CÔTE d'ÉMERAUDE

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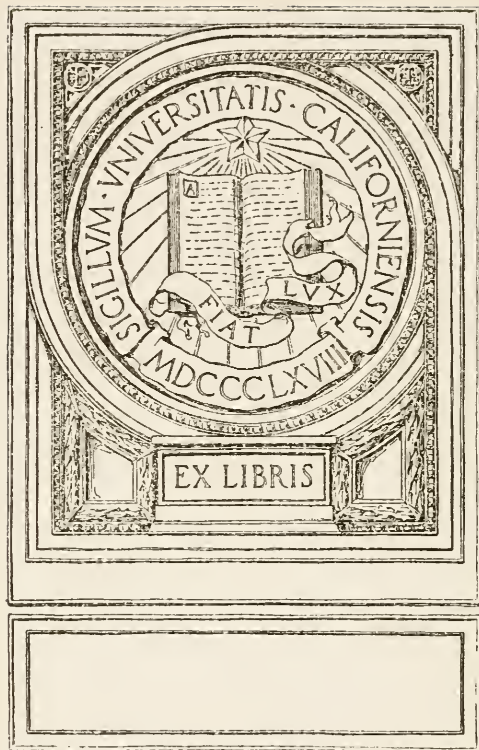
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LA COTE D'EMERAUDE

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MONT ST. MICHEL FROM TOMBELAINE : EVENING

LA COTE D'EMERAUDE

PAINTED BY

J. HARDWICKE LEWIS

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LA COTE D'EMERAUDE

I

ST. MALO

We do not find *la Côte d'Emeraude* on the map. It lies across geographic, historic and ethnic boundaries, a deep embroidered border of orchard, field and town, golden beaches and iron cliffs, round the edge of the great Gulf of St. Malo, which looks hacked rectangularly out of the land, and strewn with chips and fragments; it is, in fact, but a local detail of the slow subsidence and erosion that have made Great Britain and Ireland into islands, and changed the vast plain that joined them to northern Europe into a shallow sea.

The Emerald Coast of France has much in common with our own Emerald Isle. Not only do the last strands of the Gulf Stream bring to each the mild, moist air that makes them green, and the veiled skies and mystic horizons that steep their atmosphere in poetry, but both are lands *où les jamais sont les toujours*, last refuges of the attractive, ineffective Celtic race, which barely hold their own as distinct folk in the long fringe of creek and firth, island and highland,

that stretches from the mouth of the Loire to the misty Hebrides.

English visitors usually cross by a boat of the London and South Western Railway, taking train from London at Waterloo Station. On either side of the line the pleasant homeland spins by like a variegated riband of park and down, green fields and white roads, little villages sleeping round their ancient church, towns with an immemorial past, and towns that date from yesterday. After a couple of hours we get in company with a little river winding through a flat green land or creeping under bended trees. In time it begins to merge with the sea in a narrow estuary; boats are beached on the banks or ride in the tideway. We enter the ancient 'town and county of Southampton,' rush past the high walls of mouldering stone that once enclosed it and are now enshrined in its midst, and run alongside the docks where the boat is waiting to receive us.

We glide between low wooded shores through the tranquil spaces of Southampton Water and the Solent, alive at night with twinkling lights; by the long wards and minarets of Netley Hospital, and the beautiful ruins of the abbey; by the fleet of transports lying 'in pawn'; by the swaying line of grim battleships that stretches eastward from Spithead. We pass the variegated cliffs and ghostly western end of the Isle of Wight, and lose sight of land till the Cotentin looms ahead on the left, the long uniform line of the Norman

and Breton coast curving back behind it ; further on we see the English Channel Islands, embosomed in the great gulf like orphaned fragments of France. Then we pass over a drowned land, whose granite summits and ridges look grimly out above the surface or lie treacherously just beneath, cruel teeth of the devouring sea that every year take their toll of wreck and death. Many a craft, great and small, goes down between January and December into the maw of the restless monster that ordinarily lies floating many a league, fair, alluring and caressing, at once the maker and destroyer of the land, the nourisher and devourer, the terror and delight, the home and the grave, of its people. The whole population of the Emerald Coast are directly or indirectly in touch with the sea, and its moods and ways, its bounties and its cruelties, its inexorable routine and its incalculable caprices, are the underlying preoccupation of their lives. If we approach by night, a gleaming host of fixed, revolving and flashing lights give warning of the hidden death ; if by day, we see these grey tombstones of the buried land standing thickly round, wind-worn and wave-worn. Behind this frise of rocks and islets, bristling with fortifications old and new, St. Malo has always lain secure, defying all hostile approach, sheltering a crowd of shipping that preyed on English commerce, and on occasion bearded English warships.

'The Corsair City' on approach, almost enisled on its granite rock, and belted with massive ramparts that rise from the water's edge, still has the air of a medieval stronghold. Its battlemented walls enclose

a maze of narrow streets winding between tall, sombre houses, gloomy little squares, steep, tortuous lanes that have been watercourses for centuries ; above them all, with crowded granite chimneys rising round it like the pipes of an organ, a tapering spire of white stone, perforated and crocketed, dormered and pinnacled, raises the cross.

Close to the quay of the London and South Western Railway is the Grande Porte, flanked by two massive towers, the most imposing of the six gateways that pierce the ramparts. In a shrine above the gate on the inside is a famous statue of the Virgin, beside which a crowd of tapers, placed by women whose men are in peril on the sea, burn perpetually. The Virgin of the Great Gate has been regarded as one of the chief protectors of the city ever since in wondrous fashion she found her way there. A Malouin captain, voyaging to the Indies, saw a strange object floating near his ship. A boat sent to examine it found it to be an iron-bound chest, miraculously floating with this stone statue inside. The captain took it as a sacred charge and vowed to present it to the city on his return. But the imperious Virgin would brook no delay. Violent, contrary gales made it impossible for him to continue his voyage. Recognising divine intervention, he reversed his course and, with gentle breezes over tranquil seas, returned to St. Malo. There the statue was placed for awhile in the choir of the cathedral for the veneration of the people, and then set above the

principal gate. It is said that when the sanguinary le Charpentier was proconsul at St. Malo, he came with a band of his men to remove this and the companion statue of St. Christopher. But the Virgin of the Great Gate had stalwart handmaidens hard by; the market-women, mustering round her with their great knives, showed so determined a front that the ruffians desisted.

Here, and at many points, we may mount to the ramparts, which afford an enjoyable and interesting walk. Towards the open sea—that is, on the northern and western sides—the fortifications date from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Those along the quays on the south and east were planned by Vauban in the first quarter of the eighteenth. In a garden, into which the old Batterie de Hollande has been converted, is a bronze statue of the famous Malouin navigator, Jacques Cartier, the discoverer of Canada.

The prospect changes at every turn. On the land side we have crowded docks and busy quays, filling the space between the tawny medieval walls of St. Malo and the grey industrial quarter of St. Servan. Beyond this, wooded slopes rise to the green undulating plateau that stretches inland, broken by the series of lakes and straits that form the estuary of the Rance. On the sea front we look down on the broad beach of yellow sand, dotted with tents, crowded with bathers and loungers, with children searching with spades, prongs, and nets, or grubbing with their fingers for the wonders of the sea; others industriously utilizing the

infinite architectural possibilities of wet sand, building elaborate fortifications, moats, ramparts and towers, surmounted by dangling banners of seaweed. Troops of little *sans-culottes* attack and defend them in desperate mimicry, wriggling up behind zig-zagging spadework till they can attempt with a rush the silting moat and sliding ramparts, behind which the garrison await them with grim determination. Lying off this *grande plage* are the islands of the Grand and Petit Bey, which combine into a peninsula at low tide. On the northern front of the Grand Bey a granite cross, standing on granite rocks, marks the tomb of Chateaubriand.

On the right a succession of sandy beaches fringed with houses stretch by Paramé towards the long, dark mass of the Pointe de la Varde, projecting like the prow of a titanic vessel into the Channel. On the left the still larger and longer mass of Cap Frehel thrusts out its level outline. Between are a series of beaches and headlands, commencing with the green hills and varied houses of Dinard. Scattered over the sea in front is St. Malo's vanguard of rocks and islets which we threaded on approaching.

Peering over the ramparts from the town are numerous apartments of all sorts and sizes, profusely labelled to let, one of which was for some time appropriately occupied by my bookmate, the artist. I had suggested Dinard, but he so evidently thought it a bad joke that I said no more ; when I went to see him I understood. For I found him, his wife, and daughter—artists all of them—in a little suite of panelled rooms, a huge old chimneypiece in one,

FROM MY WINDOWS, ST. MALO

another a sort of gallery, walled on one side with their sketches, and on the other with four broad, continuous windows, from which Sketch 2 was taken. It shows the statue of Jacques Cartier holding the tiller of *La Petite Hermine* on the left, the Fort de la Cité in the middle-distance, and Dinard in the background. From their snug eyrie they could watch the crowded and varied life upon the sands, the transformations wrought by the rising and the sinking tide, the endless changes of light and hue upon the far-stretched sea, gleaming intensely blue, shot with every prismatic tint, shadowed to purple and blackness by the storm, or to infinite neutral tones by fleecy clouds, lit to gold and silver by sunrise and moonlight, paved with fire by the dying day.

The only break in the tour of the town is at the Castle, which forms the southern and smallest side of the irregular pentagon of the enceinte. It is now a barracks, but I believe St. Malo cherishes the hope that, following the example of Dinan, it may be acquired for the municipal museum; it will be itself at least as interesting as anything it may contain. The ground-plan of the imposing edifice is a square with a tower at each corner, and a double-walled, angular projection, known as la Galère, thrust out towards the neck of land that connects the rock of St. Malo with the mainland. The tower on the seaward side of this, known as the Vieux Donjon, was probably the keep of a more ancient castle. The corresponding tower is known as the Tour des Dames. The two huge towers on either side of the entrance

are styled la Générale and Quiquengrogne. Between them rises the keep, with turrets at its corners.

The two towers last mentioned were built, in 1498, by Anne, Duchess of Brittany and Queen of France, against the strong opposition of the Bishop of St. Malo, Guillaume Briconnet. When finished, she had inscribed on one: 'Qui qu'en grogne, ainsi sera, c'est mon plaisir.' The inscription was effaced at the Revolution, but the tower retains the singular name derived from it.

This great stronghold blocked the entrance to the city by the strip of land known as the Sillon, which until the construction of the modern docks and quays, alone prevented St. Malo from being an island. From some points of view the city has still the aspect of a great floating fortress moored by this narrow strand to the shore. On this single straitened approach the municipal watchdogs—commemorated on old seals of the Commune: *argent au dogue de gueules*—were formerly let loose at 10 o'clock at night, after the bugle had sounded for all decent people to go to bed. The dogs were enormous mastiffs, descendants, it is said, of some that were imported from England in 1155. In spite of many misadventures of peaceable citizens, the custom continued long after the gradual changes, introduced by gunpowder into the conditions of attack and defence, had reduced it to a picturesque survival. At length, on the night of March 4, 1770, a naval officer, Jean Baptiste de Herouarts, who was returning to the town after visiting his betrothed at St. Servan, was done to death by the savage brutes.

He defended himself desperately with his sword, but this only infuriated the animals, who closed round him on every side. Finally he rushed into the water, whither they followed and tore him to pieces. The horror caused by the incident led to a loud demand for the suppression of the useless and dangerous guardians. By a decree of the municipality the historic beasts were destroyed by poison on the 7th of the month.

