes continual pictures: now rising above the projecting dormers of some old wooden house on one side, now appearing on the other over a nodding gable with some massive sign—a key or a huge tea-kettle hanging in the air—while in the street itself there is an ever-varied foreground. Not far from the end a priest is stopping to speak to two sisters of charity, with their flapping white headgear and blue skirts; they have between them a blushing young country maiden, and they are soliciting the good offices of Monsieur le Curé in finding her a place. Monsieur le Curé is so very stout that he quite blocks up the footway, but he has a kindly thoughtful look, and the two sisters have evidently great faith in the help he promises. A little way on, a load of fresh yellow pine-wood has just been thrown down before the shop of an épicier, and a man in a blouse and patched blue trowsers is chopping it up for use, chatting merrily all the while with a blue-eyed girl in a snowy cap who stands in the doorway. There comes a ringing of numerous little bells, and a team of Norman horses drags a long heavy cart full of large stones along the street; the white, clumsy-looking horses have a gay scarlet fringe to their collars, and each has a chime of little bells; the driver, in a blouse and sabots and a straw hat, walks beside them, making strange sounds and cracking his whip.

Suddenly, on the left, appear the graceful spire and part of the tower of St. Maclou, rising above a group of tumble-down houses. We conjure up a wonderful picture in think-

ing what this street must have been a few years ago, for several modern houses have crept in here and there, and doubtless every year now will make a change. A few yards further on is a curious old house-front in carved oak, dated 1646; the carving of the lower frieze is very quaint. How glorious it must have been when the street was filled with such houses, and probably not one of them exactly like another! One of the lessons to be learned in Norman cities, although it shows itself more impressively in such towns as Bernay and Lisieux than in Rouen, is the originality of mind in their builders; if one of them could rise up and see some of the Parisian streets, with every house as alike and un-special as a *rouleau* of newly coined napoleons, what would he think? He would smile scornfully at the notion that the dwelling which suited Peter would suit Paul and Philip equally well, although he would hold it as a matter of course that Peter and Paul's children would each live in their respective father's house from generation to generation.

We have reached the end of the Rue d'Amiens, and we come to the Place Eau de Robec. Here, on the right, is a view of St. Ouen, on the left, of St. Maclou. Here, too, is the quaintest-looking street, the Rue Eau de Robec, with a little stream—the river Robec—running through it; poor little river! a mere slave now to the numerous wheels and engines which it helps to work. The footway is raised, and on it are displayed old furniture of every age and style, and in the windows of the houses on both sides a goodly display of china and crockery and curiosities of every sort, at ruinous prices.

The Rue de la Chaine is a continuation of the Rue d'Amiens: here too are some quaint old houses. It leads

on into a broad, handsome, perfectly modern street, now called the Rue de la République. We cross this, and a little way on find ourselves in the *Marché aux Fleurs*. This market is a charming sight: rare plants and flowers under the shelter of canvas sheds, hardier ones in admirably arranged groups; white-tasselled fuchsias backed by dark myrtles covered with starry blossoms; everywhere sweet-smelling mignonette and the tender green of verbena and basil; and, towering over the rest like the plumes of some oriental bird, flame-coloured gladioli, or softer-coloured lilies in pink and white; then there are huge bouquets of cut flowers at absurdly low prices. But we have only to go straight on along the street which leads from the market-place and we come to the Rue des Carmes, and almost opposite the comfortable hotel to which we are bound, standing back from the street in its shady court-yard full of evergreens and flowers.

It is not difficult to find one's way about Rouen. The Seine, which is wide here and spanned by two handsome bridges, divides the city; or rather, on the north bank of the river lies the city of Rouen, with its cathedral and churches, and treasures of antiquity, surrounded by the tree-shaded Boulevards, reaching in a semicircle from one end of the town to the other, and backed by the lofty hills, up the sides of which Rouen has crept; and on the south bank is the modern suburb of St. Sever, with its useful manufacturing population and its factory chimneys. Two handsome bridges connect St. Sever with Rouen itself, and it is worth while to cross these for the sake of seeing the city from the opposite side of the river.

Although the Cathedral and almost all the ancient stones

of Rouen are of later date than the churches of Caen, yet Rouen as a city is of older date; in the first part of the second century it is spoken of as Rothomagus. It was the capital city of the Gallic tribe of Velocasses; but Ptolemy is the first ancient author who speaks of it. Cæsar does not even mention it. The Romans appear to have been the first to fortify Rouen; remains of Roman walls still exist in the cellars of a sugar refinery in the Rue des Carmes, and these probably extended eastward as far as some other remains in the Rue de la Chainé.

According to French archæologists, in the Roman period the Seine came as high as the line reaching from the present Rue des Bonnetiers to the extremity of the Rue aux Ours, and formed the south boundary of the city; the northern limit was from the river Robec on the east, to the Rue de la Poterne on the west; the western, from the Rue de la Poterne to the Rue aux Ours; the eastern limit being made by the river Robec. Rouen seems to have been a well-known town under the Romans, but some of the earliest history we get of the city is from the records of its bishops. We find some of the very early Christian fathers staying at Rouen when they visited Celtic Gaul.

St. Nicaise appears to have been the apostle of Rouen, but St. Mellon seems to have been its first bishop. He was a native of Great Britain, and was consecrated by the Pope-bishop of Rouen in 260. He either built or consecrated the first church in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and that seems the most important event recorded in connection with him.

The next bishop of whom there is special mention is St. Victrix. During his episcopate the town extended its limits,

the population increased, and many churches were built; the bishop himself is said to have laboured with his own hands in their erection. About a hundred years after St. Victrix came St. Godard, who died in 529. In his time the Franks, under Clovis, invaded and conquered the provinces north of the Seine, and wrested Rouen from Roman dominion.

Rouen now became a French town, and about 540 its first great church, the abbey of St. Peter, now St. Ouen, was founded by Clotaire I. After this, with the exception of the murder of Archbishop Prétextat in the Cathedral, by order of Frédégonde, and the episcopates of St. Romain and St. Ouen, in the seventh century, we hear very little of Rouen till the Norse invasion in 841. From this time till the country was finally subjugated by Rollo, or Rolf, early in the tenth century, a reign of anarchy seems to have prevailed—burned cities, deserted villages, a whole population massacred, one horror succeeds another; but when once Rolf is declared Duke of Normandy, he establishes peace and order, and Rouen soon becomes a populous and thriving city. M. Deville seems to think that Charles the Simple only ceded to Rolf a part of Neustria Maritima and the town of Rouen, with its dependencies Evreux and Lisieux, and that the towns of Bayeux, Sées, Coutances, and Avranches, were only gained by fresh concessions to Rolf and his son, William Longsword. Duke Rolf and his son, William Longsword, extended the southern limits of Rouen by uniting to terra firma the islands on which stood the churches of St. Eloi, St. Etienne, St. Clément, and St. Martin de la Roquette, so called because it was built on a little rock in the middle of the river. The Porte Cauchoise

was built in the eleventh century, in the reign of Duke Richard II. ; this extended the western boundary.

When Philip Augustus took Normandy from King John in the thirteenth century, he built the old castle, the Château de Bonvreuil, of which only the Tour Jeanne d'Arc now remains ; and St. Louis added to the city the ground on which stand the churches and parishes of St. Patrice, St. Nicaise, St. Vivien, and St. Maclou.

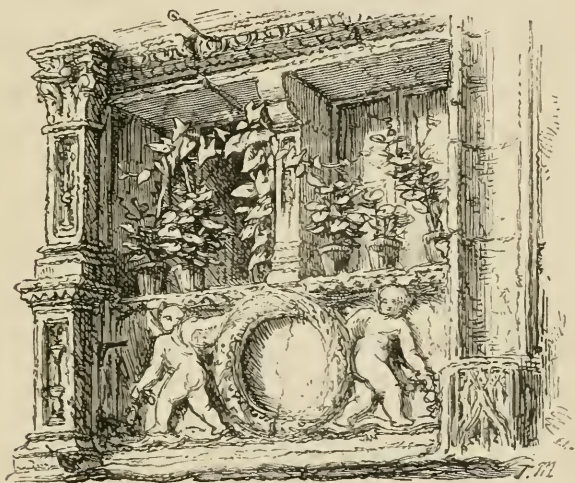
Formerly Rouen was surrounded by walls and towers and deep ditches, and was in every way strongly fortified. In 949, during the minority of Richard the Fearless, it was besieged by Louis IV. of France and the false Arnulf of Flanders, also by Otho, the German emperor ; in 1204, by Philip Augustus ; and in 1418, by Henry V. of England ; by Charles VII., who retook it from the English ; by Charles IX., when it was in the possession of the Calvinists ; and lastly, in 1594, it was besieged by Henri Quatre.

Excepting the high tower, which once formed part of the castle of Philip Augustus, all the fortifications were destroyed during the Revolution of 1789. The tower formerly belonged to the convent of the Ursulines, but it is now the property of the town.

Before the Revolution there were thirty-seven parish churches and numerous religious communities. There are now only six parish churches and eight chapels, and a church which is used for English service. Many of the churches remain, but they are either shut up or desecrated.

The Place de la Cathédrale is in the Rue des Carmes, just where that street changes into the Rue Grand Pont, on its way to the suspension bridge across the Seine. We learn from the drawings of Samuel Prout how picturesque

this Place must have been when it was surrounded by old houses, and used as a market-place. Facing the Cathedral there is still a very interesting house—the ancient palace of the Cour des Aides, usually called the Bureau des Finances. It is a richly sculptured stone building of the François I. epoch, with curious medallions and other ornaments in bas-reliefs. The palace is now divided into two houses; on the ground-floor are shops, and the upper



Bureau des Finances.

rooms are used for club meetings. The house stands at the corner of the Rue du Petit Salut, and the side front in that street is also curious.

The best time to see the west front of the Cathedral is just after sunset, when its details are somewhat obscured and broadened by the absence of brilliant light. Then the effect of the grand mass of picturesque building filling up one side of the open square is most impressive. On the

right is the lofty Butter Tower, on the left the Tower of St. Romain, and in the centre the magnificent west front.

One stands a long time looking at this grand church. The detail is so luxuriant that one's eyes get tired of trying to examine its elaborations. The doorways under the three entrances to the porch are ornamented with bas-reliefs, but these were greatly injured by the Calvinists in 1562. The great central design is a Jesse tree, and that on the left the beheading of John the Baptist, where the daughter of Herodias seems to be dancing on her head ; but the accumulation of sculpture in images, canopies, galleries, crocketed pinnacles, is bewildering, and we looked up at the richly carved mass, with the luxuriant Butter Tower on the right, and the graceful tourelles in the centre, feeling that it was impossible to examine it in any detail, and that its massive proportions and its marvellous effects of light and shade, as the light touched the outermost portions, leaving those under the porches in deep shadow, were its most admirable features, except some part of the towers.

The northern tower, or the Tower of St. Romain, is the most ancient part of the building. Before the Revolution it contained eleven bells. It is in a far purer, severer style than the rest of the Cathedral. The upper part is much more recent than its foundation, and was probably finished in the year 1477. It is very beautiful, and is worth a careful study.

The west front itself was built by the first cardinal, the famous Georges d'Amboise. It was begun in 1509 and finished in 1530. The Butter Tower on the right (so called because it was built with the alms of the faithful who purchased leave to eat butter during Lent) is 230 feet high.

Robert de Croixmare, Archbishop of Rouen, laid the first stone in November, 1485; it was consecrated in 1496, and finished in 1507. It was for this tower that Cardinal d'Amboise caused the famous bell to be cast, which was christened Georges d'Amboise. The circumference of this bell was thirty feet, its height ten feet, and it weighed 36,000 lb. Its founder, John le Machon, is said to have died of joy twenty-six days after the casting of this bell.

When Louis XVI. visited Rouen, in 1786, the bell was rung so loud that it cracked. At the Revolution it was melted down into cannon. Some few pieces were made into medals bearing this inscription—

“Monument of vanity,
Destroyed for utility,
The second year of *Egalité*.”

Before entering the Cathedral we went round the Rue St. Romain, and examined the northern portal, flanked on each side by beautiful open towers. It is called the *Portail des Libraires*, from the number of booksellers' shops formerly in the court leading to it. The sculptures over the entrance-door seem to have been left unfinished. They are part human, part beasts, taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The porch was begun in 1280, and not finished till 1478. It was used by great personages on their visits to the Cathedral, only kings and princes of the blood being admitted by the great western door. The court in front of the *Portail des Libraires* seems to have been used as a burial-ground for some time. “They ceased interring in it,” says Monsieur Licquet, “because a murder was committed there, and the ground was left unpurified.”

We get a good view of the northern side of the Cathedral here. There are nine windows among the side chapels, all ornamented in different ways. It is probable, too, judging by the round-headed windows in the lower portion of the Tower of St. Romain, that this story formed part of the old building in which Duke Rolf was baptized, and which was not burned down with the rest in the year 1200. The fierce old Dane was baptized by Francon, Archbishop of Rouen, and his godfather was Count Robert of Brittany.

We prefer to follow Monsieur Licquet's history of the Cathedral, as the present very courteous authorities in the great Bibliothèque of Rouen told us that his account is to be fully trusted.

There seems to be no doubt that the first chapel was founded by St. Mellon; and there is also no doubt that the river Seine, in the time of this bishop, in the middle of the third century, and in the beginning of the fourth, and even for many centuries after, reached as high as the place now occupied by the southern porch of the Cathedral—the Porte de la Calende; it is most probable, therefore, that the first Christian church of Rouen stood somewhere about the site of the Tower of St. Romain, which gives abundant evidence of having been founded on the remains of one of the many churches built here before the actual cathedral in which Rolf was baptized.

Monsieur Licquet thinks that the Cathedral was pilaged but not destroyed in 841, as the country and its inhabitants were engaged in such perpetual struggles with these northern pirates in the interval, that there would scarcely have been time or means to effect a rebuilding before the period of Duke Rolf's baptism in 912, and

there is evidence that he was baptized in this the principal church of the city. Rolf seems to have offered magnificent gifts to the Cathedral after baptism, and there is clear proof that the building was then in existence. Rolf's grandson, Richard I., the fearless son of William Longsword, enlarged the Cathedral about the end of the tenth century; and Archbishop Robert, one of the sons of Richard the Fearless, went on with the work. Richard's great-grandson, William the Bastard, gave the see of Rouen—after his uncle Malger, the successor to Robert, had been deposed in 1055—to Maurilius, formerly Abbot of St. Mary, in Florence, then a simple monk in the Abbey of Fécamp. Maurilius finished the Cathedral, begun by Archbishop Robert, and in the year 1063 dedicated it to Notre-Dame in the presence of Duke William and the suffragan bishops of the diocese of Normandy—the bishops of Bayeux, Avranches, Lisieux, Evreux, Sées, and Coutances.

In 1200 the whole edifice, with the exception of some of the lower parts, was burned down, and it is perhaps the only meritorious action on record of our King John that in his character of Duke of Normandy he assigned funds for the building a new cathedral in the town of Rouen. But it is evident that the Cathedral as a whole is the work of several centuries. It does not seem to have been completed till the sixteenth, and, as may be seen, there are still uncarved blocks of stone both at the western and northern entrances. Its architect in 1214 is said to have been Ingelram, the architect of the Abbey of Bec.

The first sight of the interior of the Cathedral is disappointing. Although the length of the building from the door to the end of the Lady Chapel is four hundred and fifty feet, the

massive effect of the whole is frittered away by a second tier of arches opening into the aisles. These dwarf the principal arches, and destroy simplicity of effect. The modern screen, too, is in a very bad and inharmonious style; but the stained glass windows are beautiful, and are well worth a careful study.

In the left aisle of the nave there is a window with subjects taken from the life of John the Baptist. In the left aisle of the choir there is another very remarkable window, and there are two others near the Lady Chapel on the life of Joseph. On the right side of the choir are two remarkable windows: one represents the Passion. All these and some others are of the thirteenth century. There is also some fine glass of the Renaissance period.

Two altars stand in the nave, just opposite the choir-screen; that on the right hand, with a statue of Our Lady by Lecomte, is still called the altar of the Vow. In 1637 there was a grand procession to this altar to implore cessation of the plague which at that time desolated the city. On the left-hand altar there is a statue of Saint Cecilia.

There are twenty-five chapels round the cathedral, and some of these contain most interesting monuments. The first to the right is the chapel of St. Stephen, once the parish church of Notre-Dame. It contains the monuments of the President Goulard, the first President of the Exchequer of Normandy, and his wife, once in the Salle des Pas Perdus at the Palais de Justice. But at the end of this aisle is a tomb of greatest interest in the Cathedral, for here, in the chapel of Petit St. Romain, is the tomb of the great Duke Rolf, removed from its first place behind the high altar when in enlarging the Cathedral the altar was set further back, in the time of William the Bastard.

The inscription is on a black marble tablet above the arcade which contains the tomb:—

“Here lies Rolf, the first duke and founder and father of Normandy, of which he was at first the terror and scourge, but afterwards the restorer. Baptized in 912 by Francon, Archbishop of Rouen, and died in 917. His remains were at first deposited in the ancient sanctuary, at present the upper end of the nave. The altar having been removed, the remains of the prince were placed here by the blessed Maurille, Archbishop of Rouen, in the year 1063.”

Exactly opposite, on the other side of the nave, the remains of Rolf's son, William Longsword, lie in the chapel of St. Anne. This is the duke whose assassination by Arnulf, Count of Flanders, is so touchingly told in Miss Yonge's charming story of “The Little Duke.” The “Roman de Rou” is full of quaint and interesting anecdotes of the Dukes of Normandy, from Rolf to William the Conqueror. The inscription on this tomb is much the same as the latter part of that to Duke Rolf. Neither the tomb of Rolf or that of William Longsword are older than the fourteenth century.

In the choir itself are eighty-five curiously carved stalls of fifteenth-century work, and in the north transept is a carved Gothic staircase leading to the library of the Cathedral. The lower story of this staircase is fifteenth-century work, but the upper part was built in 1789, to reach the new story built by command of the chapter for the church records.

We went on from the tomb of Rolf through the gates which shut off this part of the church, and came to a door leading into the sacristy: it is of wrought iron, and both it and the carved stone screen are of fifteenth-century work.

Against the railings of the choir is the tomb of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, with his long-lost effigy. There had been inscriptions signifying that Richard, and his brother Henry, and John Duke of Bedford, lay buried in the choir; but not until the 30th of July, 1838, did it occur to the authorities to try to ascertain the exact place of burial. On the 30th July, thanks to the perseverance of Monsieur Deville, they began to dig at the spot indicated by the inscription to Richard, and soon discovered his effigy, buried, it is supposed, to escape the fury of the Huguenots who pillaged the Cathedral in 1562. It is an immense recumbent statue of thirteenth-century work, more than six feet and a half in length, roughly hewn out of a single block of limestone; the crowned head is supported by a square cushion; the feet rest on a lion couchant; the left hand has evidently held a sceptre, the right hand has disappeared. He wears a close-fitting tunic, bound round the waist by an embroidered belt, of which one end hangs down in front; over this is a long mantle which nearly reaches to the ankles. Richard was buried at Fontevrault, but it was known that he had bequeathed his heart to the city of Rouen on account of his great love for the Normans; and on the day following the discovery of this effigy, was found a double box of lead, with this inscription in black letters on the box—

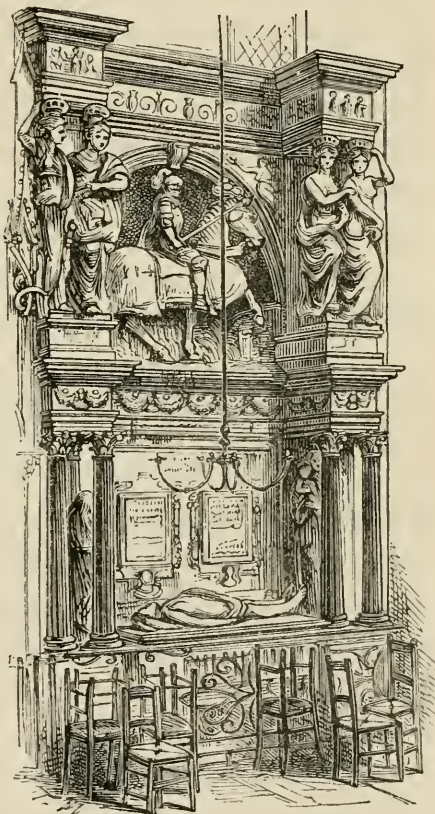
“Hic : jacet : cor : Richardis : regis :”

Inside, enclosed in a green silk bag, was found the heart perfect: it is now in the Museum of Antiquities.

Exactly opposite, on the other side of the choir, is the tomb of Henry Plantagenet, the eldest son of Henry II., but the statue here is modern; and behind the high altar is

the tomb of John, Duke of Bedford : these, with the heart of Charles V., have all been discovered within the last few years.

On the left, before going into the Lady Chapel, is a tomb in the thickness of the wall, on which lies a recumbent figure. It is now said that this is the monument of Archbishop Maurice, who died in 1235. The popular legend is an absurd one : it is supposed that it is the tomb of a bishop who, in a passion, killed his servant with a soup-ladle. The bishop repented, and when he died bade his servants not to bury him in the church, neither to put him outside ; so, to solve the difficulty, they put his tomb in the thickness of the wall. But the Lady Chapel contains the real treasures of the Cathedral. On the left is a stone monument to the memory of Peter de Brézé, Count of Maulévrier, Grand Seneschal of Anjou, Poitou, and Normandy ; killed at the



The Tomb of Louis de Brézé.

battle of Montlhéry, 1465. The figures of Peter de Brézé and his wife Jeanne du Bec Crespin, are no longer on the tomb ; but the arcade above, and the columns which support

it, are exquisitely sculptured ; one sees the initials P. B. in the tracery. Peter de Brézé was a famous general ; he was the first to enter the city when Rouen finally surrendered to Charles VII. Next to this monument is the tomb of Louis de Brézé, also Grand Seneschal of Normandy, and grandson of Peter and husband of Diana of Poitiers. She caused this monument to be erected in 1531. It is supported by four black marble columns, with capitals and bases in white alabaster : below, on a kind of sarcophagus, lies a white marble figure of Louis de Brézé ; the figure is quite naked, the left hand is on the breast, at the head kneels Diana in a widow's dress, and at the feet stands the Blessed Virgin with the Holy Child. There are two inscriptions, one in prose and one in verse, and on the left side is a third inscription in Latin verse—

“Hoc, Lodoice, tibi posuit Brezœe sepulchrum,
Pictonis amisso mœsta Diana viro,
Indivulsa tibi quondam et fidissima conjux
Ut fuit in thalamo, sic erit in tumulo.”

But Diana was buried at Anet. Above these is an equestrian statue of the seneschal in white marble, under an arch, the entablature supported by four caryatides representing Prudence, Glory, Victory, and Faith. Above, again, is an alabaster figure holding a sword, and over it a frieze with this inscription—

“In virtute tabernaculum ejus.”

It seems to be uncertain whether Jean Cousin or Jean Goujon is the architect of this splendid monument.

But the most elaborate tomb in the Cathedral is that of the Cardinals of Amboise ; the architect was Roullant Leroux, who also designed the great western porch of the

Cathedral, and was one of the creators of the Palais de Justice. This grand monument was finished in 1525 by the second cardinal, or rather archbishop, Georges d'Amboise, for he had not then received investiture. At the base are the six virtues—Faith, Charity, Prudence, Power, Justice, and Temperance, represented by exquisite white marble figures. The tomb itself is of black marble, and on it kneel the two cardinals, uncle and nephew, both Georges d'Amboise; they kneel on cushions, and their hands are joined; the expression of the faces is exquisitely given: there is, as background, a bas-relief of St. George and the Dragon; statues of the Virgin, of St. Romain, and many other saints are grouped at the sides, and above are statues of the Apostles placed two and two.

At the foot of the monument is buried Cardinal Cambacères, and opposite it is the tomb erected in 1857 to the memory of the cardinal-prince of Croy, Archbishop of Rouen. The altar-piece is the Adoration of the Shepherds, by Philippe de Champagne; but the chefs-d'œuvre of the Lady Chapel are the tombs on either side: the effect of that of the cardinals when the light falls full on it is most striking. In the Lady Chapel is also buried Archbishop Odo Rigault; he died in 1275. He was the first archiepiscopal possessor of the domain of Gaillon. Jean le Machon, the founder of the bell, is said to lie buried in the lower part of the nave. We did not see his tomb, but Miss Costello speaks of it as a small tomb, on which is the figure of a bell with this inscription:—

“ Ci dessous Gist Jean le Machon
De Chartres Homme de Fachon
Lequel fondit George D'Amboise
Qui cinquante six milles Livres poise

Mil cinque cens un jour d'Aout dixième
Puis mourut le vingt et unième."

Every step that one takes in Rouen Cathedral is full of interest. It was here that the emissaries of Frédégonde murdered Archbishop Prétextat in his pulpit, because two years before he had officiated at the marriage of the revengeful queen's step-son, Mérovée, to her rival and sister-in-law, Brunehaut; Brunehaut having been banished to Rouen by King Chilperic, father of Mérovée and husband of Frédégonde.

We came out of the Cathedral by the great western doorway, and stood once more examining the stupendous amount of work displayed upon this building. It has suffered much both from decay and mutilation, so that some of the richly carved canopies have now the effect of a fleece of grey wool; but more than enough is left to tell of the labour and skill that have been expended in producing such a luxuriant mass of richly carved stonework. Its great fault is redundancy; for, of course, purity of style is rarely found in work of so late a date as some of this portion of the Cathedral. If the Butter Tower had been built rather sooner, it would have been a magnificent structure. We could not leave the Cathedral by the *Porte de la Calende*, for the whole south side of the nave was under repair, and even the portal itself was blocked up. This porch is very beautiful. It is only to be hoped that the work of restoration will not be carried too far; restoration is probably necessary, but it too often destroys picturesque effect.

Above this porch are two square towers, with pointed windows; the door itself is a mass of richly carved stone, divided into three subjects. The uppermost is our Lord on

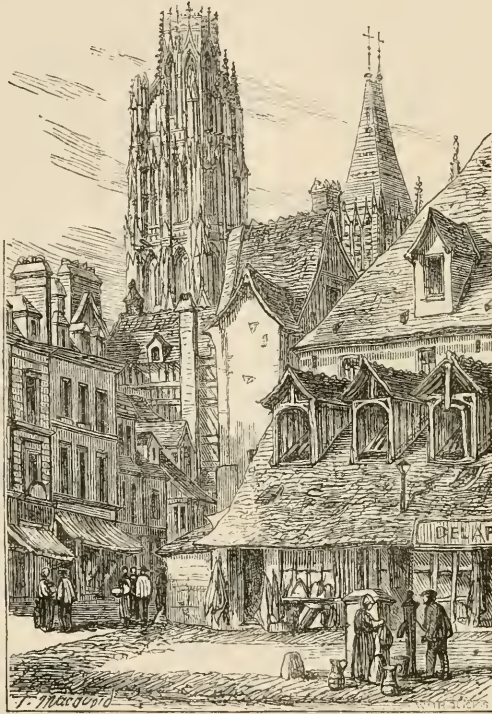
the Cross ; next to this is the Funeral of Jacob ; and the lower one is supposed to be Joseph sold by his Brethren. On each side of the porch are several statues and some bas-reliefs, relating mostly to the history of Joseph. From the Place de la Calende we got a view of the central tower of the Cathedral. Till the year 1822, this tower was crowned by a beautiful spire, built in 1542—1544 by the architect Robert Becquet, at the cost of Cardinal d'Amboise II. It was 396 feet high, but it was destroyed by fire in a few hours. The first spire had been of stone, destroyed by lightning in 1117. After this two successive wooden *flèches* were destroyed by fire, and therefore the authorities determined on erecting the present unsightly spire of open cast-iron work, nearly 500 feet high, "only 13 feet lower than the highest pyramid of Egypt," says Monsieur Licquet, in anticipation of its coming stupendousness. The least that one can say of it is, that it is a lasting blot on the beauty of the fair city of Rouen, its immense height making it perpetually obtrusive.

We crossed the Place de la Calende, and went down the steep slope into the Place de la Haute Vieille Tour. It will be remembered that the Seine is supposed to have flowed nearly to the Place de la Calende, and here on its banks Richard the Fearless, third Duke of Normandy, built a palace in the shape of a large tower, which served as one of the defences of the town. It also served as a state prison. It was here probably that William the Bastard was staying when the news was brought to him in the forest of Rouen, where he was hunting, of the treachery of Harold :—

“ En Roem ert li Dus el Parc
Entre ses mainz teneit un arc.”

Roman de Rou.

Later on, when some forts were added to it, the tower was called La Vieille Tour. It is generally thought that it was in this tower, in 1203, that John imprisoned his nephew, Arthur, and afterwards murdered him. It is certain that it was afterwards destroyed by Philip Augustus.



Cathedral Tower and Halles.

The Halles cover the site of the palace, and also that of the Vieille Tour. The covered market, on the north side of the Place de la Vieille Tour, forms a very picturesque foreground, with its lofty roofs, quaint, time-stained dormers, and shops for old clothes, to the view of the Cathedral. The Halles themselves are vast warehouses, of great

extent; the oldest of them was built in the time of Louis XI. They divide the Place into two parts, which communicate by an archway underneath the monument of St. Romain. The Halles of Rouen are about the most important in France. The oldest part of the building is devoted to the sale of linen cloths. It is 288 feet long and about 52 feet broad, and the roof is supported by two rows of stone pillars. There are two other Halles, not quite so long—one for cotton and one for worsted stuffs. Rouen is considered the Manchester of France, and is specially famous for the manufacture of rouennerie, striped and checked linen.

The monument of St. Romain does not belong either to the old palace or to the Halles. It was built in 1562, and when the new Halles were built in 1774 this was left standing; it replaces the ancient chapel of St. Romain, which was of older date than the Halles of Louis XI. It is of classical architecture, quaint, but uninteresting. A double flight of steps leads to a sort of open portico, and on this took place the celebrated old custom called the *Levée de la Fierté de St. Romain*, when every year one prisoner under sentence of death was set free. From the top of these steps a good view is obtained of the Cathedral. We passed through the archway into the other market-place, called *Place de la Basse Vieille Tour*, which seems devoted to a poor kind of fish and vegetable sale, and is surrounded by shops full of common crockery.

Going round again outside the Halles, we came to a quiet house standing back from the street: in front was a garden full of small pear-trees laden with fruit, and some standard roses, on one of which was a beautiful white rose. While we

stood looking at this unexpected sight in the midst of the busy city, a little old woman, with a bonnet on, darted out of the open entrance-door as nimbly as a spider after a fly, and greeted us with bows and smiles.

“Monsieur and madame like flowers? they admire my rose? Ah! I perceive it; I know it. Yes, yes, I know it; and madame shall have a bouquet, the best I can offer, if she will give herself the trouble to carry it.”

We protested and apologized, but it was useless. She gathered a small bunch of flowers, and then, before we could prevent it, she had darted to her rose-tree and had actually gathered its one beautiful blossom. She presented the bouquet with much grace, and in reply to our thanks she said, “Ah, but it is nothing. I love the English, and I am glad to show my love. I am an indigo merchant, and I make much money by the English; they are honest people.” Almost before she had ended, she ran to the door, crying, “Marie! Victor! come quick; you are waited for.”

A heavy-looking lad of sixteen, and a girl younger, answered the summons. They were civil, but they evidently did not share their mother’s enthusiasm.

“Ah,” she said, “I must also show you my husband. Pierre, Pierre!”—this was screamed—“where art thou, my friend?” After a little delay, a good-looking young man, much nearer the age of his step-son than that of his wife, came out of the house. He bowed and smiled, and said, “Yes,” to all madame’s praises of the English. He also looked at the bouquet, and we explained his wife’s great kindness to us.

“Ah, yes,” he said, “it is all right; that gives her pleasure.”

They all took quite a friendly leave of us, and we came away charmed with the old lady's courtesy and kindness to wandering strangers. From this we turned into the Rue de la République, and then going up again from the river followed the street which branches out on the right, the Rue Malpalu. On the right was a picturesque-looking, disused church. Houses have been built against each side of it, so that only the entrance-doorway is left, and that is encumbered by huge barrels placed in front. Close by, at the corner of a street, we came to a cooper's : it was a kind of open shop, with a long vista of background, and the sunlight coming in from side windows and an open door behind, fell on the casks, on rusty iron hoops, and on the figure of the master seated on a barrel in the midst, and made an effective picture. We went a little way down the street at the side of this shop, Rue du Nouveau Monde, and found ourselves between two high walls ; but, on the right hand, suddenly we caught sight of a most quaint carved oak staircase, with galleries and twisted balusters, placed outside the house we had just been noticing. We went back into the Rue Malpalu, and the cooper most courteously got off his barrel, and took us over his house. He showed us not only the staircase, which is a quaint specimen of what doubtless there were hundreds of a few years ago, but he took us along a gallery to a room occupied by his lodger, in which is a very handsome chimney-piece of the time of François I. We saw some wonderful oak beams in this house.

It is worth while going to the end of the Rue Nouveau Monde. After manifold turns and twists, full of picturesque bits of very old houses, we found ourselves in the Rue des

Arpents, certainly about the oldest and most interesting street in the city. Such dirty, narrow streets were doubtless plentiful in the time of that apostle of the commonplace, Arthur Young, who, writing in 1793, says of Rouen, "The merchants are right to have country villas, to get out of this great, ugly, stinking, close, and ill-built town, which is full of nothing but dirt and industry. What a picture of new buildings does a flourishing manufacturing town in England exhibit!" We stood lingering much by the way, and turning to the left we reached the Rue Martainville, where we found ourselves close to St. Maclou.

St. Maclou used to be called the eldest daughter of Monseigneur l'Archevêque. It is an exquisite little jewel of a church, in the most elegant style of the fifteenth century; the architect was Pierre Robin. In the middle of the last century the spire became so ruinous, that it had to be taken down, and it was not replaced till 1869, when the present *flèche* was erected. During the Revolution the leaden covering of the ancient spire was melted into bullets.

But it is the great triple porch of St. Maclou which is its chief beauty. It consists of three arches, on plan like a bow window, with lofty canopies filled with the most exquisite tracery. There were formerly five entrances, but now two of these are closed. The architecture of this porch is most tasteful and elegant, and the carving on the three remaining doors is wonderful—said to be the work of Jean Goujon. The fountain against the north side of the church is also attributed to him. The bas-relief on the central door represents the Baptism of our Lord: it is finely executed. The northern door, in the Rue Martainville, is also carved in bas-relief, representing the Death of

the Virgin. Inside, the church is very curious, though much disfigured by a gilt plaster baldacchino. The stained-glass windows are all ancient, but much mutilated. There is a winding staircase in exquisitely carved stone-work of later style, leading to the organ-gallery; but the full effect of this can only be seen when the doors are set open, and the Suisse most obligingly opened them for our benefit. We came out of this lovely little church on its northern side. A few years ago it was smothered up by quaint old houses, but though many of these have been removed, the houses still press so closely on it that it is difficult to get a good sketch of the porch. The sacred oil-vessels were kept at St. Maclou and were distributed hence through the diocese; and in general processions the cross of St. Maclou led the way, taking precedence of all others. Not far from this church, in the Rue Damiette, is an excellent view of St. Ouen; and nearly opposite St. Maclou, in the Rue St. Romain, adjoining the Cathedral, is the archiepiscopal palace. This was begun in 1461, by the Cardinal d'Estouteville; but he died before it was finished. The first Cardinal d'Amboise seems to have completed the building. Louis XII. and his queen stayed here in 1508; and the dauphin François, eldest son of François I., lived in this palace in 1531. It now contains, on the first floor, the library belonging to the chapter of the Cathedral.

We went down the Rue Martainville in search of a certain cemetery we had been told of, looking in as we passed at the quaint cluster of houses behind St. Maclou, the residences of the clergy and the officials. Nearly opposite the Rue des Arpents, at No. 188, on the left side of the Rue Martainville, we found a passage with large closed gates at

the end of it. We passed through these gates, and found ourselves in a cloister planted with rows of lime-trees, and surrounded by a quadrangle of ancient half-timbered, two-storied buildings, with quaint dormer windows in the tiled roof, and an external staircase at each corner. On these buildings are fragments of carved stone figures. They sup-



Rue Damiette.

port a wooden frieze running round the whole enclosure, on which are carved scythes, shells, mattocks, and other emblems.

There are seats beneath the trees, and some poor women were seated here at needlework. Presently a sister came

out of the building and joined them. We asked her the name of the enclosure.

“It is called the ‘Aitre of St. Maclou,’” she said; “it was anciently the parish burying-ground, but it was found insufficient; for St. Maclou is a very large parish, and, oh! so very poor; but I will show you what we use the buildings for now.”

She took us round the cloister, and, looking into the rooms, we saw that they were all full of desks and benches.

“We teach our boys on this lower story,” she said, “and the girls above. We have a thousand children here, the very poorest in Rouen; but it is holiday time now, till the end of September. That is their playground.” She pointed to the quiet tree-shaded court.

It looked so full of melancholy memories, with the few feeble-looking, bent women sitting on the bench, and the sad-faced sister with her long black garments, that the idea of a thousand noisy children at play seemed incongruous, and we said so.

The sister smiled. “It is pleasant and peaceful now,” she said; “and we have always the dead beneath our feet, and those tokens,” she looked at the frieze, “to remind us of death. We have death below, and death above.”

And again it seemed wholly impossible to think of it as a playground full of merry, romping children. We asked the sister if she could tell us the history of the sculptures on the walls; but she seemed scarcely to be aware of them, and only anxious to impress on us the great poverty of the parish of St. Maclou. She shook her head when we asked for the history of this quaint secluded nook; but we learned afterwards that the Aitre of St. Maclou was the finest of the

eighty cloistered burial-grounds which once existed in the city of Rouen, and that the north, east, and west galleries had been built in 1526. The fragments on the walls were once two figures carved on each column—one living, the other a skeleton dragging it to the grave, a Dance of Death, or *Danse Maccabre*.

We left the depressing atmosphere of this cloistered court, and struck up a little side street, crossed the Rue d'Amiens, then up another street, and then, a little way on the right, up the Rue Eau de Robec, we came to the Church of St. Vivien. All these streets are more or less picturesque, with old houses, &c.; but they are exceedingly dirty and unsavoury, and it is better to visit them in full daylight. St. Vivien has been lately restored. It was originally built in the twelfth or thirteenth century; but in 1636 the roof was raised. There is some old glass, and rather a remarkable spire of fifteenth or sixteenth-century work. By the Rue Pomme d'Or and the Rue Poisson, we reached St. Nicaise, which seems to join on to the Grand Séminaire.

This church was built on the site of the chapel of St. Nicaise, founded by St. Ouen in the seventh century. There are two curious old glass windows at the east end of the aisles. The Rue St. Nicaise leads into the Rue de la Roche, and on the left of this is the Rue de la République. We asked our way to the Museum of a neat-looking lady, poorly dressed in black, with a huge batiste parasol lined with green. She made a profound curtsy, and then, with such a torrent of words that it was difficult to follow her, told us we were close by, waving her parasol over her head and up the street behind her like a flag of triumph.

The Museum of Antiquities is in a quaint old house surrounded by a garden, formerly the Convent of Ste. Marie. Some part of this convent seems still to exist in a building on the other side of the road. The situation of the Museum is delightful—we had been climbing steeply for the last ten minutes, for the house is on the boulevard high above the town—on one side are the spires of Rouen, and on the other the green heights beyond the Boulevard.

We went up the staircase of the ancient convent, very picturesque from its architecture and the quaint array of sculptured relics that lie about here and there, as if they did not feel at home, and found ourselves in the convent cloister. Three galleries of this cloister are devoted to the Museum. The first is full of records and treasures of the Middle Ages—the heart of Richard Cœur-de-Lion (now a little heap of mouldy dust), the signatures of various kings—a cross is the sign manual of William the Conqueror; plaster casts of the fine bas-reliefs of the Hôtel Bourgthérout, representing the interview on the Field of the Cloth of Gold; the coat of mail of Enguerrand de Marigny, the reliquary of St. Sever, specimens of wood and stone sculpture, and a model of St. Maclou with its original spire, the door of Corneille's house, and many other relics, including carved *bahuts*, coffers, &c., in oak and ebony. The next gallery is full of Roman and Gallo-Roman remains—tombs found in Rouen; statues, fragments of pottery, &c., discovered at Lillebonne, coins, mosaics, and other excavated remains, especially a beautiful female figure found at Lillebonne within the last few years. Along these galleries are fifteen windows, filled with ancient stained glass, chiefly from the churches of St. Eloi and St. Godard: the

glass dates from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. These windows from the Church of St. Eloi relate the history of the Jew and the consecrated wafer. But the third side of the cloister is most interesting. It contains a collection of Rouen ceramic art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, amounting to more than a thousand pieces, collected by Monsieur André Pottier. It is so classified as to show the rise, progress, perfection, and decline of Rouen ware; so well illustrated, that those who are the most ignorant of ceramic art can, if they choose to take the trouble, become acquainted with the mysteries of this *faïence*. To collectors it offers the highest possible treat, and makes a visit to Rouen, setting aside all the attractions of the town, almost a necessity to the lover of "blue and white."

This manufacture began about 1640, in the last years of the reign of Louis Treize, and was introduced by Poterat. Poterat's establishment was successful, and was divided among his children. Poterat's privilege or patent, granted by Anne of Austria, expired at the end of fifty years, and other factories grew up to the number of sixteen or eighteen around the principal one in the suburb of St. Sever. The decline seems to have begun about 1730, and to have reached the full period of decadence by the middle of the century; the commercial disasters of France, and then the Revolution, gave a death-blow to Rouen ware, but the last manufactory lingered till 1840.

There are masterpieces of old Rouen *faïence* in this collection. There is one set of three pieces in blue and bistre said to be unrivalled. There are also a few specimens of Nevers, Moustiers, Limoges, Strasbourg, &c., and

some Delft, notably one of the famous blue and white violins.

The curator is an enthusiast in faïence, and a very quaint character in his way; a gentleman of the old school, full of small courtesies, but not at all above accepting the customary franc, for, as he said, putting it in his pocket, "It is the income of the *gardien*." The public are admitted to this museum between eleven and four o'clock on Sundays and festivals; but artists and foreigners are admitted every day, within the specified hours.

ROUEN.

CHAPTER II.

St. Ouen.	St. Gervais.
La Bouille.	St. Patrice.
St. Eloi.	St. Romain.
Place de la Pucelle.	Tour Jeanne d'Arc.
Hôtel Bourghéroude.	St. Godard.

THE Rue de la République is a steep descent until it reaches the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville. This is a large handsome Place, with an equestrian statue of Napoleon I. in the centre, and the beautiful Church of St. Ouen towering above the Hôtel de Ville. Many old houses have been taken down here and their places have been left vacant, the ground leases not having expired; so that for such a populous thriving town as Rouen the effect of this very open Place is incongruous, with so many gaps between the houses. Lofty green hills rise behind the Boulevard, which crosses the top of the wide, handsome Rue de la République, but on the whole the general aspect is a deserted one. Voitures stand for hire on the Place.

The Abbey of St. Ouen was the most ancient in all Normandy. It was founded in the reign of Clotaire I. in 533, and flourished specially under St. Ouen, who gave up

his patrimony to it. At that time it was called the Abbey of St. Peter.

The Normans, as has been said, sailed up the Seine and landed at Rouen on the 14th of May, in the year 841. On the 15th they burned the abbey, and almost entirely destroyed it.

When Rolf became a Christian and sovereign-duke of Normandy he rebuilt the monastery, and caused the monks to restore the relics which they had carried off to save them from profanation at the hands of the Norman soldiers. The new abbey was dedicated to St. Ouen, and both Duke Richard I. and Richard II. went on with the work of restoration. By the time of Richard the Fearless, St. Ouen was held in so great reputation that Otho, Emperor of Germany, demanded a safe-conduct into Rouen in order to pay his devotions at the abbey.

Abbot Nicholas, the son of Duke Richard III., in the reign of William the Bastard, caused the then-existing church to be demolished, and in 1046 laid the first stone of a new one. This was not completed till the time of Abbot William in 1126, and it was dedicated on the 17th of October of the same year by Geoffrey, Archbishop of Rouen; but there seems to have been a fate over these first four churches, for in 1136 the building was destroyed by fire in one day.

The Empress Matilda and Henry II. again helped the monks of St. Ouen to rebuild their church and monastery, but in 1248 the church was once more burned down.

At last, under the twenty-fourth abbot, the famous Jean Roussel Marc d'Argent, the first stone of the present church of St. Ouen was laid in 1318. The chief part of it was

built in twenty-one years, and the rest was finished by the beginning of the sixteenth century, except the west front, which seems to have been left incomplete till 1846—52, when the two western towers and the great western porch were built. The work has been well executed, but it is easy to see the difference between this end and the rest of the church; for, excepting this western portion, there is a unity of design in the exterior of St. Ouen which at once gives it a special character. The central tower, an octagon pierced by arched windows, and supported by flying buttresses, rises to the height of 260 feet; it is very light and graceful, and is crowned by a circlet of fleurs-de-lis. This tower was completed before the end of the fifteenth century. The sculptures of the great western front are very interesting. On the central gable is the statue of St. Ouen, and in the gallery the abbot St. Wandrille; the Archbishops Flavius, Ansbert, Maurille, and Geoffrey of Rouen, and the Abbot St. Germer, alternate with the Dukes of Normandy, Richard I., Richard II., William the Conqueror, Henry II., and Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

Above the great door is the Holy Trinity, on the central pillar our Blessed Lord, and at the sides the twelve Apostles with their emblems, only that St. Paul, with a sword, takes the place of St. Matthias. On the side portals on the right are the patron saints of the diocese and the monastery—St. Nicaise, St. Romain, St. Benedict, St. Ouen, and the Abbots of St. Ouen who aided in founding and rebuilding the abbey and the church—Nicholas I., Jean Roussel, Hildebert, Antony Bohier. On the left are four contemporaries and friends of St. Ouen—Dagobert I., King of France, St. Eloi, Bishop of Noyon, St. Philibert, Abbot of Jumièges, St. Austreberthe,

Abbess of Pavilly ; and lastly, the secular founders and benefactors of the monastery, Clotaire I. of France, the Empress Matilda, wife of Geoffrey Plantagenet, St. Clotilde, Queen of Clovis, and Charles de Valois, son of Philip III., the Bold.

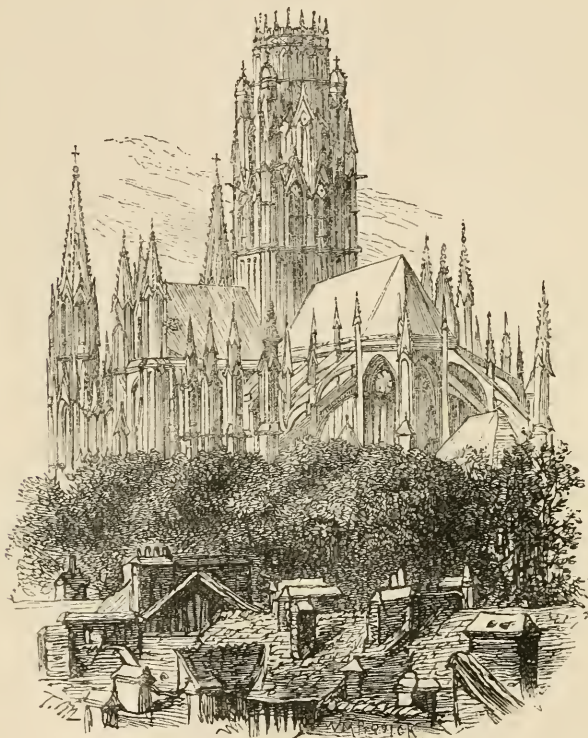
The Portail des Marmousets, so called from the figures of animals in the door-heading, is singularly beautiful ; it is on the south side of the church, and is far more remarkable than this western façade. The bas-relief above the door is divided into three parts, representing the Burial of the Blessed Virgin, her Assumption, and her Entrance into Heaven. The architecture of this porch is indescribably light and elegant, and has two very remarkable pendants.

It seems a great pity that the buildings of the monastery of St. Ouen were entirely demolished in 1806. The monastery served as a residence for the kings of France when they visited Rouen. Henry II., Charles IX., Henry III., Henry IV., and Louis XIII., all stayed there, and doubtless many other worthies of their time. Henry IV. stayed three months in the monastery. It was from this house that he addressed to the aldermen of his good town of Rouen the famous words—"My friends, be good subjects to me, and I will be to you a good king, and the best king you have ever had."

St. Ouen stands partly in a very pleasant public garden, which was once the garden of the monastery. There is a curious old tower, of the eleventh century, at the angle of the north transept, called the *Chambre aux Clercs*. It seems to be a fragment of one of the churches which preceded the present St. Ouen—that of 1136. In the garden itself is a statue of Duke Rolf. Here Joan of Arc was

forced to make a public recantation of her errors before the citizens of Rouen ; and now there are platforms for a band of music, and chairs which on fine afternoons are filled with the good citizens, as they sit listening to the performance.

But though it is easy to examine and describe in detail the



Tower of St. Ouen.

outside of St. Ouen, it is difficult to go on with the description when we enter the building. We stand rapt, absorbed by the wonderful beauty, the spiritual loveliness, that pervades this most perfect church. The screen was destroyed at the Revolution, and it may be the absence of anything to break the exquisite vista, which the eye follows even

into the Lady Chapel, or else the light and airy effect of the triple rows of windows, and the large size of those in the clerestory, or it may be the extreme loftiness of the roof, and the absence of any tawdriness in the ornaments on the high altar, or the union of all these qualities, that makes this interior so powerfully impressive; we were wonder-struck, without any power to analyze the effect produced on us, spell-bound by the almost angelic beauty of the marvellous architecture of the interior. It is a long vista of lofty, marvellously slender clustered columns, which first support pointed arches of exquisite proportion, and then ascend to the very roof of the nave. At the points of intersection by the transept, the tower rests on four sheafs of pillars, each composed of twenty-four slender shafts, perhaps the most wonderful union of grace and strength ever beheld. As the arches proceed eastward they narrow, and through them from the windows of the surrounding chapels there comes in a flood of jewelled light, glowing in a mellowed richness that must be seen to be believed in.

On the right, close to us as we enter, is a black marble *bénitier*. A Sister, who had come in like ourselves to see the church, pointed to this, and whispered to us to look into the water with our eyes almost on a level with it, and we saw indeed a marvellous picture—the church in miniature, exactly reversed, with every detail of carving, every rich tint of colour softened and glorified in reflection.

We stayed in the church till late afternoon, and this is the most exquisite time for seeing St. Ouen. The sun sent level beams through the glories of the eastern windows, and then the rich, many-coloured tints began to play over the pure lines of the slender clustered shafts, and fell in

broadening, bright-hued masses on the stone pavement, flashing now on the silver image of St. Michael, now on the votive lamps in front of the altar. After the long view down the nave, the most wonderful is from about the second chapel on the right of the Lady Chapel, looking westwards. The effect of light and shade on the exquisite groining of the aisles is here quite indescribable.

There are one hundred and twenty-five windows in the church, exclusive of the three rose windows; and two of these last are especially beautiful. The sweet-faced, gentle-voiced old sacristan showed us the "Apprentice's Window" with much admiration, and pointed out the pentalpha in it. It is certainly very wonderful and beautiful; but it is a pity that it is in the north transept, as the sun cannot come streaming through it as it does through the rose window opposite, the work of the master-mason, Alexander Berneval. "Yes," the old man whispered, "it is beautiful—the pentalpha; but the master thought it was too beautiful to be done by any but himself, and he killed the poor boy, his apprentice. But he repented, and received the last rites, or the good fathers would not have laid him here." He pointed to the second chapel on the left; and there the master and his pupil both lie side by side. There are eleven of these chapels round the choir. The first on the left contains the font; the next, the tombs of Berneval and his pupil, date 1440.

"Here lies Master Alexander Berneval, master of the mason works of the king our lord, of the bailliage of Rouen and of this church, who died in the year of grace 1440, the 5th day of January. Pray God for his soul."

Alexander Berneval was publicly tried and executed for

the murder of his pupil from jealousy of his work, but the monks, in consideration of his great services to the church, buried him in consecrated ground.

In the Lady Chapel are two very interesting tombs—one to the youngest son of Talbot, who is called in the inscription Monsieur de Talbot, Maréchal de France, date 1438; and another with a Latin inscription to the celebrated Abbot Roussel Marc d'Argent, the real founder of St. Ouen. The dear old sacristan told us legends about the interior of the old portion of the north transept; it is an interesting little chapel, evidently much older than the rest of the church; and then we went up with him to see the view from the roof of the nave. It is quite necessary to do this to appreciate the fine details of the central tower, especially the flying buttresses and the exquisitely carved heads on the pinnacles surrounding the church.

At the first staircase landing our guide said emphatically, "Ah, que c'est beau!"—at the next he made the same exclamation, only he substituted *magnifique* for *beau*; but when we reached the roof of the nave and saw, besides the beautiful church, the fair city of Rouen lying at our feet, he exclaimed enthusiastically, "C'est superbe!"

It is hard to define the charm of this church; but go to St. Ouen when you will—at early mass, when a solemn repose pervades the beauty of the building—at high mass, when the pure simple style of the decoration is enlivened by many-coloured vestments, and lighted tapers, and glittering censers, and, above all, when the sweet solemn music seems to linger caressingly among those wondrous aisles—or in the evening, when the sunbeams come pouring in and bring a flood of gold and warmth and colour on the

cold grey stone—it is an eminently beautiful church, and it lives ineffaceably in the memory.

Few, if any towns, possess three such remarkable churches as the Cathedral, St. Ouen, and St. Maclou. We went, next day, to high mass at the Cathedral—it looks very grand and impressive filled with people; and then we went on to get another look at St. Ouen, and to see the Library and Musée, which are both in the Hôtel de Ville. This is a fine building, with a handsome staircase, and the library is full of interest. There are 1200 MSS. in the Library; among these is “Norman History of William of Jumièges.” The Rouennais are very proud of their picture-gallery; but we did not see anything to justify much expense of time there, and also we were anxious to get the steamer for La Bouille.

Being Sunday, the quay was crowded with people: it reaches from one end of the town to the other, and is a handsome spectacle, with its forests of masts and steamer chimneys, and its two fine, well-built bridges spanning the beautiful Seine. Opposite is the suburb of St. Sever, full of factories and tall red-brick chimneys; while behind it rises a crest of green hills.

The steamer for La Bouille starts from the quay some little way below the suspension-bridge. As it is Sunday, there is a large gathering of well-dressed people at the aft end of the vessel; children and babies are abundant, and grandmamas and aunts and cousins in charge of flocks of juvenile relations, with nurses and perambulators, evidently going out to dine, or spend the afternoon on the pleasant banks of the Seine; an officer with a wife much older than himself talks all the way to one of the pretty

young girls; and the river is so pleasant, and the scenery is so varied and pretty, that the journey would be a delightful one, if the boat would not go at such a snail's pace. Our Rouennais companions do not seem in a hurry; they evidently consider the journey itself a great pleasure, and chat, and laugh, and make fresh acquaintances, and merriment too out of the merest trifle, as only French people can.

We pass the islands Petit-Gay, Alexandre, and Grandin, and the mouth of the little river Cailly. Soon the bank on the right rises, and we see the charmingly placed Château de Canteleu, with its wooded and terraced banks, and nestling at its feet the little village of Croisset. Next is Dieppedalle, where there are some curious caves in the rocks.

And now there is a stir among some of the nurseries on board. We are getting near the landing-place of Dieppedalle, on the right bank, and we have passed Le Petit Quévilly on the left some time ago; and a nurse, and a perambulator, and several children, with their relations, go ashore. Nearly opposite is Le Grand Quévilly. At Le Petit Quévilly is the Romanesque chapel of St. Julien, built by Henry II., who had a park and a hunting-lodge here. He made a gift of it to the female lepers of St. Julien. The rest of the buildings have been destroyed; but the chapel still remains, and is very curious. A little way on we come to a pretty house close beside the river, with three ladies seated at a table before the open gate. There is a general movement among the rest of our children, and the ladies at the gate wave their handkerchiefs; and when we reach the landing-place there is a disembarkation of about twenty. Our officer and his wife, so much older than him-

self, and the pretty girl of sixteen he has been talking to with such interest, her companions who went to see after the comfort of one of the babies, the pretty girl's sisters, a group of troublesome children, and some grown-up ladies, all depart. They are evidently going to spend the afternoon at the pleasant-looking house beside the Seine.

The river makes lovely curves here; but we go on more slowly than ever, and have plenty of time to observe the very ugly column set up to commemorate the transference at this point—Val de Haye—of the remains of Napoleon I. from the steamer *La Normandie* to the vessel which conveyed them to Paris in 1840. We pass several other villages—Hautot, Soquence, Sahurs—with noticeable churches and châteaux, on the right bank of the river; and now we have come to Moulineaux on the left. But the light has grown more level, and the colour of the water is exquisite—a mingling of gold and steel-grey, like the tint of a salmon. The sunlight plays, too, over the water-flowers and weeds that nestle into the banks.

Presently we are told to look at that hill on the left, above Moulineaux, for the ruins of the Castle of Robert le Diable are there. We cannot see them very distinctly. There are horrible legends about this castle, and no less than three claimants for the name. An ancient chronicle ascribes all these evil deeds to Robert, son of a governor of Neustria, in the time of Pepin; but some French historians assert that Robert the Magnificent, the father of William the Bastard, was really Robert le Diable, and others give the name to his grandson, the unlucky Robert Courthose. There are caves under the ruins, and it is said that from them subterranean passages communicate with the Seine. These are

haunted by evil spirits, and woe be to the traveller who, as he climbs the hill on which the ruins stand, treads heedlessly on the little withered plant, "l'herbe qui égare;" he will certainly lose his way, and will go round and round the castle till nightfall, when the whole place is filled with the cries of the lost Robert. King John destroyed this castle, which, according to Jules Janin, was the scene of the murder of Arthur.

And now pressing forward into the river, as if it meditated



Castle of Robert le Diable.

a journey across, is the pretty village of La Bouille, built on a projecting tongue of land, and clustering round its church, backed by lofty côtes. We intended to have explored the caves in these hills, which are said to be worth a visit; but already we have been two hours in reaching La Bouille, and so violent a storm of thunder, lightning, and rain has come on that we are glad to go back at once to the boat, as it is to return without delay to Rouen.

Fortunately the storm ceased just as we came again in sight of the city; and this sight is worth a journey to

behold. In the foreground an island, fringed with tall poplars, divides the river into two. On the right St. Ouen, the Cathedral, and St. Maclou rise up in grey majesty, the numerous towers and spires of the city standing out dark against the sky; the houses below and the hulls and masts of the ships are in broad sunshine, St. Ouen towering above all, except the tall lantern of the Cathedral. Overhead is a varied mass of rain and thunder-clouds, frowning down on the green hills round the city; for from this point Rouen looks like a grey ruin set in the midst of a verdant forest, with the river glinting across the view, now in a bold curve of shining steel, now divided by one of the numerous long, low, poplar-fringed islets that are set like emeralds on its glittering bosom.

We were out early next morning, and Rouen is specially lovely in the very early morning. We went down the Rue Grand Pont (which is the name of the Rue des Carmes when it has passed the Place de la Cathédrale) to the quay. The Cours Boieldieu is the fashionable walk of Rouen; it extends along the quay, and is pleasantly planted with trees; on it is a statue of Boieldieu, who was a native of Rouen. Just beyond we came to an open space also planted with trees: it has a high iron railing round it. This is the Bourse, or uncovered exchange, the ancient exchange having been removed for the sake of widening the quay. Beside the exchange is the Consuls, or Tribunal de Commerce. A little way farther along the quay stands the custom-house, a modern building finished in 1838.

We turned up a little street beside the Douane, and soon found ourselves in the old Church of St. Eloi. It is curious to remember that this very Church of St. Eloi formerly

stood on an island of the Seine before these islands, of which there were several, were united to the main-land under the name of *Terres-Neuves*.

There used to be the three windows here, of sixteenth-century work, now in the Museum of Antiquities; but the spaces have been walled up. There was also a well in the choir, from which water was drawn up by a chain; hence the Rouennais proverb, "As cold as the chain of the well of St. Eloi." From the beginning of the century this church has been devoted to French Protestant worship, and in the afternoon of Sundays there is an English service here.

A little way on the right from St. Eloi, and we suddenly found ourselves on the most interesting ground in Rouen. The old market-place, or *Place de la Pucelle*, which dates from the eleventh century, is really the spot where *Jeanne d'Arc* was sacrificed in the presence of the Bishop of Beauvais, the Cardinal of Winchester, the Abbots of Bec, Jumièges, Fécamp, and many other priests. In the centre is a hideous fountain, surmounted by a statue intended to represent the Maid of Orleans; it is wonderful that the princely town of Rouen can endure the presence of such a libel as this statue is on the "Maid." One is sometimes ashamed of one's countrymen abroad; nowhere perhaps so much as in the *Place de la Pucelle*, where one is forced to remember all that the virtuous and heroic Joan suffered at our hands; and it is unpleasant to feel that our chief motive in so outraging humanity was not justice, but revenge. Formerly, the Place was surrounded by quaint wooden houses, but these have disappeared.

From this *Place de la Pucelle* we turned into the courtyard of the *Hôtel Bourghéroude*—an old green-grey, quiet

place, with a quaint stone building round it. Facing us are two elaborately sculptured dormer windows, and in the left corner is an elegant hexagonal tower covered with bas-reliefs of pastoral subjects in marble. From this tower extends a lower range of building, and here above and below the windows is a series of most exquisite bas-reliefs in marble: those above represent the Meeting of Henry VIII. and Francis I. on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, near Guines, in Picardy. Wolsey's figure is very distinct. The sculpture is marvellously delicate, and it is wonderful that it should have escaped when so much else has perished. Above the windows is a series of bas-reliefs of allegorical subjects. At each corner is a flight of steps leading into the building, which is now used as a banking-office; and against the old grey walls are the graceful leaves and trailing vines of an American creeper, making more vivid by contrast the brilliant rosy blossoms of some oleanders growing in great tubs below. Under one window a little trickling fountain falls into an ancient moss-grown trough, and from the window-ledge golden wreaths of moneywort stretch down to the water, as if they were thirsty on this hot August morning.

The old *concierge*, in his blouse and flat black cap, comes out to have a chat. He is charmed that we admire his flowers—the sweet peas in the corner. “Ah, but yes, they are my own rearing; and I was not quite sure they would grow, because it is not a sunny corner, and flowers love the sun.”

We answer that every one loves sunshine; and we point out to him an uncovered space of wall which the sun does visit, for he shines fully on one side of the Hôtel Bourg-

théroude. We humbly suggest that nasturtiums would look very pretty trailing up that green-grey stone.

The old fellow is in ecstasy. "Nasturtiums! Ah, but yes, there shall be some; and when monsieur and madame come another year to the Hôtel Bourgthéroude they will see them in flower."

He came with us to the entrance of the low-browed archway, took off his flat cap, and bowed with an elasticity really wonderful at his age. Certainly the ready smiling courtesy and the cheerful quaintness of these Norman cicerones are delightful, and add both charm and amusement to all one sees.

The Hôtel Bourgthéroude is one of the most interesting of the secular houses of Rouen, and has greatly engaged the attention of the learned. The most complete history of it is that given by Monsieur de la Quérière in his "Historical Description of the Old Houses of Rouen."

This hotel is supposed to have been founded about 1486 by Guillaume Le Roux, Lord of Bourgthéroude; but it was completed in the sixteenth century by his son, also Guillaume Le Roux, Abbot of Aumale and Valricher. One looks vainly round the Place de la Pucelle for the quaint old houses which used to abound between the old market-place and the *Marché Neuf* in the *Rue Jeanne d'Arc*; probably in the making of this wide, handsome street, and in clearing the space for the market-place, they have disappeared. Now the *Rue Jeanne d'Arc* and its immediate surroundings form about the most modern part of Rouen.

We went westwards up the *Rue de la Pie* to look at the house No. 4, where *Corneille* was born in 1606, but found,

alas ! that it is quite a modern erection. We then proceeded northwards up the Boulevard Cauchoise, which is wide and pleasant, and planted with trees, past the Préfecture ; and turning northwards when we reached the Rue du Crosne, we came to the vast hospital of the Hôtel Dieu and the Church of La Madeleine. The hospital, except in very urgent cases, is entirely devoted to the people of Rouen. Patients are treated there for six months before they are declared incurable ; and then if they can prove a ten years' residence in the town of Rouen, they are received into the Hospice Général.

The Church of the Ste. Madeleine is modern (1781), and is in the classical style. At the back of the high altar there is a chapel for the Sisters of the Hôtel Dieu.

We still went on northwards, getting always higher and higher, till we reached the modern Church of St. Gervais, close to the Paris and Havre line of rail. This new Romanesque building has been only recently finished. It is in very good taste, but is all modern, except the pillars of the apse and a most remarkable crypt of the fourth century. There seems to be some doubt as to the real date of the Church of St. Gervais taken down when this one was built, but the story of the building of the first church is interesting. St. Victrix, Archbishop of Rouen in 386, received from St. Ambrose, of Milan, a box containing the relics of St. Gervais. He immediately set to work to build a church for the reception of this precious gift, and so eager was he for its completion that he worked with his own hands, and even helped to carry stones on his shoulders. There seems little doubt that the crypt now existing is a part of this ancient church. We were very anxious to see this crypt, and waited all through

a most uninteresting marriage ceremony for the sacristan's services.

The bride was not pretty. She had on white silk, with a long tulle veil; and the bridegroom appeared in evening dress, which looked as if it had been hired for the occasion, he seemed so ill at ease in it. The numerous friends and relations, chiefly female, clearly belonged to the working class, and wore bonnets covered with flowers of all hues, more in English than in French taste, so utterly unsuited were they to the complexions and faces of the wearers. The great western doors of the church were opened to let the bridal procession pass out; its members seemed to pack very closely into some smartly appointed carriages waiting for them.

The great doors were closed again, and after a little delay the sacristan, a short, stout man, with a flat bald head and a fat square face, exactly like an Ingoldsby friar, came out of the sacristy, and we told him what we wanted. He went back, and presently returned with a bunch of keys and a long thin tallow candle which he held between his fingers.

He stooped down beside where we stood and lifted up a square trap-door: in the dark hole below appeared the beginning of a flight of steps. Our conductor raised his candle, looked grimly at us, and went down the steps; just as he disappeared into the darkness he muttered "twenty-eight," and both he and the candle were lost to sight.

It seemed so like Aladdin's adventure with the magician that we were quite excited during the descent. We counted twenty-eight, and found ourselves, guide, candle, and all, in a most curious subterranean chapel, thirty-five feet long, about fifteen feet high and sixteen broad; there is an arcade on each

side ; at the end is an apse, and a stone altar marked with five crosses : above this is a very small window ; on each side are the holes left by the rails for the curtains which used to screen off the altar. In the left arcade is the tomb of St. Mellon, and on the right that of St. Avitien, the two first archbishops of Rouen. There is, undoubtedly, Roman masonry in the walls of this crypt, and the sacristan seemed only too eager to convince us of this fact, for he pulled out a piece of red tiling and gave it to us, and regretted that the cement was too hard to be broken away !

We came up into the church, glad to get to the daylight again, and then went outside through the cemetery to look at the ancient portions of the apse built above the crypt ; it is very early Norman work, quite Romanesque in character, and doubtless belonged to the church which existed when William the Conqueror was taken to the ancient Priory of St. Gervais to die. For in the midst of the blazing churches and convents of Mantes, lighted to revenge the insults which the French King Philip had offered, the furious and mighty King of England, struck by the pommel of his own saddle, received his death-wound, and at once, struck too with sudden remorse, stayed his hand and retired to his Palace of Rouen. But he could not rest there, and he ordered himself to be carried to the Priory of St. Gervais.

He lay here for many weeks, suffering greatly, but never losing sense or the power of speech. He seems to have been sincerely penitent, and to have tried to atone as much as was possible for the woes he had wrought in Normandy. He, especially, left a sum of money to rebuild the churches which he had burned at the sack of Mantes.

He sent to Bec for Anselm to help him to make his peace with God ; but, though the abbot reached Rouen, he did not see the king, being himself struck down with severe illness. William was attended by his own doctors, Gilbert, Bishop of Lisieux (probably, from what we read of him, a better physician of the body than of the soul), and Guntherd, Abbot of Jumièges. The account of William's death in the "Roman de Rou" is very interesting. It would seem as if he were truly penitent. Orderic says that the king owned he had too much hated the English. He expresses a wish that his son William may succeed him, but he dares not bequeath him the Crown of England.

“Engleterre cunquis à tort,
 A tort i ont maint hoem mort,
 Ses eirs en ai à tort ocis,
 E à tort ai li regne pris ;
 E ço ke j'ai à tort toleit,
 Oû jo n'en aveie nul dreit
 Ne dei mie à mon filz doner,
 Ne à tort nel' deit ériter.”

Roman de Rou.

Still he gave William his blessing, and a letter to Lanfranc, and bade him depart at once. He left his Dukedom of Normandy, with much sorrow and misgiving, to his rebellious son Robert ; and to Henry five hundred livres in silver. “What use is that to me,” says Henry, “if I have no roof to dwell under?” “Keep a good heart,” says William, “the time may come when you will be richer and more powerful than your brothers.” Henry seems after this to have left his father's dying bed, although we hear of him as present at the funeral.

William also desired the release of all prisoners—except

one, his turbulent brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. At last he was persuaded to consent to his freedom; but he predicted that it would not be for the good of the dukedom.

At the hour of prime, on a Thursday in September, 1087, the great king died, commending his soul to the prayers of the Blessed Virgin.

Some Norman writers assert that the popular tradition of the desertion of the body of William is untrue; but it is certain that his sons and relatives had left him, and that all the barons, fearing that anarchy would return in the absence of the master-spirit and iron will which had evoked from it a reign of order, took horse, and rode away each to his own castle, so as not to be taken unawares. Meantime, William was left to menials, who plundered and left him. The Archbishop of Rouen ordered that the king's body should be borne to his own church of St. Etienne, at Caen; but there was no one to undertake this charge till a Norman knight, Herlwin, offered his services, and himself accompanied the body to Caen, and paid the expenses of the journey.

In the capital city of Normandy we take up first the last chapter of the life of its mightiest Duke. After this, in almost every town we find a link to some period of his wonderful history. It is impossible carefully to study the life of William the Conqueror without becoming more or less interested in Normandy. It is impossible to travel intelligently in Normandy without becoming fascinated by the living interest which the records of his presence kindle as we journey from town to town. We go on reading, though not always in sequence, one living chapter after another of the story of the friendless Bastard, who made himself Duke of Normandy and King of England,

till the dry bones of history become present realities. The monks of St. Georges Boscherville seem to have attended his body to Caen. There is a marble slab on the outside of the Church of St. Gervais telling the story of his death in the Priory. A pretty cemetery surrounds two sides of this church, which till lately must have been completely outside the town; the old Roman road from Rothomagus (Rouen) to Juliabona (Lillebonne) passes close beside St. Gervais.

It is better to go down the Rue St. Gervais, across the Place Cauchoise—a curious opening with some old houses about it—into the Rue des Bons Enfants: here, Nos. 132 and 134, is the house in which Fontenelle was born; and from this point the Rue Etoupée, crossing the Rue Hôtel de Ville, leads to the Church of St. Patrice. The stained glass is very good in this church; it is chiefly sixteenth-century work, a later date than the windows in the Museum of Antiquities. Most of the windows are very remarkable both for design and colour, especially “The Woman taken in Adultery,” from St. Godard, date 1549; “The Adoration of the Wise Men,” “The History of St. John the Baptist” (some parts of these subjects are modern); “A Holy Family;” “The History of Job,” 1570—this is also from St. Godard; “The Histories of St. Patrice and Ste. Barbe,” 1540; “The Annunciation,” 1580, very remarkable; and the Lives of St. Eustache, St. Louis, and other saints. Near the choir is a window said to be painted by Jean Cousin; it represents “The Triumph of the Law of Grace.” The Church of St. Patrice, apart from this glass, is not very interesting; it was built in 1535, and the chapel of the Passion and some other parts are more than a century later in date.

Leaving St. Patrice we went northwards, and found ourselves on the Boulevard Jeanne d'Arc, which extends along the north of Rouen, between the Boulevard Cauchoise on the west and the Boulevard Beauvoisine on the east. On the left, a little way up a side street, is the Church of St. Romain, anciently the chapel of the barefooted friars; the first stone of this present church was laid in 1679, by M. Bec-du-Lièvre, first President of the Cour des Aides. He and his two sons after him built the church entirely out of their own funds.

The high altar is the granite tomb of the Archbishop St. Romain, and was found in the crypt of St. Godard, where St. Romain is known to have been buried. There are also some beautiful windows brought from the ancient churches, now destroyed, of St. Maur, St. Etienne-des-Tonneliers, and St. Martin-sur-Renelle. In the first chapel on the right there is a very curious font-cover, brought from St. Etienne; it is ornamented with wood-carvings of the Passion, and above the cover is a Resurrection, also in carved wood of sixteenth-century work.

The dome in the nave is painted in fresco with the Acts of St. Romain: his Consecration; his Destruction of the Pagan Temples; his Victory over the Gargouille (this is a favourite subject in Norman painted glass); and the Procession to obtain the deliverance of a prisoner. At the top is the Apotheosis of St. Romain. In a side chapel there is a small marble statue of St. Louis, and a fresco—"Tobit burying the Dead."

St. Romain was consecrated Bishop of Rouen somewhere about the year 630. The precise date does not seem to be known; but, according to Monsieur Floquet, the celebrated

miracle of the Gargouille was not publicly announced till 1394, when the Chapter of Rouen declared it in support of the famous Levée de la Fierté de St. Romain.

St. Romain passed his early life at the court of Clotaire II., but as soon as he was consecrated Bishop of Rouen he devoted all his energies to the extirpation of idolatry. His efforts were crowned with success, the old chronicle says, and God was pleased to testify to his sanctity by according to him the power of working numerous miracles, one of which by its enduring celebrity has surpassed all the others.

There was in those days, in a morass near Rouen, a prodigious dragon which devoured men and animals. Occasionally it took a bath in the river, thereby flooding the city; it rubbed itself against a church, and down toppled tower and spire; it leaned against trees, and snapped the strongest off at the root; and it so persecuted the workmen then engaged in building the tower of St. Romain, that they dared not carve thereon the figure of a single monster. It was also a beast fond of delicate food, for we are told it specially devoured the young girls. The presence of this fearful destroyer filled the city with panic, and filled St. Romain with burning zeal day and night to devise the means of releasing his people from their enemy.

At last he resolved on a direct attack, and he set forth in search of the monster accompanied by a murderer already condemned to suffer a shameful death.

As soon as St. Romain entered the dragon's den, the beast advanced snorting and giving signs of fury; but the saint made the sign of the cross, and in an instant the furious Gargouille was transformed into a peaceful animal. The bishop passed a leash round its neck, and bade the criminal

who had witnessed the miracle lead the monster back into Rouen. In this manner the terrible beast was conducted into the city, where it was publicly burned. Some chroniclers say that the den of the Gargouille was in the forest of Rouvray, on the other side of the river; others, that it was on the site of the Champ du Pardon (between the Porte Beauvoisine and the Porte Bouvreuil)—so called because, when the first solemn celebration of the feast of St. Romain was instituted, in 1079, by William Bonne-Ame, Archbishop of Rouen, so large a concourse of people assembled that the sermon had to be preached in the open air, and so many indulgences were then and there distributed that the field received the name of the Champ du Pardon.

To return to the Gargouille: the murderer who led him back obtained a free pardon, and in order that the memory of this glorious miracle might never perish, King Dagobert, by the advice of St. Ouen, gave permission to the Cathedral of Rouen to deliver from death every Ascension-day a prisoner, whomsoever the clergy might choose to select.

This custom, called *La Levée de la Fierté de St. Romain*, was continued by the clergy of Rouen till the Revolution. It still existed when Doctor Ducatel visited the city, in 1767, and he gives the following quaint account of "the privilege of St. Romain:"—

"The chapter, which consists of the archbishop, a dean, fifty canons, and ten dignitaries or prebendaries, have ever since the reign of Henry II., King of England and Duke of Normandy, enjoyed the extraordinary annual privilege of pardoning, on Ascension-day, any person confined within the jurisdiction of the city for murder, with his or her accomplices; if there happens to be no such prisoner, then any other

malefactor, however atrocious the crime he is charged with may be, provided it is not high treason against his sovereign, and that he is a native of the place, receives the pardon. On the morning of Ascension-day, the chapter, having heard the confession and examination of the prisoners read, proceeds to the election of the person to be pardoned; and the name is transmitted by one of the chaplains to the parliament which assembles on that day at the palace. The parliament, having received the billet, walk in procession to the great chamber (in the Palais de Justice), where the prisoner elect, being brought before them in his fetters and placed on a stool, is informed that he is entitled to the privilege of St. Romain. Then the fetters being removed from his legs and fastened to his arms, he is led to a place called the Old Tower, where, in a small chapel dedicated to St. Romain, built on the site of the ancient palace of the Norman dukes, he waits the arrival of the procession of St. Mary. As soon as these matters are notified to the chapter, the procession sets out from the Cathedral, two of the canons in their albs bearing the shrine in which the relics of St. Romain are supposed to be preserved (called the Fierté de St. Romain). When the procession arrives at the Old Tower, the shrine is placed in the chapel opposite the criminal, who is kneeling bare-headed, with the chains on his arms; and the archbishop, having made him repeat his confession, lays his hand upon his head, and says the prayers commonly used at the time of giving absolution. After this the criminal, still kneeling, lifts the shrine three times amidst the acclamations of the people assembled to see the ceremony. The procession then returns to the Cathedral, followed by the criminal wearing a chaplet of flowers on his head, and carrying in his arms

the shrine of St. Romain as far as the high altar, where, having deposited it, he salutes the chapter and then proceeds to the chapel of St. Romain within the Cathedral, and then hears mass said by the chaplain of that fraternity. The mass finished, he is conducted by the same chaplain to some place without the jurisdiction of the city, where, after a most serious exhortation given to him by a monk particularly appointed to that office, he is entertained with wine and other refreshments, and then attended by the same chaplain returns to the Cathedral, in some of the apartments belonging to which a supper and a bed are provided for him, and next morning he receives his plenary dismissal."

There is not much to interest in the actual Church of St. Romain, but it is specially interesting from the numerous good windows and other ancient objects it contains.

We regained the Boulevard, and then went back a little way along it till we reached the Rue Jeanne d'Arc. At the corner is the old high tower, the last remains of the Château Fort de Bouvreuil, built in 1205 by Philip Augustus. There were originally seven towers. This last one is called the Tour Jeanne d'Arc: it formerly belonged to the Convent of the Ursulines; but as they proposed to demolish it, a national subscription was set on foot, and the tower is now the property of the town of Rouen. The tower which served as prison to the Maid disappeared in 1780. She was put to the torture in this only remaining donjon tower.

We went along the Rue Morand to the Church of St. Godard, famous for having once possessed the finest painted windows in France; but at the time of the Revolution, when the churches of Rouen were suppressed, all the rich

windows of St. Godard passed to the churches of St. Ouen and St. Patrice. Those windows at the Museum of Antiquities, representing the Story of St. Nicholas, formerly belonged to St. Godard. In 1806 St. Godard was reopened for divine worship, and then its two finest windows were restored—one in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin (the Genealogy of the Blessed Virgin, 1506), and the other in the chapel of St. Peter (a large window of the sixteenth century on the Acts of St. Romain).

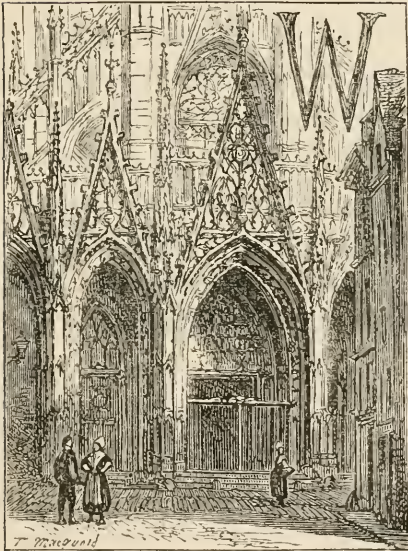
There are two other very old windows, composed of separate bits, which were formerly set in plain glass windows, and are now put together and pieced out with some new glass. One is in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, and represents episodes in her life; and the other in the chapel of St. Peter, representing the evangelic apparitions. There are many other very interesting windows, chiefly modern. The church itself is very late Gothic. In the ancient crypt, now destroyed, St. Godard was buried in 530; and in 646 St. Romain—but his remains were afterwards removed to the Cathedral in 1079. The tomb of St. Romain was transferred, as has been said, to the church of St. Romain.

ROUEN.

CHAPTER III.

The Palais de Justice.
The Grosse Horloge.
St. Vincent.
St. Sever.

The Bridges.
Bon Secours.
The Côte St. Catherine.
Canteleu.



WE found our way back to the Rue Jeanne d'Arc by the Rue Hôtel de Ville. At the angle of these two streets is a very pretty square called the Jardin Solferino, and from here is a charming view of the grey towers of St. Laurent and of St. Ouen. St. Laurent is one of the suppressed churches, and is now used as a warehouse for carriages. We looked in, but were un-

courteously told this was not permitted. Its tower is beautiful and very remarkable, 1490—1501, and is seen from a great distance. It groups admirably with the exquisite grey tower and spires of St. Ouen, the trees of the pleasant

square Solferino in the foreground. St. Laurent was once famed for its screen.

The shops in the Rue Jeanne d'Arc are so good and attractive that it is as amusing a lounge as the Rue des Carmes, which seems to be the Bond-street of Rouen for shops. On the right, as we come down the Rue Jeanne d'Arc, is the Post-office, a large, commodious building, but where the officials are certainly not very skilful in deciphering handwriting. A little way lower, on the left, is the *Marché Neuf*, behind which, now used as a school, there is another suppressed church, the ancient Church of St. Lô. Presently, on the left, we see the street we are in search of, the Rue des Juifs, in which is the Palais de Justice.

The actual Palais de Justice forms one side of a square, and faces the street ; but the older building of the *Salle des Procureurs* joins it, forming a wing on the left ; the wing on the right was rebuilt in 1842—52, in very successful imitation of the rest of the façade. The completed effect is magnificent ; and although the ornament may be thought redundant and mixed in style, it is marvellous in execution. The statues, with their rich canopies and pinnacles, the balustrade rising over the roof, the crocketed arcades which form a gallery along the entire front, the graceful ornamentation of the dormer windows, and above all the beautiful little pavilion projecting from the centre of the façade, are indescribable in their mixture of lightness and richness. Louis XII. built this palace in 1499, for the great and ancient Court of Exchequer of Normandy. Until this the Court of Exchequer, of which mention is made in the time of William the Conqueror, had been sometimes held at Rouen, sometimes at Caen, and sometimes at Falaise ; but Louis XII.

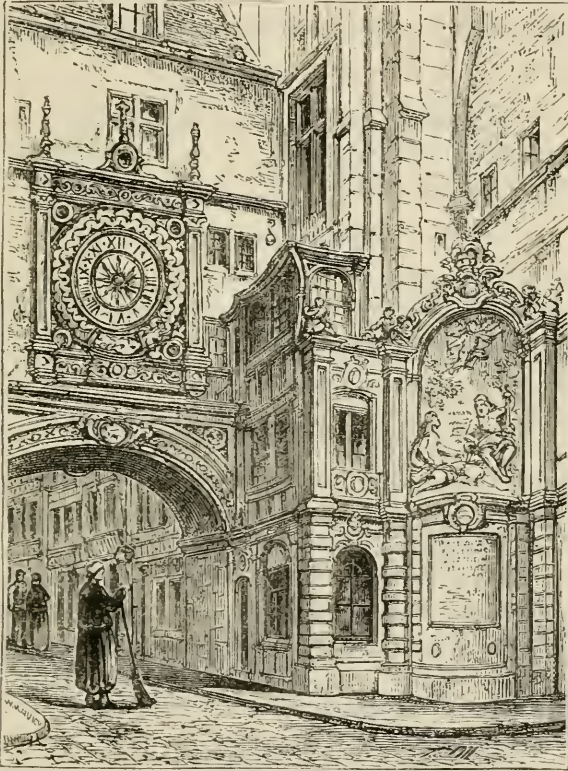
fixed it permanently at Rouen, and Francis I. raised it into a parliament on his accession to the crown, 1515. The little round room in the pavilion, with its funnel-shaped roof, was occupied by both these kings when they came to Normandy to preside at the solemn meetings of the Estates of Normandy.

We went first into the building on the left, the Salle des Procureurs ; this was built in 1393 as a place of meeting for merchants ; it used to be called the Salle des Pas Perdus. It is a very lofty and spacious hall, with a roof like an inverted ship, and it is not supported by any pillars. Beneath it are the Conciergerie and the prisons. A plaster cast of the bronze statue of Corneille, on the stone bridge over the Seine, is at the end of this hall. From the Salle des Procureurs we passed into the ancient grand chamber of the Parliament of Rouen ; it is a very fine hall, now called the Cour d'Assises. The ceiling is of the Louis XII. period, much sculptured and gilt, but it has been recently restored ; it is carved in solid oak. The walls are ornamented with bees and the cipher of Napoleon III., with eagles here and there. From this hall we pass into the council-chamber. There is a picture here of the Crucifixion, given by Louis XII. In the Salle des Appels there is a Christ by Philip de Champagne, and a Judgment of Solomon by Mignard. The wing on the right contains courts of justice, and the Cour Impériale held its sittings there.

Next to the Cathedral and the Place de la Pucelle, this well-preserved Palais de Justice stirs more memories than any other spot in Rouen. Especially interesting is the little round room, unchanged since Francis I. sat there three hundred and fifty-nine years ago.

In the Rue des Juifs there is a stone house, late sixteenth century, Nos. 47 and 49; and at No. 9 of this street is the house in which Jouvenet was born, in 1644.

We came down a little narrow street from the Rue des Juifs into the Rue Grosse Horloge, and found ourselves close to this remarkable clock. It is, perhaps, with its



La Grosse Horloge.

gate-house, and archway, and bas-reliefs, as picturesque as anything in Rouen; and going a little way beyond it, the views of the street, seen through the stone archway from either side, are full of picturesque effects of light and shade

on the quaint old houses. At the foot of the tower is the fountain of the Grosse Horloge ; it represents Alpheus and Arethusa and their children. The archway itself was erected in 1527, on the site of what was called the Porte Massacre. Above it on each side are the huge clock-dials, in sculptured frames ; underneath the vault is sculptured a shepherd tending sheep, and on the side walls are also bas-reliefs of the same subject. On one side, facing the old market-place, is the inscription—

“ Animam suam ponit pro ovibus suis,”

and on the opposite side—

“ Pastor bonus.”

There is a railed gallery at the top of the tower, which commands a good view of the town. At the foot of the staircase of two hundred steps which leads to this, there is a brass plate with this inscription in black letter—

“ En lan de lincarnation nre segnour mil. CCC. ̄IIĪ et neuf. fu commencé cest berfroy : et Es ans ensuivas jusques en lan mil. CCC. ̄IIĪ et xviii. fu fait et parfait. du quel temps noble home mess. Guille de Bellengues chevallier chambellan du Roy nostre Sire estoit cappitaine de ceste ville . honorable home pourueu et sage Johan de la tuille bailly . et Sire Guillaume alorge, Johan mustel . Guill de gaugy . Richard de sommery . Nicolas le roux . Gaultier campion . conseillers de ladicte ville et Pierre hermes reseueur d'icelle.”

At the top of the two hundred steps is the bell ; and here is another inscription in black letter—

“ † Je sui : nommé Rouvel : Rogier : le : Feron : me : fisa : fere : Jehan : Damiens : me fisa †.”

