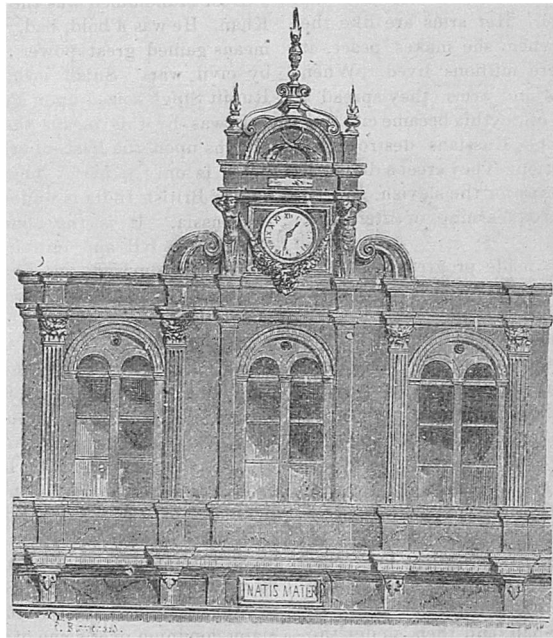


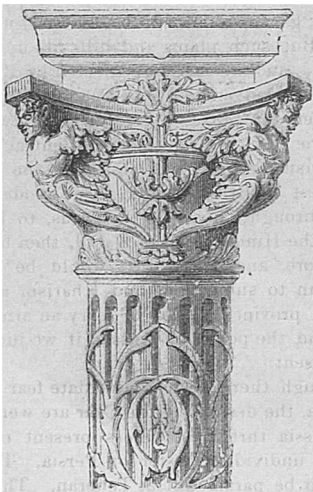
THE CHATEAU OF BOURSALT.

It is related that in the time of the crusades, a French lord having fallen into the hands of the infidels, begged permission to go to France and obtain his ransom. Relying on the high sense of honour for which the *preux chevaliers* of those days were so renowned, and of which such striking instances are given by the old chroniclers and romance writers, they granted him a year's liberty, on condition that, before the expiration of that period, he would either send them the stipulated sum or return to captivity. He crossed the seas, went to Champagne, and appealed for assistance to every knight or baron in

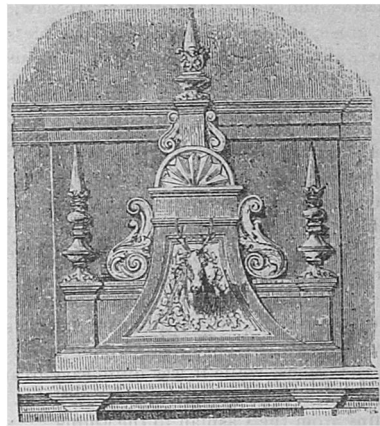
solaces of religion or friendship, and not improbably embittered by every kind of indignity, if not aggravated by barbarous cruelty. Neither the tears of his wife and family, nor the urgent remonstrances of his friends, who suggested all sorts of excuses for violating his promise, had any power to shake his firm resolve. Like the heroic Regulus, so celebrated in Roman annals—who, having been taken prisoner by the Carthaginians, and allowed to go to Rome, on condition that he should either induce his countrymen to make peace with Carthage, or go back to captivity, urged them to refuse all



CHATEAU OF BOURSALT—THE TOP OF THE SOUTH FACADE.



CAPITAL OF THE CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE LARGE SALOON.



ORNAMENTATION OF THE WINDOWS.