Opposite the Castle is the Hotel de France, from a little side-court of which, that has remained unchanged for a couple of centuries, we can mount to the room in which on 4 September, 1768, Francois René, Vicomte de Chateaubriand, was, to use his own phrase, sentenced to life. It still retains the four-post bedstead in which he was born, and other old furniture. A door from it opens on to a terrace, from which we look across the ramparts and the sea to his tomb on the island of the Grand Bey. 'Long ago,' he wrote to the Mayor of St. Malo in 1828, 'I formed the project of asking my native town to grant me a little plot of earth on the point of the Grand Bey, just enough to hold my coffin, where, when it shall please God, I will rest under the protection of my fellow citizens.'

It may be taken for granted that at St. Malo all roads lead to the church; if you lose your way, you have only to walk for a few minutes, quite at random, and you will see its white sculptured spire looking solemnly down a narrow vista of tall sombre houses, or

VEGETABLE MARKET, ST. MALO

son. It is said that when a lady of fashion questioned his second son, the illustrious ecclesiastic, as to the position of his family in the town, he replied, 'Mon père, Madame, occupait la plus haute position de St. Malo.'

It is not only geographically that its church is the centre of St. Malo. It is impossible to be there much without feeling that, to an extent which few churches can claim nowadays, it is the centre of the city's life. On Sundays and high days the streets and quays are almost empty, the whole population is gathered in the church, and their reverence and attention show that their presence is more than mere form and custom. At the Fête Dieu, the day of St. Jeanne d'Arc, and other great festivals, the grim granite town is transformed into a sylvan sanctuary, the market-places become floral oratories, the streets are winding aisles of foliage and flowers, in which altars stand at intervals. There are, I should say, few cities that combine so much of modern life with so much of medieval sentiment as St. Malo, whose ancient motto is *Semper fidelis*. Crowds flock thither by train from Voltairian Paris, and by boat from Protestant England ; they are cordially welcomed and genially exploited ; in her corporate capacity the city appears well abreast of modern civilization, but in her private life she keeps the faith and outlook of the days when her sons sharpened their axes on the edge of the font before going forth to battle with the French, or sought baptism and the blessing of the church for the corsair craft that were to plunder and scuttle English merchantmen. Clergy and laity seem tried

and trusted comrades, linked by generations of common experience, by a hundred ties of mutual service and citizenship. The priests, though no doubt exemplary in life and doctrine, hardly give the impression of being men of light and leading. There is little of the ideal or the mystic about them; kindly and very human personages, their faithful spirits tabernacled in ample and rubicund flesh, they look as though they took life easily and pleasantly without much trouble from obstinate questioning of invisible things. Yet they evidently have the regard and affection of their flock, the more so, perhaps, because they are little removed from them in character and standard; 'who drives fat oxen should himself be fat,' and these burly, genial, commonplace clerics are truly, so far as a casual stranger can judge, the pastors of the people, their intimate guides and associates in the venerable rites and offices of the Church from the cradle to the grave.

As a rule a population have the spiritual pastors and masters that they deserve, that subconsciously and inarticulately they demand, and to all appearance priests and people at St. Malo are thoroughly content with one another. I fancy there are few communities that would be more dislocated and paralysed by the loss of church and clergy than the Corsair City. In the general boycotting of the saints at the Revolution the name of the place was officially changed to Port Malo, but it may be doubted if many Malouins—still less many Malouines—adopted the altered style. A story is told of the head of a department named Chavannes, down from Paris to inspect some public

works, who unceremoniously spoke of the city as Malo.

'Notre ville s'appelle *Saint*-Malo,' the representative of the municipality who received him ventured courteously to interpose.

'Je le sais,' was the impatient response, 'mais je n'aime pas les saints.'

The business concluded, the local official, bowing respectfully to his departmental chief, said, 'Adieu, Monsieur Vannes.'

'Vannes!' exclaimed the great man with annoyance. 'Comment Vannes? Je m'appelle *Cha*vannes.'

'Je le sais,' replied the old Malouin, 'mais je n'aime pas les chats.'

In the Rue de Jean Chatillon is the house of Duguay Trouin, a most picturesque relic of St. Malo's heroic age. It is a wooden house with carved beam ends and corbels, each of its four stories projecting beyond the one below. The front from top to bottom was originally all windows; some of those that still remain are fine specimens of leaded paning. The statue of Duguay Trouin in the square that is called after him is a very mediocre work, but that in the Cour d'Honneur dedicated 'à toutes les gloires de la France' at Versailles is considered the *chef d'œuvre* of Dupasquier.

Duguay Trouin is one of the most celebrated of the famous corsairs who are the pride of the French Channel coasts. The splendid geographical position of France, with coasts on three seas, would seem to mark her

a sea power almost as inevitably as insular England or peninsular Italy and Spain. She has, moreover, in her day had more deliberate and farseeing conceptions than we of empire overseas, of which naval power is an indispensable corollary; while in the hardy seafaring population of her northern shore she has as splendid naval material as any in the world. Yet the ideals, the ambitions, the instincts of the masses of her people and of her government have never been in this direction. Her darling and representative service has always been the army. Her navy, like her colonies, has been rather official than national, her maritime commerce has been personal and local; there has been no living co-ordination, no nourishing reciprocity, between the two; both were outside the main stream of the nation's life and interest. The intensely patriotic folk of the north-west coast might have been on a Channel island for all the influence they have had on her history. Yet they have done what they could. They have not been able to write the history of their country as they would have liked, but they have dotted its pages with many an heroic parenthesis. They have manned any fleets the government would build, and when the officials at Paris—far from the call and teaching of the sea—have let these fall into desuetude, the old seadogs who had sailed and fought them were determined in their individual, ineffective way to have their say. The admirals might be defeated or disgraced, the Ministry of Marine might be hopeless or impotent, France might be indifferent, but Brittany and Normandy

would not see the Channel an English highway, or if it were, the English traders should find many a Gallic highwayman in their path. So, when the official navy had been swept from the seas, the old tars who had manned it, the men of the Channel seaboard, took up the game, as much for glory as for plunder, fighting at least as much for the honour of France as for loot. Out of the deep, rock-set harbours and little creeks that dent the shore from Calais to Brest there swarmed forth ships of every sort and size, from old disused men-of-war to fishing smacks with nothing but a rusty carronade in the bows, and a keg of powder in the hold, but all manned as full as they could be packed with men in whom daring seamanship and hatred of the English were an inherited instinct, to whom the broadside of the man-of-war, or a few shots from the crazy carronade, were but polite preliminary flourishes, whose one notion of naval warfare was to get alongside, swarm over the taffrail, and come to terms with cold steel and pistols.

Admiral Mahan, in his 'Influence of Sea Power on History,' has shown conclusively that all this heroism and patriotism, havoc and slaughter, counted for little in the broad results of the great world-duel. Immense loss was inflicted on English merchants and shipowners, immense plunder was dispersed in Norman and Breton ports, corsair captains retired with large fortunes, built themselves semi-feudal residences, became financial magnates and peers of France ; but both loss and gain was limited to individuals. As regards great

national issues, ocean commerce, colonial possessions, and a decisive voice in the world's affairs, the gain was wholly with the power whose navy controlled the seas. The weary Titan still staggers under the load of dominion and responsibility that she inherits from those confident and lordly days.

Duguay Trouin is the most brilliant Malouin in the annals of this *guerre de course*, to which St. Malo owes her title of the Corsair City, and which forms the heroic and golden age of her history. To enumerate his triumphs, the long list of merchantmen and men-of-war that he sank, captured or disabled, after fighting them at fearful odds, would be painful to English readers. From warlike tradition in Brittany, Englishmen would seem a provision of Providence for evoking the enterprise and prowess of Frenchmen. Duguay Trouin's last and greatest exploit, however, was not against the English. Mahan gives it as a curious illustration of the spirit of such enterprises in that day, and of the shifts to which the French Government was reduced.

A small French squadron had attacked Rio Janeiro in 1710, but being repulsed had lost some prisoners, who were said to have been put to death. Duguay Trouin asked permission to avenge the insult to France. The king consented, advanced the ships and furnished the crews; a regular contract was drawn up between the king on the one part and the company employing Duguay Trouin on the other, stipulating the expenses to be borne and the supplies furnished on either side, among which we find the odd, businesslike provision

that for every one of the troops embarked who shall die, be killed or desert during the cruise, the company shall pay thirty francs. The king was to receive one-fifth of the net profits, and was to bear the loss of any vessels that should be wrecked or destroyed in action. Under these provisions, enumerated in full in a long contract, Duguay Trouin received a force of six ships of the line, seven frigates, and over two thousand troops, with which he sailed to Rio Janeiro in 1711, captured the place after a series of operations, and allowed it to be ransomed at a price of something under 400,000 dollars, probably equal to nearly a million in the present day. The privateering company cleared about 92 per cent. on the venture. As two of the ships of the line were never heard of after sailing on their return voyage, the king's profits were probably small.

It was seldom, however, that the Breton and Norman privateers went so far afield. As a rule their exploits were in the narrow seas and *l'ennemi c'était l'anglais.* When one considers the long blood-feud between the races one cannot but doubt whether, among the maritime and peasant population of the Côte d'Emeraude, the present happy *entente* can be very cordial. An antagonism whose roots are everywhere in the centuries that have passed since 'heathen swarming o'er the northern sea' drove across the Channel the British saints who christianized and civilized the country, can hardly be eradicated by the combinations of diplomacy. Anatole le Braz, in his delightful book 'Au Pays des Pardons,' gives a stirring account of a recitation by

one of the last Breton bards at the Pardon of Rumengol. The heroine of the poem relates how

En battant contre l'Anglais,
Mon père s'est noyé dans la mer profonde,

and cries with her dying breath,

À la vierge je donne mon cœur,
Ma malédiction aux Anglais.

'The bard,' he says, 'emitted the concluding line with all the force of his lungs, and in a tone so vibrating with bitterness that the crowd quivered with rage, thrilled by the inherited hatred of twelve hundred years.'

This inherited and implacable hatred found its most glorious opportunity on the narrow seas during the wars between the two nations that filled the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For the mass of Frenchmen they were mere military or political episodes, but in Brittany religion combined with patriotism, and with the antagonism and antipathy that a long history of bloodshed, outrage, loss and humiliation had woven into the fibre of the population, to give the *guerre de course* the sanctity and ruthlessness of a crusade.

Years ago I frequently went out boating with an ancient mariner of La Houle, named Jean-Battiste, as seasoned an old salt as you could wish to see: brawny, tough, tanned to shoe leather. He could neither read nor write, but to know him was a nautical education. He had been brought up in the straitest jingoism of the coast; his father, grandfather, and I know not

how many generations before them, had been seamen like himself, and he spoke of the fights of a century and more ago as though he had taken part in them. This was when we had got on speaking terms. At first I could not get a word out of him ; he did everything in the bond, but the bond did not include spinning yarns, and he wrapped himself in the sullen taciturnity natural at finding himself in the same boat with an hereditary enemy. I hardly like to mention the misconception that loosed his tongue ; I am afraid that, to use a nautical equivalent for the economy of truth, I went rather close to the wind. An incidental reference to colonial origin gave him the idea that I was an American ; I left the convenient illusion undisturbed, and at once was an heir of all the ages. To a compatriot of Paul Jones—of whose career he told me many startling, unpublished episodes—his sympathies went loquaciously forth, and he gave me his opinion of my countrymen with great spirit and freedom.