This bell is called the Cloche d'Argent, probably from its sound, for there is no silver in it ; it rings every night at

nine o'clock, and also for public rejoicings or sorrows. It was cast in 1447, and was then called the Horloge du Beffroi.

The ancient town-hall used to stand in this street, near the belfry tower, but only a bit of it remains facing the Rue Thouret. We went quite along the Rue Grosse Horloge, looking at its quaint old houses and the view of the Cathedral in front, and then we came down the Rue Grand Pont a little way, and turned into the Rue aux Ours. There is much to interest in this street; at No. 46, Dulong, the great chemist and natural philosopher, was born in 1785; at No. 61, Boieldieu, the composer, was born in 1775. At Nos. 24 and 26, and at No. 81, are two towers of the sixteenth century; and at the corner of the street where it crosses the Rue Jeanne d'Arc is the tower of the Church of St. André, 1526. This tower has been restored and surrounded by an enclosure. Before we left the Rue aux Ours, we found the Rue Nationale and the Rue des Cordeliers running side by side. In the first of these streets is the tower of the ancient Church of St. Pierre-du-Chatel, fifteenth century; and in the Rue des Cordeliers, Nos. 2, 4, 6, the former chapel of the Cordeliers, thirteenth century, now used as wine vaults and as a shop for theatrical decorations!

We went back into the Rue Jeanne d'Arc, and soon came to the Church of St. Vincent. This is an original-looking church, with its low square tower, high-roofed apse, and flying buttresses; it is also very elegant. There is some fine painted glass, and the porch is most exquisitely sculptured. The whole church, both for exterior and interior, is remarkable. Above the chief entrance are the remains of a bas-relief after Michael Angelo, and in a window of

the right aisle looking towards the choir, a Blessed Virgin, and Apostles kneeling, painted, partly on pasteboard, by Albert Dürer. In the north aisle is a window representing the story of St. John Baptist; the figures are very life-like, and the colour excellent. There was once a window in this church containing a view of St. Ouen, but unfortunately it is now broken.

St. Vincent was formerly called St. Vincent-sur-rive, because it stood on the bank of the Seine. The treasurers of St. Vincent held possession of the salt-measures of the town of Rouen: the measures were kept in a small tower at the entrance of the church. As each boat laden with salt passed up the Seine, it stopped at the church, and gave a certain quantity to the parish of St. Vincent. This toll is still levied, but it is paid by a yearly sum of 140 livres.

St. Vincent is being very well restored; its services are attended by the Norman aristocracy when they visit Rouen. One side of this church is in the Rue Vicomte. No. 45 was the ancient hotel of the Vicomté de l'Eau, but it has been lately rebuilt. No. 54 is an old sixteenth-century house. There are very many of these old stone houses to be found; and many also of the wooden houses, with their remarkable stripes of slate overlapping each other alternating with broader stripes of plaster, resting on oak beams of marvellous solidity, and capped by nodding wooden gables above.

But those who wish to see the Rouen of the past must not delay to visit her; every year she becomes more modernised. In the autumn of 1872 we saw a beautiful old house in the Rue du Bac being pulled down from its pic-

turesque gables to the ground. Already the three principal streets running direct from the Seine to the Boulevards are bare, cold, and devoid of interest, except for the churches that stand in them; and every day the people of Rouen take more and more pride in these well-to-do, commonplace, and we suppose we must add useful, streets, and grudge the room still occupied in the older part of the town by the picturesque but tottering wooden houses.

The Rue des Carmes is neither so broad nor so handsome as either of the modern streets on each side of it—the Rue Jeanne d'Arc, formerly Rue de l'Impératrice, or the Rue de la République, once Rue Impériale. There used to exist behind the Rue Impériale, on the site of the ancient Monastery of St. Amand, a square opening, a perfect Cour des Miracles. Poor artisans, workpeople of all sorts—especially street-sweepers—lived here in picturesque, tumble-down houses, in the midst of the charming ruins of the old abbey; it was dirty, doubtless, but it must have been full of pictures. Now all that remains is No. 35, in the Rue de la République, an old house, the Hôtel St. Amand, built on the site of the old abbey. A turret and the room of the abbess Guillemette are said still to remain of the ancient abbey; they are to be seen at No. 25, Rue Ronques, in the Faubourg Bouvreuil, near the Boulevard.

Travellers who have time to spare, and who are interested in visiting manufactories, will like to cross the Seine and visit the suburb of St. Sever. Besides the numerous manufactories, of which the tall chimneys form sufficient guide-posts, are to be found the Church of St. Sever, a modern building; the wharves, barracks, docks, lunatic asylums

at St. Yon and Quatremares, a reformatory school in the ancient Priory of St. Julien, a botanic garden, the Abattoirs near Sotteville, and the gas-works in the island of Lacroix. But, even to the mere antiquarian traveller, who cares only for the past of Rouen and the associations that hang about her ancient stones and medieval houses, there are interesting memories in St. Sever. The church only dates from 1856, but it stands on the site of one built in 1538, and this had taken the place of a much earlier building, of which the following legend is narrated :—

In the reign of Richard the Fearless, grandson of Rolf, first Duke of Normandy, two priests of Rouen made a pilgrimage to a church built in a forest near Mont St. Michel, for here was the sepulchre of St. Sever, Bishop of Avranches. This church was only served by one priest, who lived alone. The two pilgrim priests, inflamed with excessive zeal, resolved to carry off the body of the saint ; but the priest overheard them as they were planning the attempt in the forest, and prevented them from executing it. The two priests went back to Rouen, and obtained the duke's permission to remove the holy relics ; armed with this they returned to the church, and carried off the body of St. Sever, amid the tears and remonstrances of the priest and his flock. More than once during the journey, the shrine which contained the body of the saint became so heavy, that the priests could not remove it until they had vowed to build a chapel on the spot where the body rested ; and then immediately the weight was removed, and they were able to begin their journey again. But when they reached the village of Emendreville, not even the usual vow would lighten the shrine : it remained

rooted to the spot, and a church was built round it and dedicated to St. Sever. The village itself was called Emen-dreville for four centuries after, but at last it took the name of St. Sever. The shrine of St. Sever in the Museum of Antiquities can hardly be the original coffer of the journey ; but it is of very ancient date, and doubtless stood once in the first church dedicated to the saint.

The Caserne Bonne Nouvelle is the ancient priory of that name, so called by Queen Matilda when she received the news of her husband's victory at Hastings. These barracks have accommodation for nine hundred men.

The asylum for female insane patients, in the Rue St. Julien, was begun by the Brothers of St. Yon in 1708. They seem to have built their own church themselves, without the assistance of architect or workmen ; and, in 1734, they buried their founder, the venerable Père Lasalle, in the Church of St. Sever. At the Revolution this community was suppressed ; and, in 1821, the Consul-General of this department purchased the monastery as an asylum for insane persons. It contains about one thousand insane females, chiefly paupers : they are tended by Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny.

The suburb of St. Sever is reached either by the stone bridge at the foot of the Rue de la République, or by the suspension-bridge at the foot of the Rue des Carmes.

The famous bridge of boats, built in 1626, stood formerly about 150 yards lower down than the stone bridge, nearly opposite the Rue du Bac. This stone bridge, completed in 1829, forms two bridges, connected by the Ile de la Croix, with the bronze statue of Corneille between them. This statue is 12 feet high : it was cast by Honoré Gonon, of

Paris, after the model by David. The first stone of the pedestal was laid on the island by Louis Philippe, 1833. There is this inscription on one side of the pedestal—

A PIERRE CORNEILLE
PAR SOUSCRIPTION
1834

The suspension-bridge, opposite the Rue Grand Pont, was opened the same day that the bridge of boats was done away with. There is a guard-house on one side of the bridge; and on the right is the house of Brune, famous for having saved the lives of more than thirty persons drowning in the Seine. He is dead now, but the city of Rouen had this house built as a reward for his numerous services.

Rouen is rich in fountains; it possesses thirty-six. Of these, the two most ancient are the Fontaine de la Croix de Pierre, 1515, erected by Cardinal d'Amboise, in the Carrefour St. Vivien, and the Fontaine de Lisieux, 1518, in the Rue de la Savonnerie: it represents Mount Parnassus. The Fontaine de la Crosse, at the corner of the Rue des Carmes and the Rue de l'Hôpital, was still older, but it has been restored. The fountains of the Grosse Horloge and of St. Maclou are also remarkable.

The only one of the old gates of Rouen which still exists is the gate Guillaume Lion, on the quay, at the bottom of the Rue des Arpents. It was built in the middle of the last century. The sculptor was Claude le Prince, a native of Rouen. It is chiefly worth seeing for the foreground it makes to the picturesque view of the Rue des Arpents, which its portal frames. We saw this on our way to Bon Secours, and soon after we passed the Champ de Mars, where the soldiers were very busy at drill, and came to the Church of

St. Paul. Popular tradition says that this was an ancient Temple of Adonis, but there seems to be no foundation for such a belief. The three apses are very curious, and so are the grotesque heads outside them. The new church of St. Paul is built close beside the old one. The Cours Dauphin, planted with double rows of trees, makes a pleasant drive. Indeed, all the way up the hill to Bon Secours the road is charming, shaded with trees, diversified with hedges, and, whenever a pause is made, affording a most exquisite view of Rouen.

About half-way up the hill on the right is a curious-looking house like a castle, on a projecting bit of cliff that juts out, overlooking the Seine. This place, called Belle Vue, was to let; so we went over it. It had been taken possession of by the Prussians during the war. They planted seven field-pieces in the garden to overawe the town; and when one sees how near the city is, and how completely unsheltered, it seems wonderful that Rouen escaped. Part of the house is built in the shape of a round tower, and the rooms in the tower are round. One of these has five windows, each of which commands a charming view. The house is still very dilapidated. The woman who had charge of it showed us the looking-glasses smashed by the Prussians. Below is a large hall, which the soldiers seem to have used as barracks. We strolled out into the garden, so neglected that it is almost a wilderness. A narrow path leads up through a little wood to the projecting crag on which the cannon were planted, and here we found ourselves at quite a dizzy height over the Seine; in the foreground the sparkling river, with its emerald islands, and then the grey hoary-looking city, with the heights of Canteleu beyond.

But we did not linger long here. We were anxious to see the view from Bon Secours, and also from Mont St. Catherine, which is perhaps the most comprehensive of all. For, however beautiful and interesting Rouen may be in detail, the grandest part of it is certainly its position: it is so surrounded by heights that there are many and varied views to be had of it; and these heights are easy of access, for, besides the voitures which abound along the quays, there are numerous omnibuses which start from the Place des Beaux Arts. The ordinary traveller gives perhaps two or three days to Rouen, but the buildings in the town alone demand a longer stay than this, and to visit its charming suburbs and the many places of interest within easy reach will take several days. The environs of Rouen are well worth seeing, and it is quite possible to visit Jumièges and St. Georges Boscherville from here, as they are within a drive.

Just before reaching Bon Secours, the road becomes a steep climb, and the horses go even slower than pedestrians; but the ascent is well worth making for the sudden burst of prospect which greets us at the porch of the church.

The church is an excellent specimen of modern Gothic, of thirteenth-century style. The doorways are richly sculptured, and all the mouldings and details are well and judiciously executed; but we thought the colouring of the interior painfully glaring and inartistic. There is no repose for the eye anywhere; even the pure white marble tablets which line the walls are glaring with inscriptions to Mary, in gilt letters; these are votive tablets erected as thank-offerings for the intercession of Notre-Dame de Bon Secours. We had business with Monsieur le Curé, and found out his

pleasant old-fashioned house and garden, near the church. He was not at home ; but we saw what a peaceful, charming nook he lives in, and had a chat with his old housekeeper, a little wrinkled woman, with eyes as bright as a squirrel's.

La Côte St. Catherine is so near Bon Secours that it is easy to walk there from the church. There are several roads ; the pleasantest way for walking is that on the north, by the Petites Eaux Martainville. The path follows the river



General View of Rouen.

Aubette, with its dyeing-houses and green meadows, for some distance. Then we turned into a winding road, shaded by the wood of Bois Bagnières, and found ourselves on the Côte St. Catherine. It is not so lofty as Bon Secours ; but there is nothing here to intercept the view, and it is perfect, as it commands both the valley of Darnétal and that of the river. At our feet is the Seine, glittering in the exquisite sunshine and sparkling atmosphere—an atmosphere in which every grey spire and every green poplar-girt island stand out

crisply and brilliantly. The city is girt on three sides by the Boulevards, or rather by what looks at this distance a semi-circular green belt, linked at each extremity by the steel-like glimmer of the winding Seine, with its forest of masts and funnels; beyond it are vast green plains, bounded by the dense forests of Rouvray and La Londe. But the eye travels quickly round this setting, and comes back with delight to the hoary city below; for at this distance, and having in the foreground the ancient suburb of Martainville, Rouen loses any modernness of aspect.

The gay glitter and movement of the river-side give it sparkle and animation, or it might seem to be a phantom city guarded by its three grand churches, the spire of St. Maclou standing out in distinctive grace, and yet grouping admirably with the towers of the Cathedral and the grey mass of St. Ouen, which rises loftily above all except the gridiron spire of Notre-Dame; and from this distance the hideous monster is inoffensive, and makes a grand feature in the view—now telling black as ink against the blue sky, now, as the light falls fully on it, revealing itself in pale grey. Overhead a lark was singing what seemed to be a perpetual hymn of praise, and some black and white goats were browsing close by, looking as if they had come there on purpose to complete the harmony of the picture.

From the Côte St. Catherine we see on the north-east the valley of Darnétal. An ancient tower stands here, called Carville, from which it is said Henry IV. reconnoitred the Leaguers when he besieged them. Some miles north-east of Darnétal are the ruins of the famous Abbey of Mortemer, begun in 1154 by Henry II. of England. Still more to the north are the hills of St. Hilaire and those of Les Sapins.

Beyond them is the hill of Bois Guillaume, full of charming walks and views of the city. Next to Bois Guillaume is St. Aignan, and rising from this is the Mont-aux-Malades; but this is an excursion of itself. The church, twelfth century, is worth a visit; in it is a curious old tomb of the time of St. Louis, and close by the church are some curious Romanesque ruins—those of a church belonging to the monastery of St. Jacques, endowed by Henry I. and Henry II. The last king took much interest in the Leper Hospital of the Mont-aux-Malades, and instituted a fair, which used to be held on the hill every year, on the 1st of September. The history of the Mont-aux-Malades, by Monsieur l'Abbé Langlois, is interesting. A road leads down from the Côte St. Catherine along the Rue Mont Gargan into the Rue Martainville.

But our most delightful excursion in the environs of Rouen was to Canteleu. We were fortunate in having as bright a day for this visit as for Bon Secours, and a bright day in Rouen is marvellously beautiful; it is like looking at nature through a diamond, the atmosphere is so crisp and sparkling. As our driver, a brown-faced, blue-eyed Norman, with a nose and chin singularly suggestive of the silhouette of "Punch," turned round to volunteer numerous remarks on the beauty of the road, his brick-dust coloured cheeks, the curve of his nose, his shiny hat, and faded blue coat stood out in metallic sharpness from the blue sky around him. He stopped when we were beyond the barrier and had fairly begun to climb the steep côte on this western side of Rouen, and pointed with his whip to emphasize his words:—

"Ah, and is it not then a fine city? I can see by the face

of madame what she thinks. Madame has perhaps lived a long time in Rouen."

Having got an answer, he burst into a peal of laughter, shook the rein, and we moved slowly up hill. "*Tiens,*" he went on, "and is it then possible that monsieur and madame have taken a so strong love for our city after a stay of only some days? and we say that the English are cold and indifferent. *Dame,* but it something new for me."

The expression of his face, while he rattled on in this way, was irresistible. He was plainly laughing at us the whole time, and watching to see the effect; and when he saw us laughing too, he joined in, took off his hat and wiped his face, which had got very red, with his handkerchief, and rolled, as he sat, with delight.

All this time we were slowly mounting the terraced road cut on the side of the steep green hill overlooking the Seine. The driver told us not to look back till we were nearer Canteleu, but we ventured to disobey him, and were glad we did so; for the river makes a sudden curve here, and the view of the city nestling in the bend, and backed by the green Côte St. Catherine, with Bon Secours standing out like a watch-tower on the hill above, was magical. A few grey clouds had risen since we started, and one of these now caused a strange effect on the scene below. The grey green-belted city, the sparkling river, and the border of white modern houses which line the quays were in vivid light, and so was the curved green island, lying in front of all, like a smiling sentinel; but the three churches rose up like black phantoms mourning over the departed glory of their city. For it strikes one as a strange contrast to the past history of Rouen—the capital city of a duke-

dom—and to the feudal and chivalric associations that cling round the columns of the churches and the gables of its houses, that its boast now is that it rivals Manchester, and its aim is to be considered the first cotton-spinning town in Europe. Once there were thirty-six churches in Rouen; there are now not half the number; and as church spires, and towers, and religious houses have been swept away, the tall chimneys, with their clouding smoke, have multiplied till every distant view of the city is marred by some of these unsightly erections. Men no longer build houses for God, only for themselves.

The owner of Canteleu, Monsieur Lefèbure, is very kind and courteous to strangers, and takes great pleasure in showing his house and museum of curiosities; he was unfortunately absent on the day of our visit, and the house was closed. But the grounds at Canteleu are exquisite, laid out in natural wooded terraces overlooking the lovely Seine, which curves again here on its way to Dieppedalle. Nestling at our feet, among beautiful trees, is the little village of Croissy, then comes the island-gemmed river, and opposite is Rouen, just now lying half in shadow, while the churches are bathing in a full flood of sunshine, which succeeds in changing them to a grey filmy hue, making them as phantom-like as before.

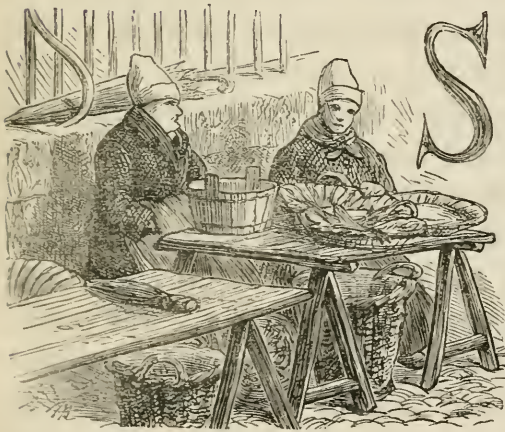
We stayed a long time at Canteleu. It is very well planted; the trees are skilfully varied, and many of them very remarkable; the steep *côte* rises high above the walks, and the smooth turf beside these fringes the edge of another descent, with another walk below. There is a curious series of caves pierced in one of these *côtes*, with pillars of solid crag left here and there to support the roof: they look

as if they had been made for smugglers, but we could not learn their history. We came out again and stayed till sunset, watching the beech-wood till it quivered with red gold, and the pine branches changed to glowing crimson against their purple-green foliage; from among the group of pines below, came up wreaths of blue smoke from the village of Croissy; but the air grew suddenly chill, and the beetles began to fly about in warning fashion. Most reluctantly we took our way up the steep slopes and through the avenue, and said good-bye to Canteleu, the more sorrowfully because this was also our last day at Rouen.

THE SEA-COAST OF UPPER NORMANDY.

CHAPTER IV.

DIEPPE.



SO far as Malaunay we travel along the line of the Rouen and Havre Railway. On leaving the station in the Rue Verte, we pass through the tunnel of the Mont-aux-Malades, and come out beside the Ce-

metery of St. Gervais. Very soon we are overlooking the valley of the Cailly. It is very pretty here ; the little river winds along shaded by trees, but still everywhere there are traces of industry. Presently we come downhill beside the little winding river, and pass Maromme, the birthplace of Marshal Pelissier. Maromme is in a valley full of busy factories : every moment we are reminded that we are leaving a great commercial centre. The ruins and ancient

memories of Normandy are buried under these thriving villages, with their tall chimneys and long ugly factories ; but it is a hopeful sign for France that in the midst of political agitation her factories, and consequently employment for the peasantry, steadily increase. Year by year as one visits Rouen, Vire, and other busy towns, one grieves over fresh eye-sores in the shape of red chimneys in the midst of lovely valleys, or in close conjunction with some architectural relics of the past. Still these are hopeful signs ; only one would be glad in Normandy, for the sake of the picturesque, to confine the manufactories to Elbœuf, Bolbec, Yvetôt, and a few other of the uninteresting towns which a traveller leaves unvisited, and rid the Vaux de Vire and the country round Rouen of their presence.

At Malaunay we separate from the Havre line, and climb the hill again, and once more look down on the little osier-shaded river, winding its way through pleasant meadows, backed by wooded hills. As we pass along, we see the signal-woman beside the line, in her quaint blue gown and black sailor hat, blowing her horn. The station garden at Malaunay is charming. We stop long enough to see that it is full of roses ; a group of very tall sunflowers are burning in the light like glowing golden shields. In the middle of the garden is a huge silvered ball on a pedestal. There is a grand viaduct at Malaunay ; indeed, when one notices the ups and downs of this charming country, and its constantly intersecting rivers, one thinks with wonder of the difficulties of constructing this railroad.

We soon come to Monville, destroyed by a storm in 1845, and now, thanks to the city of Rouen, rebuilt and in greater prosperity than before. The Cailly and the

Clères unite at Monville. A Roman cemetery was discovered here in 1847. A very interesting trip may be made from Monville into the valley of the Cailly. Many Gallo-Roman remains have been found near Cailly.

Nearer Dieppe the road becomes very beautiful, with wide stretches of common backed by romantic-looking forests of picturesque trees. We boast of our English trees, and they are certainly bigger, grander-looking than French trees; but for real grace and beauty of form the trees of Normandy are especially remarkable. Now we are in a charming tree-shaded valley, and we pass St. Victor l'Abbaye, which stands on a hill. The Mortemarts founded a splendid abbey here in 1051, but there is only a small portion left. The church was founded by William the Conqueror, and has outside a statue of him. We cross the Scie so frequently that it seems as if our whole route was bridged over the little winding river. We pass many villages where interesting remains have been discovered: Auffay, where so lately as 1861 were discovered the ruins of the cloister of a priory, thirteenth century; the wood of Mont Pinson, where there are the remains of a château of the eleventh century; Longueville, with some stones of the walls once surrounding the castle which Condé's sister made famous during the wars of the Fronde. Longueville station stands on the ground once occupied by the ancient Priory of St. Fay, built in 1093; its ruins have helped to build most of the houses of Longueville, and the only remaining portion is now used as a cotton-mill.

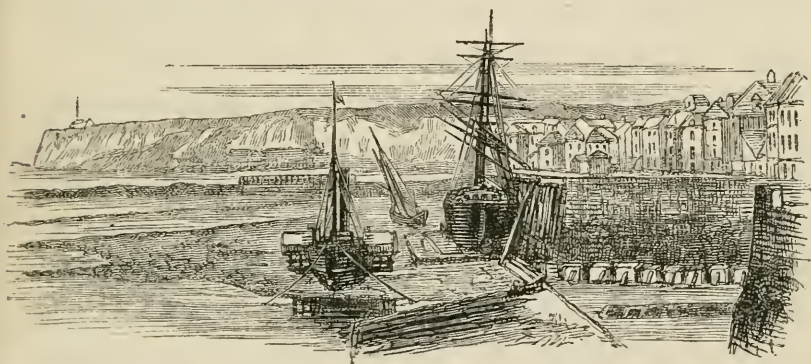
Dr. Ducarel, writing in 1767, says, "At Longueville, in the Pays de Caux, half-way between Dieppe and Rouen,

is a Cluniac priory founded by Walter Giffard, Earl of Buckingham, who died in the year 1102, and lies buried there. He granted several manors, churches, and lands to this priory; among others, the manor of Newinton Longueville, in Bucks, where a Cluniac priory was afterwards founded as a cell to Longueville in Normandy."

Near St. Aubin-sur-Scie is the Château de Miromesnil, built in the time of Louis Treize. Taking it as a whole, the journey from Rouen to Dieppe is among the prettiest of railway journeys — woods, hills, winding rivers, and smiling green meadows (for it is chiefly pasture land) make a sunny and picturesque landscape of endless change and variety: there is always something to elicit admiration and observation.

Perhaps the most direct route through Normandy is to arrive at Dieppe from Newhaven, proceed to Rouen by rail, and thence again by rail to Fécamp. But those travellers who have time to spare can begin with Rouen, *viâ* Boulogne and Amiens, thence to Dieppe, and so on to Fécamp by the coast. The chief advantage of the first route is the charming view of Dieppe from the sea, formed by its two projecting piers, each surmounted by a crucifix, the busy harbour and quaint houses surrounding it, with St. Jacques rising in the centre and the castle-crowned heights behind. Our first visit is to the west pier, which reaches far into the sea. In rough weather the waves break with fury against the pier, and leap up to dash against the white cliffs. From the pier we can go along the *plage* to the Etablissement des Bains, a substantially built, sheltered place, in the style of the Crystal Palace, surrounded by a well-planted garden. There is a casino here: in the centre is a large ball-room, and

on each side billiard-rooms, reading-rooms, and all the necessary accompaniments of a fashionable seaside resort ; for, next to Trouville, Dieppe is the watering-place, now-a-days, where the greatest extravagance in dress is displayed : the glass front of the casino makes a pleasant shelter for invalids, who sit here reading and working in sight of the sea. One wonders, as one saunters through the quaint town up to the castle heights, and thence visits the charming country around, how people can spend so many hours in doing just what they could do in London or



Avant Port.

Paris or Brighton, ignoring, as many of them do, the real delights which the place has to offer. The chief features of Dieppe are its casino life, its fishery, and its trade in carved ivory ; and, without the town, its charming environs.

From the *plage* we go on to the Grande Rue, through a small street in no way remarkable for its houses ; for Dieppe has a painfully modern aspect, having been bombarded and completely destroyed in 1694 by the English in revenge for a repulse they had received at Brest. Spite of this Dieppe is very picturesque : and although it has many English among its visitors, it is as yet a purely French town.

As we go up the street we meet a bevy of fish-women, with short black skirts and black stockings, red or blue neckerchiefs, and white-cotton-stocking caps. They stand at the corner of a street, near a dyer's, seemingly, for the *ruisseau* rushing along the street is of a deep blue colour. Two of them are young, with bright black eyes and bronzed, well-featured faces. The others are old, wrinkled caricatures of the younger faces; their black eyes look small and hard in the network of brown wrinkles in which they are set, and their mouths are pinched and lifeless from the entire loss of teeth. Neither young nor old show any hair; it is all stowed away under the nightcap.

On each side of this street are small shops with glass doors, and windows filled with freshly ironed muslin and frilled caps hanging by the broad white strings. Let us look into one of these shops. On one side, over the fireplace, is a mantelshelf with clock in the middle, and a moderator lamp on each side of it; close by, a round table is spread for dinner; on the other side, a sort of counter, where three or four young women are ironing with so much earnestness that they scarcely look off their irons. The white painted room is so small that it is filled with the amount of work they have accomplished, and there is much more yet to do. Almost every open doorway in the street affords the same spectacle, and makes one think that, spite of their extreme economy—and the Normans are the most thrifty people imaginable—they are lavish in the matter of washing. Certainly you never see a soiled cap or crumpled cap-strings. Those snowy frills round all the faces above the wearing of a cotton nightcap, always look as if they were put on for the first time. Doubtless the absence of smoke

helps much towards this snowy aspect, and much more the good washing and the excellent soap of Marseilles, so universal among Norman laundresses. One is apt to long for the French *bonne's* cap in place of the horrible little shams worn nowadays by English maid-servants; but, in our climate and with our washing, the French cap would be either very expensive wear, or else unsightly.

The Grande Rue has some good shops, especially those for ivory-ware—a trade which is almost peculiar to Dieppe, and which is said to have taken its origin from the importation of elephants' tusks in the days—three centuries ago—when Dieppe was the most flourishing seaport in France, and one of the first in Europe, when the famous merchant D'Ango, the friend of Francis I., was a sort of king on the high seas, and his fleets and those of his successors brought furs from Canada, and all the rich treasures of the East Indies, to supply the luxurious courts of the Valois sovereigns. Besides the ivory shops, there are charming figures and cameos in terra-cotta well worth looking at.

We go from the Grande Rue to the Place Royale, or Place du Marché. It is market-day, and there is a most picturesque array of countrywomen, who look as if they all belonged to the sea, they are so coarse and hard-featured. Their dress is wonderfully full of low-toned colour, with perhaps bright-coloured cotton handkerchiefs tied over their heads, and blue and one or two black and scarlet striped skirts. One wonders where painters have seen the gaudy hues in which they sometimes depict Norman peasant-women. Black, dark blue, and a sort of greenish grey are almost the universal colours seen in skirts all over the province; the aprons black, grey, lilac, or blue. In La

Haute Normandie the short loose jacket is worn by all, and this is always of black or dark grey stuff. The colour lies in the aprons, or where a bright-coloured square of cotton is tied over the cap. In La Basse Normandie, specially in Calvados and La Manche, where the neckerchief is still worn across the shoulders in place of the jacket, this is usually bright-coloured scarlet or orange mingled with black. The "indiennes" they wear for this purpose cost often 5s. or 6s., and are treasured for years, and worn only on market-days and festivals; but a scarlet petticoat is not often seen. The Normans are much too thrifty to wear any but dark-coloured gowns, unless indeed it be a lavender cotton, and this is always of a pale, subdued tint. It is the wonderful neatness and jauntiness which pervade the whole costume of even the poorest, from the black wooden sabots to the snowy *bonnet de coton*, with its tassel a little on one side, that make the Norman peasant so admirably suited as contrast and relief to the quaint rickety wooden houses and mouldering grey stone wonders of past times, among which she lives, the colours of her dress always in harmony with the surroundings; and the men with their blue blouses and trousers, often faded to greenish hues, with many patches of the same colour, but of different tint, are just as harmonious objects as the women are. Their skins, too, warm as if the sun had burned his own reflection into them, their vivacious intelligent eyes and ready smile, and the intensely brightening effect of the pure atmosphere, make them quite salient enough against the ancient, sombre backgrounds of these picturesque old towns—the artist need not dress them up in colours which their natural sense of the fitness of things would repudiate.

There are not many covered booths in the market-place of Dieppe; but vegetables in baskets and heaps on the ground, and poultry, and sabots, and crockery-ware seem to be driving a lazy trade. Thrifty housekeepers, with a little *bonne* behind in well-starched muslin frills and with a great covered basket on her arm, are pinching the fowls and ducks, and carefully poising in one hand the huge cabbages like enormous half-blown green roses, examining them all round, and rejecting every one that has the least breakage or bruise on the outside leaf. It is easily seen that the French cook produces good food out of that which the English cook throws away; and perhaps nothing so evidences this as the frugality with which the French one uses a cabbage. The outer leaves, with a couple of onions, a few sprigs of *petites herbes*, as they say, make the foundation of a soup or a stew, and the heart of the vegetable is cooked separately, and served with the *bouilli*.

In the Place Royale is a statue of the Admiral Duquesne, a famous sailor of Dieppe. Also here is the Church of St. Jacques; but the view is so unsightly from this side, that it is better to go round to the east. Here the body of the church is almost hidden by the richly decorated flying buttresses, which are mullioned like windows. The porch is a handsome specimen of fourteenth-century style, and, seen from a distance, this church is highly picturesque. Its details are too redundant and late in style; but, on close inspection, its green-grey stone is full of colour. The Porch of the Sibyls must have been remarkable before the niches were robbed of the figures of the Twelve Sibyls. Inside, the church has been sadly mutilated. The transepts and part of the choir seem older in date than the rest, and the

screens in the side chapels are very curiously carved; the style is a sort of fusion of Gothic and Italian architecture, probably of the date of Francis I. The Lady chapel is very late Gothic: the roof is elaborately carved. Behind the choir are two marble tablets—one in memory of D'Ango, 1551, and the other to Richard Simon, priest of the oratory, in 1638.

There is a great deal of this curious sixteenth-century



St. Jacques.

carving about the church, and it has acquired that peculiar green hue here and there which one remarks in the old churches of seaport towns.

St. Jacques was restored in 1870; and there were then discovered in the chapel of St. Andrew five coffins, supposed to contain the bodies of the five Scottish ambassadors sent to

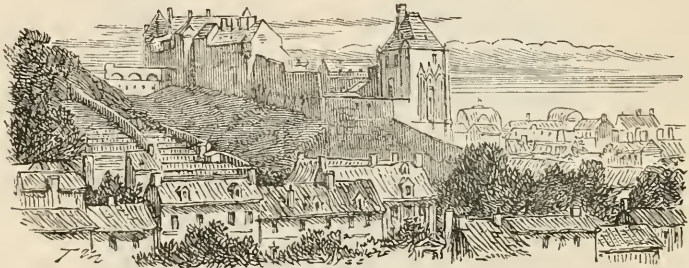
France to represent their nation at the marriage of Mary Stuart with Francis II.

We go out from St. Jacques by the great door to St. Remy, and we notice still more of the green stain on the walls of this church. There is absolutely nothing to admire here. The chill, forlorn aspect of the place suggests that it has at some time or another been flooded by the waves, and that these green stains are the traces of their presence.

The Grande Rue runs direct from the harbour on its way up to the old Castle; this is very picturesque. The Castle, perched on the heights overlooking the town, looks remarkable from below, with its narrow bridge spanning a natural chasm in the cliff; and when we have toiled up the ascent, passing on our way a quaint fountain with a group of girls filling their red pitchers of Oriental shape, we are delighted with one of the little courtyards inside the Castle walls. There is no beauty of architecture, but there is a vivid effect of light and shade through the entrance to this inner court; and beside it clings a vine trying to make its hold firm on the parapet above, and clustering with graceful leaves, and fruit already purpling, round an open lattice-window. The intense sunshine on the white-washed wall makes the open space within the window almost black, and on the sill are geraniums with glowing scarlet blossoms, and yellow nasturtium wreaths trailing down and mingling their cold grey green with the tender leaves of the vine.

The first Castle of Dieppe was built by Charlemagne, who is said to have built Dieppe, and to have named it Bertheville, in honour of his mother Bertha; but this Castle

dates from the fifteenth century, and has been completely modernised. It is full of associations. D'Ango died here, broken-hearted and beggared, in 1551. Some years later, Henri Quatre took refuge here during the wars of the League ; and in the seventeenth century the restless Duchess of Longueville fled to the Castle of Dieppe for safety, and from thence made her escape to Holland. We find a trace, too, of William the Conqueror at Dieppe. On his second return to England, he set sail from "the mouth of the Dieppe, near the town of Arques," on December 6, 1067,



The Old Castle.

and on his arrival at Winchester learned that the mother church of Canterbury had been burned to the ground.

The view from the *falaises* of the town and harbour is magnificent, and enables one to realise the ancient power and splendour of Dieppe.

In the tenth century it seems to have been a small seaport. About 1145, Philip Augustus, then at war with Richard I., sacked and plundered Dieppe. Two years after Richard, who had taken the rock of Andely, belonging to the diocese, of Gaultier, Archbishop of Rouen, in order to build Château Gaillard, ceded Dieppe in exchange. Its commerce greatly increased under Charles V. ; but in 1420

it was taken by the English. Its greatest prosperity seems to date from 1433, when, in the reign of Charles VII., the Dauphin Louis XI. retook it from the English.

The archives of Dieppe were destroyed in the bombardment of 1694; but writers who had had the opportunity of consulting these archives assert that the Dieppois were the first to land in Guinea, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in America. In 1402 Jean de Bethencourt, Lord of Grainville-la-Teinturière, attempted the conquest of the Canaries; his enterprise was successful, and at his request Pope Innocent VIII. named Albert de Las Casas bishop of the Canaries. The use of the mariner's compass was known in Dieppe from the beginning of the thirteenth century. The Dieppois assert that a young sailor named Cousin, a pupil of Descaliers, took command of a ship in 1448, bound on Atlantic discovery. In accordance with Descalier's instructions, the Dieppois captain avoided the coast of Africa and sailed southward. The equatorial current drew him west, and, after a journey of two thousand leagues, Cousin landed in an unknown country, on the borders of a great river, which he named Maragnon, since called Amazon. He then sailed east, feeling sure he should reach Africa, and touched at the Cape of Good Hope, whence he returned to Europe. When, some years later, the renown of Christopher Columbus and Vasco de Gama reached France, the navy of Dieppe asserted their claim to a share in the glory of this discovery; but it was the period of the French expeditions against Italy, and all public interest was centred in this foolish and fruitless enterprise.

There is, in the midst of this record, one singular coincidence. Cousin's mate was a foreigner named Vincent

Pinçon, or Pinzon. On the return voyage to Dieppe this man mutinied. He was tried, and sentenced to be dismissed from the naval service of Dieppe.

The chronicle adds that the rebellious mate retired to his native country, and was one of the three brothers Pinzon who accompanied Columbus, and greatly aided him by their advice and money.

Dr. Ducatel says of Dieppe:—"Though it was but a mean village in the twelfth century, it grew into a considerable town soon after King Richard I. had granted it to Walter, Archbishop of Rouen, and his successors in that see, in exchange for Andeley, which he annexed to the Duchy of Normandy."

The famous merchant, Jean D'Ango, contributed much to the increase of its commerce. He was born at Dieppe in 1480; his father seems to have been a man of small means, who had begun to enrich himself by merchant seamanship. The son, Jean D'Ango, has been called the Medici of Dieppe; the boldness of his enterprises, the energy and independence of his character, the splendour of his luxury and expenditure, his ardent and enlightened passion for art, have shed round him a brilliant lustre, in the light of which he seems almost to rival his king and friend, Francis I. In his youth D'Ango made several voyages, and then settled at Dieppe. Here he soon established himself as a merchant; he equipped vessels for the Indies, and caused himself to be made farmer-general of the chief lordships of the country, of the Duchy of Longueville, the abbeys of Fécamp and St. Wandrille, and of the Vicomté of Dieppe, belonging to the Archbishop of Rouen. All these enterprises succeeded; his riches became immense, and he was able to

treat with princes on equal terms. When Francis I. visited Dieppe, D'Ango received him as his guest, and entertained him with much magnificence. In return, Francis I. gave D'Ango the title of Viscount and Commandant of the Town and Castle of Dieppe. When the King of Portugal sent ambassadors to Francis to complain that a fleet equipped by D'Ango had committed devastation in the Tagus, the King of France sent the emissaries to D'Ango, and bid him settle the matter as he pleased. But at the close of his life ruin overtook him. All his property, including even his splendid manor of Varengeville, became the property of his creditors. D'Ango languished for two years after, and died in the Château of Dieppe in 1551. In addition to the famous Manoir d'Ango, near Varangeville, he had a beautiful house in the town, built of wood, and elaborately carved, the site of which is now occupied by the College. Besides its ruinous bombardment by the English, the trade of Dieppe seems to have suffered a death-blow from the rivalry of Le Havre, and the superior facilities offered to the commerce of that port by its position on the Seine. Still, during the last few years, Dieppe has revived from the ruin which had overtaken it, and it is more and more frequented as a watering-place. Its charming environs and the splendid sea view commanded by its lofty *faïsses* make it very attractive. The bathing, too, is excellent.

We came down from the château to find our way to the Faubourg of Le Pollet, which is certainly the most interesting part of the town. It was formerly a distinct village, and it is still only inhabited by fishermen, who maintain the customs of their fathers. They seem quite primitive. The women dress like the group of fish-women we met on our

first arrival; and the men in the blue jersey and woollen serge trousers and stocking cap universal among French fishermen.

The houses of Le Pollet are very picturesque: fish of all shapes and size hang on strings from the windows, at which are drying maybe a pair of blue trousers and a scarlet nightcap, or a regiment of dark-coloured petticoats. A little farther on is a balcony with red geraniums and a small trailing yellow flower, and below quite a festoon of large flat fish.

A girl in the inevitable very short black petticoat, but with blue stockings and a blue handkerchief tied over her white cap, was standing beneath an open window, set in a bare blank wall. She looked up, shading her eyes with her hand, at an old man, seemingly an ivory-carver, for he held a small ivory figure between his thumb and finger. His face was very like a walnut-shell in colour; like it, too, in the fine network of wrinkles, plainly visible as the sunshine flamed on his brown face and scarlet worsted cap; his keen black eyes looked like slits as he laughed back at the girl; and as he laughed he showed that his loose lipless mouth was quite devoid of teeth. Behind him the room was in darkness, except that on a projecting shelf close by the window was an ivory crucifix, beautifully carved. It was strange to look at the poor squalid house, and at this rough ignorant workman, and to think of him as the creator of some of the exquisite little curiosities we had been admiring in the Grande Rue.

The inhabitants of Le Pollet are full of superstitious legends and observances. The famous Nain Rouge, the Robin Goodfellow of Normandy, is said to play endless tricks on fishermen who neglect to cross themselves with

holy water when they rise. The young fisher-girls may be seen seeking along the shore for a white stone, of special shape, which they call the stone of happiness, and to which they attribute the power of ensuring their prosperity, deliverance from danger, and in proper time a good husband.

There is one legend which must be related, as it is a favourite among the Polletais, and it shows the gloomy fervour which characterizes this strange people. The same legend is told of St. Etienne Lallier, near Pont Audemer, and of the churchyard of St. Martin-des-Champs, between Falaise and Condé-sur-Noireau, but in less dramatic form than in the story of Le Pollet.

There had been a terrible storm, which had kept the inhabitants awake half the night. Peter, the sacristan of Notre-Dame du Pollet, had just begun to enjoy the delights of his first sleep, when he was awakened by the ringing of the mass-bell. He jumped out of bed, thinking he had overslept himself, and that the priest had bid some one else ring the bell.

When he entered the church he saw the priest already at the altar, and a great number of fishermen praying fervently. But, as the sacristan gazed at some of the faces around him, he was seized with terror, for he saw only the faces of those who had died.

One of those kneeling near him had left home a year and a half before, to go fishing, and had never been heard of. The corpse of another had been washed ashore: the sacristan remembered that he had assisted at his burial. Peter was so transfixed with horror, that he could neither speak nor move. Meanwhile the mass proceeded. When the time came for communion, the priest

tried to put the Host to his lips, but It slipped from his fingers.

Then he uttered an alarming cry of distress, which was echoed by all the rest, and, turning to the sacristan, cried out, "My poor Peter, my poor Peter, do you not recognise me? I am Régnaud, whose ship was wrecked on Monday in Easter week, on the rock of Ailly. I had vowed a mass in honour of Our Lady, and I forgot my vow. I try now to say this mass myself, in order to keep my promise; but each time that I try to communicate, the Host escapes from my lips, and I feel the torments of hell in my bosom. Oh, my Peter, I suffer the tortures of the damned. Tell my son, I implore you, never to forget the masses which he may promise to Our Lady."*

Le jour des Morts is observed very religiously at Dieppe. If a fisherman were to attempt to go out to sea on that day, the belief is that he would be followed everywhere by his double—a figure resembling him exactly. If he were to attempt to fish he would find his net extra heavy, and on drawing it in there would be only broken skeletons and bones.

On that day, towards midnight, a funeral car is heard in the streets of Le Pollet. It is drawn by eight white horses, and white dogs run before it. As it passes by, one hears the voices of those dead during the past year. Very few persons have seen this apparition; all those who do see it may expect to die soon after. For this reason it is the custom to close the windows when the procession is expected to arrive.

* "La Normandie Romanesque et Merveilleuse," par Mdle. Amélie Bosquet.

If the prayers and masses offered up on this anniversary have been insufficient, or if some of the departed souls have been forgotten by their friends and relatives, this is what happens in the middle of the night. The sea howls, the wind is furious, and a ship is seen out at sea, advancing with alarming swiftness. It seems as if it must strike against the pier, but it reaches it in safety. The spectators, looking at this vessel, recognise with surprise one of those supposed to have perished. There is no mistaking its rigging, its sails, its mast; only the sail is torn, and the mast looks injured and crooked.

However, the vessel must be helped, and the light-house keeper throws out a hawser; the crew seize it, and fasten it to the ship. The women and children crowd round the end of the pier, some full of hope, others despairing and uncertain. One hears on all sides cries of "There is my father, my husband, my brother, my betrothed."

But the crew on board the vessel remain silent. At first this does not occasion surprise, for sometimes the sailors bind themselves by a vow not to speak till they have been to church to thank God and Our Lady for their deliverance.

But the women and children have harnessed themselves to the cable, and yet the vessel remains immovable. It is in vain they strain, they strive—at last they pause, terrified and exhausted, and give themselves up to despair. The vessel seems anchored there by the hand of God for eternity. One o'clock strikes; a slight mist floats over the sea, and the ship has vanished. "Pay your debts," or in other words, "Pray more earnestly," is all that the spectators say to the sobbing widows and children who have been striving to haul in the phantom vessel.

It is said that the fishermen of Le Pollet, when out on long expeditions, say mass daily among themselves, the eldest of them, surnamed the curé, reciting both mass and vespers from memory, although often he cannot read. At the end of the herring fishery, as they return into port, the fishermen intone the *Te Deum*; but this is the only occasion on which they sing this canticle at sea. They never permit themselves to speak on board their vessels either of priests or of cats, and they forbid the use of playing-cards.

In the fish-market we saw plenty of the inhabitants of Le Pollet. The fish-women sit in a row on each side of the covered market-place, behind their wares, looking, some severe and some sleepy. Nearly all are clad in black, with white-cotton nightcaps. The constant exposure to rough weather night and day—for they are always on the alert to meet a fishing-boat when it comes in—dries and wrinkles their bronzed faces prematurely. We asked one old dame, sitting still and silent, her arms wrapped in a pink cloak with a hood, and looking very like a mummy, how old she was. She looked between eighty and ninety, and, to our surprise, she said she was only sixty.

Outside the market-house were several picturesque groups of fish-sellers, seated beside the baskets on which the fish were spread. As soon as it was discovered that one of these groups was being sketched, a general rivalry was excited; one handsome young woman came up and remonstrated.

“Will not madame speak to monsieur?” she said, grinning, and showing that as yet she had not lost her white strong teeth; “look at him, he but wastes his time in drawing *La Mère Suchet*. She is old, and see how wrinkled. It would surely be better to draw some one younger,—me, for

instance." She waited a few minutes ; but finding monsieur obstinate, she went away with a toss of her head.

From Le Pollet there is a pleasant walk along the cliffs to Puits. This is a sort of little bathing-place, and there are several pleasant houses. Dumas *filz* has a house here, in which he spends the bathing season with his family ; and Lord Salisbury has also built a *châlet* at Puits.

Beyond Puits is the Cité de Limes, also called Cæsar's Camp. It is supposed to be the remains of one of those cities of refuge resorted to by the Gallic tribes when closely pursued by their enemies ; but some writers think it is of far more modern date.

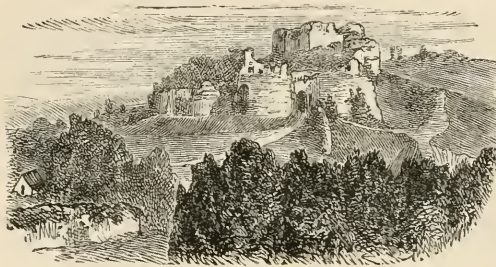
The two chief attractions in the environs of Dieppe are the famous Château d'Arques and the Manoir d'Ango. In the season an omnibus goes to Arques from Dieppe at 12.15 and 3 o'clock every day, and returns at 9.12 A.M. and 8.12 P.M. There is also the St. Nicholas diligence, which passes Arques, and which leaves Dieppe at six o'clock in the morning.

But, for walking, the pleasantest way is to go to Arques through the Valley de l'Eaulne, by the picturesque little village of Martin l'Eglise. In the Church of Ancourt there are seven good painted-glass windows. In the forest of Arques-Archelles there is a pretty manor-house of the Renaissance period.

The Château d'Arques stands well on a spur of high ground in the wooded valley of the Béthune, above the junction of the little river with the Arques. The ruins give an idea of great extent, but they are so shapeless and destroyed that they are far more picturesque at a distance. The whole building has suffered, as Jumièges and most of

the famous Norman ruins have suffered, far more from the plunder of moderns than from the wear and tear of ages. The huge donjon built by William of Arques, lord of Talou, uncle to William the Conqueror, still remains. Its picturesque site and its historical associations make the chief interest of Arques. The view from the castle is splendid: below are the grey ruins, the wooded valleys and their rivers; and, beyond, the forest and the sea.

Arques was the ancient capital of the country of Talou. Gunnor, wife of Richard the Fearless, was daughter to the Forester of Arques. William the Bastard gave the county



Château d'Arques.

to his uncle William, one of the sons of Duke Richard II. by Papia. As soon as Count William had built a strong castle at Arques, which he fortified by an immense fosse, still re-

maining, he entered into a secret conspiracy against his nephew with his brother Mauger, Archbishop of Rouen, Henry I. of France, and some of the rebellious Norman lords. Duke William did not at first quarrel with his uncle; but, as he suspected him, he placed a garrison in Arques. The garrison surrendered to Count William as soon as he appeared before the gate of Arques, and at the news William the Bastard, then in the Cotentin, hastened to punish his rebellious kinsman. It was on this occasion that William passed through Caudebec as he came from Valognes by way of Bayeux, Caen, and Pont Audemer,

in the famous ride described in the "Roman de Rou." When he reached Arques, he had only six men. But his loyal townsmen of Rouen had sent out forces to check Count William's treason, and the Duke, assaulting the castle at the head of these auxiliaries, had nearly taken it by a *coup de main*. Failing this, he blockaded the castle and reduced it by famine. Count William was dismissed, unpunished except by the loss of his county; and the Castle of Arques became an appanage of the dukedom, and was governed by William the viscount, also a kinsman of the Duke of Normandy. Mr. Freeman, in his third volume of the "History of the Norman Conquest of England," gives a most interesting account of the siege of Arques. After the death of his father, Robert Courthose gave up the Castle of Arques to Hélié de St. Saens (who had married Robert's illegitimate daughter), and appointed him guardian of his son. Henry I. wrested the castle from Hélié after the battle of Tinchebrai. This Hélié de St. Saens is memorable for the faith and devotion he showed in guarding his young charge, the son of the luckless Robert, from Henry's treacherous attempts to get possession of him.

Our Henry I. repaired the fortifications of this almost impregnable castle. King Stephen got possession of it by treason, and it was the last castle in the province which, in 1145, yielded to Geoffry Plantagenet, the father of Henry II. Louis VII., le Jeune, tried in vain to take it from Henry II., and Richard Cœur-de-Lion was equally unsuccessful against Philip Augustus, who had taken it during Richard's captivity; but by the treaty of Louviers Arques was ceded to Richard, and he kept it till his death. The Château d'Arques was the last Norman castle which

opened its gates to the French, 1204, when John fled from Normandy, and gave up the inheritance of his fathers to the King of France.

The glory of Arques fades with the extinction of Normandy as an independent kingdom. In 1419 it yielded to Henry V. of England, but it was retaken in 1449 by Charles VII.

The French naturally attach far more interest to the battle gained under the walls of Arques by Henri Quatre than to the famous blockade of William the Conqueror.

This battle took place at the north-east of the village of Arques. Henri Quatre had four thousand men against Mayenne and his thirty thousand Leaguers. Before the battle Henri made his memorable answer to the envoy of the Leaguers, Count De Belin, who asked with what troops he meant to oppose so immense an army. "You cannot see them all," Henri answered, "for you cannot see God and the right, and these are on my side." After the battle he wrote to Crillon, "Hang thyself, brave Crillon, for we have fought Arques without thee." A bas-relief over the entrance gateway commemorates the date of the battle, Sept. 12, 1589, and represents Henri Quatre on horseback.

According to tradition, the Duchess Inde, the mother of Robert le Diable, lived at the Château d'Arques; and it was here that her wretched son, stained with every possible crime, presented himself before her, sword in hand, and threatened to take her life unless she revealed to him the cause of his own wickedness. His mother confessed that she had cursed him before his birth, and then she fell at his feet and implored for death as an atonement for her crime. But Robert was struck with grief; from grief he went on

to penitence, and, according to the legend, lived a holy life and died a penitent Christian. Some part of the remaining ruins were built by Francis I. There is still some part of a subterranean passage, which tradition says at one time reached as far as Dieppe. Arques was once a large, important town; it is now only a charmingly placed village on the river Arques. The church, sixteenth century, is interesting and well-preserved.

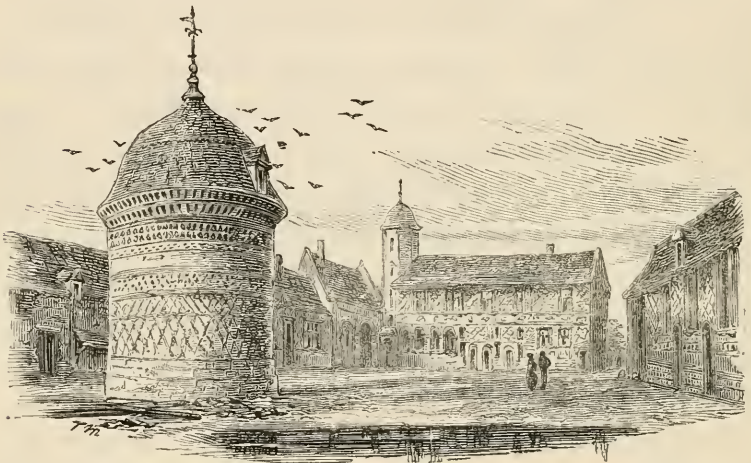
The Manoir d'Ango is in the village of Varengeville. There is a pleasant walk to this by way of Pourville, a little fishing-village. But the pleasantest way is through the Castle of Dieppe, and along the cliffs to Pourville. Here you cross the river Scie, and climb to the pretty village of Varengeville. The view all the way is charming, and the Manoir d'Ango is well worth seeing. It now forms part of a farmhouse. There is not much left of the ancient splendour it must have possessed when it was visited by Francis I. and Diane de Poitiers, and when D'Ango received the ambassadors of the King of Portugal.

It seems only to have been one story high. A part of the ground-floor forms a gallery, with an open arcade supported by columns, the capitals of which are carved with angels' and women's heads. Above this is a frieze ornamented with lozenges and medallions.

The windows above are square-framed, with arabesque ornament. Another part of the building runs out from this, but is joined to it by a graceful tower six stories high. There is yet another building, not joined to the others, and also a most quaint dovecot, circular in form; the details of this are curious. The whole manor-house is built of red brick, diapered with flint; the windows and mouldings are

in stone. Within there are fragments of good carving, especially a remarkable stone chimney-piece; in the centre an old man's bust, the hand holding a globe; and in 1857 the fresco, Moses showing the Brazen Serpent, was discovered. The building still enables one to form a good idea of a wealthy house of the sixteenth century.

The Church of Varengeville is picturesquely placed, and about a mile and a half beyond it, across the cliffs, is the



Manoir d'Ango.

lighthouse of Ailly. There is a fine view from the lighthouse.

At Sainte Marguerite, which is separated from the lighthouse by a stretch of waste land, some wonderful Roman discoveries were made about thirty years ago. A Gallo-Roman cemetery was discovered, and a Roman villa containing a magnificent mosaic.

From Dieppe it is easy to visit Eu, and the château rebuilt by Louis Philippe, where he received our Queen.

The Château d'Eu has, however, far older associations, as it was built by Henri de Guise, le Balafré, in 1578, on the site of a much older castle, which had belonged originally to the Lusignans. Near Eu is the fishing-village of Tréport: it is a quiet and cheap bathing-place, and the church is singularly well placed on the summit of the cliff.

THE SEA-COAST OF UPPER NORMANDY.

CHAPTER V.

St. Valery-en-Caux.
Valmont.

Fécamp.
Etretat.



THE journey from Dieppe to Fécamp along the coast used to be an insufferably tedious one of nearly seven hours, so the diligence is now given up. The best way for the traveller who does not care to go back to Rouen and thence start afresh for Fécamp is to take a voiture only as far as St. Valery-en-Caux, a pleasant and comfortable little bathing-place, with some interesting environs, and a curious old town some little way from the modern watering-place. It is interesting to English people, for it was here, according to some writers, that William embarked on the 27th of September, 1066, for England; but, according to Wace, he embarked at St. Valery-sur-Somme :—

“*Quan li nés furent atornées
 En Somme furent aancrées
 A Saint Valeri menées ;
 Mut ont nés e batels en Some.*”

Roman de Rou.

As soon as Harold tired of guarding the English coast, the watchful William removed his fleet from the mouth of the Dives, where it had assembled, to the mouth of the Somme. Here was a great abbey dedicated to St. Walaric or Valery, but scarcely any trace of this remains. But even when the fleet was all assembled the wind remained contrary, though William prayed constantly in the church of the abbey for the success of the enterprise. For a fortnight the wind was obstinate, and then, with a long procession, came the abbot and monks of St. Valery, bearing the shrine containing the relics of their founder. This was set on a carpet in front of the army, and William and his followers knelt down and prayed earnestly for a favourable wind.

The shrine was soon covered with gold and silver coin, the offerings of the troops; the presence of the holy relics seems to have revived their hopes. Soon after the wind changed; it blew from the south, and William at once ordered all to embark for England. All were now in eager haste, and while the ships were getting ready, the Duke repaired once more to the Abbey of St. Valery to offer solemn thanks and earnest prayer for Divine help. He then embarked in the *Mora*—the ship which was the special gift of his queen Matilda.

About six miles from St. Valéry-en-Caux is Cany, a pretty little clean town, situated in a green valley. Cany is one long street, with the cold, grey-looking church at the end of it. Only the font remains of the church consecrated here

by Archbishop Odo Rigault. The château of the Montmorencys is near Cany. It now belongs to the Duke of Luxemburg, and only dates from the end of the seventeenth century; but it has a good collection of old tapestry.

Not far from here is a very cheap little watering-place, called Les Petites Dalles, but with only one hotel. The road goes on straight from Cany to Fécamp, but it is more interesting to go by way of Valmont. Between Cany and Valmont is the Château of Fiquainville, where Cuvier first began to study natural history. The road between Cany and Valmont, like almost every part of Normandy, is rich in village churches and antiquities, as at Thérouldeville, where there is some fine painted glass, or Gerponville, where there is a Druidic grotto, or Hocqueville, where there are some thirteenth-century remains.

Valmont is pleasantly situated in a picturesque valley. It is worth visiting for the remains of its château, once the house of Du Guesclin, and it was also the birthplace of the Cardinal d'Estouteville. The ruins of the Abbey of Valmont are close by. The Gothic tombs of the lords of Estouteville in this abbey are very remarkable. The nave and cloister have been entirely destroyed, but part of the choir and the Lady chapel remain, and are now taken great care of by the present owner. These are of Renaissance work. In the Lady chapel behind the altar there is a curious sculptured representation of the Annunciation. The tombs of the Estoutevilles are on each side of the chapel.

The Abbey of Valmont-*en-Caux* was founded in 1116 by Nicholas d'Estouteville, to fulfil a vow which he had made when in peril of his life in the Holy Land. But though he sent to Germany for the best possible architects, builders and

sculptors, so that the abbey might be a splendid and worthy offering, he was a wicked man, violent and harsh-tempered, and besides this a miser. He made his vassals serve as workmen, without pay and with bad food ; and there would have been a revolt among them but for the interposition of his young daughter, Marie d'Estouteville, who spent all her money in procuring food for the starving workmen.

This story of "The Miracle of Roses" has been also told of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Magot of Sauvigny, and of other French and German saints. One evening, when Marie d'Estouteville was carrying a store of provisions for the workmen wrapped in her dress, and a vase of wine in her hand, she met her father. He demanded furiously what she was carrying so carefully.

"My father, they are roses," she said ; "and this is water."

The unbelieving father commanded her at once to open the folds of her dress, and, behold, a cluster of roses fell at his feet ; but, still full of suspicion, he upset the vase she carried, and a stream of clear water trickled on the turf.

Instead of being mollified, he overwhelmed her with reproaches, and threatened that she should spend the rest of her days in a cloister.

"May your will be done, my father," said the maiden ; and, as she spoke, a shining nimbus circled round her head.

The Sire d'Estouteville fell at the feet of his daughter ; but when, at last, he raised his eyes, she had disappeared. She was sought for diligently during many weeks, but she was never found. About a year after, however, a pilgrim who had received hospitality at the château declared that Marie d'Estouteville had died in the odour of sanctity in a convent of Carmelites.

Valmont is only about six miles from Fécamp.

The railway journey from Rouen to Fécamp is not very interesting, chiefly through corn-land. The great feature we remarked was the novel way in which each sheaf of corn was tied near the top, so as to give the effect of a huge round head. Some uncut fields glowed like burnished gold, with a gleam of scarlet poppies flaming through.

The first impression of Fécamp is not favourable. It is a long, cold, unpicturesque town, crowned by the massive, severe-looking abbey; after we had visited some others of the Norman bathing-places, we were quite at a loss to guess its attractions; and yet on the day of our arrival the inns were full, and there was scarcely a bed to be had. There is a good-sized harbour, and a bathing establishment, casino, &c., at one end of the long, narrow town, which extends uphill for about two miles in a valley made by two steep ranges of cliffs. Fécamp presents the novel aspect of a bathing-place and a manufacturing town in one. It is reckoned the first port in France for the fishery of cod, mackerel, and herring.

The river Fécamp, as it descends the steep valley, is fed by the Valmont and the Gangeville, and it works cotton, oil, and tan factories, besides flour and saw mills.

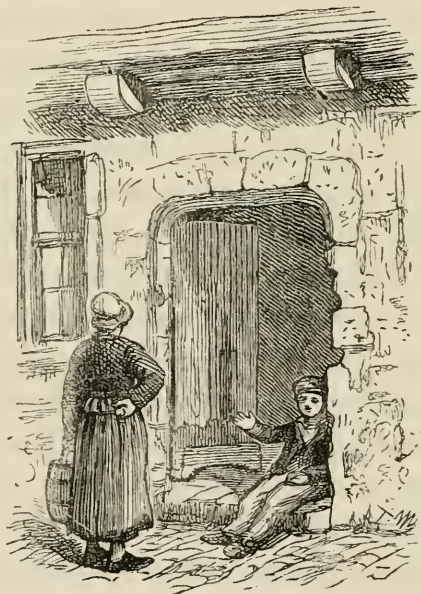
The town is little more than one long street reaching from the sea to the abbey, and beyond, whenever gaps occur between the houses, we get glimpses of steep grey-green *falaises* on each side.

The upper end of the town, near the abbey, would be very quiet but for the continual traffic of small, noisy omnibuses taking bathers to and from the sea from the various hotels. Down at the port the visitors are very gaily dressed :

the men in strangely shaped hats with beehive crowns ending in sharp points, and trimmed with bright red ribbon ; the girls in fantastic hats with low crowns, and bright-coloured scarves round their waists. There are several groups of smartly dressed, coarse-looking people sitting outside the little cafés drinking beer, &c. The harbour forms half a bay : on the right the cliffs stretch along for some distance as chalky as the cliffs of England ; in the midst is the port ; on the left the headland stretching out into the sea, with a lighthouse and church atop ; this is the Chapel of Notre-Dame de la Grâce, built by Henry I. of England. In this direction we saw a

party of men and women flying kites. But our pilgrimage to Fécamp was to the abbey, and this is at the farther end of the town. There is not much to notice in the streets beyond a few quaint old stone houses of the sixteenth century, and the Place at the upper end, which is a picturesque opening, and, as it was market-day, was full of colour.

A little beyond this is the abbey-church ; the



Old Doorway.

outside is not remarkable, and what remains of the monastery has been built in and surrounded by the municipal offices of the town. The church is still roofed with lead, spite of the

Revolution, which spared so few of the leaden roofs of churches.

The entrance to the church is in the street itself; you go down twelve steps into the nave, divided into three by two rows of eleven massive pillars. The first aspect is very impressive. It has quite a Norman character from its massive strength; but the nave is said to be early thirteenth-century, and the south side of the choir much later. The lantern is very remarkable. The chapels at the east end are of very early date; and the entire freedom of the whole building from whitewash adds much to its effect.

The first abbey is said to have been founded by St. Wanninge in 650; it was dedicated in 664, in the presence of Clotaire III.; St. Childemarca, a virgin-saint of Burgundy, was placed at the head of the convent, which contained three hundred nuns. The Normans destroyed this building, and committed fearful ravages, in the ninth century, and William Longsword rebuilt it. His son, Richard the Fearless, built a larger church and established a foundation of secular canons at Fécamp in 990. These became unsatisfactory, and in 1001 he sent for William, Abbot of St. Benigne at Dijon, dismissed the canons, and established a community of Benedictines. His son, Richard the Good, completed this work at the beginning of the eleventh century. Both these Dukes of Normandy dearly loved Fécamp. They had both minster and palace there, and both were buried beneath the eaves of the abbey-church.

Duke Richard the Good always kept the feast of Easter with much solemnity at Fécamp. He and his two sons waited on the monks at dinner-time. Sometimes, during the night, the duke would rise to go and pray in the abbey.

One night he found the door of the church fastened, and, pushing it open roughly, he awoke the sacristan. The sacristan started up, and, being only half awake, he took the duke for a thief, beat him and turned him out of the abbey. Next day the duke sent for the sacristan, and, after giving him a severe fright, pardoned him. Richard was called the Father of the Monks. When he was dying, he repeated the pious direction as to his own grave, which his father had given to himself. "Bury me," he said, "beneath the eaves of the church, so that the water trickling from the roof of the holy house may cleanse my body from all impurity." His son William became a monk at Fécamp; also his son Mauger, and his grandson Nicholas.

Fécamp is specially interesting to the English, for, besides the associations connecting it with William Longsword and his son and grandson, there is much to remind us of early Norman history. It was from Fécamp that Duke Robert and Edward the Atheling embarked for England, but they were driven ashore at Jersey. At Fécamp was buried Count Alan of Brittany, one of the guardians appointed by Duke Robert during the minority of William the Bastard. After the Conquest, King William kept his first Easter with much pomp at Fécamp, which, next to his own splendid church at Caen, he seems to have loved best among the religious houses of Normandy. In 1075 William again kept Easter at Fécamp, and during the same festival his daughter Cicley took the veil and became a nun in the Abbey of the Holy Trinity, at Caen. This was the only famous monastery in Normandy north-east of the Seine; the rest were either in the valley of the river or west of it.

The Chapel of St. Thomas was built to honour the place

where, in accordance with their wish, the pious Dukes Richard I. and Richard II. were buried, under the eaves of the church they had built; their remains were afterwards deposited near the high altar.

In the baptistery there are two small stone figures veiled; these are memorials of the nuns of Fécamp, "the pious children of St. Childemarca," who, during the siege by the Normans in 841, cut off their own noses and lips to escape profanation.

Behind the choir is the great treasure of this Church of the Holy Trinity; a small white marble shrine is fixed against one of the pillars, with an inscription signifying that herein is preserved a portion of the Precious Blood of our Lord.

The legend is that Nicodemus, when assisting in the descent from the cross, collected in a glove the blood which had gathered around the sacred wounds. He kept it thus preserved during his life, but when he was dying he confided the treasure to his nephew Isaac. Isaac was told in a vision that the Romans were destroying everything that came in their way, and, fearing for the safety of the precious relic, he pierced a hole in a fig-tree and placed in it a leaden box in which he had enclosed the relic, then he cut down the tree and threw the trunk into the sea. The trunk was carried by the waves to the valley of Fécamp. The children of a Christian named Bozo, and his wife Merca, were playing in the field where the trunk had been washed ashore, and finding three shoots of an unknown tree bearing large leaves, they carried one home to their father. Bozo recognised the leaf as that of the fig-tree, and planted the young shoots in his garden; he tried to remove the trunk there, but it was too heavy. The shoots grew into

large trees ; and as the tree had never been seen before in the country, the place where they had been found was called "le Champ du Figuier."

Bozo died ; and one winter night an old, venerable-looking man came and asked hospitality from Merca. The night was cold, and Merca had little fuel.

"Ah," said the hospitable woman, "if my husband were alive, we would have such a log of wood as we burn at Christmas."

The children said to one another, "Why should we not bring hither the trunk of the fig-tree, if we could only find some one to help us?"

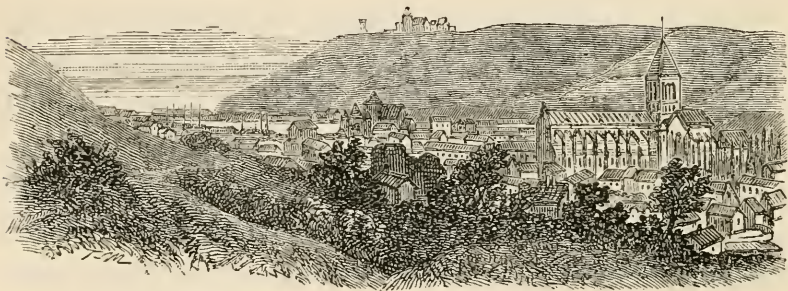
"It is useless," Merca replied ; "your father tried his utmost, and he could not so much as move the trunk."

The stranger asked what the trunk was, and being told, said he would go next morning to the Champ du Figuier.

Next morning the stranger, accompanied by the children and servants of Merca, went to the field. The stranger raised the trunk, which Bozo had found so stubborn, without any difficulty, and placed it on the car which had been made ready for it. The oxen drew the car easily till they reached the place where now stands the Abbey of Fécamp, but they could draw it no farther ; and as they strove the car fell to pieces, and at this the stranger fell on his knees and remained some time in prayer. He then made the sign of the cross on the trunk, and placed on it a heap of stones in the form of an altar. "Happy province," he said, "happy place ! but thrice happy he who adores the price of the world herein enclosed." He disappeared at these words ; but some centuries passed before a church was reared in honour of the relic. When Duke Richard caused his church

of Fécamp to be rebuilt in honour of the precious relic, now lost under the ruins of the first abbey in which it had been enshrined, on the day of its dedication an angel suddenly appeared, bearing in his hands the Precious Blood, and, having laid it on the altar, he said, "Here is the price of the redemption of the world, which came from Jerusalem." He then vanished, but left the impression of his foot on a stone still to be seen; it is enclosed in a shrine in the Chapelle de la Dormition de la Vierge.

Another story says that the abbot, Henry de Suilly, found the Precious Blood in 1440 under one of the pillars near



View of the Abbey and Town.

the high altar, when he was rebuilding the church which had been burnt.

From the Abbey of Fécamp came Cardinal la Balue, the Cardinal François of Joyeuse, Henry II. of Lorraine, and the Archbishop Henri de Bourbon. Jean Casimir, King of Poland, was Abbot of Fécamp. The Abbey was exempt from all ecclesiastical jurisdiction, except that of the Pope.

After Normandy was reunited to the crown of France, Fécamp seems to have been a special favourite with the French kings. From 1476 the Abbot of Fécamp was

always a member of the court. The last abbot was the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault.

On the north-east side of the church are several chapels with some very curious cinque-cento screen-work.

We were so tired that we were glad to go to the inn nearest the abbey, a bustling place, so full of noisy bathers that when we asked to wash our faces we were told to go into the kitchen which opened into the courtyard—a quaint place with stables on one side, and a wooden gallery running along the other, with stairs leading down here and there. There was a vine as usual clustering round the windows in the gallery, and two girls gazing down out of this leafy bower looked charmingly picturesque.

In the kitchen we found a tap over a clean white earthenware sink, a clean towel, and some mottled soap. The master and mistress sat close by, behind a glass partition, the chef and the garçon sat eating in the kitchen itself, but all were much too polite to stare at us while we washed in public.

On the north-east side of the town is a fountain, said to have gushed forth on the spot where the trunk of the fig-tree was washed on shore, and here pilgrims resort yearly on the first Tuesday in Trinity to drink the water of the fountain, after having visited the shrine in the church. At this season Fécamp literally overflows with the multitude of pilgrims from all parts of France, who come to worship at the shrine of the Precious Blood.

It appeared that the diligence for Etretat had started just before our arrival, and that there was not a horse to be had till evening. This was disheartening news, for we wished to get on to Etretat ; but there was no help for it.

We did not start for Etretat till seven o'clock, as our driver took at least an hour to arrange his harness and our luggage.

We drove at a very leisurely pace. For some distance the road lay over a plateau of waste land; then appeared orchards and harvest-fields, the shocks of reaped corn tied together atop in much larger groups than we had seen them before. In the waning light they looked like nodding goblins against the broad expanse of sky; for although we could not see the sea we were following the line of cliffs, and these fields stretched away to the edge. We watched the sun set gloriously, leaving a broad border of golden light above the edge of the fast-darkening cliffs. A little farther on a team of Norman horses and three men loading a cart stood out in giant largeness against the band of golden light. Presently we came to a lovely wooded valley sloping down on the left, and again the bare waste stretching out to the cliffs on the right.

About three parts of the way to Etretat we passed through a village with a church, which our driver told us was Les Loges. It was too dark to see anything, but we heard that numerous Roman antiquities have been discovered in and about Les Loges.

It was quite dark by the time we reached Etretat. The town seemed to be nestling between two dark hills, and the lights from the houses below and those scattered up the sides of the hills came twinkling through the trees like glow-worms.

We drove through the narrow street to the Hôtel Gustave Hauville. It forms three sides of a little courtyard, and the light from the windows showed us the landlady's pleasant

smiling face as she came out to meet us. But directly we asked for rooms she threw up both hands in seeming despair, though as she still smiled we felt she must be in a state of inward satisfaction.

“*Quel dommage!* but it is so much better to write. It is always so about the 15th of August, here and elsewhere. There is not a bed to be had in Etretat.”

Cheerful news at nine o'clock at night, with the alternative of a two hours' drive back to Fécamp!

We remonstrated and entreated; but madame explained that a large number of her guests, and also of those at the other hotels, had to sleep in rooms in the town, and that she had already sent away thirty people from Etretat that day, after vainly seeking a bed for them.

We drove to one of the other hotels, but only heard the same story; so we told our driver that when he was rested we would go back to Fécamp, unless we could succeed in finding a lodging at Les Loges.

Meantime we strolled about the town, having made a solemn resolution never to venture to Etretat or any other French watering-place in the month of August without writing to secure a lodging. The town looked very sleepy; most of the shops were already shut, and the visitors were doubtless congregated at the casino.

Presently we came to a shoemaker's shop which had not closed so early as its neighbours. The door too stood wide open, and revealed a most dazzling array of blue and yellow shoes on its neat shelves. On the empty shining mahogany counter was a large bouquet of China asters, and behind this sat a quiet, simply dressed young woman with a sad pensive face.

A faint hope came to us, and we went in and told her our plight.

“I am afraid it is true,” she said, smiling. “I have heard there is not one bed to be had in Etretat.”

Here came a pause. We felt that we would rather sleep in her nice clean shop than go back in the dark to noisy bustling Fécamp ; and after all Fécamp was perhaps as full as Etretat.

All at once the sad face took a sudden look of intelligence. “Attendez,” she said, “I will inquire ;” and she vanished out of the shop.

She soon came back with a little girl.

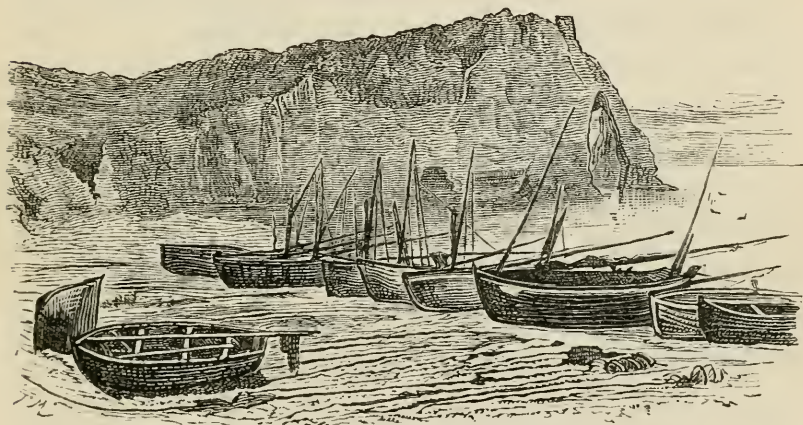
“Yes, I have been fortunate. There is a lady who has a room cleaned and ready for occupation, if monsieur and madame will go and see it.”

We thanked her most heartily, and then followed the little girl down two narrow, dark alleys—for there are no street lamps in Etretat—to a small house. Over the door was a swing-lamp, and a signboard with “Café Gémy” thereon. Opposite was a blank wall. Altogether it was a most uninviting lodging, but still it was our only hope. We went in through the café. A rough-headed woman opened the door of an inner room, and revealed the disorder on the four bare deal tables we were passing—spilt beer and coffee and dominoes scattered on each table.

The back room was a kitchen with a staircase in it. There was a long table, on which the rough-headed woman had been busy ironing, though it was nearly ten o'clock.

She was rather a pretty woman, with long narrow eyes ; and she held up her one candle and examined us curiously out of them, and then asked us to follow her up-stairs. Here

she threw open the door of a miserable little room. There was a bed, a chair, a row of shelves, and a baby in a cradle in it. The floor was certainly clean, but the whole aspect of the place was squalid. However, having protested against the absence and presence of one or two things, specially the presence of the baby, which was carried off up-stairs, we managed to sleep very comfortably at the Café Gémy; but we had the satisfaction of paying for this wretched room a larger price than we should have paid for capital accommodation at the hotel.



Porte d'Aval.

Next morning we went down to the *plage*, and were delighted with the view of Etretat. Its position is perfect. It is placed at the opening and junction of the two valleys, Grand Val and Petit Val, which find their way here to the sea between two chalky cliffs nearly three hundred feet high. The cliff on the right is called the Côte d'Amont; at the top is the little chapel of Notre-Dame; and beyond on the farther side, but not visible from the beach, is the Chaudron: this

was a creek leading into a tunnel in the cliff, where the sea roared and foamed furiously ; but it is now blocked by a fall of the cliff. That on the left, by far the most beautiful, is the Côte d'Aval. The two lofty cliffs, which descend precipitously into the sea, are pierced through by a lofty pointed arch, called the Porte d'Aval ; through this the sea is visible, and from a certain point on the *plage* is visible also the Aiguille d'Etretat, a singular natural obelisk which rises abruptly from the seat ; its effect, when seen through the arch, is most remarkable.

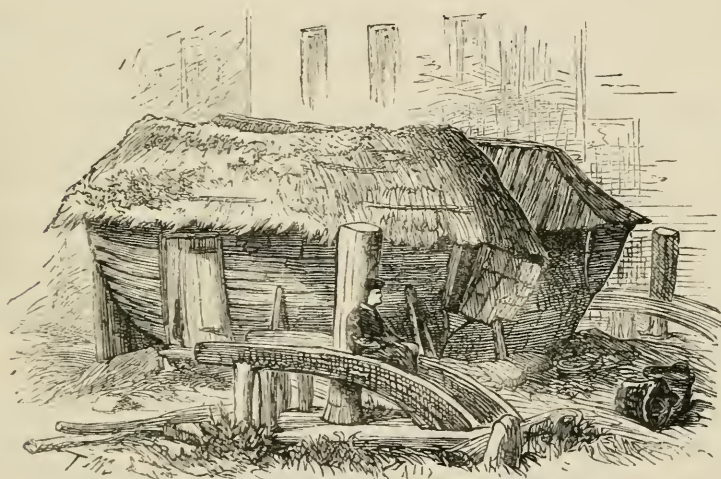
The effects of light and shade on these grass-topped cliffs and the fantastic rocks below make constant and varied pictures, and one is not surprised that artists find so much charm in Etretat.

Etretat itself lies below the sea-level. It has been, therefore, necessary to protect it by raising a steep beach of large stones. All one end of this towards the Porte d'Aval is given up to the fishermen, and was covered with boats when we first saw it. Along the top of the beach is the bathing establishment, with its rows of cabins ; and behind this the casino, which has a ball-room, a theatre, and all the usual accessories. Behind the fishing-boats is a range of thatched boats with doors in their black sides, reminding one at first sight of Yarmouth and of Mr. Peggotty ; only these are not used for habitations, only as storehouses for fishing-nets and apparatus. These boats, with their mossed thatch, make a singularly quaint background to the groups on the beach.

Two centuries ago a river ran through Etretat into the sea, but it has disappeared, and now only manifests its presence in pools of fresh water on the beach, in some of which we saw women washing clothes.

But besides the scenery there is very much to enjoy at Etretat : there is such an utter freedom from restraint, and from all the absurd conventionalities which bathers seem to bring to almost all the other seaside resorts. People at Etretat seem to be hard-workers who know the value of a holiday, and are resolved not to encroach on its freedom by any of the formalities necessary to life in a city.

Their system of bathing would not suit English taste, but they seem very happy in it. The stony beach, however, is



Boats used as Storehouses on the Shore.

very unpleasant for the bathers. We saw a lady coming up the path of planks which reaches from the top of the steep beach to the sea, with her ankles bruised and bleeding. The little dressing-cabins are at the top, and the bathers have to make a long journey down and up the planks. There is no special part of the bay set apart for bathing. There is a large awning on the beach, and under the shade of this the little community sit reading, sketching, embroidering, or

engaged in what seems by far the favourite occupation—chatting; and, to judge by the fragments of talk that reached us as we sat in happy idleness in the bright sunshine—the sparkling animated faces and the gentle laughter around us—the chatting was very amusing, evidently often at the expense of the bathers, who pass and repass close beside the awning in full bathing costume, and over this a long white wrapper. All of them wear bathing-shoes, with soles made of cord to protect their feet from the stones, and many of them have large straw hats. When we first reached the *plage* the sea was a most animated spectacle. Groups of men and women—for everybody bathes together at Etretat—were dancing about hand-in-hand in the water; while many were swimming out at some distance, having taken headers from a sort of spring-board which is wheeled down the beach close to the water's edge. The more timid bathers are guided down to the sea by one of the Brothers Maturin, or by Zephir; and when they reach the sea, a pail of salt water is poured over the head before they venture in.

The laughter and life and sparkle of the whole scene are indescribable. Every one looks happy and bright; and each makes fun of the other, as each in turn leaves the shade of the awning, or a comfortable seat on the beach, to join the noisy groups in the sea.

There seems, too, a sort of family life here that is almost ludicrous. We watched a husband and wife leave the shelter of the awning, go up to the cabins, and then descend the planks in full array. When they reached the sea we saw that they were accomplished swimmers. On they went side by side till we began to feel nervous for their safe return; but presently they turned, and the lady's large Leghorn hat was

ahead. In a few minutes they came up the planks chatting together, the lady so tired that half-way up she begged for her husband's arm, and there seemed to be some little difficulty in walking arm-in-arm in those immense white wrappers.

There are plenty of comfortable chairs to be had gratis. Fathers and mothers sit surrounded by children of all ages, and seemingly spoil the latter to their hearts' content. We watched one charmingly dressed little damsel of about twelve disturb the comfort of her whole family by crying and sobbing for at least an hour because she had missed a friend with whom she was to have taken a walk. Several attempts were made to soothe her, but neither father nor mother seemed to think reproof needful.

We went to the Hôtel d'Hauville to breakfast, and were much amused by the life there. It was a repetition of the happy gaiety of the beach. Many of the male guests were artists, all French. Some of the gentlemen had blue yachting suits and large bright scarlet flat caps ; but none of the ladies showed any of the extravagance in dress we had remarked at Dieppe. They seemed to have come to Etretat simply for bathing and for enjoyment. Most lively conversations were carried on after meals between groups sitting and lounging about the yard, and other groups looking down from the little outside wooden gallery which runs across one side of the house, while below in a sort of open counting-house sat the mistress ready to smile and chat with all.

The tone of life of Etretat, and of some of the smaller bathing-places, such as Arromanches, Asnelle, Les Petites Dalles, and many others, seems purely French. There is scarcely any of the peacock display of Dieppe, Trouville,

and some of the grander resorts, where Parisians and English and American women strive to outdo one another, the former in *bizarrerie*, the last in extravagance. Nor do we see so much of that flirting which seems to be now a chief element of an English sea-side town. It is at Etretat and elsewhere a thorough family holiday; and on Sunday especially, when husbands and brothers who have travelled from Paris on Saturday join the groups, the mirth and sparkle over the whole scene are most delightful. This is doubtless increased at Etretat by the fondness shown by artists, both in painting and literature, for the beautiful little place; and no one who has ever visited it can wonder at their choice.

Bathing and breakfast over, some of the idlers disperse. Another of the charms of Etretat is, that there are enchanting walks within easy distance, and, for those who prefer them, most delightful drives. The famous Cap d'Antifer is some distance beyond the Ported'Aval, and the Roc-aux-Guillemots is near this. Yport, too, is a charming little bathing-place, between Etretat and Fécamp, so exquisitely placed in a valley running down to the sea that, but for the mud, which is considered unhealthy, it would be a formidable rival to Etretat. Also there is the excursion to St. Jouin. This is generally made early, as it is customary to breakfast at the Hôtel de Paris, kept by Ernestine Aubourg, who is a sort of celebrity among the artist-visitors of Etretat. There are drawings to be seen here, and verses written by A. Dumas *fils*, in praise of Ernestine. The cliffs at St. Jouin are worth seeing, and the return by the valley of Bruneval is charming.

It is also possible to drive beyond the Côte d'Amont to Bénouville and the Fontaine aux Mousses; but this is far

more delightful as a walk, as you can then descend the *vallée* of Bénouville, a sort of spiral which circles round an immense natural well. Below this are steps leading down to the sea. Here is the farm of Father Isaac, to which people often walk out to breakfast.

But the most charming walk is that of the Côte d'Aval. Just before we reach the Porte d'Aval—the lofty arch in the rock we had seen from the beach—we see a cave in the cliffs we are scaling; this is called the Trou de l'Homme. As we get nearer the Porte d'Aval, the fantastic forms of the cliffs reveal themselves more fully; and as soon as we have passed it, we stand in admiration of the sight below. On the right is the Porte d'Aval, and beside it, surrounded by a group of strangely shaped rocks, is the famous Aiguille, rising in weird irregular grandeur more than 220 feet. On the right, in a lofty cliff stretching out into the sea from a semicircle of rocky coast, is the Manne Porte, another lofty arched opening in the rock. From this point the cliff continues in a succession of rocky peaks to Cap d'Antifer. From the cliff where we stand, between the two arches, a narrow path, from which the cliff descends like a precipice on each side, leads up to a rocky peninsula. On the summit of this, at a height of 300 feet, is a fantastic-looking grotto, called the "Chambre des Demoiselles." This is the legend:—

The village of Etretat anciently belonged to the lords of Fréfosse. There was once a chevalier of Fréfosse so wicked that he had no respect for female virtue. One day being at church, he saw there three young and beautiful sisters, and he ordered them to be carried off to his castle. But the sisters were as good as they were beautiful, and they refused

even to speak to him. Furious with rage, the chevalier caused the three sisters to be carried to the top of the cliff, since called the *Chambre des Demoiselles*, and to be flung down thence in a barrel spiked with sharp nails. From this time the white phantoms of the three sisters were seen by the fishermen on the summit of the cliff, and day and night they followed the steps of their murderer. At length, exhausted by their constant attendance on him, he died of remorse, and since then the sisters have neither been seen nor heard of. There is something in this legend which reminds one of the story of the *Discreet Princess*.

The view from the point on which the grotto stands is said to be magnificent, and is, no doubt, worth the attention of fearless climbers; but the path is narrow and broken, and the wind is so high that we content ourselves with the prospect from the cliff itself. In some ways it reminds us of Lynton, Devon. It is, perhaps, not so grand, the cliff being lower; but it is, if possible, even more weird and picturesque.

The cliff itself on which we walk is covered with fine grass, and we see in abundance the star-thistle and many other wild flowers. The sun is shining gloriously; the sea is an exquisite blue, except where it flings a mist of spray against the cliffs and falls in snowy foam at their feet. Sea-birds sail across the little bay with a calm, sustained flight, as if they are not troubled by fears for the weather; and out at sea we can make out more than one huge vessel on its way to Havre or Fécamp.

But we are not left long in peace. Up the cliff come, smiling and chatting, a father and mother, an old aunt, and a girl and two boys. One does not see large families at Etretat.