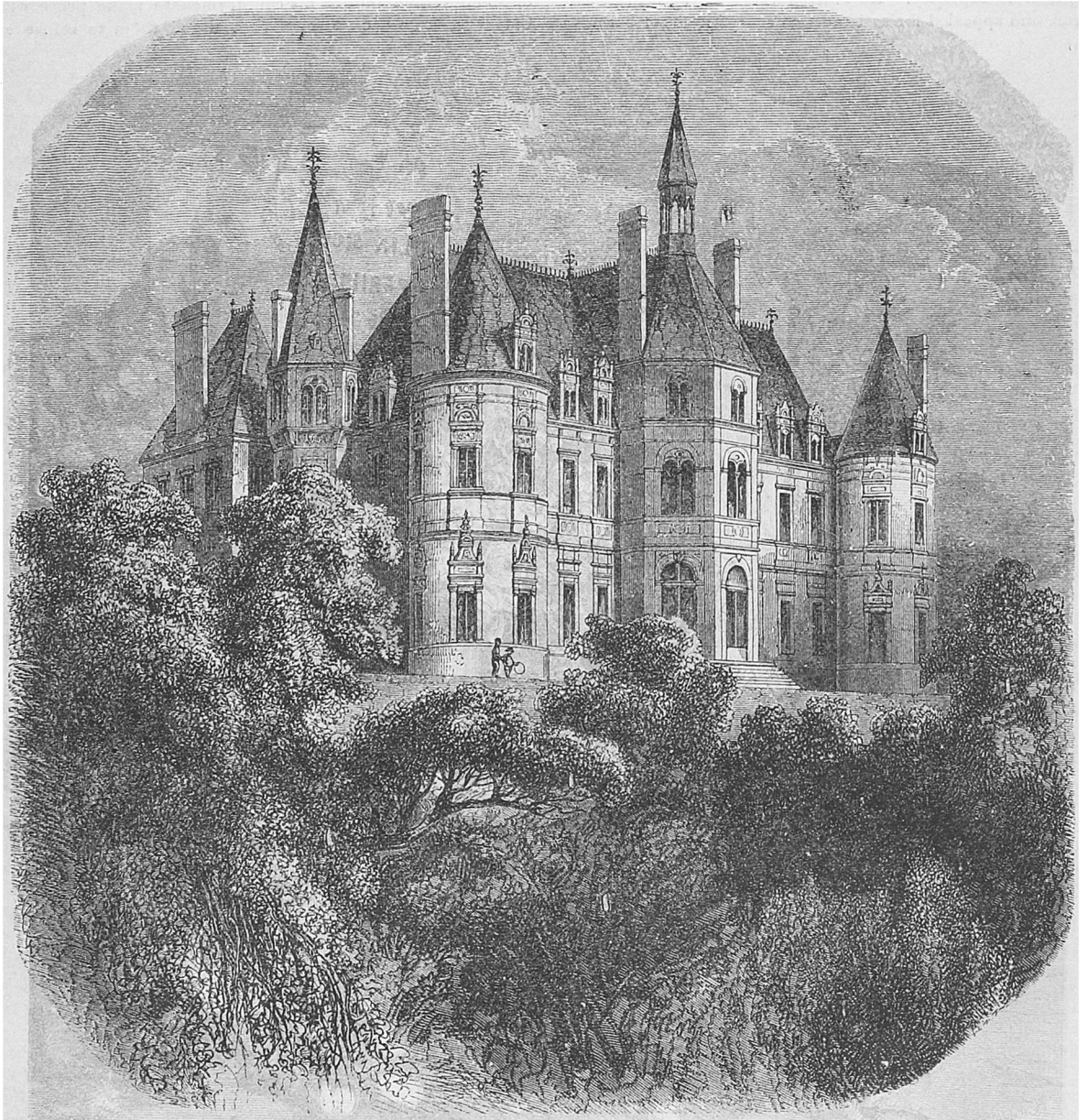
the district, from whom he had any reason to expect a favourable hearing. But all his efforts were fruitless. The sum he had engaged to pay was considerable, and the nobility had exhausted all their resources; first, in building churches, through fear of the end of the world, which was expected about the year 1000; and secondly, in maintaining religious wars. Meanwhile, time wore on. The brave knight, seeing the close of his respite fast approaching, began to prepare for his return to captivity, from which there appeared no prospect of any other release than death—a death without any of the

peaceful proposals, and then tore himself from the embraces of his family and friends to fulfil the promise he had made—he turned a deaf ear to all entreaties, and hastened to surrender himself once more into the hands of his implacable foes. It appears that the sultan—unlike most of his race—was not destitute of the milk of human kindness, nor without some appreciation of noble conduct. Having never expected to see his prisoner again, he was the more struck with the loyal fidelity to his word which he displayed. More generous than the Carthaginians, who put Regulus to death with horrible

torture, he at once granted him his liberty, begging him, henceforth, to add to his christian name that of Saladin. With this wish he could not refuse compliance, and his descendants, who were long after in possession of the barony of Boursault, in the department of Marne, continued to bear this name as a family title.

A drawing, of the year A.D. 1000, represents the ancient chateau of Boursault in all its strength and glory, with seven towers, a keep, portcullis, moat, and drawbridge. There seems little doubt that it was destroyed by some conflagration,

in 1848. It is situated on the brow of a hill, amid living springs and beautiful trees, and commands a fine view of the road to Paris, the Strasburg railway, the lovely valley through which the Marne winds its way, and, at a distance, the town of Epernay. On the *façade* is this brief inscription: "*Natis mater*" (a mother to her children); and it was in order to collect her family near her that a lady, whose name is well and honourably known, had this rich and elegant villa erected after the plans and under the superintendence of M. Arveuf, the able architect, to whom was entrusted the task of restoring



VIEW OF THE CHATEAU OF BOURSULT.

for on the soil which was covered with its ruins, a large quantity of cinders and ashes have been discovered. In the course of time, other edifices were raised on the same site, or close by; but among all these, none was so worthy of the original chateau as that of which a view is given above. It is not, however, a monument built by some nobleman of the court of the magnificent Louis XIV. after the design of a Mansard or a Lepautre. It belongs to an age when, despite the greatest possible merit, chateaus and architects do not easily win admiration—that is to say, the present.

The chateau of Boursault was begun in 1843 and completed

the cathedral of Rheims. The style, as a whole, resembles that of the Renaissance. The ground-floor may rival in magnificence and taste the most graceful works of the sixteenth century, which adorn the charming borders of the Loire. The principal dining-hall is decorated with splendid modern tapestry and richly carved wainscoting. In the saloon, which is octagonal, is a monumental chimney-piece of Burgundy stone, upon which a magnificent chronometer is placed. All the sculptures are the productions of the most distinguished Parisian artists. A beautiful avenue leads from the front of the building across a large park to the Epernay road.