We are apt to think that until the Revolution, when the royalist proclivities of naval officers led to the French navy being largely commanded by men with little seagoing experience, the French admirals were tactically and strategically superior to our own—with a few supreme exceptions—just as, until we took to copying the lines of our prizes, the French ships were indubitably the better sailers ; that, in fact, we won our victories by the bulldog courage that did not know when by all tactical laws we were beaten. But very differently was history read by Jean-Battiste. He

doggedly maintained that the English victories—he admitted there had been English victories—were won by discipline alone. He was never weary of expatiating on English naval discipline. There lay the secret of any success at sea that we could claim; it was by that we won the great pitched battles that swept the French navy from the seas. Man for man and ship for ship we were—bah!—the English weren't sailors, they were soldiers afloat. Seamanship! They didn't know what it was. Put them to sail a goelette in a sou'-wester, and they would be swamped in five minutes. But the officers were splendidly educated, and an iron discipline enabled them to get the better when great fleets met in battle array. In individual contests they were nowhere. The men were pressed on board, half of them kept in chains on the orlop deck till the fleets joined action. Then they were set to fight the guns with a pistol at their heads.

In those days highly coloured old prints of naval warfare were much commoner in Breton inns and cottages than now. The view of history they presented was very different from that to which our insular pride is accustomed. French ships engage English with various but always glorious results. Sometimes they are victorious over fearful odds; at others, numbers and weight of metal are too much for them, and they go to the bottom ringed round with battered foes, the old tablecloth, as our bluejackets called the *fleur-de-lys*, flying to the last over a sea red with blood and flame. I am not quite sure of

ST. MALO, GRAND ET PETIT BEY, FROM ROCHEBONNE

the titles of one series that decorated a room I occupied for some time, and that much impressed me. They were something like this :

I. ‘Le Petit Diable rencontre le Cumberland, le Devonshire et le Dauntless.’ The Petit Diable is a taut little brig with one gun-deck. The three English ships, hulking two-deckers, bear down on her under full sail and full fire. She returns about one gun to twenty, but every shot tells. Already their canvas is being riddled, and there are spurts of flame about their hulls.

II. showed the crisis of the combat. In the centre the Petit Diable, somewhat mauled but full of fight, is firing double broadsides. The Devonshire, dismasted and down by the bows, seems about to plunge to the bottom. The Dauntless, with an ugly list to starboard and her spars knocked to smithereens, maintains an intermittent fire as she drifts helplessly to leeward; while the Cumberland, as yet hardly touched, seems about to give the *coup de grâce* to the gallant little Frenchman. But wait a bit.

In III the brig has somehow got alongside her huge opponent and, of course, there can be but one result. Already the tricolour—for this was after the Revolution—has been run up the main, while a travesty of the Union Jack flutters down, and the narrative triumphantly concludes: ‘Le Cumberland est amariné et amené à St. Malo.’

These one-sided views of history might easily have been matched by prints of the same date popular at Portsmouth and Plymouth. On such heady art and

literature the seafaring population on both sides of the Channel were nourished in the good old days.

For the origin of St. Malo we must turn to the neighbouring St. Servan, which is now looked on as its humble suburb, though officially the two towns are separate communes. Ancient and solidly established though St. Malo be, it is a mere parvenu beside the industrial quarter across the docks that for centuries has been its unpretending and somewhat grubby handmaid in peace and scapegoat in war, building its ships, storing its merchandise, and housing its workpeople, plundered and burnt by its enemies, while its impregnable daughter looked securely on. St. Servan's pride, indeed, is clothed with humility; it piques itself on its respectable and unobtrusive obscurity. It does not need to assert itself like the upstart Dinard over the way; it does not defy the waves and throw back the sunshine like St. Malo. It has no call for all this. It is of too unquestioned antiquity to need legendary credentials and historic relics. It boasts no medieval ramparts, it was a city long before the Middle Ages. It was ancient when the British saints crossed the Channel in angelic barks or on miraculously floating slabs of stone, when the sea lay far out beyond the isle of Cézembre, when the site of St. Malo was a barren hillock in a marsh, when the Rance, parting in twain at its gates, flowed between woods and meadows where now ships drop anchor and fishermen cast their nets. When Cæsar came to Armorica he

found a city here, his legions had much ado to capture and occupy it ; when at length he possessed it, he girt it with a wall, fragments of which, it is claimed, still remain, and ruled the country hence. Of course, it was not then called St. Servan, a comparatively modern style obviously assumed within the Christian era. Long before Christianity dawned upon the world a city stood here, the ancient Aleth whose origin is lost in mist and myth. Here the kings of the Curiosolites, one of the three Armorican States, had their court, and Druids taught their hoary wisdom and practised their awful rites. The name of the islet Ile Harbour, is said to preserve the record of the seaport of Aleth. Here came little craft from Cornwall, bringing the precious tin necessary for making the weapons of the day, and taking back pottery in return. Small boats could come up the Rance and unload at a rock—fast being quarried away—that still bears the name of la Hoguette, or the little port.

Gradually Christianity filtered in and divided the population with the ancient faith. A holy hermit, St. Aaron, took his dwelling, and built a little church, on the barren rock that stood on the north-east ; a chapel dedicated to him stands to-day on its highest point amid the crowded houses of St. Malo. The poor folk of the land gathered round him in a community in which he sought to re-establish the early church, that was of one heart and one soul, and had all things common. Here he received St. Malo, brought from Britain in a bark navigated by angels,

some say by the Lord Jesus himself. In the various forms of his name, Malo, Maclou, MacLaw, it is not difficult to recognise our familiar Celtic patronymic. Christianity, no longer represented by the simple-minded hermit with his primitive notions, but by a commanding and magnetic personality, endowed with the highest learning of his day, and gifted with persuasive eloquence, at once became agressive, and the old faith, already sapped and shaken, went down before it in utter ruin. Aleth—king, druids, and people—became Christian. But its glory departed. St. Malo, the first bishop, built his cathedral, not in the immemorial metropolis, but by the cell of Aaron, probably on the very spot where the church of St. Vincent now stands. Round it a city grew up that gradually supplanted Aleth. Either because the changing coast-line and the swarms of northern pirates made some more defensible position desirable, or because the masterful saint, who is said to have worked at the new city with his own hands, determined on a change, St. Malo waxed and Aleth waned.

We must read between the lines of the saintly legends to have a full picture of what actually occurred. A hint of another element in the population than St. Aaron's communists and St. Malo's converts, is given by the record that at its foundation the city was declared a sanctuary. Its founder, in fact, appears to have attracted population very much as Romulus is said to have drawn it to the infant Rome ; and in the one case as in other, the virile and adventurous temper of the citizens may be largely due to the lawless riff-raff

among their ancestors. This right of asylum was maintained intact until the fifteenth century, and was such that 'all men and women, of whatsoever nation or country they be, who take refuge in our town of St. Malo demanding *franchise d'icelle*, shall enjoy rights and immunities such that they cannot be arrested for homicide, or any action whatever, committed without the said city.' This was the Minihi, a term that survives in the names of several places on the old boundaries of the city's jurisdiction, at whose churches were the *cloches libératrices* that were sounded by refugees on their arrival, in token of their demand for sanctuary. On confession of fault and promise of newness of life, the Seigneury gave them letters of *francs bourgeois ;* their children became full burghers. These lawless spirits from without continually replenished the indomitable population that brooked no trenching on its rights from Dukes of Brittany or Kings of France, and was foremost among the Channel towns in disputing the narrow seas with the English. The exploits of Malouin seamen in the *guerre de course* are one of the most brilliant stories of guerrilla warfare in modern history.

Now the Corsair City has found that it can exploit its insular neighbours more effectively by peaceful processes of commerce than by rapine upon the high seas. The descendants of Duguay Trouin and Surcouf welcome the English invader with enthusiasm : hotel porters contend keenly for his capture, entertainment, and subsequent ransom; bankers accept the cheques of perfidious Albion with remarkable confi-

dence; a main branch of the trade of the port is in butter, eggs, and early vegetables for Covent Garden Market; the London and South Western Railway Company have extensive storehouses and offices on its quay, and their boats effect daily landings beneath the frowning ramparts on which once the relics of St. Malo were carried in procession with the chanted litany,

De furore Anglorum
Libera nos Domine.

Not far from the quay of the English steamers is the curious *pont roulant*, which offers the shortest way of getting from St. Malo to St. Servan. It is a small platform resting on four iron stanchions shod with grooved castors that run on submerged rails. An endless chain, worked by a steam-engine at the St. Servan side, draws it to and fro.

As has been said, St. Servan, from being the venerable mother of St. Malo, has sunk to be its neglected Cinderella. St. Servan, however, has possibilities of expansion that St. Malo, packed to the water's edge upon its rock, is denied, and every now and then some fairy godmother seems to bethink her of Cinderella: the extensive docks constructed last century between the two towns, and the railway that terminates at St. Servan, have brought it business and population, though they have but accentuated its industrial grubbiness. It is a military station, has some naval importance, and boasts of torpedo-boat ways, constructed, I am told, on the singular principle that the take-off is

above the level of low tide, and the housing shed submerged at high. All this gives a growing importance to the ancient town, which has also availed itself of the pleasant slopes behind to spread out in the avenues and gardens of an attractive residential quarter. It has its casino, tennis courts and clubs, and claims its share of the season—claims, indeed, something more: to be an eligible residence for all the year round, quieter and less expensive than Dinard, better sanitated than St. Malo, milder and more sheltered in winter than either.

Sketch 5 is taken from the corner of the military port, or Port Solidor, which is separated by the spur of rock on which stands the imposing Tour Solidor from the little Port de Saint Père, whence steam ferry-boats start for Dinard. The ground-plan of the Tour Solidor is a trefoil formed by three massive towers, sixty feet high; these and the connecting walls are loopholed and surmounted by very projecting corbelled battlements. The building commemorates the traditional hostility between St. Servan and St. Malo. It was erected by Jean IV, Duke of Brittany, in 1384, when he was contesting the claims of Joselin de Rohan, bishop of St. Malo, to the temporal sovereignty of the city. In the time of the League, the Duc de Mercœur gave it in charge to the municipality, who placed it under a commandant with a salary of three hundred crowns, in consideration of which he had to maintain three soldiers, a manservant, a maidservant, and three dogs.

On its seaward coast St. Malo extends northward to Paramé and Rochebonne, crowded, dusty watering places sharing an excellent beach, an extension of that of St. Malo, which fringes the shore all the way.

Interesting rides may be made all about this region, known as the Clos Poulet, roughly the peninsula north of the reclaimed tract of marsh which stretches from le Viviez on the Bay of Mont St. Michel to the Rance. Clos Poulet, it may be remarked, does not indicate a poultry-run; it is said to be a corruption of Plou Aleth, or territory of Aleth, the old Armorican city that has become St Servan. It is in the main a land of small proprietors who understand admirably how to keep the soil up to the mark. Every rood is put to profit, crop follows crop without intermission; scientific treatment, and intensive cultivation by all hands of the family, get good returns from soil that would never have been taken into cultivation had it been looked at from the point of view of capital and hired hands. Every homestead has its little *lopin*, with trees bowed by fruits in their season, a field or two for tillage, hedged with hawthorn against the sweeping sea winds, and planted with rows of apple-trees. There is little grain, as the layer of vegetable soil is thin, and market gardening lucrative. There is an abundance of potatoes, vegetables of all kinds, some tobacco, beetroot and colza. Little ground can be spared for wood, but here and there are clumps and avenues of chestnut, beech, and oak.

An interesting feature are the *gentilhommières* or

LA TOUR SOLIDOR, ST. SERVAN

small manor-houses built by the old corsairs with the plunder of the sea—solid granite houses with dormers and chimneys of moulded stone in their steep roofs. Generally a short avenue leads from the road to the iron gate of their little court, where perhaps there is a well, a great dovecot, a cider press, a chapel that has often been made a barn or cart-house; a windmill on an eminence near by may complete the self-sufficiency of an old country house. The chapels are nearly all of the same size and plan : some thirty feet long and half as broad, and about twenty five feet high, a three-panelled apse at the east end, a round window above the western door, over this a niche, and a belcot on the gable point. In all the houses that are a couple of centuries or so old there is something of fortification, not to stand a siege but to protect against a raid, for at any little cove or beach the English might suddenly land, and carry off all they could lay their hands on. Many of these *gentilhommières* have been kept up, and form charming country residences ; others have become farmhouses, and are often divided into several tenements.