The ladies sit down on the grass, declaring themselves tired out already by the ascent from the beach ; and the gentleman having stared at us, and ascertained that we are—what is at that moment rare in Etretat—English, declares he shall go across the perilous isthmus to the *Chambre des Demoiselles*. His wife remonstrates, then entreats, almost cries, and finally sulks, because he persists in his adventure.

When he comes back he announces that it is not at all dangerous, but that there is little to be gained by going there ; and then, looking at us, for he evidently rejoices in an audience, he announces his intention of descending the precipitous cliff to the sea. He reads aloud a passage from his guide-book to prove that there is a way here, used by revenue officers, and that it is therefore practicable for him. Madame gets on her feet, wrings her hands, and shrieks after him in agony ; but he goes plunging down among the rocks in the most rash and alarming manner, declaring he sees a rope to cling to.

Madame turns round and exclaims, "It is always so ; there never was such folly ; and he will be killed—he will certainly be killed !" The children even leave off their play on the grass, and look anxious. We walk on, feeling ourselves *de trop* in this family discussion ; but, long before we reach the *Manne Porte*, Monsieur comes rushing up the cliff, looking rather crestfallen. He stops to inform us that it is quite insignificant down there, and therefore he has not thought it worth while to make the descent. We smile, and go on along the cliff. For good walkers it must be a delightful excursion to *Cap d'Antifer*, but it must be more than six miles along the edge of the cliffs.

Etretat is a place where one seeks for natural beauty more than for architecture or history ; but it has been called the Norman Herculaneum from the amount of Gallo-Roman remains found there, and Monsieur l'Abbé Cochet has written an interesting treatise on it. Although it now contains nearly two thousand inhabitants, it was till lately a mere fishing-village. Thirty years ago Isabey, the painter, first discovered its charms, and he soon induced other artists to frequent it. Le Poitevin every year found subjects there for his pictures ; and finally Alphonse Karr wrote up Etretat till he made it famous. But the casino was not built till 1852, and not in its present form till 1870. Spite of its newness, Etretat possesses an old church of the transition period. It is at some distance from the town, and is more interesting than remarkable, except the lantern, which must have been very good before it was restored. It is said to rank next to the lanterns of Fécamp and Coutances. There is a legend which accounts for the distance of the church from the town.

A pious lady, named Olive, was bathing at a fountain near the sea, when she was surprised by pirates. She took flight, vowing if she reached home safely to build a church on the spot where she fled away from her pursuers. Having reached home in safety, she proceeded religiously to fulfil her vow, and began to lay the foundation of a church close to the village ; but the Evil One, who had great dealings in Etretat, thought this would save too many souls, so every night he moved all the workmen's tools and building materials to the Petit Val, at the foot of the Côte St. Clair. As it became evident that this interference would continue, and so much time being wasted in the removal, after a few days Olive re-

solved to transfer the site ; and the present church was built on the spot designated by the Evil One.

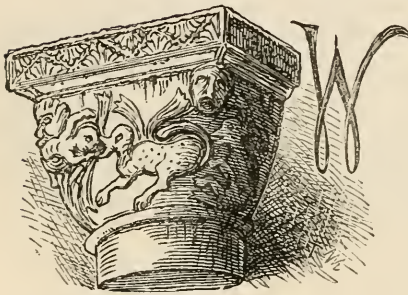
Near the church, and, indeed, on each side of Etretat, are pleasant furnished houses standing in gardens. We went over one with three sitting-rooms and about ten bedrooms, full of old furniture and rare faïence, with a wooden balcony round the house, forming an outside communication between the rooms. It was to be let at a very reasonable rate. There are many private villas built up the sides of the cliffs, belonging to Parisians, who flock here for the three holiday months. August is the full month for Etretat ; in July or September it is much easier to find room ; but it is always wise to write beforehand, as there are only two good hotels.

The town is small : one street, with a few nice shops, and another street crossing the end of it, is about the extent.

THE SEA-COAST OF UPPER NORMANDY.

CHAPTER VI.

LE HAVRE.



WE were very sorry to leave happy, sparkling Etretat, for, spite of our misfortunes on arrival, we had found so much enjoyment there. We had secured outside places on the diligence for Havre, as there was no room in the *coupé*, and also we wished to see the country; but just before the time for starting it began to rain heavily. We found, to our dismay, that instead of a *banquette* on the roof, sheltered by a leather hood, there were two outside seats on a bench fixed in front of the *coupé*, without any shelter; and, to add to our discomfort, a third passenger was crammed in, leaving about six inches of seat for the unlucky coachman. He, however, seemed to be a thorough philosopher; and, while we tried to make a sort of tent of umbrellas, he sat cheerfully soaking in the rain. Even when his white horses fell into a walk, he never touched them with his whip; he only cracked it, and shouted the invariable "*Hé-gidi*," or whatever the word is, which only a Norman driver has power to utter. Occa-

sionally he poured out a volley of these words, rising into a shriek as he ended, but the horses took very little heed.

There is really nothing to see in the drive from Etretat to Havre worth such a wetting, and we were heartily glad when we clattered over the stones of the well-lighted, spacious town. It was light enough to get a glimpse of the Place Hôtel de Ville and of the Hôtel de Ville itself, and then of the Place Louis Seize, with its brilliantly lit theatre; and then we came clattering down the Rue de Paris, full of gay shops, on our way to the sea.

Among French towns, Havre is of modern origin—till the fifteenth century it seems to have been little more than a salt-marsh, and to have been English in the reign of Charles VII. Louis XII. increased its fortifications; but it did not develop into importance till the reign of Francis I. When Henry IV. visited Havre in 1603, he said, "I have heard that you are preparing for me fêtes: employ the money that you destined to vain pomp to help those who have suffered from war; they will find their account in it, and so shall I."

The old picturesque round tower of Francis I. has been destroyed to make room for the pier. The citadel, too, built by Cardinal Richelieu, in which the leaders of the Fronde—Condé, Conti, and Longueville—were imprisoned by Mazarin, has been demolished; and in 1856 the ramparts, which went quite round the town, were removed, and the three towns of Ingouville, Graville, and Sanvic were united to Havre, which now contains a population of upwards of 71,000. It is since the peace of 1815 that the prosperity of Havre has taken such a stride, and now every year widens its commercial relations.

As a town, except that it has handsome, well-paved, well-lighted streets, some fine boulevards and squares, it is not remarkable; but its harbour and docks are among the wonders of the world, and are well worth a visit. It is the only entirely safe port for steamers on this side of France.

The tide in the Seine, at the mouth of which the town stands, keeps high water in the harbour for about four hours twice a-day, and during this time boats go across to Honfleur and Trouville and back.

We went up next morning to the Place du Théâtre, or Place Louis Seize, in the centre of the town. The view here of the shipping of all nations in the Bassin du Commerce, which occupies one side of the Place, is very fine. There is an enormous iron apparatus fixed in the middle of the Place for unloading vessels.

The Place itself is divided into two squares, planted with trees; that on the right is used as an open-air exchange, and that on the left is a promenade, and, when we reached it, was occupied as a flower-market. In the middle is the statue of Louis Seize. It is a splendid opening, and gives the impression that Havre is a powerful and wealthy city. On the right, as one faces the quay, the Rue de Paris stretches down to the harbour; and on the left to the handsome modern Hôtel de Ville, built in the style of the Renaissance.

Havre offers the strongest possible contrast to Rouen: it is all modern, of the newest type, with its streets full of bronzed sailors; and its forests of masts, which greet you at the end of almost every street. It seems to be a city which deals in the raw material of wealth, receiving the products of all nations, and speeding them forth again on the broad

bosom of the Seine to be utilised. Since the railway has been established, however, the traffic on the Seine has decreased; but still huge barge-loads float lazily up to Rouen, Elbeuf, &c., though these are sometimes tugged swiftly along by one of the rapid little river steamers.

We came down the Rue de Paris, looking into the windows of its capital shops. On the left is a magnificent fruit-market—piles of tawny melons, baskets of velvet peaches, royal purple and crimson plums, beside pyramids of scarlet tomatoes, and above and among and everywhere bunches of grapes that looked like embodiments of sunshine.

There are vegetables sold here also, though the great display is of fruit. There is a fish-market in the Place behind. As we passed the market we saw a proof of French thrift in several women bargaining for apronfuls of the refuse cabbage leaves, which in England would be swept away as rubbish, but of which our frugal neighbours make their soup.

It is a sad disgrace to Havre, that while it has docks which have cost millions, like the Bassin de l'Eure, it cannot show a church worth looking at. There is no record left of the chapel Notre-Dame de Grâce, which stood once near the sea, and from which the town took its name of Havre-de-Grâce. The present church of Notre-Dame is most unsightly, both inside and out.

We went on to the end of the Rue de Paris, to the Musée. There are pictures here, but none of any interest; and a public library of 30,000 volumes—among these are some eighth and ninth century manuscripts.

In front of the Museum are two handsome bronze statues of Casimir Delavigne and Bernardin de St. Pierre, by David,

both natives of Havre ; but the houses in which they were born no longer exist. We went on along the quay to the pier. There are two piers stretching out from the harbour, and vessels enter between them ; but only this one on the north seems to be frequented.

It was high water when we reached the lighthouse at the end of the pier. The view here is very striking : on the left, the mouth of the Seine ; opposite are Honfleur, or rather the wooded cliff of Notre-Dame de la Grâce, and Trouville in the distance ; on the right are the bathers and Frascati ; above are the heights of Ste. Adresse and the lighthouses of Cap la Hève ; and in front is the sea. More than one large vessel was in sight, and the whole made a picture to be remembered.

For a residence of some days or weeks Frascati is the pleasantest part of Havre ; but for travellers pressed for time it is very uncentral.

We came back to the Musée, and then went on along the Grand Quai. Here are parrots of all kinds and colours, screaming, chattering, turning the place into a perfect Babel of feathered talk ; and besides these the whole quay is thronged with bales and barrels, and among them sailors gesticulating and chattering almost as many tongues as the parrots.

It is amusing to notice the names on the restaurants which abound on this and the neighbouring quays—Hôtel de New York, de Suède, de Norvège—with many invitations in foreign tongues to tempt the throngs of bronzed sailors to fancy they are at home. The steamers for Caen, Honfleur, and Trouville start from the Grand Quai, and the departures and arrivals add to the universal bustle.

We had to go rather in and out to find the bridges which separate the different basins, and make a land passage among them. There are twelve of these bridges, with sluice-gates. Five of them open directly into the harbour, and the others are between the different basins, so as to make a thorough communication from one dock to another. We turned to the left, up the Quai Notre-Dame, and crossed the Bassin du Roi by the first bridge, then down the quay opposite the Quai Notre-Dame, which was choked by bales of cotton, and across another bridge dividing the Bassin de la Barre from the harbour or avant-port. Just opposite the Pont de la Barre we crossed another, called the Pont de Sas. We followed a road which led beside the harbour to another bridge, called L'Ecluse de la Citadelle. It is about 100 feet wide, and it separates the harbour from the great Eure dock, which is specially reserved for the Transatlantic steamers. We went over another bridge, and all round this huge Dock de l'Eure, which, except the Bassin de la Floride, still nearer the pier, is the nearest dock to the Seine. Its size is immense, 3,600 feet long by upwards of 600 feet broad: the huge red-chimneyed vessels lie quite at their ease in this vast dock. We saw and admired among others the unfortunate *Ville du Havre*, lying near the end of the dock. Beside the basin is a sort of dock faubourg, called Eure, where there are some very old walls. This is the region of dock-houses and huge wooden sheds for merchandise. One realises that specimens of the products of the whole world lie here round and about.

We crossed two more bridges, and then the Pont de la Barre, which brought us on to the Quai d'Orléans, beside the Bassin du Commerce. Near here we passed the

Morgue, and a floating dock, quite dry at that time. A large vessel was lying heeled over, with about fifty carpenters in blouses swarming up its sides like so many ants, driving in lumps of tow with wooden beetles.

Perhaps, after all, the Bassin du Commerce is the most interesting; its position in the centre of the town is very picturesque. It is interesting, too, from the variety of the great vessels that lie within it—vessels of every variety of build, from the huge unwieldy Norwegian, with its profusely gilded figure-head and much-encumbered rigging, to the slender, swift-looking New Yorker, without a superfluous cable on her decks, her tall, tapering masts showing bare beside many of her neighbours. It was cheerful to see our flag frequently, and to notice the trim aspect of the vessels beneath it. The British crews are, far away, the best-looking among the sailors; the others seem to be a motley assemblage of nations, numbering among them many men of colour. There is a life and animation in the incessant occupation which is very amusing. It becomes a sort of fascination after a time to watch the loading and unloading of the different vessels, and the variety in the crews.

The Quai d'Orléans reaches quite to the Placé Louis Seize. We went up the Rue de Paris, and came to the Hôtel de Ville, with its charming, well-planted garden in front. The climate, doubtless, has much to do with the luxuriant growth of plants and shrubs, but both here, at Rouen, and elsewhere in Normandy, we were delighted with the public gardens. They are small, except at Lisieux and Coutances, but they are well kept, and the plants in them are both rare and interesting.

The Hôtel de Ville is very handsome. It was built in 1855, in the Renaissance style, with the high roofs and dormer windows of that epoch.

Another interesting public garden is in the square of St. Roch, once a cemetery. There is a Jardin des Plantes here and an aquarium, of which the Havrais are very proud. The square of St. Roch is a little way on the left of the Hôtel de Ville, along the Boulevard de Strasbourg.

Early next morning we went up to the Place Louis Seize, and took the omnibus to Ste. Adresse. It is best to see this in early morning; the harbour and town are freer then from smoke, and the view is much more extensive. The road is very steep, and every now and then we get peeps of the sea. In about half an hour we reach the opening of the village, and we leave the omnibus. At the corner of the road is a pleasant-looking farmhouse; beside this is a path which leads up through a steep wood to the cliffs. About half-way is a most charming view of the mouth of the Seine and the opposite coast, with the hills of Calvados. Havre lies below us, shrouded by its forest of masts; and midway are weeping willows among groups of poplars. But we have to hurry on, for our fellow-travellers of the omnibus are far ahead, and we may lose our way alone.

It is a delightful walk in the early morning, so fresh and yet so still; and when we finally leave the wood and cross a huge field, the dew hangs still on the grass, and we see a lark rising up to begin his morning hymn.

There is no danger here of missing our way. The lighthouses are before us—two huge white towers, which do not seem in keeping with the scene, they look so realistic and commonplace.

The little chapel of Notre-Dame des Flots is more interesting, though it too is quite modern.

In going to the lighthouses we are warned not to go too near the edge of the cliff, the ground is so very treacherous. The view from here is magnificent. In clear weather, to the south-west one can see the headland of Barfleur, the scene of the shipwreck of the *Blanche Nef* in the time of Henry I. ; to the south, much nearer than Barfleur, Dives and the mouth of the Orne ; and to the north the Cap d'Antifer and rocky peaks of Etretat. The immense expanse of sea in the soft haze of morning light is a splendid spectacle of colour ; the variety and beauty seem never-ending, sometimes glittering, and then opalesque, with infinite change of soft and tender tints, now, as some light mist floats over the sun, mellowing into a greyish green, almost more lovely than its former aspect, and, before the eye has time to tire, sparkles of light flit across the broad expanse from one curving ripple to another, as if the very water were conscious of its Proteus-like power, and enjoyed the delight it is giving us.

Ste. Adresse lies in a little valley, and is only a few minutes' walk from the lighthouses. A legend gives the origin of its name. Once upon a time, a merchant-ship was carried away by the current to the foot of Cap de la Hève, which at that time stretched much farther into the sea than it does at present. The ship had nearly struck ; and the sailors, instead of aiding the captain or the ship, flung themselves on their knees, and invoked St. Denis, the patron-saint of the Pays de Caux. The captain looked at them, and then he said, "My friends, you mistake ; you should not ask help from St. Denis, but from Ste. Adresse : for Adresse is

the only saint who can bring us into port." The sailors took courage, and worked with a will ; and the name of Ste. Adresse was given to the little village of Cap de la Hève.

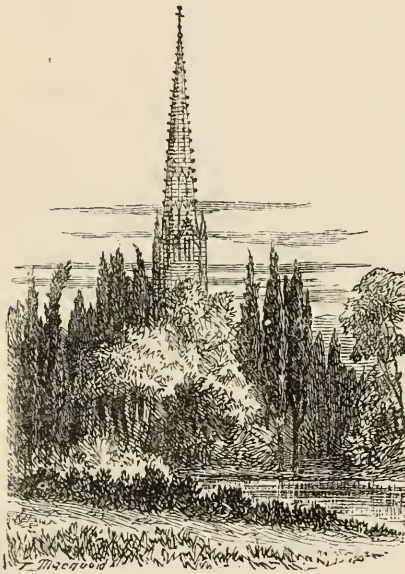
The scene from the heights of Ingouville, on the other side of the town, is quite different in character from Ste. Adresse. We were advised to take this route in the evening to see the sunset, and it is very well worth seeing. The view of Havre, of its harbour, and of the Seine from this point is very remarkable. Ingouville is studded with villas and gardens, and is reckoned extremely healthy.

Though Havre in itself is very commonplace and uninteresting, still it is a comfortable town to stay in ; and there are so many places of interest within reach, that it is a very good centre for travellers who have plenty of time before them, and who do not care to stay in the smaller towns. Etretat, Harfleur, Tancarville, Lillebonne, Honfleur, and Trouville may all be reached in a day's excursion ; and Château d'Orcher and Graille are close at hand.

The best way to reach Château d'Orcher is to take a private voiture for the afternoon to Harfleur. The landlord at our hotel shrugged his shoulders when we asked about Harfleur. "There is nothing absolutely to see," he said, "even for the English;" but, as we were obstinately bent on seeing the town so associated with our English kings, we started off for Harfleur.

The church alone is worth the journey. The spire is very graceful, and both the portals are remarkable, especially the northern porch, with richly sculptured pendants. The eastern end of the church is much older than the tower spire and northern aisle, which, according to English authorities, were built by Henry V. The French deny this indig-

nantly, and say that these portions are of later date. It is certain, however, that Henry, with thirty thousand men, attacked and took the town in 1415; the garrison, only four hundred strong, resisted for forty days. Henry then walked barefoot and bare-legged to church to offer up thanksgiving for his victory; after which act of piety he assembled the inhabitants, about 8,000 souls, exiled them from the town,



Church, Harfleur.

and appropriated their possessions for the English, with whom he re-peopled Harfleur. Only the poor and ignoble were left in the town; but, later on, four hundred of these chased the enemy from their walls; after this, at matins, four hundred strokes on the bell recalled the fame of the unknown heroes of Harfleur.

It is difficult to realise that Harfleur is spoken of in old chronicles as the chief seaport of Normandy.

It is now an inland town, on the choked-up river *Lézarde*, about two miles from the *Seine*. During the wars between the French and English for the possession of this town, the harbour was neglected and became choked with sand, and *Havre* has usurped the commercial prosperity of the more ancient seaport.

Harfleur is charmingly placed at the foot of wooded hills,

and there are still some curious houses left to vouch for its antiquity. It is no longer "girded Harfleur." There is no trace of the walls to which Henry urged his soldiers: "Once more to the breach, dear friends;" but it is interesting, and from several points the church groups in well with a very picturesque foreground. One should visit Harfleur, if only as a tribute to its ancient grandeur. Edward the Confessor, Marguerite of Anjou, Henry of Richmond, all passed through Harfleur on their way to England.

From Harfleur we drove up a steep road to Château d'Orcher. For some way the road lay between high hedges, with visions of pumpkin fields and vegetable gardens behind them, but after a bit it became more interesting.

Before we reached the park gates, our driver turned into a sort of orchard by the roadside, and said we had better alight. He would await us there while we went on foot to Château d'Orcher. There was a little auberge here, and a party of men and women were drinking at a long table under the trees. There seemed to be a good view of the Seine through the trees; but our driver hurried us off, assuring us that we should want all our time at Château d'Orcher.

When we reached the park gates, the *concierge*, a brown-faced Norman woman, informed us that we were welcome to walk about the park as long as we pleased, but no one could see the house while the Marquis de Mortemer and his family were *en résidence*. It was unfortunate, she said, that the marquis preferred coming to Orcher in August, as that seemed to be the time chosen by English travellers for visiting Le Havre.

Before us stretched a long avenue of beech-trees, and the *concierge* told us that this reached to the famous terrace

overlooking the Seine. The trees are very lofty, making the finest avenues we have seen in Normandy. The park itself is very thickly planted, chiefly in huge stars, stretching out in long leafy avenues, the trees having been trained arch-wise, so that there is a constant succession of Gothic aisles. The leaves were turning early, and the contrasts of colour were exquisite, as we walked on the smooth grassed drive under the shade of the trees. Presently we reached the terrace, a broad grassed and gravelled walk extending the whole width of the park, which forms itself into a close wall of verdure as background. The terrace is bordered by a low hedge, and from this the view is magnificent.

The *falaise* slopes down in front, covered with brambles, furze, brake, and long grass dried up by the sun. Below are meadows, partly under water, and between these and the river are long lines of salt marsh left by the tide. Opposite is Honfleur; and on the right is the mouth of the river, and the open sea beyond, glittering in the sunshine.

The smoke from the harbour and factory chimneys obscures the town of Havre, but the port, with its tall array of masts, stands forward boldly; and midway, nestling between lofty cliffs, is the little village of Harfleur, crowned by the tall elegant spire of its church. On the left the course of the Seine can be traced for miles, till it takes one of its sudden curves and disappears altogether. The chief features of its banks this way seem to be wooded hills and long stretches of meadow and sandy marsh along its edge; and this feature continues quite as far as Quillebœuf and its opposite neighbour, Tancarville.

We walked along the whole length of the terrace till we reached the château at its farthest end. It is a quaint, com-

fortable-looking seventeenth-century house, built on the ruins of the ancient fortress ; it is splendidly placed, and the view from its windows must be quite equal to that on the terrace.

Each time we approach the Seine we meet with fresh and marvellous beauties. The view from Château d'Orcher is not perhaps so fairy-like in its loveliness as the view from Canteleu, but is far finer ; next to the view of Mont St. Michel from the terrace at Avranches, the finest sea and river view we met with in Normandy. Perhaps the most special feature in the beauty of this river is its never-ending variety. It would be difficult to find more varied bits of river scenery than those seen from Château d'Orcher, Villequier, Canteleu, or Mount St. Catherine and Château Gaillard ; and all of them so vivid with past associations.

We should have liked to spend a long day at Château d'Orcher ; but we promised ourselves another visit in the absence of the De Mortemers, and we found our way back to the orchard where we had left our vehicle.

Our driver looked extremely sulky at our long delay. He was very young ; he had a capital little Norman horse, and was an excellent driver ; but he was the only sulky, ill-conditioned Norman we met with in our wanderings. He either did not or would not know anything about the way, except to inform us that the new road by which he drove back to Harfleur was a great boon to the country, being much shorter, and that the Marquis de Mortemer had given up all the land it traversed to the department in order that it might be made.

“But I never mount it,” he said ; “it is much too steep and rough at present : it does very well for the return.”

It is a beautiful road, commanding a view of the river for some distance, and has wild, picturesque banks, having

been cut on the side of a heath and gorse-covered slope ; which will probably, in the neighbourhood of such a populous town as Havre, soon be spoiled for the eye by cultivation.

We rattled through Harfleur, admiring its quaint aspect still more than on our first view of it, and then drove along the broad well-kept road which leads to Havre. The Norman roads are certainly admirable. If they were not all made by the Romans, the Roman idea has been scrupulously imitated ; for the long dusty straight line, like a broad white ribbon always mounting to the top of the hills in front, is a feature that seems inseparable from memories of Normandy.

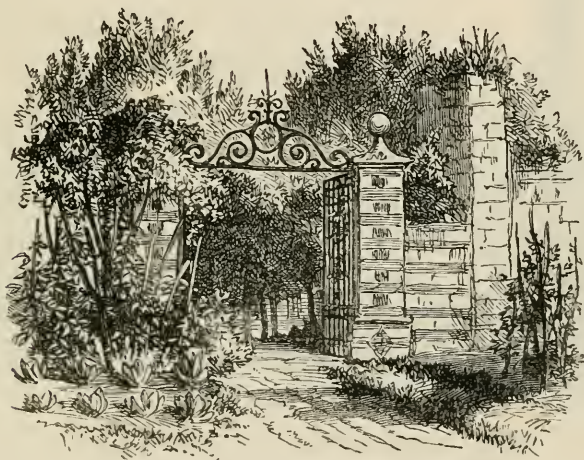
We soon reached Gravelle, or at least a turn out of the road where our driver said it was the custom to descend. "The road there," he pointed up the path with his whip, "is much too steep for my voiture."

We did not believe this ; but his face was so intensely mulish that we began to climb the hill, and found it very steep indeed. In about ten minutes, at a sudden turn in the road, we came in sight of a picturesque gateway, partly overgrown with ivy. The rusty gates stood wide open, and within was an arched avenue of lime-trees. Coming slowly up this alley, framed in by the leafage, were two Sisters, with broad stiff white frills projecting from their black veils ; one of them was old and one young, but both had sweet and earnest faces. We asked them if this was the Abbey of Gravelle, and the elder smiled till she almost laughed.

"There is no longer an Abbey of Gravelle," she said. "If you go up the avenue, you will find the church. There is a presbytery and a school-house for boys, and there is also a school-house for girls ; but that is separate—quite separate from the presbytery, and is taught by Sisters."

She made a curtsy here, and glanced at her young companion ; then they said " Bon jour," and went quickly up the road, which turned aside by the gateway terrace-fashion, to scale a still steeper part of the cliff than we had mounted.

Going a little back to get a better view of the gateway, as my companion wanted to sketch it, we came upon a grand view of the Seine. A cloud was passing over the sun, and while Honfleur and the opposite side of the river showed

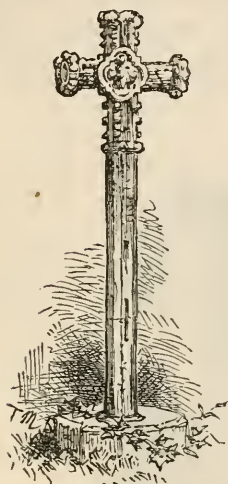


Entrance to the Abbey of Graille.

dark olive and the hills beyond a leaden blue, and the wooded slope in the foreground was also sombre in tint, the low-lying marshy meadows were of the most brilliant emerald, and the near side of the river shone like burnished steel.

While my companion sat sketching, I strolled down the avenue. About half-way down I met a most venerable-looking priest. He was bare-headed, except for a black silk skull-cap ; and as he walked he read out of a richly bound breviary, with crimson and gold markers hanging from it.

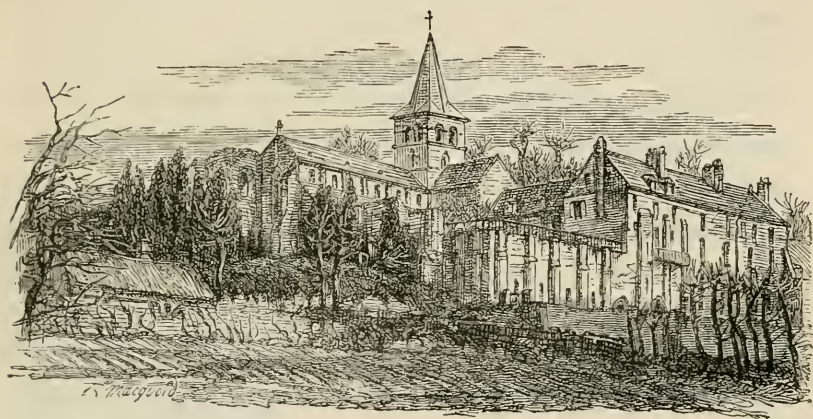
It was so like an old picture, the grey presbytery now visible through the trees as background, the leafy arcade, and the peaceful leisure of the priest and his occupation, that I was startled when he passed me with a courteous bow, and brought me back to real life.



Old Cross

There is a curious old well in front of the presbytery, and the church joins on to the conventual buildings. It is a very remarkable church of the last half of the eleventh century; the transepts have external arcades intersecting one another, and along the edge of the parapet is a succession of heads both of men and animals. But you forget the church when you reach its western end and turn the corner of the building. It stands on a spur of land projecting from the side of the steep wooded cliff overhanging the Seine. From its wooded churchyard there is a perfect view of Havre and the mouth of the Seine. It was near sunset; the red light came glowing through the trees, and a soft grey haze came up from the green valley below. On the right, near the porch, is a tall moss-grown stone cross of exquisite proportions, and clearly of great age. Through the soft haze smoke rose lazily from the village below, and sent pale blue wreaths into the yew-trees that clothe the up and down precipitous ground where rest the ancient people of Graville Ste. Honorine. It was a scene of enchantment. Below Cap la Hève the sea lay basking in a flood of golden light, and the air was full of the soft slumberous murmur which tells that the day is going to sleep.

Inside, the church is very interesting and well preserved. It was built in the last half of the eleventh century ; but it has been badly restored. The capitals of the columns in the nave are evidently old, and are most grotesque and extraordinary ; one of them is at the beginning of this chapter. In the aisle, on the left of the altar, is the tomb of St. Honoria, discovered in 1867 ; it is a stone sarcophagus with a large round hole at one end. According to the



Abbey-Church of Graville.

legend, the remains of St. Honoria were removed, at the time of the Norman invasion, to Conflans ; but when peace was restored to the country the monks of Conflans refused to restore the relics. Spite of this, so great was the sanctity attached to the Abbey of Graville Ste. Honorine, that the pilgrims continued to flock thither in larger numbers than to the Church of Conflans, where the body of the saint actually lay.

Near the church, on the way up the hill, are several caves in the rock, used as cellars. We looked into the school-

rooms, and going up a little higher found ourselves above the wall of the Sisters' garden, such a pretty, quaint sun-trap, with plots of onion and cabbage and artichoke, and pear-trees laden with fruit everywhere, and a gay show of scarlet and golden and blue and white flowers near the school-house, which made one boundary of the garden, and which was covered with white climbing-roses and the crimsoning leaves of a Virginia creeper.

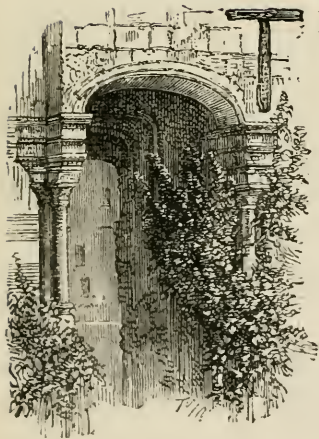
From the outside of the enclosure, at a little distance, the position of Graille is very striking : the church rising above the old grey range of building gives the idea of a still-existing monastery. It is only a short drive from Graille to Havre, and we got several charming views of the church before we quite lost sight of it.

Montivilliers is also an excursion from Havre. There is an old church founded, in 682, by St. Philibert, Abbot of Jumièges, but it was ravaged and destroyed by the Normans in the ninth century. Richard the Good gave the Abbey of Montivilliers to the monks of Fécamp. Beatrix, aunt of Robert the Magnificent, got leave to restore the abbey to its original purpose. Helped by St. Gradulph, Abbot of Fontenelle (afterwards St. Wandrille), the holy woman re-organized the noble abbey, and established a sisterhood there. The Abbey of St. Taurin, at Evreux, was given to the monks of Fécamp in exchange for Montivilliers. The Roman tower at the north angle of the entrance-doorway is remarkable, and so is the porch and the fine fourteenth-century window. The carved staircase leading to the organ gallery is something like that at St. Maclou. There are a few old houses at Montivilliers, also a cloister; but the church is certainly worth seeing.

THE VALLEY OF THE SEINE.

CHAPTER VII.

Tancarville.—Lillebonne.



THE pleasantest way of seeing the Seine as a whole is to leave Havre by the little steamer, the *Furet*, which runs on alternate days between Havre and Rouen; but there are several places on the banks worthy of closer inspection than can be made from the steamer, and although it is possible to stop at some of these, yet, as the steamer does not go on to Rouen every day, the stopping at every place of interest would make the journey a long one. The best way is, perhaps, to take the steamer from Havre to Rouen, or the contrary, so as to see the banks of the river, and then make the journey by land afterwards. The Seine is the chief feature of Normandy, and it is impossible to gain a just idea of its varied and lovely scenery unless one follows its course either by land or water. Till it reaches Quillebœuf it is nearly three miles

wide ; here it narrows very suddenly to little more than a quarter of the width—and this part of the river is very dangerous on account of the *barre* and the shifting sand-banks.

The danger has been lessened since the invention of steam-tugs, which now pull large vessels up even against the wind, thereby saving time and risk. The *barre* is caused when the full tide of water, rushing up from the sea, meets the current of the river, and the water, finding itself contracted thus suddenly into so narrow an outlet, rises up in fury, dashes over the quay and buildings of Quillebœuf, hurls vessels ashore, and sometimes submerges farmhouses and cottages for miles along the banks. Its fury reaches as high as Caudebec ; but it is the period of the full moon in spring and autumn when the *mascaret*, or the *flot*, as the good people of Caudebec call it, is to be seen in its height of wrath. The immense quantities of mud and sand brought up the river by the fury of the *barre* form the continually shifting sand-banks which are the chief peril of the Seine.

The Seine, counting its windings, is about eighty-five and a half miles from Havre to Rouen ; but the land journey is only fifty-three miles.

The following are the chief objects of interest seen from the river. The magnificently placed castle of Tancarville frowning down from the top of a lofty perpendicular *falaise*, with the enormous rock, called Pierre Gante, crowning the opposite side of the valley, is the first object of interest on the left bank, after Harfleur and Graville Ste. Honorine. On the right, after Honfleur, comes Quillebœuf, with its church-tower, and lighthouse projecting into the river. Quillebœuf

is the chief pilot-station on the Seine, but there is also a small colony of pilots at Villequier. Just opposite Quillebœuf the lovely valley of the Bolbec opens on to the river; and up this valley, on a clear day, the Castle of Lillebonne is visible.

After Quillebœuf, on the right, is the forest of Brotonne; close beside the river is Aizier, with a curious old Romanesque church. On the left is Norville, which may be reached by land from Caudebec, and is worth a visit. It has a remarkable church-spire; and about a mile and a half from it is the village of St. Maurice d'Etelan. There is a curious fifteenth-century church here, and the ruins of a much older one; also the Château d'Etelan. There is some good glass in the chapel, and the château itself is remarkable. On the right is Vatteville la Rue, a most fatiguing village, about a mile and a half long. We were sent all the way from Caudebec to see an oak here, said to be one of the wonders of the Seine: when at last we reached it we found a fine large tree, but nothing in any way remarkable to English eyes. There is some good glass in the church at Vatteville, and it is worth visiting for the sake of the view of Villequier and the opposite banks.

And now, on the right, we have reached perhaps for quiet beauty the most exquisite part of the river—the bay of Villequier. The little village nestles in among the trees on the side of a lofty *côte*, crowned by the Château de Villequier; and above the clustering houses rises the spire of a Gothic church, part of which was built in the twelfth century. Villequier stands just where the river bends round on its way to Caudebec, and the river curves in and out between the two places in a series of little

rippling bays, which wash the feet of the lofty wooded crags above. Here and there the crag overhangs the road in bare whiteness, but the coppice of beech-wood clustering below tells that it will soon be covered again with successors to the trees which have been removed. Between the river and the *côtes* are green sloping meadows, fringed sometimes with slender poplars, sometimes with osiers; and now, as we come opposite a huge cave which opens in the rock, across the mouth of which ivy has thrown itself in a long graceful wreath, tall silver-skinned birch-trees bend down over the water, their pale foliage telling out against the ivy-crowned cliff behind. As the green sloping meadows become steeper, they change into orchards, the trees rosy and golden with cider-apples.

A little way on a tongue of land projects into the water, making a charming picture; and from here is a grand view of the curve of the river beyond Caudebec, and the dark forest-clothed range of hills between it and St. Wandrille. Caudebec itself lies a little back, but it can be seen from Barre-y-va—a small chapel filled with the votive offerings of sailors, standing on the river-bank half-way between Villequier and Caudebec.

Before we reach Barre-y-va a curious-looking white house stands high above the river. It is now a farm-house, called La Maison Blanche; but its walls are of immense thickness, and there is a Norman staircase tower on one side: it is said to date from the thirteenth century.

Now we come to pleasant gardens, and the bank changes from sloping meadows to a walled quay. Next is a quaint old house surrounded by a garden, with courtly hollyhocks and glowing roses; and then the quay suddenly broadens.

A stately double avenue of trees reaches along to its midst, and we see the quaint town of Caudebec, full of "striped" and gabled wooden houses grouped round its magnificent church-spire—the Cathedral of Caudebec, as strangers often call it; and the richness and beauty of the exterior merit the name: the effect of this massive spire, rising just where a street opens into the town at the end of the avenue, is most remarkable. Caudebec is admirably placed at the entrance of a valley, between two lofty and thickly wooded hills. Two little rivers, the St. Gertrude and the Ambion, find their way to the Seine through this valley; they take their rise in the Caux,—hence the name of the town; or, as some writers say, Cold-beck, the original Celtic name.

From Caudebec to Jumièges the scenery is enchanting; on both sides, the river banks are steep and wooded.

Just beyond Caudebec is the pretty little village of Caudebecquet, with its lighthouse and long sand-marshes, which year by year are being reclaimed from the river and converted into green meadows. Behind Caudebecquet are the ruins of St. Wandrille, one of the oldest of Norman abbeys; and from this point, just before the river sweeps round between its steep dark *côtes* and La Mailleraye, there is a wonderfully beautiful view of Caudebec. The grey church-spire rises between the hills on either side of it, and in the distance is the Bay of Villequier. The steep wooded hills cast broad olive tints over the shining river, bright as a steel cuirass under the fleecy grey sky—that exquisite pearl-grey tint which seems a specialty of Norman skies. On the right, just ahead of us, is La Mailleraye. The château here used to be seen from the water; but

during the war the Prussians demolished it, and cut down the trees in the park.

On the left is the forest of Le Trait: this is really part of the forest of Maulévrier, which surrounds Caudebec and St. Wandrille. The Church of Le Trait, with its white spire, is a landmark; and from here the river runs almost due north and south till it reaches a peninsula of land, on which are the magnificent towers of Jumièges. A little way above Jumièges the Seine makes one of its bold curves, and runs upwards again till it reaches Duclair; before this it passes Mesnil. There is a house here, said to have been the residence of Agnes Sorel: it is now a peasant's cottage. Duclair is well placed between the steep crags behind it and the river. On the left bank also is the Abbey of St. Martin de Boscherville; but this is not seen distinctly. Between the abbey and Rouen the river makes an immense horseshoe, eighteen miles long, the land distance to Rouen being about half the length.

Half-way between Duclair and Rouen, on the right bank, is La Bouille, which we had already visited when we were at Rouen.

In making the land journey, we wished to keep as near the river as possible; and as we learned that some of the localities could be reached from Caudebec, we determined to make that town our head-quarters, as it is the pleasantest and largest town between Rouen and Havre.

We found that there was no direct public way of reaching Tancarville from Havre. The distance between Havre and the castle is about ten miles: it is possible to go by railway to Bolbec, thence by diligence to Lillebonne, and there engage a private voiture for the excursion to the

Château de Tancarville; also the said diligence passes within three miles of the château, and this, for good walkers, is perhaps the best route. We had no wish to visit Bolbec, an uninteresting, thriving manufacturing town; and we found that by taking the train from Havre to St. Romain, about thirty-five minutes of rail, we could get a voiture thence to Tancarville and Lillebonne. We were told at Havre that there was no possibility of sleeping at Tancarville, or of finding a horse there; but in this, as in many like cases, we found that "seeing is believing."

We left Havre at eight o'clock. We soon passed the spire of Harfleur, which looked exquisite through the veil of morning light. In about an hour we reached St. Romain station, nearly three miles from the little town; but we had been told at Havre that there was an omnibus which met the trains. However, after waiting nearly an hour at St. Romain station in silent patience—and a large packet of this virtue is necessary for travellers on the Ligne de l'Ouest, the worst-managed line in France—we learned that, as the omnibus had not been there to meet us, it would not now arrive till just before the next train from Paris; so that all our calculation of time had been wasted, as the train from Paris was not yet expected.

We were very hungry and weary by the time the omnibus appeared; and we got to St. Romain finally about an hour and a half later than we had hoped to reach it.

We walked about the town, looked into the church, and after some difficulty engaged a carriage to take us to Tancarville, and from thence on to Lillebonne.

We had ordered our vehicle half an hour sooner than we wanted it, trusting to the universal unpunctuality of Nor-

mans; but for once we were mistaken,—while we were still at breakfast we heard that our driver was waiting.

When we came to the door of the hotel, we saw a common, rough-looking cart, with a board tied across for seat, and a shawl laid on this by way of cushion. Our driver had arranged a portmanteau sideways as a seat for himself.

“But you promised us a voiture,” we said, with some disappointment; “we shall be shaken to pieces in that cart.”

“Pardon, monsieur; pardon, madame.” He pulled off his old cloth cap to each. “Monsieur has said he wanted to go very easily; and my cart has the best of springs, and my horse! allez, monsieur will not beat him in Havre—perhaps nowhere.”

A bystander began to echo the praises of the horse and of the cart-springs; and as we had already been told that there was no other horse to be had in St. Romain, we mounted the cart and started at a rattling pace for Tancarville. Our driver had looked a dirty old man when we made the bargain for his vehicle; but since then he had washed his face and hands, put on a clean blouse and a snowy collar, and tidied himself into respectability. His way of speaking puzzled us, it was so very superior to his looks; but he soon informed us he had been in business in Paris, and, as that did not answer, he had since been a courier, and knew every inch of Normandy. If his cart had only had a hood, it would have been a delightful vehicle for going about the country in; for it went very easily, and the horse deserved all the praise we had heard of him. He was a small brown animal, and he never needed the whip; the pace at which he went down the hills reminded us of drives in Devonshire. Our driver chatted all the way. We passed through

Ceriangue, which has a fifteenth-century church, and came to a very large house standing in orchards; it looked dreary and deserted, and we asked our driver to whom it belonged.

“Ah!” he said, “it belongs to Mademoiselle B.: she built it herself, and she is quite rich enough to afford to live in it; but she has too much sense,—she lives there, among her people.”

He pointed with his whip to some cottages near a range of workshops: there were timber-yards on the other side of the road, and not far beyond stacks of bricks.

I felt puzzled, and asked the age of mademoiselle.

“Dame, she may be forty, or perhaps fifty,” he said. “She was here when I came to this country, and I do not know how long I have been here.” I asked if her parents lived here before her, or if she had inherited the property from some one else.

But the question vexed him.

“Dame, did I not tell Madame she makes her money herself. She builds houses, I say; that she does, and stands over her workpeople from morning till night; and she is good to them, and she lives with them, and they love her. Her father and mother, what signifies asking about them? I do not remember ever to have seen them: they are dead; but I believe they were poor people, like myself.”

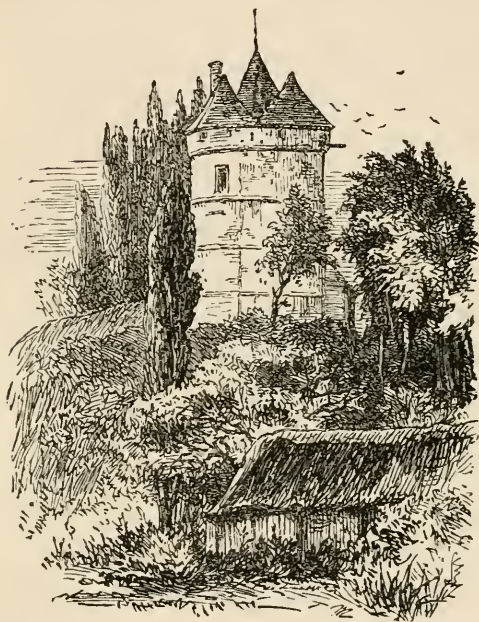
“But if Mademoiselle B. is so rich, I wonder she does not marry.”

He looked at me, and winked his left eye deliberately.

“She knows better. She knows that, though some of your courtly gentlemen may have soft tongues and pleasant ways, it would only be for the sake of her money. Bah!

some gentlemen have empty pockets and the hearts of wolves; and, after all, what does a woman of her age want with a husband?"

He cracked his whip, and the little horse went ahead still more rapidly. We felt sorry not to see Mademoiselle B.; we were curious to learn the true history of her riches, for they must have had some beginning.



The Tour de l'Aigle.

The road became charming as we drew nearer Tancarville. It seems to have been cut round and round the hills, through a lofty and thick forest. High trees crown the banks on either side; but openings now and then give glimpses of the Seine, or vistas of wooded valleys with *côtes* rising one behind another; it is a succession of varied scenery.

The first glimpse of Tancarville is very striking. The old grey towers loom grandly above the forest which surrounds them; after this the road circles round so as to break the steep descent: it is very wild and picturesque. The village, or rather the little inn and a few cottages, lie at the mouth of a steep and richly wooded valley, opening on to the bank of the Seine, just opposite Quillebœuf. A lofty *falaise*

guards the entrance of the valley on either side : the cliff on the right, the loftiest of the two, is surmounted by the castle, of which the bold tower round on this side—the Tour de l'Aigle—is the most salient feature ; the cliff on the right is clothed with wood on the side of the valley, but fronting the Seine is a huge white-topped rock overhanging the river, called La Pierre Gante,—it is more than two hundred feet high.

We had been told to inquire at the inn for the keys of the castle ; so we drove into an orchard at the back of the house, where we found the landlord in his shirt sleeves, mounted on a ladder, gathering some exquisite, large, rosy cherries from a tree nailed against the house. He was a tall, big, burly Norman ; and as he stood on the ladder, wiping his bald head with a huge yellow handkerchief, we fancied he did not look at us quite as hospitably as a landlord is bound to do.

However, by the time we had alighted he had come down from his ladder, and we followed him into the kitchen and made our request for the keys.

He looked thoroughly surly, and turned his back.

“It is not possible. It is the little *bonne* who always shows the castle to strangers. We are all busy, and she, the little Marie, has not had her breakfast ; it is quite impossible.” He growled this over his shoulder, and then walked away from us in a puffet ; and we turned to a tall, elderly woman, who must have been very handsome in her prime, and asked what we were to do. She was very civil. She said the household breakfast was just going to be served, and, if we would not mind taking a little walk up the cliff, the *bonne* would soon be ready. We came through the house into the garden, or rather grassed court, in front. Everything looked

so clean and neat, that we wished we had waited instead of having breakfasted at St. Romain. Over the door we read the name Toutain, and wondered if our surly, burly host was related to the faithful Toustain, chamberlain of Robert the Magnificent, who, when his master died at Nikaia, in Bithynia, brought the relics collected by the Duke of Normandy in the East to his famous Abbey of Cerisy; or to the more famous Toustain the White, the son of Rou, who carried the Norman standard—a banner consecrated by Pope Hildebrand—at the battle of Hastings.

The house is so exquisitely placed in the gorge of the two steep cliffs, with the grey castle frowning over it, and the Seine flowing in front, that in itself it makes a picture. On the grass in front is a delightful round summer-house, made of scarlet runners trained on osiers bent into the form of a large weeping ash: some of these bean-blossoms were of a most exquisite pale yellow. Inside was a good-sized white deal table and some benches. It looked a delicious nook to idle away summer days in, watching the windings of the lovely Seine, the exquisite changes of light on the castle-crowned hill frowning over the river above the trees on one side, or the wooded valley of Pierre Gante.

While my companion sketched, I climbed up to the top of Pierre Gante. It has a flat table of white rock on the summit, like a bald head, fringed by the brushwood which clothes it thickly up to this point. The view of the Seine is extensive, but not so attractive as from many other points, as the opposite banks are in comparison flat; and, instead of the graceful fringe of slender trees, there are sand-banks and low-lying meadows half under water and cut through with deep channels. But the view of the Castle of Tancarville

is very fine from here : it is perhaps the best distant view, except that from the middle of the Seine ; and that will be much finer when the modern portion of the castle falls more into decay—at present it hides the range of ancient towers.

By the time the sketches were finished, our guide appeared with a bunch of keys. She was a little damsel of about twelve. Her full-bordered cap tied demurely under her chin gave her a strangely quaint look. There was something patriarchal in the big, rough Norman's solicitude that his little maid's comfort should not be interfered with. So far as we could see, she was the only maid-servant except the daughter of the house.

The little creature went on in front, swinging her keys backwards and forwards, and singing to herself as she went up a steep path which wound up in and out among the thickly planted trees. The sides of the path were bordered with ivy and periwinkle wreaths, mingled every now and then with shining fronds of bright green hart's-tongue.

Our little guide saw us gathering some of these wild leaves.

“It is forbidden”—she looked at us reprovingly—“to gather flowers inside the castle court. There are beautiful flowers there, but monsieur and madame must not gather them.”

Just after this we reached the gate-house. This is in good preservation. The caged windows still exist, and within the arched entrance are grooves for a double portcullis. There is another tower here, said to date from the fifteenth century.

From the gateway we went into the enclosure of the ruined castle, a large triangular space. At the foot of the triangle

on the right is the large tower which keeps guard over the village—the Tour de l'Aigle. On this side it is triangular also. It is the only part which is still habitable, and is occupied by the châtelain and his family when they visit Tancarville. From the Tour de l'Aigle a broad terrace extends along the edge of the cliff, gay with scarlet geranium beds; and overlooking the Seine at the end of the terrace is a modern château, uninhabited and going fast to decay; stretching from this at an acute angle are the ancient towers of Tancarville, connected by curtain walls which entirely enclose and form the two other sides of the triangle. This, the ancient castle court, is now picturesque, up and down, broken ground, full of ruins and bushes, and weeds rampant over all. The cliff itself is more than one hundred and sixty feet high, and of the same triangular form in which the castle is built. There are the remains of three principal towers commanding the three corners, and of seven intermediate towers. The donjon was beyond the wall of enclosure, and connected with it by a bridge. The Tour de l'Aigle, as has been said, is round outside the walls, and triangular within the enclosure. It contained the castle archives. The twin towers of the gateway contained the prisons, also the lodging of the captain of the castle. At the angle nearest the Seine and the modern château is the Tour Carrée, four stories high, about the oldest part of the building, and said to date from the twelfth century. This was formerly decorated with frescoes; among these are found relics of the ancient device of the Tancarvilles. Between this and the Tour Coquisart are the ruins of the ancient dwelling-house of the Tancarvilles, Harcourts, &c.

The walls of the towers have been torn down, the floors

and staircases have disappeared, but still there is much left of extreme interest. The chapel, with its graceful pointed arches, the Salle des Chevaliers and its fire-places, may still be made out. We found some fire-places too in the other towers. The walls are so broken that we wandered in and out among them and the bushes which threaten to overrun the whole building.

We came suddenly on an awful subterranean dungeon deeply sunk under the Tour du Lion—it is also called Tour du Diable; and a legend tells how the Evil One had to be exorcised by the curé of the village when he had taken possession of the subterranean. In the donjon, which is behind the other towers, and detached from them, is a well three hundred feet deep.

The small-leaved ivy creeps up the ruined walls, and above and below, wherever the stone lets it flourish, is a rampant waving growth of harebells and tufted grass, and wreathing clematis with creamy blossoms, among which peep bright-eyed yellow star-flowers. A coppice of nut-trees clusters closely round the base of one of the ruined towers. Close by us is the Tour Coquisart, sixty feet high, shaped like a triangle with curved sides. There have been five stories here, but all the roofs have fallen in; only at the top three groined ribs still remain, though the vaulted roof has fallen through them, and there is the blue sky in exquisite contrast against the creamy stone-work, and the long grass is waving in sad mockery over all. This tower was restored and nearly rebuilt in the fifteenth century: it forms the opposite angle to the Tour Carrée. The name Tancarville first appears in a chart of Henry I., 1103—William of Tancarville, son and successor to Raoul the chamberlain. M. Dep-

ping considers that names of places ending in *ville* originated with the Norman followers of Rolf, who gave their own names to the castles which they built and to the villages which sprang up round these.

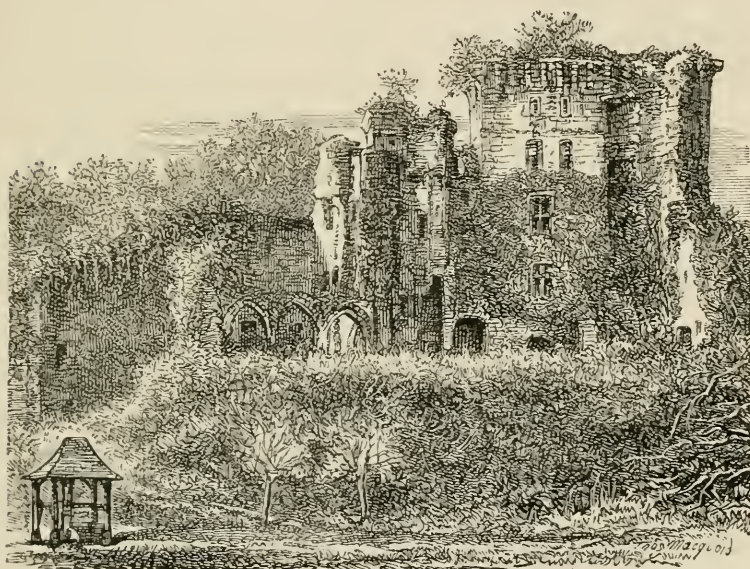
Tancarville is full of sad associations, and is especially interesting to Englishmen, as it was the chief stronghold of the Tancarvilles—the hereditary chamberlains of the dukedom of Normandy—till 1320; then it passed to the Harcourts. After them came the Montmorencys and the family of La Roche Guyon. But after this it fell into ignoble hands. John Law, the South-Sea impostor, purchased Tancarville, and lived there for some years. It was greatly destroyed and plundered at the time of the Revolution; the people named it Le Fort aux Bourreaux. It is now the property of M. Lambestye.

The ancient castle of Raoul de Tancarville was burned down by Henry V. in 1437. He was certainly a mischievous general in Normandy. Scarcely any part of the present ruins is older than the fifteenth century.

Perhaps it is the perfect bits remaining that seem to make home life real here; but, as has been said, there is something inexpressibly sad in Tancarville. The hearths—the chimney-pieces are still really there—round which have gathered so many brave and gentle and chivalrous spirits, are now exposed to every gaping sight-seer. In the tower beside the gate-house the walls are nine feet thick; and here are dungeons and the ancient torture-room.

The ruins are so very interesting, that we thought they would be worth much more than a day's visit; and when we went back to the inn, we ascertained that it possesses two

comfortable bedrooms, and can also furnish a horse and carriage when required. Madame Toutain, the landlady, was much aggrieved when we told her the report of Tancarville we had gathered at Havre. She said they had so many visitors in the summer that it was better to give them a week's notice, and they would always send to St. Romain to bring any visitors out to the little Hôtel du



Ruins of Château Tancarville.

Havre. Certainly the floors and staircase were cleaner than any we saw in Normandy, and the beds looked most comfortable. The day was so bright, and the whole scene so full of charm, that we were unwilling to leave Tancarville. In the bean-vine arbour Madame Toutain arranged a charming little repast of bread, cream-cheese, butter, and cakes, and the delicious cherries we had seen her husband gathering, also some excellent wine. It was so very pleasant to

sit here looking at the lovely scene and shaded from the sun, yet seeing the blue sky through the intertwining bean-arms covered with their pale blossoms ; but the sun warned us of the time, and we had still a long drive before us. Moreover, we began to reflect that it had possibly been injudicious to leave our driver so long in the inn ; and the result was what we might have expected. When he was summoned to put his horse in the cart, he was in a garrulous state of intoxication, and he was a long time getting ready to start. Long before his fussing and fidgeting had ended, the sky suddenly darkened ; a huge mass of grey vapour came down from the direction of Rouen, and obscured every bit of blue ; and in a few minutes, first a few heavy drops pattered in between the bean leaves, and then such heavy drenching rain that we were glad to escape to the house for refuge.

The driver said it was only a shower, and would soon be over, but Madame Toutain shook her head. However, as she had more than once entreated us to stay a few nights at the Hôtel du Havre, we did not quite believe in her opinion. It was, indeed, difficult to believe in so sudden a change of weather ; but this was almost our first introduction to the banks of the Seine, and we had yet to learn the wonderful faculty that otherwise charming river has of attracting rain. As soon as the shower was over we started, and, happily for us, the rain kept off at first.

The valley of the Bolbec is lovely ; wooded hills rise steeply on each side, and as the road is raised some height above the river, and every now and then circles round the side of the hills, the prospect is constantly changing. One point is very remarkable : the road seems

almost to cross the valley high above it, and far off at the extreme end, just where a blue vapour hovered over the Bolbec, and melted into the varied foliage on each side, the valley opened, and there was the Seine, and, as our driver assured us—for those who could see them—the opposite cliffs of Quillebœuf. But now down came the rain again pelting hard, and we had nothing but the shelter of our umbrellas. Our little horse went like the wind, and our driver's tongue never ceased till we got within two miles of Lillebonne; then he sank into such sudden dumbness, that we feared he was going to fall asleep.

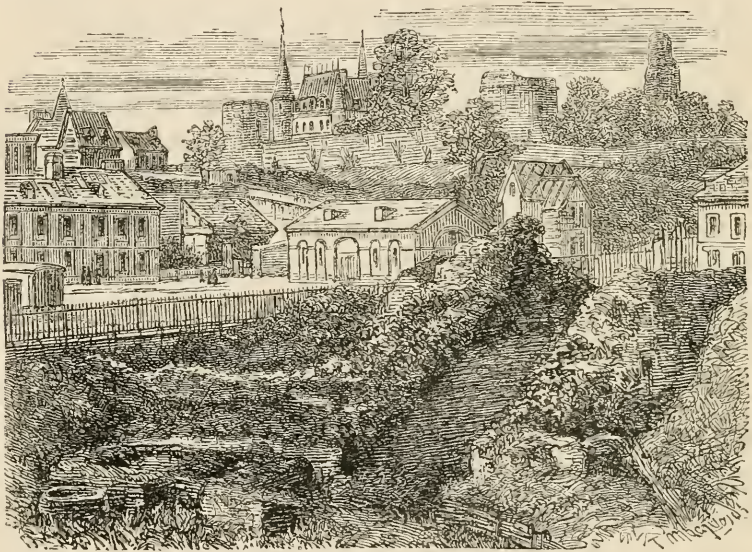
We got a grand view of Lillebonne some time before we reached it, as we drove down a steep descent cut on the side of a hill. Lillebonne appeared on the side of the opposite hill, its factories and river in front, and above these the spire of the church and the castle of William the Conqueror. Spite of the pouring rain, we greatly enjoyed our drive, it was so very varied and full of beauty.

It was growing dusk as we drove into the town: it looked dark and dirty, and the hotel, which our driver assured us was the best, was most uninviting. However, we supped and slept there, but with so little comfort that we much regretted Tancarville and its clean inn and pleasant hostess.

Next morning it still rained, and we were told it had been raining all night. We went out early to the Cirque, as the Roman theatre is called at Lillebonne. Lillebonne is charmingly placed on the river Bolbec, surrounded by a circle of wooded hills; we stood tracing the course of the river among the hills for some distance by the fringe of slender poplars along its banks. In front of us was the theatre, or rather the semicircle allotted to the spectators; the high road

crosses and occupies part of the portion that must originally have been the stage, and above this, on the left, looking down on the theatre, is the castle of William the Conqueror, injured in effect by the modern house of the proprietor—a red brick, fanciful erection, Behind us, in the centre of the town, is the spire of Notre-Dame de Lillebonne ; it reminded us of the *flèche* of Harfleur, but it is far less elegant.

Lillebonne is one of the most ancient cities in France.



Ruins of the Theatre and Old Castle.

In the time of the Roman occupation of Normandy it was called Julia Bona ; and Ptolemy says that on this site was the capital city of the Caletes, the tribe who inhabited the Pays de Caux. Julius Cæsar is said to have built a town on the ruins of the capital of the Caletes, and to have named it from his daughter, Julia Bona. Other writers say it was built by Augustus. The present town is supposed to be on the site

of the ancient one ; and since 1840, when the theatre was thoroughly excavated, there have been constant discoveries of statues, bronzes, vases, tiles, and other objects in terracotta, besides coins and other Roman treasures ; but the search has been keen—the old woman who showed us the theatre said she believed the ground had been so thoroughly ransacked that nothing more could be found. We felt disposed to disbelieve this assertion when we afterwards saw the splendid mosaic discovered in 1870.

The theatre, or rather the remaining part of it, is separated from the road by an iron railing, and the gate of this is kept locked. The old woman who keeps the key, and acts as guide, is not very intelligent. She seems to have more taste for the natural beauties of the place—which are very remarkable—than knowledge of its history ; but at Lillebonne one does not seem to want a guide, it so thoroughly represents the various races which have dwelt in the fair valley—the Roman (and, from some remains which have been found, even the Celtic), the Romanesque or Norman, and the Gothic or Plantagenet, possessors of Normandy.

The theatre of Lillebonne is supposed to date from the second century, and to have been capable of holding three thousand spectators. The rows of seats are cut in the rock which rises behind ; there are eight divisions of these and seven vomitories, and all round the outside of the semicircle there is a passage which rises up in its midst to the highest row of seats. From these, there is a fine view of the castle opposite, of part of the town, and of the country surrounding Lillebonne, on the side of the theatre. There are two wells in front of the amphitheatre, and in these many treasures and curiosities were discovered. The massive walls dividing and

surrounding the theatre are faced with Roman masonry, bonded together at uneven distances by courses of thin red tiles ; frequent buttresses support the walls : but the whole is grass-grown, and although it is evidently cared for, it is not kept too trim. Wreaths of clematis fling themselves down from the topmost row of seats, and hang like a canopy over our heads as we walk round the outside corridor, while the turf at our feet is a carpet of wild flowers. Our guide saw us gathering some of these, and asked if Madame would accept a bouquet. Out of the clematis blossoms and a few others, she arranged a charming nosegay, with a deftness and rapid skill truly French, and presented it with a smiling grace that seemed quite out of keeping with her short square figure and wooden-looking face.

“ I love flowers,” she said simply, “ and I am sorry when they mow the grass and trim my bushes in the Cirque.”

It is wonderful that this relic should have been so well preserved for so many centuries, and also that it should have lain undiscovered till 1812. Lillebonne, or rather Julia Bona, seems to have been a place of great importance, judging by the remains which have been discovered of numerous Roman roads, all starting from it in various directions ; but there is little mention of it in later Norman times, and until William the Bastard held his famous council there it becomes insignificant.

We had been told of a wonderful mosaic pavement lately discovered at Lillebonne, and after some trouble we got admission to it. While we waited for the key in the café to which we had been directed, we amused ourselves with the walls of the little room. From the wainscot to the ceiling on each side, and also facing the windows, a canvas

was stretched, and on two sides of it were represented six of the marshals of the two Napoleons. There were Ney and Pelissier, Macdonald and Soult—all painted in oil, life-size, in full military costume. At the end a large space was reserved for one portrait; but of this only the scarlet legs were visible, the face and body being concealed by a huge framed lithograph of a young lady with abundant curls, hugging a cat, with an inscription, "Ma petite chérie." We were so inquisitive that we peeped behind the frame, and there was a very good likeness of Napoleon III!

We found the mosaic in much better preservation than we expected. A shed has been built over it, so that it is sheltered from all injury. It is certainly a very important work, about twenty-eight feet long by about twenty-two broad. M. l'Abbé Cochet, in the *Journal de Bolbec* of April 16, 1870, published an interesting little account of its discovery, from which we translate:—

"Early in March, 1870, Monsieur Fagot, the proprietor of a café at Lillebonne, was digging up a yard, intending to convert it into a garden" (town talk says Monsieur Fagot was making a bowling-green), "when, at about a foot and a half below the surface of the ground, he came upon an ancient pavement. He communicated his discovery to Monsieur le Docteur Piqué, Mayor of Lillebonne, who at once recognised the pavement as a mosaic.

"Sensible of the importance of this discovery, M. Piqué set to work to disinter it with all possible care, and called round him those most capable of aiding him in this delicate operation. I saw the mosaic first on the 15th and then on the 21st of March, and I followed the whole process of discovery

Monsieur Piqué, Monsieur Brianchon, member of the Commission of Antiquities, and M. Derarue, cantonal agent, worked indefatigably themselves, and did not allow workmen to touch the last layer of rubbish which rested on the mosaic. The pavement was surrounded by walls, rather more than a foot and a half in thickness, but nowhere more than a foot in height. They must have fallen with the roofs, for their ruins lay scattered over the pavement. These walls appear to have been painted; and there must have been marble used in the decoration of the chamber, for numerous marble slabs appeared among the rubbish. The roof had evidently fallen in. We found the surface of the pavement covered with ridge and pantiles: even the nails of the roof were found. It was plain to us that this ancient dwelling had been destroyed by fire. A black, burnt surface, some inches thick, adhered to the face of the pavement. On this we found several statuettes, some broken, some entire, in terra-cotta. We recognised among these the sitting figure known as Latona, and some Venus Anadyomenes. These statues had become blackened by their long stay underground in the burnt earth. I think these are probably votive images, and I am inclined to consider that the building of which we have discovered the pavement was a temple consecrated to Diana and Apollo.

“The mosaic has, first, a broad white border, edged with black lines. After this come four hunting subjects, one on each side of the mosaic, separated by a band of white and red lozenges.

“*East Side.*—In the compartment on the east side there are men, horses, and dogs, but there is no prey to be seen. The scene is a forest; three men on horseback gallop one

after another. One of the horsemen holds a whip and a leash; a dog runs beside his horse: another holds a lance or boar-spear; near his horse's foot is a very little dog, beyond is a larger dog. It is possible that they are all in pursuit of a fine ten-antlered stag in the next compartment.

"*South Side.*—This is still a hunting scene in a forest. The forest is represented by numerous trees. The chief per-



Mosaic, Lillebonne.

sonage here is on the right—a huntsman armed with a quiver. He draws his bow to let fly an arrow at a ten-horned stag running at full speed. Before the stag is another huntsman, who stops its way and pierces its mouth with a boar-spear. Behind this man is another stag, with splendid antlers. This fine beast, which seems to come out of a thicket, has a young doe close by, and is pursued by a greyhound. We think that this last group of animals

belongs rather to the huntsmen of the first division than to the archers we have just described.

“*West Side.*—In this scene there are four personages. The first on the left holds a stag of ten antlers; the stag appears to be tranquil. Behind it is a man dressed in Gallic fashion. In his right hand he holds a curved stick; with his left a circular cloak placed on his shoulders. Behind are two coupled dogs, one tan, the other black. These dogs have collars, and a cord fastens them together. Behind them are two figures: one is on foot, and walks beside a horse with a bridle; the other personage is on horseback, and holds in his right hand a whip and a leash, as on the east side.

“*North Side.*—This is the finest and most remarkable group. There are in it still the trees representing a forest, also a stag; but besides these there are seven personages, a goddess, and an altar. On the left a man holds a bridled horse with his right hand, while with the left he wields a club. Another man, in Gallic costume, holds a sharp lance in his left hand; with the right he leads a dog. The third figure appears to be the most important. He is wrapped in a large mantle, and is perhaps a priest or a sacrificer. He points to the statue of the goddess in front of him. A fourth figure stands between him and the image, but this one appears young and very small; he is perhaps a server. The altar itself seems to be receiving from the young server an offering or the sacred fire. The goddess crowns the picture. She stands erect on a pedestal; holding a bow in one hand, the other is raised to her head. She is evidently Diana, the goddess of the chase.

“This is certainly a sacrifice in the forest. The picture is

completed by three persons, who assist at the sacrifice. One of them holds in his left hand an elegant vase for libations; in the right he has a salver. Another personage brings a young stag for the sacrifice.

“All the figures in these different scenes are from 31 to 35 inches high.

“Between this dramatic part of the mosaic and the centre there is a second white band, about $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, bordered, like the first, with black lines about an inch in breadth.

“The centre of the mosaic is round, and in each of the angles left between it and the corners of the white border is a handsome basket, or antique vase, with two handles and a foot.

“On the right and left of the basket are branches bearing pointed leaves resembling laurel.

“The central picture of the mosaic, which I believe to be perfectly round, is enclosed in a border of twisted circles of various colours, about two inches broad. This portion, filled by a group, is the important part of the design. All our interest concentrates itself on this mysterious composition.

“*Central Group.*—We see here two personages—a man and a woman, life-size. But for long scarves, they are nude. The woman’s scarf is black and white; the man’s white and red. Unhappily the man is much less perfect than the woman; both are very well drawn. The man’s legs are as vigorous as those on a Greek vase. The man appears to run after the woman; the woman flies from the man, but she seems to be falling on her knees, turning her left side to her pursuer. The woman’s hair is dressed, and among her plaits of hair are some green beads. Some part only of the face

remains. The forehead, the eyes, and the nose are here, but the mouth and chin are wanting, and so is the neck. The arms are perfect, and between the elbow and the shoulder are armlets of green beads. The right hand tries to rest on something round, which seems to fall from its grasp. Is it a box or an urn? That is what we cannot discover. Stretching her left hand towards the man, she seems to implore mercy. The man has lost the greater part of his body: the two arms and the trunk, so far as the hips, have disappeared; there are only the two legs perfect. The face is in profile, and has only the eyes and hair. The hair is wreathed with a crown of laurel; a scarlet scarf floats behind the back, and is folded round the left leg. He holds a long stick.

“M. le Baron de Witte, who is deeply versed in Greek and Roman antiquities, thinks that the picture represents Apollo pursuing a nymph, who is perhaps Daphne.

“Two inscriptions are preserved on the mosaic. Each inscription contains two lines. The first is placed over the head of the two personages in the central group; the second is beneath their feet. These inscriptions have no connection with the subjects: they simply relate to the artist and the designer of the mosaic.

“Wonderful to relate, this beautiful mosaic appears to be the work of an Italian artist of Pozzoli, a place celebrated for this kind of work. The ancient workers in mosaic must certainly have possessed a special secret for making the cement in which the cubes are inserted, for we hesitated at first as to whether this was an artificial composition or natural rock. This hardness, doubtless, effectually resisted the damp of the earth below; and it is this which chiefly

explains the good preservation of the pavement. The pavement is not quite level, but is on a slightly inclined plane, so that water must necessarily have drained off its surface. These are the two inscriptions—

T. SEN FILIX C PV
TEOLANVS FEC.

which stands for—

‘Titus Cenius Felix, citizen of Pozzoli.’

The second inscription is more difficult to read and interpret. However, we believe it runs thus:—

ET AMORCI or GI or GF
DISCIPVLVS,

which signifies ‘pupil of Amorsus, or Amorgos.’ Is this the name of a master of a school? We cannot tell. Our great interpreter, M. Léon Renier, considers this may be the Latin translation of the Greek Amorgos. Amorgos was a Greek island, one of the Cyclades, where there was a manufactory of purple and of the best red dye. After all the researches we have brought to bear on it, we are led to conclude that the mosaic of Lillebonne is a work of the second century, and that it is contemporary with the theatre and the great prosperity of Julia Bona. It is the work of an Italian artist, a mosaic-worker of Pozzoli formed in the best schools of his epoch; and we have every reason to think that it is the pavement of a temple of Apollo and Diana, from the subjects represented thereon and the statuettes discovered on its surface.”

We saw afterwards some photographs of the mosaic, which gave a much clearer idea of these subjects than it is easy

to gain by looking at the pavement ; for the colour is rather confusing, and the restorations (if they are restorations) which appear here and there injure the clearness of the whole. Still it is marvellously well preserved, and well worth seeing.

Lillebonne is very well watered, and has become a manufacturing town. One of its manufacturers, a cotton-spinner, has purchased and built himself a house in the castle and enclosure of William the Conqueror. The massive old walls still exist, enclosing the modern gardens and orchards. Some of the old towers and the more modern round tower yet remain ; but the cotton-spinner entirely demolished the great Norman hall in which William held his great council previous to the invasion of England, when he heard of the accession of Harold. When one reflects that this noble and almost unique specimen of Norman domestic architecture was removed in order to make room for the mimic red-brick castle which we saw from the Cirque below, it raises one's indignation as well as one's wonder. This loss is irreparable ; for, from the drawing in Cotman's "Norman Antiquities," it must have been a splendid building.

However, the present proprietor is very courteous in allowing strangers free access. We strolled up through a pleasant garden, a little way beyond the theatre, to the old tower. This is perhaps hardly so old as Duke William. It is of hexagonal shape, and entirely ruined, far more so than the Roman Theatre, perhaps eight hundred years older, lying at its feet on the other side of the road. The old castle of William the Conqueror was inhabited in turn by William Rufus, the Empress Maud, and her

son Henry II. The last held a council at Lillebonne. In 1223 Louis VIII. yielded Lillebonne to his brother, the Count of Boulogne, the son of Philip Augustus and Agnes de Méranie. After this it belonged to the Harcourts de Rieux. In 1416 Lillebonne was taken by the all-conquering Henry V. The lofty round tower near the house is in perfect preservation. It is about two centuries later in date than the ruined tower, and not older than the fifteenth century. The masonry of this tower is marvellous work; grass cannot find a chink to nestle among its evenly set stones. There are three stories, each divided by a finely moulded vaulted roof. The round walls are thirteen feet thick, and fifty-five in diameter. It is completely surrounded by a fosse crossed by a drawbridge. A little corkscrew staircase takes you to the top of the tower, and the view is very extensive and beautiful; for, besides the valley of the Bolbec and the surrounding hills, which gird Lillebonne with a belt of exquisite green, the cliffs open suddenly nearly opposite Quillebœuf, and there is, about three miles off, a view of the Seine. The inside of the tower is picturesque: its narrow slits of windows are deeply splayed in the immense thickness of the wall, and all around are stacked logs and faggots, except where a space is reserved for huge cider-casks.

It is easy to see how high the water in the moat formerly reached, for the grass and wild plants have continued to generate where its action has softened the mortar or widened the interstices, and up this portion creep and cling all manner of frail plants; clematis even has contrived to niche itself, and hangs down in a hoary festoon above a tuft of nestling harebells. Lillebonne contains so

much that is interesting, and belongs to such various periods of history, that we should have liked to make a much longer stay there, if we had been more comfortably lodged.

It is a deep regret for Englishmen that the baronial hall of Duke William, in which the Conquest was first publicly mooted, should have been swept away. It formed an important link among the buildings connected with his life in Normandy, where every step we take seems to recall some fresh memory of this wonderful man.

The opinion of the barons assembled at William's famous council seems to have been much divided. The "Roman de Rou" gives a most graphic account of the different answers which William received :—

“ Mult se vont entrels dementant
Par tropeax se vunt conseillant.”

“ Li altres dient ke pas n'iront,
Kar mult deivent è povres sont.”

Spite of the enthusiastic eloquence of the Duke's friend, William Fitz-Osbern, the barons do not seem to have accorded a general or even a public consent to the enterprise. Each baron appears to have given a separate promise of the number of men and ships which he would supply ; and this promise was entered at once against their respective names in a book :—

“ E li Dus fist tot enbrever
Nés fist è chevaliers nombriere.”

THE VALLEY OF THE SEINE.

CHAPTER VIII.

Caudebec.—St. Wandrille.



WE found the only way of getting from Lillebonne to Caudebec was by private carriage, and we bargained with our landlord for one for the afternoon. He had commented severely on the people of St. Romain for not finding

us a better vehicle, so we expected something more respectable; but, when it appeared, it was only a superior sort of cart, with a bigger, showier horse, but which in reality was very inferior in speed to our little fast-trotting friend. We had found so much that is beautiful and interesting in Lillebonne, that we should have made a longer stay there if the inn had been cleaner and more comfortable: a greater number of English travellers would certainly work reform in these points.

The road is pretty between Lillebonne and Caudebec, but not so beautiful as between Lillebonne and Tancarville. We passed through numerous orchards all fruit-laden, and at

last came to a road near the top of a steep hill, but with such high tree-crowned banks on each side that, although we knew we must be near the Seine, we could not get a peep at it. Presently we came out on the high road. We overtook a carriage heavily laden, and dashing along at a gallop; but our horse evidently knew the road, and that he was not far from good quarters, and we soon passed these travellers. We had not got much ahead, when there came a crash, then shouts and cries, and, looking back, we saw that the travellers had been suddenly stopped—their carriage-pole had broken. This seemed an awkward accident coming down hill, but our driver would neither stop nor offer to help. He drove on as fast as he could. Just at the opening of the road is a most exquisite view of Caudebec. The little town lies at our feet, its quaint gabled houses backed by the steep forest-covered hill behind; but the grand spire of Notre-Dame rises up so impressively in the midst that we seem only to have eyes for its beauties. It is certainly a noble church. The architecture is perhaps too late in style, and shows many blemishes on close inspection; but the grouping of spire and tourelles is admirable, and its position among the houses and trees, difficult as it makes it to the artist in the way of subject, yet enhances its picturesqueness when seen from a distance.

The position of Caudebec at the mouth of a valley that opens widely on the banks of the Seine, between two lofty thickly wooded hills, is truly exquisite, and the long double avenue of lofty arched trees on the broad quay beside the river gives it an indescribable quaintness. We drove into the yard of our old quarters at the Hôtel de la Marine, and found landlord and landlady and the whole establishment

ready to greet us with a heartiness of welcome that made the old-fashioned, somewhat rough place seem quite home-like. The view of the Seine is here perfectly exquisite, with its poplar-fringed, low banks opposite, and the grand bends it makes on either side, curving round on the right so as to face Villequier, and girdled in on the left by the dark hills of the forest of Maulévrier, as they sweep round to St. Wandrille.

A *bac*, or very large ferryboat, is constantly plying across the river to St. Nicholas and Vatteville; diligences come in once a day from Rôuen, and more frequently from Yvetôt; and the little *Furet* passes one day on its way from Rouen, and the next day from Havre. Besides these arrivals, the quiet of the little town is rarely interrupted, except by the incomings or departures of *commis-voyageurs*, with their traps; and for them it must be said, for the matter of arrival and departure and everything else, they are good at announcing their presence.

Mr. Musgrave's description of Caudebec is very graphic, and comprises much of the chief information that is to be gained about the charming, quaint little town:—"Joseph Vernet considered the view from the quay at Caudebec one of the finest in France, on account of the ellipsis which the Seine forms above and below this point. The town itself seems really to have been built on purpose to improve and perfect the beauty of the prospect. The church itself is of the fifteenth century, and uplifts its fine Gothic steeple from amidst a group of fine trees and clustered old houses. This, at any rate, is seen to great advantage from the water, which commands a full view of a natural amphitheatre, covered with dense groves, wide-extended gardens, and the prettiest

of villas ; a fine quay, planted with trees, cut most ingeniously into the form of an arched gallery ; and an ever-picturesque assemblage of vessels, lading, unloading, or waiting for a wind." This was written in 1855. There are not many vessels now-a-days in the port of Caudebec. William the Conqueror was here, nineteen years before he paid us his memorable visit, on his way to punish the revolt of the Count of Arques, and Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, was governor here in the very year 1442 when, having left the regent Duke of Bedford in Paris, he was elevated to the earldom. Caudebec had surrendered by capitulation to the Earl of Warwick, after a siege of six months, and subsequently engaged in a sanguinary battle with the English army at Tancarville, losing a thousand men on the field. The frequent felling of oak trees in this neighbourhood, for ship-building on the other side of the river, gave rise to tanneries which now constitute the sole manufacture of Caudebec. Previous to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes there was a thriving trade here in kid gloves, so soft and fine that they could be enclosed in a walnut-shell ; and the *fabrique de chapeaux* had attained such celebrity, that a Caudebec hat was essential to the outfit of the dandies in the days of Louis XIV. Boileau says in his "Épître à Monsieur de Lamorguon"—

"Pradon à mis au jour un livre contre vous,
Et chez le chapelier du coin de notre place
Autour d'un Caudebec j'en ai lu le préface."

Still at Caudebec one learns a little more about the town than Mr. Musgrave has given us.

It seems there was once an island in front of Caudebec

called Beleiniac. Three beautiful churches were built upon it, but the *barre* at last submerged it. A century after, in 1641, the island again rose above water, but the violence of the *barre* soon swept it away again. In the ninth century Caudebec was a mere fishing-village, and was granted with its harbour by Charles le Chauve to the inhabitants of St. Wandrille. In 1282 the monks of St. Wandrille built the quay, and in the reign of William the Conqueror there was on the quay a little church called St. Pierre des Planquettes.



The Double Avenue.

In the second half of the twelfth century a larger church was built, dedicated to Notre-Dame, and consecrated by Archbishop Odo Rigault. The arms of Caudebec at this time were three silver whiting on a blue field. Louis XIV., with his usual want of good taste, substituted for the whiting three salmon. When the English invaded Normandy in the fifteenth century, Caudebec was in the hands of the Burgundians, who offered to yield the town to the English, and to recognise the authority of Henry V., if he should succeed

in taking Rouen ; but the loyal citizens of Caudebec refused to submit to the invader, and they sustained a siege of six months. During this siege the two armies interchanged arrows and couplets beneath the walls; but at length Caudebec surrendered to Warwick and Talbot, and Talbot remained in it as governor. In 1453 came the insurrection of the Cauchois. After they had taken Harfleur, they asked the generals of Charles VII. to help them to free Caudebec from the English, but the generals refused on the ground of weariness. The brave Cauchois then went on alone, resolved to free the conquered town from the hated English ; but when they reached the boundary formed by the river St. Gertrude, they found it defended by English archers, and they lost many men in trying to take it. While they were still fighting, they were surrounded by English troops sent out from Rouen, and a fearful massacre ensued.

Louis XI. paid frequent visits to Caudebec. He is said on one occasion to have met Warwick the king-maker there. He founded a mass in the chapel of Caillouville for the royal family.

In the sixteenth century the Huguenots ravaged Caudebec, but it declared for Henri Quatre. After the Prince of Parma had forced Henri to raise the siege of Rouen he retook Caudebec, but he received a mortal wound there. A memory of Henri still lingers in an old house in which he is said to have lodged ; also his opinion that the church was " *la plus jolie chapelle que j'ai jamais vue.*"

Caudebec looks as if modern improvements had not yet reached it—it is so full of the leisurely sunshine of life : existence seems to go on as calmly as the flow of the bright, broad river, except that there is no such excitement in the

life of the little town as that caused by the *barre* on the river at the time of the equinoctial full moon.

The Prussians occupied Caudebec for six months during this last war, but they do not seem to have done any damage to the town. The only complaint we heard was that they ate like horses.

The morning after our arrival was market-day, and we were very early roused by the noise of arrivals and by the buzz on the quay below our windows. We found that many of the wives of the farmers of the neighbourhood and the shopkeepers of adjacent towns preside at their own stalls in the market and come to the table d'hôte of the hotel as guests. When we went out, the market had spread itself all along the quay; the huge waggons, with lofty green tilts, filled up the arched avenue, and grouped well with the quaint old house that stands in its garden at one end of it. Just in front of the hotel was a stall of woollen and linen goods; here were merino and flannel of very good quality, close to ready-made shirts and jackets of the coarsest and cheapest make. Along the quay beyond were fruit-stalls, with piles on piles of quaint, round baskets ready to replenish the stalls. Up the street beside the inn—the street up which one sees the exquisite view of the church from the river—was a busy fish-market. We hurried through this; for the sight of huge congers, hake, and fish strange to English eyes, was sickening. In the smaller Place on the left, close to the convent, was a meat and hardware market; we turned up a narrow street on the right, and in a minute or two were in the Grande Place, one end of which is entirely filled by the Church of Notre-Dame.

The way to the church was crowded up with baskets and straw, for it was so early that goods were still being unpacked ; but finally we emerged into a little street which goes round the church, and from which there is a view of the west side. The quaint, half-timbered houses, however, are built too close to it, and we found no means of seeing this side from a sufficient distance. The west porch is very rich, and perfect in its details. It is a triple portal, the side porches curving backwards, profusely ornamented with sculptured niches and foliage and statues ; above is a balustrade, and a rose window of later work. The north door is also remarkable. But the glory of Caudebec is its church-steeple, 330 feet high ; the core is of brick incrustated with perforated work, unfortunately now imperfect, as a portion of it fell down a few years ago ; it is octangular, the stone tracery takes the form of fleurs-de-lis. The flying buttresses are graceful in design ; the staircase-tower ends in a royal crown, and is also richly ornamented. The perforated parapet over the west door is an inscription made in stone letters nineteen inches high ; it goes completely round the church.

Inside, the appearance of the church is colder than might be expected ; but there are some good painted sixteenth-century windows. There are a nave and two aisles, no transepts. In a chapel in the north aisle is a font, with a curiously carved wooden cover, with subjects from the life of our Lord. It was very interesting to see how many market-women had come in to early mass ; and how others kept on stealing quietly in, some of them, basket in hand, just to kneel down and ask a blessing on the day's work ; then they went out quietly again to their business in the Place outside.

There is a remarkable stone pendant in the Lady chapel behind the high altar. The roof of the chapel is groined, and the vaulting ribs unite and form this pendant, which is thirteen feet long, and ends in a carved boss. There is also a piscina of sixteenth-century work, some old painted glass, and the tombstone of Guillaume Letellier, the architect of Notre-Dame.

The atmosphere in the church was so still and peaceful—the only sound being the muffled closing of the door as the market-women passed in and out, or the quiet tread of a tall priest who, when mass had ended, took a friend round the church—that it was difficult to believe in the noise and bustle when we came out again into the Place. Here is the life and soul of the market. In the centre and along the sides are large stalls, some with canvas roofs, others only sheltered by umbrellas; all around and about, wedged between the stalls behind them, even reaching as far as the pavement before the houses that surround the Place, are market-women with baskets of eggs and of primrose butter, so exquisitely cool and tempting as the vendor raises first the snowy cloth that covers her basket and then opens the cabbage-leaves which close over the butter. Some of the baskets are open and full of poultry, set on the ground beside their sellers, who stand in lively smiling gossip with a neighbour. As we approach, we are asked to buy a duck, a chicken, or a turkey, and to feel the breasts of the poor patient creatures, sitting four in a row, two on each side the basket handle; if they move a wing or a leg, they are instantly tucked in again with a sharp admonitory pat.

We have to push through these throngs of basket-women to reach the fruit and vegetable stalls. The clatter, the

daughter, the gesticulation and harangues of a keen-faced, dark-eyed man, in a blouse, who is selling an immense pile of melons by auction—all the merry sounds so indescribably French, are bewildering, but they seem to fill the Place with sunny mirth. It is a bright morning, too, after the rain, and the sun seemingly revels among the *potirons* and *citrouilles* lying about in front of the stalls, some of them with a slice cut out, glowing with the delicate golden tint within. Beside the stall is a heap of tin and wooden measures, and on these lies an open sack of *cornichons*, another of rosy onions ; in front is a basket of large white radishes, a heap of orange carrots, glowing against their feathery foliage, and a bunch of silver-skinned leeks ; cabbages, not crammed out of sight in a basket, but arranged on the stall so as to show their exquisitely veined leaves to the best advantage ; a few creamy cauliflowers, placed temptingly beside a pile of scarlet tomatoes ; and raised higher, so as to be more under the shadow of the canvas overhead, are plums and peaches and grapes. The pears are not unpacked yet, but they lie brown and tempting in the mouths of their open baskets. There does not seem any attempt at effort, and yet everything is placed in such happy harmonious contrast ; the turnips and carrots have been carefully washed at the fountain near the church ; everything is at its brightest and best ; no one seems to have a care or a trouble on market-day.

The women have chiefly gowns of lilac cotton, or check or dark green-grey stuff ; most of the short jackets are black, and several of the women are clad altogether in black, the collar of the gown coming up round the throat, with lilac aprons. The younger women wear the ordinary, full-bordered, grisette

cap; but the older women wear a closer cap, the border usually being a plain piece of dimité, cut somewhat deep at the ears, with a band going round the head, the ends fastened together by a pin over the forehead; most of them have black stockings and sabots, and one or two of the very poorest wear a *bonnet de coton*, but these are rare on market-day at Caudebec. The men have light-blue, many-patched blouses; some faded to an exquisite hue.