Following the coast from Paramé we come to Minihic, a few weather-beaten granite cottages and prim modern villas. There are excellent beaches for bathing, and now that it is connected by tram with St Malo, it will doubtless become one of the quiet, outlying watering places that relieve the turmoil and congestion in those of older standing. Its name, in fact, preserves the record of an old sanctuary. The wind-swept Pointe de Lavarde, with abundant sea-

side flora, thrusts its ruined buttresses, gnawed and blackened by the waves, into the sea; the cliffs are fissured by deep chasms in which the restless water frets and moans. At this, its mid-point, the whole Côte d'Emeraude stretches out on either hand: on the left the long level plateau that terminates in Cap Fréhel, the beautiful spire of St. Malo rising above the forest of houses within its walls, Paramé spread carelessly along its charming beach; in the haze on the right, hardly appearing above the shifting sea, the great curve of Norman coast and the islands of Chausey.

The indented coast now turns eastward to Rotheneuf, another rising watering place. A picturesque fragment of a seventeenth century house was the home of the Abbé Fauret, and is now a museum of the eccentric handiwork to which he devoted the last twenty years of his life. Crowded in the courtyard is grotesque, crudely painted sculpture in granite and in trunks and roots of trees; in a room of the house are pictures framed with broken crockery pieced together with cement; dolls with spiteful heads of lobster claws, and distorted, grimacing creatures suggested by the knots and turns of twisted roots.

Outside the village, a spur of granite rock that slopes steeply to the sea is completely covered with fantastic sculpture. Not a foot of several thousand square yards of surface is left in its original state, though the treatment has evidently been suggested by the natural moulding of the rock. Steps and paths cut into it

wind amid seats, shrines, and altars. Strewn and piled on every side is a Dantesque welter of human and monstrous shapes; some are below the level of high tide, all are within reach of waves and spray; these have worn down the crudities of the sculpture, and almost washed away the paint, forms and faces seem vanishing again into the rock; it is as though a crowd of tortured creatures under some gorgon gaze, had writhed and stared as they were gradually turned into stone.

The bay of Rotheneuf is almost landlocked; the rocky island of the Grand Chevreuil, lying just off its entrance, gives it from many points of its shore the air of being quite enclosed. The sea almost abandons it at low tide; at high tide it looks a large tranquil lake. On a segment of the amphitheatre of down that surrounds it is a wood of ancient pines, carpeted with close grass, extending to the beach—an ideal picnicking place, the more appreciated because trees are rare in the neighbourhood. At the head of this wood is le Lupin, a good specimen of an eighteenth century *gentilhommière*, which has long stood with empty rooms and broken panes, waiting for some one to buy and repair it. Structurally its granite walls and oaken timbers seem quite intact. A balustraded oak staircase winds up from the ground to the roof rooms. To the right of the pillared gateway of its little courtyard is a dovecot; to the left a chapel, beside which can be seen the circular stone runnel of an old cider-press. A large walled garden that was at the back is now a ploughed field.

Turning back to St. Malo, we pass through the village of St. Vincent ; its little church opposite an ancient granite crucifix is on rising ground outside. Soon after this, two dense avenues of small oaks lead to the front and back gates of the charming *gentil-hommière* of Ville-es-Offrans, with 1670 on one of its arched doorways. Near by is what remains—a dwarf tower, an old well, some gothic lintels, one with the Cartier arms—of the Manoir des Portes-Cartier, once the home of Jacques Cartier, the discoverer of Canada. Sketch 6 shows a granite cross that stands on rising ground looking out to sea near some cross-roads, a spot where, tradition says, the great navigator was wont to come and pray at eventide during his short intervals at home. A little farther on is the oratory of Notre Dame de Grâce, recessed in a farmhouse wall. In July 1791 all priests who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Revolutionary Government were ejected from their cures, and replaced by the more complaisant *prêtres constitutionnels.* Two aged nonjurors, defying all threats, and persecution, continued to celebrate mass here to crowded congregations, and 'rectified' rites that had been solemnized by conforming priests. To secure legal validity and registration, baptism and marriage were undergone at the hands of the temporizing ecclesiastics, but the people could not believe that they had heavenly sanction and blessing, until the rites had been repeated by those who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

Next we come to St. Ideuc, whose church, dating only from 1791, represents one of the oldest founda-

ORATORY OF JACQUES CARTIER

tions in the region. St. Ideuc was a British abbot, teacher of St. Malo, St. Samson, and St. Gildas. When St. Samson established his bishopric at Dol, he dedicated one of the first outlying churches of his diocese to his old master. A great part of the present building is panelled with effective eighteenth century woodwork. St. Ideuc and Rochebonne now merge into one another, and we can either re-enter St. Malo by the way that we left it, or by one of the avenued roads that border St. Servan landwards.

This little round, which is a sample of numberless rides and walks that can be made in the Clos Poulet, might easily be expanded to include Cancale and la Houle, which can also be reached by tram.

The large village of Cancale stands on the edge of the plateau whither the inhabitants of the two villages of Port Pican and Taumen retreated as their dwellings were gradually submerged, but population has gravitated again to the sea with which all their work has to do. La Ville Basse, as la Houle, the seaside suburb of Cancale, is locally called, is as busy as la Ville Haute, round the great unfinished church, is dull. Behind this church a pleasant footpath runs along the cliffs, which have a singularly Mediterranean look. Pine trees line their edges, or fill the little ravines that slope down from the plateau to the beach. Between them are shattered cliffs of ruddy rock, enamelled gold and grey by lichen. From the path we have an extensive view over the great circle of the bay, the cone of Mont St. Michel and the rock of Tombelaine standing in delicate silhouette at its edge. On an

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eminence behind rise the spires of Avranches, to the right are the hill and cathedral of Dol ; on the left, the chain of little coast towns that stretch to Granville, beyond which on clear days are seen the archipelago of Chausey and the English Channel Islands. La Houle spreads below in a long curve along the shore; in front of the line of houses is a row of little ship-building yards, on the stocks of which small craft may be seen in various stages of construction. Below this is shallow sea, in which innumerable fishing-boats lie at anchor at high tide, and at low tide loll in the mud amidst the famous oyster parks. Lower still, and only uncovered at spring tides, are the breeding beds ; from these the original oyster plantation at Colchester was taken.

In one way or another the sea is the absorbing preoccupation of Cancale and la Houle. A large proportion of the men are away all the summer at the Iceland or Newfoundland fisheries, and their women-folk are the main workers in the oyster parks, which extend over several hundred acres that the sea leaves bare at low tide. They are fine-looking women, brawny, bronzed, and hard-featured through work and exposure, a favourite subject with artists and photographers. One of those in the sketch informed the artist that she appeared in a cinematograph, and supposed that she was going the round of the world. As might be expected, after this high distinction she took little interest in a mere water-colour sketch. Her companion, who had a less-assured position in the world of art, was more solicitous ; critically scrutinising

DRYING DAY AT LA HOULE

the drawing in progress, she remarked that it would give the English people a very poor idea of the personal appearance of the Cancalaises.

'But it is only half done,' said the artist apologetically.

This opened up a bright vista of possibilities; between the middle and the end of a sketch what might not be achieved to order.

'Then do,' she pleaded, 'do give me beautiful blue eyes!'

The artist properly remarked that her own, which were as black as sloes, became her best.

'Ah,' she said, '*il ne s'agit pas de ça*, all the good women in the stories have blue eyes.'

This predilection of popular fiction for blondes is indeed remarkable. Why is it that, no matter how universally and beautifully brunette a population may be, no matter in what glory of raven hair, dark lustrous eyes, bronzed and glowing cheek and brow, its women be arrayed, the ideal of its popular art is always blonde: its Madonnas, saints and angels are fair faced and flaxen haired to insipidity; the heroines of its folklore, ballads and legends have blue eyes and golden locks, their cruel and treacherous rivals have hair and eyes as black as their hearts. I think one reason why the nut-brown maid has won all hearts is that she is almost the only exception to this unjust partiality.

As befits a population in which members of every family are always in peril on the sea, the inhabitants of Cancale and la Houle are intensely religious. No long period passes without a procession in which all

the parish takes part. Besides the great festivals, processions are always being organised for special purposes such as a change in the weather ; and it is to be noted that when the desired change occurs there is a procession of thanksgiving.

In the midst of la Houle is a lofty crucifix that has replaced a very ancient one before which, forty six years ago, Joseph Camu, curé of Cancale, offered up his life to end the dearth of fish and disease of oysters that was ruining his flock. For three years the trouble had gone on, prayers and processions seemed in vain. At length it was borne in on the mind of the good curé that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. He had a service of supplication in the church, and afterwards proceeded with his parishioners to the ancient calvary. Here he blessed the barren bay and festering parks, and then, kneeling before the memorial of the great self-sacrifice, solemnly offered himself to turn away the divine wrath and bring back welfare to his people. Within the year he died, and immediately fish flocked to the bay and oysters multiplied in the parks.

The great day of Cancale is that of the *Tour de Paroisse* on September 14. No one knows when or why the custom began, but it is universally held that it is an act of thanksgiving for deliverance from a great calamity, an act that Cancale could only neglect at its peril.

Long before daybreak the whole population gathers before the church. The streets have been strewn with flowers and rushes, the recesses of doorways and

windows have been made into little floral shrines, where tapers burn before sacred images. At seven o'clock the crowd forms into procession and, singing the litany of the saints, descends to la Houle, chants an *O crux ave* before its calvary, then goes slowly along the shore and winds up to Terlabouet. The great bay stretches mistily below, the Mount of the Archangel rising on its further shore ; at short intervals, like minute guns from ships in peril on the sea, invocations are chanted by the precentor, and responded to by a thousand voices : 'Miserere Domine, parce nobis, adjuva nos ; Sancti et Sanctæ Dei, orate pro nobis, intercedite pro nobis.' At Terlabouet the procession turns inland, swelling at every house and hamlet passed. A little before St. Colomb the road turns again towards the coast ; by immemorial custom the *Peccatores* is reached at this point ; turning towards the sister village, the precentor shouts the versicle in his loudest tones ; the gathered villagers respond, and come out to join the throng. Past the mounded steps of the great cross of Tannée—locally said to have been erected by the English, who are not credited with many good works in this region—the great crowd wends its way to the chapel of le Verger, a shrine held in peculiar veneration by the seafaring population. Toylike models of ships, and other naive votive offerings, are suspended from the walls, tokens of thanksgiving for deliverance, blessing or answered prayer. Only two or three hundred can enter, the rest stand bareheaded and silent without while Mass is said. It is now about 9 o'clock ; the multitude

sit down on the green grass and rest awhile ; pocket provisions are produced, little fires are lit, and coffee warmed ; many get a simple meal at a farmhouse near. The procession forms again, and, singing the *Ave Maris Stella*, goes along the narrow promontory that juts northward into the sea and ends in the Pointe du Grouin. Here, looking out on the infinite sea, the home and the tomb of so many of their people, with whose gifts and perils their lives and thoughts are occupied from the cradle to the grave, over which even now husbands, sons, and brothers are ploughing their way back from Iceland and Newfoundland, a canticle is chanted to the Mater Dolorosa, whose ancient image stands above the door of the little storm-beat chapel. Then the crowd turns homeward along the cliffs, wailing invocations and responses to the refrain of the beating waves. At the Anse du Port Pican, beneath whose waters it is said the ruins of the homes of their ancestors can still be seen at low tide, a halt is made and a *Libera nos Domine* is sung. It is after noon when the procession again enters Cancale, having traversed some ten miles.