Our friend, the melon auctioneer, is having a fierce battle with a woman as sharp-looking as himself. He has been brandishing a clasp-knife so close to his own thin nose that the effect has been alarming; and now, as his customer flattens her nose on the melon in the endeavour to test its soundness, he snatches at the fruit and plunges the knife into it, as if he were stabbing an enemy; he hands her the slice, but she shakes her head.

"Gathered green," she says with a smile. She turns away, and our friend stamps, swears, and catching sight of us holds out the melon.

"Gathered green!—ma foi!—smell it," he screams; "taste, and then see if it is not the cheapest of cantaloups—only one franc and a half for the best fruit in the market."

But a vehement drumming makes us indifferent to the auctioneer of melons.

A crowd has gathered on the other side of the market, round a large square frame mounted on a pole. In this frame are nine small pictures, representing the devastations of the Prussians. Beside it stands a copper-faced, bare-headed woman, holding in one hand a bundle of songs, in the other a long wand. She points in turn to each of

the nine pictures, and recites its story with much dramatic effect. As she ends, the drum beats *rat-à-plan*, and then she sings "Vengeance," &c., keeping time with the bundle of songs.

She kept on repeating this performance all through the



Rue de la Boucherie.

morning, and probably it was not her first visit to Caudebec on market-day; yet the crowd at that end of the Place listened to her in breathless silence, and we saw tears in the eyes of some of the women. Some of the countrymen, too, bronzed, rough-looking fellows, seemed deeply stirred. We did not see any mockery shown at the performance, though the woman's voice was so harsh that it was not pleasing to hear.

Round the Place are some of the principal shops—M. Vagnon, tailor and member of the town-council, and Monsieur Patey, the jeweller and clockmaker, and others—all, but especially Monsieur Vagnon, most kind and courteous people, ready to give any information about their town and its neighbourhood. The doctor of the town, too, M. Gue-

roult, is a distinguished antiquary, and has a charming collection of treasures, gathered both in the neighbourhood of Caudebec and elsewhere. He is very courteous in showing his treasures to visitors; from his pretty garden one gets an excellent view of the church. There is plenty to amuse and interest in the houses and people of the quaint little town, without exploring the neighbourhood; and yet that should be seen, it is so full of rare beauty. It is the peace and sunny leisure of the place that are so refreshing. As the chief upholsterer, another quaint character, said—

“We sleep, we good folks of Caudebec, while the rest of the world goes ahead.”

He said this to us in reference to a projected railway between Havre and Rouen along the banks of the Seine. He, and a few of the more enterprising inhabitants, wish the railway to follow the river-bank and pass in front of their town, hoping by this means to restore prosperity to Caudebec; but others shake their heads: “We do very well,” they say; “why not let well alone?”

And though such a railway would make the present rather difficult access an easy one—for Caudebec is now six miles from Yvetôt, the nearest railway station—we yet felt inclined to agree with the sleepy townsmen, and to prefer the dear primitive little place, with its utter want of luxury and modern ways, to the change that a great influx of travellers would create in its narrow streets, tottering houses, and, above all, in the leisure of its sunny life beside the lovely Seine. It is sad to think, too, how completely this projected line of rail will change the whole aspect of the river. The beautiful and varied banks of the Seine, between Caudebec and Le Havre, will soon be a thing

of the past ; and although opposition may for a time defer its approach, the mercantile advantages of such a railway are too obvious to be resisted in such a money-getting province as Normandy.

We passed round the east end of the church, and found a charming group of quaint, tumble-down gabled houses, half-



Old Houses.

timbered in dark grey-green oak, with a vine flinging its festoons of tender green foliage across from one tiled roof to the other ; going on past some unsavoury tan-yards, we found ourselves at the end of the Grande Rue and outside the town. There is an immense flight of steps here leading into the wood ; but it is worth while to climb them, for the view of the church, rising above

the clusters of gables, is very picturesque. Then we came down and sauntered along the Grande Rue, stopping every moment to admire the pictures made by the old houses, now nodding their gabled vine-crowned heads together in some sunny nook, now revealing, through their open doorways, visions of courtyard, so full of light and shade and colour that an artist might well despair of reproducing them.

There is a large proportion of dark in these pictures, for the oak walls and beams seem to absorb so much of the light, that what is left only glints on freshly sawn timber, on blouses hanging to dry, vine-sprays climbing up wherever there is a chance, on nasturtium blossoms at a side window, and most of all on the snowy, softly cooing pigeons which delight in Caudebec.

Near the top of the Grande Rue, just before it debouches on the Yvetôt Road, we came to the Rue de la Boucherie. This is the most picturesque street in Caudebec. The little river Gertrude runs through it from end to end. On one side some of the houses are built over the water; and on the other the upper stories project over the street, and are supported by stone pillars resting on the pavement. Below these, at No. 4 and No. 6, are two very curious houses, called *La Maison des Templiers*, of real thirteenth-century work, seemingly untouched by restoration: the fireplace in one of these rooms, and the window-seats, are very remarkable.

There are several other streets in Caudebec nearly as picturesque as the Rue de la Boucherie, but they are fast falling to decay, and every year now threatens their entire removal. It is too easy to picture Caudebec a few years hence as unrecognisable, when the hand of the moderniser has been laid upon it, as the Rue Jeanne d'Arc now is for any ancient inhabitant of Rouen. At present, except Lisieux, it is the quaintest, least-modernised town in Normandy, and the most charmingly placed of any, unless it be Avranches.

At the end of the Grande Rue, beyond the top of the Rue de la Boucherie, there is a picturesque opening. Between the houses at the end of this are some remnants of

the old ramparts of Caudebec ; and in a garden not far off, to which it is easy to obtain access, besides some curious old ruins, there is a good view of the church. The garden is terraced on the site of the old fortifications, which extend here for some distance. The proprietor has died lately, and the garden is in a wild, neglected condition, full of cabbage-stumps and rampant vines clinging to the old walls. The little river winds in and out, in green light and shade, and the whole place is full of subjects for an artist. At one end a woman was kneeling on a flat stone, washing her clothes in the water, which, as it runs directly down from the unsavoury tan-yards on the opposite side of the town, cannot be fit for the purpose.

At the very end of the Grande Rue is the forge of a blacksmith, or rather *the* blacksmith, for the big, grey-bearded, kind man is popular in the town ; every one seems to know M. Mathieu. From the rising ground beyond his house there is a very picturesque view of the Grande Rue, with its quaint gables and vine-clad windows, ending with the steeple and *tourelles* of the church, and the wooded hill in the distance ; and, by climbing up a little path which turns off the road by the Gendarmerie, a good view may be got of the town and the river, stretching away to Villequier.

At the opposite side of the town, near a large tan-factory, is a little quiet Place. There are some curious old houses here. One of these surrounds a small tan-yard, and has an old oak gallery running round its first floor. This is said to be the house occupied by Henry IV. after he had routed the Duke of Parma, who lost his arm here in 1592. In a cellar leading out of this tan-yard are some of the old walls, of amazing strength and thickness. The woman who

showed them to us said that she shut herself in here with provisions for a month at the first alarm of the Prussian approach; "but," she said, "if I could only have shut the brigands in there under my thumb, dame! they might have stayed shut up till now."

She was a tall, gaunt woman, with lively black eyes—a



Grande Rue and Church.

certain Mère Robillard, and she looked quite bloodthirsty at the notion of trapping the enemy. She took us through the cellar to see a beautiful fruit-garden at the back of the house, and sold us a quantity of excellent pears, that were ripening on a south wall.

One evening, when we were sitting in the little Place (a kind old woman always brought out chairs when she saw

that my companion was going to sketch—this chair-lending is a kindness which we found unfailing throughout Normandy), some of the children who usually surrounded us spied out in the sketch-book a likeness of La Mère Robillard; it was only a little pencil outline, but they recognised it in an instant. There was a shout, a laugh, and out came the elders from the houses round to ask leave to look at their “gossip’s” likeness. One foolish-faced, fat old woman, with her face tied up in flannel, stood in front of the sketcher gaping, with her arms a-kimbo, trying to understand the buzz of merry laughter; and in a moment our old chair-lender had seized her by the elbows, and held her tight, crying—

“Thou shalt be drawn too, La Mère Manget, since thou standest between monsieur and his sketch.”

There was nothing for it but to sketch La Mère Manget; and this fresh likeness was even more popular than the first, and so increased the excitement that we began to expect our stout friend, the chief gendarme, would come to know what the shrieks of laughter meant.

There is a charming walk close to Caudebec, called the Marais, but it is not easy to find, as we went to it through some fields off the road at the end of the town by the tanneries. It is chiefly through fields beside the little, poplar-bordered river, and in the evening the reflections in the water are most lovely: it is a walk full of beauty, and from about here there is another charming view of the church.

Another very pleasant walk is from Caudebec to the little village of Ste. Gertrude. At first we go along the steep, dusty high road leading to Yvetôt; but, when we get a little way out, there is so grand a view of Caudebec and its

church, and of the charming green valley through which the Ste. Gertrude runs, that the walk has none of the dulness one associates with a high road. It is cut on the side of one of the hills which make the valley of Ste. Gertrude, at a considerable height above the willow-shaded river. About two miles on, the river curves round in a sudden bend, following



Street in Caudebec.

the course of the hills to the left, and a road opens on this side, and takes its way through a green valley beside the little stream. It was near sunset, and the tall, slender poplars beside the water stood out, their delicate green clearly defined against the darkness of the hill behind; against this nestled a tiny church, with white tower and grey spire. The sun was setting in a flood of golden glory just where

the two dark lines of hill cross one another. The purple clouds seemed to hang lazily overhead, their edges gilded with light from below, the purple hue partly bronzed by the same cause. Along this pleasant road, with a bit of waste land beside it, we came to the tiny village. A few houses, with gardens gay with flowers, clustered round the church. The village now numbers about one hundred and eighty inhabitants, but it is said that at the time of the English invasion the population was between seven and eight thousand. The little church was once famous for its painted glass, but this was destroyed at the Revolution. There is a very remarkable stone tabernacle over the altar. The church was nearly condemned a few years ago, but was saved at the entreaty of its inhabitants, as it is considered so good a specimen of its style—sixteenth century.

It seems as if one ought to be able to find one's way back to Caudebec beside the river; but the peasants we asked declared there was no such way, and that the only path lay along the high road.

We had been told that St. Wandrille was within an easy walk of Caudebec; but it is nearly five miles of walk beside the Seine, on the way to Rouen, and there is so much to be seen there, that it is much better to drive at least one way. The village of Caudebecquet is worth exploring on foot, it is so extremely picturesque.

The road to it, nearly three miles along the banks of the Seine, is lovely. There is an upper and a lower road; but perhaps the lower is the most picturesque. We went one way, and returned the other. In the upper road there is an ancient pillar, with a round flat stone atop, on which a cross is engraven. This is the old cross of the knights of

St. John, and to this the monks of St. Wandrille used to walk out each Friday, and place on the stone *pain chétif* for the poor of Caudebec.

The upper road is cut in the side of the steep *côte* that borders the Seine, and down its banks are market-gardens, where hundreds of golden *citrouilles* revel in the sunshine, and orchards laden with scarlet-cheeked cider-apples.

Just before we reach Caudebecquet, in the lower road, the foreground becomes marshy—long green lines of meadow are being gradually reclaimed from the river which intersects them. Here, tall reeds mirror themselves in the water; beyond, the wooded hills descend gently and meet in the blue distance which bounds the farther bank. A narrow tongue of land projects from the marsh into the river, and on this is a small white lighthouse-tower; for the sudden curve the river makes here, and the many sand-banks cast up by the *barre*—which reduce the actual channel within very narrow limits—make navigation extremely dangerous; beside the tower is the small brick dwelling of the lighthouse-keeper of the Seine. We saw this on a dull afternoon, when the river looked pale and grey, and the osiers and poplars beside it wan and weird. It was a spot where one could imagine a tragedy, for even the lighthouse and the dwelling beside it seemed deserted, the only disturbing sound being the harsh cry of some bird among the reeds.

A little way off the road, on the left, we came to an old half-timbered mill; the black wheel was lumbering noisily round, the water from it gurgling over a heap of moss-grown stones in the middle of the stream. There is a bank on one side with a hedge of willows; the other side

curves in and out, and is bordered by large mossy stones : over these are poplars, with a grass-topped wall beneath them, on a level with the entrance to the mill. We heard a cheerful greeting, and looked up. There was the miller at a window, with bare arms and a huge white cap on his head, his great round blue eyes stared at us out of a floury face ; he was laughing heartily at our admiration.

“ If it was in good repair, *bon*—it would be easy to understand ; but tumbling down, that is another thing ;” and his shoulders went up in protest.

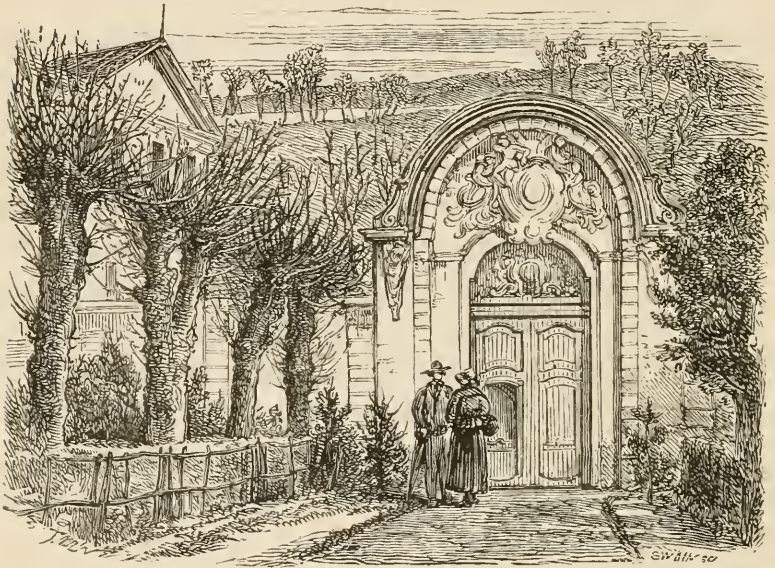
However, as *monsieur* and *madame* cared for things which wanted mending, they had better follow the mill-stream a little to the left, and they would find plenty ; and we did find some deliciously picturesque old sheds, built over the water, and fast falling to pieces. We rested here, and then took the turning to *St. Wandrille*. The village of *St. Wandrille* does not look attractive ; but the church is very curious. The ruins of the abbey have been bought and partly restored by an Englishman, calling himself *Marquis of Stackpoole* ; but we regretted that we had not seen the ruins before these attempts at restoration had been made. This, one of the most ancient abbeys in Normandy, was founded about 648, and called the *Abbey of Fontenelle*.

In the middle of the seventh century *St. Wandrille*, or *Wandregisilus*, left the Merovingian court to give himself up to establishing a monastery. He chose the district of *Rothmar*, in the canton of *Jumièges*, and built his monastery there. It contained three or four hundred monks and six churches. Among its inmates were *St. Wulfran*, the apostle of *Friesland* ; *Thierry*, the son of the last Merovingian king ; and *Eginhard*, the historian of *Charlemagne*. The monastery was burned in

the eighth century, but King Pepin rebuilt it. At the first Norman invasion it yielded; but at the second the monks fled with the remaining treasures of the abbey. The Normans laid it in ruins, and a century went by before any one came forward to rebuild it. Then the Abbot Maynard, of Mont St. Michel, who had formerly been a monk of Ghent, rebuilt it; and his successor, St. Granulph, dedicated it to St. Wandrille in 1033, when it was consecrated by Robert, Archbishop of Rouen, great-uncle of William the Bastard. The abbey was again burned down in the beginning of the thirteenth century, and this time it took nearly a century to rebuild. There was a magnificent stone spire to this last abbey, but it was allowed to decay; and in 1631 the tower fell, crushing in nave, aisles, Lady chapel, the stalls of the choir, and many precious ornaments. The building was restored; but there is little left of it except the cloister, which is most picturesque. It has been painted as the scene for the opera of "Robert le Diable." This cloister is of the fourteenth and fifteenth century; Jacques Hommel, the last regular abbot, ordered the immense stone lavatory to be constructed.

We went in through the garden, which looked pretty and tasteful. The proprietor courteously allows strangers to see his house, as well as the ruined part of the abbey. The conventual buildings, in Italian style, have been converted into a spacious mansion, with an unsuccessful attempt at harmonious furnishing and decoration: behind the house are the cloisters. There are some remains of pillars and arches and tracery here, and most of the broken sculptured portions have been restored or taken care of; it is evident that the abbey has suffered much from pillage. Till 1863 it was

partly a cotton manufactory, partly a tan-yard and mill, and at that time the fragments of sculpture, &c., were abundant, and were freely used to repair walls, &c. There is a very curious lavatory in the cloisters, and the whole enclosure is very interesting; ivy and other creeping plants cling to the ruined columns, and make constant pictures. The church is said never to have been finished; but some of it



St. Wandrille, near Caudebec.

yet remains—parts of the wall of the central tower, which must once have been very lofty. The arches and columns are very elegant in design, and give the idea of a very beautiful building.

The best-preserved portion is the Norman refectory; this is made to communicate with the house. It is about 100 feet long, and has a lofty vaulted roof. In the centre of one side of this vast hall there is a fine collec-

tion of blue and white faïence and china, collected by Monsieur Stackpoole.

The situation of St. Wandrille is admirably sheltered in this wooded valley leading up from the side of the Seine. The terraced gardens reached formerly to the top of the hill behind, on which stands the little chapel of St. Saturnin. This is a curious little Norman building of early date; it is now surrounded by a thick wood. We heard that pilgrimages are often made to the little chapel; it is a very fatiguing walk to reach it.

We turned away from St. Wandrille, glad to think it was rescued from the plunder of road and fence menders, and yet with the feeling that a ruin loses much of its interest when the hand of care is too apparent. There is too much attempt here to bring these ruins into the daily life of the inhabitants of St. Wandrille, and the effect is unreal and discordant—an effect hardly to be defined, and yet which makes itself felt at once.

The most charming walk is from Caudebec to Villequier: the scenery is lovely from the river, but the walk has such special charms that the journey is worth taking by land as well as by water. We go along the quay past some charming gardens with large plots full of balsams and geraniums, standard roses with softly tinted blossoms clustering round small pear-trees laden with brown fruit. At the end of these the quay ends, and the ground slopes in a long green bank to the river. The road rises higher and higher, and the sloping bank becomes an extensive orchard. Apple-trees covered with fruit grow down to the water's edge, and through them appears the poplar-fringed bank of the opposite side. On the right side of the road the

white rock rises into steep crags, sometimes wooded up to the top, sometimes showing patches of bare rock among the close-growing beech-trees. Evidently there have been large trees : few of these remain, but there is a thick undergrowth of copse-wood.

About half-way to Villequier is a little opening beside the river. Here is a tall calvary, and behind this the little chapel called Barre-y-va; it was originally founded in 1260, but rebuilt in the time of Louis Quatorze. The walls of the little shrine are covered with the tablets and offerings of sailors and their relatives. There is a custom in Caudebec—no one seems to know of how long standing—that every newly married pair shall on their wedding-day make a pilgrimage to Barre-y-va; and in one of our excursions to Villequier, while we sat resting on a pleasant shady seat beside the high road, we saw a bridal procession pass. The bride, in a trailing white muslin gown, a wreath, and tulle veil, led the way, her mother walking beside her, and the bridegroom, looking rather sheepish, came behind holding the bride's parasol; after these were about eight couples of friends and relations, not wearing a very bridal air; the bridegroom was a gendarme, and several of his comrades were in the procession.

Near Villequier the river curves into a lovely bay; behind this the dark wooded hill rises steeply; the little village, nestling in its side, clustered round the white church-spire. The Maison Blanche, a large stone house before reaching Villequier, surrounded by its garden and farmhouse, is not so apparent from the road as it is from the river; but it is worth a visit, if only to see the thickness of its walls and a curious group in plaster in one of the bedrooms. We saw

a brown jug in the Maison Blanche with the date painted on it. In most of these old Norman houses there is quaint old crockery.

When we came out of the Maison Blanche it was growing late in the afternoon : the glow of colour on the water was exquisite ; Caudebec lay nestling beneath its steep *côtes* veiled in tender purple mist. The moon was rising over the river ; and as we turned again towards Villequier it lay shrouded in sudden shadow—the water of the little rippling bay a deep green.

A very sad occurrence happened here in 1843 ; on her way to visit her father, Madame Vacquerie, the charming daughter of Victor Hugo, was shipwrecked.

The village of Villequier is one long street. There is an inn, but it has not an inviting appearance : just behind it a steep straight road leads up to the church and the castle. The church is interesting and well preserved ; the choir dates from the twelfth century, but the rest of the building is much later. In it there is some good painted glass.

We went up the very steep hill till we came to the iron gate of the Château de Villequier. The grounds are well planted with fine trees, and the present proprietor, Monsieur Musard, courteously allows the public free access. The place looks melancholy and deserted. The trees are very lofty, and seem to darken the air. On the right a little stream, blue-green in tint, wanders through the deserted place below the green slope which mounts towards the château. A little way on in the valley stands a low, half-timbered, thatched building with three bright green doors and five green-shuttered windows. The concierge lives here—an unhealthy spot, for the ground all round it is

swampy, and the thatch is ominously green. A young woman standing at one of the doors offered to conduct us to the château; but when we had scrambled up a steep path winding through the shrubbery that clothes the front of the hill, and then the much steeper grassed slope on the left, our guide said that, as her father was not in sight, she could not show us over the château, as he only had the keys.

The château is a modern building of the first empire epoch, but the view from it is magnificent. In front is the steep grassed and wooded valley of the park, and beyond this the course of the Seine can be traced for miles. On the left is Caudebec, standing at the head of the sudden bend which the Seine makes; beyond Jumièges the river again makes another decided bend upwards on its way to Duclair, while on the right it curves downward towards Quillebœuf; but we had not much enjoyment of this splendid prospect—heavy clouds had risen while we hurried up the hill, and now the rain came down so heavily that we were glad to shelter ourselves under a tree behind the château.

After a little the rain lessened, but the clouds grew heavier; darkness had come on rapidly, and by the time we were on our way to Caudebec again the effect was awful. The moon had risen high overhead, but she was struggling through rolling masses of black and grey cloud. Through these a ghastly light fell on the white stems of the birch-trees, making them yet more weird, and on the white crag above the cave, which looked black as ink in contrast. Suddenly an owl flew across the road in front of us, and uttered a sharp cry as he disappeared into the cave. Till now we had seen the pale glimmer of the river through the trees; but they grew higher after this, and the road was very dark.

All at once, before we reached the Chapel of Barre-y-va, we heard the murmur of the *barre* groaning and thundering over the rocks below. At this point the road is some forty feet above the river.

The next day was to be, we heard, the grandest of the *mascaret*. For about four days the effect is nearly the same, but the last day but one is considered the finest; so we were on the quay early in expectation of its arrival. Although this phenomenon happens twice every year, at the full moon nearest the spring and autumn equinoxes, yet the sight seems to be always full of excitement for the inhabitants of Caudebec. Numbers of persons, too, come in from neighbouring places and stay in the town to see the *mascaret*.

It does not last more than ten minutes. The morning tide was the grandest. The river was smooth as glass, till suddenly just below Villequier there appeared first a speck of foam in the midst of the stream, and then the water seemed to rise in its whole width and to roll majestically up to Caudebec, the sides of the wave dashing stones and spray far inshore on either side: the whole mass of water came on roaring and thundering in a wave about six feet high, and swept on as far as we could see; two or three waves followed, and these broke furiously over the quay. For about ten minutes the broad calm river was like a stormy sea full of raging foam, wave dashing against wave in struggling fury, and then almost at once the tumult disappeared. The little boats, which had moved up and down the river into safer harbourage, came back and took up their usual stations, and the Seine was as peaceful as ever. At the full moon in October there is another *mascaret*, but it is not so violent as the September one.

It is possible that, to those who have witnessed the Bore or the Eager, this phenomenon would not appear so marvellous: to us who have not it seemed wonderful, rising out of the peaceful river as if by magic. It happens twice in the twenty-four hours with the turn of the tide; and fortunately for us, as the first *mascaret* happened about eight, we saw it twice a day while it lasted.

Miss Costello gives a charming description of Caudebec in her "Summer among the Bocages and the Vines," and a curious version of the cause of the *barre* or *mascaret*.

"This charming little town is situated at the base of a double mountain, in the midst of one of the deep windings of the Seine: the small river of St. Gertrude here meets the great stream and throws itself into its bosom, occasioning a commotion in the waters, which, at certain periods, produces a phenomenon which is an object of much curiosity, called *la barre*, similar to the contention of the streams at the port below Avranches."

It has been already said, in Chapter VII., that the actual cause of the *barre* is the sudden narrowing of the river at Quillebœuf.

The port of Caudebec is said to be a thousand years old.

Caudebec is mentioned in the "Roman de Rou" as having been visited by William the Conqueror:—

"Quand il vint à Punt Andumer
A Chaudebec ala passer
De Chaudebec as Bans le Cumte."

This was when he came in hot haste from Valognes to the taking of Château d'Arques.

Caudebec would be a charming spot to spend the summer

in for those anxious to explore the antiquities of Normandy north of the Seine; there is much worth visiting close at hand, and within a day's excursion, and it is so easy of access by the river both from Rouen and Havre: there are plenty of pleasant villas to be had here, built high on the cliffs overlooking the Seine.

But, to see all the beauties of Caudebec, it should either be visited or quitted by diligence or voiture, on the road to Rouen. This road is extremely beautiful throughout, but the view of the little town as we leave it and look back from a distance is most lovely. In the distance is Villequier and its bay; and nearer is the broad quay of Caudebec, with its double-arched avenue and the antiquated houses clustering up the sides of the steep cliffs that form the valley in which it lies, its superb church towering like a cathedral and backed by the rich woods of Maulévrier. It is a picture never to be forgotten, and we were fortunate in a fine bright afternoon, after the rain which had fallen heavily all the morning. The road is bordered on the left by steep hills densely wooded, for the forest of Le Trait begins soon after St. Wandrille is passed, and across the river are green hills, behind which is the renowned forest of Brotonne. As we get nearer Jumièges this forest approaches the Seine. The exquisite grey shining river winds and curves constantly till it reaches Le Trait, then it takes a bend southward, while the road rises higher half-way up the hills: the long sloping banks below are filled with orchards, apples hanging almost close to the water's edge. There are some loose fleecy clouds moving lazily, and the constant changes they effect in the lights and shadows are marvellous in beauty. Sometimes the river

glistens silvery white, the forest trees and banks opposite are deep olive, the orchards below us emerald green, and then in a moment the picture is reversed; the jewel tint fades from the meadows and leaves them ordinary grass beneath the russet, fast-browning apple foliage, the river has paled to cold steel, and the slender poplars across the water tell out in full relief against the mass of forest behind them.

We pass La Mailleraye before we come to Le Trait. The château has been destroyed, but we see the village and the church under the hill across the river.

Just before we leave the high road we get a view of the twin towers of Jumièges. Then we turn to the right and follow the course of the river on its way to the abbey. The monastery is built on sunken ground and is not seen much before you approach it; but at last, at a turn in the road, it appears in stately grandeur.

THE VALLEY OF THE SEINE.

CHAPTER IX.

Jumièges.—St. Georges Boscherville.



THE view of Jumièges is most impressive. The two lofty, slender towers, shorn now of their spires, but still looking strong and massive, the remains of the central tower, which once connected the transepts with the nave and choir of this splendid church, are surprising in their height and vastness, and, placed as they are on a wooded promontory of the Seine, are highly picturesque. One specially remarks the exquisite colour the stone has retained after so many years of exposure and ill-usage.

We approach the Abbey of Jumièges with a feeling of almost deeper reverence for its renown than for any of the ancient buildings of Normandy. It was once all-powerful. Its founder St. Philibert passed his youth at the court of King Dagobert, he was a man of position there; but he found himself moved to adopt the monastic life, and retired to the Abbey of Rebais. He was soon chosen abbot; but

his rule was too holy and self-denying for the monks ; they revolted, and Philibert was banished. He then visited many of the monasteries of France and Italy, and finally came to Neustria, searching a place in which he could spend his days in solitude.

Between Rouen and Caudebec, the Seine forms a peninsula about four miles long from north to south, and about a mile and a half broad from east to west. This peninsula bore the name of *Terre Gémitique*. It now contains the communes of Jumièges, Yainville, and Mesnil.

In this "*Terre Gémitique*" there stood, in those days, on the banks of the Seine, a very ancient castle ; it had once been a strong fortress, but it was now partly in ruins. Clovis II. had succeeded his father Dagobert, and from him, and from his pious queen, Bathilda, Philibert obtained a grant of these ruins, and in 654 he laid the first foundations of the Abbey of Jumièges. Very soon three churches were built, and Philibert called round him seventy monks selected from the various abbeys he had visited ; ten years after its foundation, the number of the monks amounted to eight hundred. They lived on fruit, vegetables, and fish which they caught in the Seine. Many of these fish were enormous : some traditions represent them 150 feet in length, others 50 feet ! but there seems good reason to believe that they were of great size, as they supplied the monks with oil as well as with food.

The Merovingian kings enriched Jumièges, and held the abbey in the highest esteem ; but some years after the establishment of the monastery Philibert gave offence to Ebroin, mayor of the palace, about St. Léger, Bishop of Autun. To revenge himself, Ebroin invented a shameful

calumny, and prevailed on St. Ouen, Archbishop of Rouen, to depose his friend St. Philibert, and imprison him in the Tower of Alvaredo, at Rouen.

After a time St. Philibert recovered his liberty, but he was not allowed to return to Jumièges. He retired to the island of Herio, now Noirmoutiers, where he erected a new monastery. From thence he sent St. Aicadre as spiritual pastor of Jumièges. But at the death of Ebroin, St. Ouen and St. Philibert seem to have been completely reconciled, and the latter returned to Jumièges. He does not appear to have stayed there long. He built another monastery at Montivilliers, near Havre, and then went back to Noirmoutiers, where he died on the 20th August, 684, aged sixty-eight. It seems to have been at the first period of his residence at Jumièges that the semi-historic, semi-fabulous event occurred, which is so important a part of the story of Jumièges.

The old legend tells how, on the 18th May, 658, St. Philibert was informed that a boat without mast or rudder had floated down the Seine, and had run aground at Jumièges. On going down to the water's edge he saw two handsome youths dressed in magnificent habits lying side by side in the boat. He questioned them, but their answer was to burst into tears; and when the pitying monk lifted up their long robes, he saw their arms and legs still bleeding from cruel mutilation. St. Philibert ordered them at once to be borne into the monastery, and to be carefully tended. Little by little the youths recovered from their wounds, but not from their deep sadness; and as they persisted in keeping silence as to the origin of their misfortune, they went only by the name of Les

Enervés. The Abbot Philibert was convinced that they were illustrious personages, but he generously respected their reserve. He himself instructed them in cloister discipline, and they proved such apt scholars that the abbot considered he ought not to delay their profession.

When the solemn day arrived a great noise was heard at the gates of the abbey. King Clovis II. and Queen Bathilda, his wife, were there in great state, with a brilliant attendance of courtiers and guards. They came to ask the hospitality of the monastery.

The king and queen had no sooner entered than they asked to speak with the abbot in private; and then St. Philibert learned the real history of his guests.

Clovis II. had resolved to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and by the advice of his barons, before his departure, had crowned his eldest son, and appointed him the guardian of the saintly queen, his mother.

At first all went well, but soon the queen became aware that the headstrong pride of her eldest son had led him to despise her authority, and to incite the brother next him in age to do likewise.

Queen Bathilda summoned her husband to return; but meantime the rebellious sons gathered troops, and the king found the gates of his towns and fortresses closed against him. Clovis tried conciliatory and even affectionate messages, but his sons did not even deign to answer him. Then the king advanced with his handful of men, put to flight the rebellious army, and took his sons prisoners. The princes were brought into the presence of the king and of Bathilda, their hands tied behind their backs. The lords of the council unanimously refused to condemn the royal

blood, and then the queen, moved, says the chronicle, by a divine inspiration, rose and spoke,—

“Every one,” she said, “must bear the punishment of his own sins, either in this world or in the next; and as the pains of this world are less than those of the other, and also in order that the other sons of the king may take example and be prevented from undertaking so great a crime against father and mother, and because these present have denied their father, hear all: I judge that they lose for ever the heritage that they would have had of the kingdom; and for that they have borne arms against their father, I adjudge them to lose strength and bodily power.”

The king confirmed the sentence of Bathilda. The two unhappy youths were hamstrung, their sinews being burned in the presence of the assembly; but even while this torture was being enacted they were seized with repentance; they yielded their limbs without a murmur to this cruel suffering in the hope of saving their souls from eternal torment. One legend tells that they were placed at once in a boat and sent adrift down the Seine, and were received and carefully tended by Philibert; the other account relates that from the day of their terrible punishment the youths gave themselves up to piety and good works, but that the king, their father, was overwhelmed with pity; each time his eyes fell on his children, he saw that “they never stood erect, but always sat.” Clovis consulted his wife to know how he should rid himself of this painful spectacle. There is no mention of remorse felt by the mother for this horrible cruelty, but the story relates that Bathilda, having invoked divine light in continuous prayer, at last advised her husband to have a boat made big enough

to contain a supply of food, linen, and clothing, to place the princes therein, and to abandon them to the river without oars or rudder, only accompanied by a single servant. This account says that the boat drifted into Neustria to Jumièges, the abode of a holy man named Philibert, who held rule there, with another monk; that the princes told the abbot their true story, and that he recognised that they had been divinely guided to him.

The servant went back to the king and queen to report the happy ending of the journey, and they, full of joy, repaired at once to Jumièges to show their thankfulness; and, in witness of their entire reconciliation with their sons, they bestowed munificent gifts and great privileges on the abbey. The princes remained at Jumièges, lived many pious and exemplary years there, and died in a saintly manner.

The difficulty of accepting this sad story lies in the fact that Clovis II. died, some authors say, at twenty-two; others, at twenty-seven, and that he was so completely a *roi fainéant* that he never went beyond the limits of his kingdom.

By the time of the second Abbot of Jumièges the number of monks had increased to eight hundred, and the riches and possessions of the abbey had become very great.

Pépin sent the Abbot of Jumièges as his ambassador to the Pope in his famous negotiation respecting the real and the nominal king of France. In 794, in the reign of Charlemagne, and during the abbacy of Landric, the treacherous Duke of Bavaria, Tassillon, and his son Théodon, were sent shaven to be received as monks and prisoners for life in the Abbey of Jumièges.

An abbot of Jumièges was chaplain to Louis le Débon-

naire. All went royally with the magnificent abbey till the ninth century, when Hasting and his Northmen came sailing up the Seine. The monks of Jumièges had heard of the fiery and murderous devastation that for some time past had marked each step of these invaders, but they do not seem to have realised the strength and warlike power of "the pirates," as the Northmen were called even to the reign of the third Duke of Normandy.

The monks felt secure in their own immense numbers, the strength and thickness of the monastery walls, and on the support of the surrounding inhabitants; but they were no match for the furious Danes, whose appetite for plunder had been whetted by the treasures with which they had been bribed at St. Wandrille. They burst open the gates and massacred the monks, after having tortured them to make them reveal hidden treasures; they stripped the churches of all that they could carry away, and then set fire to the building; they also undermined the walls, and saw them fall into the midst of the flames.

“ Par la mer tant avironerent
 En Saine vindrent, euz entrerent
 A l'Abéie de Jumièges
 Pristrent à els et as nés sièges.
 Noef chenz moignes, tut en covent,
 I ont ja bien lungement.
 Saint Philibert la compassa,
 El tems ke Cloviegz regna :
 Bartent la Roïne de France,
 Ki ores ert de grant poissance,
 Aïst Jumièges et estora (endowed it),
 Terres è rentes lor dona.
 Por la poor è por le cri
 De Hastainz, cil fel anemi,

Se sunt li mugues tuit fui,
 Li mostier unt tot soul guerpi,
 Paenz unt la vile alumée
 E l'Abéie desertée."

Roman de Rou.

For nearly a century Jumièges remained a heap of ruins ; the forest had grown nearer to it, and its stones were overgrown with brambles and briars. When Rolf came up the Seine, in 877, he did not injure the remains of the abbey. At last two very old monks, named Baldwin and Gondrin, who had escaped from the Danish massacre, came back one day to revisit their old home. They were so touched by the desolation that they resolved to devote themselves to the cleansing of the deserted shrine. With the help of some peasants they built a little cabin, and spent all their time in prayer for the departed souls of the monks of Jumièges, and in rooting up the brambles and weeds that had overrun the destroyed altars.

The legend says that one day when they were thus employed a huntsman suddenly appeared among the ruins ; he was splendidly dressed and of haughty aspect, but he had lost his way in pursuit of a wild boar.

"Which way has it taken?" he said hastily.

The old fathers assured him that they did not know, and then hospitably asked him to share the dry bread which served for their dinner.

The huntsman looked scornfully at the black bread and gave them a rude refusal ; he then dashed into the forest. Here he was at once attacked by a huge wild boar. He aimed a blow at it with his hunting spear, but the wood broke in his hand, and the monster sprang on him furiously and hurled him to the ground. The huntsman commended

his soul to God, for the boar was ready to make a second charge, and to pierce him with its deadly tusks, when suddenly it paused, turned, and fled away into the forest.

Meanwhile the huntsman, who was William Longsword, son of the great Rolf and second Duke of the Normans, had become insensible. When he recovered and found himself safe, he considered the whole affair miraculous. The boar, he said, had been sent to chastise him for his insolence towards two holy men of God. He went back to them, and expressed his contrition; and as soon as he returned to Rouen he gave orders for the immediate rebuilding of the Abbey of Jumièges. He caused it to be consecrated in 930, and sent to Poitiers for Abbot Martin and twelve monks. Afterwards he spent much time in the monastery, and is supposed only to have been restrained from taking the vows by the Abbot Martin. The dialogue between the duke and the abbot is given very graphically in the "Roman de Rou." It is certain that after his death a monk's frock and cowl and scourge were found in a coffer which he said contained his greatest treasures. He gave to Jumièges, besides the country that lay round it, Joinville, Duclair, the mill of Caudebec, the lordship of Norville, the port of Quillebœuf, and others on the Seine. But though he rebuilt Jumièges, William Longsword was not so great a benefactor to the church as his son Richard the Fearless was. Abbot Annon, the successor of Martin, caused a poem of two hundred verses to be written, telling the story of the abbey, and to be inscribed as it was written on copper plates, which were fastened on the cloister walls. It was in the time of this Abbot Annon that King Louis carried off the young Duke Richard the Fearless, and set as governor

over the province Raoul Tourte, who did much injury to Jumièges.

Richard greatly enriched Jumièges, and it soon rose to more than its ancient fame and splendour. Richard the Second was also a great benefactor to Jumièges. At one of his visits, instead of the mark of gold or silver which he usually offered after his prayers in the church, he put a bit of bark of tree into the alms-dish. This created surprise, which



The Village and Ruins of the Abbey of Jumièges.

the duke changed to delight by declaring that by that symbol he gave to the abbey the woods and manors of Vimontiers, in order that the monks of Jumièges might remember to pray God for him and his posterity. He gave much land to Jumièges, even so far off as Trouville, and Dives, and Bayeux. Its renown for learning was very great. There were various schools for arts and sciences, some for monks and some day-schools for seculars, who were admitted without distinction of rich and poor, except that the poor scholars

were often fed by the monastery. All the great families sent their sons to Jumièges. When the Atheling Edward was left behind in Normandy on Queen Emma's return to England, after the accession of Canute, he was brought up at Jumièges. It is said that the verses on the tablets on the walls, lauding the munificence of the Norman dukes to the Abbey of Jumièges, were impressed by the monks on the young mind of Edward, and suggested to him the necessity of appointing the Duke of Normandy his successor on the throne of England, in compensation for the hospitality he had received at Jumièges. Edward certainly appointed Robert, who had been first prior of St. Ouen, Rouen, and then Abbot of Jumièges, Bishop of London, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the many proofs of Edward the Confessor's want of judgment, for Robert was an excellent and munificent abbot at Jumièges, while in England he proved a firebrand. To his influence may be traced the increase of Norman power at the court of Edward and the decline of the Godwines. The chief part of the Abbey of Jumièges was built by Abbot Robert from 1040 to 1043, when Edward the Confessor summoned him to England. He continued a benefactor to Jumièges, and died there in 1056. The building was consecrated in the presence of William the Conqueror by Archbishop Maurilius, of Rouen, in 1067. William of Jumièges, the historian of the Conquest, was a monk of the abbey. He dedicated his famous work, "*De Ducibus Normanniæ*," to William the Conqueror.

William had much affection for Jumièges. After the Conquest he reserved the Isle of Helling, in Norfolk, for the monks of Jumièges, which brought them a rent of 1,100

gold crowns. The town of Pont de l'Arche also belonged to them till they made a present of it to Philip Augustus. William appointed the Abbot Gonthard, of Jumièges, his physician. There is a legend that it was near Jumièges that Harold took the oath.

A very saintly Abbot Richard was elected by the monks in 1191. In his time the monks gave up a quarter of their revenue to contribute to the ransom of their Duke Richard Cœur-de-Lion; after this the abbey sold all its silver plate, and gave the price, with the rest of the money it possessed, to obtain the release of the Archbishop of Rouen and the other lords who had been left as hostages for Richard with the German emperor, and who were being harshly treated by him.

This abbot seems to have been full of good deeds. In consequence of the incessant wars between Philip Augustus and King Richard, there was a fearful famine in Normandy; and the Abbey of Jumièges succoured multitudes who otherwise must have perished.

Jumièges did not escape during the invasion of Edward III.; it was taken and pillaged during six days.

This attack seems to have given the monks a dread of the English; for when they heard that Henry V. had landed at Harfleur, they retired to Rouen; the plague came at the same time, and many of the monks died, and the abbey was again pillaged.

Jumièges is full of memories of Charles VII., of his residence there, and of his love for Agnes Sorel. The king's hunting-lodge at Mesnil was only a mile and a half from the abbey, and Agnes died there, poisoned, it is said, at the instigation of the Dauphin, Louis XI., though other

historians assign a more natural cause for her sudden death. Her body was carried to Loches ; but her heart, at her own express wish, was buried in the Abbey of Jumièges. The monument raised over it was destroyed by the Calvinists.

In the reign of Charles VII., Nicholas, Abbot of Jumièges, was one of the judges of Jeanne d'Arc, and, next to the Bishop of Beauvais, the most bigoted and determined on her death.

Margaret of Anjou stayed here when she took refuge in France.

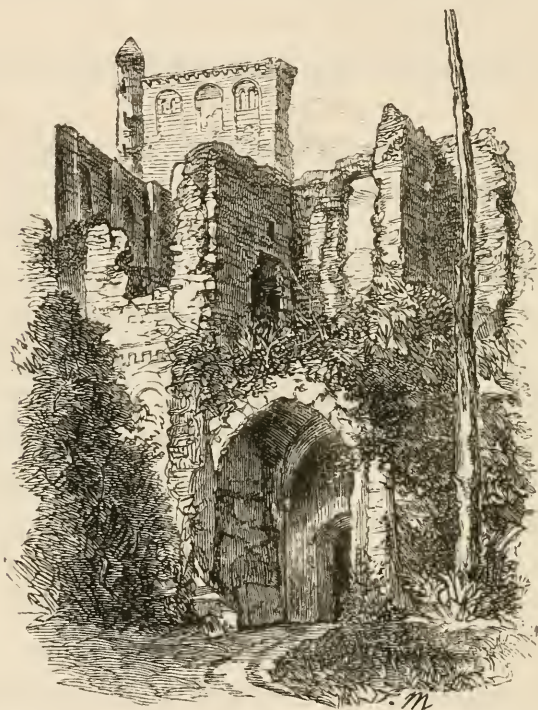
In later times, two brothers of the famous Cardinal d'Amboise were successively abbots of Jumièges. In the time of the second, much irregularity seems to have crept into the abbey.

The west front, with its two lofty hexagonal towers, as has been said, is very stately in its severe simplicity ; the aisles of the nave, though roofless, have their arches and columns in wonderful preservation, and these are doubtless the work of Abbot Robert ; early Norman in style—plain round arches resting on alternate round and square piers, the capitals of which still show traces of having been painted in fresco. The central tower must have been of immense size and strength ; only one side of it is left standing.

The east end, which was of later date, was partly destroyed at the Revolution ; but it appears that its entire ruin was caused by its late proprietor, who actually pulled down and sold much of the abbey for building materials, and for stones to mend the roads. There are some graceful arches and clustered columns here, and one small chapel less ruinous than the rest. Slender ash-trees mingle with the ruins in the most exquisitely graceful fashion. Its present state

of preservation is due to the indefatigable researches of the antiquary, Monsieur de Caumont, and to the loving reverence of the present proprietor, who inhabits the old gatehouse, which forms a charmingly picturesque object from the ruins of the abbey.

Through an arched doorway we went into the church of



Jumièges.

St. Pierre, of later date than the nave ; there is an interesting arcade against the wall here ; but it is curious to see, here and elsewhere, how the Norman part of the building has outlived the later Gothic. After this we came to the Salle des Chevaliers, the portion of the building specially

inhabited by Charles VII. This is full of picturesque bits of light and shade.

One is tempted to forget the architectural interest and historical associations of Jumièges in admiration of its exquisite beauty. It is at once so grand and so lovely. The stones, more than eight hundred years old, have the pure creamy tint they must have had at their first erection; and they stand high in air, towering grandly above the lofty forest-trees which surround them, and in vivid contrast to the sky above, which had cleared into an intense blue. The aisles are paved with short soft turf, and up the ruined columns had twined ivy and briar, while hoary-blossomed clematis wreaths flung themselves down from the Gothic arches still left beyond the central tower. The sun was shining brightly, all the foliage looked exquisitely green and fresh, in mocking contrast, with its young life, to the ruined stone-work; but the contrast was different from any we had seen before. There is no sombre grey tint at Jumièges; the abbey looks destroyed but not decayed, and a feeling of almost keen anguish rises as one remembers that it is only within the present century that this magnificent building has been so cruelly injured.

In 1557, however, the Bishop of Evreux robbed the central tower of its magnificent leaden spire, and in 1560 the abbey was pillaged by the Calvinists, those universal destroyers of the beautiful.

Usually one is not permitted to visit the abbey after four o'clock, but our guide kindly allowed us to stay as long as we pleased, and was most intelligent in answering questions.

Near the gatehouse, in a corner of the ruins, is a collection of the most remarkable relics which have been found

in the abbey. Here are capitals of columns, and fragments of statues from tombs; here, too, is the black marble slab on which was once the effigy of Agnes Sorel; now there only remains the inscription. This slab was at one time built into a house in Rouen.

Here too are the broken figures, lying side by side, crowned and in royal robes, which are called *Les Enervés*. There seems no doubt that a mass was celebrated yearly on the 18th May, called the anniversary of the *Enervés*. A cloth was spread over this tomb, the abbot himself being celebrant. It has been said that the story of the *Enervés* is a fable, and that this is the tomb of Tassillon of Bavaria. But the well-known Norman antiquary, E. H. Langlois, in his "*Essai sur les Enervés de Jumièges*," throws discredit on either supposition, by proving that the style of the figures on the tomb, and of its ornaments and accessories, is not of older date than St. Louis; and this assertion upsets, too, the conjectures of Monsieur Duplessis, who imagines the two effigies to represent the two sons of Carloman, the eldest son of Charles Martel.

There is a later essay on the *Enervés* of Jumièges, by Monsieur A. Deville; and in it he asserts that two skeletons were found under the tomb—one that of a youth, the other that of a man of advanced age. This discovery seems to point to Tassillon and Theodon.

Near the tomb of the *Enervés* is the boldly sculptured boss from one of the vaults in the Church of St. Pierre. Our guide had previously shown us the chapel from which it had been removed. It represents St. Philibert with a wolf lying at his feet, in allusion to the tradition on which is founded an annual fête at Jumièges. It is celebrated every year (or

was, until lately), on the 24th of June, by the name of Loup Vert.

St. Philibert had appointed St. Austreberthe abbess of the convent of Pavilly, about four leagues from Jumièges; and she and her nuns used to wash the linen of the abbey. But as the distance was long and the linen heavy, the nuns employed an ass, so intelligent as to walk the double journey without a guide, to carry the baskets. It happened one day that the ass was met by a hungry wolf, which, says the chronicle, had respect neither for the patience nor the obedience of the poor beast, but at once fell on him and ate him up.

No sooner had he ended than St. Austreberthe appeared. She not only compelled the wolf to carry the linen baskets at once to Pavilly, but ever after to take upon himself the task of the poor ass—a task which the wolf performed with willing docility. For this reason St. Austreberthe is always represented with a wolf licking her hands. In the seventh century a chapel was built in the forest, in memory of this event, on the spot where the ass was devoured. When the chapel fell in ruins, a simple stone cross was erected on its site; and this cross was not destroyed till about sixty years before the Revolution. A large oak-tree which stood near was chosen to perpetuate its memory, and several images of the Virgin were placed on it. This oak is still called by the villagers the *Chêne-à-l' Ane*.

There is one more legend of Jumièges, so quaint and touching that it must be told here.

St. Aicadre, the successor of St. Philibert, being very infirm and aged, had a revelation of his approaching death. Fearing that this great assemblage of eight hundred monks, whom he knew to be in a state of grace, would make

shipwreck after his death, he prayed fervently for their ultimate salvation; and "the following night he saw an angel walking about the dormitory where they all lay sleeping, who touched with his wand four hundred among them, and assured St. Aicadre that in four days their Father, who grudged them to the earth, would transport them to heaven, and that he was the guardian angel of this house, and would protect it to the end. Of which the holy abbot having advertised the monks, and they having prepared themselves for this happy voyage, and having received in church, being quite well and joyful, the most holy viaticum of the Blessed Sacrament, they went to hold a chapter with their aged abbot, who directed each of them to sit between two others of the brethren, in order that their so-glorious departure might receive comfort and honour. These holy confessors, singing divine hymns with their brethren, each began to take the hue and the light of an angelic face, and keeping still in their seats with a celestial demeanour, without trembling or giving token of any suffering, they all passed out of this life into the other in one day—the first hundred at the hour of terce, the second at sext, the third at nones, and the last hundred at vespers."

It is matter of history that four hundred monks of Jumièges died in one day of the plague; and they died, as the chronicle relates, with a heavenly demeanour, singing holy hymns. They were buried in stone coffins in the abbey cemetery, their abbot in the midst. This event was recorded in a fresco, which still existed at the time of the Revolution.

We had not much time to spare for St. Georges Boscherville. It seemed dull after Jumièges, but it is a very an-

cient and perfect building. The church is now the parish church of the village. It was founded in the eleventh century, by Raoul of Tancarville, and was once a large monastery. The portion that remains is singularly perfect. It is specially interesting to the architect or archæologist as a landmark of Norman building, for the date of its foundation is certain, and it has been wonderfully well preserved. The church is entire, and the chapter-house is very perfect ; there are also some remains of a cloister ; the colour of the stone is remarkably pure. The building is well placed, and the view from it is lovely ; but the style is very cold and severe ; it should certainly, if possible, be visited before Jumièges, it offers too trying a contrast afterwards in the way of picturesqueness.

It was growing dark when we reached Duclair, where our driver informed us we should certainly find a vehicle which would take us on to Rouen. The crag called the Chair of Gargantua is close to Duclair. Rabelais' famous giant seems to have left traces of his footsteps in Normandy. Besides the Pierre Gante at Tancarville, there is Mount Gargan, near Rouen ; at Veulettes, not far from Trouville, there is a Roman fort, surrounded by ramparts, which is called the Tomb of Gargantua. M. Deville has discovered mention of the Chair of Gargantua at Duclair in an ancient chart of the eleventh century.

These legends are very interesting and very puzzling ; they are all of so old a date that it is impossible to reject them altogether. If we entirely exclude them, we deprive rivers and rocks of almost all interest, and bring them down to the mere prosaic level of natural objects.

We found at Duclair only a small dirty-looking inn. We

asked for a voiture, and the landlady said she would call her husband, who we supposed was the Monsieur Georges we had been recommended to. He was a very tall, broad shouldered Norman, with a slow, honest face, in which we thought we missed the habitual expression, perhaps best described as "Norman,"—an expression that at once puts you on the alert in making a bargain.

He said he feared it was impossible for us to get on to Rouen by voiture; the *malle-poste* was expected in half an hour, and unless it was full it might take us on; but it was not pleasant travelling. Meantime he would try to get us a horse; "but, on market-day, what will you?"

He left us at this, shrugging up his broad shoulders, and we went into the great bare inn-kitchen, glad to get a warming at an enormous wood fire blazing on the open hearth, for the air was growing very cold. The kitchen looked cleaner than we expected; so we ordered some cutlets and fried potatoes, which madame certainly knew how to cook, although she charged an exorbitant price for them. Presently Monsieur Georges came back. The *malle-poste* had gone by; but he could let us have a horse and cart, on condition that we would only drive to Barentin, the nearest railway-station, instead of to Rouen, the distance being six instead of twelve miles.

"You have only just time to catch the last train," he said; "the cart is ready at the door."

There was no time to lose, unless we wished to sleep at Duclair; so we left our potatoes half eaten, and paid our simple-faced friend for the horse and cart to go to Barentin very nearly as much as we had paid to M. Berne for our long, delightful drive from Caudebec, seeing Jumièges

on the way. The road seemed to be very uneven and stony; but the driver, having explained to us over his shoulder that we were in great risk of losing the train, went off at a break-neck pace. It had grown dusk; and, as the trees rose high on each side of the road, it was soon quite dark. On we went, swaying from side to side, unable to see the road before us, at the mercy of our reckless driver, who kept up a constant shouting of the inevitable "Hé-gi-di" and its following chorus, the horse seeming to enter into his spirit and going along at a tearing pace.

It is certainly quite useless in France ever to believe that a train will start punctually, or to inconvenience one's self in order to reach a country station at the appointed time. At a terminus or in the large towns, however unpunctual the train may be in starting or arriving, still one has to be punctual to register baggage. It seems strange that in so short a distance as that between the two countries there should be so great a difference in the regard paid to the value of time. The only chance not to waste time in France is to travel by express trains; and even these on the *Ligne de l'Ouest*, as the Norman and Breton line is called, are not always punctual. Probably an influx of British travellers may mend matters: at present this railroad is said to be very badly managed.

We did not reach dear old Rouen till ten o'clock; and although we had written beforehand, there was not a room vacant, and the landlord said he had been sending people away all day. The *Conseil Général* was sitting, and its members had descended like a flood upon our hotel. However, the landlord thought he could take us in next day, and meantime he found a room for us near at

hand. We made a resolution to avoid in future Rouen and all other large towns while the Conseil Général lasts; its presence seems to turn a town topsy-turvy. We found more quaint old streets in this second visit to the fine old city, chiefly east of the Cathedral, and numerous exquisite points of view both of it and of St. Ouen, with foregrounds of tottering gables in the narrow streets.

THE VALLEY OF THE SEINE.

CHAPTER X.

La Côte des deux Amants.
Gaillon.
Les Andelys.

Château Gaillard.
Vernon.

OUR next point was Les Andelys, the last Norman town of interest on the Seine, except Vernon ; for Mantes is not really a Norman town. It should, however, be visited as a connecting link in the life of William the Conqueror, which may literally be traced in this interesting province from the cradle to the grave, the two points nearest together, Falaise and Caen, containing the beginning and the end of his wonderful story.

It is strange to find how real and vivid this great man becomes after a few weeks of travel in Normandy—a king among kings. At first the reiteration of *Guillaume le Conquérant*, which the French take delight in emphasizing, becomes a trifle wearisome ; but as one studies his character, and realises in his own land what he did and what he had to overcome, this feeling fades.

William the Bastard would never have remained a mere petty sovereign. If he had not conquered England, the court of France would probably have been once more banished to Laon, and the Duke of Normandy would have

been also Duke of Paris. He was a born conqueror of mankind.

It used to be possible to go by steamer from Rouen to St. Germain, and the banks of the river are very interesting here ; but it makes so great a bend to Elbeuf, that this route must have made the journey a long one. The best way now of reaching Les Andelys from Rouen is to take train to Gaillon, whence an omnibus goes on to Le Grand Andely.

On our way to Pont de l'Arche we leave the Lower Seine and pass into the Department of Eure. Rather more than a mile from Pont de l'Arche is the Abbey of Bon Port, a Cistercian foundation, built on a branch of the Seine in 1190 by Richard Cœur-de-Lion ; but none of the ruins now remaining seem to be as old as this date. The church has been entirely destroyed ; but the refectory (now a barn) remains, and beneath it is the ancient kitchen of the abbey. There are also a few other remains. It is said to have been founded by King Richard in fulfilment of a vow made when he narrowly escaped drowning when fording the Seine.

Pont de l'Arche is most picturesquely placed, and is full of interesting remains. Beyond it we come in sight of a lofty green hill, known as La Côte des deux Amants. The mournful story of this hill has come down to us in the Lais of "Marie de France." She is the first French female poet on record. She lived in the thirteenth century, and wrote about 200 fables, which she said she translated from the English, but which are supposed to be founded on the fables of Phædrus ; some of them are very original. Though she was born in France, she passed the greater part of her life in England. Probably she first told this story, which has been sung in so many ways since. Her Lais are very

elegant and simple, and were once highly esteemed ; but, as they are written in the Breton dialect, a rough translation is made here of the—

“ LAI OF THE CÔTE DES DEUX AMANTS.

“ Once in Normandy there came to pass an adventure well known to those who love. Of this the Bretons have made a lay, called the ‘Lay of the two Lovers.’ In Neustria, which we now call Normandy, is a large and lofty mountain, where lie the two children. Near this mountain was a city built by the King of Pistreia ; he named it from the Pistreians, and so he called it Pistre. The town still stands there, and so do the houses ; we all know that the country is called the Vale of Pistre. The king had a beautiful daughter, a most courteous damsel ; she was much comfort to him, for he had lost his queen. His people murmured against him, even blasphemed, because he did not give his daughter in marriage. When the king heard how they spoke of him, he was sorrowful and heavy, and he began to think how he could free himself, so that no one should rob him of his child. He proclaimed that whoever would wed his daughter must bear her up the face of the mountain in his arms without stopping to rest. When this news was spread through the country, many came to try the exploit. Some of them got half-way up the mountain, but no one reached the top ; and for some time the princess was not sought in marriage.

“ There was in the country an amiable and handsome youth, the son of a count ; he resolved to surpass all the others. He lived near the king’s court, and often sojourned there. He loved the king’s daughter, and begged her to

love him in return. His valour, his courtesy, and the friendship shown him by the king won the princess. They spoke often together, and they grew more and more fond ; but they concealed their love from all. Their passion increased daily. Then the youth reflected that it was better to suffer some evil than to lose all by rashness. This youth, so wise, valiant, and handsome, came to his beloved, and asked her to go away with him, for he could no longer bear the torment of his love. He knew that, if he asked her of her father, the king loved her too much to consent, and would bid him win her by carrying her up to the top of the mountain.

“The damsel replied, ‘Friend, I know well that you cannot carry me ; but, if I go away with you, my father will be filled with grief and anger. It is martyrdom to him to live without me, and I love him so much that I do not wish to anger him : let us seek some other way, for I cannot listen to that one. In Salerno I have a rich relative, who for more than thirty years has studied the art of medicine ; she knows the virtues of every leaf and root, and is full of health-giving recipes. If you will take a letter from me, and explain to her our adventure, she will provide the remedy. She will give you fresh strength ; and when you return to this country, you will ask me of my father. He will treat you as a child, and will tell you that he gives me to no man who cannot carry me in his arms to the top of the mountain without stopping.’”

[The youth thanks the maiden, asks her leave to depart, returns to his own country, and makes great preparations for his journey. He arrives at Salerno, and presents his letter to the aunt (spelt *Aunte* in the original). She gives

him tonics and strengthening cordials, and when he leaves Salerno presents him with a liquor which has the power of at once removing fatigue, and refreshing the body, the muscles, and bones. The youth, on his return, asks the king for his daughter, offering to carry her up the hill. The king is friendly, but he thinks the youth foolish; the Count is much too young, he says, and must fail where so many strong and valiant men have not succeeded.]

“The day arrives; each of the lovers has invited friends; the place is thronged with spectators. The damsel has fasted severely, so as not to tax the strength of her lover by her weight. The youth arrives first, not forgetting his philter. When all the great company are assembled in the meadow, the king brings his daughter, clad only in her chemise.

“The youth took her in his arms, and gave her the phial to carry, thinking he no longer needed it. His joy gave him strength, and he mounted half-way rapidly. She felt his pace slacken. ‘Friend,’ she said, ‘drink. I feel that you tire: this will bring back strength.’ The youth answered, ‘No, dear one, I feel strong yet, and I do not wish to stop; if I drink, I must pause ever so little, and the crowd below will cry out and stun me with their hisses, and I shall perhaps fail.’ When two-thirds were mounted he grew yet fainter, and she entreated him many times, ‘Friend, drink the cordial.’ He could neither see nor hear; a great anguish overcame him; he reached the top of the mountain and fell. The damsel thought he had fainted. She knelt beside him, and tried to give him drink; but he died as I tell you, and she mourned him with loud cries. Then she threw far away the phial which held the cordial, and since

that time the place on which the liquor fell has been noted for health-giving plants. Now I will tell you how the unhappy maiden, because she had lost her lover, lay down beside him, pressed him in her arms, kissed his mouth and his eyes, till grief striking into her heart, she died, this damsel, so fair, so wise, so brave. The king, who waited for them below, when he saw they did not come, climbed up and found them, and he fell fainting on the ground. As soon as he could speak, he broke into lamentations, echoed by all the people. Three days after they brought a marble tomb, and laid in it the bodies of the children. Every one advised that they should lie on the top of the hill where they died ; and, as soon as all was done, the people departed. The hill is called ‘The Côte des deux Amants,’ and, as I said before, the Bretons have made a Lai about it.”

Gaillon itself is full of memories. Here was the famous palace of the Archbishops of Rouen, now converted into a penitentiary, or, as it is called, *Maison centrale de Détention*.

The remains still existing of the old château—the entrance-porch with its four towers, the clock-tower, the chapter-tower—belong to the palace built by the celebrated Cardinal d’Amboise, in 1498, in the reign of Louis XII. But the first archiepiscopal palace of Gaillon was of much older date ; and there is a curious legend about its first possessor, Odo Rigault, Archbishop of Rouen in the time of St. Louis.

Odo was a very wealthy prelate. He owned farms, mills, fish-ponds, dairies, in the neighbourhood of Rouen ; his cellars were filled with exquisite wines ; his coffers overflowed with gold ; his table was more splendidly served than that of any baron of Normandy. But in the midst of all

this splendour Odo was the most unhappy person in his diocese. While all the fierce unlettered barons of the province had strong castles, from which they could torment and plunder those weaker than themselves, he, the Prince-Archbishop of Rouen, was the only man of position who had not a strong fortress, in which he could secure his treasures in the event of an English invasion, or secure himself against the covetousness of his noble neighbours. No one would cede him a castle, and each time he journeyed through his province the sight of a conveniently placed fortress would plunge him into deep sadness.

One day he set forth, attended by a numerous suite, to visit the Bishop of Evreux, and was overtaken by a violent storm. His attendants, getting wet to the skin, entreated him to halt and take refuge in a château they saw close by, situated on the brow of a hill overlooking the Seine. The archbishop at first refused; but when he found that this Château of Gaillon belonged to the saintly king, instead of to one of the marauding nobles, he consented; "but the visit is ill-omened," he said.

This palace of the thirteenth century was a very inferior building to that of the fifteenth and sixteenth; but still it was well placed, and possessed of a very extensive territory. The captain, who held command of the château in the king's absence, received the archbishop with due reverence, and conducted him through the deserted but richly furnished apartments.

Odo expressed his surprise at the neglected state of the palace, and asked whether the king or the Queen Blanche did not sometimes reside at Gaillon.

No; the king had come once, before his first departure

for the Holy Land, but he had never paid a second visit. The royal chamber had been closed ever since.

The archbishop supped and passed the night at Gaillon ; but he neither ate nor slept ; his mind was absorbed in one idea, the possession of Gaillon. So strong, so well placed, so convenient, it was the very château he longed for—ah, what would not he give to be able to say to the barons, when they came back from Palestine, “I, too, have my fortress, with towers higher than yours ; I, too, have my crossbow-men and halberdiers : come and besiege me, if you dare.”

He left Gaillon next morning with a heavy heart, but the doom of his life was sealed. From that day did the archbishop, Odo Rigault, incessantly covet the king’s château of Gaillon. He did not again visit it ; but he frequently rode within sight of its towers, and each time after a long lingering gaze he went home still more heavy-hearted and covetous than before.

Soon after, a summons came for the archbishop to attend the king.

“Messire,” said St. Louis, “I have spent my all. I have pledged all my plate and jewels. I have absolutely nothing wherewith to maintain the holy war, and deliver the tomb of our blessed Lord. I hear that your coffers are full of golden crowns ; give some of them to me, and if there is anything I can offer you in exchange, you have but to speak and you will obtain all you desire.”

“My lord and king,” said the archbishop, “I desire but one thing in the world ; and you can give it to me. Take all I possess, and give me your palace of Gaillon.”

But the king would not thus despoil the prelate. He

named the sum he required, and told Odo that henceforth Gaillon should be the residence of the Archbishop of Rouen.

The old archbishop fell at the king's feet crazy with joy ; but St. Louis raised him, and said—

“And now, my lord archbishop, in order that our exchange may be acceptable to God, will you not go with me on this crusade? It is a pious work, which will stand you in good stead hereafter.”

Messire Odo Rigault turned pale, but he murmured an assent.

Some days after the fleet set sail for Tunis, with king and archbishop on board. Very soon St. Louis lay dead of the plague, and Philip III. brought back the army to France ; but just in sight of land a tempest arose and swallowed up many of the ships,—among others, that of the archbishop ; he managed, however, to cling to a bit of wreck till he was picked up by a fisher-boat, which landed him in France.

He hardly waited to be recovered from his fatigues, he was so impatient to take possession of his domain. At last he was going to realise his great desire. It was in the spring of the year, and he resolved to enter Gaillon with the greatest pomp.

Early one morning a great procession filled the road to Gaillon. A large number of the clergy, the metropolitan chapter, deputations from abbeys, convents, communities, all were there, with crosses and banners. In the midst was the archbishop, superbly mounted, with his mitre and pallium : beside him were his six suffragans, the bishops of Bayeux, Evreux, Lisieux, Avranches, Sées, and Coutances, richly robed.

He was ushered with great pomp into the chamber which

had once been occupied by Louis IX. When the archbishop lay down on the royal bed, he exclaimed triumphantly—

“At last I am castellan of Gaillon.”

At that instant, from behind the bed-curtains, came back a solemn voice, which repeated like a funereal echo, “It is I who am castellan of Gaillon.”

Next morning, when his chamberlains entered the room, they found only the corpse of the Archbishop of Rouen.

In 1423, the soldiers of the Duke of Bedford surprised the palace, set fire to it, and massacred the garrison. It remained a heap of ruins till the reign of Louis XII., when Georges d’Amboise, recently installed in the see of Rouen, passed by Gaillon, and stopped to look at the ruins of the palace. He seems to have been so impressed by the admirable site and the natural advantage possessed by Gaillon, that he at once set to work to restore the palace in a sumptuous style of magnificence. He sent to Italy for the famous architect Giovanni Giocondo, and associated with him Androuet du Cerceau, Pierre Pouce, and the equally famous sculptor, Juste de Tours; but just at the same time the archbishop began his struggle for the pope-dom, and it was not till his hopes and his efforts were frustrated by the election of Julius II. that he found leisure and means to complete his superb château.

As he could not be pope, the Cardinal d’Amboise determined to rival the pope in splendour, and Louis XII. yielded to his prime minister ‘the tribute levied on the Genoese, in order that the palace might be perfected. The descriptions of its magnificence, and the beauty of its gardens and terrace, read like eastern fables. From far and near every one came to visit this celebrated pile, and receive the

blessing of the cardinal archbishop, Louis XII. and his queen, Anne of Brittany, among the first. Georges d'Amboise did not long enjoy his splendid palace : he died in 1510, aged fifty, in the convent of the Celestins, at Lyons, on his way to Italy. As he was dying, he said to Brother John, the nursing brother, who sat beside his bed—
“ Brother John, Brother John ! Alas ! why have I not been all my life Brother John ? ”

The Cardinal of Bourbon, uncle of Henry IV., preferred Gaillon to any of his other residences ; and here in 1562, as Archbishop of Rouen, he received Charles IX. and the queen-mother, Catherine de Médicis, when they came to superintend the siege of the city, which had been taken by the Calvinists. Nicholas Colbert, son of the great minister, was Archbishop of Rouen, and kept his court at Gaillon, though in a quieter, more ecclesiastical style than some of his gorgeous predecessors.

On the 28th June, 1786, on his return from Cherbourg, Louis XVI. paid a visit to the last chatelain of Gaillon, the Archbishop Dominique de la Rochefoucauld, and brought with him the tidings that when the great bell of the cathedral, Georges d'Amboise, had been rung in honour of his royal progress through Rouen, it had uttered three sounds and then had cracked. It was an omen of the doom which was so soon to fall on the king and on the diocese of Rouen.

Ducatel says of the palace, which was still standing when he visited Normandy :—

“ The people of Normandy have formed to themselves so high an opinion of the beauty and magnificence of this palace, that when they endeavour to give you an idea of the utmost elegance of any villa of which they are speaking,

they conclude their commendations by saying, 'In short, sir, it is a little Gaillon.'

The richly ornamented façade which separated the outer from the inner court is now in the courtyard of the Palais des Beaux Arts at Paris.

At a distance there is a view of Château Gaillard rising steeply above the Seine; but we had not much time to spend at Gaillon, for we heard that the omnibus was the only means of reaching Les Andelys that evening.

On our way we passed a bridge, demolished to stop the progress of the Prussians; but they managed to cross the river after all. The Seine winds in such a puzzling manner, that one becomes confused as to which bank one is on. The river seems to appear where one least expects it, and the hills follow its course, so that the scenery changes constantly. Near this destroyed bridge we had to alight, for though a new bridge is building it is not yet complete; and we, and our omnibus, and the carriage of a gentleman, which had also come by train, were taken across the river on a huge raft, worked by chains under water. The moon had risen out of a dense bank of clouds, and the whole scene on the pale willow-bordered river was very picturesque. It is a long drive to Le Grand Andely, and we had to find our way in the dark to the inn we were so anxious to see; the omnibus stopping at the bureau.

Presently, at the top of the street, we saw in the gloom a house with overhanging dormers. A cheerful red glow shone out of the open doors; and going in at one of these we stood in sudden surprise; we were in a sort of kitchen, with walls panelled in dark oak, the huge, black, projecting fireplace finished with a pent-house roof. At the top of

this is a carved wooden image of the Blessed Virgin, and below the eaves of the roof is a carved border of most elaborate workmanship.

On the roof of the fireplace, over the doors and over the walls, hung plates and dishes in old faïence; and on *armoires* and a low shelf which ran all round the room

were vases, fountains, cups, bowls, &c., of old Delft and Rouen ware, chiefly in blue and white. Before we could look thoroughly at this museum we were shown into the *salle-à-manger*, and here the display was even greater. There were quaint metal chandeliers and sconces and antique drinking-glasses; but the faïence did not show so effectively on the dark



Hôtel du Grand Cerf

orange paper of this room as on the black wooden walls of the kitchen. We asked for a room; but we were told we must eat our supper first, as there were not many chambers in the house, and the room we could have had been lately occupied. When, at last, we were shown up the broad old oak staircase, we saw that its walls and those of the passages formed a continued museum of curiosities, among which appeared some very quaint time-stained oil pictures and stone bas-reliefs.

The chambermaid stopped to let us examine these, and we noticed that she had an immensely long key, with an elaborately worked handle. She told us that this was the key of our bedroom; and she presently turned into a very narrow passage, unlocked a door, and threw it open.

She went in before us and lighted two candles that stood on a table, but these only gave light enough to let us see how very charming a room we were in. It was about forty feet long; the walls partly wainscoted with black oak, partly covered with old Beauvais tapestry. Along two sides of it were ranged seven *armoires* and coffer in carved oak, and on these, and wherever space could be found on the walls, was a quantity of *faïence*—the plates and dishes suspended as we had seen them below. The floor was tiled; the chairs were huge Louis Quinze fauteuils, rather out of harmony with the rest, for the coffer were chiefly Gothic. At the end of the room, opposite the door, were two windows with quaint old-fashioned curtains; between the windows came another oak coffer; and on the fourth side were two beds, perhaps the most interesting part of the room. They were very antique looking, of elaborately carved oak, with old-fashioned striped hangings of rich red and buff cretonne, like those in the windows.

There was so much to look at, the quilts even were a work of art, that it seemed impossible we should be able to go to bed for hours.

The chambermaid told us that the master of the hotel had spent twenty-eight years in making this wonderful collection, and had devoted all his gains to it, travelling over different parts of France, and seeking everywhere for *faïence* and curiosities. He had died, she said, only a few weeks

ago ; and now his widow meant to sell the whole collection, either in London or Paris. It seemed a great pity. This old sixteenth-century house, with its massive walls, and heavy beamed ceilings, and quaint mouldings, is a fit home for the motley collection ; for although we suspected that most of the oak furniture was "put together" by a modern workman, and some of it entirely of modern fabrication, still Le Grand Cerf is a really ancient house. Its precise date is unknown ; but it was probably built in the reign of Francis I., for the salamander and fleur-de-lis are frequent in the ornament. In a genealogy of the Duval de Viennois family, made in 1675, it appears that "the Hôtel du Viennois at Grand Andeli has been held from time immemorial" by the lords of Viennois ; and Monsieur Brossard de Ruville believes that the founder of this house was Nicholas Duval, a favourite of Francis I. The husband of one of his descendants sold the house, in 1729, to Nicolas Lefebvre, *cuisinier patissier* ! The purchaser turned it into a public hotel, and made some alterations in the building. Monsieur B. de Ruville gives an interesting account of the original house. Many distinguished visitors have stayed at the Hôtel du Grand Cerf ; amongst others, Sir Walter Scott and Rosa Bonheur.

We started early next morning for Château Gaillard. An omnibus from Le Grand Andely passes the foot of the hill on which it stands. The air was delightful in the early morning, and we much enjoyed climbing up the downs to the castle. They are very steep and bare of trees ; and are covered with short slippery grass, among which we gathered some very curious wild flowers.

The castle rises up grandly. Perched on the very summit

of a projecting cliff, it commands the river for miles. The crag on which it stands is isolated on all sides, except one, from the surrounding cliffs, and here the strip of connecting land is cut through by a deep ditch. We could make out clearly the three walls, one inside the other, with the fosses between each. Richard Cœur-de-Lion is supposed to have been his own architect, and the skill shown in the construction of this wonderful fortress is considered masterly.

The central donjon tower is of immense strength. It



Château Gaillard and Le Petit Andely.

is the most perfect remaining part of the castle, and the walls are from fourteen to fifteen feet thick. The defences extend even around the edge of the cliff, which descends a sheer precipice to the Seine. On one side of the second fosse are some curious crypts or caverns excavated in the rock, and supported by masses of rock left as piers. In these subterranean caves probably the unhappy Margaret was strangled. The entrance into the castle still exists, but here is not means of access to it; so we climbed by a path

cut along the face of the rock, at a dizzy height above the Seine, and entered by a flight of steps of evidently modern erection. The view from the castle over the Seine is very grand. On the right is the town of Le Petit Andely crouching below, with two charming tree-covered islands in front; and on the left, the river is divided by another long narrow island; on the farther bank are smiling green meadows interspersed with corn-land.

It lessens one's opinion of Cœur-de-Lion's chivalry to reflect that he bound himself by treaty not to fortify the town which he had built on the Seine, Le Petit Andely, so as not to interfere with the commerce of Paris, and he dismantled a fortress on one of the islands, of which some ruined walls remain, and then built close by his Château Gaillard, which gave him complete command over this important part of the river, thus entirely dividing Paris from Normandy. But as a matter of self-defence it perhaps was necessary, for, by the treaty of Louviers, 1196, Richard ceded to Philip Augustus the Norman Vexin, Vernon, and Gaillon, thus giving him complete command over Rouen, and thence over Normandy. As soon as the King of England perceived his mistake, he set to work at once on the lofty triangular rock which overhung his town of Le Petit Andely, and within a year he had completed his strong castle of Château Gaillard. But the territory of Les Andelys belonged to the Archbishop of Rouen; and when he saw the formidable castle in the heart of his domain, he protested loudly; and finding protest useless, he excommunicated the King of England. The king appealed to the pope, who decided in his favour, saving only that Richard was to make compensation. Richard accordingly ceded the Castle of

Louviers, the mills on the river Robec, the town of Dieppe, and the forest of Aliermont, with all the privileges of the chase—a rich exchange for the barren rock of Andely.

When Philip saw Château Gaillard he was very angry, and said, “I will take it if it is made of iron;” to which Richard replied, “And I would hold it if it were made of butter.” John signed a treaty at Château Gaillard; but when Richard died, Philip Augustus attacked the castle. The governor, Roger de Lasci, feeling secure in its impregnable strength, had consented to shelter within the castle walls the inhabitants of Le Petit Andely. Philip, finding it impossible to take the castle by assault, blockaded it; and the governor, unable to feed so many mouths, chose out the strong fighting men from among the devoted townspeople, and turned the old men, the women, and children out of the castle. The besieging army refused passage to the unhappy fugitives, and drove them back upon the castle walls. The poor creatures wandered up and down on the bare rocks, starving and houseless: at one time they subsisted on the dogs which had also been turned out of the castle. Most of them perished before the end of the siege, which lasted six months. It is said that when Philip arrived before the castle at the end of the siege, he was much afflicted by the spectacle of his starved subjects, and ordered them to be fed. After this siege, Château Gaillard belonged to France.

There are some historical memories attached to it. In 1314, Marguerite de Bourgogne, the frail wife of Louis X., was strangled here with her own hair, by order of her husband. David Bruce resided here during the time of his exile. But Henry IV. considered the existence of so strong

a fortress undesirable, and he destroyed the fortifications of Château Gaillard when he destroyed many other strong castles of France. Its remaining walls and bastions are of such prodigious strength that it is evident they might have stood till now, if they had only suffered natural wear and tear. Château Gaillard is certainly, to Englishmen, the most interesting ruin in Normandy.

But, without this special interest, there is a wonderful charm about the ruined fortress. Its name seems to suit it perfectly: even in its ruined dismantled state, frosted with lichen and overgrown with brambles and other clinging plants, it seems to smile saucily down on the shining river below, and on the green hills and valleys of Les Andelys, which stretch away behind it. It may be that these pleasant green slopes and undulating hills, with glimpses of the two little towns nestling one behind the hills, the other beside the river, add a present human link to the past history of the place; and the enchanting beauty of the winding Seine itself lends a brightness to the hoary ruin above. Certainly we came away from Château Gaillard with much regret, for it would be delightful to spend days on its sunny slopes overlooking the river as it hurries on to Paris; though as a ruin it creates none of the mournful tenderness that such castles as Tancarville and others awaken.

There are some quaint old houses in Le Petit Andely, and the church is interesting. There is an altar here, once in the abbey of Mortemer, and the pavement is full of ancient gravestones. Beside the river is the Hospice Saint-Jacques, founded in 1784 by the Duke of Penthièvre.

As we walked back to Le Grand Andely, we remarked

a bronze statue to Nicholas Poussin in the centre of the Grande Place : he was born in a neighbouring village in 1594. A party of Englishmen in blue knickerbockers and scarlet caps, on a walking tour, arrived at Le Grand Cerf while we were breakfasting : apparently they had not heard of the treasures there, and were loud in their regrets at being obliged to leave without seeing them all.

Near the church is the fountain of St. Clotilda. There is a yearly pilgrimage here, on the 2nd of June, of sick and infirm persons, who come to bathe in the fountain ; and as most of these are too poor to pay for a night's lodging, they are allowed to sleep in the church.

Before any of the pilgrims are allowed access to the fountain, the curé of Les Andelys walks in procession at the head of his clergy, and pours a certain quantity of wine into the flowing water, in commemoration of the miracle by which Queen Clotilda changed the water of this fountain into wine for the benefit of labourers exhausted and worn out with work.

There is a chapel of St. Clotilda also near the church, but it is of late date. The church itself has been built at various times ; but the restoration has effectually destroyed all purity of style. In the Lady chapel is an ancient altar which once stood in the Chartreuse of Gaillon, destroyed at the Revolution. On one of the pillars of the nave is a rudely carved representation of Château Gaillard. The nave is said to be of the thirteenth century ; also the two towers. We liked the church best outside ; it groups well with the trees and the quaint houses close by. When we went back to the inn we were shown another very quaintly furnished bedroom, but it was not either so beautiful or so interesting as our own. Our hostess showed us a book on Les Andelys by M. Brossard

de Ruville : there was in this a most interesting history of Le Grand Cerf, and a drawing of the chimney-piece ; there was also a picture of the great house of Les Andelys, the Manoir de Radeval. This splendid house was built in the Rue St. Jean by Jean Picard, lord of Radeval and Neubosc, maître d'hôtel of François I., and bailli of Gisors. In 1820 this house fell into the hands of the brokers, and from them M. Ruville says it was purchased by Lord Stuart de Rothsay, for the decoration of his manor-house of Highcliff, near Christchurch, Hampshire. It seems a sad fate for so splendid a specimen of the time of François I.

It is better to go back to Gaillon, and take train thence to Vernon. The church here is interesting, and contains some remarkable monuments ; but almost all trace of the ancient fortifications of the town has disappeared, and the famous Château de Bizy, not far off, was destroyed at the Revolution. The park of Bizy still remains, and a new château has been built. It is easy to reach Paris from Vernon, by way of Mantes ; but we wished to go on to Louviers from Les Andelys, and drove off to St. Pierre de Vauvray along the banks of the Seine. We drove some miles before we lost sight of Château Gaillard, towering grandly over the winding river. Our only fellow-traveller—a polite but toothless priest—was very anxious to inform us that that was the famous castle built by an English king. He seemed surprised to learn that we had visited it.

At last the road left the river, and we could no longer see Château Gaillard. Losing sight of the Seine seemed like taking a last leave of an old friend ; for we knew that we should not see the lovely river again in the course of our wanderings, except at Honfleur, and there the view is more of sea than of river.

THE OLD TOWNS SOUTH OF THE SEINE

(DEPARTMENT OF EURE).

CHAPTER XI.

Louviers.
Evreux.

Bernay.
Pont-Audemer.



THIS, the ancient country of the Ebuovices, is extremely rich in Gallo-Roman remains, as well as in mediæval ruins and churches ; it is full, too, of historical interest. Besides Vernon, Les Andelys, Château Gaillard, &c., there are in Eure Evreux, Bec-Hellouin, Verneuil, Bernay, Pont-Audemer, &c., seldom visited by English travellers.

At St. Pierre de Vauvray we took train for Louviers. When we reached the station, there was no omnibus ; so we walked into the sleepy, peaceful town. Like most of the towns in the department of Eure, Louviers is charmingly situated in a valley surrounded by richly wooded hills. The river Eure flows round and through the town, which is constantly intersected by its branches.

Louviers is a manufacturing town, and these river-canal work many wool and cotton mills, and make, besides, picturesque washing-places. The entrance into the town is quaint and pretty.

The church is very remarkable. The east end is the oldest portion, dating from the thirteenth century; the tall square northern tower had formerly a leaden spire, but one hundred and fifty years ago this was struck down by a thunderbolt. The southern side of the church is the most picturesque, although the architecture is of late fifteenth-century work, and much too redundant in its details. Beyond the door there is a projecting porch of stone, with very elaborately carved pendants; this is the most characteristic feature of the church. The upper part of the northern side has been restored in such abominable taste, that one would have preferred to see it in decay: the attempts to imitate the old flying buttresses are simply laughable. Inside, the five aisles give an imposing effect, but the details are poor.

We had been told of a very ancient house of the twelfth century, and spent much time in seeking it. At last we found a very chatty hairdresser standing at his shop-door. He shook his well-curled head when we asked for the *Maison des Templiers*.

“Ah, yes, yes, many travellers have asked the same question, but it no longer exists; but,” this with a most complacent smile, “I will show monsieur and madame the place where it stood.”

We found, however, that our time had not been wasted. At the farther end of the street, at the angle formed by another street, is a most quaint gabled wooden house; the

upper stories project the whole width of the pavement over the lower ones, and are supported on stout, stumpy oaken pillars, on which are displayed some of the toys and hardware sold in the shop within; opposite is another very curious house, but this has been so modernized that the general effect is spoiled. There are several other picturesque houses in the old part of Louviers. The more modern part of the town is uninteresting; but still Louviers is very quaint and restful: spite of its manufactories, it seems to be peacefully unconscious of the din and turmoil of larger cities, and we fancied that there must be charming walks in the green woods that surround it.

At Louviers, in 1196, Richard signed the famous treaty with Philip Augustus. Richard gave back to Philip, Gisors (a very interesting town, but not strictly in Normandy), which had been part of the dowry of Philip's sister Alice, and all the Norman Vexin; also Vernon, Gaillon, Ivry, and Nonancourt; also the province of Auvergne. Philip gave back to Richard, Eu, Aumale, Arques, Neufchatel, Beauvoisin, and all that he had taken during Richard's captivity in Germany: Les Andelys was to belong to the church of Rouen. As soon as this treaty was concluded, as we have seen, Richard set to work on his "daughter," as he called Château Gaillard, and built it in the short space of a year.

The journey from Louviers to Evreux is very pleasant. We pass the junction of the Eure with the Iton; and after this the Iton follows our course, and we cross it several times before reaching Evreux. The view of the city is one of the most striking in Normandy. It lies in a green plain, crowned by the spires of its cathedral, and surrounded on all sides by rising ground. The river Iton

flows up to it, and then dividing into three branches traverses the city, and continuing its course disappears in the massive forest of Evreux, which forms a rich leafy background to the pleasant-looking town. Evreux seems to be full of gardens; for trees abound among its white and red brick houses, and also along the banks of the Iton.

We reached Evreux while the Conseil Général was sitting; and as the members were quartered in the Grand Cerf, we had some trouble to get a room. Certainly the cathedral towns are for this reason to be avoided while this business is in progress. Landlords, waiters, even the shopkeepers in the town, seem to lose their wits till the affair is over. Doubtless Evreux is on ordinary occasions as decorous and sleepy as it befits an episcopal town to be; but we saw it in a state of exceptional liveliness.

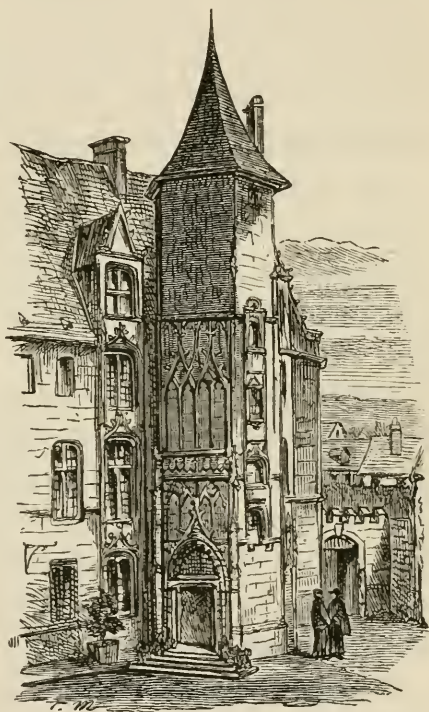
It is a pleasant, clean, well-kept city, built on the actual site of the old capital Mediolanum Aulercorum, which city was destroyed soon after the arrival of the Franks under Clovis. At the end of the ninth century it was again destroyed by the invading Norsemen. The new city was burned down by our Henry I., with the permission of the bishop, on condition that the king would rebuild the churches. Philip Augustus burned it down again at the close of the twelfth century, in revenge for John's treachery; and Richard Cœur-de-Lion seems to have rebuilt it after wresting it from Philip Augustus. After this Evreux appears to have changed masters frequently. It was a constant theatre of warfare during the intrigues of Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, the son-in-law and cousin of King John of France. Froissart says, "In 1353, the King of France took from Charles the Bad, King of Navarre and Earl of

Evreux, all the lands belonging to him in Normandy, except Evreux, Pont-Audemer, Cherbourg, Gavrey, Avranches, and Mortain, which were garrisoned by men from Navarre, who would not surrender themselves." The Evreux men seem always to have been Navarrois at heart. "The inhabitants," says Froissart, "never perfectly loved any other lord but the King of Navarre, who held it in right of his mother." Since 1441 Evreux has been the property of France. Some of the old Norman chroniclers were born at Evreux: William and Matthew of Evreux, one in the twelfth, the other in the fourteenth century; Simon Vigor, Archbishop of Narbonne, in the sixteenth century; also Simon Vigor the historian, and many others; our own English family of Devereux takes its name from this city.

We were delighted with the Cathedral: it is small, but, spite of its frequent demolitions and restorations, it has a singularly complete effect—except, indeed, the west front, which is Italian and quite out of keeping with the florid Gothic spire or the Norman nave. The spire was erected by Louis XI.'s luckless favourite, Cardinal la Balue.

The effect of the interior is very good. The piers and arches of the nave are Norman, and probably formed part of Henry I.'s building; but the choir is of later date. It is very beautiful, with its pointed arches and clustered columns, and it is of great height. The clerestory windows are large; the triforium is also Early English, and is glazed; the apse of the choir is remarkably rich and elegant. The Lady chapel and north transept are of the fifteenth century; the former is of exquisitely pure and simple design, built by Louis XI.; there is some very curious glass here, and the north doorway, though much injured at the

Revolution, is still beautiful ; it must have been a mass of elaborate work before the figures were removed. There is a great deal of whitewash lingering about the interior, which somewhat injures the effect, and gives a dirty look ; the wooden screens to the choir chapels are very interesting, and also some of the wooden screens to the chapels in the nave are good specimens of the transition from florid Gothic to the style of François I. Both of the rose windows are good ; indeed all the work of this part of the cathedral is worth study. The glazed triforium in transepts and choir is very remarkable, and there is some good stained glass besides that in the Lady chapel.



Archbishop's Palace, Evreux.

The Cathedral is well situated in a large open Place. Just behind is the episcopal palace, a quaint old fifteenth-century building, with a picturesque tower ; it seems to be kept shut in by huge gates from the inspection of the curious ; by good fortune these gates were open when we passed by : but when, after a little time, the sentry passing up and down in front found that we were not waiting for admission on business, but were simply examin-

ing the palace, he roughly informed us that we were to go away, and actually shut the gates on us.

The Church of St. Taurin is at some distance from the Cathedral, and is well worth a visit; the famous shrine of St. Taurin is still preserved here; it has been robbed of its jewels, but it is a very remarkable example of the goldsmith's work of the thirteenth century; the tomb of the saint, said to be very ancient, is in the crypt. Some portion of the church, a very curious Norman arcade, seems to have belonged to the ancient Abbey of St. Taurin, founded by Richard the Good.

According to Orderic, St. Taurin, first bishop of Evreux, sent from Rome to preach Christianity to the Celtic Gauls and destroy idolatry, expelled from the temple of Diana a horrible demon who had for some time dwelt in the city.

The vulgar call him Gobelin, and assert that the merits of St. Taurin have ever since prevented him from harming any one. As the demon obeyed the orders of the saint and broke his own statues, he was not immediately sent back to hell; but he suffered his punishment in the place where he had reigned, and saw the men he had so often tried to ruin eternally—saved.

There are various legends about St. Taurin: he delivered Evreux from a plague of adders and snakes; and indeed ever since his time venomous reptiles are unknown in the city, or if they appear they die at once.

At the other end of the town, not far from the Cathedral, is a Tour de l'Horloge, a picturesque building of the fifteenth century. It contains a bell to which one of the sons of Charlemagne is said to have been sponsor. Traces of the

ancient city walls (fifth century) are still to be seen : they are of extraordinary thickness.

Le Vieil Evreux is only about four miles off ; it is interesting on account of the discoveries which have been made there. Most of these are now in the Museum of Evreux, and are worth seeing. The public library of Evreux contains many curious old MSS., and has 18,000 volumes of books.

When one thinks how very old this city is, one of the seven of the Armorican confederacy, it seems impossible that the relics contained in the museum can in any way represent the treasures which must lie underground ; for Gothic, Norman, even Roman periods are modern beside that of the first possessors of Evreux. Walking along through the old streets sighing for the quaint old wooden houses which once filled the streets and which have been replaced by commonplace modern ones, we came upon a comic-faced old woman standing at her door. She asked us how we liked her city, and especially how did we like the Cathedral.

“ It is fine, is it not ? ” She put her head on one side, and looked as if she thought there was no match to be found for it. She then asked if we would walk in and look at her faïence, and we followed her into two rooms literally crammed with bits of old Rouen, Nevers, &c. At first sight this was tempting, but our old friend quite understood the value of her possessions, and asked a large price for them ; finally she told us, in a sort of stage whisper, that she had a real treasure in her bedroom, if we would take the trouble to mount the stairs. When we got there she showed us a picture which she said was a genuine Nicholas Poussin, and for which she wanted a purchaser. She was fairly old, but her nimbleness was marvellous ; she ran up and down

stairs, jumped upon a chair like a bird to examine the back of the picture, and finally told us that she was aware that she was crazy, as she found herself the only one among all her neighbours who cared for the beautiful and for rare works of art.

"They," she said, "save their money, or else spend it on their meals or their clothing. I," here she snapped her crooked fingers and twinkled her black restless little eyes, "do not care for food,—a little potage, a slice of bread, and I have finished; and as for saving," we had reached the entrance passage on our way out, and she pointed over her shoulder at the rooms we had left, "there are my savings: dame! faïence is worth more than bank interest."

She winked; and considering the price she had asked for a Rouen jug which we very much wanted, we thought that, if she sold her treasures, faïence in her hands was certainly a profitable investment, and that her love for the beautiful was not necessarily a proof of insanity.

We were on the whole disappointed in Evreux; it is far less interesting than Lisieux, or even than Bernay or Pont-Audemer. We felt little desire to linger, and were glad to find ourselves on the road to Bernay. The railway between these two cities passes so many places of interest, that it is quite worth while to stay and see some of them, or else to make excursions from either Evreux or Bernay to them; and as the journey between the two cities is not a long one, the distance is of course not very considerable. Gally Knight speaks of the Castle of Navarre, near Evreux, and says it is worth a visit; but we did not go there.

We pass Bérengenville, where there was once an abbey founded in the fourteenth century, and soon after we cross

the Iton. A little way farther is the village of Bonneville, where is a fifteenth-century church with some good stained glass, and some remains of the Abbey of St. Florentin, founded by the Empress Matilda; after passing this, we cross the Iton again. We go through the wood, and cross another tiny river, and then into a tunnel under a lofty hill, on the summit of which is a church with a most exquisite Gothic spire. This is the Church of St. Foy, at Conches Station; the spire was rebuilt in 1851, in imitation of the original of the fifteenth century. There are seven windows in the church, with good sixteenth-century glass in excellent preservation; they chiefly relate to the legends of St. Foy. The church groups charmingly with the ruins of the old castle of the Counts of Conches; it stands still higher than the church, and was a strong fortress in the eleventh century. It was built by Roger de Toesni, Lord of Conches, a descendant of Malahule, uncle of Rolf. This fierce old Scandinavian had made a crusade into Spain against the Moors in the lifetime of Duke Robert, and when on his return he found the son of Arlette in possession of the dukedom, he refused to own allegiance, saying, "A bastard is not fit to rule over me and the Normans." He was, however, vanquished and slain in battle by Roger of Beaumont. The Lord of Conches was, by right of birth, hereditary standard-bearer to the Duke of Normandy; but at the battle of Senlac, or Hastings, Ralph of Toesni, grandson of the famous Roger, refused the office: he would not fill his hands with anything which should hinder his prowess in the battle. The view of the surrounding country from the castle is charming: there are also some other ruins at Conches of an old Benedictine abbey, also built by Roger;

it was called the Abbey of Chatillon, according to Orderic. The abbot, Gislebert, was famous for sanctity.

In the reign of William Rufus there was war between the Count of Evreux and the Lord of Conches, because their wives, Havise of Evreux and Isabelle of Conches, quarrelled. Isabella, a daughter of the Count de Montfort, seems to have been charming, and also a very valiant captain; she came off conqueror in the last battle between the warlike ladies.

A diligence goes direct from Conches to Verneuil, and this is perhaps the most direct way of reaching the ancient and curious town; although Verneuil may be taken on the road between Alençon and Paris. The canal still exists which our Henry I. caused to be constructed a length of about five miles, in order to bring the water of the river Iton to Verneuil. Of the ancient castle there only remains the lofty donjon, or *tour grise*, sixty feet high, on the banks of the Aure. But the Church of La Madelaine is most interesting; the architecture is of various periods ranging from Norman to seventeenth century; and the famous tower is very remarkable for the richness of its decoration. There are some other churches here worth seeing, and some of the old houses are exceedingly ancient and curious. Public walks have been made on the remains of the old walls, which are of the twelfth century.

Under these walls was a hard-fought battle in 1424, between the Regent, John of Bedford, and the troops of Charles VII. The English gained the victory. Among those slain fighting for France were the Earls of Douglas, of Buchan, and many other Scottish gentlemen. Altogether Verneuil is an interesting town, and well worth a visit.

It is perhaps more direct to drive back to Conches than to take train from Verneuil to l'Aigle.

Another halt is worth making at Beaumont-le-Roger, in the lovely valley of the Rille. There are some interesting ruins here of the Priory of the Holy Trinity, which are well worth seeing, and a diligence goes every day to the ancient château of Beaumesnil, about six miles distant, a fine building of the time of Henry IV. This drive through the forest of Beaumont is very pleasant.

The next station is Serquigny, a junction from which it is easy to get to Paris or Havre, or Rouen or Caen ; but the town itself does not look interesting. After this the road crosses the river Charentonne, passes the forest of Beaumont, and is full of interest till suddenly it reaches Bernay, a small town of white and grey houses, without any remarkable church-towers, surrounded closely by wooded green hills.

The station is on the boulevard close to the town, and we seem to get to our inn in a few minutes, being driven by a very tall stout Norman, who, on our arrival at Le Cheval Blanc, announced himself as our landlord. Such a jolly host : no matter how rude and abrupt the behaviour of the *commis-voyageurs*, the only travellers who seem to visit Bernay, Monsieur Roussel, or *le père* Roussel, as they called him, managed to smooth them down into at least a show of civility. And his wife was equally kind and civil, and as thoroughly neat and clean in the ordering of her house as if she had been an Englishwoman. It is marvellous that so few English visit so interesting a town as Bernay, especially when it possesses such a comfortable and clean inn as the Cheval Blanc.

Even as we drove that little bit from the railway, we had been struck with the original look of the houses, and we were impatient to get out and explore. A few steps from the inn is a blacksmith's shop; a vine had clambered up its blackened gabled front; on the pavement a man and woman were talking; two broad-backed grey Norman horses stood waiting to be shod, and just inside the blacksmith was striking sparks rapidly from the heated iron on his anvil, his grimy, powerful arm showing out vividly against the glow in the furnace behind him.

On each side of us were quaint wooden houses; and as we looked down the streets, right and left, we saw much that tempted us to explore them; but we were bound for the Church of Ste. Croix, and we had learned that this lay at the bottom of the principal street.

Some little way down this broad street leading to the church, is a quaint wooden house, gabled and standing cornerwise, the upper story embraced by the graceful leaves of a vine, its gnarled brown stem showing it to be an old inhabitant of the pleasant sunny corner; beneath the vine-leaves, stretching up ambitiously to kiss them, and opening richly tinted blossoms widely to the sunshine, were many-coloured wreaths of garden convolvulus. We did not find the Church of Ste. Croix very interesting. It was rebuilt in 1372, and enlarged about a hundred years after. Two of the marble altars are said to have belonged to the Abbey du Bec; also the sculptures behind the high altar, and the statues in the nave.

Coming up the street we saw several quaint half-timbered houses of a different style from those of Rouen; for the gable atop was usually squared, with a projecting tiled coif. The

beams separating the floors are singularly massive, and in many instances their projecting ends are carved into grotesque faces. At the corner of the Rue du Commerce there is a very original-looking house, with the upper story projecting over the lower, and supported on wooden pillars. We went on till we reached the Grande Place. Here stands a huge grey building with a seventeenth-century front; it is really the ancient monastery founded by Judith of Brittany, wife of Richard II., surnamed the Good, the fourth Duke of Normandy. She founded the abbey under the direction of the well-beloved William of Dijon, Abbot of Fécamp, for Benedictine monks. Judith died before her pious work was completed, June 17, 1017, and her husband Richard completed the abbey.

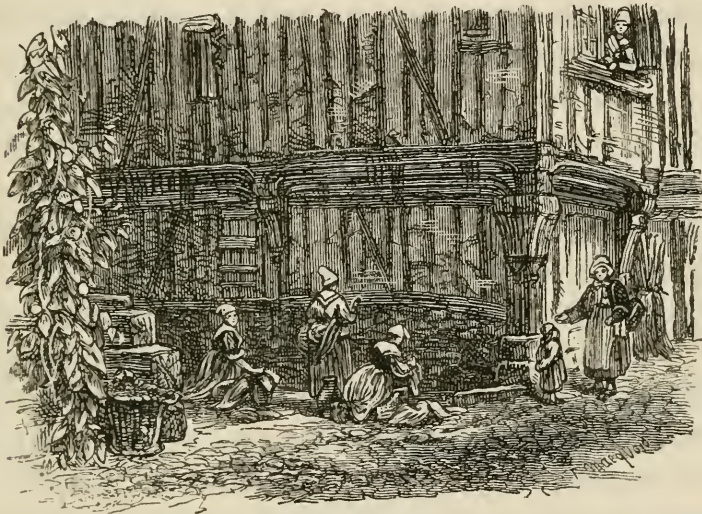
It now contains the Hôtel de Ville, the tribunal, the prisons, the sous-préfecture, &c. But the church of the abbey, which is entered from the Place, is the most interesting portion of it. It is no longer a church; the altars have been removed, and it is used every Saturday as a corn-market; it is entirely desecrated, but it is a very noble relic of the massive building of those times. It is said to be one of the oldest Romanesque buildings in Normandy, very large and perfectly simple in detail; plain round arches are supported by square stone piers: the columns attached to the piers are doubtless more recent, for the capitals are carved; on one of them is, "Isambardus me fecit." There is a vaulted stone roof, and each of the transepts ends in an apse. In 1865, when the Norman archæologists visited Bernay, there was discovered, during some excavations made in the nave, the skeleton of a tall female figure, richly habited; this the people say was the skeleton of Judith of Brittany, but she seems certainly to

have been buried in the Abbey of Fécamp : other skeletons were also found, one of them holding a crozier of fifteenth-century work, carved and gilded. The first Abbot of Bernay became Abbot of Westminster. In the sixteenth century the Calvinists attacked Bernay, and made horrible havoc there.

We wandered on beyond the town to see the other church—Notre-Dame de la Couture ; it is the resort of pilgrims at certain seasons, and is a quaint and curious building ; the slated spire, with its pigeon-house projections, is very singular and original. It completely escaped the fury of the Calvinists, who confined their ravages to the town. This church is pleasantly placed in the midst of a large grassed cemetery. Going down the quaint old streets again, and finding yet more picturesque old houses, we went into a bookseller's shop to inquire for photographs, and found the master a very intelligent and civil man, who offered to guide us about the town. He took us first up on the heights through a sort of hanging wood ; and seen from this wooded height Bernay is lovely, its quaint houses seem completely to nestle into the surrounding belt of trees ; it quite justifies Madame de Staël's epithet of " Bernay est une corbeille de fleurs." From this height we noticed a surprising number of red-mud walls, thatched atop ; nailed against these were fruit-trees in a flourishing condition. Why do not we build mud walls in our English fruit-gardens for this purpose ?

We came down into the town again, close to a most picturesque scene. Stacks of old wooden houses occupy the corner of two streets, up one of which flows a stream of water bordered by flat stones, on which a group of washer-women knelt soaping or beating linen. The houses were of that exquisite green-grey tint which is prevalent in

Bernay, and which adds much to the effect of its old gabled dwellings; the water, too, was in shadow, and looked a sombre olive; all the light fell on the women's white cotton nightcaps and the linen they were beating with their wooden *carrosses*. The women washing were mostly young; but from an upper window was craned out the witch-like face of an old dark woman with spiteful black eyes; when she saw that she was being sketched—and it is wonderful how



Women washing.

quick these Normans are in detecting such an attempt—she looked more evil still, and began to gesticulate and chatter in so alarming a manner that it seemed possible she might lose her balance and come tumbling on the stones below.

Just opposite was a very remarkable house with a pointed gable, and in it a quaint diamond-paned lattice, with pots of scarlet geranium on the sill and bunches of rosy bean-pods drying in the sun on either side. The moulded beam

which divided the ground floor from the upper story was of amazing thickness, and was supported by carved corbels : below was a seemingly deserted tinker's shop ; as we looked through the open lattice, we saw it was full of odds and ends of rusty iron. Our friend the bookseller guided us all over the town, showing much that we had already discovered, and also a great deal that we had not as yet seen ; there is very much to see in Bernay, for the lover of the curious and the picturesque, as well as for the artist. Some of the early morning and evening effects are most remarkable, and these arise much from the narrowness of many of the streets and the original way in which they curve round one out of another. Here and there up the exquisite green-grey of the old wooden houses, bright-leaved, vigorous young vine-arms spread in an ambitious effort to reach the edge of the projecting roof, or in some instances the top of the gable.

Next day was market-day, and we went out very early. The view from the old abbey was most picturesque ; the market spreads not only over the Place, which rises from the abbey buildings, but also down the long street on the right and across the way to the opposite street that winds in an upward direction, full of dark wooden-gabled houses nodding at one another above the bright fruit-stalls and snowy caps below.

As we sauntered through the groups of market-women, we noticed the well-to-do air of most of them. The fruit was not as good here as at Evreux, where the peaches were the finest we had ever seen ; but everything seemed cheap at Bernay, which perhaps accounts for the reasonable charges of the Cheval Blanc. We went down to the washing-place to complete the sketch of the previous day. Some of the

girls were still washing, others had been to market and were gossiping in a merry group of bright brown faces and snowy caps beside the tinker's cottage, but every one looked gayer and better dressed than usual. We missed our old witch from the window ; but in a minute or two she came up and laid her hand on my arm.

“ *Tenez !* Madame is the little lady of the monsieur who has put me in his picture yesterday.”

Her patois was so broad that it was not easy to understand, especially as she had lost all her front teeth ; but the looks and signs of her companions, who at once gathered round, somewhat helped my comprehension.

The old woman was evidently considered a wag, for at every sentence the merry-faced girls had to turn aside to hide their laughter ; they were too polite to laugh out, and one of them tried to excuse the old woman's freedom. But she had no idea of being silenced ; she shook her head at the interruption, and went on.

“ Monsieur is then the husband of madame. Monsieur can doubtless draw very well, but he has made a mistake.”

I inquired what the mistake was.

“ Does not madame see ? ” She touched her cap with her forefinger—a plain dimity skull-cap, with a dimity bow behind, but without any strings, and of the most dazzling whiteness. “ Monsieur should have drawn me to-day, when I am *belle* : yesterday I had my bonnet de coton, and a bonnet de coton is not for a picture—mon Dieu ! I should think not. I put it on to do my work or the washing ; but for the market or for *ia messe*, ma foi, non : it is only poor diables, who have not a centime, who would be seen in church or in the market in a bonnet de coton.”

This explained her excitement at the window yesterday.

She wanted to have the objectionable cap in the sketch altered at once, to the great delight of her companions; and she did not seem at all satisfied to be told that the *bonnet de coton* was better for a picture, and was never seen in England.

There are some good shops in Bernay, and there are numerous cotton manufactories in the *arrondissement*. The stuffs of Bernay were spoken of in the fifteenth century. One of the most remarkable of the old houses is now a *café*. It is easy to pass it without seeing it, the lower story having been completely modernised; but the upper portion is about the most perfect specimen of its kind and date—sixteenth century—that we saw in Normandy. But it is not only in the town itself that there is so much to delight both the artist and antiquary, as well as the ordinary lover of nature—all around the country teems with interest. Not far off is Orbec, a railway station; but, as the town is nearly six miles from the railway, it is, perhaps, better to visit Orbec from Lisieux, from which city a diligence goes direct three times a day to Orbec.

On the heights to the north of Bernay is a lofty Calvary, and the view from this point is very beautiful. We have lost the lovely Rille, with its shady banks and winding valleys, but instead there is the sparkling little Charentonne. Except when it rains—and it is rather fond of raining in Normandy—the climate seems very dry and healthy; and this is the more remarkable from the constant presence of one or other of these graceful rivers, now grey, now shimmering bright as steel, or alive with the reflections of its waving fringe of trees.

There is not much mention of Bernay in history, besides the building of its abbey. In 1378 Pierre Dutertre, confidant of Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, defended Bernay against Du Guesclin, but was obliged to surrender to the famous captain. Alexandre de Bernay, the poet, was born in Bernay in 1150; his chief poem was "Alexander the Great of Macedon," written in lines of twelve syllables.

We were very sorry to say good-bye to Bernay, it is so quaint and pleasant, and one leaves it with the feeling that there is more to be discovered in it than would reveal itself easily to the passing traveller.

At Bernay one feels the neighbourhood of the Abbey of Bec, for which the inhabitants evidently entertain much reverence; and we, who had read Dean Church's most interesting account of it in his *Life of St. Anselm*, were eager to visit the Abbey of St. Hellouin, the famous school of Lanfranc and St. Anselm; but illness frustrated our hopes, and we had to go on direct to Pont-Audemer instead of halting at Brionne, where we heard good lodging could not be had. It is sad to learn that no relic remains of the ancient Abbey of Bec: there is a ruined isolated tower of the fifteenth century; the great mass of the building, entirely rebuilt in the seventeenth century, was almost all destroyed at the Revolution, and that which remains is used as a cavalry dépôt. In the parish church of Bec is the tomb of St. Hellouin, the saintly knight who founded the abbey in the days of Duke Robert the Magnificent; he was succeeded as Prior of Bec by Lanfranc, who left the abbey to become Abbot of St. Etienne at Caen, and then Archbishop of Canterbury. Hellouin was succeeded as abbot by Anselm, who also left Bec to succeed Lanfranc as Archbishop of Canterbury.

At Bec Henry I. was reconciled to Anslem, who had retired to his monastery from Canterbury sooner than yield to the king's interference. At Brionne was held, in 1050, in the presence of Duke William, the synod in which the tenets of Berengarius were condemned. Berengarius was a native of Tours, and Archdeacon of Angers; his heresy seems to have been provoked by envy of the success of Lanfranc's teaching at Bec; however, Berengarius repented eight years before he died, and acknowledged his errors.

At Brionne there are some ruins of an old castle of the eleventh century; but this is not the castle on an island, to which Guy of Burgundy fled after the battle of Val-ès-Dunes, and which underwent the famous siege of William the Bastard. At last, the garrison was reduced by famine, and Guy surrendered. William seems to have been very merciful on these occasions; Guy was not even banished the court.

We reached Pont-Audemer late in the afternoon—an admirable hour for seeing its wonderful effects of light and shade. It is a marvellous little town, with its quaint gabled houses, and the numerous branches of the lovely river Rille running between its picturesque houses and forming washing-places along the banks, and, above all, its grandly sombre Church of St. Ouen. Not for beauty of architecture, but for impressiveness of effect, we felt inclined to rank St. Ouen, of Pont-Audemer, next to the churches of Rouen.

The chief street of Pont-Audemer is very wide, and we soon saw the church before us. On each side hideous gargoyles project far beyond the building. Are these gargoyles named from the monster Gargouille conquered by St. Romain?

We went into the church. It is very lofty, and has lofty columns and arches along the nave. The effect was striking in the gloom of evening; except for some lights near the altar, all was in deep shadow. We saw some attempts at decoration, and heard that there would be a special service for children next day.

Crossing the main street, we went up the Rue du Commerce to the river. On the side next to the town is a broad quay, bordered by a low stone wall on one side and by houses on the other; here and there are flights of steps in openings in the low wall, and girls were busy filling brass jugs and ancient-looking red pitchers, which they seemed to find heavy as they came slowly up the steps again. The opposite bank is charming: the green hill, crowned with trees, lies behind—for the Rille runs through a continual valley—and in front of this are, first, picturesque red-brick houses, then an avenue of lime-trees, and then again houses set in sauntering, desultory fashion, as if they were lingering to look at the river: very near the edge is one which seems as if it would not stand much longer; it is of red brick, but the upper portion is half-timbered, with a vine spreading over it. In the wall below is an arched opening, with a flight of steps leading into the water; the lower step is much broader than the rest, and on this, half in the shadow of the archway behind her, a woman was beating a red petticoat with her *carrosse*; farther on is a range of wooden sheds, evidently for washing, bordered by flat stones for the convenience of the laundresses; and always among the houses, and above the sheds, the graceful bending poplars trembling in the evening light.

But the Rille is so lovely, that, besides the interest which

Pont-Audemer possesses as a town, it is worth a visit of some days for the sake of the walks beside its river ; the walk up its tree-shadowed banks to the Castle of Montfort is most lovely. The view across the river, of the surrounding country, from the terrace of Château Bonnechose, is also very charming.

Mr. Musgrave, who gives a very good and interesting account of the old town, says justly :—"To ramble at noon-tide or sunset in the valleys of the Rille, the Ante, and the Vire, as at Pont-Audemer, Falaise, and Vire, is a privilege to be gratefully remembered."

The river can be traced for some distance winding between its wooded *côtes*. Pont-Audemer looks exquisite in the early morning—though, alas ! pouring rain soon dimmed the wonderful effects of light and shade on the picturesque bits beside the water—for Pont-Audemer is full of pictures of a special sort, and must be seen to be thoroughly appreciated. It is full, too, of special characteristics, which mark it out from every other town in Normandy.

In the bright morning light, before the rain came like a veil to dim every view, we saw that the ends of the streets running north and south are bounded by steep green hills ; the hill on the south is called Mount Gibet, and that on the north, which looks almost perpendicular, is Mount Carmel. On the top of this a Monsieur Desson, a retired manufacturer, has built an ugly yellow house, very conspicuous, and so uninviting-looking that one wonders he should have chosen so visible and so inaccessible a site.

Another characteristic of Pont-Audemer is in the branches of the river, which run parallel to the Grande Rue, and across which the side streets are carried on bridges, so that

at the openings between the houses you get sudden pictures full of colour and light and shade. Old wooden houses, so rickety and decayed that it seems as if the projecting gables atop must quickly end their days in the stream below, go sheer down to the edge of the olive-brown water. Some of the houses have wooden pillars supporting the upper story, and in the space left below are large flat stones, on one or other of which there is always the inevitable washerwoman beating or soaping linen and then rinsing it in the running stream. Certainly washing of clothes seems much more frequent in France than in England; and it must be healthier to perform so large a portion of it in the open air, for *la lessive*, properly so called, takes only



Old Houses on the Rille.

a short time; there is also a pleasant suggestion of cleanliness in the process of dipping into the running water instead of into the already soiled water of the tub. On the other hand, in towns where fountains and pumps are not plentiful, there is only river water for cooking and drinking, and it cannot be wholesome, and must certainly be unpleasant to live lower down the river than your washing neighbours. At Caudebec the little river Gertrude is com-

pletely polluted by the numerous tanneries of which it receives the refuse, and yet the people who live near it drink the discoloured water, and also wash their clothes in it.

At Pont-Audemer, up the sides of the river, high-water mark can be traced by a green line on the brown walls, and below this grow trailing plants trying to get a hold in the brick foundation of the houses above. From some of the windows sprays of vine hang down in graceful festoons, making a kind of bower for nasturtium and moneywort, which come trailing down from pots in the ancient casements. It is chiefly up these canal-streets that the old houses still remain. At first sight, Pont-Audemer has a far more modern aspect than Bernay ; but there are plenty of old houses, if they are looked for, set in most picturesque surroundings.

The town is supposed to date from the eleventh century, and to take its name from a Baron Audemer, or Odemer, who built a bridge over the Rille here.

Pont-Audemer belonged to Roger, Count of Beaumont, who, although he refused on principle to accompany Duke William on his invasion, fitted up sixty vessels for the Norman fleet. He remained in Normandy as chief counsellor of the Duchess Matilda. William gave estates in England to the son of Roger. He is the ancestor of the Earls of Warwick, Leicester, and Bedford.

It is curious to learn that in 1378, when the town was attacked by Du Guesclin by land, and the Admiral Jean de Vienne by sea, the sea flowed to the gates of Pont-Audemer. In this siege cannon was first employed in France. The garrison resisted so manfully that they were allowed to surrender with honour, and were sent off to Cherbourg ; but the fortifications were razed ; and although the ramparts existed

till the sixteenth century, no attempt was made to fortify the town again. Three years after the battle of Agincourt, Pont-Audemer was governed by Thomas of Lancaster, Duke of Clarence, and the town belonged to the English till the final annexation of Normandy to the crown of France. There are a great number of English names to be seen in Pont-Audemer, and there is a rough sturdiness about the people that is very un-French.

We had been told yesterday that there was to be a special service for children on the fête of St. Gilles, and that all timid children were brought to church by their mothers on this day to cure them of fear of being left in the dark. Very early indeed, even before we went out, we saw a mother carrying a smartly dressed child to church; but by ten o'clock the children's service was over, and only a few of the little ones stayed for *la grande messe*.

St. Ouen is a grand church, although it has plainly been left unfinished, and has also been injured by the ruthless cutting away of the pillars in the choir for the erection of seats. The choir, which has been badly restored, is said to be of the eleventh century; the nave is late Gothic, but is very picturesque in effect. The church was crowded by a congregation singularly quiet and devout. The sermon was most eloquent, chiefly on the life of St. Gilles.

Taken as a whole, that Sunday service at St. Ouen, of Pont-Audemer, was the most impressive we attended in Normandy. The richly painted windows made the church dark, but heightened the effect; and the preacher, in his white surplice and black canon's cape, with his eloquent, refined face, seemed to concentrate on himself the straggling rays of light.

Over the chancel arch is a huge picture of Abraham and Isaac, but it is much too high for criticism.

We came in to breakfast, and then went to vespers at the Church of St. Germain, on the southern side of the town. It is a quaint old Norman church, with a steeple of later date, and it stands like an English country church in a grassed churchyard planted with trees and shrubs. Behind it rises Mont Gibet. We climbed up this by a pretty shaded road ; it was very steep, and we could see through the trees how rapidly the country opened.

The view is splendid from the top of this hill ; it is so high that one sees over a great extent of country. One feels here, as one feels at Bernay, at Villequier, at Trouville, at Falaise, at Vire, at Mortain, at Avranches, and in so many other Norman towns, how much lovely country one has to leave unexplored. It would make an interesting tour to follow some of the loveliest of these Norman rivers through their entire course. The Rille and the Eure one meets with more than once ; but one leaves the Ante at Falaise ; and the Vire, of which we get a glimpse first at St. Lô and then among its own lovely Vaux de Vire, must be very worthy of closer examination ; and at Bernay one longs to follow the Charentonne to its source, and to discover the site of the once-famous Monastery of St. Evroul, the home of Orderic, built originally in the sixth century, by the holy hermit, St. Evroul, in the forest of Ouche, and restored in 1150, by Hugh and Robert de Grandmesnil and the two sons of William de Géroie. These famous old monasteries were always built near forests, for the sake of fuel and for the pasturage of the swine. We could not learn whether any ruins of St. Evroul yet remain ; but on the map there is

Notre-Dame du Bois St. Evroult, and, for Orderic's sake, one would like to make a pilgrimage to his beloved monastery. He was born in England in 1075, at Altringham, on the banks of the Severn ; and his father Odelirius, a married priest, took him over to Normandy when a mere child, and placed him at St. Evroul. Orderic was only eleven years old when he received the tonsure, but he was not ordained till he was thirty-one. His History of Normandy is most quaint and delightful, although many of his assertions are entirely contradicted by other writers.

Almost all the Norman rivers are utilised ; at Pont-Audemer the Rille works numerous tanneries, and cotton factories besides ; but the tan-pits at Pont-Audemer keep more out of sight than they do at Caudebec, and are less offensive. As one walks beside the Rille, one hears the ceaseless din of the tanning-mills, the wheels of which are turned by the water, and one sees outside the tanneries, and, indeed, outside farmhouses and cottages too, in the neighbourhood of all these tanning-mill towns, shelves full of *mottes*, or tan-cakes, drying for fuel. It is the making of these *mottes*, or, rather, the crushing the bark left in the tanning-tanks into the powder of which they are made, which keeps the mills so constantly at work. It seems surprising that in the present scarcity of coal we should not try to burn these *mottes* in London, as they appear to be made in the west of England, and are used there instead of peat for fuel. Near Pont-Audemer was a famous abbey called St. Pierre des Préaux, founded in 1035 by Humphrey de Vieilles, endowed by his son, the celebrated Roger de Beaumont, the friend of William and the trusty counsellor of Matilda during her husband's absence.

The power of vision in some travellers is very remarkable. We had been told that at Pont-Audemer we should see plenty of specimens of the lofty Cauchoise cap ; but although it was Sunday, and the feast of St. Gilles to boot, we only saw one old lady in St. Ouen with a remarkable cap. Hers was certainly marvellous—a lofty cone of white muslin, with a pair of short stiff wings and a piece of muslin tied round the top in a bow behind.

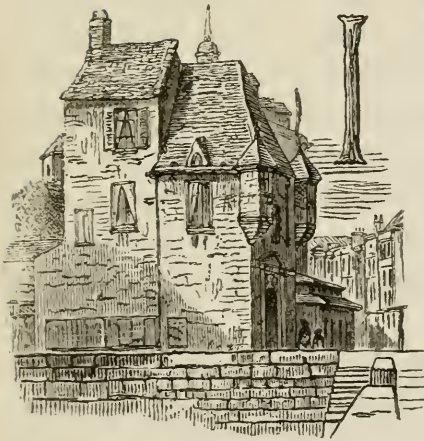
Now when one reads some books that have been written on Normandy, one thinks of this power of vision. At Vire and at Granville quaint caps are plentiful, but certainly they are only rarely seen elsewhere ; very certainly they are rare in the towns eastward of Caen, and even ten years ago they were hard to find there. In Caen, ten years ago, a middle-aged woman was describing to me the caps worn by her mother and grandmother on fête days ; and when I asked why she did not continue to wear this picturesque costume, she answered with much disdain, “ Me ! is it likely I could wear anything so ancient and pagan as a tall cap ? ”

CALVADOS.

CHAPTER XII.

Honfleur.
Trouville.

Villers.
Lisieux.



It is possible to go from Pont-Audemer to Honfleur by way of the Pointe de la Roque. A steamer goes down the Rille every other day on its way to Le Havre. The journey is very picturesque: a ferryboat takes one to Conteville from a little village called Bas de la

Roque, where the steamer will stop if it is told to do so; from thence one walks beside the sea to the lighthouse built on the point. In front is Tancarville; on the right, the Marais Vernier; on the left, Cap du Hode, la Pointe du Hoc, and the mouth of the Rille. The view is very fine, but not so grand as that from the Côte de la Grâce at Honfleur; returning to Conteville, the distance thence is nearly equal either to Honfleur or Pont-Audemer—fourteen miles

to the first, and thirteen to Pont-Audemer: a conveyance can be got at Conteville for either place. The name Conteville reminds one of the knight Herlwin of Conteville, who married Arlette after the death of Duke Robert, and by her became the father of Odo of Bayeux and Robert of Mortain, the half-brothers of William the Conqueror.

But the drive from Pont-Audemer to Honfleur is too beautiful to give up for any other route.

We left the little town with much regret. The diligence started very early in the morning; and as the mornings of late had been rainy and the evenings dry, we preferred to start in a private voiture about five o'clock, as we heard it was not more than a two hours and a half's drive to Honfleur. The road to Honfleur lies past the Church of St. Germain, and for the first few miles is not remarkable; but after passing St. Maclou the country opens, and we get a glimpse of the Phare de la Roque. Our road circles round a steep hill, and on the left is a deep valley, which presently at an abrupt turn gives a lovely glimpse between the hills.

About Fiquefleur a magnificent peep opens over the mouth of the Seine, with Havre and its thread-like masts, and the tall spire of Harfleur seen across the water in the red light of the setting sun; the hills on this side, through which we see the picture as it were framed, are dark olive, and every moment the glow is fading; but the sight can never be forgotten, and it comes so suddenly, and disappears so quickly, as the road rounds the shoulder of a hill, that the effect is magical.

Soon after this we enter Calvados, the most interesting department in Normandy, the birth and burial place of

William the Conqueror and one chief scene of struggle between our Plantagenet princes and their French opponents, the site too of some of the most famous and interesting buildings in the dukedom. In products Calvados seems to be chiefly distinguished by its breed of horses and its marble and stone quarries—the famous Caen stone comes from Calvados; also for its export of colza oil. It is not nearly so rich in manufacturing towns as the department of Eure, its chief trade being in the hands of the women—lace and blonde making and the sprigging of tulle veils. In Caen, the capital city of Calvados, and once the capital of La Basse Normandie, we saw continually women seated at the house-doors, as one sees them in Belgium, engaged either in lace-making or much more frequently in embroidering black tulle. It is wonderful to see even old women engaged at this trying work, peering at it with un-spectacled eyes and apparently quite adepts.

Honfleur looks best from the sea; but it seemed a quaint little town as we clattered into it soon after entering Calvados. Near the harbour where the hotels are, and close to which is the market, there is the constant bustle of steamers arriving and departing, and of ships taking in or else unloading their cargoes, the fisher-boats coming in with their glittering hauls and merry crews, and the traffic of the railway omnibuses to the station at the end of the harbour.

But next morning, when we went out to explore the town, we found that its apparent liveliness is deceptive, and only confined to the quays. The streets at first sight have little that is picturesque. The town was built at the time of the Conquest, and seems to have belonged frequently to the English till 1449. It suffered greatly during the wars of the League,

but it was a considerable port in the time of Louis XIV. Since then the rise of Le Havre has greatly injured its prosperity, and Honfleur has now the atmosphere of a town which has gone to sleep.

Its position between the sea—for the mouth of the Seine here is seven miles across—and the wooded hill against



The Market-place, Honfleur.

which it is built is very striking. It has pretty environs, and the sea view of it is most picturesque and charming—its busy little harbour surrounded by old buildings, in the centre the old tower of La Lieutenance, and beyond it the quaint spire of St. Catherine; this spire is very original and striking, separated from the church by a street,

but really a part of it. Close by is the little Place, where the fruit and vegetable sellers were holding their market. They seemed to give brightness and colour to the universal groups clustered round their wares, with this quaint belfry towering above them, and the town rising to the wooded heights behind.

But the great charm of Honfleur—a charm which should ensure it a visit from every traveller—is its Côte de Notre-Dame de la Grâce. Leading from the Place is a street which mounts steeply towards the heights; we followed this a little way, and then turned to the right into the Rue des Capucins; this led us to a path shaded by lofty trees, which goes on to the top of the steep *côte* on the side of which it is cut. Here is a large shop full of blue and white faïence, but it does not look very genuine; below on the right is the road to Trouville, and beyond this we look down on the opal-tinted mouth of the Seine, showing between the trees of the ever-mounting path. The trees are so large and lofty that the road is completely shaded, except where the sunshine finds its way here and there between them; but the river is in full light, and so are the numerous white villas which stand in their fruit-gardens on the bank below the Trouville road.

About ten minutes' farther climb—a very steep climb too—and we reach the top. It is a large open space surrounded by trees, except at the brow of the hill. In the midst of the space is a lofty Calvary; and at the foot of this a woman is kneeling, her black gown and white cap telling out clearly against the vast horizon of blue sky beyond. Behind the Calvary, half hidden among the large trees, is the chapel of Notre-Dame de la Grâce; but we leave the chapel for the

present, and go to the brow of the cliff. The view here is very grand and beautiful, certainly finer than the view from Ste. Adresse on the opposite side. In front is Havre : its town, its villa-covered cliffs, its vast harbour and forest of masts are all clearly visible without a glass ; and, by means of the old sailor's telescope on the parapet, one sees Cap de la Hève, and the cliffs which extend thence to Cap d'Antifer and the jagged crags of Etretat ; far away to the left is the boundless wide Atlantic ; and on the right the broad estuary of the Seine, with its lofty wooded *côtes* ; below is Honfleur, built in a kind of semicircle ; and with the telescope can be seen the opposite spire of Harfleur, and above this Château d'Orcher on its lofty cliff.

But no words can paint the water as we saw it on that bright September morning. There were a few light clouds near the sun ; and as these gave one another a kind of lazy chase over his broad light, the changes of tint from pale, quiet sea-green to luminous opal, and then again to vivid blue set in lines of burning gold, seemed to exhaust our power of admiration ; for on this broad expanse there was such infinite variety : here the water was a pale olive, then grey, and then, chameleon-like, it glowed all over with the soft ever-changing opal tint, in which blue, and rose, and green, and purple, and gold strove for mastery as they do on the skin of a newly caught mackerel.

The Côte de Notre-Dame de la Grâce of Honfleur is a place to linger on ; a pleasant spot for an early-morning pilgrimage ; and behind, among the trees, a little higher up than the chapel, there is a restaurateur, who provides a table and chairs for travellers who like to breakfast in the open air. Three Parisians, a gentleman and two ladies, were

enjoying their breakfast under the trees with the bottled cider for which this restaurant has a reputation; and *cidre mousseux* seems hardly to be got elsewhere in Normandy.

We went into the chapel, the object of so many pilgrimages. The original building is said to have been built by Duke Robert the Magnificent; but the present one is, so far as relates to architecture, quite insignificant, and was built in 1606. It is a small building, but it is nicely kept, and the walls are covered with votive pictures in oil—offerings from sailors who have escaped shipwreck. In one picture a ship is almost submerged; above is a dark, stormy sky,—all looks black and hopeless; but in the midst of the darkness appears Notre-Dame de la Grâce in a halo of light, with the Saviour in her arms: underneath is this inscription:—“Voué à Notre-Dame de la Grâce par Alexandre Berneval, et l'Equipage du Marquis de Bois Martin, le——” here follows the date. There are also models of ships, rosaries, and flowers, the usual offerings one sees in the shrines of pilgrimages. On the left of the choir is the image of Notre-Dame de la Grâce, richly dressed and ornamented; numerous lighted candles were burning round her, and she was almost smothered with offerings of wreaths of flowers and strings and chaplets of beads suspended from her hands and feet. Candles seem to be the universal offering of the very poor. We sometimes found fifty or sixty of these slender lines of tallow burning before a special altar. There is something touching in these votive offerings, and also in the intense devotion one sees in these out-of-the-way pilgrimage-chapels.

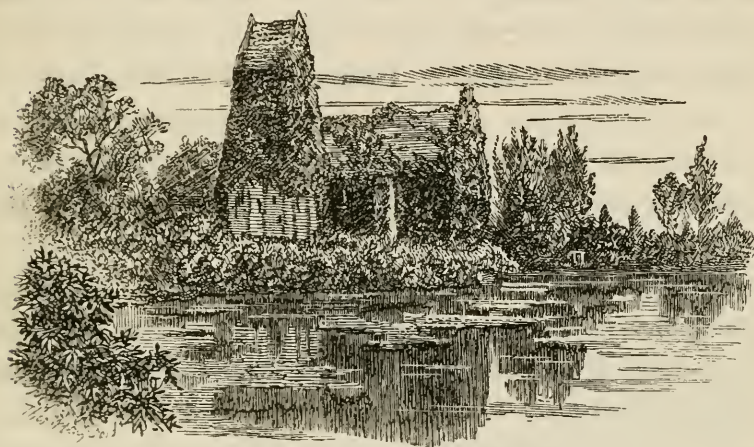
On the top of the hill, near the Calvary, is another large

shop for the sale of blue and white faïence and oriental china ; also for votive offerings, shell boxes, &c. The shop seems strangely out of place here, perched near the edge of the cliff, and isolated from other houses. A little way down the *côte*, on the way back to Honfleur, we saw a good brick house in the course of building. We learned that an old Parisian curé, who has saved some money, has purchased the site, and is building a house in this lovely situation, in which to end his days. Certainly he can never tire of looking at the view before him ; but, if he is really old, it is difficult to imagine that he will be able to make many visits to the town below, for the descent is even more fatiguing than the ascent, the street leading down into Honfleur is so very steep.

We looked with interest at the fruit-market, for Honfleur sends us our chief supply of apricots and other stone fruit ; and certainly the apricots were very good. Honfleur sends also enormous quantities of eggs to England. The most picturesque part of the town is around the port. The inner harbour was full of quaint fishing-boats ; and going through the fish-market, we stood to look at the weather-beaten old women selling salt fish and mussels ; some of them were picking the finest live shrimps and prawns from the grey, kicking heaps on their boards, and held them out to us with a shrill cry of "Crevettes, les belles crevettes." Above the tall houses we got glimpses of the surrounding green hills, and overhead was a deep blue sky, flecked with white clouds.

It is a very pleasant way of going to Trouville to take the diligence, which leaves Honfleur about one o'clock, and reaches Trouville at three o'clock. The first part of the road

circles round the Côte de la Grâce, and keeps the sea in full view. Some miles on we pass Criquebœuf—worth a halt on account of its ancient and curious church of the twelfth century. The church is covered with ivy, and is most picturesquely placed beside a gloomy-looking pond. Not very far off is the marsh of Criquebœuf, where some rare marine plants are to be found; but Criquebœuf is so



Ruined Church of Criquebœuf.

near Trouville that it is within a walk or short drive, and should not be left unvisited.

It is possible, too, to go to Trouville by train from Honfleur, although there are only three departures a day; but the best way of approaching Trouville is by sea.

We left Honfleur by the steamer, and reached Havre in plenty of time to go on by the Trouville boat; but, as we had business in the town, we stayed a few days, and took another look at the wonderful Bassin de l'Eure, and paid another visit to the charming churchyard at Graville. In the afternoon we went by steamer to Trouville in less than an

hour. The sea was so rough, and the boat so small, that it pitched in the most alarming manner; but the passengers seemed used to the violent swinging motion, and no one was ill, although most of the people on board were French.

Perhaps the passengers were kept from thinking of themselves by the constant interest of the prospect: it is very varied and charming. At first, one looks back at Havre and its haven. On the left is Honfleur, and beyond it is Villerville; and after a bit Deauville seems to stretch out in the midst of the sea before us. Trouville appears on the left, and between it and Deauville the mouth of the river Touques: on the right are Villers, Houlgate, and Cabourg.

Trouville looks very charming from the sea: cliffs rise behind the well-built, picturesque-looking houses, crowned and clothed with trees; and among these nestle delightful-looking villas, some Gothic, some Swiss, and some here and there of richly decorated Moorish architecture. Everything is dainty and luxurious, and of a most delightful freshness. There is no soil of time or poverty on young and beautiful Trouville; for she is very young for a town, only forty years old, and, like Etretat, she has sprung out of the sea at the fiat of artists, both painters and writers. Trouville was a mere fishing-village when M. Isbaey began to paint and Alexandre Dumas to describe her, and now she can lodge twenty thousand persons,—can lodge, we say; for the first breath of cold September weather acts like the striking of the clock on Cinderella's ball-dress. The beautiful ladies and their lovely children, the elaborate dresses, the music, the dancing, the flowers and lights of the Casino, all disappear;

and Trouville is left to its fishermen and grumbling shopkeepers, who try to persuade you that, if these Parisian ladies would only have patience to make the experiment, they would find Trouville an admirable winter residence!

The great building which seems to guard the entrance to Trouville is the Hôtel des Roches Noires. This is the chief hotel, and the resort of the most gaily dressed of the loungers; it is worth seeing. We go on past this; a bell rings loudly, and we glide by the crowds of idlers on the pier, and up the mouth of the Touques; and amid a mob of shouting *facteurs* we land.

The first impression of Trouville is very gay and charming; the pier covered with gaily dressed people: white parasols, lined with all colours, gleaming among costumes the tints of a humming-bird; then the long stretch of *plage*, with the gay bathing-establishment and Casino beyond; the innumerable little basket carriages with their light umbrella tops, with the drivers' Babel of sound, beseeching, urging, almost commanding, the newly landed arrivals to "Montez, montez, monsieur, madame," to be driven to hotels six yards off. There is not so much as a beggar to destroy the illusion. Truly Trouville would have seemed a paradise to that Eastern philosopher who wandered about in search of happiness; and the paradise would last—perhaps till he was called on to pay his hotel bill.

We walked about the town, which is soon seen, and then along the *plage*. The houses reach along the vast extent of sand as far as Les Roches Noires; and on the other side of the high road, which runs parallel with the sea, are pleasant villas perched here and there among the wooded crags; all is bright and elegant; the trees even have a

light feathery character; and yet there is little of the cockneyfied, hard, matter-of-fact modern look so vexatious in English watering-places.

When we came out again, we met groups of ladies, cloaked and hooded, with here and there a gentleman as escort, on their way from the houses and the different hotels to the Casino. Some of them were in voitures, but the greater number walked.

The ball-room is very grand; and the toilettes of the ladies are a study, though they are less remarkable than some that are to be seen earlier in the day.

We went down on the *plage* to see the bathing early next morning; it is quieter and more decorous than at Etretat, and the sand is much pleasanter than the terrible stones; but with these exceptions we give the preference to pleasant Etretat. There is a formality, a conventionality, a self-consciousness about the loungers on the *plage* at Trouville which takes away all sense of holiday freedom. To begin with, unless you subscribe to the Casino, you pay for sitting down. The children even are far less natural and unconscious than the children are at Etretat; but the ladies of Trouville must have the greatest amount of praise for industry. Such rolls of canvas, such borders in silk and velvet embroidery; slippers, smoking-caps and pouches, are to be seen in progress; and the ladies sit stitching, chatting in soft low tones, rarely looking off their work in this early-morning time, while their children play about; a *bonne* often sits near, knitting or sewing. The dress at this early hour, though simple, is carefully studied, and often very elegant. The ladies go in and breakfast, and re-appear in quite different costumes.

We went off after breakfast by omnibus to Touques, on our way to the Châteaux of Bonneville, Lassay, and the Priory of St. Arnoult. The road is shaded by an avenue of trees, which reaches the chief part of the way to Touques.

Touques is a long, picturesque, straggling village ; many of the houses are half-timbered, and almost all clothed with vines, on which there was an abundance of ripening fruit ; here and there are beans, tied in bunches, and taking varied colours as they hang under the eaves, drying rapidly in the sun. At one end of the town

is the parish-church ; at the other, an older-looking church, closed at present for restoration. Monsieur Joanne, in his excellent Guide, seems to have been dreaming about Touques ; for he says gravely, in describing the Church of St. Thomas, "It was at the foot of the altar of this church that St. Thomas of Cantorbéry was assassinated in the year 1171."

At the end of the village a path on the left leads to the remains of the Château de Bonneville. This was a favourite residence of Duke William, and is specially interesting to British travellers as being one of the places said to be the scene of Harold's oath. There are still the remains of the prison-tower, and also that of the Tour du Serment ; from the ruins there is a fine view of Trouville and Deauville. It is too far to walk from Bonneville across the Touques to Château



Beans drying under the Eaves.

Lassay, but it is a very pleasant drive. Both the château and the Priory of St. Arnoult below it are in ruins ; but the priory is so overgrown and festooned with climbing foliage that it is full of picturesque bits, and the view from the château above is worth climbing the hill to see.

It is wonderful how in almost every walk on the soil of Normandy one is taken back to English history, and one's heart is stirred by the remembrance that this fair and fertile province was at one time as much a part of England as one of its own counties. William Rufus embarked at Touques when he set out to claim his succession to England on his father's death ; and years after, when the province had been bequeathed to France by its cession to Philip Augustus, Henry V. landed at Touques on his way to Agincourt, and to the reconquest of the duchy of Normandy and the provinces of the Loire.

We were not attracted by Deauville : it seems a place of deserted mansions. The houses are far beyond the reach of ordinary sea-side visitors ; and since the death of the Duc de Morny, the great promoter of Deauville, a blight seems to have fallen on it.

There are several other watering-places worth seeing, and easily reached from Trouville. Villerville, on the right, is within a walk ; it was formerly only inhabited by fishermen, and visited by artists, but of late years it has begun to build villas, and has now a regular bathing establishment. On the way to Villerville is Hennequeville : there is a very extended view from the church.

Villers lies on the coast beyond Deauville : an omnibus runs there daily from Trouville. It is a pleasant place to spend the bathing season in. The country round is as

charming as at Trouville. the bathing excellent, the living far cheaper, and the life far more independent.

There was an old church here of the tenth and eleventh centuries ; but it has been rebuilt, partly with the old materials. There is also a remarkable château of the style Louis Treize, formerly the property of the eccentric Marquis de Brunoy, of the time of Louis XV.

Near Villers are the curious rocks called Les Vaches Noires, very picturesque from a little distance, formed of stones, shells, and petrifications which have taken the most quaint fantastic forms. Villers, Houlgate, Beuzeval, Dives, Cabourg, seem to lead one from the other, with very little separation between them. Houlgate and Beuzeval are so close that they are served by one station. Houlgate is the most fashionable ; Beuzeval is chiefly resorted to by French Protestants.

Between Houlgate and Villers there is a walk called the Desert, a valley of rocks ; the whole line of the dark crags called Les Vaches Noires is full of picturesque points of view.

These watering-places can be reached easily from Caen by those who do not wish to make a long stay at Trouville.

From Trouville to the Château d'Hebertôt there is a very pleasant drive by St. Gatien through the forest of Touques. The château belonged once to the family of the celebrated D'Aguesseau ; the oldest part is of the time of Louis XIII., but the chief part of the building is Louis XIV.

There are also excursions from Trouville to the Chaumière Normande by the road called the Corniche des Roches Noires, on the way to Villerville and Honfleur, and also to

the Château de Glatigny, a really interesting building, with a carved wooden façade of the sixteenth century.

Certainly there is no lack of amusement of every kind at Trouville ; and as soon as bathing and breakfast are over the little umbrella-covered carriages are seen driving about in all directions, bringing their freights home in time to make a fresh toilette for the pier before dinner. Certainly, also there cannot be much laziness at Trouville : these charming, exquisitely dressed loungers must get through very much work in a day, if only in the way of dressing in so many different costumes.

Trouville makes a bright, charming picture ; but, on the whole, we were glad to find ourselves at the station, waiting for the train to Lisieux.

The train was, of course, much behind time ; but the waiting was less weary than usual, we were so much amused in watching a group of fashionable Parisians who were leaving Trouville. As they walked up and down the dirty station, we wondered how such delicate robes and bonnets would bear the long, dusty journey ; they looked more as if they were going to a wedding, than as if they were starting for a journey home.

At Pont l'Evêque we joined the Honfleur line on its way to Paris. Pont l'Evêque does not look interesting ; but one has a regard for its cheeses, which, eaten new, are excellent. It would be well if Norman hotel-keepers would give up a perverse notion of keeping these cheeses till they are bitter and mouldy. This town takes its name from a bridge built by one of the first bishops of Lisieux over the Touques, which joins the Calonne at Pont l'Evêque. The country is fertile and well cultivated. All the way to Lisieux we passed

through a constant succession of orchards, the trees literally gemmed with the rich colours of apricots, plums, and apples; also we noticed frequent farmsteads and snug dwelling-houses surrounded with fruit and flower gardens. The vines covering the fronts of the houses seemed to be specially laden in Calvados with clusters of fast-ripening fruit.

Lisieux, the ancient Neomagus, was the chief city of the Lexovii: it is now a good-sized manufacturing town, very thriving and industrious. We had heard so much of its ancient houses, that as we drove into the town we looked eagerly for traces of them. We had travelled with a priest, evidently a dignitary, as he wore a canon's dress, and the omnibus went out of its way to put him and his trunks down at the *porte cochère* of a blank-looking house opposite the Church of St. Jacques. The church looked old and interesting; but the priest's boxes were a perfect study of antiquity, such a long, narrow hair-trunk, beaded with brass nails, could hardly have been made in this century; and when the little door in the middle of the dull green gate opened, there was an ancient courtyard, surrounded, so far as could be seen, by half-timbered buildings, and paved with green damp-looking stones, between which the grass grew freely.

In a minute or two there was a sound of rusty bolts, the big gates rolled back squeaking on their hinges, and in the midst of the dingy old courtyard appeared the housekeeper of Monsieur le Curé, laughing and crying alternately with delight at seeing him at home again. She was a little old woman, with hair nearly as white as her master's; and it was a pleasant coming-home scene to witness. The curé patted her shoulder, and helped her to drag the boxes over the sill of the door; and then he nodded at the little girl,

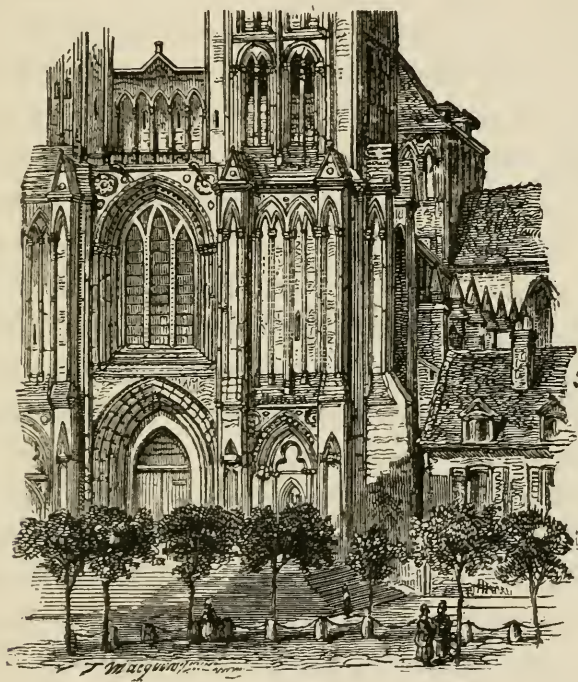
who stood behind the housekeeper ready to help, and disappeared into the house.

We did not see much of the town as we entered it, for our driver took us along the Boulevard to the Hôtel de France ; we were told the house was full,—we could only be lodged *au second*; but when we saw our rooms we rejoiced, for the view from the window was pleasant, and we overlooked the Cathedral. Lisieux is situated more like one of the Eure towns than like those of Calvados, at the bottom of a beautiful valley watered by the Touques and the Orbiquet. The boulevard is on the highest side of the town, and overlooks it.

Some remains of the ancient town have been discovered not far off: it was destroyed either in the fourth or fifth century, and rebuilt in the sixth. The Norsemen pillaged it in the ninth century. After the battle of Tinchebrai, Henry I. assembled the lords and bishops of Normandy at Lisieux, and in 1204 it fell into the hands of Philip Augustus. In 1562 the Calvinists took the town and plundered the Cathedral. Lisieux seems to have escaped the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and to have given itself up to Henri IV.

We went first to the Cathedral, or, as it is called since the diocese of Lisieux has become extinct, the parish-church of St. Pierre. It is a very imposing building, well placed at one corner of the very large market-place, which is surrounded on all of its four sides by a double row of trees; the Cathedral is approached by a broad and lofty flight of steps: one of the two western towers which front the square has been rebuilt; that on the south side is crowned with a spire; the northern tower is roofed with red tiles,—these contrast admirably with the exquisite colouring of the stone, a sort of tawny green.

The great west window is pointed, instead of the usual circular form. The west end of the choir and part of the transepts are the only parts remaining of the first church, in which Prince William, the son of Henry I., was married to the daughter of Fulk, Count of Anjou, and in which Henry II. married Eleanor of Guyenne, the divorced wife



Lisieux Cathedral.

of Louis VII. : the rest of the church was burned down in 1226. The style is very early thirteenth century—a sort of transition between Norman and Early English ; the chapels are of later work. But the whole interior is much disfigured by whitewash. The general effect of the architecture is good, though some of the mouldings are rather meagre : the choir is very elegant, but the absence of painted glass

throughout gives a cold look; the glass was doubtless destroyed by the Calvinists. In one of the chapels on the south of the nave is a modern silver altar, very well executed, and in another chapel on the north stands a very ancient tomb; above are two figures in niches, and five very quaint heads are sculptured on the tomb below.

The Lady chapel is specially interesting: it was founded in the fifteenth century by Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, as a fruit of his repentance for having helped in the condemnation of Jeánné d'Arc. The deed of endowment of this building records his repentance and self-condemnation.

We came out of the Cathedral and passed through an archway in the old building on our right, formerly the bishop's palace, now converted into the sous-préfecture, and containing a police tribunal and a prison. The archway led into a quiet courtyard, with grass growing between the stones, and surrounded by quaint red buildings with window-mouldings and parapets of stone. The palace was begun by Bishop Cospéan, 1637: the façade is of the Louis Treize period. At the opposite side from the archway is a very steep flight of stone steps, with little landing-places every now and then, where we could stop to take breath and admire the picturesque scene—the quaint red walls in the foreground, the sombre Cathedral and its brown-red roof towering above them, and through the broad archway the square with its rows of trees; nearer are the stone steps of the Cathedral, on which were seated two men in blouses, and a woman, in earnest talk. The court was in shadow, but through the archway the ground was yellow in the broad sunshine.

At Lisieux the blouses change colour; we say good-bye to

the light blue, washed-out, many-patched blouses of the Seine and the department of Eure : here they are of a very dark Oxford blue or dark grey, and the patches on them are scarcely noticeable. In Calvados and La Manche the original colour of the linen is much darker, allowing for the change effected by wear and tear ; this gives a more sombre hue to the markets, &c.

At the top of the steps we found a broad terrace stretching from end to end of the palace, and leading down by flights of steps into one of the finest public gardens in France.

In the centre is a large pond, with a fountain : round this are grass plots and charmingly grouped parterres of flowers and rare-leaved plants, the grass of Palmyra waving gracefully among the rest. On each side of the garden are lofty double avenues, children were playing in the pleasant shade or sitting on the benches beneath the trees, and beyond the garden itself is an extensive view over the lovely country round Lisieux. Altogether the public garden at Lisieux is very remarkable—so spacious, so well placed and planted, with such quaint and picturesque surroundings, and above all with so delightful a prospect over corn-fields and wooded valleys.

We crossed the large market-place, and went down the Grande Rue. Lisieux seems to be a thriving town, judging by its numerous manufactories and busy shops : there are five small and picturesque bridges over the branches of the rivers, which run in different directions through the town to work the mills ; two of these, the Pont Mortain and the Pont of the Rue aux Fèvres, are very old.

The Grande Rue has been very much modernised, but there are some old houses left ; one block at the corner of

the Rue de Caen is very remarkable. Very near this is a turning leading into the Rue aux Fèvres, certainly the most remarkable street in Lisieux ; it is very narrow, with wooden houses on each side, with such overhanging upper stories that there is only a strip of sky above, and that seems to



Rue aux Fèvres.

come in slices between the sharply peaked gables. The heavy oak beams that divide the stories of these houses are elaborately moulded, and are supported by carved brackets, in many instances of most grotesque design. Almost every house is a study ; but about half-way up the street we came upon, as it is called *par excellence*, the house of the Rue aux Fèvres ; its brackets are supported by wooden

figures about a quarter life-size, and in excellent preservation, though the house is more than four centuries old. All the way up to the top, between every window, the wood carving is most bold and original, and we heard that the beams of the rooms were also most curiously carved ; unfortunately this wonderful house was to let, and no one could tell us how to get an entrance.

But, besides the marvellous breadth of design and finish of detail, this street of Lisieux is perfect in artistic effect. Unfortunately its extreme narrowness makes it difficult to sketch the fronts of the houses ; but the depth of shadow which this narrowness creates doubles the brilliance of sunlight that breaks in at the lower end of the street, turning into a gem the scarlet geranium on a casement-sill on the right, and glowing like a carbuncle on a hoop of rusty iron hanging against one of the carved oaken posts of the open blacksmith's shop below. With all its antiquity, there is plenty of life in the street, plenty of dingy shops to which customers appear to go ; and ancient signs are hanging still from some of the house-fronts.

These houses must have been very splendid ; every detail is so finished, and the proportions are so good and massive. Doubtless, nobles and rich knights and gentlemen lived here in the days of Louis XI. and Charles VIII., before the troublous wars of the League and the Fronde came to disturb the peace of Normandy. The men of Lisieux are mentioned as fighting for William the Bastard in the battle of Val-ès-Dunes.

From the Rue aux Fèvres we went on into the Rue de la Paix : a great contrast. It is truly a peaceful street, grass-grown, and looked into chiefly by the sides and backs of houses. One of these, partly wooden, partly whitewashed, had a vine clustering over its front. From the casement opening in the midst of the clinging vine-leaves a pole projected, and from this hung blue and white shirts drying in the sunshine.

The street goes down hill to the Church of St. Jacques, which seems to close up the end of it, except that a broad

band of golden light, just in front of the south portal, tells that a street crosses the end of the Rue de la Paix, and comes between it and the church. A curious wooden house, the lower part in brick, rises to some height at this end of the street, and so does the wall opposite ; so that for some way up, nearly reaching to where we stood, the end of our street was in shadow. A veiled Sister, with a huge bunch of keys jingling in her hand, passed us, and, stepping quickly through the shadow, crossed the broad band of light at the foot of the church-steps, and then in a moment she mounted these, and her black robe was lost in the inky darkness of the half-open door of St. Jacques.

We followed slowly into the church. It is a large uninteresting building, with some very rich sixteenth-century windows ; the bosses of the nave are curiously decorated, and on the walls are some lately discovered paintings in distemper. In the Chapel of St. Ursin is a quaint old picture, representing how the relics of St. Ursin were brought miraculously into this town in the year 1055.

We found a large but very dismal *table d'hôte* at our hotel, there being two parties of English travellers besides our selves, each too reserved to speak to the other. Some French people staying in Lisieux were enjoying themselves very pleasantly, telling each other their adventures, each gaining information from the others about the town and the places worth seeing in the neighbourhood. The contrast was very striking.

It was a relief to miss the faces of the *commis-voyageurs* we had seen so often in the Department of Eure, they are very objectionable ; although certainly one of these persons—a rare exception—we found very courteous and intelligent

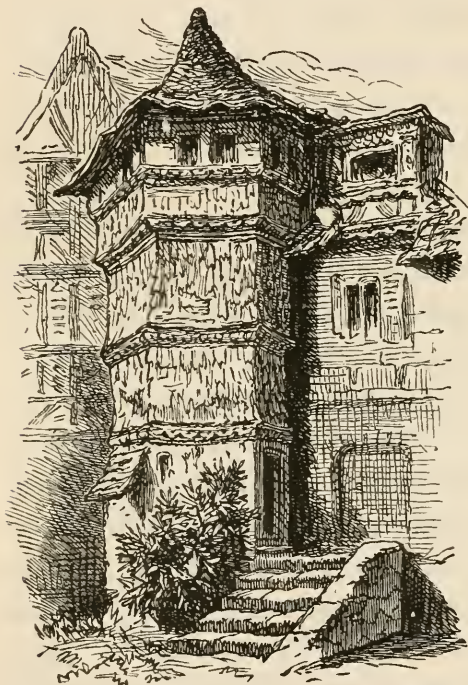
at Les Andelys. He gave us much useful information about the country we were passing through.

Next morning there was market in the Grande Place, and pouring rain; there is plenty of rain always in Normandy, and this rain has a most decided character of its own. We took refuge in the Cathedral porch. From here the market-place was a sea of umbrellas of every hue—blue, green, brown, black, crimson, pale blue; some of them almost wrenched out of the owners' hands by the gusty wind that came sweeping down from the Boulevard, but all of much too sturdy make to run a chance of being turned inside out. Business went on just as well under the umbrellas as without them. We got used to the rain, and went down into the muddy, sloppy Place. One remembers that the sellers mostly wear wooden shoes, or one would lose time in wondering why they do not all get rheumatic fever, standing from early morning till four o'clock in such a depth of mud and water; seemingly they take no heed. The whole scene is wonderfully full of life and colour. Long rows of booths reach from end to end, and side to side, parallel with the trees; and in the centre of the great square are hills of melons and gourds, and a tempting array of vegetables and fruit placed on straw. There was plenty of noise and chatter, and the women had a smile for every one; they wore chiefly blue, black, and grey gowns, with black or white jackets, and the *bonnet de coton*, with its tassel on one side, was much more general here than it was at Bernay; but the quiet tone of colour contrasted well with the glowing tints of the fruit and vegetables, and harmonized admirably with the quaint and sombre buildings around. The bustling, merry crowd made a wonderful picture

through the palace archway, from the steps we mounted yesterday.

St. Thomas à Becket spent the chief part of his exile at Lisieux, and probably resided in the palace. In the chapel of the Hospice, opposite the top of the Grande Rue, are shown, it is said, the vestments he ministered in while at Lisieux.

In the Rue des Boucheries we saw some curious old houses ; and these old houses are to be found more or less in all the streets of the old part of Lisieux.



Staircase Tower at Orbec.

A week may easily be spent in this town, and there is plenty to see for those who care to examine these houses in detail.

The walks and drives round Lisieux are delightful. We came upon a charming bit close at hand, at the bottom of the Grande Rue—a little bridge over the river shaded

by weeping willows. There are several châteaux in the neighbourhood worth visiting : Marolles, which has also a good Romanesque church ; the Château de Mailloc, a quaint house of the seventeenth century, now a farm, called Les Pavements, and several others.

Orbec, about thirteen miles from Lisieux, is very interesting: an omnibus runs three times a day to Orbec and back. The *beffroi* of the Hôtel Dieu, which seems to be crumbling into decay, is covered with *essentes*, a sort of wooden tiling like fish-scales, resembling the red-tiled fronts of our old English cottages and manor-houses. These *essentes* are becoming very rare. We saw much more of this kind of work at Vire than elsewhere in Calvados. Besides this tower, there are a few very curious old houses at Orbec.

Except for the mere student of church architecture, Lisieux is, in itself, by far the most interesting town in Calvados; it does not gain its interest only from historical associations, it is so full of quaint, rich, picturesque bits—exquisite contrasts of grey bridges with glistening water, old wood full of all the hues which time has left on it—with brilliant effects of golden light and grey-green shadow; there is so little of modern innovation in Lisieux, and there is so much colour in the old oak-fronted houses. It would be easy to fill pages with descriptions of the marvellously carved creatures on the corbels of these house-fronts—pigs blowing whistles and bagpipes, dragons with huge serpents' tails, and men and women in quaint fifteenth-century costumes and head-dresses.



Bracket, Rue aux Fèvres.

We were glad to find that the inhabitants of Rue aux Fèvres, and indeed most of the townspeople we spoke to,

seemed to be fully impressed with the exceeding preciousness and rarity of the bits of antiquity among which they live ; so one hopes that the carved wooden house-fronts of Lisieux have a longer lease of existence than the fast-disappearing old houses of Rouen. And yet, wandering along the valley of the Orbiquet, and noticing the whirring wheels and tall chimneys of its manufactories, it grows hard to hope this. It seems as if successful trade everywhere sets its heel on the past, on every remnant of a feudal age, and erects instead its square, dull, brick, flat-topped houses, or, worse than these, its stuccoed villas with their attempts at taste.

If the Normans of old spent hundreds on the carved woodwork of their beautiful dwellings, they spent thousands on the sculptured stonework of churches and cathedrals ; so that as one journeys through the province, one makes a constant pilgrimage from one famous shrine to another. A special amount of interest awakens as soon as we really begin to journey through this province of Calvados.

William the Conqueror had a castle at Lillebonne ; he even held councils there ; he received his death-wound at Mantes, and he died at Rouen ; he often visited Fécamp and Jumièges ; but the real story of his life does not seem to begin till we enter Calvados, and then we are constantly turning fresh chapters of exciting history as we visit Falaise and Caen and Bayeux.

We started so early for Caen that we were surprised to see the town of Lisieux so much astir ; it seemed like a dream to get in the grey morning light that vision of bright bronzed faces and white caps and blouses, backed up by the grey-green of the Cathedral and the dark carved house-fronts of Lisieux.

On the way to Caen we pass Val-Richer—the country-house of Monsieur Guizot. There was formerly an abbey here, founded in the middle of the twelfth century ; but the ruins which remain are of much later date. The country here seems as fertile as between Trouville and Lisieux, and the vines remarkably abundant, covering the roofs as well as the walls of the houses, and trained across the windows on small arches, from which rich purpling fruit hangs in tempting clusters. There are no waste patches of common, no bare stretches of ploughed brown earth ; all is green and fruitful.

We cross some small rivers, and pass St. Crespin on the right. Not far off is the Château de Grand Champ, very curious and remarkable, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The next station is Mesnil Manger ; and not more than three miles from here is the Château de Crèvecœur, of the fifteenth century.

We come next to Mézidon, a manufacturing town ; it is easy, and perhaps better, to branch off here to Falaise, instead of going on to Caen, that is, if the weather is fine ; for Falaise is not to be attempted in wet weather, one of its great charms being the walks in the valley of the Ante. As we approach Caen the face of the country changes—spaces of uncultivated stony land appear between the orchards, the trees become stunted, the gentle ups and downs of the landscape level themselves into flat, unvaried, stone-covered fields, with an occasional fringe of tall, slender poplars.

We pass near Vimont, where there is a column to commemorate the famous victory of William at Val-ès-Dunes, in

1047 ; and presently we come out of a cutting, on to a flat plain, and we see, beyond poplar-fringed fields, in the distance the spires and towers of a large city.

We have been to Caen already, and we recognise the graceful *flèche* of St. Pierre, the spires of the Abbaye aux Hommes, with their surrounding *tourelles*, and the massive towers of the loftily placed Abbaye aux Dames. We see, too, the masts rising above the houses : they are only those of the small craft and barges which come up the Orne ; but they suggest that we are nearer the sea than is really the case, for it is ten miles away.

The entrance into Caen is not good. The railway ends in the suburb of Vaucelles, on the south of the town, and it is a long drive along the quay from thence to the Rue St. Jean.

CALVADOS.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAEN.



CÆSAR makes no mention of Caen, and the first Norman charter in which the name of the city occurs is in one of Duke Richard II., in the year 1015; it is there called Cadon. It is called in the old chronicles Cathim, Cadun or Cadam, Cathom, Cahom, and Cahem. Wace, writing in the twelfth century, calls it indifferently Cahem, Chaem,

Caem, Caam, and Caan. Some writers say the name is derived from Cate-heim—house of the gate.

The chronicle of Guillaume le Tallens of Rouen speaks of Caen about the year 945—the epoch of the conflict between King Louis and the young Duke Richard the Fearless. Caen is supposed to be one of the cities founded by the Saxon Otlings, who invaded Neustria between the third and seventh centuries. The Otlings are said to have em-

braced Christianity in the middle of the seventh century, and to have had for their apostle St. Regnobert, who seems to have founded the four churches of St. Sauveur, Notre-Dame, St. Pierre, and St. Jean, in the city of Caen. William the Conqueror built the castle to overawe his mutinous vassals in the Bessin, and also to maintain a free passage for vessels along the river Orne.

Robert Courthose caused the first canal to be made—connecting the Orne with the Odon. The Orne waters the south-east and south side of the city, and the Odon that of the west. A new canal now runs parallel with the Orne to the sea, as the river was found too narrow and difficult for navigation: the great basin of the harbour is fed both by the river and the canal.

The old city only contained the parish of St. Sauveur, and part of the parishes of Notre-Dame, St. Pierre, St. Etienne, St. Martin, and St. Julien. It was a walled city with eight gates, which still existed in 1346. The Porte St. Etienne was not destroyed till 1758. Robert Courthose added to this enclosure the island of St. John; and Henry Beauclerc surrounded the château with walls in 1123, and built the donjon. But Caen was so badly fortified, according to French writers, that it yielded at the first attack of Edward III. in 1346.

Froissart says—“The English then advanced towards Caen (from St. Lô), which is a much larger town, stronger, and fuller of draperies and all other sorts of merchandise, rich citizens, noble dames and damsels, and fine churches. In particular, there are two very rich monasteries—one dedicated to St. Stephen, and the other to the Trinity. The castle is situated on one side of the town: it is the

handsomest in all Normandy, and Sir Robert de Blargny was governor, with a garrison of three hundred Genoese.

“The king took up his quarters for that night in the fields, two short leagues from Caen, near a town called Estreham,* where there is a haven.”

According to Froissart, it was not only the weakness of the fortifications, but the cowardice of the townsmen, which made the conquest of Caen easy. The Earl of Tancarville was taken prisoner in this battle.

At first Edward intended to destroy the town; but he yielded to the entreaties of Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, and marched on to Rouen.

As soon as he had departed, the authorities of Caen got permission from the king, Philip de Valois, to strengthen the defences of their town. Spite of these precautions, in 1417 Henry V. took the city after two assaults, and entered by the ancient *Porte des Jacobins*, near the *Pont St. Jacques*. The English kept possession of Caen for thirty-three years; but after the battle of Formigny, in 1450, it capitulated to Charles VII., after a long siege.

Huet, the learned Bishop of Avranches, who was born at Caen, 1603, speaks of twenty towers on the fortified walls of the city. The tower of *Guillaume le Roy* was much more ancient than the rest, and was ruthlessly pulled down only a few years ago. Some remains of the old walls and towers may still be traced, but they have nearly all disappeared.

We were much struck with the cleanness of the streets

* Ouistreham, at the mouth of the Orne; but it is much more than two leagues from Caen. Near Ouistreham are the remains of a Roman camp.

and the wide pavements ; but even in these few last years Caen has been modernised. In its best streets it has more the handsome, common-place, well-to-do aspect of an English town than the grace and picturesqueness of a French one. But the market-place on the Place St. Pierre is very picturesque, with its groups of flowers and richly laden fruit-stalls and their keepers. Some of the surrounding houses are also very quaint, with multiform gables. On the Place itself, just before reaching the church, is the Hôtel de la Bourse, formerly the Hôtel de Valois or d'Ecoville, built in 1538. The sculptured stone gables in the courtyard are remarkable, and so is the sculptured tower and staircase ; and it is all in good preservation.

But the gem of the whole Place is its centre, the beautiful Church of St. Pierre. Carved flying buttresses unite the aisles to the nave, and produce a graceful effect ; but the central tower and spire kept us standing before it in an ecstasy of admiration. The tower is so exquisitely proportioned, lighted on each side by four deeply recessed lancet openings, enriched with tooth-ornament ; from its summit springs an octagonal stone spire, 242 feet high, built in 1308, and surrounded by four *tourelles* ; it is pierced with open trefoils. The effect, for lightness, elegance, and richness, is indescribable ; and, from whatever point one sees it, it seems to give interest and importance to the view.

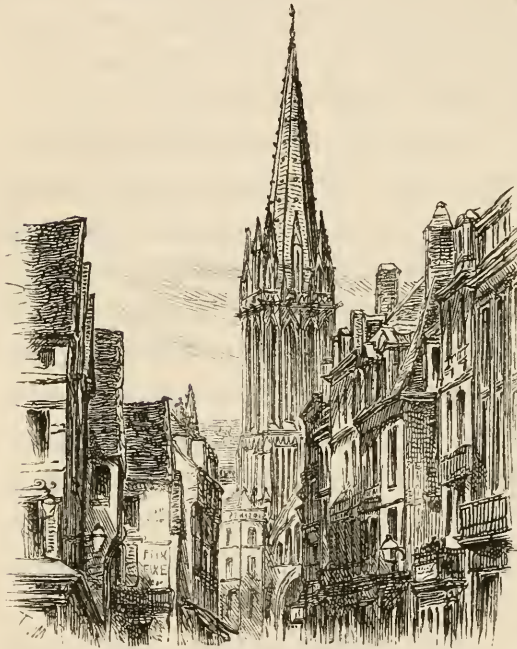
This *flèche* of St. Pierre is considered one of the most perfect and exquisite of the fourteenth-century spires of Normandy. The original church was founded in the early ages, by St. Regnobert ; but this tower, with its marvellous spire, was built in 1308 under the auspices of the treasurer, Nicolle Langlois. Unhappily the name of the architect is unknown. A tradi-

tion exists that there was once an inscription on the spire ascribing it to Huet, a master mason, as architects were called in those simple days; and the tradition goes on to assert that this Huet was an ancestor of the learned bishop, of whom we are reminded at Avranches by the Place Huet. The spire is an impersonation of pure and fervent religion, as it springs heavenward without any support except the walls of the tower, pierced by its long narrow lancets, the *flèche* itself perforated with the trefoil—emblem of the Holy Trinity. This spire is open to the cross which surmounts it, and yet the stones of which it is built are only four inches thick. The outside of the apse is picturesque; but both the portals have suffered from mutilation and consequent restoration. The interior disappointed us greatly; we found the decadence of Gothic art in the vaulting of the roof, said to be the masterpiece of Hector Sohier, architect of Caen in 1521; “pyramids turned upside down” in the shape of pendants, like overgrown stalactites, depending from the roof of the Lady chapel; but they are by some travellers considered triumphs of the art of the Renaissance epoch; Miss Costello and Mr. Musgrave are eloquent in their praise.

There are some curious capitals on the pillars in the nave, on subjects from the old romances—Tristram, Lancelot du Lac, &c.; also Aristotle on all-fours, ridden by his mistress.

The service at St. Pierre is reverent, and the singing is very good. We saw an old woman in a curious high-peaked cap, embroidered in silver; and we heard that she was a country farmer’s wife, who had come into Caen to assist at a baptism. The real Caennois cap—a

close skull-cap, with a stiff cockscomb of lace just above the eyebrows—was plentiful throughout the city ten years ago, but it is much scarcer now. There were some specimens in church; but the smart modern muslin cap, with embroidered crown and full-quilled border and profuse ribbon trimming, is universal on Sundays and fête days. The



St. Pierre.

younger women wear these sometimes without a crown, after the fashion of the bonnets of a short while ago. The illustration at the beginning of the chapter is from a drawing by Stothard, and gives the Caennois costume of fifty years ago—more quaint than beautiful.

We went into the Rue Notre-Dame, and stopped a little way down it to turn and look at St. Pierre, framed by the gables of some of the few old houses left in the street, and we were obliged to own that there is still something picturesque left in one of the chief streets of Caen. This street of Notre-Dame changes its name at intervals, and, just before it becomes the Rue St. Etienne, is the Church of Notre-Dame, now called

St. Sauveur. The apse, which comes quite into the street, is very rich and picturesque.

This is one of the four churches founded by St. Regnobert. The church has evidently been built at different periods. The carved wooden panels on the great door are in good preservation, and well executed. There are two naves, opening one into the other by a broad arch, with double altars in the middle of the two aisles. These naves are connected at the choir by an immense arch ; the roof is in wood. There is some valuable old painted glass, but it has been much damaged by restoration. In Caen the restoring process has been equally liberal and ignorant ; everywhere one sees the hand of well-intentioned but irremediable destructiveness. A curious fresco has been discovered on the wall of one of the side chapels, but it has evidently been injured. The double flight of stone steps leading up to the organ gives a curious feature to the interior of this church.

We came out, and went along the Rue St. Etienne till we reached the Abbaye aux Hommes.

Caen seems to have been the favourite dwelling-place of William the Conqueror ; and when the Pope commanded him and his wife Matilda to build each a house to the glory of God, to atone for the irregularity of their marriage, they chose the city of Caen for these magnificent foundations. The monks of the Abbaye aux Hommes were to be chosen from noble houses, and preference was given to those who had borne arms.

The Church of St. Etienne seems to have been begun in 1064. Its west front, nave, and towers were completed by 1077 ; and the building was solemnly consecrated in the

presence of William, his queen, and his court. A community of monks must have been established here before the buildings of the abbey were nearly completed, for William summoned Lanfranc from the Abbey of Bec, of which he was then prior, to be the first abbot of the new monastery in 1066 ; but Lanfranc's rule was short. Within four years he was summoned to a wider sphere of life ; William sent for him to England, and made him Archbishop of Canterbury.

The west front of St. Etienne is cold and severe, but the towers are very fine. These, with the nave, belong to the first part of the building. The spires above them are of later date, and the choir later still. There was once a spire on the central tower, but it was much injured by Henry V., who placed his cannon on the tower when he besieged the town, and it was finally destroyed by the Calvinists in 1562. It must have been very beautiful. The nave is most impressive, so simple and severe, yet so spacious and lofty in its proportions. One feels in the presence of a work of consummate genius, and one feels too instinctively that this noble building is a fitting tomb for the conqueror of England. The pillars and arches of the nave are of massive strength. The arches of the triforium are as wide as those below, and two-thirds their height. The clerestory windows are alternately short and tall, as the points of their arched heads meet the curves of the vaulted roof. The choir is of later style—probably thirteenth century ; and here, under a grey marble slab, was once the body of William the Conqueror. There is on the marble a simple Latin inscription to the “truly invincible William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, and King of England.” It seems enough. The

church itself is the mighty monarch's best monument ; any other would be superfluous. His first burial-place was, according to Orderic, between the choir and the altar, probably beneath the central tower, for no part of the present choir belongs to William's foundation ; his church of St. Etienne ended in a simple apse.

William Rufus and Henry, his two sons, erected a costly monument, enriched with gold and jewels, with their father's effigy thereon ; but this was destroyed by the Calvinists in search of hidden treasures, and William's remains were scattered among the ruins. A thigh-bone was discovered, eight inches beyond the usual length, and after a long and laborious search, conducted by Jean de Baillehache, the rest of the skeleton was found and put together, and reinterred in 1642, with due funereal ceremony, under a simple monument in the place now occupied by the inscription. But at the outbreak of the Revolution the monument was destroyed, and a few years later the grave was again rifled.

Standing here beside the grave, we thought of William's funeral and its strange and awful interruption. His son Henry was chief mourner, as William had commanded William Rufus to hasten to England and claim the crown directly he should have expired. The Conqueror's turbulent brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, was also present ; also Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, and the two Gisleoerts, the Doctor-Bishop of Lisieux, and the saintly Bishop of Evreux. There stood also beside the grave the king's cousin Nicholas, Abbot of St. Ouen, Mainer of St. Evroul, and many abbots besides. Greatest and holiest of all was Anselm, Abbot of Bec, at length recovered from the ill-

ness which had kept him from William's death-bed. The interruption to the interment came in answer to the eloquent sermon of the Bishop of Evreux, while the body still lay uncoffined on the bier before the high altar; and there in the church, the chief mourner, Henry, paid down sixty shillings as payment to the knight Ascelin for his father's grave. The belief that William's body was deserted seems to be ignored by some of the early Norman chroniclers, although they relate the panic caused by his death, and the retirement of his barons to their estates in order to prevent the chances of insurrection or of an invasion by the King of France. In the sacristy, which is interesting in itself, is a likeness of William the Conqueror; but we greatly prefer the statue at Falaise. William bequeathed to the Church of St. Etienne his body, his sceptre, the crown he wore upon extraordinary occasions, his hand of justice, a cup made of precious stones, and his golden candlesticks. He also purchased for the monastery the skull of St. Stephen and several other relics of the protomartyr.

The interior of St. Etienne presented a splendid sight when we first saw it some years ago, in the days of the Empire, on the Fête Napoléon, the 15th of August. This was the only day in the year on which ladies were admitted with gentlemen to the triforium, and, by going early, we got excellent places near the altar. The *grande messe* came first, and was crowded with worshippers; and when the service was over—even before the chairs could be cleared away by the panting officials—an immense crowd of men, women, and children straggled into church. The triforium gallery was soon filled throughout its extent, and the chairs left in a line in the aisles and nave were also

filled by those who did not choose to pay so much for their places. There was only a short pause, and then a file of gendarmes came in through the western doorway, the sunlight glittering on their scabbards and belts. They advanced up the nave, and formed a line on each side of the space left by the removal of the chairs. Next came a group of gentlemen, escorted by the soldiers of the 75th regiment, which was then quartered at Caen. Then came the band of the regiment, with its drum and trumpets, playing a military march, and then the préfet, the general, the mayor, and other high officials walked up the nave, and took the chairs placed for them on the steps covered with scarlet cloth in front of the altar. A crowd of officers in glittering uniforms, and of town-councillors in their long gowns, some blue, some scarlet, and some orange, followed, and filled up the space between these dignitaries.