There are few parts of the world where things such as this are more real and serious than in this Celtic corner of Voltairian France. Through centuries of hard and anxious life, of struggle with raiding foe and ruthless nature, religion has been the stay and support of the people, has entered in at lowly doors, and expressed itself in the simple terms of their daily life, too intimate and precious a thing to be criticised or questioned. And this, in very different ways, is the

case with Celtic peoples everywhere—in Ireland, in Wales, Cornwall and highland Scotland. There can hardly be a greater contrast than a *Tour de Paroisse* and a revivalist meeting, no poles can seem more wide apart than Welsh Calvinism and Breton Catholicism ; yet at heart the two are nearer than is the one to Gallic Romanism or the other to English Puritanism. Of the one as of the other, the core, the vital force, is planted in the emotional, mystic Celtic temperament, which no Englishman can wholly share or comprehend. If Ireland wants Home Rule, if Wales wishes to disestablish the Anglican Church, it is not because the English Government has been harsh or inefficient, nor because the Church has lacked holiness and devotion—whatever may be thought of them in these respects—but because of their poverty in imagination and emotion.

The little chapel of St. Charles at Blessin is much resorted to by the women of Cancale when their men are late in returning from the oversea fisheries. Mothers, wives, daughters, betrothed, flock there and pace with lighted candles round the building, commencing always on the side whence the home-bound breeze should come. With the naive egoism with which religionists of all creeds fancy themselves the centre of creation, the women-folk of Islandais supplicate northerly winds at the same time that those of Terreneuviers are importuning Providence to send them from the west. Then they enter and lay before the mosaic of the saint their little offering, to purchase his favourable intervention for the weather.

II

DINARD

One takes the boat from St. Malo to Dinard at the Cale de Dinan, just beyond the Môle des Noires that is shown in Sketch 8. Close by is a statue of the famous Malouin corsair Robert Surcouf, whose exploits were mainly in the Indian seas, and who was throughout his career almost as much at loggerheads with the authorities of Mauritius, then a French colony, as with the Dutch and English. Little steamboats known as vedettes ply to and fro continually. The passage takes about ten minutes, and costs 10 centimes, which in the season is raised to 25; this is a sample of the automatic rise of all charges in the golden moment, every one wants to make hay while the sun shines, and they make hay of everything. It is no doubt natural, but I doubt if it be a wise policy. There are *vedettes vertes* which go to an upper quay, and whose price includes ascending thence in a lift to the town; and *vedettes blanches* that go to a lower quay. At the ebb of spring tides all have to go still lower to the Bec de la Vallée, and to embark on the St. Malo side on what is ordinarily the island of the Grand Bey, but to which at low tide you can walk dryshod from the town.

An extraordinary transformation scene is wrought by the brimming invasion, and the great withdrawal, of the sea at spring tides, which occur some thirty six hours after new and full moon, that being the time that the great world-wave takes to get from the Pacific to St. Malo. The level of the sea then varies about fifty feet. At its lowest ebb the coast presents a strange and unwonted aspect ; where usually waves dance on the blue water, are wide stretches of sand and mud, weed and ooze, about which stranded streams of sea meander aimlessly. Where the water still lies, islands and bars of rock and sand emerge above the surface. The familiar islands round become twice their usual size, spreading out little beaches and labyrinths of weed-covered rock, and perhaps throwing across an isthmus to the coast. The whole life of the place is dislocated and takes to temporary channels like the little vedettes. Various opportunist industries seize their chance; channels and quaysides are cleared and deepened ; carts are driven down into the bared haunts of the sea to collect seaweed, known as *goemon*, for manure ; man eagerly exploits the vantage given in his implacable warfare on less-gifted fellow creatures, fish are cornered in extempore bays, or kidnapped in little inland seas that shrink with the sinking tide, shrimps are netted in pools, and eels forked in quicksands, shellfish left high and dry upon the rocks fall an easy prey. Children, of course, have a grand time, grubbing and wading, ruining their clothes, collecting unimaginable treasures, as they explore the slippery, swampy, new world that has been brought to light.

The lift of the *vedettes vertes* lands you at the end of the Rue Levavasseur, the principal street of Dinan. From this point the trams start to St. Lunaire and St. Briac and the Golf Links. Here, too, are the English club and the principal bank. From the quay of the *vedettes blanches* we may walk round the promontory of the Moulinet, having lovely views of the harbour and the sea. Unfortunately, at the finest point of the road, where it should round the bastionlike end of the promontory, commanding views along the coast in either direction, it is interrupted by private property and has to creep lugubriously inland between high walls. It is to be hoped that the municipality will acquire the necessary authority to enable them to expropriate enough ground to extend the road round the point; it is altogether unreasonable that a private individual should thus restrict the circulation of a growing community. The same might be done on the further promontory of La Malouine, which separates the two beaches of Dinard and St. Enogat. Dinard would then possess an incomparable promenade, four or five miles in length, along her own cliffs and beaches.

Nooked in a little grove of elms on the western slope of the Moulinet is the Anglican church of St. Bartholomew, approached by a lovely rose-walk and garden, its walls of scappled granite covered from base to eaves with ivy, honeysuckle, and Virginia creeper. The miscellaneous bedizenment within is hardly worthy of the charming exterior.

We then come to the Grève de l'Écluse, a broad

curve of sand recessed between the rocky promontories of the Moulinet and Malouine, which is covered in summer with bathers, loungers, and merrymakers. Behind in the centre is an edifice with the appalling name of 'High Life Casino,' which provides a variety of attractions and diversions.

This beach and its vicinity are the centre of the gay life of Dinard during the season. Since the sudden linguistic development that disconcerted cosmopolitan architecture on the plain of Shinar, I doubt if there has ever been such a medley of tongues in one place. All nations and races seem represented in the motley throng: stalwart Germans claiming a place in the sun, and taking care to get it; uncompromising Britons looking as though the ground they trod on were invested with extra-territoriality; Americans having the time of their lives, and letting every one know it; big, kindly Russians, phenominally cosmopolitan or naively primitive; facile, unobtrusive Italians, all things to all men, yet unmistakably themselves; angular-skulled Spaniards with the surprised, serious air of having stepped out of a canvas of Velasquez; swarthy representatives of South-Eastern Europe, of Northern Africa, of Central and South America, of weird Oriental and Semitic races, showing a hundred mysterious psychologies under the French veneer. The amalgam of all is the Frenchman, cordial, capable, versatile, expansive, thoroughly satisfied with himself and the world, thoroughly master of whatever for the moment he may think to be the situation, never suspecting there is anything in heaven

or earth not dreamt of in his philosophy. He is the ideal host, making every one at home because he is so thoroughly at home himself. There is no other country in Europe where such a mixed multitude would be quite so much at home. It may be said that they are so in Switzerland; but there it is by virtue of taking possession of the country and—greatly to their loss—ignoring the inhabitants. No one thinks of ignoring the Frenchman in France, but every one finds something of himself in the Frenchman, and something with which he is familiar at home in France. And we find it there because it was thence it came to us. There is no country from which the whole civilized world has taken so much which they have so wholly made their own that they do not realize it is not native. When Europe took French as its *lingua Franca*—may the instructive tautology be pardoned—when the Orient termed the Western peoples and civilization Frankish, they instinctively expressed a truth. Different as is the Frenchman from all of us, yet he alone is our common denominator.

A road slopes up from the Casino to the Malouine, a breezy promontory that of late years has been covered with villas and gardens. The gardens are particularly rich in roses, to which the whole region seems specially propitious. You can also mount to the Malouine by steps from the beach. Another little beach, which for some time I looked on as my private property, so entirely did I have it to myself, is recessed between the headlands of the Malouine and the Grouin. Farther on is the beach of St. Enogat, the old village

of which, fifty years ago, Dinard was a straggling outpost, and which is now mainly inhabited by work-people. This is the *plage de famille* of the neighbourhood, of which St. Enogat is very proud. It seems, as it were, to plead its beach as an extenuating circumstance for its own continued existence beside its brilliant daughter. It loves to contrast it with the *plage mondaine* of Dinard. An enthusiastic caretaker of a neighbouring villa to let, assured me that a bride in her wedding dress might sit on the sands of St. Enogat, but would resemble a chimney sweep after reclining on the Plage de l'Écluse, the sand of which is mixed with mud from the town drain, which discharges into the sea in its centre. The chimney-sweep is neighbourly exaggeration ; it is not a very criminal drain, for there is no sewage drainage in the town, this being one of the things that for a long time past Dinard has been going to do next year ; the worst that this great pipe brings down are domestic and industrial slops and scourings.

The crowd of our compatriots at Dinard, the villas with English names, the catering to English tastes in hotels and shops, the provision of English sports and pastimes, seem a realisation of the fifth-century appellation of the country as Britannia Cismarina. Every one coming to Dinard from England is struck by its looking so English. Except for a somewhat brighter sky and bolder coast, the Channel seems to count for nothing. I do not take this wholly as a compliment ; in fact, as regards appearance it is not a compliment at all. Many excellent things may be said of our

English watering places : they are pleasant, homely, convenient, but just a little commonplace. Dinard, it must be admitted, is a little commonplace. It may have a pretty house stowed away somewhere, but in the course of some months' residence I have not come across it, though I am sure that any Dinardais would enthusiastically describe the most bizarre or the most banal of the constructions as a *coquet villa.*

But then Dinard has the good qualities of its defects, I know no place of the kind where life is so conveniently and comfortably organized, and on a sliding scale that suits all purses. From the millionaire to the thrifty tripper, every one can get what they want, and will have every facility in finding it.

We hesitated a good deal as to where on the Côte d'Emeraude we should locate ourselves for these few months ; there were places that, it must be confessed, had more picturesque and romantic appeal than Dinard, but the practical sex decided for Dinard with a level-headed judgment and prevision so amply justified by results that it suggests a strong presumption for the case of the suffragettes. But I will not mix myself in such high matters ; in the little domestic polity with which I am concerned there can be no doubt in whom deliberative functions can be most safely vested.

House agency is one of the admirably organized things in which, as I have said, Dinard is pre-eminent. Great part of the population of the Côte d'Emeraude appear to subsist by letting other people's houses, and their advertisements form a salient feature of the

MÔLE DES NOIRES AND DINARD, FROM ST. MALO BEACH

scenery. The Maison Rouge was the agency that took us in hand. There can be no missing it ; its flaming front challenges attention for the whole length of the Rue Levavasseur. You enter half expecting to see Mephistopheles installed amid infernal conditions, but are welcomed by courteous and efficient gentlemen, who readily undertake to get you anything you want from a house to the most trifling article in it. They so exactly gauged our taste and purse that it was unnecessary to go beyond the first house to which one of them took us. It was as commonplace, as comfortable, as conveniently arranged and pleasantly situated, and the owner as obliging and ready to meet our wishes, as a house and its owner could be. At the same time they let the next house to a charming Americo-Canadian family party, and the three nationalities—if the Empire League will permit the expression—live in a neighbourly reciprocity that is happily independent of elections across the Atlantic. The seaside rocks and sands are within a few minutes' walk ; the sequestered garden to which the little property owes its title of a *Clos* is a sanctuary of singing birds ; shady trees hedge round two sunny little lawns, on one of which just now there is a heap of new-mown grass. Abask on it as I write, with the springtide glory around, lilac massed in fragrant splendour, may blushing into bud, and laburnum shimmering into golden showers, it is difficult to believe one is in the middle of a town. That this thing of shreds and patches, which only through the kind offices of the binder will have any claim to be

styled a book, is not more flagrantly unworthy of its subject than it is, is largely due to the happy conditions provided for its compilation by the Maison Rouge.

During the summer, the Société des Bateaux Bretons organize a variety of pleasant excursions from Dinard. There are *promenades en mer*, along the coast and among the islets, at some of which the boats touch long enough for landing and rambling; there is a daily service to St. Cast, and trips to Cap Fréhel, the Chausey Archipelago, and the English Channel Islands, which it is always startling to see so close to France. 'Jersey,' says a Dinard Guide, 'est la conséquence obligée d'un séjour sur la Côte d'Emeraude.' It must, indeed, seem to Frenchmen that in the whirligig of history the islands have missed a destiny 'indicated by Nature herself,' to quote a famous French despatch. Of course there is nothing to wound French pride in this. They are not conquests from France, like Alsace and Lorraine; the suggestion is rather the other way, as a French friend once put it to me. We were in the Town Hall at St. Peter's Port, Guernsey, where is preserved a letter from Victor Hugo, the address of which terminates: 'Iles de la Manche, Possessions Anglaises.'

'Possessions Anglaises!' ejaculated my companion. 'Could we have a better example of the way the good Hugo makes hay of history?'

I ventured to suggest that it was near enough to facts for postal purposes.

ST. SERVAN AND EMBOUCHURE OF THE RANCE
FROM VICOMTÉ

'Near to facts!' he exclaimed, 'it has not even a foundation in fact. If he had wished to stick to facts, he would have been nearer to them by speaking of Great Britain and Ireland as *Possessions Guernesiaises.* Guernsey is a fragment, a small one, it is true, but enough to be representative, of the Duchy of Normandy, which, in the eleventh century, took possession of England in very effective fashion. The claims of English sovereigns since have been based solely on their descent from the French conqueror—yes, I said French, go to Bayeux, and you will find the combatants at Senlac called Franci et Angli on the tapestry worked by the conqueror's wife—no king or queen, down to George V, has had a drop of English blood in their veins.' I thought of Maud, disveiled and crowned, but felt that her contribution of English blood to the veins of our gracious sovereign had been too diluted to justify interruption. 'If,' continued my companion, falling in love with his own paradox, 'your royal family possessed any historic sense, they would have their court here or in Jersey, and only visit the outlying island of Great Britain to open Parliament, and draw their allowances under the Civil List.'

The Vicomté is a delightful outpost of Dinard. On a hilly, breezy promontory, buttressed with cliffs that rise from the harbour and the Rance, is a miscellany of country houses standing in pleasant grounds and gardens, little hamlets of grey cottages with trim gardens and roses on their walls, shady avenues and

leafy copses, bosky dells sloping down to sandy coves, patches of farmland and marketland, commons of gorse and pasture dotted with sheep and cattle; at every turn one opens out lovely views of sea and land.

Soon after leaving the Lamballe road at a granite cross, a lane cut through the rock descends steeply on the left to the quiet and pleasant plage de la Prieuré, recessed in the south-west shore of the harbour. It takes its name from an ancient priory, the scanty remains of which nestle among trees in its western corner; only the ruined chapel and some buildings adjoining it, now a dwelling-house, remain. A stone above one of the windows bears the almost obliterated date 1156, but the priory is said to have been built for the Redemptory Fathers in 1354 by two brothers, Oliver and Geoffry de Montfort, in gratitude for their deliverance from captivity in the Holy Land. Long before this, however, there appears to have been here one of the *minihi*, or sanctuaries, already mentioned as encircling St. Malo.

In the courtyard is an old well with a cross upon its granite canopy. The ivied and moss-grown ruins of the chapel are very picturesque. A large magnolia fills its western end. In arched recesses on either side of the choir, above the tombs of the two brothers, are recumbent statues, clad in chain armour, the feet not crossed, but crosses on the shields on their arms. Mutilated though they be, they are fine examples of Gothic mortuary sculpture, with its characteristic air of repose. Beside the head and feet of the figure on the north, said to be Geoffry, are curious miniature

skeleton figures. Canopied by a leaning fig tree at the east end, is an archaic statue of the Virgin and Child, much defaced, but charming in sentiment. The walled garden beyond is a lovely tangle of roses, honeysuckle and other flowers, run wild among neglected fruit trees and little patches of vegetables.

Beyond the beach we may take several pleasant ways about the promontory. A delightful *chemin de ronde*, or coastguard footpath, runs round its edge, by dark cliffs, hanging woods, twisted pines, slopes of bracken and bramble, little beaches wedged in inlets of the land. In the course of this ramble we pass the great rock of the Angelus, so called because when the church bells ring the Angelus it turns round a thousand times, but so rapid is its motion, and so just its axis of revolution, that no one has ever seen it move. Even snapshots have failed to bring home to it any of the impossible attitudes that photography assures us are momentary aspects of quick movement. For all that the rest of the world knows of its pious exercise, it might as well be stock-still; but this is a misconception that it shares with the earth, and, it is said, with the minutest components of matter.

Finally we arrive at the Pointe de Jouvente, a pile of granite rocks half buried in turf, from which we have one of the most charming and characteristic views in the neighbourhood. To the north is the broad roadstead, the huge fortified rock of the citadel jutting like an island into its midst. White-sailed boats and black-smoked steamers leave and enter, the busy little vedettes bustle backwards and

forwards. On the left the houses and foliage of the hilly promontory of Dinard look really picturesque in the distance; on the right the always picturesque St. Malo huddles round its white spire, behind its tawny ramparts; to the east is the beautiful lake into which the Rance expands before entering the harbour, fringed with inlets and headlands, the white image of Mary on a rocky isle at its mouth, the broad waterway from the lake of St. Suliac parting the wooded cliffs at its head; embosomed in folded woods the almost landlocked Eau de la Gautte gleams, bright and blue, like a separate lake beyond.

Very pleasant rides, though with a good deal of up and down, may be made beyond this in the network of roads that fringe the Rance. On either side of the estuary are modest little watering-places, classed among the *petits trous pas chers* to which the lower French middle classes crowd in August. August is par excellence the month of villégiature, when the children have their holidays, and the thriftiest households try to manage a few weeks *à la campagne* or *à la plage*. In these *petits trous*, homely little hotels offer pension at three or four francs a day; *habitants* undertake to board and lodge for even less. The number of members of a family that can make one bedroom do on such occasions is surprising. Centuries of similar experience have evolved a sturdy bourgeoisy that is immune from the trifles about which modern hygiene makes such a fuss. What does it

SEAWEED GATHERING ON THE ESTUARY OF THE RANCE

matter that indoors the allowance of cubic air per person would shock a factory inspector, and that the sanitary arrangements are of the safe, primitive kind that warn the olfactory nerves when they want attending to. No one comes there to be indoors. Society centres round the little *plage*, the only introduction needed being a moist and scanty garment. This is usually substituted for the ordinary garb of civilization before leaving the house ; if not, the change is made in discreet recesses of the rocks, or behind an umbrella, or a towel stretched between two walking-sticks. The amphibious life is the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin. In the intervals between the elaborate meals that the humblest French housewife knows how to prepare, *papa et maman, petits et petites*, disport themselves, play, chat and joke, build castles on the sands, shout and shriek in the water, in that happy, solid, simple, domestic life which is the real life of France, so fantastically libelled in its fiction.

Nothing is pleasanter than this country in spring, when the orchards are bowered in blossom, hedges are white with may, or golden with gorse and broom, the bogs are starred with yellow iris, farmhouse and cottage walls and gardens are gay and odorous with rose, honeysuckle, stocks, carnations, and a hundred homely flowers. Of course it is scenery from which one must not expect too much ; to which, in some ways, one has to get accustomed. Above all, English eyes have to become reconciled to the docked and amputated trees ; but subconsciously the reconciliation is effected. It may be from appreciating its obvious utility, but

the eye becomes after a time used to this abortive foliage, and finds in it a certain homely pleasantness; one admires not nature less, but man the more, in seeing her thus regimented to his purposes.

Though the country homesteads—groved, gardened and orcharded, trellised with wall fruit, or garlanded with vines and roses—are often charming, the villages away from the coast are, for the most part, unpicturesque and commonplace to a degree, often without a tree or flower to break their dreary monotony. They are usually one long highway street of comfortless looking houses, drab and grey, the doors opening right on to the road with no intervening strip of garden.

For those, however, who do not expect too much, but are content to reap 'the harvest of the quiet eye,' the country is full of charm and interest. Seldom will you see those haunts of ancient peace that in England seem to weave even round the passer-by the spell of the quiet past, but everywhere are snug abodes of homely pleasantness and well-being. The road will often be in *chemins creux*, sunk deep between banks of fern and bramble, fields edged with close-set trees lying high above on either side. Here and there grassy avenues stretch off from the highway, and wind among the fields. Little streams ooze through bogs, or creep in leafy coverts, till at some convenient gorge they are dammed in millponds, and lie broad and still, like a green mirror, behind massive ramparts against which the blue sea laps at high tide.

At every turn one is reminded of the intimate local partnership of sea and land. When the road seems

well inland, among fields and hedgerows, it suddenly drops down to a little creek, up which the sea penetrates twice a day, where boats are beached and nets are hanging out to dry. Now and then some *plaine* of the Rance spreads a broader bay, where toilers of the sea and of the land dwell together, boathouses and barns stand side by side, only a narrow strip of beach separates oyster parks and pastures, and little ships are built or repaired on the edge of wheatfields, woods and orchards. Far inland on the plateau you may see a boat lying irrelevantly in a farmyard ; halves of boats set on end in gardens do duty as tool-sheds or poultry roosts ; a large sea shell often serves as holy water stoup at the entrance to the churches ; carts creak along the country lanes laden with seaweed and ooze collected at low tide ‘ to fatten the land ’ ; humbler cultivators carry up the same precious fertilizer in barrows and baskets to their little crofts and gardens ; the land, or at any rate its produce, seems almost as much a gift of the sea as Egypt is the gift of the Nile.

Everywhere you recognize that you are among a God-fearing folk, whose faith keeps to the ancient ways, and whose life is hedged with reminders of the unseen. No doubt the world, the flesh and the devil have their say here as elsewhere, and life is as heavily mortgaged to material interests as in other parts of the world, but its hidden foundations that lie too deep to be shaken by reason or sapped by knowledge, rest in the dim borderland that is peopled with guardian angels and tutelary saints. In all the

ways of worldly life are reminders that man is compassed about with benign influences that prompt to good and shield from harm ; the crucifix raises its tragic appeal on hill tops, at cross roads, or in wayside groves ; any little bit of rising or unused ground seems to suggest a granite cross ; they stand in the village street, in hedges, at turns of the road, or where a knot of rocks crops out in field or common. Some of them are rude and weather-worn, very old, with almost obliterated sculpture ; others are memorials of modern missions ; often they are decorated with wreaths, sometimes surrounded with pretty plots of shrubs and flowers. Everywhere are shrines, in cottage and garden walls, on the stone canopies of wells, or in the trunks of ancient oaks. Sacred statues are niched in shoreside rocks, bowered with hawthorn from the hedge of the field above, naïve adornments of shells mortared round them. Sometimes they are of the Saviour or the saints ; more often it is the pale form of Stella Maris, Our Lady of Sorrows, that touching apotheosis of motherhood which has almost displaced the Trinity in popular Catholic devotion. Nowhere are shrines neglected or defaced, or desecrated with the ribald scribbling so often seen in Italy.