As soon as these had taken their places, a line of priests came gliding from the sacristy, splendidly robed in crimson velvet richly embroidered in gold, with acolytes in white, swinging magnificent censers. The band played louder and louder, as if it was trying to drown the swell of the organ, which now pealed through the aisles and galleries, till all were in their places. The soldiers fell into rank along the nave, in front of the gendarmes, leaving only a narrow passage between the steps of the altar and the great western doorway, up and down which paced the two officers on duty, the drawn swords on their shoulders glittering in the broad ribbon of sunlight which stretched down from the eastern end of the clerestory to the pavement at the western entrance, marking the vast height of the church, and bringing into sudden clear relief, as it glanced across the pillars

in the nave, the sharp crispness of the Norman capitals. Beyond this again, through the open doors, was a patch of intense sunlight, quivering with the sparkle and colour of the ever-swaying restless crowd outside, the glittering epaulettes and bayonets mingling with the gay holiday dresses of the women and children. And yet, although the eagerness to see what was going on inside was intense, there was perfect order in the crowd and in the congregation within. The organ rolled out its splendid music, the drums beat, the trumpets brayed, while the priests went on chanting the service, and the acolytes clattered the censers. A stranger sound in a church to our English ears than even the drums and trumpets was the word of command given by the officer on duty, in sharp ringing tones, which seemed to rebound from each column till they reached the last soldier in the nave.

The grand old building is quite suited to a military festival. One seems able to picture William and his fierce, turbulent barons keeping Easter there, and such prelates as his half-brother, Odo of Bayeux, and Geoffrey of Coutances, among the priests.

But the Abbaye aux Hommes soon grew to have a great reputation for learning. It was a chief means of restoring the love of learning and study throughout France, and especially the revival of the study of the Latin tongue in the province of Normandy.

Since 1800, the buildings of the monastery are occupied by a *lycée*, or public school. Boys get a fair education here at a very cheap rate. Close by are the Gothic remains of a building, now used as a normal school, said to be on the site of the old Norman palace, Le Grand

Palais, which William the Conqueror built within the monastery.

Part of the ancient hall, Salle des Gardes, still remains. This was in singularly good preservation till 1802, when it was barbarously demolished by the prefect, Monsieur Cafarelli. The education of the people is much more cared for in the French provinces than it is in England. The Frères Chrétiens, who now conduct the free schools in every town in France, are a very superior body of men to our national schoolmasters ; they are higher toned and better taught, and their teaching has an entirely religious foundation. These Frères are not necessarily priests, but laymen, who entirely devote their lives to the religious education of the young ; and we found, in talking to the boys, how very accurately they are taught. The girls, too, who go to the convent day-schools, are most carefully and admirably instructed. Talking to a child of twelve years old, the daughter of a farmer at Bolbec, we were surprised to learn that she gave up eight hours every day to education, and that this time was nearly all spent in learning lessons in geography, history, grammar, in reading, writing, and arithmetic, very little time being reserved for needle-work, none at all for music or any accomplishment.

Caen is one of the chief university towns in France. The University, founded by our King Henry VI. in 1431, is in the Rue de la Chaîne. There were several colleges here till the time of the Revolution ; and we saw plenty of youths, brass-buttoned up to the throat, who had come to Caen from other provincial schools to take their degree in one of the faculties.

There is also an Academy of the Arts and Belles-Lettres.

There is an excellent public library at the Hôtel de Ville, to which the public are admitted every day, from ten till four o'clock, except during the month of September. The first libraries were those of the Abbaye aux Hommes, the Church of St. Sépulcre, and that of the University; and some of the manuscripts having been carried off from the University about 1480, a bull of excommunication was fulminated against the perpetrator of the robbery, the said bull being fixed up in the public parts of the town.

In 1515 the library only contained 278 volumes; it now has upwards of 40,000. Among these are three volumes from the library of Diane de Poitiers, in excellent preservation.

From St. Etienne we went to the Abbaye aux Dames, at the other end of the town. This was founded by Matilda, according to the Abbé De la Rue, in 1066, a few months before William embarked for England; but Bishop Huet thinks the foundation earlier. Cicely, eldest daughter of William and Matilda, was then a child; but she was solemnly dedicated by her parents to God's service, and she was afterwards abbess of the convent. When, in after-years, Robert Courthose came back from the Holy Land, he presented the Saracen standard to his sister as abbess of the Abbaye aux Dames. This abbey was richly endowed by all the Norman kings; but nothing remains of the original building, except the Church of the Holy Trinity.

This is one of the most interesting of the great churches in Normandy. It is a perfect contrast to St. Etienne, and in style very inferior; but yet there is a harmony between the two buildings. There is a strange interest in considering how this noble pair, an example to their own age and to all ages.

of conjugal fidelity, must have planned out and then watched the progress of these two monuments, destined, one may hope, to last as long as the world itself. The date of their foundation attests the religious faith of the Conqueror. William and Matilda had been enjoined by the Pope to build two houses for God, as an atonement for the irregularity of their marriage; and as soon as the conquest of England was resolved on, Matilda seems to have hastened the building of her abbey, that it might be consecrated before her husband set forth on his enterprise.

Mr. Freeman says—

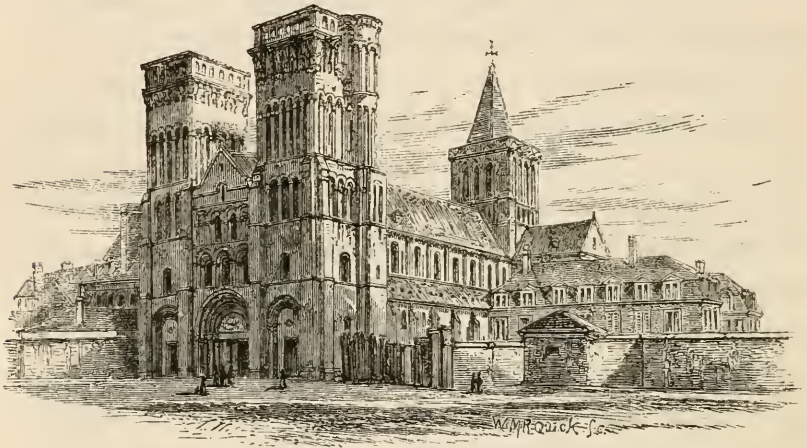
“The champions of the Church must, as far as might be, wipe out all memory of their former sin. William must set out on his holy enterprise with perfectly clean hands; and Matilda must be able to lift up hands no less clean, as she prayed for his safety and victory before the altars which she had reared.

“Indeed, even without this overwhelming motive, the eve of so great and hazardous an undertaking was a moment which specially called for works of devotion of every kind; and we have seen that it was so felt by others in Normandy, besides the Duke and Duchess. At this time, therefore, besides the organization of William’s foundation, under its first and greatest abbot, the material fabric of Matilda’s foundation was so eagerly pressed on, that the unfinished Minster was hallowed three days after the appointment of the two abbots.* As part of that great ceremony, the ducal pair offered on the altar of God an offering more costly than lands or buildings or jewelled ornaments. In

* Lanfranc of St. Etienne and Mainer of St. Evroul.

a milder sense than that in which the words were used by the ancient prophet, they gave their first-born for their transgression, the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls.

“The Duke’s eldest daughter, Cicely, now a child, but in after-days to become a renowned abbess of her mother’s foundation, was dedicated by her parents as a virgin set



The Abbaye aux Dames.

apart for God’s service. It was not, however, till nine years later that her lips pronounced the irrevocable vows.”*

The Abbaye aux Dames is built on an open space of high ground, east of the Church of St. Pierre, in a direct line with the Abbaye aux Hommes ; so that when Caen is approached from the sea, the two abbeys appear in massive grandeur, one on the right and one on the left of the town. The Church of the Holy Trinity forms a Latin cross ; it has

* “History of the Norman Conquest,” vol. iii. p. 383.

three square towers, and its west front is very remarkable : except the top of the towers, which have been restored, the church is a very pure specimen of Romanesque architecture.

We went in, and found ourselves just in time for vespers. The singing was very sweet and musical, and the church was quite full. Inside, it is much smaller and more ornate than St. Etienne : instead of a triforium, there is a very low and richly ornamented arcade above the circular arches of the nave.

The choir is shallow, and only separated by the altar from the Lady chapel. The sermon was so very long that we came out before the end, as we were too far off to hear it distinctly, and we went on to the Hôtel Dieu. This is a hospital, which existed formerly in another part of the town, but is now established in the conventual buildings of the Abbaye aux Dames. These stand just within a park to which the public are admitted.

The porter at the outside lodge told us where to go, and we found ourselves speaking through a window to a most sweet-faced nun, in the picturesque dress of the Augustines—white flannel and calico, with a black hood and black stockings—a great bunch of keys at her girdle.

“Certainly monsieur and madame can see the Hôtel Dieu ; but, as it is Sunday, some of the girls are out walking, and the Sisters are engaged ; but if monsieur and madame will give themselves the trouble to sit down, some one will be here directly.”

We sat down, and she went on writing at her desk. She had the happy, simple face one almost always sees in Sisters, but she was less chatty than some foreign nuns are. There was something indescribably interesting about her.

Very soon a lay Sister appeared. She was dressed simply in black, and she asked us what we wished to see. We said the chapel; and she took us across a hall in which is a handsome staircase. Two columns support the lofty roof of this hall. They are of considerable height, and are exquisitely worked from a single block of stone brought from the quarries of Allemande, not far from Caen.

From this we went into the chapel of the Sisters. Here we found ourselves in the Lady chapel of La Sainte Trinité; the chanting had begun again, and as the only barriers between the church and the chapel are the high altar and a low screen on each side of it, we did not like to move about to examine the chapel.

Our guide came up and whispered—

“Do not be disturbed: our office is over; it is quite distinct. *That* is only the parish-church, and there is some parish festival to-day, which makes the service tiresomely long”

More than half the chapel is railed off, and a curtain hangs behind the grated screen. Our guide went up to this, and drew aside a bit of the curtain that we might see the tomb of Queen Matilda. It is only a plain sarcophagus, having on the top a portion of the gravestone broken to pieces at the Revolution.

The chapel was full of nuns, kneeling in meditation. The effect was most striking: the exquisite architecture around; the nuns, with black flowing veils and white dresses, knelt motionless as statues, their heads bent in prayer; and from the other side the sweet, full-toned music swelled through the tall pillars and clung round the arches.

The altar in this chapel is placed at the back of the high

altar, so that the nuns faced towards us as we looked. It was more like a picture than reality—a picture of peace and rest in the midst of an active toiling life, for the forty Augustine Sisters who now inhabit these buildings are most devoted nurses to the Hospital of Hôtel Dieu. The original foundation of the Abbaye aux Dames was for ladies only of the highest nobility of France, but this was entirely dispersed and broken up at the Revolution; and in 1823 Louis XVIII. established here the great hospital of the Hôtel Dieu, which had already existed six hundred years in the city of Caen, and a certain number of Augustine nuns were permitted to exercise their tender and devoted care on the sick and the afflicted.

Matilda was buried under a costly monument on this spot in 1083; but the Calvinists, in 1562, rifled the tomb and scattered the great queen's remains. The Abbess, Lady Ann de Montmorency, caused them to be collected and replaced in their coffin, where they remained in peace till the Revolution. A new mausoleum had been raised over them in 1708; but this was thrown down by the revolutionists, who did not, however, rifle the grave itself. At length, in 1819, the prefect of Calvados caused the coffin to be opened; and having ascertained that the royal dust remained there, he erected the present monument, on which is a long Latin epitaph.

Next we went down a staircase into the crypt. This is evidently in its original state. It is supported by thirty-six pillars set close together. It is very small, but in excellent preservation.

This was once the burying-place of the abbesses of the Abbaye aux Dames. The bones found there have been

collected, and are now buried at one side of the crypt, with an inscription on the wall above.

Our guide seemed unwilling to show us the hospital, and said it was not much to see. We thought she grudged her holiday leisure, and did not urge our request, for, after all, one hospital of this kind is much like another; but after we had left Caen we learned the true reason of our guide's unwillingness: there were several bad cases of cholera at that time in the Hôtel Dieu.

We saw the kitchen as we came out, and heard the marvellous amount of food cooked on its immense stoves and in its huge boilers. Then we went and chatted with the sweet-faced nun, who had much more to say than at our first arrival.

There was another nun standing beside the cook in the kitchen, but she did not look so sweet as our first friend. We asked our guide the name of the Sister with the keys, and learned that she was called la Dame Jérôme.

It must be very delightful for those poor patients that the Park is close at hand, with its broad masses of turf and shaded lime-walks; but the Sisters seem to reap no advantage from its nearness,—they never go outside the walls of the Hôtel Dieu. As we went down the steep street into the town again we met some handsomely dressed Sisters all in black, with long flowing veils; they had some young girls with them. We asked an old woman close by, in a very original cap, what order those ladies belonged to, for they seemed to be going towards the Abbaye de Sainte Trinité.

“Oh, but no,” she shook her head reprovingly; “these are Mesdames les Bénédictines. They have a convent in

the town where they educate young ladies. See, they are taking them for a walk. They are quite another thing from les Dames des Augustines : *elles ne sortent pas.*” And when we proceeded to make further inquiry, we found this to be an established fact. Once fully professed Sisters of St. Augustine, these devoted women renounce even the sight of the outside life, even the breath of the outside air. except that which reaches the open courts and spacious arched galleries of the convent, or that which they get in recreation-time in the gardens of the convent. There is a waxen tint on their complexions, which indicates that a less confined life would be better for their health, and would probably prolong their powers of usefulness.

We crossed the road from the Abbaye aux Dames to the picturesque Church of St. Gilles. This was originally a mortuary chapel founded by William and

Matilda for the sepulture of the poor ; but M. de Caumont thinks that the nave, which is of much earlier date than either the choir or the porch, is not older than the twelfth century. It is full of interesting work, and it seems a pity that it should be closed, like some others of the remarkable churches of Caen.

Descending the steep street we came about midway upon



Porch of the Church of St. Gilles.

a striking view of St. Pierre, with a foreground of picturesque, quaint houses, and, at the end of the long street beyond, were the spires of the Abbaye aux Hommes. Looking round, we could still see Matilda's church distinctly. It seemed to make the dry bones of history facts in the flesh, as we pictured the Conqueror and the wife of his youth standing half-way between their two creations in a sympathy of admiration and joy that they had lived to see their work accomplished. And in those after-years, when William was left alone without the wife he loved so faithfully, and who had sympathized in his vast project of conquest, and given all the help she could to its execution, he must have looked tenderly from his palace at the Abbaye below, to the height on which her Cathedral stood, now her tomb.

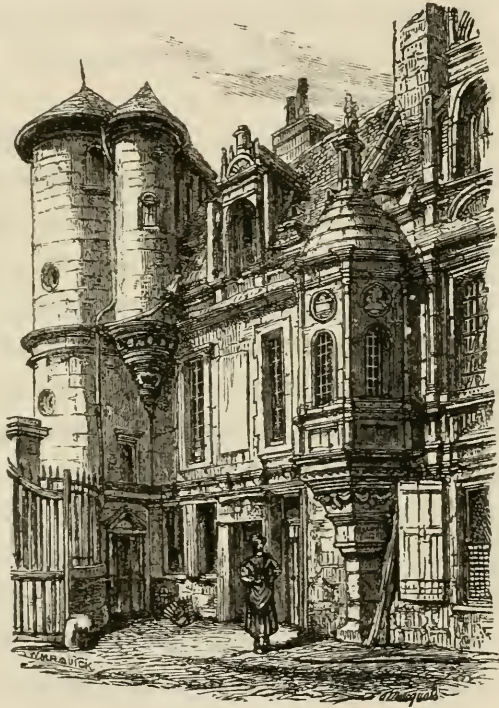
“No contrast,” says Mr. Freeman, “between two buildings so nearly alike in plan and style can be more striking than the contrast between the Minster of William and the Minster of Matilda. William was no more inclined to hurry in this undertaking than in any other undertaking of his life. His wife hastened to consecrate a fragment; but William knew how to bide his time as much in a work of architecture as in a work of war or politics. Eleven years later William and Lanfranc, now promoted to be the Cæsar and the Pontiff of another world, were present at the consecration of the great Abbey of St. Stephen, perfect from east to west, save only that the addition of the western towers was a later work, and was, probably, celebrated with a second feast of dedication. And that mighty pile, perhaps the noblest and most perfect work of its own date, shows the spirit of the Conqueror impressed on every stone. The choir has given way to a later creation; but the nave of

William and Lanfranc is still there—precisely such a nave as we should expect to arise at the bidding of William the Great. Erected at the moment when the Romanesque of Normandy had cast aside the earlier leaven of Bernay and Jumièges, and had not yet begun to develop into the more florid style of Bayeux

and St. Gabriel, the church of William, vast in scale, bold and simple in its design, disdaining ornament, but never sinking into rudeness, is indeed a church worthy of its founder. The Minster of Matilda, far richer even in its earliest parts, smaller in size, more delicate in workmanship, has nothing of that simplicity and grandeur of proportion which marks the work of

her husband. The one is the expression in stone of the imperial will of the conquering Duke; the other breathes the true spirit of his loving and faithful Duchess.*

We went a little way down the Rue Notre-Dame, and then



Hôtel des Monnaies.

* "History of the Norman Conquest," vol. iii.

down a little covered alley on the right, into a courtyard called the Cour de la Monnaie, surrounded on two sides by very quaint and original buildings. This was the ancient Hôtel des Monnaies. The tower and little angle *tourelle* are very quaint, and the oriel is elegant and original. Unhappily some new buildings have lately been introduced in this court, which have entirely destroyed the effect of it. Close by is the Hôtel Etienne Duval. There are inscriptions on both these houses.

The Church of St. Jean is not in any way remarkable, except that the calm stillness there was delightful in the early morning; we went on thence to the Rue de l'Oratoire. Here is a charming old house, the ancient convent of the Oratoire, standing in a courtyard, overgrown with vine. From the little court-yard at the back of the house we got a good view of the chimneys and gable of the Hôtel de Than. This hotel has its entrance much nearer to the Hôtel de la Bourse: it is in the same style of architecture, but is even more interesting. There are remains of several ancient houses in the Rue St. Jean, some of which have disappeared within the last few years, and some, as the Hôtel d'Aubigny, No. 100, have been modernised out of all recognition. Catherine of Navarre, Henry IV.'s sister, lodged here when she visited Caen; also the Duke and Duchess of Longueville.

The Hôtel de Beuvron, No. 214, was anciently a college belonging to the Abbey of Barbery; in 1589 it became the property of Pierre d'Harcourt, Marquis of Beuvron.

No. 94 is a very curious wooden house, with the upper stories projecting each over that beneath; but there does not seem to be any history attached to it. Another very

curious house is at the bottom of an alley in this street. There is nothing left of the house where Charlotte Corday stayed with her aunt : it stood on the site now occupied by No. 148, nearly opposite the Rue des Carmes.

We stood looking at the spot, wondering what might have been, with different teaching, the life of this great-souled girl, "to whom," in the words of a French writer, "it only needed to have read the New Testament in place of Plutarch." Till 1850 the house seems to have been perfectly preserved, even to the little back shop of the poor carpenter whom Charlotte befriended ; but the proprietor who had cared for it so lovingly sold it, and its purchaser demolished it and built this new, uninteresting house.

We crossed the Place St. Pierre, and up the steep ascent to the castle. Close to the entrance is the old chapel of St. George ; but as we went on to look at this, we were challenged by the sentry, and told to go up on the rampants to the right. It was very pleasant on the grassy mound above : the trees gave a pleasant shade ; below was the deep fosse, which seems to be a little suburb in itself, so many houses cluster between its outer walls and those of the castle. A mountain ash, bright with scarlet berries, grew half-way down the steep castle slope, and just below us were innumerable butterflies, purple, brown, and scarlet, gambolling in the early sunshine. We came round to the town side of the battlements. Here there is a splendid view of the town, with its towers and spires, its harbour and shipping, and its poplar-bordered rivers and canals ; but it is difficult to get both the Abbeys of William and Matilda into one view, although all the other churches group in admirably. We found that we could get round

to the other side of the chapel of St. George without any interference from the sentinel.

The castle itself was built by William, and fortified by Henry I. ; but this chapel is nearly all of fifteenth-century work, except the outer wall on one side, with its curious ornaments, and a circular arch in the choir. Henry V. kept the festival of St. George here in 1418, on April 23, and also held a chapter, at which he created twelve knights of the Bath. There is another and larger building, used as a barn, of earlier date, and which is said to be the ancient hall of the Exchequer of Normandy. Here, probably, William assembled the Synod in 1061, when it was ordered that a bell should be rung for prayer every evening, and all people should retire into their houses and close their doors. This shows that the curfew was established in Normandy before William introduced it into England. About the same time he established the Trêve de Dieu as a means of checking disorder and outbreaks, while he and his wisest counsellors were engaged in debating the best methods of establishing peace throughout the dukedom.

Both ancient and modern antiquarian writers have had much discussion about these two buildings, M. De la Rue having maintained that the larger building was the church; but this opinion was victoriously disproved by Mr. Stapleton, whose judgment in the matter seems to be now adopted by both French and English students of architecture.

It is so pleasant on the battlements of the old castle, with the bright sunshine gleaming on all around, and the intensely clear atmosphere giving a crispness and sparkle to every spire and gable and lattice and clustering vine-

leaf on which it lights, that one is only sorry the walls are so high, and that one cannot lie under the trees enjoying the exquisite and varied prospect.

The rattling of muskets and the sharp word of command on the drawbridge below roused us to the fact that the sentinel was being relieved ; and, looking over the parapet, we saw the file of blue-coated, crimson-trousered soldiers moving off, the sun gleaming on their bayonets and accoutrements. The new-comer was a tiny man, with a face like a red cabbage ; it did not seem as if the sun could heat him much, though it was blazing fiercely enough, on the strip of ground up and down which he had to pace, to turn an ordinary skin to crackling.

We went down again to the Place St. Pierre. The trees have grown wonderfully here in a few years on the Boulevard ; it extends from the fish-market on the east to the Place de la Préfecture on the west ; on this stands the Préfecture, and close by are the Hôtel de Ville, containing the library and museum of pictures, and the Post-office. These face the Place Royale ; and on the other side of the Boulevard are the Theatre, the Gendarmerie, and, farther back, the public baths and lavatories. Near the Post Office is the modern Jesuit Church of La Gloriette. From the Place de la Préfecture, along the Boulevard de la Préfecture, is a short way across the Park, and past the Palais de Justice, to the Abbaye aux Hommes. Just here, opposite the end of the Boulevard, we came upon a deserted church. In a corner by a gateway an old man in a blouse sat, mending china. The deserted church is called St. Etienne le Vieux. It is said by French antiquaries to be the oldest parish-church in Caen ; but from its position, so near the

outer wall, it has suffered frequent demolition, and little of the original building remains ; it is now filled with firewood, old vehicles, and rubbish of all kinds, which effectually prevent a close examination. There is a curious bas-relief of William in the wall of the choir, which is probably older than the twelfth century. The western doorway is very picturesque, though much mutilated ; and the tower and spire form a striking object from almost every point of distant view. Behind the door of this church were stacked about a hundred birch brooms, belonging to the street-sweepers, who are all women.

Except for this church and the Abbaye aux Hommes, this is too modern a quarter of Caen to be interesting ; and we turned down to the Boulevard de la Préfecture, and on along the Petit Cours till we reached the Place Dauphine on the quay, and crossed the river by the *caserne*.

It is a long, tiring walk in hot weather to Vaucelles ; but we were anxious to see the Church of St. Michel. Near it, sitting by the roadside, we found an old lace-maker hard at work. She chatted merrily, and was quite amused that we should consider the work trying for her eyes.

The tower of St. Michel is very old and curious ; the long narrow windows in it are specially remarkable. M. de Caumont puts its date either the eleventh or twelfth century ; the rest of the church is probably of the sixteenth. The carving of the north portal is very well executed, and, with its gable, the portal is altogether picturesque.

On the opposite side of the river is the Grand Cours, a pleasant walk, planted with double avenues of tall trees, and looking on to the race-course. The races of Caen are said to be very good ; they take place in the beginning

of August, and last four days. At this time the town is most unpleasantly full, as people stop at Caen for the races, on their way to Luc, Trouville, &c. We were too tired for any but the shortest way home, and were rejoiced to find that the end of the Rue St. Jean was actually on the Place Dauphine.

CALVADOS.

CHAPTER XIV.

A GREAT NORMAN CHARITY.



L'Abbé Jamet.

PROBABLY most English travellers, who are visiting for the first time the capital city of La Basse Normandie, will carefully inspect the two famous abbeys of William and Matilda, St. Pierre, and the other churches, and even make a pilgrimage to the Abbaye d'Ardaine, to the castle heights, and examine the quaint old stone and wooden houses still left undisturbed in the modernised streets. They will also go out and see Falaise and the châteaux of Creully and Fontaine Henri; they will visit Cabourg and other watering-places, by way of refreshment from so many dry piles of Caen stone; and very likely they will ignore and never take the trouble to go near one of the most interesting institutions of the town—the Hospital of Le Bon Sauveur, chiefly devoted to the care of the insane and the instruction of the deaf and dumb.

Some pages, therefore, are given to a description of this great work.

If possible, Le Bon Sauveur should be visited on a fine day; for one cannot see all the arrangements of this grand work of benevolence without at least an hour or two of walking about in the open air.

There is no huge gloomy structure here; so many separate works are united in one large grasp of charity, that of necessity they are conducted as far apart as may be. There are separate ranges of large, airy buildings for each special work, besides charming private houses for the insane patients who can pay for such a privilege; and all these are dispersed round and about well-cultivated and extensive walled gardens, full of apple and pear trees, the walls covered with fruit and vines and American creepers.

Starting from St. Pierre, we go down a long street with four names; and when we reach the Abbey of St. Etienne, we follow the left-hand division, instead of taking the branch on the right, which leads to La Maladrerie and the Abbaye d'Ardaine.

Before we reach the great gates of Le Bon Sauveur, a few details of its origin, most kindly sent to me by the present superior of the institution, must be given in her own words.

"Our community," she says, "is truly that grain of mustard seed spoken of by our Divine Saviour, which, planted by the weakest hand, guided by heavenly inspiration, has grown and increased till, spite of tempests and persecutions, it has become a great tree, which shelters many miseries, cures or consoles the most grievous of maladies, and showers its fruits and its blessing on all

those who are given to it, to sustain and help in the way of sorrow and suffering. It was begun in 1720 by two poor girls penetrated by the love of God and his poor : they set to work in a poor house in one of the poorest parts of the town ; there they devoted themselves to teach little children, to succour and visit the poor, to nurse and comfort the sick among those whom they visited. Little by little their number increased, and their works multiplied : they bought a better house, and received children, female penitents, and insane persons.

“ In 1730 they succeeded in forming a community. Though opposed and thwarted by those who should have aided and protected them, their work went on providentially increasing. Some contagious diseases having broken out in Caen and the environs, the Sisters devoted themselves to nurse and console the fever-smitten patients, and many of them sank under the malady and fatigue. They went on with their charitable works till the great Revolution in 1789, which struck them as it struck every other religious and charitable house. They are turned out of their convent, plundered and dispersed, but not destroyed. They gather together, a few here and a few there, in different houses, and work for their living, and for the living of the poor they have kept with them. M. l'Abbé Jamet, then a young priest and their chaplain, escapes death and imprisonment, gets himself put on the list of *émigrés*, and conceals himself in the woods, and, with a courage which only faith could have given, continues the exercise of his holy ministry. He visits his dispersed daughters, sustains and consoles them by the administration of the sacraments, celebrates in their abode the holy Eucharist. They persevere in these holy exer-

cises ; then when the revolutionary tempest subsides, when the churches re-open, this confessor of the faith does not rest till he has gathered together again the dear daughters of the Bon Sauveur. After many delays and fruitless efforts, he succeeds in purchasing a ruined Capuchin convent. He is still on the list of *émigrés* : he possesses nothing, and cannot borrow. His daughters are without funds, and have only their work to depend on for themselves and the poor people they still succour. What does it matter ? God will provide ; he is carrying out His work. The poor Sisters work with fresh zeal, and, on the 22nd of May, 1805, they celebrate, with inexpressible joy and solemn festival, a thanksgiving to their divine Saviour for the mercy he has shown them. This festival is commemorated every year, and will be so as long as Le Bon Sauveur shall exist. Filled with ardent zeal, they work with their own hands in repairing and enlarging their dwelling. New inmates flock to them—children, insane persons.

“ In 1817 and 1818, the department offers the sisterhood the care of its female insane patients. The Bon Sauveur accepts them, though as yet it has no settled resources. And only then does the local government grant a loan for the construction of buildings for these insane patients—a loan which was paid back a few years after. The male insane patients of the department are then consigned to the daughters of the Bon Sauveur, who are resigned to accept them for the glory of God and the good of His poor souls, spite of a well-founded repugnance ; but the end has shown how pleasing this sacrifice was to their heavenly Master. At the same period M. l'Abbé Jamet undertakes the instruction of the deaf and dumb. By dint of research and study, he invents

a method of instruction for them. There is a school for girls, and also one for boys; and they thrive rapidly. Priests and Sisters from different parts of France—from Ireland, even from the colonies—come to learn this method, and return into the countries whence they came to found schools, which have also had a ready success.

“At that first united gathering of the 22nd of May, 1805, the daughters of the Bon Sauveur who had escaped the persecution amounted to fifteen only. They had with them about eighteen dependants. They bought with funds sent to them by Providence the ground on which the asylum stands, and erected all the buildings you have seen. There are now two hundred and thirty-five Sisters, besides the novices. They tend in this house at Caen about a thousand mad patients, teach a great many deaf-and-dumb children, and others. The population consists of from fifteen to sixteen hundred persons.

“Three *succursales* have been founded. The first is at Albi, Tarn: a much larger number of children are taught here. Our Sisters also take charge of insane patients. Their numbers increase every year; they are between nine hundred and a thousand. The second is at Pont l’Abbé, not far from Cherbourg. The same works are carried on there: there are about six hundred insane patients of both sexes.

“The third *succursale*, more lately founded, only receives female insane patients, and teaches the children of the poor. It is already a large community, situated in a very healthy part of the country, in a well-placed and celebrated old abbey. The venerable Superior, La Mère Lechasseur, who died at the age of ninety, was the help and right arm of our good father in his works of zeal and charity.”

The ancient Capuchin monastery mentioned by the superior had, till the Revolution, taken second rank among the Capuchin houses in France: it had been founded in 1577 by some Roman fathers, sent at the express demand of the French ambassador.

These fathers built their monastery on fifteen acres of land belonging to the Priory of Brucourt, and granted to them by Cardinal Farnese, at that time Abbot of St. Etienne; this land is very well placed between St. Etienne and the present race-course.

In 1818, the plans of the institution being matured, the buildings within the old convent walls were dedicated to the following different objects:—

1. An asylum for insane persons of both sexes. (These were at first limited to inhabitants of the department, but now there is no such restriction.)

2. A dispensary for providing medicine and food, and nurses if needed (but, as there are now other nursing institutions in Caen, the Bon Sauveur Sisters do not go out to nurse, unless specially required).

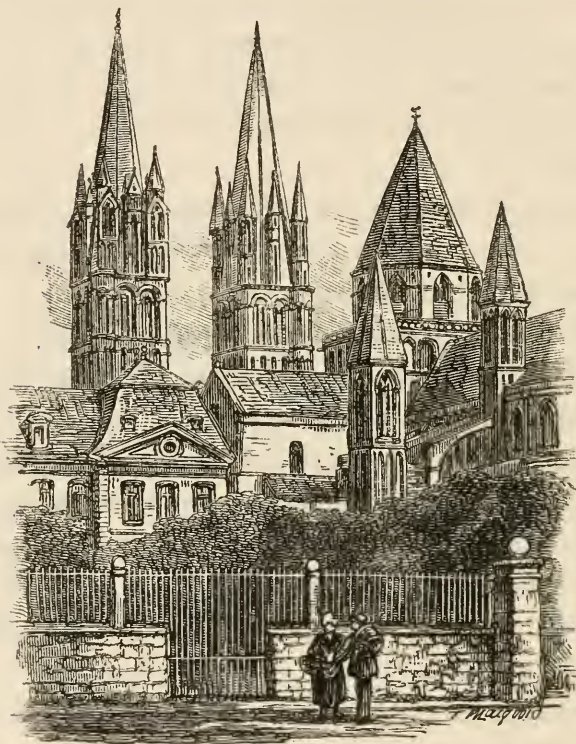
3. An educational and industrial school for deaf-and-dumb boys and girls.

4. A school for young ladies, who pay for their education.

5. A free school for poor little girls.

Our driver stopped before a huge pair of gates in the Rue des Capucins, and rang the bell. The gate was soon opened by a pleasant-looking portress in a Sister's dress. She smiled at us, and then going back into her lodge, she asked us to walk into the parlour, a little room on the right of the open court into which we had entered. We went into the

little room : there were only a few chairs in it, a crucifix over the fireplace, and a religious print. We came out again to admire the splendid myrtles ; about thirty standard trees, in huge square tubs, stand ranged round the court, many of them covered with exquisite starry blossoms ; and



Abbaye aux Hommes, Caen.

seen above them, beyond the garden wall, is the best view of the Abbaye aux Hommes that is to be had in Caen. While we stood looking at the exquisite effect of its cream-coloured spires against the intense blue sky, there came along the path leading to the convent buildings a very short, plump, and smiling old lady in a Sister's dress.

She had a large blue cotton umbrella in one hand, and a bunch of keys hung at her waist ; her long black skirts were fastened up by a strap on each side, and showed her white stockings and low-cut easy shoes. She bowed to us very courteously, with a pleasant smile of welcome on her gentle old face, and asked what we wished specially to see at *Le Bon Sauveur*.

We answer, "Everything that is permitted, and that madame is willing to show us." This seems to please her very much. She turns round and points to a large building on the left side of the court, and tells us that that is the abode of the *sourds-muets*, taught on the system of the Abbé Jamet. We follow her across a little garden, trimly kept, with a large bed full of standard roses in the midst of a good-sized grass plot. On our way we pass a great thorn-tree, loaded with berries : our guide says that this is two hundred years old, and that nearly every year it bears two crops of flowers and berries. Beyond the grass plot there is a covered arcade, and this is full of stonemasons and carpenters at work.

"We are in vacation now," says our dear old smiling guide, "so we are doing reparations. Never mind ; you do not see us at our best, but we have still some pupils who have not gone home for vacation."

"How many deaf-and-dumb scholars are there?" we ask.

"About one hundred and fifty, male and female. Some of these are rich and some poor ; but they are all taught on the same system."

"And who pays for the poor scholars, madame?"

She shrugs her shoulders ever so little.

“Well,” she speaks quite apologetically, “you see, our numbers increase so rapidly, that it has been necessary to represent to monsieur the préfet of the department that a small allowance must be made for our poor children; and it is made, but it is very small. For all that, we never refuse to take in a poor scholar.”

“And how long do you keep them here?”

“Ah,” she says, “that depends quite on themselves. They are welcome to stay here until they are thoroughly able to earn a livelihood. We teach them whatever trade they prefer. But this is the class-room.”

She stands aside, and we pass into a long lofty room, wainscoted with panels of slate reaching some way up the walls.

“Here is one of our scholars.”

She looks towards a tall young fellow about sixteen, with a clever-looking head and bright, intelligent, dark eyes, and then she turns to another Sister standing near a row of chairs facing the slate panels.

“If you will sit down,” our guide says, “my Sister will explain your questions to her pupil.”

She seats herself, and we follow her example; and then the other Sister, a dark-eyed, sorrowful-faced woman, smiles and bows, and we ask—

“What is the capital city of England?”

She repeats our question, but more as if she were saying it to herself than to the pupil, and makes only a few gestures with one hand. Instantly—it seems to us before he can have gathered in her meaning—the deaf-and-dumb boy nods, smiles, and writes on the slate, in a large, bold hand—

“Monsieur et madame, la capitale de l'Angleterre c'est Londres.”

We then ask for the birthplace of William the Conqueror : the question is signed to him, and again quite as rapidly he writes—

“Guillaume le Conquérant est né à Falaise.”

Then he looks eagerly for another question, and we ask what trade he wishes to follow when he leaves *Le Bon Sauveur*. This answer comes even more rapidly, with a smile of delight. He has chosen the trade of a turner.

“It is a favourite trade with many of them,” the Sister said ; “and he shows also a taste for drawing.”

We showed him some sketches, and his quick comprehension and effusion of delight were most interesting. It was almost painful to see his intense efforts by look and gesture to show his pleasure. At last he tapped his forehead, and the Sister said he meant by this to express that the person who had made the sketches had “*beaucoup de moyens*.”

We said good-bye to him, and wished him success, and then we followed our guide to another range of building.

“He is very clever,” the Sister said, “and he is a pious child as well as a clever one ; he is always good.”

“And he is one of your poor scholars. Are his parents working people ?” The boy's manner was so very good and graceful that he puzzled us. She shook her head, and looked very grave.

“There is not much to be said about his parentage. His mother is a servant, who has to work hard for her living.”

We asked his name, but the Sister had forgotten it. As we followed her, we puzzled over the future of our interesting dark-eyed friend, who will have, humanly speaking,

to make his own way in life without even a tongue to help him.

Our guide moved very slowly, answering our questions and volunteering information in a most pleasant and ready manner.

"This is our chapel." She unlocked a door, and we went in. The building is not large, and is divided into two portions by a curtained screen. Between this and the choir are benches for the *sourds-muets*, and above the screened-off portion is a gallery for the *sourdes-muettes*. The Sister drew aside a bit of the curtain, and we saw several of the community kneeling in prayer.

"It is our hour for meditation," she said.

We asked to what order the community belonged.

"We are only Sisters of Le Bon Sauveur," she answered; "we do not belong to any order. We began here only five, and, by divine blessing, we are now three hundred, including our novices; and we have other houses in other parts of France."

We had been following her along a paved passage, and now we came into a large, airy, handsome room, with an inlaid floor in parqueterie, and elaborately carved brackets for gas-burners.

"Those are carved by the *sourds-muets*," the Sister said; and she seemed much to admire the work.

There was scarcely any furniture in the room but chairs, and an immense number of these placed as close together as possible.

"This is our recreation-room," she said; "the Sisters and novices all meet here for recreation."

She went on at the same slow, gentle pace across a large

pleasant garden full of flower-beds. There were thirty or forty Sisters strolling about, some reading, others with books under their arms, but all apart. They looked much healthier than the cloistered nuns of the Hôtel Dieu. It looked very sunny and peaceful to see them taking life so leisurely. The clock struck twelve, a bell rang, and they all disappeared into the building we had left.

Our guide stopped us, and asked us to admire the façade of the new buildings and the spire of the chapel.

“It is not yet complete,” she said. “If you come and see us next year, you will find that our church is very much enlarged and beautified.”

We doubted the last assertion; for although the work done is handsome and substantial, the style of it is not good. It is so wonderful that, with those exquisitely pure and severe spires of St. Etienne looking over the garden-wall, the architect of Le Bon Sauveur should not have been moved to a better design.

She said that their numbers increased so rapidly that they were always building. She led us into a second garden, with a cloistered walk round it. This was half roofed over, and the Sister said it would soon be completed.

“It will be good for your health,” we said.

“It will be good for the processions,” she answered; “they have now to be made without any shelter. We have very good health here; we are scarcely ever ill.”

“You look as if you had excellent health.”

“I have never yet been ill,” she said, “and I am old too; ah! much older than you think,” she smiled quite archly. “Why, I have been a religious for fifty years.”

We were startled, for she did not look more than sixty

years old ; but she went on to a corner of the cloistered walk, and stopped before a little open chapel, with a *pric-dieu* in front of it handsomely carved in oak.

She said that this was the first work of a poor deaf-and-dumb scholar after his apprenticeship. He did it at odd times, without his master's knowledge, as an offering to the good Sisters who had done so much for him.

Next the cloister we came into a very large walled garden, the beds bordered by marigolds in full blossom, the centres filled with cabbages, onions, potatoes, and artichokes, and the walls covered with fruit-trees. Among the vegetables were plenty of pyramidal pear-trees. At one side of the garden, instead of a border of marigolds, there were dwarf espalier apples trained about a foot from the ground.

Just here we met several women walking with a Sister. We noticed that our guide scarcely looked at them, as she bent her head in acknowledgment of their greeting and passed on. Some of the faces were smiling, others sad ; but in all there was a withered, craving expression, as if the mind had been seared by some scorching blast and was thirsting for refreshment.

"Those are quite harmless patients," the Sister said, as soon as they were out of hearing. "They take so much pleasure in the gardens, and they are allowed to walk in the fields too, but always with a Sister."

"They do not go far?"

"Not to walk ; but we have several carriages, and they drive out constantly when the doctors think it desirable ; the air is so good for them. We do all we can," she went on, "to soothe and to brighten the dark lot of these afflicted ones. You do not know, until you have tended it, what an

awful doom insanity is. Here we try, if possible, never to thwart our patients. In some establishments it is considered wise to have a regimen about food, but with us they eat and drink as they please, and we do not find that this indulgence hurts them."

We asked if any of the poor patients helped in gardening; for the gardens are so beautifully kept, and so extensive, that they must require much labour.

"We do not count on their assistance: we employ twenty-four regular gardeners. If the patients like to work, either in the garden or in other ways, we are always very glad, but more for their sakes than for the benefit of the institution. Their labour is so fitful and uncertain, that there is little profit in it, and we never urge them to work; in this, as in everything else, they do as they please."

Listening to the gentle voice, and seeing all around such peace and sunshine and order, we thought that the poor afflicted inmates of *Le Bon Sauveur* must be as happy as their doom can allow; but it makes the heart heavy to look at the fair, well-ordered scene—the luxuriant, richly stocked ground, the walls glowing with fruit, and then to meet these strange, restless, scared, or vacant faces in the midst of all that seems needful for a peaceful, happy life.

In a corner of this garden we came to the church for the insane. It is very plain and simple.

The Sister said that only those are admitted who are sufficiently quiet; and these, it seems, are very few out of the thousand patients who are now in *Le Bon Sauveur*. We were surprised to hear there was so large a number; it seems wonderful that a thousand maniacs can be tended and controlled by these quiet, gentle women.

The ranges of buildings behind the church are appropriated to the male patients ; those on the other side of the grounds to the females and young children. It is very sad to learn that there are many mad and idiot children here ; also many more female than male patients. A little way farther we came upon a kitchen opening on to this garden, and saw the bread and portions of food being arranged for the male patients.

“ Who waits on them ? ” we asked.

“ We do.” The Sister looked surprised at the question. “ We do everything for the female patients, and also for the males, except the bathing and dressing and undressing of those who cannot do it for themselves ; but we have for this men we can trust. But we wait on our male patients at meal-time, and we feed them if they do not like to feed themselves.”

A few yards beyond the chapel we came to a small neatly kept enclosure, nearly full of turfed graves, with a path down the middle leading to a small building.

“ It is our mortuary chapel,” she said. “ Those are the graves of our Sisters ”—she pointed to the right ; “ and these on the left are the graves of our Superiors.” The small group on the left looked specially well cared for. The Sister asked us to look at the central sod of these last graves.

“ Our first Superior lies there, *La Mère Lechasseur*,” she said. “ She was ninety when she died, and she was re-elected three times.”

We asked how often the election took place.

“ We choose a new Superior every three years, and she is sometimes re-elected.”

She went forward and unlocked the door of the mortuary

chapel. We entered a square stone room, with an altar at one end, before which a lamp was burning.

In the centre is the large stone monument. The figure is in marble.

“I will ask you not to examine the face till I have closed the shutters,” she said; and it was wonderful to see the beautifying change in the marble countenance when daylight was excluded, and the light of the lamp burning in front of the little altar was concentrated on the exquisitely regular features of the great benefactor of the institution.

“It is so much more like the Abbé Jamet in this light,” she explained, “it is such a perfect resemblance.” And as we stood gazing at the sweet, saint-like face—sweet and yet full of calm resolution—it became easier to understand the wonderful rise and development of this great work, and the sorrow which is yet felt at the Bon Sauveur for the loss of this wise and good man.

The tomb and the figure are exquisitely sculptured, and are the work of a Caennais artist. A legend round the monument records that it is to the memory of Pierre Jamet, who died 1845, aged eighty-three. He watched over Le Bon Sauveur and its fortunes from 1790 till his death. The present Principal is also a Monsieur Jamet, a nephew of the Abbé; and there are several priests attached to the institution.

The mortuary chapel is built against a wall, over which at a little distance can be seen the tower of the Church of St. Ouen.

“You might think,” the Sister said, “from its close vicinity, that we are under parochial administration. Strangers often think this, but it is a mistake. We bring

all our dead to the chapel here ; our Sisters are buried in our own ground," she looked towards the graves, for we had now come out of the chapel, "but our patients are taken from us, through that door in the wall, and are buried in the parish cemetery ; still, for all that, the authorities of St. Ouen have no authority over us. We open the door, and they bury our dead, and that is all." She looked anxiously, to be quite sure we understood. It was plainly grievous to her to be supposed amenable to alien authority. We asked the dear old lady if she had ever been Superior. There was a gentle dignity about her, and a sort of motherly, protecting manner, which seemed to imply that she had held an important post.

She smiled.

"Oh no," she said, "I am nothing, and I am too old now to be of real use to any one ; but I take strangers about, because I have been here so long, and can answer their questions."

She is certainly admirably suited for her post, and we ventured to say so.

"But I am very old," she said.

"But, madame, you are not much more than sixty?"

"I am seventy-five," she answered, to our astonishment.

We begged that she would not take us any farther, as we thought she must surely be tired.

"If madame is tired," she said very sweetly, "we will return ; but I should much have liked to show you everything. I am not at all tired."

And she looked so fresh and hale, and seemed so really anxious we should proceed, that we followed her without further protest. We had noticed a young woman bending

over the Sisters' graves ; we asked if she was one of the insane patients.

“ Oh no ; she is a poor girl who was starving. We took her in the hope of giving her employment ; but she is too ill to work, so we shall keep her here till she dies.”

At last we reached the end of the large garden, and began to mount some rising ground on which stand the laundry and drying-house. They are both on a large scale.

On our way we met several men with working tools in their hands, who all saluted our guide. We were surprised to hear that they were all mad patients. We had not suspected it, as their faces were so much more peaceful than those of the women we had seen ; one man especially, of about thirty, had quite a handsome, fair, sunburnt countenance.

“ Ah, but these are very mild and reasonable,” the Sister said ; “ they are some of our *bons enfants*.”

We noticed a few yards behind these men came a Sister. She walked in a quiet, leisurely way, as if she were taking the air for her own special benefit ; but evidently she was not there by chance.

The drying-house is very large. They never light fires in it ; there are large windows on every side, which admit a thorough current of air to the five floors, one above another. Poles are fixed on wooden framework, about two feet apart, and reach from side to side of the building. On the day of our visit these poles were covered with linen drying in the current of air that circulates freely from the open windows.

Our guide asked us to mount to the third story, so that we might see the extent of the land and buildings.

“ If it will not *gêner* you too much,” the dear old woman said ; and she slipped in between the poles and stood on tiptoe to pull aside a row of damp shirts, so that we might pass up to the windows. It was not pleasant to squeeze past the wet linen, but we found it quite worth while to do it. We saw very perfectly how charming is the situation of Le Bon Sauveur, surrounded on two sides by its own far-stretching fields, fringed by poplars, and on the third by the grey walls and spires of St. Etienne. The Sister pointed out a windmill in the fields : she told us all their flour was ground there. From this point we saw, too, the great extent of the hospital buildings ; they are so admirably placed between the leafy walls and shrubberies, and they nestle in such a hidden way among them, that as you walk about you are unable to realise the vast amount of ground they cover.

Close around the drying-house is the farmyard, surrounded with its cow-houses and piggeries. There are plenty of clean, well-kept cocks and hens, and ducks, strutting and waddling about the spacious yard in the centre. Here, too, are the coach-houses and stables.

“ We often have pleasant drives—all of us,” the Sister said with animation.

The farmyard is on the rising ground on which the drying-house is built ; and we looked down on the large extent of gardens we had traversed, and saw the ranges of houses extending on each side in long semicircles, one behind another, walled gardens and trees intervening, so as to insure an amount of privacy to all. We noticed some charming detached villas, only one story high, nearest the central gardens, shut in by shrubberies ; and farther on a range of still lower buildings.

“ These last are for our poor epileptics,” the Sister said. “ The poor ladies used to fall down-stairs sometimes, and hurt themselves, when they were taken ill suddenly ; so we have built them houses without any stairs, and if they fall they are not injured.”

She had brought us to the drying-room by the right-hand side of the gardens ; now she asked us to return along the left-hand side.

Beau Brummell died at Bon Sauveur, but we did not care to see his room ; it is shown to strangers who wish to see it. He seems to have died very peacefully. How strange a contrast between the haunts of London fashion and the quiet asylum at Caen !

We went back through several beautiful gardens, but they are all of the same character ; vegetables and pear-trees in the midst, and the walls glowing with fruit ripening fast under the intensely blue sky, a few late butterflies darting out now and then unexpectedly.

Presently our guide stopped before a door in the wall ; she took a key from the large bunch at her waist slowly, almost unwillingly.

“ I must ask you to look in quickly, when I open the door,” she said rather nervously : “ if there is any one in the garden, I must close it again at once. This is one of the rich patients’ enclosures, and they do not like to be looked at.”

But when she opened the door there was no one to be seen ; only a very pretty house built of Caen stone, and before it a garden well screened on each side by shrubs ; the lawn covered with flower-beds quite ablaze with blossoms. Among the shrubberies we saw arbours and

pleasantly arranged nooks, with tables and chairs for spending time out of doors.

“That is all right.” She seemed quite relieved when the door was shut again. “Are they not pretty, the houses of our rich patients? Poor things! they prefer to live alone, though I think they must be very dull; but a Sister is with each one night and day,—only it is so arranged that she does not intrude on them.”

A little way on we came to another locked door in the vine-covered wall.

“I will show you another of our private houses. These patients are not so rich; and here two ladies share a house between them, but each has her own bedroom.”

She opened the door, and there was another pretty bright house and garden—only here the door opened into a covered walk, where two ladies were seated at needlework.

One came running up when she saw us at the door; she spoke to our guide, and looked eagerly at us. She smiled as we bowed.

It was very sad to see her smile. There was something inexpressibly pathetic in her whole aspect. Her hair was all awry, in little grizzled, dry curls on each side of her restless, eager face; and yet in the very eagerness there was a want of purpose, as if she did not know what she was seeking; still she did not look unhappy. She began to talk with volubility, but the Sister answered her with smiling courtesy and shut the door again.

“There is no harm done there,” she said. “Both of those are good reasonable patients; our visit will not have excited them.”

We asked if cures were often effected at *Le Bon Sauveur*.

“Yes,” she said slowly, “we have cures, but they are rare; and sometimes the patients who go away cured return, and, if they return a third time, there is little hope that they will ever leave us sane.”

There was an indescribable depth of sadness in her voice. At that moment the flowers, the fruit, the blue sky, and the butterflies sporting in the sunshine seemed terribly out of harmony with these thousand afflicted souls.

After this we walked along in silence. Our guide had promised to show us the two wonderful cider-reservoirs, each capable of holding eight hundred and ninety-eight hogsheads—far more than the great tun of Heidelberg. Just before we reached them, we came upon a Sister and two poor little idiot children of about six and eight years old. The eldest had a vacant look, but still she was quiet and collected; but the other child had a distorted, grotesque face, and laughed wildly when we spoke to it. One could feel in a moment the brain was empty. One of us carried a little black leather bag, and this fixed the little creature’s attention. She kissed it, fingered it, and bit it, moved it about, and tried to see her face reflected on it, till it became terrible to watch her. We had some difficulty at last in getting away gently from the poor mindless little creature.

“There is no hope for her,” the Sister said sadly. “She will be always like that; but the Bon Dieu loves her as much as He loves his other children, and He will not expect of her more than she can give.”

We passed on to the cider-tanks. They are immense, but they were not filled last year.

“The apples failed with us,” our Sister said; “and they

were so dear that we could not buy sufficient to fill both our tanks, so we cannot give every one cider now. You see sixteen hundred people consume a great deal of cider, and we make all ourselves."

A little way on we came to the bakery. Two women passed us here, wheeling barrows, and close behind them came a Sister watching them attentively.

We looked at our guide for explanation—for the first had a quiet, wooden, contented sort of face; the second looked unhappy.

"Those are two dangerous patients," she said; "they may not be trusted out of sight at all."

What a life it seems for these two hundred and thirty-five gentle, devoted women to keep a constant watch in these asylums over the sad, afflicted creatures who, whatever may be their behaviour, are treated tenderly and lovingly.

We said to our guide that we should like to see such an institution in England, and we told her that our insane patients are tended only by paid nurses.

"Ah," she said, "our work is quite different to any other work. It is easy work to teach the ignorant, to nurse the sick, to reclaim the fallen, even to give speech to the deaf and dumb, compared with the self-abnegation required of those who will tend the insane. No one can know what it is without trying. It is a necessary work, but it is very difficult. In other work you have hope of progress, but hope is almost impossible here."

Doubtless this Sister, who has spent fifty years among the insane, must know how hard this task is, and yet she did not speak as though she shrank from it, but only as if to warn that such a charge must not be lightly undertaken. It

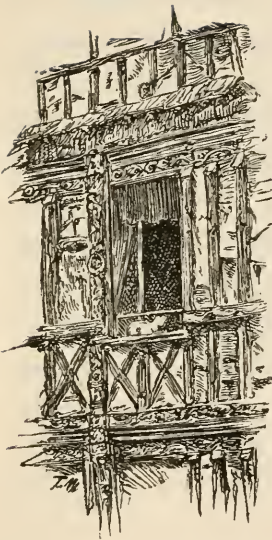
may be that she thought so much self-denial was not to be expected of heretics ; and yet our English sisters are as pious and as gentle as their foreign sisters, and have therefore as much power to gild the daily life of their demented brethren here. And how blessed and glorious a mission it is !

Of all sights, a madhouse is the one we have always shrunk from with the most intense avoidance, and yet we left Le Bon Sauveur with a feeling of inexpressible joy and thankfulness that so much soothing calm was bestowed on its poor inmates by the sweet and holy atmosphere that surrounds them. There was, too, a very peaceful and sweetening influence in the talk of that dear old Sister, and in watching the kindly greetings she gave and received. Most heartily I advise all travellers in Normandy who visit the fair city of Caen (of which Madame de Sévigné says, in her charming French, that it is "the prettiest town, the most inviting, the gayest, the best placed ; it has the handsomest streets, the finest buildings, the most beautiful churches, meadows, walks ; and, finally, it is the cradle of all our wits ") to devote part of a day to a pilgrimage to Le Bon Sauveur

CALVADOS.

CHAPTER XV.

CAEN.



NEXT morning we went down to the Place St. Pierre, and found the lovely old spire rising out of the midst of flowers. It was not market-morning, but there was a fragrant show of myrtles covered with starry blossoms, beside fuchsias and fragrant dark-red clove carnations, pots of mignonette and double wall-flower. There were, besides, huge bouquets, some of choice flowers exquisitely grouped, notably some of white jasmine and myrtle and dusky cloves ;

others, of enormous size, of China asters and marigolds. These were sold from fifty centimes to a franc each.

A little way farther on the left is the fish-market ; and this part of the town, with its canal in the middle and rows of trees in front of the houses on each side, reminded us much of Bruges.

We passed through the fish-market—not a pleasant sight—and went along the Rue Basse for some distance, till we reached the Maison des Gendarmes, or, as it is also called, the Hôtel de Nollent. It is a singular-looking building, built in the reign of Louis XII. by Gérard de Nollent, and called in those days the Manoir des Talbotières. It looks like a little fortress, with its machicolated parapet and grated windows, and is ornamented with sculptured medallions and coats of arms. The present name has been given from the two figures on the roof of the tower. They represent two soldiers originally armed, one with a bow and the other with a cross-bow: they are now mutilated. Coming back we found our way to the harbour, which is spacious, although after Havre it looked insignificant, and crossing the bridge in the middle of the quay, we went down the right-hand side of the canal. This is bordered by a single row of trees on each side, and runs nearly parallel with the river. Between the trees is a long range of meadow land, on which numerous cows were grazing.

There was a picturesque scene on the canal. All along the steep banks were groups of anglers. One lad had five lines at once in the water; and farther on, at the bottom of some steps cut in the bank, were busy washerwomen kneeling in little wooden trays, set at the very edge of the water, soaping clothes on a bit of board which they brought with them, and then beating them with the flat wooden *carrosse*.

Behind us was the city; on one side the Abbaye aux Dames, on the other the lofty tower of St. Etienne le Vieux; and in the midst, the lovely tapering spire of St. Pierre.

We found our way across the meadow on the right to the Cours Caffarelli, beside the Orne. It is not very easy to

cross this meadow, as we found it was intersected by a bog full of interesting flowering plants ; but the Cours is delightful. On each side of the river—the opposite side is called Cours Montalivet—are tall double avenues of trees, chiefly elms and poplars, with seats beneath them. The walks are perhaps straight and formal, but they are very pleasant and shady in summer-time ; and it must be a great boon to the inhabitants of Caen to possess so many of them, for the Grand Cours at the south of the town is also pleasant. The most charming time for the Cours Caffarelli is the evening : then the place is lively with fathers and mothers, and groups of little ones. Or farther on, where these are scarcer, we come upon a pair of lovers sitting under a tree ; then, as the light fades, and the stars begin to spangle out one by one above the trees, turning back towards the harbour, the lights of the town appear, too, one by one, twinkling in the green gloom of the trees like glow-worms on some mossy bank. On special occasions, when the band of the regiment plays in the Place Royale, at the first note of music the crowd moves quietly, but in a continuous stream, eastwards, till the Cours is left to the stars and some owls which hoot now and then among the opposite trees, and to a few of the lovers who prefer solitude to music.

There is a very charming walk, beginning with the Granville road, getting a fine view of St. Etienne, and returning along country lanes bordered by hedges—so like England that it was suggested that probably Duke William took some hedges over at the time of the Conquest—through Louvigny, and by the Orne. There is a splendid view of the city from the prairie on this side, but the view we prefer is on the road to Luc. This is a steep walk of about two miles in quite

another direction on to the heights overlooking the town. There is a Calvary beside the road ; and from a field close by you see the city.

It was sunset when we first saw it, and there were broad lines of gold and crimson in the pale greenish sky above the city stretched out so far below us ; the crimson changed, while we stood gazing, into purple that mingled with the grey of the long range of distant hills. The river, as soon as it got beyond the forest of masts in the harbour, shone out clearly in the golden light that fell on it, and we could trace its windings among the poplar-fringed fields. The light glittered, too, on the vanes on some of the churches, and guided our eyes from William's minster to that of his wife. We stood watching till the crimson glow dimmed, and the sun sank slowly into a grey bank of cloud that rose up behind Caen. As he sank, there came faintly and sweetly up to us from some bell below, the sound of the Angelus, and it swelled louder and louder till each church had lent its voice to sound the death-hour of another day.

There is a quaint old street on the right of the Rue Notre-Dame, called Rue des Fromages : it is very picturesque, and has several old houses. It used to be called Rue Mont-à-Regret, because criminals passed up it on their way to execution, when the prisons were in the Rue de Geôle. It led us out on the Place St. Sauveur. Here is the ancient Church of St. Sauveur, one of the churches founded by St. Regnobert ; since the Revolution it has been used as a corn-market. The interior is extremely interesting ; the columns are of the twelfth century, but the nave itself seems to be of later date ; the choir is still later ; and the present portal of bad eighteenth-century work. The

church looks very picturesque on market-day, and the Place is then very animated : there are still some old houses left. At the end of it, facing the Place Fontette, is the Palais de Justice. We went on beyond this, till we found ourselves on the Cherbourg road. A little way before La Maladrerie is the Calvary of St. Etienne. But we wanted to see the Abbaye d'Ardaine ; and we had been told in



Maison des Gendarmes.

Caen that there was a short cut across the fields much pleasanter than the high road, if we could only find it.

We stopped at the Octroi, and asked the way of the burly Norman in charge.

“Yes, yes, there is a way ; but it is straighter to go along the high road.”

We looked. The road lay before us ; waves of white dust were driving along it ; and although it was near sunset,

and the day had grown cooler, still the wind blew towards us, and, if we took that broad white track, we must be smothered.

Before we could ask again, a shrill-voiced, skinny old woman, in a white *bonnet de coton*, informed us that we had only to follow her, and she would take us to the abbey in a few minutes.

We objected that we did not wish to take her out of the way.

“ Dame,” she smiled very pleasantly, “ but monsieur and madame have not understood. *I* am going to the abbey : it is the shortest of ways—a little five minutes. We have but to hurry our step, and there we are.”

She looked possibly mad, certainly a vagrant ; but there was something compelling in her cheery manner. Our stay in Caen was nearly over, and it was near sunset ; the idea of reaching the Abbey d’Ardaine in a few minutes was tempting. She went on at such a rapid pace that it was not easy to follow her along the rough, uneven road. We crossed some fields, and came out at last into a road again. But many five minutes had passed, and the sun had sunk before our chattering guide pointed out to us a group of buildings nestling like a farmstead among trees.

At last, a turning appeared on the left, bordered by trees, and at the end of this two ancient-looking gates.

Our guide told us these were generally open ; and as soon as we reached them she began to drum thereon with her knuckles in a most vehement manner.

A pretty young woman, with long gold earrings, opened a small gate cut in the large one. She said it was too

late for seeing the abbey; but, as it was still quite light enough, we asked her to be so complaisant as to let us in.

The farmhouse is behind; but all round the large yard, into which the gates open, are farm-buildings, and in the centre is the abbey-church—a beautiful nave, with four corner turrets, each containing a staircase. It is well preserved, although entirely desecrated. The west front and rose-window are very remarkable, and so doubtless were all the windows. The whole of the interior is now filled with hay, straw, and other stores; we saw a waggon standing just within the western doorway. It is a most interesting building; and it seems strange that the authorities of the department should allow it to remain in this uncared-for state.

The abbey was founded by Aïulphe du Marché and Asceline his wife, in 1121; and among the names of its benefactors are those of Richard I. and John Lackland, and other well-known names of the period. Charles VII. lodged here during the siege of Caen; and from here, on July 6th, 1450, he made his triumphal entry into the town. In memory of this event, Ardaine bore two fleurs-de-lis on its shield.

On the left side of the yard is an enormous barn, divided inside by arches resting on two rows of round pillars into three aisles. Evidently the abbey was very wealthy. There is a great extent of cellarage; and the kitchens, buttery, &c., covered half an acre.

The house, within another court, seems to be underlet to a farmer, the proprietor living abroad.

When we came through the great gates again, we found our guide waiting for us. She had refused any payment for her services, as she declared it was delightful to get a talk

as she walked along, and also that she was proud to show English people so beautiful a building as the abbey. We could not get rid of her ; she said, if we attempted to return in the dark through the fields, we should certainly be robbed ; and as she lived at La Maladrerie, and must therefore go there, we had much better let her guide us to the high road by way of La Maladrerie.

“As to that,” she said, with the most ludicrous twist of face imaginable, “it makes no difference”—here she snapped her fingers ;—“if my home were the other side of the abbey, instead of being, as by a most fortunate chance it is, in the road of monsieur and madame, it would make nothing. All the same I should not leave them till they were safe on the high road.”

We soon reached La Maladrerie, and had the greatest difficulty in prevailing on the kind old woman to accept any reward for her trouble ; and yet she must have been very poor, her clothes were threadbare rags—in fact, she seemed only to wear a cotton gown and a *bonnet de coton*, her bare feet in black wooden sabots.

The name of La Maladrerie tells its story. Henry II., the patron of lepers, founded a hospital here for that terrible disease in 1160 ; but there are no remains of this building. There is a little Romanesque chapel not far off, called the Chapelle de Nombriil Dieu. Henry's hospital was called Beaulieu ; and the village that grew up round it was called La Maladrerie. This hospital was so greatly esteemed that many smaller ones were closed, and their revenues added to its endowment.

The hospital continued to receive patients till 1593, but the disease had apparently died out during the next cen-

ture, for in 1696 all the hospital revenues were transferred to the Hôtel Dieu at Caen, and Beaulieu became a sort of penitentiary for malefactors of various kinds. From 1784 to 1818 a most strange system of things prevailed.

Till this date the lunatics of the department had been confined in an old tower, the resort of bats, toads, rats, and spiders, called La Tour Chastimoine, the most horrible of dungeons; in 1784 they were sent to Beaulieu.

But in the third year of his restoration, Louis XVIII. separated these poor lunatics from the depraved companionship into which they had been thrown at Beaulieu, and transferred them to the tender care of the admirable Sisters of Le Bon Sauveur. Beaulieu, since 1820, has been the central House of Detention for male prisoners of the three departments of Eure, Calvados, and Manche. It is a very large building, and it is said to be well managed.

There are charming nursery-gardens on the higher side of the town, near the riding-school; and there is a public garden, not very interesting, near the high ground behind St. Julien. We had not yet seen this side of the town, and we went up the Rue de Geôle, a steep winding street in a line with the Rue St. Jean, on the other side of St. Pierre. There are two very curious houses here—No. 17, and No. 31, Maison des Quatrans. Of No. 17 the first and second stories remain in their original state. The house is built of stone, and is of the Renaissance epoch. There are four well-executed medallions with inscriptions, and a quaint bas-relief in the frieze of the doorway. A rather doubtful tradition says that this was once the house of the poet Jean Marot. The Maison des Quatrans is a wooden house, almost too well preserved, for its freshness

gives it a modern aspect. It belonged in 1380 to Jean Quatrans, of Caen. The gate was open, and we went in, and found a charming courtyard, with trees on one side, and against the house itself a curious octagonal stone tower.

In the Rue de Geôle (so called because the prisons were formerly in this street), and in almost all the old streets of Caen, we came suddenly on arched doorways, the upper half of the door a grating, and through this we got visions of green trees and gleaming flowers massed in a parterre on either side, in the midst a sparkling

fountain, in which most of the sunbeams seemed to be taking a bath together, the rest mirroring themselves in a huge glass ball placed at one side of the garden or of the old grey house behind. These bits of light and colour offer continual refreshment; and even where there are no sparkling visions



Stone-Medallion, Rue de Geôle.

of gardens and fountains, it is impossible to go the length of a street without being attracted by some picturesque grouping of window-flowers, or a little out of the main thoroughfare by the light and shade on the exquisite green of vine-leaves clustering round a door or a window.

This Rue de Geôle, anciently Cattethoule, is the most ancient in Caen. It runs finally into the Courseulles road; but some way before this it opens into the Place and Promenade St. Julien. The little grey church stands in one corner, and is not remarkable. Inside, it is rather special and

original, but it has been spoiled by attempts at restoration. A charter of Richard Cœur-de-Lion speaks of it as the Monastery of St. Julien in 1189, but at that time the word *monasterium* seems to have been used in speaking of churches and even of chapels. St. Julien was in the gift of the Knights Templars of Voismer; but at the suppression of their order, in 1312, it was given to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. This church preserved till the end of the sixteenth century the ancient custom of liberating a caged dove on the Festival of Pentecost, during the chanting of the *Veni Creator*. Also, from openings made in the vaulting, there were thrown over the assistants at the service seven different kinds of flowers, and even flaming torches.

The Promenade St. Julien is a shaded walk into the town. About midway down there is a good view of the Abbaye aux Hommes: the Promenade ends on the Place St. Martin, and leads thence into the Rue Ecuyère, just in front of Duke William's abbey; but there is a sad deserted look about this Promenade St. Julien. It is the present site of public executions. These used formerly to take place on the Place St. Sauveur, or Place au Vieux Marché, where criminals are still publicly exposed.

Leaving the Promenade St. Julien, a turning on the right leads us to the Rue de Bagatelle. There are several nursery-gardens about here, filled, when we saw them, with exquisite standard roses in full flower. The riding-school, a large establishment, is in this street, and at the end of it is the old Church of St. Nicholas. Excepting the tower, this is considered by Monsieur de Caumont to be an entirely unaltered church of the eleventh century. It is very sad to

see its present state ; it is used partly as a stable, and also as a store for forage. It seems wonderful that, instead of building modern churches, the authorities of Caen should not restore this interesting church to its original destination.

Some very quaint and picturesque bits are to be found rather above St. Pierre, near the streets l'Amontoir de la Poissonnerie and Puis-ès-Bottes. From hereabouts, in a low light, the grey-green of the *flèche* and upper part of the tower of St. Pierre is most beautiful ; below the stone assumes warmer tints. Beyond these streets is the Rue des Chanoines, and from this street in the early morning a charming view of St. Etienne is to be seen, the grey towers framed between trees on each side of the street.

South-east of Caen, in a line with Allemagne, is the plain on which was fought, in 1047, the decisive battle of Val-ès-Dunes. It was the first pitched battle of William the Bastard, and in it he taught the rebellious Saxons of the Bessin, and his Danish subjects of Coutances, that henceforth he was their master. In this battle King Henry I. of France espoused the cause of William, and fought bravely. Wace gives a most spirited and interesting account of Val-ès-Dunes in the "Roman de Rou."

Diligences go several times a day to Courseulles and Doûvres—where there is a very remarkable church, and also close by the chapel of La Délivrande—of Bernières, St. Aubin, Lion, Langrune, Trouville, Villers, Houlgate, Beuzeval, Cabourg-sur-Dives ; and many Caennais go out to one or other of the smaller of these watering-places several times in the week for bathing.

We were anxious to see Cabourg and Dives, and we drove there in the grey of the early morning. The road lay beside

the river, from which a soft grey mist rose slowly, shrouding the city behind us with a silver veil. Gradually the sun rose higher behind the avenue of trees opposite, and now through the mist, opal tinted as the sun's rays reached it, the spires and towers of the grand old city seemed transfigured, looming gigantic through the silver veil which had already lifted from the trees and shipping in the foreground.

Soon after this we quitted the river and its shady avenues, and passed through a most fertile country, the road bordered by hawthorn hedges and grassy banks, and shaded by the tall trees growing up behind them. Every now and then we came to a *château*, showing a high-pitched roof and rows of narrow windows, at the end of a long stiff avenue; but everywhere, as far as eye could reach, were the inevitable apple-orchards, laden with scarlet and golden fruit.

In some places the crop of barley or wheat below had been cut, and the ground was being weeded by women for another sowing, but generally the golden grain was waving pleasantly beneath the fruit-laden trees. As we drew near the sea, the trees became stunted and the ground sandy, and soon we came to waste ground with sand-hills beyond it, and beyond them the shining ocean.

We reached Dives about half-past ten o'clock. Our driver had told us, when we engaged his *voiture*, that his mother and daughter lived in a pretty cottage at Dives, and that if we chose we could breakfast there more quietly and comfortably than at the *Hôtel* of Guillaume le Conquérant.

We agreed to do this, and he drove up to a pretty cottage in sight of the river, with a garden in front. Great plots of marigolds and clove pinks grew under the open windows. Round one of them was a jasmine starred with blossoms,

but on almost every other bit of wall hung peaches, nectarines, and apricots glowing in the warm sunlight.

A pretty, blushing girl was opening the gate, smiling all over in the delight of seeing us ; and an old woman, dressed in black, came waddling up the grey garden path. She took a motherly tone at once.

“Tiens,” she said to our driver, after she had made us each a dignified courtesy, “why, Pierre, my lad, thou art before thy hour. I have not yet made the salad. Well, by the time monsieur and madame have seen the garden and looked at the apricots we shall be ready.”

And by the time we had inspected the garden and been taken by the pretty grand-daughter into every room upstairs and down, of the charming cottage—which the old madame was anxious we should take for the remainder of the season—madame herself called from the foot of the stairs that we were *servis*.

That little breakfast was charming, a picture to live in memory like our open-air banquet on the banks of the Seine at Tancarville. The old lady sat down with us and carved, and her sweet grand-daughter waited.

There was a little round table daintily laid in the midst of the room ; the windows were open, and the sweet, bright sunshine and flower-scents came streaming in, and with them thirsty bees from the hives in the garden, jealous for the apricots which madame had gathered in our honour, and which glowed in a nest of vine-leaves on our table. Everything was delightful ; our soup, and cold chicken, and salad, and vin ordinaire, seemed exquisite fare in such surroundings.

After breakfast we walked along the straggling street of

fishermen's cottages to the church. There is a little left of the original eleventh-century building, but the chief part is much later. There is the carved wooden Christ, said to have been found in the sea, as well as the cross on which it hangs; and also the list of the barons and knights who accompanied William on his expedition to England.

There are some curious sixteenth-century houses at Dives, near the Place. The hotel itself is old, and in it is shown the room occupied by Madame de Sévigné, with some of the original furniture.

We went up a steep hill which lies on one side of the village. Up the side of this cliff we saw quantities of sea-buckthorn, with its sticky gold-coloured berries and grey-green leaves. The cliffs are of a singular grey tint, suggestive of river-mud deposit. There is a very extensive view from the top; here stands the column which M. de Caumont has erected to commemorate the conquest of England. It is certain that William remained a month at the mouth of the Dives, collecting his ships and his army. In those days the sea was nearly a mile from the village. The Point of Cabourg seems only to have formed the bay that now exists since the beginning of the century. The river divides and makes a figure of eight at low water; the harbour is too small now for any but fishing-boats. We got ferried across the river by some picturesque fishermen, and then had a pleasant walk over the wide-stretching sands to Cabourg.

We found a pleasant, sociable gathering of Parisians under the striped awning on the sands at Cabourg; the ladies chatting merrily over their embroidery, the older ones looking even stouter and more unwieldy than they

had looked at Etretat. Gentlemen were scarce, and were almost all in bathing costume, some seemingly fresh and dripping from the water, in spite of which they were quite content to sit chatting with the ladies under the awning near the sea. There were more children here than we had remarked at any of the other watering-places, and they seemed extremely sociable and happy. There is a large hotel and a grand casino, with a theatre in the middle of it, and there are plenty of nice-looking, newly built houses ; but one cannot say that Cabourg is a very attractive place, although it is near much that is charming on the way along the coast to Trouville : and the broad sands must make the bathing very pleasant. Dives, though doubtless not so healthy from the muddy state of its river, is yet far more interesting than Cabourg.

We drove home in the cool of the evening, delighted with our day. Caen seemed to look grander than ever in the waning light, as we once more reached the poplar-bordered Orne.

There is another delightful excursion to be made from Caen, which may be accomplished in a day ; only it is a long and fatiguing day's work. We leave Caen by its northern side, and for some time the road mounts steeply. We pass through St. Contest, which has an interesting old church, several other villages, and then cross a little river, on the left bank of which is Lasson.

There is a noble château here of the time of François I., but, like most works of the Renaissance period, it is more remarkable in its details than as a whole. It is rich in mouldings, medallions, and friezes ; the windows, chimneys, the *tourelle* above, and the octagonal staircase tower, are

all full of effect. On the principal façade is an inscription in large letters, which no antiquary has as yet been able to explain—

“Spero Lacon et asses perleu.”

The river Orne flows round the park. Not far from Lasson we come to the church of Thaon, or Than; it is very interesting, although it is no longer used as a church; it was built in the time of Henry I., and has one of the oldest of the hollow stone spires of Normandy.

Two miles or more farther on is Le Fresne Camilly, with its beautiful church; but the château here has been lately rebuilt.

We next come to Pierrepont. On the banks of a little stream here is the Château de Lantheuil, of the time of Louis XIII.

But the most interesting and complete of all these purely domestic châteaux is the Château Fontaine-Henri, about a mile and a half from Thaon. It seems to have been built at various periods, and yet the effect is most complete and perfect.

The right side dates probably from the fifteenth century; it is flanked by two square towers, one of which has remarkable mouldings. The other side, that of François I., has a very high roof and lofty chimney. There is an elegant *tourelle* at the angle of the pavilion, and at the other angle a loftier tower with a conical roof. On one of the windows of the left wing is the inscription “1537, nescüt.” The front of the building is covered profusely with arabesques, medallions, scrolls, friezes, canopies, statues in bas-relief, worked with extraordinary care and skill. Above a

door in the staircase leading to the apartments is a half-length figure of Judith holding the head of Holofernes in her left hand ; her right hand rests on her sword :—

“ On voit icy le pourtraict
De Judith La Vertueuse
Come par un Hautain faict
Couppa La Teste Fvmeuse
D’Holopherne qui L’Heureuse
Jerusalem eut defaict.”

The style and delicacy of carving on this building resemble those on the tomb of Cardinal d’Amboise.

Fontaine-Henri is a very fine building, and also a delightful specimen of the dwelling of a French nobleman in the latter part of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth. It was then in possession of the Harcourts. The chapel is of the thirteenth century.

Farther on still is about the most interesting château in Normandy—Creully, the Castle, as it called itself, *par excellence*.

This was once one of the strongest fortresses in Normandy, but it is now used as a dwelling-house. The Castle has evidently been built at different periods, but some of it doubtless belongs to the epoch of Robert of Gloucester. Originally it seems to have been a square building. There are still on its northern side some curious vaulted roofs, reaching to the floor in a complete semicircle. The donjon is undoubtedly old, but there is sixteenth-century work in the façade ; the towers are not older than the fifteenth century.

Seen from the river-side, Creully is most picturesque. Its history is specially interesting to English people.

Its first remarkable lord was Hamon of Morigny, surnamed "Hamon aux Dents." Mr. Freeman says, "Hamon Dentatus became the forefather of men famous in British as well as in Norman history." Hamon, and his brother Guillerin, were foremost in the famous revolt of the Bessin against William the Bastard. They both fell, fighting valiantly in the battle of Val-ès-Dunes, near Caen. Hamon's son, Robert Fitz-Hamon, remained faithful to William, and, after the Conquest, was rewarded by a grant of English land, and the earldom of Gloucester and Bristol. He performed prodigies of valour at the battle of Hastings. He built Cardiff Castle, and overawed the wild inhabitants of South Wales. In one of the subsequent Norman battles he was wounded by an arrow, and became imbecile, which, says the chronicle, "was a judgment for that he had contributed with all his might to the taking of Bayeux when the church was destroyed by fire with the rest of the town." He fell at the battle of Tinchebrai in 1106; one of his daughters, Mabel, married Robert de Kent, natural son of Henry I. of England, and took to her husband the lordships of Creully and Thorigny, as well as the earldom of Gloucester.

This Robert de Kent was the famous Robert of Gloucester. He fortified the Château de Creully, and made it one of the strongest places in Normandy. In the fourteenth century the English took possession of the Castle, although its lord, Richard of Creully, had dismantled it in the hope that they might pass it by. Some time after this, Richard, who seems to have been a degenerate descendant of Hamon Dentatus, retook the castle with the help of his neighbours, but it did not remain long in the possession of its natural owners.

In 1417, when Henry V. overran Normandy, he gave the manor of Creully to an English knight named Harcourt de Vauclos, and the ancient lords of Creully only regained their rights after the battle of Formigny. In 1678 the château and the barony of Creully passed to Colbert, the minister of Louis XIV. He seems to have delighted in this quiet retreat on the banks of the river Seulles, and to have found refreshment and solace here from the wearying anxieties and perplexities which the intrigues of Louvois and the ingratitude of Louis XIV. had caused him. There are various legends of the crimes perpetrated by the ancient possessors of Creully, although perhaps not more than may be found attached to most of these very old Norman houses.

Not very far from the château are the ruins of the Priory of St. Gabriel. This was also founded by Robert of Gloucester, and is said to be the finest ecclesiastical ruin in Calvados. The donjon still remains, also a manor-house of the fifteenth century, and the choir of the ruined church. The great door is of the thirteenth century, but some of the ruin dates from the twelfth. It must have been a very rich specimen of Norman work. It is possible to go on from Creully beside the Seulles to Courseulles, a small bathing-place, not very interesting, but famous for its oyster-beds; there are upwards of a hundred of these at Courseulles.

There are some very interesting Romanesque churches in the small watering-places in the neighbourhood of Caen. At Luc there is a nave of the twelfth century, and at Lion-sur-Mer a remarkable and lofty tower of the same date. At Lion, too, there is a charming château of the Renaissance period: it is very elegant, with its tall slated roof and

picturesque *tourelles*, its bold staircase tower, and lofty chimneys.

The famous pilgrimage church of La Délivrande, at Doûvres, has been mostly rebuilt, but there is a little of the old work left in the arcades north and west. On the 14th of August, 1473, Louis XI. went on pilgrimage to La Délivrande, accompanied by Louis de Harcourt, Bishop of Bayeux and Patriarch of Jerusalem, by Louis de Bourbon, Admiral of France, and by the Sieur de Torcy, Grand Master of the Cross-bowmen.

A quaint little book, dated 1642, says that "Robert Cenalis, Bishop of Avranches, affirms that the first chapel of the Délivrande was built by St. Regnobert, the disciple and successor of St. Exupère, the first Bishop of Bayeux, to which city he was also the apostle, being sent there by his master, St. Clement, disciple and contemporary of St. Peter. But during the reign of Louis I., King of France, Norman barbarians and idolaters came from Norway, accompanied by the Danes, and made a descent into Gaul in the year 830, and after this made several other inroads, ravaging all Neustria. They profaned and burned all churches. "It was in the midst of these burnings and universal ravages that the chapel of the Délivrande was burnt and entirely ruined by Hoistine, the first leader of these infidels, who burned and pillaged the church of Bayeux. These more than brutal cruelties have caused to be inserted in the Litanies, the words, '*a furore Normanorum.*'

"Now the image of Notre-Dame, which was in the chapel of La Délivrande, remained buried under the ruins of the said chapel about two hundred years, that is to say, from the year 830 till the time of William II. of this name, and

seventh Duke of Normandy, who began to govern the province under the king of France, Henry I., at the beginning of the eleventh century.

“There lived at that time a lord named Baldwin, Count of the Bessin, who held his barony of Doûvres of the Bishop of Bayeux, the shepherd of which lord perceived that one of his rams often retired from the flock and ran to a place near the pasture, there with its foot and its horns struck and scraped the earth, and then, being tired, lay down on the place where is now the image of the Virgin in the chapel of the Délivrande. This ram never ate, and yet it was the fattest of the flock. The count, thinking that this was a warning sent from heaven, went to the spot, together with the nobility, with a holy hermit, and with a great crowd of people who ran thither from surrounding places.

“He commanded that the trench which the ram had begun to make should be laid open, and in it was found the image of Notre-Dame, more than eight hundred years ago. This image was carried in solemn procession with universal joy by all the people into the church of Doûvres, but was soon taken back by an angel to the place where it had been found.

“Then the count, understanding the Divine will, founded and caused to be built on the spot the chapel, which now exists, and gave it to messieurs of the chapter of Bayeux.”

The little book goes on to narrate the miraculous cures wrought by Notre-Dame de la Délivrande; also gives reasons for the presence of images in churches—reasons why they are venerable, and how they are to be regarded—reasons why they are to be kissed and touched with devotion—

reasons for pilgrimages, &c., and ends with the quaint quatrain—

“ Si l'amour de Marie
 En ton cœur est gravé,
 En tout temps ne t'oublie
 De lui dire un *Ave*.”

Overleaf is this notice from the printer to the reader—

“ To my Reader.—As I finished printing this book in the month of July, 1642, there came to the *Délivrande*, Isaac le Gros, shipmaster, Etienne Deschamps, pilot, Pierre Relay, Guillaume Roumission, and Guillaume le Gros, mariners, who have attested that on Friday the 11th of the said month and year, they having been taken by the Turks, and chained on board a galley for the space of three days, were miraculously delivered by the grace of God and by the intercession of Notre-Dame of the *Délivrande*. In witness of which they were come to the said place to return thanks to God and to the Holy Virgin, and had brought the chains with which they were bound, and have signed the aforesaid attestation, and placed it in the hands of the chaplain of this chapel.”

La *Délivrande* is still a favourite shrine for pilgrimages, and the church is filled with votive offerings and tablets.

At Langrune there is an interesting church of the thirteenth century, with a lovely tapering spire ; and near Bernières there is a very curious sunken road.

The first feeling on arriving at Caen is that the town is spacious and airy, but very dull ; and in truth, as soon as the Abbeys of William and Matilda, St. Pierre, and the Castle are visited, there seems little more to interest. Caen is certainly not so interesting a town as some others to walk about in,

nor can the walks or country near at hand compare with those of the towns farther west, still it is an excellent centre to stop in—there is no town in Normandy from which so much that is interesting can be so easily reached

It lacks the charm of Rouen, but it is much more restful to the tired traveller; the air is very healthy, and there is more than one cheap and good inn. The traveller who stays a day in Caen will leave it with comparative indifference: the traveller who stays there a fortnight, and visits all the marvellous churches and châteaux within reach, will leave Caen with affectionate regret. There are plenty of excellent shops, and there is a fine library to which the public have free access. What a boon this last is! In every provincial town in Normandy we found there was an excellent public library, and, in those we visited, most kind and courteous officials.

In Caen, too, there is a much better collection of pictures at the public gallery than there is in Rouen; specially one said to be a Perugino. It is very interesting on Sunday afternoons to see fathers and mothers showing their little children these pictures; the little girls in their full-bordered caps crammed with white satin bows, much more intelligent-looking than their close-cropped, bullet-headed brothers, dressed in imitation of a soldier's uniform or in the eternal grey blouse.

Picture-gazing over, the crowd streams out of the Hôtel de Ville, and divides itself for vespers among the different churches, and then re-assembles later in the Cours Caffarelli, or, should the band be playing, in the Place Royale. If all the shops were but closed so that one could believe every one was taking holiday, a French provincial

Sunday would be most delightful; however, both last year and the year before, we saw urgent notices in the churches of La Haute Normandie, signed by the Archbishop of Rouen, requesting all shopkeepers to give up Sunday trading.

Within a walk of Caen, dividing the commune of Baron from that of Fontaine Etoupefour, is a well-preserved remnant of the old Roman road that once traversed the arrondissements of Bayeux, Caen, and Falaise. At Fontaine Etoupefour there is a château of the time of Louis XI. or XII.: the pavilion over the entrance is said to be very interesting.

CALVADOS.

CHAPTER XVI.

FALAISE.



THE most delightful excursion to be made from Caen is to the ancient town of Falaise, the famous birth-place of William the Bastard. The country between Caen and Falaise is so lovely that it is a pity to go there and back by railway ; perhaps the best way is to go by rail, sleep at Falaise, and then drive back next day to Caen. It is only an hour's journey by rail.

We started early, and breakfasted at the little inn at Falaise, and then set out on our pilgrimage to the castle ; for we had been living so long in an atmosphere of "Guillaume le Conquérant," as the Normans call him, we had visited so many of the places made famous by his exploits, that he had become, especially in his own city of Caen, a hero to

us, and we approached the scene of his birth with both enthusiasm and reverence.

We visited first the picturesque Church of St. Gervais, standing in a Place with a fountain in the centre, interesting as having been consecrated in 1134 in the presence of King Henry I., Duke of Normandy. The principal doorway of the old Church of St. Gervais is most picturesque and full of colour, quite worthy the attention of an artist. Within, some of the pendants of the chapels are remarkable; but the church is being very badly restored; at present it is much disfigured with whitewash, and the architecture of the choir is very debased. After breakfasting at the inn we passed on through the quiet, sleepy little town to the Grande Place, where on one side is another spacious church, La Sainte Trinité, and in the centre of the grey open space, mounted on a high pedestal, the bronze statue of the hero of Falaise.

William is on horseback. His charger a massive Norman horse, is in the act of plunging forward, and the Duke, in a suit of chain mail and a casque with open vizor, is looking round at his imaginary soldiers, and waving them on with lance and pennon grasped in his right hand; his casque is surmounted by the ducal crown.