The Rance can be crossed at Châtelier lock by the pivot bridge, by the old and new bridges at Dinan, or from any of its villages by boat, as by the ferry between St. Hubert and St. Jean. The huge abortion of a bridge, whose inconclusive offtakes confront one another like hostile monsters at St. Hubert and St. Jean respectively, is a sad example of the proverbial

jealousy of riparian neighbours, to which etymologists say we owe the word 'rival.' For years the two departments have been disputing as to exactly how the bridge should be built, without being able to come to an agreement. Meanwhile the work of each has sullenly stood still on its own edge of the plateau.

All along the estuary are ancient villages of stone cottages, with thatched or slated roofs and round-arched doorways. Each has its church and patron saint, its humble history and wonderful legends, many of which Monsieur Herpin has told with charming simplicity in his *Au Pays des Legendes.* St. Hubert, who is the tutelary of the little port that is connected by ferry with St. Jean and by daily steamboat with St. Malo, especially sees to the migration of birds. The vociferous gathering of winter fowl is *la Chasse St. Hubert.* It is no Spartan temper that takes them to inclement climes when the earth is bursting into blossom and fragrance, and other birds are joyously welcoming the spring. It is St. Hubert drives them off, doubtless for some wise purpose. Whirling and cracking his long whip, he ransacks marsh, bog and pond. From their haunts among reeds and rushes, brake and bramble, he musters wild geese and duck, curlew and moorfowl. You may not see St. Hubert in his long boots stalking through swamps and over commons, it is as much as you can do if you catch a glimpse of his great whip lashing and circling in the air, but you cannot fail to hear its swish and twang, or feel its sting upon your cheek. And every one can hear and see the garrulous,

excited birds, marshalling for their long flight, and then setting off, silent and serious, in pairs or in little flocks or long trails. Then you know that winter is done, that some near morning the sun will have new warmth and radiance, and the earth appear released from bondage, that the fields will soon be starred with daisies, the banks with primroses, and the bogs with iris ; swallows will arrive in wheeling, twittering crowds, and prospect for building sites in cliffs and eaves ; the faithful birds that never leave us will woo and pair, warbling happy love songs as they build a home for the coming family ; and the wandering cuckoo, unscrupulously searching for a ready-made nest and foster-parents for her young, will proclaim, on hill and dale, by copse and stream, that spring has come.

There is a peculiar peaceful pleasantness about the *plaines* of the Rance, little inland seas, dotted with islets, edged round with dark cliffs that are broken here and there by beaches and hanging woods, and merge as they rise into the emerald verdure of the plateau. Beautifully situated on the *plaine* of the same name is St. Suliac, clustering round its ancient church, which is built over the tomb of the saint. The tower, the upper part of whose spire is gone, is particularly interesting. In a gothic porch on the north are life-size statues in pink granite of St. Suliac and his disciples. In a niche by the deep romanesque doorway on the west is a fine head of the saint, apparently part of an old statue. The vaulting of the interior springs from charming slender

columns. There is a naïve local character about the decoration: a large altar-piece of realistic sculpture in the south transept represents a storm at sea; the Virgin, standing on a rock, lowers a rosary to a drowning sailor, the infant Saviour leans forward from her left arm and extends a boathook—a real boathook—towards a ship that labours with broken mast and rent sail among the waves, the crew kneeling on her deck in supplication. On a window near is represented a celebrated pilgrimage of sailors going barefoot and in their shirts from the village to the shrine of St. Père to give thanks for deliverance from shipwreck. The other windows give scenes in the life of St. Suliac, from his arrival in a boat to evangelize the district to his death. One in the nave is apparently motived by the famous legend of the Asses of Rigourdaine, but the artist has stopped short of the dramatic point of the story, perhaps fearing it might distract the congregation from more serious topics. These asses had contracted the unfortunate habit of swimming across from Rigourdaine to pasture on the vegetables of St. Suliac. After expostulating in vain, the saint effectually stopped their depredations by a structural modification that made browsing impossible. The misguided beasts—like many human beings who trespass on forbidden ground—had their heads turned, and ignominiously swam back to Rigourdaine looking at their tails. In the window, asses, cattle and goats are making themselves very much at home in the mission garden, peasant men and women belabour them with cudgels, the saint himself upon a rock lifts up

holy hands in warning or malediction, but up to the moment depicted by the artist the heads of all the animals are in a normal position.

The legend has been pressed into a physiographical argument which is a good illustration that all is fish that comes to the net of modern science. Without necessarily attributing, it is said, any historic value to the story, we must assume that it had a certain verisimilitude. Now, Rigourdaine is at present separated from St. Suliac by four kilometres of deep water. An ass is not an aquatic animal. Would the most irresponsible mythmonger represent asses swimming that distance for the most succulent vegetables ever grown by saint? Is it not evident that at the time the fable arose the Rance was a small stream, still untided by the sea? The legend is thus taken to indicate the introduction of Christianity as a limiting *post quo* date for the great catastrophe that modified all this coast. The most approved geological opinion, however, does not, I believe, concur in this.

Just below the lake of St. Suliac is the rocky Ile aux Moines, on which are the remains of a priory that was destroyed during the Revolution. From the earliest introduction of Christianity into these parts the island had been inhabited by anchorites, who on dark nights and foggy days lit a lamp and sounded a bell, as a warning to passing mariners. The inhabitants of Pleudihen have always made a special trade of supplying wood to the port of the embouchure. Long before St. Malo existed, they brought down fuel to the city of Aleth, and it was customary for

ST. MALO FROM THE PRIORY BEACH, DINARD

each boat as it passed to throw towards the rock a faggot or a log, which was fished up by the hermits. These wood boats are called *gabarres* ; the *gabarriers* who work them are distinguished by a white apron, for which there is, of course, a legendary explanation.

One cold Christmas Eve, at a time when a hermit named Juannic dwelt upon the rock, Suliac, a *gabarrier* of Pleudihen, and his wife, sat by their fire. The man had thrown on it his goodliest log ; the woman busied herself preparing the traditional good fare for the morrow ; the little sabots of the children were ranged round the hearth in readiness for the simple gifts that it is the special business of a good saint to put in them during the night. A bitter wind raged without and made Suliac bethink him of the poor hermit plying his bell upon the rock.

'I reckon the holy man is cold to-night and hungry,' he said. 'I will take him one of my logs and a portion from your good fare.'

'You shall not go out on such a night as this,' said his wife, 'for the holiest and hungriest hermit upon earth.'

He persisted, she resisted, till both went angrily to bed. When the better half was audibly asleep, the inferior half stealthily got up and commenced dressing to carry out his charitable intent. But a man has to get up very early—in fact should not go to bed—to circumvent his wife. In her solicitude on his behalf the good woman had hidden his trousers. Search as he might he could find them nowhere; probably they were under her pillow. Determined not to be

frustrated in good works, he put on his wife's apron, and thus attired sallied out into the night, took his boat from the quay, and pulled across the dark water to the island.

Long before he reached it he saw the light and heard the bell.

'Ah,' he said, 'nor cold nor storm stay the holy man in his task. But what a lamp he has, what a heavenly radiance it sheds over rock and sea! And his bell sounds as though all the angels of heaven were murmuring Christmas carols.'

Soon he was rowing in the wonderful light, which not only was diffused around, but rose far into the sky. And, looking up, he saw heaven opened and the angels of God in glittering ranks singing, as on the first Christmas eve, 'Glory to God and peace on earth.'

When he landed with his burden it was no white-bearded, brown-robed hermit that met him, but a beautiful child in shining garments. It was from him and from no earthly lamp that the divine effulgence came. Leading Suliac to the hermit's cave, he put his finger to his lips and showed him Juannic, worn out and asleep. 'Lay your offering there,' he said, 'where he will see it when he wakes; we will not rouse him now.' Then they went down again to the shore, and Suliac, as he bent to unmoor his boat, bethought him of his scanty attire, and turned as though to make excuse.

'No garment is amiss to men of goodwill,' said the Holy Child—for it was none other than He. 'Henceforth my good *gabarriers* of Pleudihen shall be proud

to wear this, in memory of the kind deed that you have done to me to-night.'

'Lord Jesus,' said the honest seaman, falling on his knees, 'I did but think to bring a little aid to the poor hermit of the rock.'

'Inasmuch—' said the Child, with a divine smile, as he shoved off the boat by a gentle impulse that took it without oar or sail through water that quieted in its path to the distant quay. And all the while the heavenly radiance shone, lighting up the broad *plaine* and the little port and the village street. And the sweet tones of the bell floated round and mounted up, like the notes of a lark; and ever as they rose angelic music, falling through the infinite heaven, proclaimed glory to God and peace on earth.

III

DINARD TO CAP FREHEL

As already mentioned, a tram—the smokiest, noisiest, joltiest tram imaginable—starts from the lift of the *vedettes vertes* and runs along the coast. The first village we arrive at is St. Lunaire, a delightful subsidiary watering place of Dinard, with two superb beaches of sand. Between them juts the rocky headland of Décollé; it has been dreadfully vulgarized, but nothing can spoil the charm of the splendid cliffs and islets of granite, the gracious curves of sandy beach recessed in the bays on either side, the headlands of green down cresting grey precipices beyond. On the left the long curve of coast, dotted with white houses, stretches to Cap Fréhel. On the right are the gardens and villas of Dinard, and the dun battlements and white spire of St. Malo.

The fishing village of St. Lunaire lies more inland than the modern watering place, round its ancient and now disused church. In the graveyard are shady trees and an old granite crucifix, the cross carved to imitate the natural trunk of a tree. The Saviour is stretched on one side, the Virgin and Child are seated against it on the other. The choir of the church is romanesque, most of the rest is later. In the

ST. LUNAIRE, WITH CAP FRÉHEL IN THE DISTANCE

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interior is the tomb of St. Lunaire, his statue, mitre on head and crozier in hand, recumbent upon it. Almost obliterated, on his breast is the figure of a dove with outstretched wings and a stone in its mouth, symbolic of the stone, still shown, to which a dove directed him to fasten his boat when he disembarked to Christianize the country. Near this a worn sepulchral slab bears the rude effigies of a knight and his lady, demons under their feet, angels at their head. In recesses in the north transept are recumbent statues of a lord of Pontbriand and his wife, their hands crossed on their breasts and angels supporting their heads. In a recess on the south is the effigy of a lady wearing coif and rosary.

The past has been so largely obliterated in the recent developments of the neighbourhood that one is glad to hear it is proposed to restore this interesting and neglected church ; it is to be hoped that the restoration will not be so drastically archæological as to rob it of its air of long continued and homely use. Meanwhile it retains its ancient and sacred charge ; when the new church was built it was proposed to remove thither the tomb and remains of St. Lunaire, but it is said that the workmen set to do this were ever prevented by a mysterious force from carrying out their task.

St. Lunaire thus maintains in death the reputation that he had in life. He is looked on as one of the most potent of *les saints thaumaturges*, and many are the tales told of his wonderful works. He was of royal British birth, and in early life received a divine

call to Christianize the heathen over seas. Gathering together a company of seventy to aid him in the work, he went down to the coast, where he found a large vessel manned by a crew clad all in white waiting to receive him. In this they were conveyed across the Channel. They cleared a space in the forest that then covered the country, a herd of wild cattle presented themselves to be harnessed to their plough, a flight of doves brought grains of wheat in their bills and laid them in the furrows.