It is a most powerful and spirited conception, and it impressed us strangely. Gazing at this statue, one is able to realise the gigantic mental power of the man, who, though he could only sign his name at Rouen with a cross, could quell the power of his fierce Viking barons as well as the external foes of his dukedom, and conquer such a kingdom as England. Mr. Freeman, in his "History of the Norman Conquest," has so fully grasped and appreciated the cha-

acter of this master of his fellows, that the best preparation for a visit to the Castle of Falaise is to read some extracts from his "Character of William the Conqueror."

"William, king of the English and Duke of the Normans, bears a name which must for ever stand forth among the foremost of mankind. No man that ever trod this earth was ever endowed with greater natural gifts; to no man was it ever granted to accomplish greater things. If we look only to the scale of a man's acts, without regard to their moral character, we must hail in the victor of Val-ès-Dunes, of Varaville, and of Senlac the restorer of Normandy, the conqueror of England—one who may fairly claim his place in the first rank of the world's greatest men. No man ever did his work more effectually at the moment; no man ever left his work behind him as more truly an abiding possession for all time. And when we consider all the circumstances of his life, when we judge him by the standard of his own age, above all, when we compare him with those who came after him in his own house, we shall perhaps be inclined to dwell on his great qualities, on his many undoubted virtues, rather than to put his no less undoubted crimes in their darkest light. As we cannot refuse to place him among the greatest of men, neither will a candid judgement incline us to place him among the worst of men. If we cannot give him a niche among pure patriots and heroes, he is quite as little entitled to a place among mere tyrants and destroyers. William of Normandy has no claim to a share in the pure glory of Timoleôn, Ælfred, and Washington; he cannot even claim the more mingled fame of Alexander, Charles, and Cnut; but he has even less in common with the mere enemies of their species, the Nabuchodonosers, the Swends, and the Bonapartes,

whom God has from time to time sent as simple scourges of a guilty world.

“Happily there are few men in history of whom we have better materials for drawing the portrait. We see him as he appeared to admiring followers of his own race ; we see him also as he appeared to men of the conquered nation who had looked on him and lived in his household. We have to make allowance for flattery on the one side ; we have not to make allowance for calumny on the other. Assuredly William’s English subjects did not love him ; but they felt a sort of sullen reverence for the King who was richer and mightier than all the Kings that were before him. In speaking of him, the chronicler writes, as it were, with downcast eyes and bated breath, as if he were hardly dealing of a man of like passions with himself, but was rather drawing the portrait of a being of another nature. Yet he holds the balance fairly between the dark and the bright qualities of one so far raised above the common lot of man. He does not conceal his crimes and his oppressions ; but he sets before us the merits of his government and the good peace that he made in this land ; he judicially sums up what was good and what was evil in him ; he warns men to follow the good, and to avoid the evil ; and he sends him out of the world with a charitable prayer for the repose of his soul. And at the moment when he wrote, it was no marvel if the chronicler was inclined to dwell rather on the good than on the evil. The crown of William passed to one who shared largely in his mere intellectual gifts, but who had no fellowship with the greater and nobler elements of his character.

“To appreciate William the Conqueror, we have but to cast our glance onwards to William the Red. We shall then

understand how men, writhing under the scorpions of the son, might look back with regret to the whips of the father. We can understand how, under his godless rule, men might feel kindly towards the memory of one who never wholly cast away the thoughts of justice and mercy, and who, in his darkest hours, had somewhat of the fear of God before his eyes.

“ In estimating the character of William, one feature stands out pre-eminently above all others. Throughout his career we admire in him the embodiment, in the highest degree that human nature will allow, of the fixed purpose and the unbending will. . . . Whatever the will of William decreed, he found a means to bring it about. Whatever his hand found to do, he did it with all his might. As a warrior, as a general, it is needless to sound his praises. . . . Others beside him could have led the charge at Val-ès-Dunes; others beside him could have chosen the happy moment for the ambush at Varaville; others beside him could have endured the weariness of the long blockade beneath the donjon of Brionne. . . . But none in his own age, and few in any age, have shown themselves like him masters of every branch of the consummate craft of the statesman. Calm and clearsighted, he saw his object before him; he knew when to tarry and when to hasten, he knew when to strike and how to strike, and how to use alike the noblest and the vilest of men as his instruments. Utterly unscrupulous, though far from unprincipled, taking no pleasure in wrong or oppression for its own sake, always keeping back his hands from needless bloodshed, he yet never shrank from force or fraud, from wrong or bloodshed or oppression, when they seemed to him the straightest paths to

accomplish his purpose. His crimes admit of no denial, but, with one single exception, they never were wanton crimes. And when we come to see the school in which he was brought up, and the men he had to deal with from childhood, our wonder really ought to be that his crimes were not infinitely blacker. His personal virtues were throughout life many and great. We hear much of his piety, and we see reason to believe that his piety was something more than the mere conventional piety of lavish gifts to monasteries. Punctual in every exercise of devotion, paying respect and honour of every kind to religion and its ministers, William showed, in two ways most unusual among the princes of that age, that his zeal for holy things was neither hypocrisy, nor fanaticism, nor superstition. Like his illustrious contemporary on the Imperial throne, he appeared as a real ecclesiastical reformer, and he allowed the precepts of his religion to have a distinct influence on his private life. He was one of the few princes of that age perfectly free from the guilt of simony. His ecclesiastical appointments for the most part do him honour; the patron of Lanfranc and Anselm can never be spoken of without respect. In his personal conduct he practised at least one most unusual virtue: in a profligate age he was a model of conjugal fidelity. He was a good and faithful friend, an affectionate brother, we must perhaps add too indulgent a father. And strong as was his sense of religion, deep as was his reverence for the Church, open-handed as was his bounty to her ministers, no prince that ever reigned was less disposed to yield to ecclesiastical usurpations. . . . While all Europe rang with the great strife of Pope and Cæsar, England and Normandy remained at peace under

the rule of one who knew how, firmly and calmly, to hold his own against Hildebrand himself. . . .

“We are too apt to look on William as simply the Conqueror of England ; but so to do is to look at him only in his most splendid, but, at the same time, his least honourable aspect. William learned to become Conqueror of England only by first becoming the Conqueror of Normandy and the Conqueror of France. . . . He turned a jealous over-lord (Henry I. of France) into an effective ally against his rebellious subjects, and he turned those rebellious subjects into faithful supporters against that jealous over-lord. He came to his Duchy under every disadvantage. At once bastard and minor, . . . he was throughout the whole of his early life beset by troubles, none of which were of his own making ; and he came honourably out of all. The change which William wrought in Normandy was nothing less than a change from anarchy to good order. . . .

“In the face of every obstacle, the mighty genius of the once-despised Bastard raised himself and his principality to a place in the eyes of Europe such as Normandy and its prince had never held before. . . . He shared, indeed, in the fierce passions of his race, and, in one or two cases, his wrath hurried him, or his policy beguiled him, into acts at which humanity shudders. At all stages of his life, if he was debonair to those who would do his will, he was beyond measure stern to those who withstood it. Yet, when we think of all that he went through, of the treachery and ingratitude which he met with on every side, . . . we shall see that it is not without reason that his panegyrist praises his general forbearance and cle-

mency. . . . The reign of William as Duke of the Normans was prosperous and honourable in the highest degree. Had he never stretched forth his hand to grasp the diadem which was another's, his fame would not have filled the world as now it does, but he would have gone down to his grave as one of the best, as well as one of the greatest, rulers of his time.

“If we turn from William, Duke of the Normans, to



La Sainte Trinité, Falaise.

William, King of the English, we may, indeed, mourn that, in a moral sense, the fine gold has become dim ; but our admiration for mere greatness, for the highest craft of the statesman and the soldier, will rise higher than ever. No doubt he was highly favoured by fortune — nothing but an extraordinary combination of events

could have made the Conquest of England possible ; . . . but then none but such a man as William could have conquered England under any circumstances at all. He conquered and retained a land far greater than his paternal Duchy, and a land in which he had not a single native partisan : yet he contrived to put himself forward in the eye of the world as a legal claimant, and not as an unprovoked invader. We must condemn the fraud, but we cannot help

admiring the skill by which he made men believe that he was the true heir of England, shut out from his inheritance by a perjured usurper.

“Never was a more subtle web of fallacy woven by the craft of man; never did diplomatic ingenuity more triumphantly attain its end. He contrived to make an utterly unjust aggression bear the aspect, not only of righteous, but almost of holy warfare. . . .

“And, landed on English ground, with no rights but those of his own sword, with no supporters but his own foreign army, he yet contrived to win the English crown with every circumstance of formal legality. He was elected, crowned, and anointed like his native predecessors, and he swore at the hands of an English primate to observe the ancient laws of England. . . .

“None but a man like him could have held down both conquerors and conquered, and have made his will the only law for Norman and Englishman alike. . . . He put the finishing stroke to the work of Ecgberht, and made England the most united kingdom in Western Christendom. . . .

“All opposition was quelled by fire and sword; but when it was quelled, whenever and wherever William's rule was quietly accepted, his hand was heavy upon all smaller disturbers of the peace of the world. Life, property, female honour, stood indeed but a small chance while the process of the Conquest was going on; but, when William's work was fully accomplished, they were safer under him than they had ever been under England's native Kings. . . .

“Here, then, was a career through which none but one of the greatest of mankind could have passed successfully. . .

At no time of his life does William appear as one of those tyrants who actually delight in oppression, to whom the infliction of human suffering is really a source of morbid pleasure ; but human suffering was a matter about which he was utterly reckless,—he stuck at no injustice needed to carry out his purpose. . . .

“ We may well believe that, when he swore to govern his new subjects as well as they had been governed by their own kings, it was his full purpose to keep his oath. . . . But he could not govern England as he had governed Normandy ; he could not govern England as Cnut has governed England ; he could not himself be as Cnut, neither could his Normans be as Cnut’s Danes. He gradually found that there was no way for him to govern England save by oppressions, exactions, and confiscations, by the bondage or the death of the noblest of the land. . . . Northumberland was hard to be kept in order, and Northumberland was made a desert. . . . To lay waste Hampshire to make a hunting-ground was a blacker crime than to lay waste Northumberland to rid himself of a political danger. He could still be merciful when mercy was not dangerous ; but he had now learned to shed innocent blood without remorse, if its shedding seemed to add safety to his throne. The repeated revolts of Eadgar were forgiven as often as they occurred ; but Waltheof, caressed, flattered, promoted, was sent to the scaffold on the first convenient pretext. It is hardly superstitious to point out, alike with ancient and with modern authorities, that the New Forest became a spot fatal to William’s house, and that after the death of Waltheof his old prosperity forsook him. Nothing, indeed, occurred to loosen his hold on England ; but his last years

were spent in bickerings with his unworthy son, and in a petty border warfare, in which the Conqueror had for the first time to undergo defeat. At last he found his death-wound in an inglorious quarrel, in the personal commission of cruelties which aroused the indignation of his own age, and the mighty King and Conqueror, forsaken by his servants and children, had to owe his funeral rites to the voluntary charity of a loyal vassal, and within the walls of his own minster he could not find an undisputed grave."

It is curious to read this pendant to Mr. Freeman's opinion in a French translation from an old English chronicle: "He was a very wise and very rich king, humble towards God's servants, very hard to those who opposed his will. He kept England in such order, that even a weakly man could go everywhere in safety, with a bag of gold; but he caused every one who killed a stag or doe to lose both eyes. He forbade the taking of a wild boar or a hare. To see his love for game, one would have said he was the father of it. This displeased his barons, but he took no heed of their anger; they had to obey his orders, or they lost life, land, money, or the friendship of the king. What a pity that a man should by pride put himself above his fellow-men! However, Almighty God granted him pardon for his sins."

But, as we looked up at the warlike soldier on the grand Norman war-horse, we thought only of William the Bastard, the young, friendless Duke of Normandy, so strong in his own might that when only a boy, not yet invested with the ensigns of knighthood—and he received these from King Henry of France at the earliest age allowed by the laws of

chivalry—he took his own Castle of Falaise by storm from its treacherous governor, Thurston, who had garrisoned it with French soldiers against his Norman sovereign. William attacked it from the side of the town—it was impregnable, till the discovery of gunpowder, on the other—and carried it by a *coup de main*.

The part of the town which we had traversed is built on raised ground, which continues to mount up till it reaches the castle entrance. Here we went in through an arched gateway, and were told by a girl to amuse ourselves on the ramparts till her father, the *concierge*, should arrive. The view is most enchanting. The castle, which consists of a square stone keep, faced with broad, flat buttresses, and the huge, lofty round mass called Talbot's Tower, is built at the extreme verge of the rocky promontory, so that the ramparts seem to be part of the *falaise* itself, which descends from them in a sheer precipice. At the foot of this winds the lovely river Ante, shaded by trees, behind which rises another ridge of steep hills. Exactly opposite the castle is a yet steeper hill, detached from the others, and called Mont Mirat. It was on this steep *falaise* that Henry V. planted his cannon when he took the castle in 1418, after a siege of four months; but Mont Mirat cannot be seen from this side, for the keep rises from the rock itself, and forbids any passage round its walls.

The ramparts form a pleasant grassed walk, shaded by trees. There is a public day-school in the outside court of the castle, and also in a curious old chapel said to date from the twelfth century. By the time we had looked round us, the *concierge* arrived. He was a solemn, sad-looking man, but an enthusiast for the beauty of landscape.

He guided us first to the keep, of which only some of the walls remain, the centre being filled with broken rubbish. It was rather giddy work going up a plank without any hand-rail, from the broken ground below to the top of the walls. Round the inside of these there is a plank fixed with a slight rail to prevent one from falling over ; but it is very trying to the nerves.

We saw the little cell in which Arlette is said to have given birth to William, and read the absurd inscription within ; and then, a little farther on, we reached the angle of the donjon, and looked down out of a small double-headed window, its circular arches supported by a quaint Norman pillar, at the identical fountain where still the women and girls of Falaise come to wash in the stream,



Window in the Castle of Falaise.

and where Robert, then Count of Hiesmes, saw and grew enamoured of Arlette. He was only eighteen, and did not succeed to the dukedom of Normandy till four years later ; but tradition says that he sent at once to demand Arlette of her father, the tanner, and that he, having taken counsel with his brother, a holy hermit, yielded Arlette to her young lord. Robert seems always to have been faithful to his first love. She was treated as Countess of Hiesmes, and then as Duchess of Normandy ; and although it is said that Robert afterwards married Cnut's widowed sister Estritt, he never had a child by her, nor does he seem ever to have forsaken Arlette, or Herleva. After Robert's death Arlette married

Herlwin of Conteville, and by him became mother of William's two celebrated half-brothers Odo and Robert—Odo, afterwards the famous warrior-bishop of Bayeux, and Robert, Lord of Mortain, and, after the Conquest, Earl of Cornwall. .

Looking down from that height into the green valley surrounded on all sides by steep frowning rocks, and at the little arched entrance to the washing-place beside the Ante, it all seems like a fairy tale ; it is so hard to believe that centuries have come and gone, and that still the girls are washing in the self-same spot, and still there is the glistening tree-shaded river beside which the young prince beheld his love. But these thoughts are disturbed when wise antiquarians and historians tell us that the Falaise castle we stand in is not the castle-keep of William the Bastard ; and that even if he were born in the castle at all—and there is a doubt about this—that Arlette's bower would not have been in the donjon. Yet, even if these are not the identical stones, there must have been a window somewhere here, from which Robert was gazing when he first saw Arlette ; and one looks from the window again with faithful reverence down into the valley below, feeling a strong indignation against the wise disturbers of the belief of a lifetime.

Talbot's tower was founded by Henry V. after his conquest, when he left the famous Talbot here as Lord Warden of the Norman marches for about thirty years. The masonry of this tower is as remarkable as that at Lillebonne. It is more than a hundred feet high, and the massive walls are fifteen feet thick. We went up a winding staircase leading on to five stories : in the floor of each story there is a well, the

lowermost being a dungeon. On the top is a modern zinc roof, utterly out of harmony with the rest ; but from this the view of the surrounding country is magnificent—stretches of forest, just embrowned with the first touch of autumn, rising and falling with the lofty hills over which they are spread, opening here and there in vistas of grey mist—indications of a valley with a river rippling over a stony bed, at the foot of the rocky gorge almost hidden by the red-brown trees. Beyond are exquisite blue hills, so far off that their hue is of the tenderest, and melts into the sky-line far away.

Our taciturn guide waked up at this scene, and began to point out its beauties. He asked how we had come to Falaise.

“ Monsieur and madame were wrong, very wrong, to come by rail,” he said. “ What is it by voiture ?—an hour or so longer, perhaps. Bah ! what is an hour when people are out pleasure-seeking ? And the road by Villers and Harcourt is the road for travellers : there is nothing so fine in Normandy.”

We had not heard of this route, having been told of two others from Caen ; but our guide was positive, and when we looked at the map we saw that it was a possible road, although certainly not a direct one.

After this we came down from the tower, and went round to the other side of the castle. Here is the breach made by the cannon of Henri Quatre in 1559 : he took the place after a siege of seven days.

This is a very picturesque point. Trees grow in what must have been the inner moat ; and up the sides of the steep grassed descent below the breach are ferns in profusion.

But the grandest aspect of Falaise is from outside. Sitting at the foot of the *falaise*, from which the walls go up as if all were solid masonry, it looks gigantic and of impregnable strength. Gazing up at its frowning lofty walls, up the bare rugged crag on which even furze and heather seem to find it hard to keep a hold, one realises in a measure the savage omnipotence of those Norman lords in their own domains, and how their grasp of life and death over the dwellers in the hamlets scattered here and there among the trees beside



Washing-place beside the Ante.

the Ante was as much a reality as their right to slay the wild boars and wolves and stags in the forest land around the frowning rocks.

From here we went down to the Ante, to look at the washerwomen. Beside the river, sluiced out of its course for the convenience

of the washers, is the arched entrance we had seen from the top of the donjon; within it are huge square tanks, filled with bundles of clothes soaking, and plenty of white-capped washerwomen, under the sheds beside the tanks, bending over the water. They pay three sous per day for the use of these sheds, each bringing her own soap and *carrosse* to beat the soaped linen with. Some of the water is sluiced into open-air tanks without the archway, and at these the poorer women wash free of charge.

The effect, looking through the archway, was very picturesque; but, though we looked carefully, we could see no promise of an Arlette among the broad good-humoured faces of the washers. They all know the story, and talk about Arlette as if she were a living acquaintance. Evidently they are very proud of Duke William, and, like many of their countryfolk, they seem to consider that Englishmen must shrink from talking of the Conquest.

We found lovely nooks along the valley of the Ante, where the child William may have rambled with his mother; for he does not seem to have been nursed in the castle, but in the house of his mother's kinsfolk. It is said that William of Talvas, the fierce lord of Belesme, looked in at the cottage door one day, and cursed the babe, who, he said, would bring shame and ruin on him and his house. Three of the picturesque old gates of the town still exist; the most perfect is the *Porte des Cordeliers*.

There is so much natural beauty in Falaise and its environs, that it is a pity to consider its castle the only point of attraction. The *Faubourg St. Laurent*, built up and down the valley of the Ante, is charmingly picturesque, far more so than the *Faubourg of Guibray*, which used to be famous for its fair; but we heard last year that this had become quite insignificant. There is a pleasant walk in the ancient castle moat, and from the upper town one gets exquisite peeps into gardens dotted here and there in nooks on the steep rocks, with low stone walls overshadowed by huge fig-trees laden with fruit.

There are several interesting excursions to be made from Falaise to Longpré and other châteaux of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and also to the *Brèche-au-Diable*,

a most remarkable rent in the granite rock, the entrance to the gorge of St. Quentin.

The little river Laison flows at the bottom of this steep valley. A legend gives this account of its presence there.

St. Quentin was the first apostle of this country; and when he established himself, he built a church on the site of the present one. But in those days the rock was entire. Surrounded by the Laison, which flowed round its base, and not being able to find a passage through the granite, it spread its waters over the neighbouring plains in the shape of a lake. St. Quentin lived alone on his rock, and very rarely did any pious soul venture across the lake to pray in the newly built church. St. Quentin did not murmur, but he felt that his position hindered his apostolic labours. It is said that Satan became aware of the saint's uneasiness, and resolved to turn it to profit. One day he presented himself before the saint, and, without circumlocution, proposed to him to cleave the mountain in two, and thus give a passage to the river, and by this means facilitate the access of the neighbouring inhabitants. St. Quentin was surprised at the offer. "If I consent, O cursed one!" he answered, "what dost thou demand as payment?" "The soul of thine eldest daughter," said Satan. The saint shuddered, and was about to give a determined refusal, when he saw that the demon had already disappeared. But Satan returned with fresh proffers; and finally the saint consented to the bargain, but added to it two essential conditions: first, that as soon as the river flowed through the rock, the Evil One should bleach a skin, the right of naming which the apostle reserved to himself; and secondly, that he should fill with water a vase belonging to St.

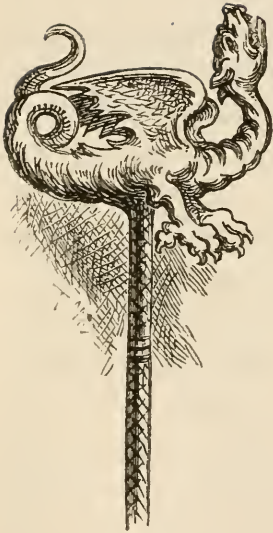
Quentin. The bargain was struck, and the rock was rent ; and then the saint produced a buckskin and a filter. Ever since the prodigious cleft has been called *La Brèche-au-Diable*.

On the summit of the rock of St. Quentin is the monument of Madame Marie Joly, the actress.

THE BESSIN.

CHAPTER XVII.

Arromanches—Bayeux.



THE country is much more richly wooded south and west of Caen than it is north and east. Towards Falaise there seems to be more forest land; but on the road to Bayeux we came to plenty of corn land largely interspersed with the red sarrasin, the grain (buckwheat) from which the detestable bread is made which constitutes so large a part of the food of the French peasant. We tasted this bread in little loaves, and thought it exactly like putty, both in flavour and texture. Sarrasin makes the flour used for *galettes*, which seem to take the place of bannocks in France, but are very inferior; there is a *galette* of very superior quality to be found in larger towns, but this is not made of sarrasin. It seems wonderful that such large tracts of ground should be used for such inferior produce—in even fertile districts, where one

would think a little good farming would soon treble the land in value, the cropping is poor—but of course the double system of cropping, which is frequent throughout Normandy, must be a great drain on the soil; and though the richly laden apple-boughs form an exquisite contrast to the waving fields of corn below, one fancies our grand, if monotonous, expanse of golden grain must in the end produce the most remunerative harvest.

It is possible to make a halt on the way to Bayeux to see the famous church of Norrey. As there is a station close by, the church is certainly worth seeing.

M. de Caumont says:—"The church of Norrey is indisputably one of the most remarkable in the department, and one is astonished that so sumptuous a building should have been erected in a parish, the population of which must always have been inconsiderable." The tower of Norrey is singularly beautiful with its tall narrow lancets. There is a tradition relating to this church, similar to that of the apprentice's window in the Church of St. Ouen at Rouen. The master or the father of the architect of Norrey had built the tower of the church at Bretteville l'Orgueilleuse (a village close by), and seeing the tower of Norrey make rapid progress, and fearing that it would throw his own tower into the shade, he was seized with so violent a fit of jealousy that he flung his pupil down from the top of the scaffolding. This is said to be the reason why the tower of Norrey was left unfinished.

On the high road to Bayeux, some way behind the great prison of Beaulieu, are the famous stone-quarries of Allemagne, from which came the Caen stone of Westminster Abbey and so many other of our ancient and modern

Gothic buildings. There is a large stretch of corn land near; but it strikes one with wonder that French farmers should so often parcel out their ground in a variety of small crops: one longs for the sight of a huge English corn-field, for the sake of variety. But, on the whole, the country between Caen and Bayeux is rich and fully cropped.

The country between Caen and Vire, or Les Bocages, as it is called, is said to be very beautiful, and it is well worth while to take the diligence from one town to the other; but we wished to see Bayeux first, as it seems to form a part of the history of William of Normandy. The view of the Cathedral, as we approached the town, is very impressive; but when we reached Bayeux station, and saw an omnibus with Arromanches painted thereon, a longing for sea-air and fresh breezes overcame our wish to examine the Cathedral and the tapestry. We had heard of Port-en-Bessin and of Asnelles, but not of Arromanches; and there is something as good as a fairy tale in a place one has never heard of; and as the day was delightful, we left the bulk of our luggage at the station and took our places in the little omnibus.

Long before we had really started on the road to Arromanches, we had grown well acquainted with the outside of the Cathedral and with the town of Bayeux; for we seemed to make a pilgrimage up and down its chief streets to take up passengers. At last we had taken up four, besides ourselves, and seemed quite closely packed. The omnibus could not be more than six feet long, four feet wide, and four feet high; presently, to our horror, it stopped again, and two more passengers appeared. We remonstrated, but the driver said eight was the complement of

passengers. The last-comer, a lady with both arms filled with toys, had literally to force her way through the passengers' knees to her seat. The laughter and joking were very merry: only one French gentleman, of the ancient régime, squeezed into the furthest corner, sulked and muttered that it was insupportable; but the others, all well-clad, well-behaved people, were most good tempered under the infliction, although two of the ladies were too fat for their own comfort or that of others. When we finally started, we had eight people inside, five bags of various sizes on the knees of the passengers, two huge baskets, toys, and sundry small packages. There was quite a chorus of relief when a fat lady and her buxom daughter got down at Tracy, or, rather, extricated themselves, for the exit was difficult.

It is a well-planted and charming road from Bayeux to Arromanches, and in spring it must be a perfect bower of apple-blossoms. The country is flat; the three spires of the Cathedral form a landmark for several miles; but the trees seemed larger, and the crops fuller, than any we had yet seen. Presently we came to an old château beside the road, standing back among its trees, and heard it was the Château de Tracy: it seemed to us we had somewhere heard that name before. The sulky Frenchman was disposed to be civil to us, and we asked him where we had better lodge, as he told us he stayed every season at Arromanches.

“Most of the inns are full,” he said; “but, if they can take you in, you will be very comfortable at the Auberge Chrétien.”

Chrétien and Tracy—we began to reflect; and then, as the road turned, and the little village, built chiefly on the

cliff, came in full view, with the blue sea curving into a bay between the outstretching points, right and left, we began to feel that we knew all about Arromanches, and should be quite at home there. So strong was this feeling that, before we left the charming little village on the cliff, we asked Madame Chrétien if there was any one of her people named Reine, as we had heard much in London of a Mademoiselle Reine Chrétien. But Madame Chrétien shook her head, and said she knew little of her husband's relations; he had some cousins at St. Aubin, she said, and it might be one of them.

The omnibus stopped at the *auberge*, and we went, as we were bid, into the kitchen, full of bright brass pans and a fragrant flavour of soup herbs.

Oh yes, we could have a room. We were to follow Marie; and then, if we would amuse ourselves on the *plage* for a little quarter of an hour, the room should be quite ready. A meek-faced, smiling old woman, her arms full of sheets, with such a quaint cap, close fitting, and a sort of white penthouse over the forehead, led us into a yard, surrounded on three sides by the white wooden inn; a gallery ran round the walls, leading down into the yard by a sort of ladder staircase. The old woman tripped up this quite nimbly, and opened one of the glass doors leading into the gallery. One would prefer to stay at the Auberge Chrétien in warm weather, for the sleeping-rooms certainly wear an *al fresco* character; however, they are very clean, most airy, and the one we occupied had an excellent bed; but our position reminded us of the Swiss family Robinson, and the lodging in the giant tree-branches.

As we went out along the one street of Arromanches, a

young lady passed us in full bathing costume. She was walking down to the sea, with a waterproof cloak over her arm, to throw on when she should emerge from the water. When we had got down on to the *plage*—a steep descent, for Arromanches is nearly all built far above the sea—we saw groups of ladies sitting reading or at needlework on the dry silvery sand, under the shade of small red-and-white striped tents. We heard that these tents could be hired for five francs per week, and that in the morning they are used as dressing-rooms or machines; but, as the sea at high tide dashes up against the wall of rock behind them, they can only be used at low water. The sands are exquisite—such firm, delightful walking. We stayed on them till the turn of the tide, watching the barelegged fisher-girls going out with their nets gracefully poised across the shoulders, their lengthened shadows glistening in the sand. Then we came back; and, climbing up at another point, found ourselves in the street again—beside a garden full of huge sunflowers, burnished by the glowing evening light, and beyond them appeared the fishing-boats, drawn up on the shelving beach, the sea glimmering like a quivering opal through the masts and ropes. Groups of girls and fishermen were enjoying an evening gossip among the boats.

We had tired ourselves out by this time; but we had been told that, although there was no regular table d'hôte at the Auberge Chrétien, dinner would not be ready much before seven.

When we went in, no one else had arrived; but they soon began to serve, lighting a candle for each group as gradually the guests assembled, and giving the same fare at different times to each—a good simple meal, admirably

cooked. We asked Madame Chrétien why she adopted this scattered system, instead of the ordinary table d'hôte.

"Ah," she said, "it is much more trouble, but my customers like it. What will you?"

After dinner we took a walk along the cliffs towards Asnelles. We heard that at low water the terrible Calvados rocks can be seen from here. The lights in the little village below came twinkling through the gloom, and a sound of merry voices. As we came back, we saw the women who



A Gossip on the Beach.

had been busy washing talking to some fishermen ; a young, bright-eyed girl was teasing an old fisherman, and he was threatening playfully to strike her with a huge red oar from the boat near which they were all standing.

One notices at Arromanches the contrast between the newly built village, which seems a creation of so few years ago, and the old-world, simple manners of its people. There is so much happy leisure ; all is so peaceful and quiet—a different quiet from the hushed solemnity of Bayeux. This was more like the quiet of flowers, silent yet how eloquent.

As we passed the chief inn facing the sea, some one—a man—began to sing a mournful German air, so tenderly, with such a sad, heart-wrung accent, that it was not possible to stand and listen : it seemed that no one could be simulating such an anguish. One summoned up the stricken withered look that must belong to such a voice, and a touch of human misery came into the scene which we had been fancying a new Eden—a place primitive and humble enough, but yet we had thought full of peace.

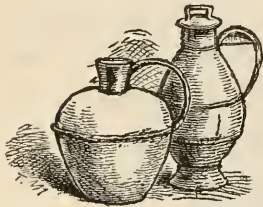
Next morning we went down to see the bathing—a very merry scene. Every one seems to come down, when the tide is nearly high, to the sands in his or her bathing-dress, and then, leaving a cloak just out of reach of the sea, runs into the water ; before long it grew so very rough, that all but the most adventurous retired, for swimming was almost impossible.

For those who really love bathing, and want a quiet yet not quite dull spot to enjoy it in, I heartily recommend Arromanches—as yet seemingly unspoiled by English visitors. Our hotel bill seemed to us a primitive curiosity, and on the bill is a notice that M. Chrétien takes pensionnaires—of course at a cheaper rate. M. Chrétien keeps the butcher's shop opposite, so perhaps he can afford to charge more moderately ; still, considering the present price of food in France, the charges seem absurdly low, especially as both dinner and breakfast were quite as good as in the larger towns, and quite as plentiful, although there were not so many courses.

We should have liked to linger in Arromanches ; but Bayeux was before us, and beyond that Mont St. Michel and Vire—all dearly prized names, long treasured up as

places of pilgrimage. So once more we took our seats in the little stuffy omnibus, and said good-bye to the Auberge Chrétien, having first got a lesson from kind, dark-eyed Madame Chrétien in her kitchen on the art of cooking "un œuf sur le plat." Certainly no one that we met with in Normandy equalled her in the production of this dish : perhaps her excellent cream had something to do with its goodness.

On our way back to Bayeux we overtook a milkwoman, mounted on a donkey, with a huge brass can slung pannier-wise beside her. Another woman walked along, carrying the great brass vessel on her left shoulder, slung by a rope which passed over the head and round the right arm. The milk-vessels in this part of the country are very quaint in form.



Milk-cans.

As soon as we reached Bayeux, we went to the Cathedral. It is very splendid and impressive, seen from the open space outside : the two western towers have still their spires of the twelfth century ; but that on the central tower, also old, was destroyed, and replaced, in the time of Louis XIV., by an unsightly dome. In the process of removing this, a few years ago, under the guidance of an ignorant architect, the central tower and its supporting piers were doomed to destruction ; but, fortunately, before the plan could be executed, another architect with more resources stepped forward, and pledged himself to raise the new metal spire on to the tower without injury to the building. This has been done : the spire is now complete, and groups well with those at the west end of the church.

The west front is fine, but has been much mutilated ; but the south portal is magnificent in the richness of its decorations. We went in at the west doorway : there are steps down into the nave, as at Fécamp, Gravelle, and elsewhere. It is difficult to describe the richness of detail in the architecture of the nave. One stands bewildered, pondering the immense labour and thought that devised and executed this infinite variety of carved stonework. Massive pillars, with richly worked capitals, support round arches : the rich Norman archbands of these, and the carving on the spandrels between them, are most remarkable. There is no triforium gallery in the nave ; instead is a trefoil-headed arcade ; the clerestory windows are long narrow lancets. This part of the Cathedral was probably built by Henry I. The first church is said to have been built by St. Exupère. After him St. Regnobert built a larger one. Then William's half-brother Odo built a grand cathedral. He began it in 1047 ; it was consecrated in 1077, and nearly burned down by Henry I. in 1106. Of Odo's church only the lower part of the western towers and the crypt remain. The columns of the choir, and those at the east end of the nave, are very beautiful, and the workmanship of the capitals is marvellous : this part of the Cathedral was built by an Englishman, Henry of Beaumont, Bishop of Bayeux, from 1183 to 1205. It is said that in this cathedral there are 2,976 capitals, all sculptured differently.

“ Two thousand nine hundred and seventy-six,” our little wizen-faced, bright-eyed guide kept saying to himself. “ Ah, they don't build such churches nowadays ; but, then, there never was such a cathedral as Bayeux.”

We echoed his admiration, and then asked if he had seen Amiens.

He shrugged his shoulders.

“But, no. I have heard there is some good glass there, but so there is here; and if our windows are modern, they are of the best; and then two thousand nine hundred and seventy-six capitals, all different—bah! where is the cathedral that has them?”

We went down into the crypt, which is doubtless part of the Cathedral, built by Bishop Odo. Some French authorities assert that part of this crypt is of the seventh century: it is very solemn and impressive, and is in excellent preservation. The roof is supported on twelve pillars, with rough capitals; and on the spaces between the arches is a series of groups in fresco—an angelic concert, each angel playing on some musical instrument. There are several tombs here of Bishops of Bayeux, with effigies sculptured thereon: probably this crypt escaped spoliation at the Revolution. One of these monuments is to Jehan de Boissay. It was after the death of this bishop, on Easter-day, April 3, 1412, that, in turning up the ground under the pavement of the high altar, to dig his grave, the existence of the crypt was discovered; but there seems to be no record of the length of time during which it had lain concealed. The youngest daughter of the Conqueror, Agatha, was buried at Bayeux. She was betrothed to Alfonso, king of Galicia; but she shrank from this marriage, and prayed that she might die a virgin. She is said to have spent so much time in prayer, that “her knees were brawned.” She died half-way on her journey to Spain, and was brought back to Bayeux.

There is a boldness of conception in this crypt which

makes one regret the destruction of the rest of Odo's work ; it is a striking contrast, in its rough-hewn simplicity, to the elaborate sculpture of the grand cathedral overhead. Doubtless the warlike bishop Odo, who reigned in the see of Bayeux for fifty years, meant to have been buried in his own cathedral ; but he never returned from his crusade against the infidels, and was buried at Palermo, in Sicily.

Our lively little guide told us that he was not the real sacristan : *he* had gone on a holiday for a few days, and had taken with him the keys of the *trésor*. We could not, therefore, see the famous ivory casket taken by Charles Martel from the Saracens, or the chasuble, maniple, and stole of St. Regnobert ; however, we could see the chapter-house and the sacristy itself. The chapter-house is very light and graceful, of thirteenth-century work, and there is a curious inlaid pavement. Our guide then took us up a staircase at the east end, unlocked a door, and we were in a vestiary, with priests' and choristers' cassocks hanging round its dark wooden walls ; from this a winding staircase took us up to a light, airy room above, filled with much interesting lumber—a variety of ecclesiastical curiosities. We were first shown the charter, the pride of our little guide's heart—a huge oaken press of the thirteenth century. He told us an English artist had been days and days drawing it, the time consumed being the strong point of the story. Many fragments still remain of designs once painted on this press in colour ; the hinges and locks are very remarkable.

There is a quaint bronze dragon of St. Vigor, drawn at the beginning of this chapter, mounted on a worked brass staff ; this last is said to have belonged to St. Louis. The dragon is borne in procession on Holy Thursday. There

is also a curious iron folding-seat of the thirteenth century, and a bronze candelabra of Louis-Treize work; some armour; wooden shrines that probably contained relics before the Revolution; at that time the relics of Bayeux were brought forth from the Cathedral, publicly burned by the heathen mob of republicans, and the ashes scattered into the river Aure.

The relics of Bayeux bring up the memory of Harold, who, according to the tapestry, took the oath of allegiance to William at Bayeux, and, according to Wace in the "Roman de Rou," took the oath on relics concealed on the altars on which he swore. Some of the concealed relics on which the English hero is said to have sworn were worn by William round his neck, on the famous 28th of September, 1066.

Wace—he seems never to have called himself Robert—was born in Jersey in the twelfth century. He studied at Caen, finished his studies in France, and came back to Caen, where Henry I. held a brilliant court. In 1160 he finished the "Roman de Rou," or of the Normans, and dedicated it to Henry II., who, in recompense, gave him a prebend's stall in the Cathedral of Bayeux. Wace died in England in 1184. He relates minutely the taking of the oath—

" Quant Héraut suz sa main tendi,
 La main trembla, la char frémi,
 Poiz a juré et a promi
 Li come homme ki eschari :
 Ele la fille al Duc prendra,
 Et Angleterre al Duc rendra."

Then, according to Wace, the Duke shows Harold the awful nature of his oath by uncovering the relics—

“ A Héraut a dedenz montréal,
 Sor kels cors sainz il a juré.
 Héraut forment s'espoanta
 Des relikes k'il li monstra.”

Roman de Rou.

The account in the “Roman” tallies with the picture ; but Lord Lytton's description in “Harold” is not quite the same.

“On entering the lofty hall, he (Harold) beheld William



Bayeux Tapestry : Harold taking the Oath.

seated in state ; his sword of office in his hand, his ducal robe on his imposing form, and with that peculiarly erect air of the head which he assumed upon all ceremonial occasions. Behind him stood Odo of Bayeux, in aube and pallium ; some score of the Duke's greatest vassals ; and at a little distance from the throne-chair, was what seemed a table, or vast chest, covered all over with cloth of gold. Small time for wonder or self-collection did the Duke give the Saxon.

“ ‘Approach, Harold,’ said he, in the full tones of that voice so singularly effective in command—‘approach, and without fear as without regret. Before this noble assembly—all witnesses of thy faith and all guarantees of mine—I summon thee to confirm by oath the promises thou hast made me yesterday; namely, to aid me to obtain the kingdom of England on the death of King Edward, my cousin; to marry my daughter Adeliza; and to send thy sister hither, that I may wed her, as we agreed, to one of my worthiest and proudest counts. Advance thou, Odo, my brother, and repeat to the noble Earl the Norman form by which he will take the oath.’

“Then Odo stood forth by that mysterious receptacle covered with the cloth of gold, and said briefly, ‘Thou wilt swear, as far as is in thy power, to fulfil thy agreement with William, Duke of the Normans, if thou live and God aid thee; and, in witness of that oath, thou wilt lay thy hand upon the reliquaire,’ pointing to a small box that lay on the cloth of gold.

“All this was so sudden—all flashed so rapidly upon the Earl, whose natural intellect, however great, was, as we often have seen, more deliberate than prompt—so thoroughly was the bold heart, which no siege could have sapped, taken by surprise and guile—so paramount, through all the whirl and tumult of his mind, rose the thought of England irrevocably lost, if he, who alone could save her, was in the Norman dungeons—so darkly did all Harold’s fears and just suspicions quell and master him, that mechanically, dizzily, dreamily, he laid his hand on the reliquaire, and repeated, with automaton lips,—‘If I live, and if God aid me to it’ Then all the assembly repeated solemnly,

‘God aid him!’ And suddenly, at a sign from William, Odo and Raoul de Tancarville raised the gold cloth, and the Duke’s voice bade Harold look below. As when man descends from the gilded sepulchre to the loathsome charnel, so at the lifting of that cloth all the dread ghastliness of Death was revealed. There, from abbey and from church, from cyst and from shrine, had been collected all the relics of human nothingness in which superstition adored the mementoes of saints divine; there lay, pell-mell and huddled, skeleton and mummy—the dry, dark skin, the white gleaming bones of the dead, mockingly cased in gold and decked with rubies; there grim fingers protruded through the hideous chaos, and pointed towards the living man ensnared; there the skull grinned scoff under the holy mitre. . . .

“‘At that sight,’ say the Norman chronicles, ‘the Earl shuddered and trembled.’

“‘Awful, indeed, thine oath, and natural thine emotion,’ said the Duke; ‘for in that cyst are all those relics which religion deems the holiest in our land. The dead have heard thine oath, and the saints even now record it in the halls of heaven. Cover again the holy bones.’” *

Wace tells the whole story of the Conquest in his “Roman,” especially that of the battle, in a surprisingly graphic manner; but he makes no mention of the tapestry. The earliest record of this is in a list of church furniture, 1476:—“Une tente très-longue et étroite de toile à broderie de ymages et eserptaux faisons representations du conquist d’Angleterre; laquelle est tendue environ la

* “Harold,” vol. iii., p. 32.

nef de l'église le jour et par les octaves des reliques." It is puzzling to guess how the French chroniclers have invented the legend of Bonneville, near Touques, where you see the Tour du Serment.

Near the Cathedral is a large open Place, grassed and planted with trees. On one side of this is the Hôtel de Ville, where the tapestry is now kept—a long strip of linen, twenty inches wide and upwards of 200 feet long, worked in coloured worsted, stretched on screens along the room, and under glass.

Mrs. Stothard, in her "Letters from Normandy," gives a good description of the tapestry:—

"The tapestry is worked with different-coloured worsteds upon white cloth, to which time has given the tinge of brown holland. The drawing of the figures is rude and barbarous; no attention has been paid to connection of colour in the objects depicted. The horses are blue, green, red, or yellow. This circumstance may arise from the limited number of worsteds employed in the work; they consist of eight colours only—dark and light blue, red, yellow, buff, dark and light green. When Napoleon projected the invasion of England, he caused this memorial of the Conquest to be brought to Paris, where it was exhibited to the people. This curious memorial narrowly escaped destruction at the Revolution: it was demanded for the purpose of covering the guns; a priest, however, concealed it."

Mrs. Stothard's description of the tapestry ought to be very exact, for we were shown a piece which it is said she cut off it, and took to England, possibly to inspect at her leisure. It was afterwards returned to the

Bayeux Library, where there is a written account of the transaction.

The tapestry far surpassed our expectations in the interest and variety of its pictures: they are wonderfully well executed, although it must be owned they are extremely comic. There are fifty-eight distinct subjects.

1. King Edward bids Harold go and tell Duke William that he will one day be King of England. Edward sits on his throne: he is a sickly-looking person. Harold is much better favoured.

2. Harold on his march. Harold's dogs run on in front, and he has a falcon on his wrist.

3. A church. Harold goes to pray for a favourable voyage.

4. Harold at sea.

5. Harold driven by the wind on the land of Guy, Count of Ponthieu.

6. Harold stands up in the boat to speak to Guy.

7. Guy arrests Harold.

8. Guy and Harold on horseback going to Beaurin: they both have falcons on the wrist.

9. Interview between Guy and Harold.

10. Duke William, having heard of Edward the Confessor's message, sends emissaries to the Count of Ponthieu.

11. The messengers of Duke William menace Guy.

12. Duke William in his castle of Rouen receives a messenger.

13. Guy takes Harold to Eu, where William receives him.

14. William conducts Harold to Rouen, and gives him audience.

15. A priest, and Elgive, the daughter of William.

16. Duke William and his army reach Mont St. Michel. (Conan, Duke of Brittany, has declared war against the Duke of Normandy, and William asks Harold to join him against Conan.)

17. They cross the river Couësnon, and Harold draws some Normans out of the quicksand. Harold looks very powerful in this picture, which in other respects is of a decidedly comic character.

18. The Normans reach Dol, and Conan retreats.

19. Duke William's soldiers attack Dinan.

20. Conan surrenders the town. He holds out the keys to William on the point of a lance. This is also a very comic picture.

21. William knights Harold. They are both in armour, and both look very like fish.

22. Duke William comes to Bayeux.

23. Harold taking the oath. William is seated on his throne. Harold is before him, bareheaded, between two small altars, in which are the relics. This scene is said to represent Bayeux Cathedral.

24. Harold's return to England.

25. Harold before Edward the Confessor, telling the result of his embassy.

26. King Edward is being carried to the church of St. Peter the Apostle. (Westminster Abbey, restored by Edward the Confessor, the restoration was completed a week before his death.)

27. Edward in his last moments speaks to his nobles. The queen weeps by his bedside.

28. And soon afterwards he died.

29. The crown is given to Harold.

30. Harold enthroned as King of England.

31. His people pay homage.

32. The people gaze astonished at a star (the comet of 1066).

33. Harold ; but it might be called Harold the Uneasy. It is doubtless meant to show his remorse.

34. An English ship on the coast of Normandy. This ship takes the news of Harold's treachery.

35. Duke William give orders for the building of a fleet. In this picture William looks majestic ; his indignation has suddenly increased his size. Near him is a priest, his brother Odo of Bayeux ; farther on men are cutting down trees, and carpenters are making these into planks.

36. The ships are drawn down to the waterside. This is a very graphic scene. Some of the men stand in the water barelegged, dragging down the ships.

37. They carry arms to the fleet, and a tun of wine.

38. Duke William with his fleet crosses the sea, and arrives at Pevensey. Duke William's ship, the *Mora*, the gift of his queen, has a standard bearing a cross at the mast-head, and a boy blowing a horn at the stern of the boat ; for they are all boats with one mast and a yard, carrying one sail.

39. They disembark the horses. The soldiers have evidently been already landed, as there are several empty boats.

40. The soldiers hasten forward to Hastings in search of food.

41. This is Wadar. Represents a horseman in the same scaly armour as the others, carrying an immense shield and a sword. He seems to be the overseer of the butchers and

cooks, about to cut up the oxen and sheep which have been brought in.

42. The cooks are cooking, and the serving-men are carrying the viands to table.

43. Here they banquet, and a bishop gives the blessing.

44. Odo the bishop, Duke William, and Robert of Mortain in council.

45. The last (Robert) gives orders to dig a trench round the camp.

46. William hears of the approach of Harold.

47. A house is burned.

48. The army goes forward to meet King Harold.

49. Duke William asks Vital if he has gained sight of the troops of Harold.

50. This person announces William's advance to Harold.

51. Duke William speaks to his army. His armour reaches from head to foot. As far as this picture, the border of the tapestry has been made of animals, monsters, birds, &c.; but it is now made of wounded men in various attitudes.

52. Death of King Harold's brothers, Lewine and Gyrd (Leofwine and Gyrth).

53. At this spot there was great havoc, both among English and Normans.

54. Bishop Odo encourages the troops.

55. The Duke William, who was thought wounded, reappears, raises his visor, and encourages the soldiers.

56. The army of Harold is cut to pieces.

57. Harold is killed; but there is no appearance of his having been shot by an arrow. A cruel knight is slashing at his leg with a sword.

58. The English are put to flight.

There was formerly half a yard more of the tapestry ; but before it was secured under glass some unprincipled person cut off the closing scene, which it is said represented the coronation of William as King of England. Another story is that Queen Matilda's death prevented her from completing the tapestry.

There has been so much doubt cast both by English and French writers on the date of the Bayeux tapestry, that it is delightful to find so painstaking and reliable an authority as Mr. Freeman staunch in his belief that the tapestry is nearly contemporary with the Conquest ; and it seems to me that a strong proof of this, which he does not urge, lies in the effect produced on the mind by a careful, orderly study of the pictures in succession. You may be a devoted adherent of Harold, but, as you examine the tapestry, by the time you reach the Battle of Hastings you will be on the side of William ; and this seems the strongest evidence that it is the handiwork of Matilda herself. William throughout is about the only person whose individuality is always preserved, and who never looks ridiculous ; there is just the calm dignity about him which such a wife as the great queen would delight in portraying. Afterwards, when one looks back and recalls the interest excited by these faded worsted figures, and the vivid pictures they enable one to call up, one is surprised, but more than ever convinced that no ordinary mind designed and superintended the execution of the Bayeux tapestry ; its very short-comings are so suggestive, and carry one so completely away to that time when life must have been so much stronger and simpler than it is now, that one cannot agree with Mrs. Stothard

that “the drawing of the figures is rude and barbarous;” it may be incorrect, but it is full of spirit.

There are some remarkable old houses in Bayeux: one especially in the Rue Saint Malo, a very quaint wooden erection of the fifteenth century; also in the Rue Franche and the Rue St Martin there are remarkable wooden houses.



Old Houses, Rue St. Malo.

But the Rue St. Nicholas—“le vieux Bayeux,” as they call it—is full of quaint old mansions of a later date.

They stand back in old stone-paved courtyards, behind heavy porte-cochères: one of these was open. We looked in, and saw a picturesque old house, with its semicircular flights of steps in the middle and on the left. The dormer

windows had richly carved gables ; and charming climbing-plants, roses, myrtle, and honeysuckle were clinging to the old grey walls. In the right-hand corner of the yard was a huge bottle-rack, with a tub beside it full of green-glass bottles—the only thing suggestive of human presence in the still, quaint nook. Bayeux is certainly a dull town, it seems asleep ; but still there is a good deal to see in it, and there is something restful in its quiet streets. It is, probably, little changed since Mrs. Stothard gave her original description of a dinner with an abbé there fifty years ago, although it is to be hoped the good people of Bayeux do not now spend quite so much time in eating and drinking.

“ We were seated at table at twelve o’clock, the usual dining-hour in Normandy. The people here rise between four and five in the morning ; and as they seldom take any breakfast, unless it be a little fruit and bread, an early dinner is necessary. We did not rise from table till nearly six o’clock. As I was the only foreign female of the party ; they treated me with great politeness, and with so much liberality that it was almost painful ; for, lest I should seem to slight their kindness, I was obliged to taste of all the good things. Immediately after the soup came meats, fowls, game, ragouts, stews, made dishes. The last course was cold fish, without any sauce. We had a luxurious dessert of the finest fruits in season from the abbé’s garden, and many nice preparations of pastry and cream, for which we were indebted to the skilful Victorine, whose cream tarts might rival those of Bedreddin Hassan. The coffee and sweetmeats came last ; the guests drank half the contents of their cup, and then filled it up with brandy and sugar, which they termed making their gloria. Various liqueurs followed,

such as cassis, fleur d'orange, vespetro accompanied by eau de cologne ; and a splendid gold snuff-box was handed round the table. We had the choice of a dozen different kinds of wine."

Mrs. Stothard's description of "an abbé of the period" is also very graphic :—

"The abbé pays us a visit every night after his early supper. He enters the room carrying his little lantern, dressed in a long black gown and powdered perruque, his plump rosy face smiling with kindness and gaiety. 'Madame est-elle visible?' is the usual salutation."

During the long minority of Richard the Fearless, Hugh of Paris occupied Bayeux. Harold Bluetooth also occupied Bayeux when he came to the assistance of Richard in 945 ; as soon as he had accomplished his purpose, he and his followers sailed back to Denmark. His interference effectually wrested Normandy from the French king, Louis d'Outremer. There is no doubt that every visit of the Norsemen left a fresh stamp of its presence, and kept up the Scandinavian element in the west of Normandy, till the Romanesque influence from the East, which had spread across the Epte, gradually gained the ascendancy.

Mr. Freeman says of the Bessin : "Nowhere, out of the old Saxon and Frisian lands, can we find another portion of continental Europe which is so truly a brother-land of our own. . . . The blood of the inhabitants of the Bessin must be composed of nearly the same elements, and in nearly the same proportions, as the blood of the inhabitants of the Danish districts of England. To this day there is no Romance-speaking region of the Continent in which the Englishman feels himself so thoroughly at home as in this

old Saxon and Danish land. In every part of Normandy the Englishman feels himself at home as compared with France or Aquitaine ; but in the district of Bayeux he seems hardly to have left his own country. The kindred speech is gone ; but everything else remains. The land is decidedly not French ; men, beasts, everything, are distinctively of a better and grander type than their fellows in the mere French districts : the general aspect of the land, its fields, its hedges, all have an English look."*

But this specialty of landscape and hedges may be also noticed of some of the country north of the Seine ; notably the neighbourhood of Caudebec and Villequier.

The famous Manoir d'Argouges is within a drive of Bayeux. Argouges was formerly a commune ; it is full of memories of the celebrated lords of Argouges. The château is very picturesque, with its quaintly shaped towers and its moat still full of water. One of the rooms is called "the chamber of the Lady," and there is still a tradition that sometimes the famous "fée d'Argouges" appears dressed in a white and shining robe, hovering about her ancient abode. When Henry I. was besieging Bayeux, a German knight in his camp, named Le Brun, challenged one of the besieged to single combat. Robert d'Argouges accepted the challenge, defeated and killed Le Brun. Before this Robert d'Argouges had wooed a beautiful fairy, who became his wife ; she warned him, however, that if he ever spoke of death in her presence she should be obliged to leave him. One day he was going to take a ride with her, and she was so long getting ready that he lost patience, and forgot her words.

* "History of the Norman Conquest," vol. i.

“Belle dame,” he called from the foot of the stairs, “thou wouldst be a good messenger to send in search of death, for thou wouldst take so long on the journey.”

There came in answer one long despairing wail, and the fairy disappeared. It is said that, when she has been seen she cries out, “Death, death!” just before she fades out of sight.

Not far from Bayeux is Formigny. There is a chapel here, built 1486, to commemorate the victory of Formigny in 1450, when the English troops, being attacked front and rear by a very superior number of French, were defeated. This victory finally recovered Normandy to the French crown, to which it has ever since belonged.

Bayeux still has manufactories of porcelain and lace; real old Bayeux lace is very scarce. From Bayeux the railway goes on through the Cotentin, by way of Carentan and Valognes, to Cherbourg; but there is so much that is interesting in this peninsula, besides Cherbourg, that it makes a journey in itself, and I propose to describe it on some other occasion.

LA MANCHE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

St. Lô.
Coutances.

Granville.
Avranches.

IT takes about an hour and a half by express, and nearer three hours by ordinary trains, to get to St. Lô. It does not take longer to go by carriage, by way of Balleroy, through the thick forest of Cerisy, stopping at Cerisy la Forêt, which is not much out of the route, to see the finest ruin in the Bessin—the famous abbey begun by Robert the Magnificent and finished by his son. Robert had intended the Abbey of Cerisy to contain his tomb; but, as he died in the East, he was buried at Nikaia in Bithynia. Toustain, his chamberlain, brought back the relics which the Duke had collected in the East for his church of Cerisy, and deposited them in the abbey. It is a grand old church, in severe Romanesque style.

The approach to St. Lô is very imposing: the lofty spires of the Church of Notre-Dame, perched on the summit of the dark stupendous hill on which the town is built, frown down on the river Vire, which is much wider here than at Vire itself.

St. Lô is a very ancient town, and was fortified by Charlemagne. It suffered much during the English invasions, and

also during the religious civil wars ; but its fortifications were not finally destroyed till 1811.

Mrs. Stothard says—

“The town of St. Lô, beautifully situated in the midst of a finely wooded country. St. Lô has an elegant cathedral ; the town is piled on hills in the most picturesque manner. The massive towers and walls of its defensive feudal times in some parts exist ; towards the extremity of the town they stand upon the verge of a lofty and perpendicular rock.”

The exterior of the church is better than the interior, but it is disappointing after the grand effect produced at a distance. The porches are interesting ; and outside the church is a curious large carved stone pulpit. Behind the high altar near one of the chapels is a deep well. There is some old painted glass, but it has been much injured, and is much of it in a fragmentary state.

The celebrated Abbey of Ste. Croix, founded by Charlemagne in the ninth century, has been swept away ; some remains of the abbey exist, but of much more recent date than the building of Charlemagne. The Church of Ste. Croix has been recently restored : it is early Norman.

There is not much to see in St. Lô, except its picturesque position on the steep rocks frowning over the Vire. We heard, too, that there are pleasant walks in the neighbourhood.

We had ample time to study the exterior aspect of the city next morning, for with customary French unpunctuality the diligence advertised to start at six o'clock got off at twenty-five minutes to seven ; and while we sat shivering on our luggage we could look our fill through the drizzling rain at the city rising above its old green-clad walls. The towers

and spires of Notre-Dame stand grandly in the midst, above all : in front is the river and its bridge ; and the views right and left of the valley of the Vire are most charming, especially that on the right. The low light of early morning toned modern improvements into harmony, and the whole effect was so charming that it consoled us for the delay.

At last our fellow-passengers assembled, and although we had rather more room than we had at Bayeux, still the size of the diligence was a tight fit for six people. Two of our fellow-travellers were young gendarmes, whose long legs and trappings took up much room in the vehicle ; there was neither a coupé nor any shelter for the outside passengers. Three of the gendarmes' superiors accompanied us on horseback : one was very well mounted, but the other two had, one such a small, and the other such a tall ungainly horse, that the effect was most absurd ; occasionally these two last would lag behind, and we lost sight of them, and then on they came, appearing like specks at the far end of the long line of straight chalky road which stretched like a white ribbon to the top of the hill behind us, and reaching us at last in a furious gallop and a huge clatter of swords and spurs.

The excited discussion of the men inside as to the respective merits of the horses was absurd, but still very amusing, and helped to wile away a rather tedious journey. The road lies chiefly through apple-orchards ; and although it is well wooded, there is little variety in it, beyond the constant ascents and descents, after we lose sight of the twin spires of St. Lô. Every now and then we saw the usual amount of comfortable farmhouses, nestling among their apple-trees and clustered with vine-leaves. Rather more

than half-way, we passed on the left the Château de Savigny ; and about this time we came to a half-way house, where the diligence stopped to change horses.

We thought it was time ; for the steep ups and downs of the last hour must have exhausted any horses but those of a French diligence, especially as our driver had been using his whip in merciless fashion.

The gendarmes waited until the cavalcade reached the inn, and then they solemnly went in, and came out directly each with a bit of bread in one hand and a glass of wine in the other, and stood eating and drinking in the open air.

When we started again, our two long-legged gendarmes got into the diligence with cigars in their mouths. They looked anxiously at our faces as soon as they were seated, and, reading signs of disapprobation thereon, each opened the window behind him, and kept his head outside till the cigars were ended.

Just before we reached Coutances we got a splendid view of the Cathedral and its three lofty spires. It stands proudly above the town, on the top of a steep and pointed hill.

Coutances is one of the seven old episcopal cities, and one of the most ancient in Normandy. It was entirely destroyed by the Normans in 886, and it seems to have suffered greatly from the excesses committed by the Huguenots. We drove up its steep street to the inn, in the pouring rain, and then went out to see the Cathedral.

The west front is very grand : the twin towers and spires are of great height, and their sombre colour is most picturesque.

Many French writers have asserted that the Cathedral is

that built by the famous Tancred de Hauteville and his six valiant sons, and consecrated in 1056, in the presence of William the Conqueror ; but this seems to be impossible ; there is architectural evidence in the church of a later period. During the captivity of King John of France, after the battle of Poitiers, Geoffrey d'Harcourt ravaged that part of the country near St. Lô, Caen, Evreux, and Coutances, and he so injured the Cathedral of Coutances that, says Gally Knight, "it must have undergone reparation and alterations of importance enough for the disappearance of all traces of any remainder of the original work." The three estates of France sent troops against Sir Geoffrey, and he was slain at the battle of Coutances, fighting valiantly. The Lady chapel and many of the side chapels are of later date than the rest of the church.

The interior of the Cathedral is very lofty and impressive. The lantern is grand, and so is the apse ; and the double columns of this last are specially remarkable. The mullioned screens, like unglazed windows, between the side chapels give an original and airy effect to the nave and aisles, and enhance the contrast of subdued light among the lower arches at the eastern end. There is something indescribable in the solemn awe of this part of the church. Altogether it is one of the grandest buildings of Lower Normandy, and merits careful study. Some of the diapered painted glass is very old and curious. There is said to be a fine view of Jersey and Granville from the top of the lantern. The Cathedral is of the same sombre colour as the Church of St. Lô.

From the Cathedral we went down a long, very steep street, and came to the Church of St. Pierre, a picturesque

building, of the end of the fifteenth century, though some parts are of the sixteenth and seventeenth. On the tower over the west doorway there is the date 1550. There is a curious spiral staircase in this church, and some good painted glass of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Just outside, suspended across the street, is one of the old street lamps, which are fast disappearing from Normandy as the railway makes progress westward, and gas is used in the streets. The old swinging lamps are not of much use in the dark perhaps, but they are delightfully quaint in daytime, reminding one of a huge spider pausing in the midst of the first line of his web.

We had gone down this street in search of *Les Piliers*, a little village just outside Coutances, in which are the ruins of a Gothic aqueduct; but we soon found we had been wrongly directed. Coming up the street again, we got a glimpse of one of the spires of the Cathedral, with *St. Pierre* and its quaint surroundings in the foreground. A little higher up is a most excellent view of the Cathedral. Near this we found a very pretty public garden, planted on the slope of the hill, charmingly laid out and well cared for, and full of delightful views over the surrounding country. The guardian took us down to a little summer-house at the end of the garden, and pointed out to us the remains of the ancient aqueduct, overgrown with ivy, in the valley below. The view of the wooded hill opposite is very pretty. The aqueduct is on the *Granville* road, and formerly bridged over the valley between the height on which Coutances stands and the opposite hill. There were once sixteen arches, but eleven of them have been destroyed: the piers still standing

—Les Piliers, as they are called—are nearly twenty feet high, and the buttresses which support them are more than six feet thick. This aqueduct was built in the fifteenth century, on the ruins of a Roman aqueduct destroyed by the Normans.

There is another church at Coutances—St. Nicholas, remarkable for a statue of the Virgin said to be five hundred years old, and one of the first in which she is seen holding the Holy Child in her arms.

Mrs. Stothard, in her charming "Letters," speaks of the personal beauty of the women of Coutances, but we were not fortunate enough to meet with it.

It is much better not to go by diligence to Granville, but to take a carriage at Coutances, and make a little *détour* on the road to Granville to see the ruins of the Abbey of Hambye. There was formerly an old Castle of Hambye, but it has been wantonly destroyed. The abbey is about a mile and a half from the village of Hambye. It was founded in 1145 by William de Pagnel, and restored by his last descendant, Joan de Pagnel, wife of the Louis d'Estouteville of whom we shall hear again at Mont St. Michel. There were two fortified castles belonging to the barons of Hambye. A baron of Hambye went with Duke William to the conquest of England. Henry V. gave the barony of Hambye to the Earl of Suffolk; but in 1450 it was surrendered to the rightful possessors. The donjon tower was of great height, and one of the finest and best placed in Normandy; it seems to have been wantonly destroyed to mend the high road. But it is the position of the ruined abbey which is its great charm. The road to it is uphill, and from the hill-top we see the old grey buildings

nestling snugly below among the trees, in a valley watered by the little river Sienne. The side chapels are of older date than the central part of the ruined church; but all the ruins are overgrown with ivy and climbing plants, and are highly picturesque. The chapter-house is much more perfect. There is also a mortuary chapel; and there are some remains of the abbey buildings, now occupied as a farmhouse. The tombs of Louis d'Estouteville and his wife were destroyed at the Revolution.

Soon after leaving Coutances for Granville there is a most magnificent view of the Cathedral; after this the road between Coutances and Granville is pretty and varied; it is again an orchard country. We passed many comfortable stone houses, with vines clinging to the eaves. Everywhere the cows were tethered in the open fields: old women, probably past harder work, appear to visit them from time to time, and remove the tethering-peg to another spot as soon as the cow has consumed all the pasture round her.

It was milking-time, and as usual the cows were being milked in the fields, into the narrow-necked, round brass jug of the country. The opening of this is so small that it must require some practice, and skill too, to send the milk into it.

As evening came on, we approached the sea. The country had grown flatter and less thickly wooded. Presently we saw, over the flat downs on the right, a light twinkling on the water.

It was from the cluster of dangerous rocks called Les Iles Chaussey. Some little way before we reached Granville, we got suddenly a beautiful but most deceptive view of it.

The upper town, surrounded by its fortified walls, and crowned by its church and lighthouse, stands on a lofty promontory of rock, with the sea stretching out behind it. On the right is the Norman coast ; and on the left, curving in a faint line round the Bay of Granville, is the coast of Brittany. We saw clearly here the light on the Isles of Chaussey. As we drew nearer, a deep valley opened between us and Granville ; and there was the lower town spread out before us, and the harbour beyond. It was growing dusk, and the lights twinkled cheerily from the town as we approached.

But next morning was very disenchanting. It is true that, when we had climbed up the steep ladders leading to the walls of the upper town, we found endless pictures among the bright and varied scenes of the market. It is true also that the view of the Bay of Granville is charming ; and the church, on the verge of the lofty promontory, although gloomy-looking—being built of dark granite—has a solemn, impressive interior : but the smells and dirt of the place are overpowering, even in the open air and in the fresh sea breezes.

The women of Granville are singularly pretty, and their costume is charming.

Except in the heat of summer, they wear a long black cloak, very much like the Flemish *faillie* of Bruges ; only the hood is different, being larger, and not always worn over the head. Shopkeepers, and those who can afford the expense, wear this cloak of fine black cloth, lined with white. The caps have quite an Eastern character, and seem special to Granville. The back part covers the head, and has flying wings ; but the upper part is formed by a piece of thick muslin or cambric, rolled up over the forehead in

somewhat the form of a loose turban, and forms a head-dress as becoming as it is quaint and original.

From the promontory on which the church stands there is a fine view of the port and the surrounding coast. A good-natured French sailor pointed out to us the Iles Chaussey, which are indeed terrible-looking rocks. The coast is very dangerous, and our friend told us that ships are sometimes

wrecked even after they have reached the Bay of Granville.

The fruit-market was going on in a long, straggling street of old dark-coloured stone houses.

One old woman sat, with folded arms, fast asleep. A man in a blouse, near her, lay also sleeping beside his heap of brilliant carrots. Another woman



In the Market, Granville.

had put up a kind of tent, composed of canvas and an umbrella, on the pavement; beneath this was stored a prodigious pile of delicious-looking eggs, and a pair of chickens lay beside them tied in a basket. The melons were selling at absurd prices: we were offered a very good-looking one for 50 centimes. To-day in the market the women wore black or greenish-grey gowns, with large thin black shawls; some of the younger women wore these very gracefully—one end under the arm, and the other end flung over the shoulder, fastened in a knot at the waist; all wore black stockings and very short petticoats. Certainly very good looking, but very

loud tongued and rough spoken, and, alas! very dirty, are these Granvillaises. They seem a race apart; and when we had come down from the walled and fortified upper town, we found the lower town quite as dirty and unsavoury; yet if Granville could only be purified, and if its inhabitants could be taught cleanliness, it would be most charming. There is much life and movement caused by the constant traffic of steamers between the port and Jersey and St. Malo; and this has doubtless been increased since the Paris Railway has reached Granville. Through a cleft in the rock, called the *Tranchée aux Anglais*, there is a pleasant bathing-place and a little casino; but, except just hereabouts, the presence of squalor in Granville is universally apparent. We were very glad to leave it for Avranches. A castle and a chapel on the rock seem to have been the beginning of the town till Charles VII. enlarged it.

Louis XIV. demolished the fortifications, but they were restored in 1720, and still further strengthened a few years later.

Granville made a vigorous resistance in 1793 to the Vendéans under La Rochejaquelin; it also repulsed the English, who bombarded it in 1825. Its chief manufacture is that of cod-liver oil.

We took the diligence for Avranches in the afternoon: and as the weather was promising, though dull, we travelled outside. The road is most interesting, full of lovely points of view. It goes over a succession of steep hills, with wooded valleys on each side of the way: the road is made in the usual straight fashion of these western Norman roads, the view ending in a broad white band. A little while before reaching Sartilly, a few kilomètres off the

direct route, there is a very remarkable ruin—the Abbey of Luzerne, founded in the twelfth century; but it is not difficult to reach this from Avranches, which is a much pleasanter resting-place to make excursions from than Granville.

Sartilly is a picturesque village; the wooded valley beyond it is lovely—very wild and diversified, and the tract of distant landscape takes a bolder sweep. The road grows so steep at one point, that it is cut round the hill to make it less fatiguing; and at one of these turns the view opens suddenly. Our driver muttered something indistinguishable, and pointed with his whip. There, in the distance, was the sea glittering in broad golden light, and rising from it, looking more like a fairy creation than anything real, was Mont St. Michel itself.

Only a momentary glimpse, and we go back to hill and valley. It was all so transient, that we could hardly believe we had really seen the wonderful rock so well known by sight to every one. And yet no picture or drawing, however faithful, had prepared us for that first glimpse; the mount had glowed as if there were light within it. There was an inexpressible weirdness of aspect, far more like a phantom than a solid rock, and its sudden appearance and disappearance set us thinking of the magic castle of St. John.

The road all the way, as has been said, till we came to this turn, had been singularly straight and a succession of ups and downs. The weather was brighter, but the sun had begun to set, when we perceived Mont St. Michel; its parting glory was at full height when we came in sight of Avranches. At about seven kilomètres distance the road again rose perpendicularly in front, bordered on each side with trees, and crowned this time with wood, in the midst

of which, standing on a lofty hill, was Avranches ; highest of all appeared a large white building, which we found afterwards is the new church of Notre-Dame, still unfinished. The road before us seemed to run straight into the houses of the town.

The tree-tops burned with gold, and the far-off town smiled down at us bathed above in rosy light, deepening into purple at the foot of the lofty hill. The changes of light and shade and colour during the next two or three miles were most varied and exquisite. By the time we had entered the straggling suburb at the foot of the hill, the town was shrouded in purple, and the trees had changed from gold to olive. The hill is so perpendicular, that the road mounts on terraces cut round it ; and even these are so steep that the diligence was more than ten minutes in climbing into the town, which is built on the very summit of the height. The view, all the way up this ascent, is most exquisite.

There is not much, perhaps, of great individual interest in Avranches ; but it is a delightful resting-place, and it looked to us, as we entered it, emphatically healthy and clean and bright. The town was so full when we reached it, that we were only just in time to get the last bedroom in the Hôtel de Londres ; it was comforting to find such clean and pleasant quarters.

Next morning was Sunday, and the town looked prettier and brighter than ever. Before breakfast we had a charming view from a terraced walk outside the town, over the valley of the Sées. The country spreads out so widely, that one can trace for miles the course of the sparkling river through green meadows and wooded valleys. The Church of St. Saturnin is in no way remarkable. We heard a

sermon on the pilgrimage to Mont St. Michel, and among the congregation we saw a peasant-woman in a very original tall cap—a rarity nowadays.

In the afternoon we went into the public gardens. From a walk here made on the old ramparts, the steep cliff is a sheer descent of immense depth to the valley below ; and the view is surpassingly beautiful, not to be equalled by any other that we had seen in Normandy.

On the right is the extensive valley of the Sées, a bright river, winding and twisting in and out among the trees that border it closely ; the sides of the valley are chiefly wooded, but here and there are glimpses of corn-land and meadow, and beyond is the sea with a distant line of coast : to the left is the valley of the Sélune, which takes a straighter course through a rich extent of hilly wooded country, that melts finally into the blue hills of Brittany. But it is the centre of the picture that fixes attention—the Bay of Mont St. Michel ; the right bank of the Sées stretches out, making a dark line between the glittering treacherous sands and the almost empty mouth of the river, with its curves and stretches of wet and dry land ; and rising from the brilliant line of light on the *grèves* is the fortress-convent, as weird and phantom-like as ever in its distinct mistiness.

Beyond it on the right, nearer to the coast, is the dark crouching rock of Tombeleine, and far behind this is a faint line of coast.

It is low water now—the season of *les eaux mortes*, and therefore it is possible to reach the Mount at any hour without reference to the tide ; it is only at spring tides that the sands are entirely covered by the sea.

In this garden, which once belonged to the old Capuchin

convent close by, is the portal of the little Church of Bouillé, now swallowed up by the sands. On our way to the site of the old Cathedral we passed through the garden of the *évêché*; there is a grand statue here, in white marble, to General Valhubert.

The Cathedral stood formerly on the open space now called Place Huet, which commands as extensive and magnificent a view as that from the Jardin des Plantes. Judging by the model still preserved in the public library, it must have been a noble building, and one grieves to learn that it fell suddenly in 1790. No trace remains of it except a few broken fragments heaped together in front of the Préfecture : on one of the stones is this inscription—

Last Remains
of the
Roman-Gothic Cathedral of Avranches,
Begun about 1090,
And consecrated
By the Bishop Turgis in 1121.

Not far from this is a large flat stone surrounded by posts and chains, close by what is said to be a portion of the door of the north transept. This is the inscription—

On this stone,
Here at the door
Of the Cathedral of Avranches,
After the Murder of Thomas à Becket,
Archbishop of Canterbury,
Henry II.,
King of England,
Duke of Normandy,
Received on his knees,
From the Legates of the Pope,
The Apostolic Absolution,
Sunday, May 22nd,
1172.

What a picture the scene calls up ! The unhappy king forced to submit to public penance, surrounded by his courtiers, and kneeling humbly before the richly robed legates and the attendant priests,—not allowed even to pass the threshold of the church till he is cleansed by absolution from the curse of excommunication which has been laid on him ; before him the open door of the splendid cathedral, revealing the interior blazing with lights, rich music echoing through its lofty aisles ; behind him the verge of the steep rock and the Bay of Mont St. Michel. There on his knees Henry acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope ; he also engaged to wear the cross for three years, and to proceed to the Holy Land to war against the infidels unless he should receive the Pope's permission to remain at home. He was then ordered to equip and maintain two hundred soldiers for service in the Holy Land, to restore to Canterbury all the Church property which had been confiscated, and, if ordered by the Pope, to rescue Spain from the heathen. He swore on the Gospels to fulfil these commands, and he then received absolution, and was allowed to enter the cathedral.

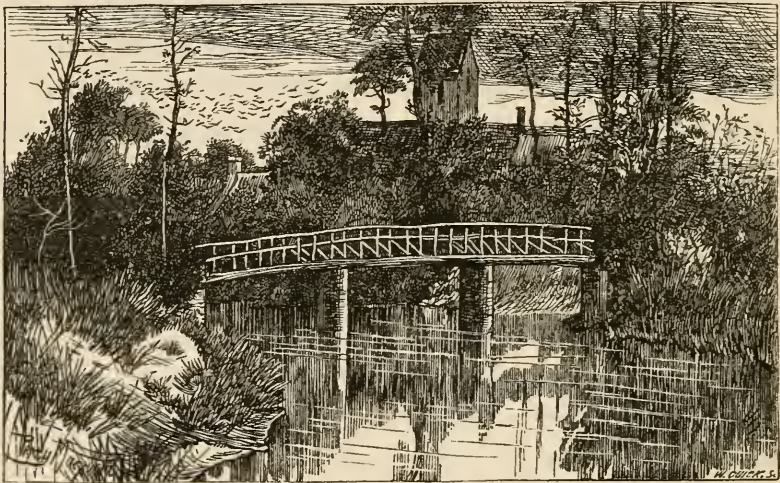
There are still some remains of the ancient episcopal palace—an arched vestibule of the fourteenth century and a fine granite staircase. Up-stairs is the public library, containing many valuable books and curious manuscripts, chiefly brought from Mont St. Michel, among which was found Abelard's prohibited treatise, "Sic et Non." There are here also a picture-gallery and a museum of antiquities. In this gallery the objects of greatest interest are a model of the Cathedral of Avranches, which makes one realise how awful a catastrophe its sudden fall must have been, and an emblazoned "table of the names and arms of the hundred and

twenty gentlemen who defended the town of Mont St. Michel in 1475." The table is dated 6th June, 1823. Charlemagne is said to have fortified Avranches in 800, and the Celtic and Roman remains found there attest that it was anciently a place of importance ; but, probably from its isolated position, there is not much mention of it in early Norman history. Mr. Freeman relates one interesting circumstance connected with the charming little town.

"In the period of anarchy which formed the early years of the reign of William (about 1039), Lanfranc came into Normandy with a following of scholars, and opened a school in the episcopal city of Avranches. The cathedral church of that city beheld in after-times the penance by which the greatest successor of William atoned for his share in the death of the most renowned among the successors of Lanfranc. But the glory of Avranches has passed away. From it alone, among the seven episcopal towns of Normandy, minster and Bishopric have wholly vanished. But, for those few years of the life of Lanfranc, Avranches must have been an intellectual centre without a rival on this side the Alps. The fame of the great teacher was spread abroad, and scholars flocked to him from all quarters. But as yet his learning was wholly secular ; his pursuits were peaceful, but he thought perhaps less of divine things than Herlwin had thought when he rode after Count Gilbert to battle. At last divine grace touched his heart ; a sudden conversion made him resolve to embrace the monastic profession. He left Avranches suddenly, without giving any notice to his friends and scholars, and set forth to seek for the poorest and most lowly monastery that could be found—for one which his own fame had never reached. A happy accident led him to

Bec, which then fully answered his ideal. Received as a monk by Abbot Herlwin, he strove to hide himself from the world ; he even at one time thought of leaving the monastery and leading a life of utter solitude in the wilderness. But the Abbot required him on his obedience to remain, and he was advanced to the dignity of Prior." *

The walks and scenery outside Avranches are very charming ; the view given is taken near the little Church of St. Jean. The walk to St. Quentin through the Bois de



Church of St. Jean.

Quenouailles is very delightful ; or it may be reached by some of the charming country lanes which are so plentiful near Avranches.

The Church of St. Quentin is very old and interesting ; but the view from the hill of Quenouailles is magnificent, and, although it is some distance from Avranches, it well repays the fatigue of the walk. A nearer and very pleasant walk is to the pretty little village of St. Loup. There are some

* " History of the Norman Conquest," vol. ii.

remains of an ancient abbey here, and a remarkable church of a very interesting period of Norman architecture ; the chancel seems to be of later work, the windows being of the transition, or even still later. Gally Knight does not speak of this church, and it is probably seldom visited. A splendid view of Mont St. Michel and its bay is got from the Bois de Naffrée ; this hill commands the Val St. Pair, and the whole walk is full of beauty. We heard of the wood of Arpilly, and there are doubtless many other lovely nooks to be explored by those who have time for a long stay in Avranches.

A very charming excursion is to the ruins of the Abbey of Luzerne, founded in the twelfth century. The square tower, of later date, is very perfect, and the church has been fairly well preserved. The situation of the ruins is most picturesque and charming ; but the abbey buildings have evidently suffered as Jumièges and Hambye and so many of the finest Norman abbeys have suffered from wanton and comparatively recent demolition.

The abbey is, of course, in a valley watered by a pretty little river. Certainly the founders of religious houses in those far-off times understood the true meaning of the word picturesque. The drive to Luzerne is tiring, as the first part of the journey lies over the *grève* at the mouth of the Sélune ; but after Sartilly the country is charming, although the road does not improve.

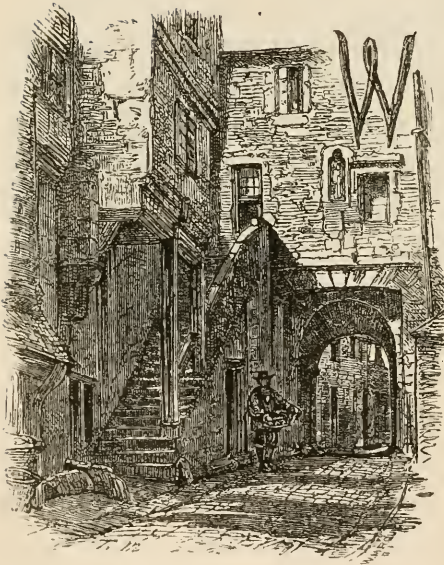
There is altogether so much in its neighbourhood to render Avranches delightful, that it is not surprising that it should have contained a colony of English residents ; however, within the last few years this seems to have dispersed, leaving only a few to represent its former numbers.

MONT ST. MICHEL.

CHAPTER XIX.

“ La roche dreite, naïve
Qui cuntre la grant mer estrive.”

Roman de Rou.



HE started early one morning for Mont St. Michel. The weather seemed showery ; but the pilgrimage had just begun, and it was expected that the succeeding days would bring a much larger number of pilgrims to the Mount.

Travellers by diligence go by way of Pontorson ; but this, although a better road, is supposed

to be a longer round. For some way the road out of Avranches is not very interesting. It is terraced zigzag fashion like that on the Granville side of the town, to avoid the excessive steepness of the hill on which Avranches is

built. At the first of these sharp turns there is a sudden opening, and we see Mont St. Michel bathed in grey morning light as wonderful-looking as ever. After a while we reach the river Selune, and cross it; the stream is shallow at this tide, a third part on each side being river mud, or, as it is called, *sablon*; it seems to us as we flounder along the muddy road that it, too, is made of *sablon*, and we wonder how our little *Américaine* will progress at all should the mud be deeper farther on; but our driver is very confident of the prowess of his horse, and says we shall reach the mount before twelve o'clock. (N.B., we did not get there till nearly one!) The costume of the women at work in the fields was picturesque. Presently we passed a group as they stood talking in the muddy road; they had been reaping sarrasin, and they each carried a reaping-hook; a peculiarity of their costume was a sort of extra sleeve of blue or white reaching from the wrist to the elbow. One of the girls had a black skirt, a blue apron tied over the ends of a greenish-grey neckerchief, white close-fitting sleeves and over these the looser blue half-sleeve.

We drove on beside the river. To our left were plots of red-stalked sarrasin, alternated with patches of grain de tremaine, with its black, knob-like heads tied in bunches. After this we came to much rich-looking meadow land, which, our driver said, benefits greatly from being manured with the *sablon*. We saw men carting this in quantities to send by railway to different parts of the interior. Salt is also extracted from it.

Soon after this we drove through the village of Courtils. It seemed all mud: miserable, squalid children, pigs, and fowls were alike muddy and forlorn-looking: there was a

mud-heap in front of every house, and we felt sure that the rooms had a mud flooring. Meantime, our road had grown heavier, and our horse could hardly go beyond a walk.

After a while we came in sight of the sea—the bay, with Mont St. Michel in its midst, now a wide, desolate expanse of sand or *grève*, a bright line of light marking the track of the water, and behind this a wide stretch of very distant hills. Several men in blouses offered themselves as guides across the *grèves*, but our driver said we did not want a guide.

The trees had been gradually diminishing; till lately the slimy, sloppy road of grey mud had been bordered only by the exquisite green of feathery tamarisks, with their pink blossoms; but gradually, as we approached the edge of the *grève*, even these disappeared; and now, circling round, we entered on the desolate expanse of sand, covered here and there by huge tracts of a small purple-blossomed weed. The rain began to fall heavily, and we could not keep it out with umbrellas. All around us were the moving, shifting sands, “so full of deadly treachery,” says Miss Costello, “that a track, which may be firm overnight, will suck in an unsuspecting traveller next morning.”

We asked our driver about the quicksands. “They are on each side of the tracks; they are everywhere,” he said; “but there is no danger for foot-passengers during les eaux mortes, for then the sea never covers the sands: it is the advance of the tide which makes the *grèves* dangerous; at least, there is no danger so long as there is no fog, and the travellers keep the tracks.” He pointed with his whip to the deep cart-ruts beside us. “For us it is different; if the

carriage were too heavily laden, it might sink beyond all power to raise it. But madame need not be uneasy," he gave an encouraging smile; "if I saw the wheel sink ever so little, I should ask my travellers to get out, and then it is easy to set the matter right—only a little walk over the *grève*."

"But if there are no tracks?" For he had already said that the road was especially heavy in consequence of the unusual traffic caused by the pilgrimage.

"Ah, that is different," he said; "then the traveller must take a guide across the *grèves*: it is not safe for a stranger to find his way across the smooth sand alone."

But it was alarming to hear that these fogs come on quite suddenly, and that many persons have gone astray in them, and have been swallowed up in these fearful quicksands on the *grèves* of Mont St. Michel.

Every now and then, especially when we got near the river or canal of the Couësnon, which runs across the *grève*, there came awkward gaps in the sandy waste. Our driver dismounted, and encouraged his horse across; but we felt that it required both practice and skill to bring us safe up on the other side.

Near one of these gullies the diligence from Pontorson passed us, going at a much faster rate than our horse attempted. Our driver shook his head.

"They are fools," he said; "but then it is to be said they have two horses."

The Mount seemed to recede as we advanced; it looked darker and yet more awful under the gloomy, unbroken, grey sky. Every now and then, spite of the driving rain, clouds of sand whirled before us. As we drew nearer, we saw

that the huge conical mass of granite rock was circled near its base by ramparts with towers. Above was a village of clustering houses, and above these a solid wall of granite rock, on which appeared—first, the fortress, then the abbey buildings, and, poised above all, the church. Formerly, there stood on the apex of this a gilded figure of St. Michael smiting the dragon, but this no longer exists.*

Probably, on a more genial day, bathed in a flood of sunshine, the aspect of the rock would have been less weird and terrible. As it was, we approached it with solemn awe; and as we drew near the walls, the wind began to howl fiercely, and blew with such strength that we had to hold on our wraps with both hands, the rain beating all the while with pitiless fury in our eyes.

Tradition says that Mont St. Michel was once united to the continent, and closely surrounded by forests; and there is an amount of petrified wood dug up from time to time on the *grève*, which gives colour to this legend. It seems to have been a temple of Belenus, served by Druid priestesses: they wore crowns of vervain and quivers of golden arrows, which last had the power of allaying the fury of tempests, if shot by a youth who had never known the passion of love. The legend says that sailors went to the Mount to purchase these arrows; and if the result was successful, the youth who had shot the arrow was sent to the priestesses laden with gifts, and, if he found favour in her eyes, was rewarded with the love of the fairest among them, who sewed golden shells on his garments.

On the right, crouching as if in abject homage before the church on the Mount, is the dark rock of Tombeleine, said to take its name from its resemblance to a tomb, although

there are legends which give it a more poetic origin. There are several rare plants found on Tombeleine.

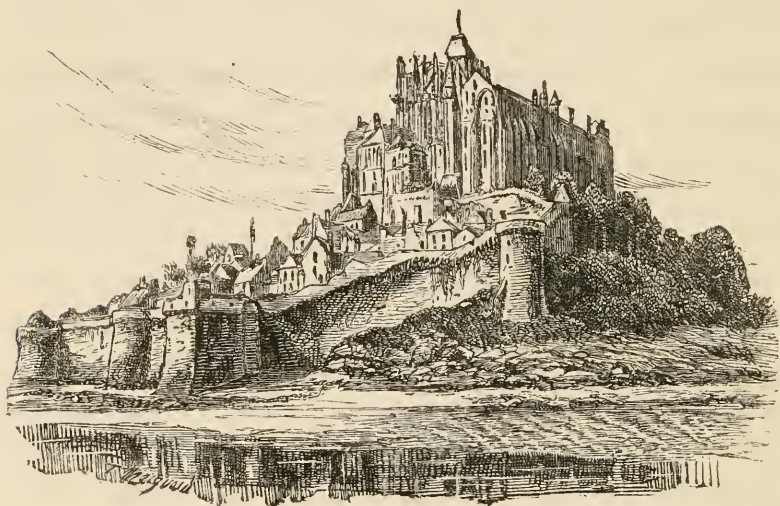
About half-way between it and the Mount there used to be a cross, standing on the *grève* itself. Mention of it is found in a charter of 1244, and again in 1644: it has doubtless been swept away by the advancing tide; but this is the story of its erection:—

“A woman in Normandy, expecting to give birth to a child, persuaded her husband to go with her on pilgrimage to the Mount, which he accordingly did with some of their neighbours. After having paid their devotions, as they were returning, in the middle of the *grèves*, behold a thick fog rose up all at once, as we often see it in these parts. The poor pilgrims, seeing neither sky nor ground, and hearing the approach of the sea, stood still, very much frightened.

“But when they tried to flee, the woman became so ill that the others left her to the mercy of the waves. This woman, seeing herself thus bereft of all human help, put up her prayers to St. Michael, beseeching him to succour her in her extremity, which the archangel did in a manner altogether admirable. The sea, when it reached her, made a circle round her, so that the water rose to a height of more than twelve feet, leaving her as dry as if she had been in the middle of an empty well. She gave birth thus to a son, whom she baptised with the sea-water, and who, when he came of age, dedicated himself to the service of the church, and was ordained priest. Coming every year to the Mount to offer there the holy sacrifice of the mass in token of gratitude for such a miracle, the cross was erected on the site of his birth.”

The Mount itself was called formerly Mons Tumba.

Holy hermits seem to have succeeded the Druids on the granite rock, which then stood in the midst of a dense forest ; but, in the eighth century, St. Aubert founded here a monastery of Benedictines. This is the legend of its foundation :—St. Aubert was Bishop of Avranches in the time of Childebert II. ; in the year 706 St. Michael appeared to him as he slept, and commanded him to build a church in his honour. St. Aubert, fearing a delusion of



Mont St. Michel.

Satan, took no heed of the holy vision. The angel again appeared, and still St. Aubert remained incredulous. At last St. Michael came a third time, and pressed his finger so hard on the bishop's skull that an indentation was ever after to be seen there. When St. Aubert saw this token of the archangel's presence, he was convinced, and next morning he set out for Mount Tumba, followed by a concourse of people.

When the bishop reached the Mount, he showed on his

forehead the print of the archangel's finger, and told the assembly of the commandment he had received. He found, too, on the Mount, as his vision had announced, a bull tied to a tree. The ground trampled by the bull indicated the site he was to choose for the church. The workmen began to prepare the ground, but an enormous rock stood in the very midst, and baffled their efforts. St. Aubert went into the forest, and found a child only a year old—the child of a man named Bain. As soon as this child touched the rock with his little foot, it rolled to the bottom of the precipice. After this the labours of the workmen progressed; but at last they wanted water. Thereupon St. Aubert struck the rock with his crozier, and a fountain trickled forth, the water of which was renowned in after-years for its healing powers.

The church being finished, St. Aubert sent to the monastery of Mont Gargan, in Italy, for a portion of the relics of St. Michael; but when the emissaries returned with their sacred treasures to the Mount Tumba (henceforward the Mount of St. Michael), they scarcely recognised it, so greatly was it changed. The sea had completely swallowed up the forest which formerly surrounded it, and reached to the foot of the rock; nothing was to be seen but a sandy *grève*.

It is said that whenever an English fleet approached the French coast on this side with hostile intentions, the archangel raised a tempest round the mount which caused the fleet to disperse; and whenever war was on the point of breaking out between these two rival nations, at night the spire of the abbey church on the rock used to shine with a light more brilliant than that of day, which light spread over the surrounding country.

Duke Rolf and all his successors were liberal benefactors to the abbey of Mont St. Michel. Orderic says that Richard the Fearless built the abbey. It is certain that he established here a community of thirty monks, who chose for their superior Maynard, of St. Wandrille, 966. Maynard governed the abbey for twenty-five years, and Richard was present at his burial; but in the time of Maynard's successor the abbey was destroyed by fire, except the cell of Bernehère, which contained the body of St. Aubert. Duke Richard and his wife Gunnor, and Geoffrey, Duke of Britany, were lavish in their gifts for the restoration of the abbey.

In the time of the fourth Abbot, Hildebert II., Richard II. the Good celebrated at the Mount his marriage with Judith of Britany, and laid the foundation of a "superb and magnificent" church. This was the original church; but little of it remains, except the present nave.

In the time of the seventh Abbot, Suppon (1048), the monastery received from King Edward the Confessor "the glorious gift" of the Abbey of St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall.

From 1060 to 1085 Mont St. Michel had a remarkable Abbot, Ranulph. He completed the nave of the church, and built the southern galleries and walls of the fortress. He exercised much influence on the mind of King William, who avowed that the greatest victory he ever gained happened on Michaelmas-day.

After William's coronation the abbey sent him six great ships and several monks, who became English abbots.

In the time of Ranulph's successor, Roger, Henry Beauerc took refuge in the abbey, when war broke out between him and his brothers. When Henry was crowned King of England, he testified in various ways his gratitude to the

abbey. Among other things he caused to be struck pieces of money bearing the image of St. Michael. "These pieces," says the chronicler, "were called angelos."

The eleventh Abbot was Roger, Prior of Jumièges, 1106—1123. The church and monastery were destroyed by lightning; but Roger was the builder of the wonderful pile called La Merveille.

During the reign of Henry II. the monks elected three successive Abbots, without consulting him, and Henry in his anger pillaged the monastery.

But the most illustrious of the Abbots of Mont St. Michel was Robert de Thorigny, or Robert du Mont, the friend and confidant of Henry II. He had been previously Prior of Bec. "He was esteemed by popes, cherished by kings, revered by monks, and beloved by all." In 1156, the Archbishop of Rouen, the Bishops of Bayeux, Coutances, and Avranches, passed four days with him, "without being able to leave him, so saintly and pleasant was his society." King Henry II. paid him three visits, and in 1158 dined in the refectory with him and his monks. Henry met at the abbey his wife's first husband, Louis VII. of France. One fancies the meeting must have been a strange one. This Abbot, Robert, was godfather to Henry's child, by Eleanor, probably young Henry. Robert increased the number of monks to sixty. He seems to have built almost all the present edifice of St. Michel, below the church, the Promenoir, the chapel of St. Etienne, and the buildings below and above it. He was the author of several chronicles, of a Treatise on Norman Abbeys, of a Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, and of various other works, which may be seen in the Public Library of Rouen.

Radulph des Iles, eighteenth Abbot (1212), was elected by the monks, who refused the interference of the Bishop of Avranches in their choice of a superior, and only admitted the bishop to their church to pay his devotions there. He rebuilt the refectory, after the abbey had been burned down for the fourth time under his predecessor. In the exchequer accounts of the abbey for 1203, are items for the maintenance of the knights and men-at-arms kept at the monastery at the expense of the Dukes of Normandy. They resided in the Montgomeries and in the Salle des Chevaliers. The glory of the abbey, its exquisite cloister, was the work of Raoul de Villedieu, twentieth Abbot, in 1225.

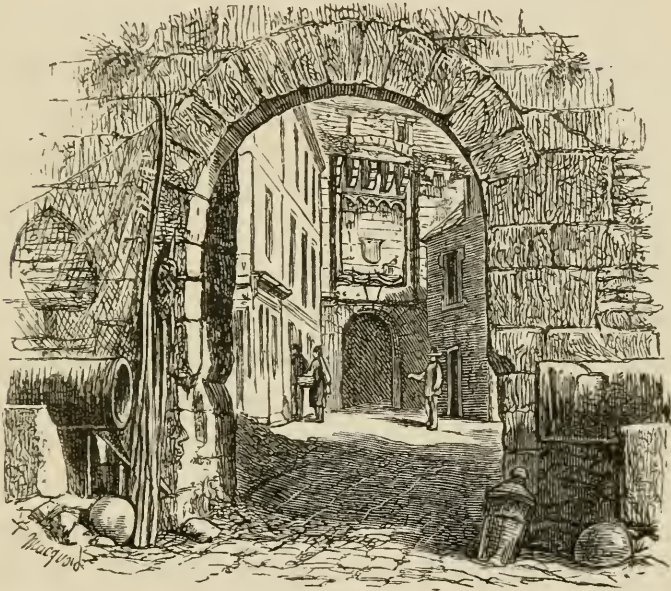
The twenty-first Abbot, Toustain, built the Salle des Gardes; but he seems to have been very unpopular. He obtained from the Pope permission to wear the mitre; "and having had a fine one made, he delighted in distributing public benedictions." He was publicly admonished by the Archbishop of Rouen, Odo Rigault.

In the time of the twenty-fifth Abbot, Guillaume le Château (1299), Philippe le Bel came on pilgrimage to the Mount; and Tiphaine Ragueneil, surnamed for her learning Tiphaine la Fée, "was brought by her husband, Bertrand du Gueselin, to inhabit a fine house which he had built for her on the Mount." In Guillaume's abbacy the church was struck by lightning, but in the space of six years the damage was repaired.

The twenty-ninth Abbot, Pierre le Roy, was as great a builder as Robert de Thorigny. Among other erections he built the charming tower, Des Corbins, also the Chartrier. The Abbots were now called also captains of Mont St. Michel. When Charles VI. went on pilgrimage to the Mount in 1393, he recognised the merit of Pierre le Roy,

gave him an income of a thousand livres, and took him for one of his councillors. He also sent him on various embassies to Italy, England, and Aragon.

In the fifteenth century Robert Jolivet, thirtieth Abbot, built the ramparts and fortifications, which enabled the Mount so gloriously to resist the English ; but, after doing this, he retired and lived in obscurity. In 1421 the top of



Les Michelettes.

the church was again burned, and at the rebuilding of this the crypt of the Gros Piliers was made in the rock itself. King Charles VII. came to the Mount to offer thanks, bringing a stone, which fell on his head without wounding him. How real and simple was faith and love in those days ! In 1427 came the famous attack and repulse of the English. Lord Scales, with 20,000 men, attacked the Mount "with several terrible machines and divers engines of war." The

attack was repulsed by Louis d'Estouteville of Hambye, captain of the Mount, and the 120 Norman gentlemen whose names and coats of arms we saw emblazoned at Avranches. The English lost 2,000 men; and their two enormous cannon, called the Michelettes, still remain as trophies of the victory. Charles VII. sent Dunois to the Mount, to compliment these Norman heroes. We do not find in the history of the Abbots any record of the construction of the Salle des Chevaliers, which, although included in the outward construction of La Merveille, is of far more recent date internally. It was therefore the work of one of the royal benefactors of the abbey, probably of Philip Augustus.

After Robert Jolivet came William, the brother of the valiant Louis d'Estouteville (1446), but he and the succeeding Abbots seem to have been of a more worldly kind. No longer the fathers of their flock on the Mount, they lived at courts and elsewhere in splendour on its revenues, and it must have been about this time that the fortress began to be used as a state-prison. William of Estouteville began to rebuild the upper part of the church in a magnificent manner. During his abbacy Louis XI., who had instituted the order of St. Michel, came on pilgrimage to the Mount in 1462. "At length," the chronicler says, "God, regarding with a favourable eye this poor abbey, inspired the king, Louis the Just (the XIII.), to make choice of a person who should restore it to its former splendour."

Henri de Lorraine was elected in 1615, and in his time Mont St. Michel came under the reformed code of the "congregation of St. Maur." Henceforth the internal rule of the Abbots gave place to that of Priors. One of the last Priors was Dom Charles Estienne de la Passeiz, in

1776. He sold to Charles Philip, Comte d'Artois, all the *grèves*, for the annual rent of a sol per acre. The last Abbot was Monsieur de Montmorency, cardinal bishop of Metz, 1788. The last Prior was Dom Ganat. At the Revolution the monastery was suppressed, and the Convention turned it into a prison for three hundred Breton and Norman priests, calling it Le Mont Libre. These prisoners were liberated by the Vendean army, on its way to the famous siege of Granville.

In 1818 the fortress abbey became an ordinary gaol; but it never ceased to receive prisoners convicted of offences against the State.

In 1863 the abbey was freed from the presence of these criminals of various grades, and a few years later it was ceded to the Bishop of Coutances. He has restored it to its original destination, and has established there ten priests of the order of St. Edme. They have charge of the building and of its restoration. There is also a community of Sisters, who superintend an orphanage. The Government has now included the Mount among the historical monuments of France. This time the works carried on there have been at the cost of the Bishop of Coutances.

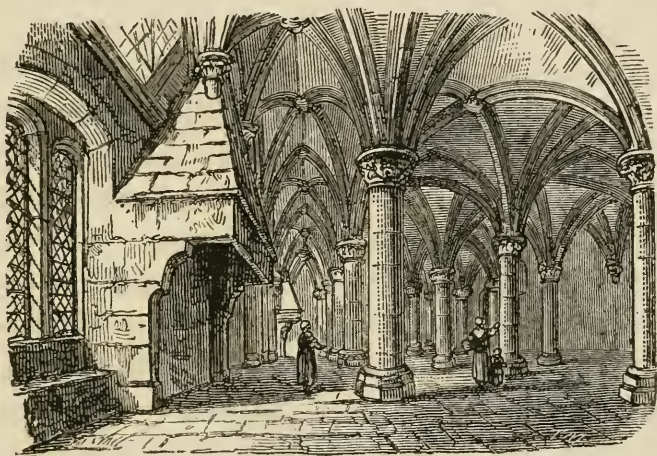
As we get nearer, the Mount takes a grander and severer aspect. There is something almost savage in the ruggedness of its tawny moss-grown walls, so built in the rock itself that one seems a part of the other. Around its base is a wall with round towers at intervals, machicolated all round the top; this is the fortification of the Abbot Jolivet. Above these walls, houses cluster among trees, and from them rises the bare tremendous rock on which is built the abbey fortress, crowned by the stone church. It seems as if a huge

bare mass of granite had been suddenly transformed into a lofty church. The two points which fix the eye are the church, as it were in the air above, and the marvellous buttressed wall, upwards of 245 feet long and 108 feet high. This wall, called La Merveille, has at its angle the elegant tourelle called Les Corbins.

It is a very steep walk up to the entrance of the fortress abbey. We go in through a low archway, and find ourselves in a small court; the Cour du Lion, so called from the lion carved in the wall on the left with his paw on the shield of Abbot Jolivet. There is another archway before us, and on each side a long, rusted, ungainly-looking cannon, with a stone ball lying below; these are the famous Michelettes, taken from the English by Louis d'Estouteville and his brave garrison in the time of Henry V., when Mont St. Michel alone in Normandy successfully resisted the invader. Through this gate we enter the second court, the Cour de la Herse, so called from the gate of the town on the farther side of it, which still retains fragments of its portcullis. On the right of this gate is the Tour du Roi, now converted into stables; and beside and in the tower on the left is the little inn of the Tête d'Or. The town gate is still surmounted by a stone shield, which once doubtless bore the arms of the abbey: three flowers *or* and nine shells *sable*. The emblem of the town was, salmon playing on the waves.

Our driver advised us to rest at the Tête d'Or, which, he said, was the best inn in the town; but when we went in through the little low door into the entrance-kitchen, we found such a goodly company of pilgrims that it seemed doubtful whether we could find room. The low roof was supported by dark oak beams; on the left a huge fire of

logs was blazing on the great stone hearth. On spits in front there were ducks and a leg of mutton ; and on the right was a long table filled with pilgrims of both sexes, each with a red cross pinned on his or her shoulder, eating and drinking, and laughing and talking, as fast as possible. Beyond, in a sort of half-darkness, was another long table, at which a number of fishermen and men in blouses were drinking and smoking. With a little change of dress it might have been



Salle des Chevaliers.

a scene out of the middle ages. There were no modern surroundings : all was rude, rough plenty.

While we stood looking on, and shivering over the welcome fire, a woman, in a black gown, with a red shawl crossing her shoulders and tied behind, came out of the darkness with a huge frying-pan—it looked big enough for Glum-dalclitch—full of golden yolks of eggs. She asked us to stand aside, flung a little butter carelessly into the mess, and then held it over the blazing logs, tossing it from side to side as if the pan were a feather-weight.

She looked over her shoulder presently, and said there was now room for us in the eating-room up-stairs, and that we had better be quick, as the omelette would soon be ready. Up-stairs we found a large room, with three long tables crowded with the pilgrims, who seemed to be enjoying themselves greatly, eating and drinking, and laughing and talking in very merry fashion. The house, we learned, was crammed; every room in the town was occupied. There had arrived more than three hundred pilgrims on the previous day, and many more had come that morning; in fact, they were arriving constantly, anxious to be in time for the office which was to be said at three o'clock before the black Virgin in the Crypte des Gros Piliers.

We got a very good meal at the Tête d'Or; the omelette we had seen in course of cooking proved excellent; and then we set out on our pilgrimage. The town looks as it must have looked ages ago. There is not a trace of modern element in its life, although there is in the outsides of some of the houses. One of the old monks, writing of the Mount, says, "A little town full of honest folk, who have, however, nothing worth frying."

It appears that the population has greatly decreased since the fortress has ceased to be a prison. The way is steep and twisting through the ancient stone houses, many of which have circular-headed doorways. On the left, the houses, with their gardens, green with vines and fig-trees, seem to be climbing up the steep rock; on the right, a flight of stone steps gives us a more extended view than we can get in the dirty street, so full of pilgrims to-day that the effect is contradictory. One would prefer to see this gaunt, tawny rock in solitude and silence, instead of

the clatter of footsteps, the merry voices, the constant greetings, as one friend meets another, unseen perhaps for years till the pilgrimage has brought them face to face. Outside some of the doors were fishing-nets of various kinds, and there were one or two shops for the sale of crucifixes and rosaries for the pilgrims. A broken flight of steps led us on to the ramparts; as we mount, there is a grand view of the abbey; above, on the right, is the Bay of Mont St. Michel, with flocks of pilgrims on their way across the *grève*; at this distance they looked like ants crawling along the desolate, monotonous stretch of sand; on the left are picturesque tiled houses, with a broken wall in front overgrown with vine.

At the angle of the rampart where the staircase mounts again to the donjon is the little Tour Claudine. We stopped before we reached the top of the first flight of steps to gaze at the stupendous wall above us—La Merveille, as it is justly named—more than two hundred feet above the *grève*, and more than a hundred feet in sheer height of granite wall rising from the wooded rock below. The wall is strengthened by fifteen massive buttresses, and is green and bronze with moss and lichen. At the eastern angle of this wall is the graceful staircase-tower, Des Corbins, the work of Abbot Pierre le Roy, 1391.

The entrance to the abbey is called Le Gouffre. It is the gate of the donjon built by Pierre le Roy in 1393, beside the Tour des Corbins at the angle of the Merveille. This entrance is very sombre and mysterious looking, and must have struck a chill to the hearts of unhappy state criminals doomed to imprisonment in the fortress.

The low menacing doorway leads up some steps into the

Salle des Gardes. Here formerly the vassals of the monastery assembled on solemn occasions. To-day it plainly did not bear a normal aspect. It had gone on pilgrimage, like the red-cross visitors of the Tête d'Or; for one side of it was occupied by a range of counters; behind the first of these were three or four of the Brothers selling crucifixes, medals, reliquaries, and rosaries, some of which were under glass cases on the counters, and others hung on the old stone wall behind them. Beyond, the counter was covered with photographs of the abbey, and several old women were very busy selling these; they could not at all understand our delay in selecting specimens.

"They are all alike parts of the holy abbey," said one. She plainly thought a pilgrim should be satisfied with the mere memento. We inquired for a guide over the building, and were told that all the Brothers and priests were busy to-day with the bishop—the Bishop of Coutances.

"But all is open," our informant added; "there is nothing to pay to-day, because of the pilgrimage. You can find your own road."

There are three doors in the Salle des Gardes: one has been opened through the ancient fireplace, and leads only to the porter's lodge; the next leads to the great staircase; and that on the right along a gloomy passage to the lowest story of the Merveille, once the stables of the Knights of Mont St. Michel. This vast building has three stories: the first is called the Montgommeries; the second contains the refectory and the Salle des Chevaliers; and the third, the cloister and the dormitory.

We went along the gloomy passage till we reached the Montgommeries, an immense crypt, upwards of 245 feet long

by about 40 feet broad. The vaulted stone roof is supported by eighteen pillars, which divide it into three aisles; it is also divided into two lengthwise by a stone wall, in which is a door of communication between the one crypt, formerly used as a stable, into the other which was the almonry.

The name of Montgommeries was given from an attack on the fortress in the fifteenth century by the Calvinist leader, Montgommery. On this side was formerly Les Poulains, a lift moved by an immense wheel for raising provisions for the fortress from below, now removed to the other side of the abbey buildings. The monk, Dom Huynes, who has left a MS. history of the Mount, gives this quaint account of Montgommery's attempt:—

“The Calvinists having captured one of the garrison, and put a cord round his neck, told him that they would grant him his life if he would promise to betray the abbey to them. The poor man accepted the offer, and arranged that they were to assemble at the foot of the staircase of the fountain St. Aubert, and that he would then introduce them into the crypt by means of the great wheel used to mount provisions.

“If God had not changed the heart of this soldier, the Mont St. Michel had been lost. But he repented, and gave notice to the governor, who resolved to put to the sword all these enemies.

“That day the air was so full of fog that the French reached the foot of the rock without fear of discovery. Then climbing up into the wheel, they began to enter one after another, and were received with open arms. They were conducted into the great hall; and there, the better to deceive them, were made to drink a taste of wine to give them courage to kill

the monks ; then they were ushered into the guard-room, and each was run through the body with a halberd ; and thus were put to death ninety-eight. The commanders of this illustrious company becoming very much surprised that so great a number of soldiers, all chosen men, made no noise, called out that, if all was going well, they should fling a monk from the window.

“ The soldiers of the garrison thereupon turned a prisoner into a monk ; they shaved him, and put on him an old habit, and, after sending a sword through his body, flung him down the rock.

“ But Montgomery still doubted, and was resolved to discover the truth. He bade his page mount the wheel, who, seeing none of his own people, cried out ‘ Treason, treason ! ’ and let himself drop to the ground. At this the Calvinists, taking alarm, climbed down the rock again as quickly as they could, while those above sent after them a discharge of musketry and stones ; of which some of them were found dead on the sands, and those whom they had left in pledge in the château were thrown down after the metamorphosed monk ; and all were buried next day at fifteen paces from the Poulains.”

Some years ago, in making a trench at the foot of the Merveille, a quantity of human bones was discovered ; these were identified with the unlucky companions of Montgomery.

The crypt is sombre and massive, well calculated to support the immense pile of building that rests on it.

A flight of steps leads to the Salle des Chevaliers. This is a beautiful hall of early thirteenth-century work, divided into three by two rows of columns, with richly carved and varied capitals : there is evidently another row

of columns built into the wall, which takes a passage off from this splendid hall. The groining of the roof is equally bold and elegant. This hall is ninety-eight feet long by sixty-eight wide ; it was used as the chapter-house of the Knights of St. Michel, by Louis XI. He instituted the Order of St. Michel at his Château d'Amboise in 1496, about the time of one of the two pilgrimages he made to the Mount ; that is probably about the date of the two fireplaces with projecting fronts as big as houses, and of the square-headed windows beside them, evidently more modern than the rest of the hall, which is attributed to Philip Augustus.

A little door in this hall leads into the ancient Chartrier. In this is a collection of fragments of the abbey.

Outside, the building called the Chartrier may be recognised by an elaborate arcade, built by Abbot Pierre le Roy, early in the fifteenth century, at the western angle of the Merveille. This Chartrier contained so large an amount of precious manuscripts, that the Mount was called "the city of books." The greatest part of these found their way to the library of Avranches. The most ancient of the dated MSS. before 1100 is signed—

"Cyraldi calamus hoc renovatit opus."

From the Salle des Chevaliers, which supports the cloisters, we passed along another gloomy passage to the refectory, supporting the dormitory. This is also a splendid hall, but of simpler architecture than the Salle des Chevaliers. It is divided into two by eight round pillars, with octagon bases ; the stone groining of the roof is remarkably bold and well developed. The refectory is about a hundred and twelve feet long and about forty broad. At the end of the room

are two roofed fireplaces of vast size—much larger than those in the Salle des Chevaliers ; and on one of these huge open stone hearths was a blazing fire of logs, and round about were several women in large aprons acting as cooks ; for we had come upon the pilgrims again in the refectory ; and probably since the time of the middle-age Abbots, before the glory of the abbey had grown dim, there had never been enacted in this refectory a scene so like the old hospitality of Mont St. Michel. Tables were spread from one end of the hall to the other, which had evidently been crowded with guests ; for several fresh-looking country-women were busy changing plates and glasses, and arranging the table for new arrivals. There were still several pilgrims eating their meal, much more silently here than those we had met with at the Tête d'Or. One of the cooks asked us to step inside the fireplace and look up the chimney. It is wonderfully lofty, and so spacious that it might lodge a regiment.

“ We have a table d'hôte here,” she said, “ for the pilgrims. Yesterday we had to serve three hundred and fifty repasts. Monsieur and madame could have eaten here as well as at the inn, if it had so pleased them.” We were told that these women had worn their picturesque Breton caps on the previous day, but had been so stared at that to-day they appeared in plain white dimity caps : they were some of them pilgrims from Britany.

The refectory was richly decorated with inlaid floor and painted windows, when Henry II. dined there with his barons, on the occasion of his visits to his friend Robert du Mont. But the present hall was built on that old site by Abbot Radulph in 1212—1218. Certainly Charles VII.

and Louis XI. of France must have been feasted here when they came on pilgrimage to the Mount.

From the refectory we went along a passage up some stairs, into another vaulted passage, or crypt, with three windows looking down into the Salle des Chevaliers.

We found ourselves here in a stream of people mounting by another staircase, and mingling with them we followed into what was at first total darkness. When we got further in, we seemed to be in a semicircular underground church, supported by nineteen round pillars, placed in two rows round two in the centre, some of these pillars are said to be fifteen feet in diameter. This is the famous crypt of the Gros Piliers, or more correctly the Chapel of Notre-Dame Sousterre, and is the *tour de force* of the abbey. The monks called it "the great work." It supports the apse of the church above.

There are five chapels against the walls, in which we saw rough temporary wooden altars. In the midst of the chapel, against the two massive central pillars, was a life-size image of the Blessed Virgin, perfectly black, but richly dressed. Above her was a lamp, shedding a little light, like a halo round her; and all about her, in a long circling wreath of laurel, were fixed candles, burning dimly in the underground atmosphere and darkness of the place. On one side was a temporary wooden altar.

We had been told that the procession would halt here, for a short service before the Black Virgin, on its way to the church, and we waited its coming. The crowd of pilgrims began to range itself in orderly fashion all round the chapel, between the second and third rows of pillars, leaving a way open near the door, which we saw led on to the grand staircase of the abbey. We stationed ourselves near this

opening, and in a few minutes came the sound of chanting, and then the procession—acolytes swinging silver censers, banner-bearers, cross-bearers, numerous priests with candles, priests in rich vestments, then the magnificent crozier of the bishop, and, following close after, the Bishop of Coutances, a very tall and remarkable-looking man, splendidly robed, and wearing a lofty mitre; then more white-robed priests, each bearing a lighted candle between thumb and finger; and about two hundred pilgrims, each with red cross on shoulder and a lighted candle in hand, chanting at the top of their voices.

The procession walked round the chapel, and then halted before the image. The bishop removed his mitre, and handed it to his chaplain, and then he began to say the office. We had moved round so as to have a better view, and the effect was most striking and inspiring. The light of the lamp fell full on the glittering robes of the bishop, on his upturned eloquent face, and on the crowd of white-robed priests behind him; it fell, too, on the ecstatic faces of the pilgrims (many of them Bretons), some with tears streaming down their wrinkled faces, relieved strongly against the intense gloom around; and when the hymn began, in which all joined, every verse ending with—

“ Vierge, notre espérance,
Etends sur nous ton bras,
Sauve, sauve la France—
Ne l’abandonne pas,”

the enthusiasm grew fervid, and one was able somewhat to realise the preaching of the early crusades and the zeal it kindled.

As soon as the hymns were sung, the bishop resumed his mitre and went on to the church. Before we followed, we went back into the passage to the refectory, and up a staircase, which we learned would lead us to the open air, for there had been something almost stifling in the atmosphere of the Gros Piliers. One realises the saying of being in the bowels of the earth in this crypt, which, although it cannot from its vast height aboveground be called subterraneous, is certainly dug out of the recesses of the granite rock.

Hitherto we had found our way fairly well, but we wished for a guide to the crypts and darker parts of the building ; and at the top of the staircase we met a priest evidently belonging to the abbey. We explained our wish, and he seemed surprised ; he said, "All is open to day ; you can go where you please." He said it was almost impossible to get a guide during the bishop's visit, as all the priests were so busy ; but if we would be in church when service was over, he would see what could be done. Meantime he pointed to the cloister which we had just reached, and advised us to examine it while the crowd of pilgrims was occupied in the church. He pointed to some steps beyond the cloister, and said that was the way to the church, and then bowed very politely and left us.

It is difficult to describe the effect of the cloister just after emerging from the sepulchral gloom of Les Gros Piliers. The name Palace of Angels, given to the abbey by its monks, seems well applied here. We came out suddenly into full daylight in a square court, quite three hundred feet above the sands, surrounded on all sides by a triple row of more than two hundred columns ; those against the walls are

of granite, and those round the quadrangle have the lancet arches which connect them, the capitals and spandrels, carved most exquisitely in Caen stone. It is impossible to overpraise the charming lightness and beauty of these arcades. The frieze above the pillars is richly and delicately carved. The double row of little columns round the centre are so placed that they alternate with the arches,



Angle of Cloister.

allowing each capital to be seen. Probably the contrast of the richly carved, delicate stonework here enhances the effect by the refined contrast it makes to the massive granite used in the rest of the abbey buildings. One fancies the delight the monks must have taken in these cloisters, and in the view from the windows over the *grève*.

The world looks so small at this distance of three hundred feet. People crawl over the sand like black specks, and the coast of Britany is a faint line. In clear weather there is a magnificent view from here, which we regretted not to have seen. In later times the cloister was used for air and exercise by the unhappy prisoners confined in the Mount. At the northern angle of the cloister is the library, built by a

prior in 1646 ; the works which it contained are now at Avranches.

The dormitory must have been very vast, but it has been so subdivided and mutilated during the occupation of the abbey as a prison that it is now the least interesting part of the building.

We went across the cloister into the church. It was no doubt very grand before the Revolution, when half of the nave was destroyed and a Greek portal erected, as a French writer says, "to stanch the wound made by this amputation." The nave with its aisles and clerestory is the original nave, begun by Abbot Hildebert in 1020. The transepts are also of Romanesque architecture, but these are of later date. The four large central columns were erected in 1050 by Radulph de Beaumont. But we regretted that we had not seen this part of the church before its recent restoration ; it bears too modern an aspect now.

The choir is flamboyant, and was begun in 1450 by the Cardinal d'Estouteville. Guillaume de Lamps, 1449, carried on his work, and built the triforium. The tracery of the windows is very elaborate, and Jean de Lamps, brother of Guillaume, finished it, 1513, by the clerestory, which is simpler and more like the first stage.

The carvings on the altar and the other bas-reliefs were sculptured by the prisoners ; some of these are very grotesque. The decorations of the altar and the fittings of the church were formerly superb, the pious offerings of kings and princes ; but the Revolution destroyed all this magnificence. When we entered, the altar was very brilliant with lights and decorations, and the church was full of pilgrims intent on the service.

When the Bishop had given his blessing, as he passed down the church he held out his hand to those near, who knelt and kissed his ring with much reverence. The church was soon cleared, as all the pilgrims followed the Bishop closely. A French lady and gentleman, and one or two others, who evidently were not pilgrims, lingered ; and presently our friendly priest appeared with a sulky unwilling-looking young fellow, whom he presented to us as our guide.

“He knows everything,” said the courteous gentleman, “and will guide you as well as we could ourselves.”

We secretly thought we should have preferred himself ; however, there was no help for it. Our guide went into the chapel of St. Martin and unlocked a door, inside which was a spiral staircase. He told us to mount as quickly as possible. At the first halt of these giddy, winding steps we came out on a forest of gargoyles, flying buttresses, pinnacles elaborately crocketed and carved, suspended, seemingly, at this immense height over the *grèves*, a wonderful sight when one thinks of the difficulty of their construction, and the years of tempest they have endured. Many of the pinnacles are left unfinished, and some bear the marks of the fire of 1594, which did infinite damage to the building. Another ascent up the staircase-tower, and then we came into the open air on a staircase thrown across bridge-fashion to the roof of the choir. This is called the Escalier de Dentelle, and is elaborately carved. From here we mounted to the parapet of the tower called Le Petit Tour des Fous, because, although it is very giddy work to walk all round this platform, still it is a less foolish attempt than to walk round the Grande Tour des Fous, still higher up. This Grande Tour des Fous is a poor substitute for

the graceful spire which once existed, surmounted by a gilded figure of the archangel with wings outspread.

But the view from this lower platform, at such a fearfully giddy height—four hundred feet above the sands—is worth climbing to see. The wind was rising fast, and blew so strongly that the weaker ones of the party were glad to cling to the parapet ; but the wind had cleared away the mist, and we saw lying spread around us, beyond the pale *grèves* on one side and the glistening water on the other, the town of Avranches, the tower of the Church of Courtils, with the dark rock of Tombeleine, and the Rochers de Cancale, in front of the coast of Brittany. We seem so far away from life up here : all around are the carved pinnacles of the church ; below is the steep rock, with its sombre crypts and horrible dungeons, of which, as yet, we have only got glimpses ; and beneath these, so far away that its sounds cannot reach us, is the little town clinging to the sides of the rock, among its vines and fig-trees, girt in closely by the belt of ramparts, beyond which stretch the pale monotonous *grèves*, only broken by the line, like a silver thread, of the canal of the Couësson.

We came down again by the “Lace staircase,” on to the platform on a level with the church ; this is called the Saut Gautier, because an unhappy madman was killed by throwing himself over on to the rocks beneath. Over one of the doorways of the church, on this platform, is a very curious bas-relief representing the miracle of St. Aubert. St. Michael presses his finger on the saint’s forehead, and shows him the Mount Tumba, where he is to build him a church. There is a grand view from this platform, which is also called Beau-regard. We were told that seventeen church spires and

towers may be seen in clear weather. Many of the pilgrims were already departing on foot to their homes: most of them lived far away—some as far as Paris and Versailles. They looked like a long line of straggling ants crawling over the sand.

Suddenly the line broke and scattered in the middle, as though in chase of something; but soon the straight line formed again, and they toiled on in the howling wind. We learned, when we got back to the town, that the violence of the wind had blown off the hats of many of the priests and pilgrims—for most of the flocks of pilgrims are headed by their curés—and the poor creatures would have to go home hatless, as they dared not chase the missing hats far over the sand.

Adjoining the platform is the abbot's dwelling, called the *Abbatiale*, but it has been modernised out of all interest; from here, down some steps, was the chapel of St. Catherine, in the *Grand Exil*; and close by is the *Prison of Petit Exil*.

Our guide seemed to consider it his duty to show us the dormitory and the cloisters, probably because the staircase leading from them conducts to the beginning of the dungeons, and the quaint, weird staircase, of which we had already got a glimpse in our wanderings, leads direct into the *Crypte de l'Aquilon*, which is in the midst of the series.

The sensation in descending from the airy height and boundless space, over which we had been gazing into this confined gloom, is terrible.

There is no carving, no groined roof here. We are within the bare, rough rock itself, at the beginning of what is called the *Promenoir*. On the left is an ancient chapel, which, during the prison period of Mont St. Michel,

was converted into so awful a dungeon that it was called *Le Cachot du Diable* : the roof of this chapel is supported by a column with carved capital standing out in the midst. There is too much light in this first part for effect, although, a little farther on, one longs to escape from the awful gloom around. The *Promenoir* is the ancient cloister of the convent, divided into two sombre walks by six granite pillars : it was built in the twelfth century. What awful seclusion, to pace up and down here under the granite roof, closed up in these granite walls with always the same companions ! One seems unable to breathe freely in the *Promenoir* : and yet the next crypt is much darker ; it is, in fact, the horrible dungeon in which was the iron cage invented by Cardinal *la Balue*. The first iron cage was afterwards replaced by one made of strong cross-bars of wood. This last one was destroyed when the young *Duc de Chartres* (afterwards *King Louis Philippe*) visited *Mont St. Michel*. It must have been horrible enough to be shut up in this dark hole without the desperate barbarity of the iron cage. Down some dark, rough steps, we looked in at gloomy vaults, once the cellars of the monks ; but there was less horror here. Presently, passing by the *Promenoir* again, we followed the descent of the rock, its rugged side walling us in on either hand. On the left this contained prison-cells cut in the rock, but partly lined with wood : nothing could be heard here. At the end of this horrible passage, we found ourselves in the *Crypte de l'Aquilon*. Here are arches and pillars with carved capitals, evidently of the twelfth century. We seem to have got into the religious life again, and we breathe more freely in this gloom than we did in the dungeon beyond. The *Abbot, Robert du Mont*, consecrated an altar to the *Virgin* in the *Crypte de*

l'Aquilon, at the feast of Pentecost, by the hands of the Archbishop Hugh of Rouen. This crypt and the Promenoir are the most interesting parts of this subterranean or rather within-rock portion of Mont St. Michel: they are breathing-spaces from the horror of the rest. The effect



Crypte d'Aquilon.

of light and shade on the quaint staircase leading from the crypt up into the church is most striking. We went down the steps at the end of the crypt, and found a gallery running across: on the right is the ancient entrance to the abbey, and on the left are a succession of dungeon-cells in the rock. Our guide opened the door of two, which are called the Twins, so close together that the wretched prisoners

could speak to one another. The French gentleman scrambled into one of these dens, but could not stand upright in it. A match was lighted that we might see into it, but it was only a hole with bare rocky sides. A lady of the party asked to be shut into one of these cells for a few minutes. The place was full of awful horror, and it is said

that some of these dungeons contain holes leading to *oubliettes* below.

It was a relief when our guide went again towards the stairs. As soon as we had mounted them, he led us, on the right, into a long narrow passage, this being the ancient burying-place, or *charnier*, of the monks. It looks a dismal cavern, which one shrinks from penetrating into. Lately, a passage has been discovered leading from it to the church; and along these awful crypts the monks must have come in long procession, bearing their departed brethren to the gloomy charnel-house, vast enough in its unfathomable gloom to have contained generations of Benedictines. Close by this cemetery we reach the light again in the ruined chapel of St. Etienne. Near this was another chapel, Notre-Dame Sousterre, or the chapel of Notre-Dame des Trente Cierges. Here was once the Black Virgin—now in Notre-Dame des Gros Piliers—always surrounded by thirty blazing candles. It is said that this chapel was the germ of the abbey, and that here was the first altar which St. Aubert dedicated to the archangel Michael.

But in 1630, the Prior, Dom Bède de Fiesque, destroyed the Chapelle des Trente Cierges, and removed the image to Notre-Dame Sousterre des Gros Piliers, and a little while after the ancient chapel was turned into its present state of passage for the provisions brought up by the wheel. This enormous wheel, removed here from the northern side of the fortress, still exists in an opening of the wall at the end of the ruined chapel: it used to be worked by the prisoners, who by it raised the lift on which the provisions were placed.

From this point we reached again the Crypte d'Aquilon,

and thence along some dark turnings came into the light airy gallery beside the Salle des Chevaliers.

One stands still here, and draws a long breath of relief at being free from the suggestive horror of those regions of crime and human suffering, closed in between the primitive little town below and the richly carved church above. We did not seem to realise the full meaning of these infamous dungeons while we were grouping blindly along the rocky passages; it is the contrast of the daylight, of the richly sculptured columns in the Salle des Chevaliers filling the mind with memories of chivalrous generous deeds and pictures of knightly splendour, that stimulates indignation and loathing for the atrocities committed within these sacred walls. Louis the XIV. and his successor each confined a prisoner in the iron cage: the first, a journalist, named Dubourg, died in this terrible confinement, eaten by rats; his crime was that he had dared to satirise *Le Grand Monarque*. The last tenant of the cage was released by Louis XVI.

At length we found ourselves again in the Salle des Gardes. Interesting and beautiful as the abbey is, still there is a feeling of intense relief in escaping from its dark dirty dungeons and close and gloomy passages hewn in the rock; it is like the sensation one has in emerging from a mine.

We came down into the town again by a different way, to see the little parish church of St. Michel. It is a very humble building, said to have been built in the eleventh century; but it does not appear to be older than the fifteenth: except some old stones with curious inscriptions, there is nothing worthy of notice. In the churchyard there is the tomb of David Benoit, who left money to pay for the tolling of the convent bells in fog-time, so that souls might not perish in the

quicksands. From the church it is easy to reach the ramparts and walk partly round the citadel; and it is much better to do this after one has visited the interior than beforehand, for one examines the different buildings with so much greater interest. There are first the seven towers, ending with the Tour Claudine, which communicates with the Merveille; a little way on is the miraculous fountain of St. Aubert; next we find ourselves beneath the Chartrier, and beyond this, as we get round to the farther side of the rock, is the chapel of St. Aubert; the block of stone on which it is built is said to be the summit of the rock, kicked down miraculously by the foot of the child when it came in the way of the builders of the first church, and resisted all their efforts for its removal.

On the western side there are no longer houses nestling among gardens with trees; the rock is bare and rugged—a savage precipice; above it is a wall as severe and bare as itself, the work of Duke Richard the Good and the Abbot Hildebrand in the tenth century. One shudders at the sight of this wall, for within are the dungeons and all the gloomy horror of the Mount. It is said that the round tower at the angle of the platform overhead was the mouth of the *oubliettes*, and that by a tube of communication the wretch condemned to this fate was sent down into the charnel-house of the monks: it is called the Tour du Méridien. From here we only see the porch of the church overhead; but formerly, before the half of the nave was destroyed, the church itself reached almost to the edge of the precipice. It is this side of the Mount which is represented in the Bayeux tapestry, and near here that Harold's stalwart arm rescued the Norman soldiers in the passage of the Couësnon. One feels that Harold must have paused on his way to marvel at the won-

drous church on the rock, surmounted as it then was by its guardian angel. And now we come to the huge yawning rift in the rock left by the destruction of the Hôtellerie, and the infirmary built in the twelfth century by that illustrious abbot Robert de Thorigny; overhead is the platform Saut Gautier, built on three arches, like a balcony; and below is the Tour Gabrielle or Du Moulin; above us, too, is the Poulains. Next comes in the upper story of the Abbatale, with its green blinds: during the prison time it was the abode of the governor; just below it was once the chapel of St. Catherine, and close by were the Grand Exil and the Petit Exil with their dungeons. The next building is the Bailliverie; and the square erection, with an arcade of eight lancets, is the Perrine, date 1393, which joins the donjon entrance-tower; and on the right, at the angle of the Merveille, is the graceful Tour des Corbins, built in the fourteenth century.

And when one has thus examined the Mount inside and out, trying to look at it as a reality, the same impression remains—a profound sadness, deepened by every glance across the pale waste of sands entirely surrounding the huge rocky pile, and intense, never-ending wonder at the gigantic strength and massive solidity of the abbey fortress. And yet these granite walls and huge pillars, real and substantial as they are, do not destroy the phantom-like effect of the Mount. It is essentially weird. When first a steamer was seen crossing the bay, sending huge wreaths of smoke from its tall black chimney, a legend sprang up among the simple people that Satan had come in person to claim the fortress, which was surely his own building.

The costume of the fishing population is very picturesque. but the Mount seems scantily peopled.

One imagines that the monks must have watched the approach alike of foes and friends, from the Saut Gautier or Beauregard—of pilgrims chanting in procession on the *grèves*, and also of the attacks on Henry Beauclerc, when, besieged by his elder brothers, he took refuge in the abbey. William was encamped at Avranches, and Robert at Genêts.

We regretted not to make a longer stay at this wonderful spot, but this was not possible. It is a wonder how the little inns could lodge the pilgrims already quartered in the town: probably some of them would have to claim the hospitality of the monastery.

Just as we were ready to start, the diligence came in from Pontorson, with the passengers and horses bruised and bleeding: the violence of the wind had blown the vehicle over on the journey; many of the people were much hurt. Our driver told us it was much safer not to drive down the steep descent: he led his horse cautiously, and we began to follow; but as soon as we were outside the shelter of the walls the wind took me as if I had been a leaf, and if I had not been suddenly caught by a strong hand I should have been blown away along the sand.

No words can paint the weird wildness of that journey back across the *grèves*: the rain poured down in torrents; as our driver said—

“It is not rain, it is water;” and yet he dared not put up the hood of the carriage, lest the wind should blow us over as it had blown the diligence. It was not possible to keep an umbrella open for an instant against the howling furious wind; it seemed like some monster risen from the desolate waste of tawny sand, roaring and clamouring for prey. So we drove on, soaked with the rain, and shrinking under our

wraps as closely as we could. Our poor driver had nothing to protect him, but he said rain never hurt him. Looking back, we saw the Mount looming like a giant melancholy phantom through the mists of rain over the desolate waste.

When we reached the road again we found it had become a morass, and we were more than four hours in reaching Avranches. On the way our driver opened his mind to us on the subject of the pilgrimage, which he said was extremely unpopular, as it was known to be set on foot for a political purpose—for the speedy accession of Henri V. He said also that the town of Mont St. Michel was very much offended with the priests for turning the refectory into a table d'hôte, and thereby defrauding the inns.

It had grown dark before we reached Avranches, very wet and tired and hungry, feeling much as if we had been taking a sea-voyage, we were so blown about by the wind, but full of a new experience utterly unlike any we had before gained. There is something completely special in a visit to Mont St. Michel, and it is worth any fatigue or trouble.

THE BOCAGE COUNTRY.

CHAPTER XX.

Vire. Mortain.



THE best way to get to Vire from Avranches is to drive to Villedieu, and then go on to Vire by the Granville and Paris Railway from Villedieu station; but we got a message from the office, saying that the diligence for Villedieu had been engaged to take a party of pilgrims to Mont St. Michel, and that we were to have an *Américaine* instead. As it was a fine morning, we preferred this change, as we were to have the inside of the carriage, our two fellow-travellers sitting on the box-seat. When we had gone about two miles, the horse stood suddenly still. The driver said it was ill, and that we were not to trouble, as it would soon go on again; but when this stopping was repeated every five minutes, we told him he must try to get another horse, as we had just passed a post-house. He obstinately refused to do this, asserting that there were no horses to be had there;

so we got out and walked a good part of the way, in great fear of being too late for our train. The contrast between English and French estimate of time was very amusing. Our fellow-travellers, Avranchin peasants—a man and a woman—could not understand our hurry; neither could they understand our indignation against the driver when he said he knew that the horse was ill before starting. They were very reluctant to get down and walk.

“He can stand still; he will be better soon,” the woman said. “What does it matter?” This cruelty to horses is frequent among these country drivers: it is one of the few drawbacks to the pleasure of travelling in France.

At last the horse recovered a little; and, after we had given up all hope of being in time, we reached Villedieu before the train did.

The railway runs through the forest of St. Sever. At the town, beyond the forest, was formerly a celebrated abbey of Benedictines, now used for the residence of the mayor, and schools, barracks, &c. There is only a small portion left of the ancient church; the rest is of the seventeenth century. But soon we got a view over the picturesque valley of the Vire. We had left frowning hills and bare rocks behind us: we were in orchards and wooded heights, with every now and then glimpses of golden corn-fields and rich pasture-land, with brown cows feeding; a river meandering below the hills, shaded by tall slender trees. We had left Avranches at half-past nine o'clock, and we did not reach Vire till two. The delays of French travelling, unless one always travels express, rob the traveller of many hours which might be spent among lovely scenery or in rest; and a French country railway-station is even more uncomfortable than an English one.

Even a hasty glance at Vire, as soon as we had climbed up the hill leading from the railway-station, was enough to show us that we had reached the most picturesque town we had yet seen. Modern improvements and alterations have been hard at work: and trade, in the way of tall chimneys, has made itself extremely obtrusive; one sighs over what must once have been, but there is still ample loveliness left in the Vaux de Vire to tempt the traveller to make a stay of several days in the town of Olivier Basselin.

The town is singularly quaint, placed at the end of a ridge of hills. Across the principal street is a picturesque arched gateway, supporting the Tour de l'Horloge, a construction of the thirteenth century; the top of the tower is very original. In front, just over the gateway, is a gaily painted image of the Virgin, with the legend "Marie protège la ville." Just before we reached the Tour d'Horloge we went up a charming old street on the right; it is the way to the post-office, and is full of curious old houses and quaint effects. We came down this again, and, passing under the Clock-Tower, reached the church of Notre-Dame, around which is a group of very old wooden houses. The church is remarkable; built of dark stone. There is a nave with two aisles, and a large choir, built at several periods—the nave probably about the thirteenth century. The pillar on which the pulpit is fixed is curiously cased in wood. Near this an old woman, with a muslin cap over her *bonnet de coton*, and an Indian red handkerchief over her shoulders, was saying her prayers in one of the high pews, which injure the effect of the interior of this fine church. The walls and columns of the choir and apse are richly illuminated, and

the effect of these from the western end, contrasted against the cold, dark stone of the nave, is admirable.

In the afternoon we took a charming walk, to find the house of Olivier Basselin. We had to ask several times before we could find any one who had heard of his name, or who knew where his house was. The first part of the walk was beside the washing-place of the town, crowded by women of all ages, and as usual full of charming pictures. From



Old Woman saying Paternosters.

this we went down a steep road on the right, beside a branch of the river, with rich dark-coloured crags on one side, clothed here and there with ivy and bushes, while opposite was a green hill, wooded up to its very summit by tall feathery trees. As this branch of the river winds in and out among the factories which it feeds, the road descends after a bit to its level, and the hills rise high abovehead, making a deep green valley. Every now and then we

came upon pleasant walks cut up the hill-side, from which one overlooks the winding river and its never-ending succession of rocky glens and wooded valleys; but the presence of the numerous factories, and the constant whirr of the mills, destroy much of the beauty of the place. Tall red-brick chimneys stand out boldly in the very midst of an exquisite landscape, and the river bank is defaced by huge red slated-roofed factories, which employ hundreds of industrious *Virois* in the manufacture of blue cloth for the French

army. One feels that it is all right, and that trade must progress; but yet it seems hard that the loveliest spot in France should have been chosen for such an amount of usefulness. Every now and then the rich red brown of the rocks is varied though hardly improved by long lines of blue cloth stretched out to dry.

After rather a long walk of constant ascent and descent between the rocks and the river, we came to the poet's house; for although Monsieur Paul Lacroix, Monsieur de Beaurepaire, and other modern French writers seem to be doubtful about Olivier Basselin's claim to the verses attributed to him, and to incline to exalt Jean Le Houx as the author, instead of the compiler, of the more ancient of the "*Vaux de Vire*," instead of regarding him as simply the author of the "*Chants Nouveaux*," still it is pleasant always to cling to old beliefs, and to think that Olivier Basselin really lived, and wrote, and plied his trade in this house beside the river. He is said to have been a fuller, and to have lived in the fifteenth century—about a century before Jean le Houx—and to have written drinking and warlike songs. His lays were very popular among his fellow-townsmen; but he was disliked by the monks, the Cordeliers, who had a convent near his mill, and he was probably much addicted to the wine he wrote in praise of. He seems to have fought at the battle of Formigny, near Bayeux, when the English were finally driven out of the province; and contemporary poems say that he was killed by the English, but his death seems as uncertain as his birth.

The factory adjoining the house is modern: it is charmingly placed on the river itself. A dark rock, *Des Cordeliers*, projects over the road beside it, and beyond it the valley

opens and shows the Vire winding round the shoulder of another hill, which stretches boldly forward, and offers a double series of exquisitely tinted hill and valley; this evening a veil of blue mist rose up as the sun sank behind the crest of the rocks.

Still farther on the valley grows more and more beautiful; indeed we fancied weeks might be spent in exploring the loveliness of these Vaux de Vire. It seems a necessity of nature that such a country should have created a poet, or, indeed, two, for Le Houx's confessed poems are quite equal to those early ones which he has assigned to Basselin.

Le Houx was a learned advocate, of Vire, and a man of classical education. His "Chants Nouveaux" reveal this; and yet they are more uniformly in praise of wine and cyder than the older "Vaux de Vire." It seems a pity that so much power of verse should not have found a worthier subject. One of the "Chants Nouveaux" must have suggested a popular song of our own day—"Jolly Nose:"—

“ Beau nez, dont les rubis m’ont cousté mainte pipe
 De vin blanc et claret,
 Et duquel la couleur richement participe
 Du rouge et violet;
 Grand nez, qui te regarde à travers un grand verre
 Te trouve encore plus beau:
 Tu ne ressembles pas au nez de quelque hère
 Qui ne boit que de l’eau.
 Un coq-d’Inde sa gorge à toi semblable porte;
 Combien de riches gens
 N’ont pas si riche nez!”

Here is one in a more pleasant vein—

“ J’ay oui dire à ma grand’mère:
 Toujours des vieux on apprend,

Que de la goutte dernière
 La bonne chère dépend.
 Bonne femme,
 Que ton âme
 Puisse être au ciel en repos !
 J'ai envie,
 Si j'ai vic,
 De suivre bien tes propos."

Le Houx seems to have given great scandal to the clergy by his volume of "Chants Nouveaux ; however, before his death he went to Rome, and received the absolution refused him in his native town, and, it is supposed, gave up the writing of "Vaux de Vire." There seem to have been many other composers of these songs, besides Basselin and Le Houx. There are some martial lays among the early "Vaux de Vire." One of these, a very early one, which Monsieur Beaurepaire thinks may have been composed by Basselin himself, begins thus—

" Hé, cuidez-vous que je me joue,
 Et que je voulsisse aller
 En Angleterre demourer ?
 Ils ont une longue coue."

From these "Vaux de Vire" the vaudeville is said to be derived ; but Norman antiquaries seem undecided as to when and how the change was made.

Next day the rain was incessant, but we went out to see the ruins of the old castle. They stand most picturesquely on a promontory of rock, which, though in the midst of the town, projects itself a perpendicular height of bare rock into the valley of the Vire. The river divides here, and circles round the hills, which rise one beyond

another till the last are lost in misty distance. It offered a most exquisite succession of pictures, even at this our first view, through the veil of rain, and left us to imagine far greater beauty. The special peculiarity of this view is the steep descent of the rock, about two hundred and thirty feet, and the way in which the river forms a double valley below among the ever-varying hills.

The ruins are only a part of the wall of the lofty donjon.



The House of Olivier Basselin.

They stand in a sort of enclosed park, and are well preserved. There are pleasant shaded walks and seats here; it is a sort of public promenade. Henry I. rebuilt the castle of Vire in the twelfth century; but Cardinal Richelieu ordered the fortifications to be destroyed in 1630.

We found our way round the town by some curious old houses. Among them was a dark round tower, with a crenelated top; we then went upwards till we got into the Rue des Teinturiers—a very picturesque street. On the left are varied groups of old houses, some built of stone, with quaint dormers and carved gables, others covered with *essentes* black with age, each story overhanging that beneath. On one window-ledge was a blue sheepskin; on the next, some bright-

coloured flowers. A good-natured looking woman, standing out in front, told us this walk was called Au Monts. On the right is the Vire, a wider stream here than near the house of Olivier Basselin, bordered by dyers' yards and sheds, under which bales of blue cloth are soaking in tanks of water, or else stretched out in huge lengths drying on poles in front.

A little farther on, between openings in the wooden sheds, we came to tiny cascades, with a rickety, picture-like wooden bridge. We crossed to the middle of this, and came in full view of a washing-shed. The sluice has been made by huge blocks of stone. The water rushes down each side in little foaming cascades, freshening the delicate green of the ferns which nestle between the huge brown stones. The white foam, the glistening brown water, the green of the trees overhead and the fern below, made the darkness within the shed still darker, and out of this the white cotton nightcaps and bright neckerchiefs of the washers gleamed with marvellous intensity. An old woman in the centre of the group, evidently the oracle of the party, wore a dark blue skirt, a lilac apron, and a red neckerchief: she soaped away vigorously while she chattered. Behind the shed is a small three-storied house, the side next the river clothed up to the roof with a vine clustered with fruit, the open windows showing black through the clinging festoons of tender green. Beyond, along the river, are the houses and quaint chimneys of the town, crowned by the tall tower of the Horloge, and backed by the wooded hills.

There must be endless walks round about this interesting old town. It must be a pleasant place to make a long stay in. There is a comfortable inn, the Hôtel St. Pierre, and

the air is very fresh and healthy, and there are plenty of good shops, besides the exquisite beauty of the country in which it is placed. We much regretted that we had not come by diligence from Caen through Villers Bocage and Beny-Bocage, for we heard marvellous accounts of the loveliness of the country, and we saw enough of it in our walks and drives to be sure that this was not exaggerated.

The people, too, are so quaint and primitive, and their costume was the most original we had seen, except that of the Granvillaises. The favourite cap is the *bonnet rond*, a high conical muslin cap, with a pair of wing-like borders curving round behind the ears, and a muslin bow in front or behind ; beneath this is a lofty stiff pointed sky-blue cone ; a bright-coloured handkerchief is crossed over the chest, and fastened in front by the apron, usually black or lilac, tied round the waist. Coming back along the Rue des Teinturiers, we stopped to admire a charming old house, the front covered with *essentes*. At an upper window were myrtles and geraniums, and sundry pairs of blue and black stockings were hanging from a line across the window. The owner of the house saw that this was being sketched, and came out and spoke to us.

“ Ah,” she said, “ it is all very well for travellers, they only think of the outside ; but for us, who have to live within, I assure you it is different. We would gladly sell our old house-front to have one of brick, that would not let in dirt and the cold of winter as this one does ; but then, what will you?—already strangers say the town of Vire has been spoiled by modern houses. And my husband’s people have lived here, facing our mill,” she pointed to one of the buildings beside the river, “ for I don’t know how many

years ; so we shall go on, I suppose, till the old place falls on us ; but, for me, I like the comfortable."

And as one walks through Vire and sees how very old are the remaining ancient houses, one fears that very soon the "comfortable" and the common-place will have completed their conquest over the exquisite Vaux de Vire and their town. We noticed in Vire what we had before noticed in Caudebec and Caen and Avranches, and many other towns, the happy, loving way in which the fathers and mothers and children speak to one another. Perhaps the children are indulged, but at least they do not seem spoiled. In one of our long journeys we met with a respectable townsman of Vire, his wife, and their son, a young fellow of about three or four and twenty ; it was de-



Tour de l'Horloge.

lightful to see the merry harmony among them, and especially to listen to the respectful manner in which the young man spoke to his father ; to his mother he spoke quite lovingly. We were much pleased to meet the father again in Vire.

Instead of following the street into the town, we climbed up a huge stone staircase on the left. This led to a very narrow and muddy, but picturesque, walk, beside a stone wall covered with climbing plants in full flower. On the

left was a steep descent, and at the bottom of this was the town ; so that we walked along rather above the tops of the houses, and got a charming view of the surrounding country, with the spires and towers of the town as foreground.

After going straight for some distance, the road suddenly turned to the left ; and down some steps we found ourselves in a very old and narrow street, with houses on each side. On the right was a curiosity-shop : the master was absent, but he had left in charge a creature who was really the chief curiosity of the dirty motley collection. It was impossible to say whether he was old or young. His skin was like parchment, and his hair looked like a wig, and yet his keen black eyes and unwrinkled mouth protested against the rest of his appearance.

A little way on was a house, with a vine clinging to the front, and pots of scarlet geraniums on the window-sills. Just opposite, as if set there to make a contrast, was a small house of two stories, surmounted by a very ancient gable. The low diamond-paned window in this was so cobwebbed across, so begrimed and shattered, that it seemed as if the room within could not have been used for years ; below it was a very heavy oaken beam, and below this an open lattice window. Close to this window, framed in by the dark squalor of the room behind, an old woman was seated at her spinning-wheel. She sat crouching at her work ; and as we stood still, fascinated by the sudden contrast she made to the brightness of the flowers beside us, she suddenly raised her head, and showed a red inflamed face, out of which two tiny grey eyes glowered at us in an alarming fashion.

We apologized for staring, and asked her if she made her living by her spinning-wheel.

“It is all I can do, and I can hardly do that,” she said; and she showed us that her right thumb was useless. Poor old woman! part of one side was paralyzed; she had lost her husband some years ago, and lately her last son in the war; and “if my neighbours did not give me a little cyder,” she said, “I could not buy it.”

She was the only instance we met with, among the numbers of peasants we had talked with, of complaint; with all the others the answer was the same—

“It is the good God who sends it, and He knows best.”

It is, doubtless, this entirely simple trust, quite as natural to them as their gaiety, which gives the French country-people what we are pleased to call their frivolity. Certainly they always do look at the sunny side of the peach as long as they can; but the cheerfulness of the poor, in a life of what seems almost starvation, is most admirable. It is this trait of cheerfulness which likens them to the Irish; but then the Norman peasant, at least, is always thrifty, and rarely idle.

As we stood talking to the poor spinner, it seemed that her life must be most desolate and hopeless. The sun could never find its way into her little dismal room; the floor was black, the walls were dark and dingy. She sat on a broken chair; behind her was a squalid bed, and on the other side of the room a little black, fireless stove and a broken stool. This was actually all, except a heap of rubbish on the floor, protruding from which was the handle of a stewpan.

Poor old Viroise! we wished she could have been safely lodged in such a shelter as that of *Les Petites Sœurs*, just

outside the Porte de Calais, at Boulogne-sur-Mer, where, out of funds chiefly given by one private individual, a number of old men and women, who can no longer work, are fed, and clothed, and nursed in the tenderest manner.

“They can stay here till they die,” sweet-faced Sœur Monique said, as she showed us some of her beloved charges, sitting in a large bright room, in sight of a pleasant garden; “and we are so glad they like to be here.”

We came out near the large square fountain in the Grande Rue. It was very picturesque to see an old woman, in a lofty *bonnet rond*, filling one of the narrow tall red pitchers of the country, and carrying it away. These pitchers are delightful, both for form and colour, and, with the baskets, they vary in shape in different places: ever since Lisieux, the *bourrische*; a kind of open basket without handles, had been abundant; also the square flat basket, with a strong handle of twisted withes across, made, like the *bourrische*, of stout wood shavings, had taken the place of the tall, narrow, round baskets of the Seine Inférieure.

The drive from Vire to Mortain is singularly beautiful. For some distance all around is a constant succession of wooded hills. The gates of the fields beside the road are kept shut by a large lump of stone placed at the end of the upper rail; but after we have passed Sourdeval—where we saw a group of women washing in the granite fountain, with its tall obelisk—we cross the river Sées, dwindled here to a tiny brook, and mount above the pretty valley, clothed with pines, through which it runs. Before us is a lofty ridge, and the road begins to climb: to do this it has to circle round and about for miles, as the *côte* of rugged Mortain is almost perpendicular. Far below us is the road we have

traversed, stretching like a white riband across the dark expanse of woods, and then suddenly appearing again lower yet, behind the crest of another hill, which rises across the view; here and there plots of sarrasin show out purple among the varied tints of green.

Our horse was a capital goer; and though his harness must have been fifty years old, it did not seem to cumber his movements. He flew along the road, his long brown-black mane floating in a wild tangle in the breeze. The far-off hills were still shrouded in haze, but the sun was making vigorous efforts to dispel the vapour which had gathered during these previous days of Scotch mist.

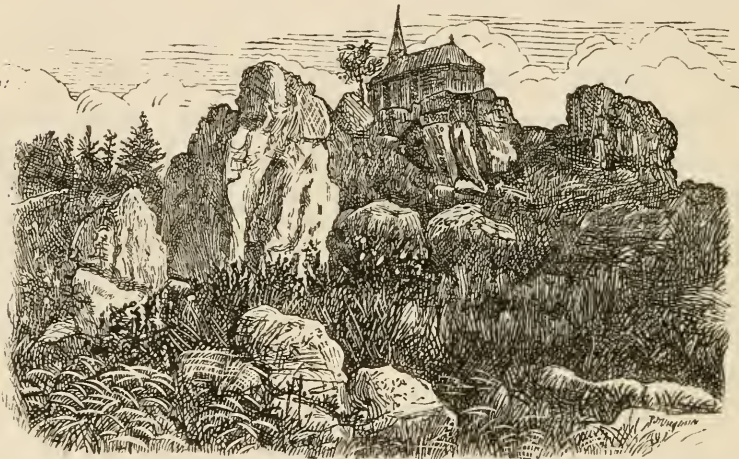
There had been rain till now; but at this point of our journey it suddenly ceased, and the mist rose slowly, leaving the hills distinct, except near the top, where there seemed to be a battle between them and the mist, for it rolled up like a moving cloud, and then, returning, spread itself again, blurring the outline as with a mass of grey smoke.

The country grows more and more beautiful. We have scarcely seen a farmhouse all the way, and now we lose all trace of human life and labour. The landscape spreads out a waving sea of bocage; and yet hills and valleys are so exquisitely intermingled, the tints on the foliage are so varied, contrasted too with sudden masses of grey rock and stretches of moorland, crimson and golden with furze and heather, and backed by such intensely blue hills, that there is no sameness in the picture.

“There is the Abbaye Blanche!” and our sharp-witted driver points with his whip to some buildings nestling among the trees. Just before we enter Mortain, the scenery is

most romantic. On one side is the wood-crowned hill, with masses of grey rock frowning down on us through the trees, from the other comes a sound of rushing water ; and there are the cascades roaring and tumbling in yellow foam into the valley below. We grow quite excited, and in a few minutes we are rattling into Mortain, and stop at the inn.

The rain had begun to pour in torrents ; there was a cold wind, and certainly the outside of our hotel did not promise much. Moreover, we had read in more than one book a



Chapel of St. Michel, Mortain.

solemn warning against the inns of Mortain. It was, therefore, a relief to find ourselves in a large comfortable-looking kitchen, and to be welcomed by a clean, kind hostess.

She at once placed two chairs in front of a huge fireplace, very like an American cooking-stove ; and having taken our wet wraps to dry, she begged us to sit down, and, opening a sort of oven-door on each side of the stove, bade us put our feet in to warm. It was a comical notion ; but it was very comforting, for we had been wet through more than once

that morning. While we sat thus rejoicing in the warmth, and hoping the weather would clear, we were surprised by the apparition of an English lady. She and her sister had been staying at this inn for some days, and had explored Mortain, and they most kindly offered to guide us to the Abbey and the Cascades.

After a little, the weather improved ; and though certainly it is better to go about Mortain in dry weather, specially on account of the long grass near the cascades, still, when after a little the clouds broke, and the sun shone out over the rocks glistening with rain-drops and the sea of freshened foliage, it seemed to us that the end of our pilgrimage contained the loveliest spot that we had met with, and that Mortain truly deserves the name of the Switzerland of France.

Our kind guides proposed that we should visit the Chapel of St. Michel, on the summit of a ridge of rocks covered with pine-trees, then the seminary of the Abbaye Blanche, and leave the church, the famous Collégiale of Mortain, till we returned, so as to take immediate advantage of the fine weather for the distant view.

Passing by the church, we took the road up a steep hill : half-way up the view in front opens widely ; below is a dense growth of pine-trees, with huge grey rocks rising up among them here and there ; in the middle distance is a richly wooded country, hills stretching far and wide to an immense distance. At our feet is the churchyard ; but a little farther on, on the very crest of the ridge of hills, we reach the little Chapel of St. Michel, and the whole view bursts on us in all its glory. The mist is rising slowly from the valley, and we see the steep granite hills descending into

it ruggedly, as if against their will. Westward is a huge granite rock, with a quarry beneath its shelter; in front is the road, and behind it the cascades, churning down yellow foam, rush into the pine valley below. Blue hills cross the distance seen through the opening between the hills.

Our friends told us that in fine weather Mont St. Michel was to be seen from this point, and just afterwards the sun came out again from behind a cloud, and there was actually the Mount itself glorified in brilliant light. We were so rejoiced to see it again, and to take a last look at "the wonder of Normandy." There was an old woman in the chapel, the concierge of the Séminaire, and she guided us by a near way to the Abbaye Blanche. It is most picturesquely placed beneath the steep crags we had been climbing, nestling in a valley of pine-trees, among rocks and cascades.

There is little of the ancient abbey left except the church, built in 1120; but it has been much added to, and is now being again restored; a part of the cloister is of the twelfth or early thirteenth century. This abbey was founded in 1105, by the son of Robert of Mortain. The abbey buildings are now occupied by a *petit séminaire*, a college for the education of priests. We went over this, and thought some of the arrangements very complete, especially the wardrobe and linen-room, presided over by a sweet-faced Sister. The church promises well, if the restoration be carried out as it is begun. There is something very delightful in the seclusion of the place, surrounded by frowning, pine-clad rocks, and, except in dry weather, by the never-ceasing roar of the cascades. In the grounds of the seminary we saw a curious Way of the Cross. The crosses look equally real and picturesque, standing among the blocks of granite rock.

From the abbey we went to the cascades : the way is slippery and dangerous, across a wooden bridge some way down the Falls. They are grand from here, dashing furiously from the height above on to the next ledge of rock, and then rebounding, the water seems to fall with double force on the next till it reaches a meadow far below the immense height of rock from which it descends. The contrast between the foaming yellow torrent, the rich brown of the rock, and the red-armed pine-trees is very grand. The rocks look like the turrets and battlements of a ruined castle, as they jut out among the trees in constant variety of form and colour. We found our way, after some climbing up and down, to the smaller falls. The scene here is very lovely. The place is surrounded by huge rugged crags, some of which look exactly like the ruins of an old castle ; near these, shadowed by trees, is a quiet pool of water ; and close by some smaller cascades dash from the rocks and form a mass of seething foam, across which a little bridge is carried ; and then down rushes the water into the mass of verdure below. We went across the little bridge, and found innumerable pictures among the rocks. There are tiny caves, festooned with ivy and lined with a growth of ferns ; and all around the crags seem to offer endless variety to the climber willing to explore them. It must be delightful to spend a week at Mortain, exploring these exquisite romantic walks, and our kind guides told us that, though the inn was rough, they had found it quite as comfortable as in many other places, and very much better than they had expected.

The castle, the dwelling-place of so many of our kings and princes, has been completely destroyed ; it stood below the cascades, on the left bank of the river. The county of

Mortair, or Moritolium, was taken by Duke William the Bastard from his cousin William, son of Malger, and grandson of Richard the Fearless, and bestowed on his own half-brother Robert, son of Arlette, by her husband Herlwin of Conteville. King John was also Count of Mortain.

Robert of Mortain appears to have been very inferior to either of his brothers; but we see him at the battle of Hastings in the Bayeux tapestry, and we hear of him in the "Roman de Rou" as fighting near his brother:—

" Si quens Robert de Moretoing
Ne se tint mie del Duc loing;
Frere ert li Dus de par sa mere
Grant aïe fist à son frere."

We also hear of him as the first Norman to whom William the Conqueror made a grant of English land, in giving him the lordship of Pevensey. Afterwards Robert of Mortain becomes Earl of Cornwall. He has large estates both in Devon and in Somerset; and he holds land in quite half of every other shire, especially in Yorkshire. His chief exploits in England seem to have consisted in robbing the churches and monasteries in the lands that thus came into his possession. We came down into the town again, and went to see the church called La Collégiale built by this same Robert of Mortain in 1085. There are no remains of this church except the south porch, a very remarkable circular-headed doorway, richly ornamented: the western doorway and the rest of the building is of later date. There is a curious sort of campanile beside the church, with remarkably long, narrow windows. There are no transepts to this church; the pointed arches spring from pillars instead of

piers, and yet the capitals, ornaments, and mouldings are all Norman, while all the arches are pointed, and all the windows are lancets. There is a tradition that this church, which is dedicated to St. Evroult, was built in thirty-two years by thirty-two builders, of whom two only died before the work was completed.

The town of Mortain is strangely lifeless. The street looked deserted, and we did not meet any one while we wandered about the rocks and among the cascades. One might fancy the town had stood still since the middle ages. There is very much to see about and around it, and it is cheering to find that it is quite possible to lodge at the Hôtel de la Poste.

ORNE.

CHAPTER XXI.

Domfront.
Argentan.

Séze.
Alençon.

THE best way to get to Domfront is to go either by carriage or diligence from Mortain, and then from the station at Domfront into the line of railway at Flers ; but it is also easy to go out to Domfront from Vire and back.

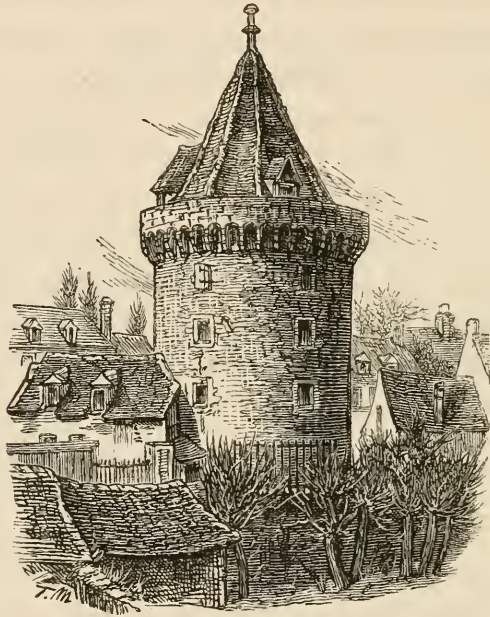
The castle of Domfront rises from the extreme verge of a pointed rock more than two hundred feet high. The town is still fortified, and stands within a circle of walls formerly defended by twenty-four towers, of which only fourteen remain, and most of these are in ruins. At the foot of the lofty precipice runs the river Varenne, and beside this is the church of Notre-Dame de l'Eau. It has been greatly destroyed ; but in one of the transepts is a tomb, said to be that of the famous William de Belesme, the founder of Domfront.

In 1020 he built on the summit of the steep rock a square castle, defended by four large towers and by deep ditches cut in the rock. Very soon the neighbouring people, drawn by the privileges offered them by the Norman lord of Domfront, gathered round the fortress ; and to defend

them William of Belesme surrounded the rock with massive walls, and flanked these with numerous towers. In spite of these defences, Geoffrey Martel, Count of Anjou, took possession of the town. But Duke William attacked it in 1049, and forced it to capitulate after a long siege. After the death of William the Conqueror, during the struggles among his sons for succession to the Duchy of Normandy, Domfront came into the possession of Henry I. The inhabitants, weary of the oppression and cruelties of Roger de Montgomery who had married the wicked Mabel, the daughter of William de Belesme, drove the garrison out of the fortress, and then yielded it up to Henry. Soon after it was invested by Robert Courthose, with a large army; but he was forced to retreat, leaving behind him the greater part of his baggage.

As a frontier town of the much-disputed province of Maine, Domfront was sure to suffer in all the wars of Normandy. Philip Augustus besieged it twice—once when he reconquered Normandy from our coward King John, and again when he took Domfront from a rebellious vassal. Before this it is recorded that King Richard Cœur de Lion spent Christmas at Domfront. In 1341 Robert d'Artois again ravaged Domfront: in 1356 the King of Navarre entered it at the head of a large army, and left in it an English garrison. After the treaty of Bretigny, Domfront was given back to France, and enjoyed a fifty years' peace. But in the civil wars under Charles VI. the town declared for the Duke of Orleans, and repulsed several attacks of the Burgundians. In 1417 Domfront was forced to yield to the English, under the Earl of Warwick. It was not restored to France till 1450, after a siege of five days. After this the poor battered town enjoyed a hundred

years of peace ; but in 1562 the cry of civil war once more sounded through France in the fierce struggles of the League. Gabriel de Montgomery, the Huguenot, defended the castle of his ancestors, in 1574, against the army of the League, but was defeated and taken prisoner. In 1598 the castle was entirely dismantled, and now only a few ruins of it remain. It is said to have afforded shelter to



Old Tower, Argentan.

the Empress Matilda, and also to have been the residence of Henry II., who received at Domfront the nuncio sent by the Pope to reconcile him with Becket. But the most interesting points of Domfront, besides its associations, are the view from the ruined castle over the surrounding country, and the old church on the banks of the rocky river, with the tomb of William Talvas.

Near Domfront is a very curious old manor-house, surrounded by a moat, called the Manoir de la Saucerie.

The railway from Vire to Argentan passes near Tinchebrai, where Robert of Normandy was defeated and taken prisoner by his brother Henry in 1106, and was then condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Poor Matilda, if she could have foreseen the fate of her best-loved son, for whom she even braved the displeasure of the husband to whom she had shown herself so devoted! The virtues of Matilda must have been appropriated by her daughters, for though Henry I. is very superior to the impious William and the weak, headstrong Robert, he is very inferior to both his father and his mother. We pass through Flers, a wholly modern town, although near it are the remains of an old abbey. Brioude has an old church, but it is not remarkable. We are more than three hours in reaching Argentan, although the distance between this quaint old town and Vire cannot be more than forty-five miles.

Argentan is an old-fashioned, clean, quiet town on the banks of the Orne. It is a good place to halt at; the inn is so extremely clean and comfortable. The town consists of one principal street, which rises and widens till it reaches the church; then it narrows again, and the houses group picturesquely round the Church of St. Germain. There are two Italian towers, quaint in form and good in colour; but the double north porch is a remarkable specimen of florid Gothic. There was once a fortified castle here, and the town was surrounded with walls; but these defences have all been swept away, except some fragments of the donjon tower. There is another church, dedicated to St. Martin, and both in this and in St. Germain there is

some old painted glass. Henry I. of France burned Argentan to the ground during the minority of William the Bastard.

Sées can be visited from Argentan ; and between these two places is the well-known Haras du Pin. There are numerous interesting châteaux within reach of Argentan, especially that of Chambois and the Château d'O. About seven miles beyond Alménèches, a station on the way to Sées, is the Château de Sacy, a most interesting specimen of Norman architecture.

Sées, one of the seven Armorican cities, stands in open country ; it is a dull, lifeless town, but the Cathedral is very fine. The first church was built at Sées in 440 ; the second in the tenth century ; a third in the eleventh ; this one dates chiefly from the thirteenth and fourteenth. There seems to have been some fault of construction, for the west front is much disfigured by buttresses of later date. Two very lofty spires surmount the west front : the arches are interesting, but sadly injured. In the choir are some remarkable carved bas-reliefs : and there is some good glass in the rose windows. It is sad to see this poor old town so completely shorn of its ancient glories. Serlon, Bishop of Sées in the reign of Henry I., preached against the long hair of the Norman nobles, and so moved the king-duke that he submitted to have his hair cut short by the bishop, and the courtiers had to follow suit.

The famous monastery of St. Evroul was thirty miles from the city of Sées, in the forest of Ouche, and on the banks of the Charentonne. About thirteen miles from Sées we come to Alençon, the capital city of the department of Orne. It stands on the border line of Normandy, in a plain,

surrounded by forests, at the meeting of the Sarthe and the Briante.

Compared with Séez or Avranches, Alençon is a modern city. It does not acquire any historical importance till Ivo of Belesme, one of the faithful adherents of Richard the Fearless, built the castle of Alençon. From that time the lords of Belesme are lords of Alençon; but the history of these rulers, and of the dukes of Alençon who succeeded them, is only a record of crimes. Alençon becomes memorable in the reign of Duke William the Bastard for the fearful cruelty he showed there in vengeance for the insult offered by the inhabitants of Alençon.

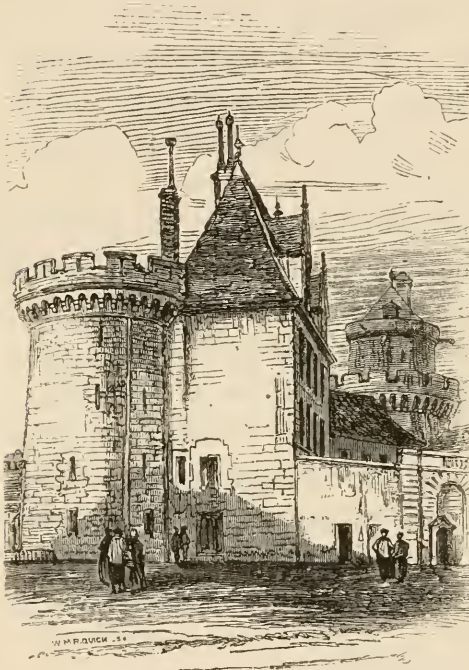
Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, had thrown an Angevin garrison into Alençon at the same time that he had made himself master of Domfront, also a stronghold of the Norman frontier. In the midst of the siege of Domfront, William, leaving men to continue his operations, sped swiftly to Alençon and attacked the bridge over the Sarthe—a bridge fortified to defend the Norman territory. The defenders of the bridge, little dreaming of the vengeance they aroused, spread skins on the bridge, and shouted, “Hides, hides for the tanner.” The insult, aimed at his mother, roused William to fury; he

“Jura par la resplendor Dé,
Co ert suvent sun serement,”

(*Roman de Rou*)

that the men who mocked should be lopped limb from limb like branches from a tree. By his order the fosse was filled with dry timber; this was set on fire, the defences and gates burned, and William was master of the town of Alençon. The castle would not yield, and he kept his fearful oath. He

brutally ordered the hands and feet of thirty-two of the rebels to be cut off and thrown over the castle walls. The garrison surrendered on a pledge of personal safety; and William hastened back after his rapid conquest to Domfront, where the garrison, having heard of the taking of Alençon, surrendered at once. Alençon is a good-sized thriving town, seem-



The Castle, Alençon.

ingly well built and clean, but very dull and lifeless; there are woolen and cotton manufactories; but the manufacture of the famous *point d'Alençon*, which Colbert introduced here from Venice, and which employed till 1812 as many as two thousand workwomen, has dwindled away.

In the centre of the town is a very large imposing open space, called the Place d'Armes. On one side is the Hôtel de Ville; on the other, the Palais de Justice, a heavy classical stone building with the usual façade of portico and columns. Behind this are the remains of the old castle; one round crenelated tower of considerable height, called La Tour Couronnée, and a doorway flanked by two massive round towers. The fosses are very deep, and are filled by the

Briante. Behind is a building with richly sculptured dormers. On the other side of the Briante, which is bordered by yellow iris and white spearwort, and overhung by old wooden houses, women were washing on the flat door-stones beneath the houses.

The outside of the church of Notre-Dame is very late Gothic. In the western façade are six figures, intended to represent the Transfiguration. The figure of St. John turns his back; and the statue is said thus to have turned itself because a profane hand touched it when the church was pillaged by the Huguenots in 1562. The interior has happily escaped whitewash; it is also Gothic of a late period. The roof of the nave is groined; the mouldings of the groins are ornamented with embossed shields and animals. The choir, apse, chancel, arch, and interior of the tower are Italian. There is good old glass in several of the clerestory windows. A very remarkable pulpit bears the date 1536; it is said to have been carved by a criminal condemned to death, who was pardoned for this proof of his skill. This pulpit, spoiled by white paint and gilding, is fixed against one of the pillars of the nave; the staircase is in the pillar itself, and an entrance is thrown out from it. There are texts cut upon the frieze of the pulpit.

The Préfecture is the most picturesque building in Alençon; it stands back from the street; the centre is built of red brick, with high slate roof, and stone dressings to the windows; along the front are myrtle and orange trees in green boxes. The grey stone buildings on either side contrast happily with this warm centre. It reminded us a little of Hampton Court Palace, only in much better style. Through an opening in an ivy-covered wall on the right we

got a peep of a charming garden, with bright geraniums and marigolds, and some purple flowers backed by a group of trees—a garden which looks as if it had existed in that sunny corner behind the grey ivy-clad wall as long as the quaint house itself, and that dates from the seventeenth century.

After the battle of Agincourt in 1415, Alençon, with all Normandy, except Mont St. Michel, submitted to the English. In 1476 Louis XI. was brilliantly fêted at Alençon; but the time of its greatest glory was during the reign of Duke Charles IV.: his duchess, Marguerite d'Angoulême, sister to King Charles VIII., kept her court at Alençon, and it entirely eclipsed that of her royal brother in wit and brilliancy.

There is a picture-gallery in the Hôtel de Ville, and an excellent public library of fifteen thousand volumes and many valuable manuscripts in the upper part of the ancient Church of the Jesuits.

There are some curious legends about Alençon. In a village near, a field, on a certain day at sunrise, is said to appear covered with gold and silver coin; but however eager the watcher may be who perceives them, he will gather nothing unless he has in his hand some medal or cross or rosary blessed by a priest. If he throws this into the field, the coin touched by it becomes real, and may be gathered by the thrower.

Another story relates to the Tour Couronnée, and is told in a popular ballad of the country.

It seems that this tower was inhabited by a beautiful lady, named Marie Anson, who is, however, not mentioned in history. She had the misfortune to be married to a jealous, brutal husband, who, suspecting her unjustly of infidelity,

ordered her to be fastened to the tail of an unbroken horse. The wild animal, turned loose into the park, dragged the unhappy lady nearly to death, and then the husband presented himself in the disguise of a priest to receive her last confession.

But she persisted in declaring herself innocent of any sin towards her husband, and died, leaving the brutal wretch tortured by remorse. Ever since, at midnight, Marie Anson, or La Dame du Parc, as she is called, appears dressed in white on the summit of the crenelated tower. She walks slowly round it, utters a cry, and disappears.

LAI DE MARIE ANSON.

“Marianson, dame jolie,
Où est allé votre mari ?”
“Monsieur, il est allé en guerre :
Je ne sais quand il reviendra.”

“Marianson, dame jolie,
Prêtez-moi vos anneaux dorés.”
Marianson, mal avisée,
Les trois anneaux lui a prêtés.

Quand il a tint les trois anneaux,
Chez l'argentier s'en est allé :
“Bel argentier, bel argentier,
Faites-moi trois anneaux dorés.

“Qu'ils soient beaux, qu'ils soient gros,
Comme les anneaux de Marianson.”
Quand il a tint les trois anneaux,
Sur son cheval il a monté.

Le premier qu'il a rencontré
Fut le mari de Marianson.
“O Dieu te garde, franc chevalier !”
“Quell' novell' m'as-tu apportée ?”

“ Marianson, dame jolie,
De moi a fait son ami.”
“ Tu as menti, franc chevalier ;
Ma femme n'est pas débordé.”

“ Oh bien ! croyez-le ou non croyez,
En voilà les anneaux dorés.”
Quand il a vu les trois anneaux,
Contre la terre il s'est jetté.

Il fut trois jours et trois nuits
Ni sans boire, ni sans dormir ;
Au bout des trois jours et trois nuits
Sur son cheval il a monté.

Sa mère estait sur les balcons,
Avisait son gendre venir :
“ Vraiment, fille, ne savez pas,
Voici votre mari qui vient.

“ Il n'y vient point en homme aimé,
Mais il y vient en courroucé.”
“ Montrez-lui votre petit-fils ;
Cela le pourra réjouir.”

“ Bonjour, mon fils, voilà ton fils,
Quel nom lui don'ras tu, mon fils ? ”
A pris l'enfant par les maillots,
Et en a battu les carreaux.

Puis la mère par les cheveux,
Et l'a attachée à son cheval.
N'y avait arbre ne buisson
Qui n'eut sang de Marianson.

“ Oh venez ça, rusé catin,
Où sont les anneaux de vos mains ? ”
“ Prenez les clefs du cabinet,
Mes trois anneaux vous trouverez.”

Quand il a vu les trois anneaux,
Contre la terre il s'est jetté :
"N'est-il barbier, ni médecin,
Qui puisse mettre ton corps en sain ?"

"Il n'est barbier ni médecin
Qui puisse mettre mon corps en sain ;
Ne faut qu'une aiguille et du fil
Et un drap pour m'ensevelir."

We said good-bye to Normandy at Alençon, and took train direct to Paris ; but it is worth while to stop and see Mantes on the way. It is also easy to go on from Alençon into Brittany, although it saves time and distance to do this from Avranches or Mont St. Michel, visiting the quaint old town of Fougères, on the border line of the two countries, placed so near together and yet differing so essentially in aspect, in language, and in inhabitants.

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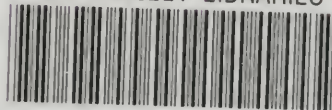
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