Thus does legend symbolize the British rechristianization and recivilization of Armorica. In the fifth century Romanized and Christianized Gaul had been devastated by Teutonic heathen barbarians: hordes coming overland on the east, pirates from the north landing on and ravaging the Channel coasts. Here, in the north-western corner, the superficial Roman civilization and the nascent Christianity had been almost wiped out, the ravaged country reverted to forest, the remnants of the population relapsed into barbarism. At the same time Romanized and Christianized Britain was being submerged by waves of the same great ethnic flood, and there the barbarians—our English forefathers—came to stay. Then there set in a great stream of emigration from the island to the continent that, with ebbs and flows, continued for nearly two centuries, during which Britain became England, and Armorica became Brittany. This north-west peninsula of Gaul was filled with a British population, more numerous and more civilized than the scattered remnants of the

native peoples, to whom they were akin in blood and speech, and with whom they readily amalgamated.

This beginning of the history of Brittany is the mythic period of which legend delights to tell its wondrous tales. The introduction of Christianity by British refugees from heathen hordes of English takes the place of the heroic epics of other races ; woven inextricably into the popular fibre, is religious sentiment and hatred of the English, who are still, as among the Celtic populations of our islands, the Saozons, the Saxons.

In the background of the epic is always the prodigal mystery of the sea ; over it the saints and civilizers came, and with it the life of the people has continually to do. The Channel presented no difficulties to the British evangelists, once the divine call came to them, though they did not always make the passage in such style as St. Lunaire. More often in frail barks of hide and wicker, on logs of wood, or miraculously floating slabs of stone, guarded and guided by white-winged angels, they found their way amid tossing waves and swirling tides to the work appointed them. It was St. Armel, if I remember right, who when he felt the missionary call took his stand upon a seaside rock, which forthwith floated off with him, and ran ashore on the opposite side of the Channel, where it has been a feature of the scenery ever since.

St. Armel always had a happy knack with rocks. He selected for his church some splendid building stone which at once began quarrying itself. With the best will in the world, however, it could not get to the

site chosen for the building. Difficulties never lasted long in those golden days ; a pair of beautiful little black and white oxen, harnessed to a dray, came up, and day after day, and all day long, unguided and ungoaded, they plied backwards and forwards between the quarry and the rising church. Unfortunately they had to pass the door of a graceless fellow named Piquet, who conceived what my informant called *l'idée déplorable* of converting them into beef. In spite of the disapproval of his wife, expressed with great force and spirit, he butchered one of them, and put the joints in brine in his larder.

Enter St. Armel.

'Where is my little ox ? '

'How should I know ? Am I your neatherd ? '

'You do know, and I know. It lies pickled in your larder. Bring it forth.'

Evasion being evidently useless, the misguided Piquet produced one fragment after another, and the martyred ox was reconstructed, piece by piece, at the waving of St. Armel's staff. When all the salt junk was metamorphosed, one bit of the animal was obviously missing. It was the choice morsel known to French housewives as *le gros bout ;* Anglicè, rump steak.

'Where is the *gros bout ?* ' said St. Armel sternly.

'Holy father, have mercy on me ! ' cried the unhappy man, throwing himself on his knees '—I have eaten it.'

'So much the worse for you,' said the terrible saint. 'My little ox shall not go lame for your gluttony.'

Whereupon Piquet was taken with violent vomiting, which continued till every mouthful of the misappropriated beast was restored. Under the magic waving of St. Armel's staff, the little ox was entirely reintegrated, and joining its yoke-fellow resumed work at the quarries as though nothing had happened. But Piquet was a confirmed invalid for the rest of his days.

Beyond St. Lunaire are the Golf Links, the seaward end of which is shown in Sketch 13: on the right is the island of Platier des Lardières, on the left the coastguard station of la Garde Guérin ; in the distance the spire of St. Cast breaks the long outline of the promontory to Cap Fréhel. The seductive pastime could hardly be pursued in more delightful surroundings : an undulating down, breaking into folds, hummocks and hollows, set with broom, gorse, bramble and wild rose, bathed in briny air from the sea, which stretches blue and foam-flecked below and beyond.

The tram terminates at St. Briac, named after another British saint, a large village most picturesquely situated on a deep, much indented inlet of the sea, sown with rocks and reefs. The native population of fisherfolk is largely augmented in summer by visitors who lodge with them or rent villas in the vicinity. The church was rebuilt in the eighteenth century by contributions from fishermen, who gave for its construction a tithe of their daily take. The devotion of seamen has also raised the Croix des Marins on an eminence overlooking the

bay. Unfortunately a large dolmen, some fragments of which form its pedestal, was destroyed to place it. It is said that the dolmen formed part of a long alignment that can be traced for a hundred miles from Cancale to Quiberon, one of those mysterious megalithic monuments that have put a girdle round half the earth, and the original idea of which theorists in such matters are beginning to surmise comes from old hushed Egypt and its sands.

A pleasant alternative to the tram in coming from Dinard to St. Briac is the coastguard footpath. Walkers are much indebted to these *chemins de ronde* that fringe the coast, running in and out, and up and down, its undulations and sinuosities, and affording delightful rambles. In this way we can continue from St. Briac to the little fishing village of Lancieux, passing the beach of la Chapelle, then the Petit Port, the Garde de Perron, opposite the islet of the same name; the Pointe de la Haye, where are the ruins of an old battery; the Roches Aiguës, the pretty beach of Port Hue, in the sands of which the trunks of trees from a submerged forest are sometimes turned up by the waves.

Farther on is St. Jacut de la Mer, one of the most charming *petits plages* of the region—a narrow promontory of dune, rock, and down jutting northward into the shallow sea, which quite deserts it at low tide. The old port indeed, at the eastern neck of the promontory, cannot be entered at the ebb of spring tides. This is

taken to indicate an elevation of this part of the coast, and here as elsewhere it will be seen the surmises of science are supported by the affirmations of legend, though the facts are differently accounted for. Another port more to seaward, known as the Petit Port, has been constructed in which the fishing boats find harbour during the summer. Just beyond this, tucked under the sandy down, is the little *plage*. Along the backbone of the promontory the village runs in one long street, first up and then down, and terminates at the parish church, a modern structure that replaced one much more ancient, known as Notre Dame de Lan Douar. The village is inhabited mainly by fishers of mackerel, locally called *macqueriaw;* and their families, sturdy, old-fashioned folk, rusted into ancient grooves, are butts in the folklore of the countryside for their simplicity. Though they have lived under the patronage of St. Jacut ever since he Christianized them fifteen centuries ago, they still invoke a great rock at the end of the promontory, known as St. Haouaouaw—a name not found in the Calendar—reverently baring their heads as they pass it, and chanting:

> 'Saint Haouaouaw,
> 'Donnez nous du maqueriaw.'

Beyond the church the road terminates at a gateway, crowned with masses of pink cluster roses, that gives entrance to the shady grounds and gardens of the old monastery, now the Pension de l'Abbaye. Under the trees in the courtyard, in a flower-bed in the midst of the grass, is a statue inscribed: 'St.

Jacut, fils de St. Fracan et de Ste. Gwen, frère de St. Gwethenoc, disciple de St. Budoc,' a connection that establishes St. Jacut's unquestioned claim to the veneration of Bretons. Among this intensely but narrowly patriotic people there is no ground for the cynical saying that a prophet is without honour in his own country. One may almost say that a saint is hardly honoured unless he be of the country, and that those who are most honoured are not known beyond its borders. The Latin saints favoured by ecclesiastical authorities have always been looked at askance as not knowing the ways and wants, or even the language, of Bretons. I doubt if the Blessed Virgin herself would be as universally honoured as she is, had it not been established that her mother, St. Anne, the patron saint of Brittany, was a Bretonne. This is clearly proved at a number of places having an unbroken record of her presence and of incidents in her life not generally known. It was little more than an accident that she was in Palestine when her highly favoured daughter was born.

No suspicion of Latin or Gallic origin rests upon St. Jacut; he is one of those unimpeachable saints who, resisting all temptations to belong to other nations, have, as claimed for him by the Abbé Gongaut in his biography, remained 'régioniste jusqu'à dans l'éternité, et qui s'écrit comme St. Gildas, *Bepred Breizad*, toujours Breton.'

His father was a Tiern Fracan, head of a British clan, who came to Armorica in the general migration across the Channel. His mother is better known as

St. Blanche, who is especially venerated at St. Cast. This sainted pair had twin sons, who devoted themselves to missionary work, and founded a monastery here.

This is, I believe, the authorized account, published with the official *nihil obstat* by a priest of the neighbourhood; but it is much too unadorned a tale for popular consumption. St. Jacut would never have attained the position he has held for centuries were this all that was to be said about him. Local legend—and the locality teems with legend—not content with his being one of twins, makes him one of seven that were born to a queen in Ireland at one birth. The following, I gathered, were the facts of the case. The queen, alarmed at this sudden increase in the family, ordered the nurse to drown all the seven. The woman, not daring to disobey, put them in a basket and was proceeding to the sea, when she was met by the king. Cries that came from the basket attracted his attention, and he asked what she was about. Bursting into tears, she fell at his feet and made full confession. The king took the children, but charged her to let the queen believe that her unnatural order had been carried out.

Under their father's care the boys increased in wisdom and stature, were trained in all manly exercises, and turned out as goodly youths as you could wish to see. When the time came to give them the position that was their due, he brought them to the queen and asked if she had ever seen them before.

'Never,' she said; 'yet the sight of them strangely troubles me.'

'I should think it did,' said the king, 'and it should trouble you more if you did not see them.' I repeat his words as they were told me: it must be remembered he was an Irish king.

He then told her who they were, and the remorse that she had never ceased to feel was changed to joy and shame.

The seven youths all became saints. Six of them—Gorgon, Congart, Maude, Gravé, Dolay, Perreuc—left the court and wandered over the earth evangelizing the heathen. Jacut remained at home as heir to the throne, and in due course, much against his will, was married. He had little to say to his wife, and the neglected woman took to amusing herself in ways that were a scandal to the court. One day he took her for a walk to a certain spring.

'Common rumour,' he said, 'accuses you of things that I cannot bring myself to mention. The only proof I ask of your innocence is that you should put your hands in this water.'

The wretched woman readily plunged them in, but immediately drew them out again, shrieking with agony. Of course no further proof of guilt was needed. Jacut told her that thenceforth he would flee her presence as mortal sin. Changing his courtly garb for the clothes of a fisherman, he got, all alone, into the first boat he saw, and hoisted sail to go where the winds of heaven might take him. In time he arrived at Lan Douar, the present St. Jacut, then an island inhabited by rough heathen fishermen, and asked the first man he saw for food and shelter. The

man, who supposed him to be a fisherman like himself, took him to his home, where he abode some days, inculcating the elements of Christian faith. Then he thought he would withdraw awhile and leave the seed to germinate. In departing he thanked his host, who was just going a fishing, and touching a net upon his shoulder, said, 'Catch plenty of fish.' It was all the good hearted fellow could do to suppress his annoyance at the inept remark, for every one ought to know that the worst turn you can do a fisherman is to wish him good luck; it is enough to send all the fish of the sea away from his net. But he need not have been anxious. Not only that day but every day, he had abundant takes, and always in the net that the strange seafarer had touched. What was even more marvellous was that it never needed mending. Often he wished that his benefactor would return, that he might thank him; meanwhile he pondered on his teaching. Gradually he became convinced that he was no common fisher like himself, but a man sent from God. When at length the stranger reappeared he fell on his knees before him. St. Jacut, raising him up, asked after his welfare, and told him that he had come to preach the Gospel to the people of the island. The good man, who knew his neighbours, besought him not to risk his life in any such mad enterprise; but the saint, of course, was not to be dissuaded. He was soon driven from the village to the shore of the island, and there hemmed in between the hungry sea and an angry mob. Lifting up his hands to heaven, he asked for a way of escape. Suddenly—and this is where

authentic legend confirms geological guesswork—the blue water in front of him was broken by a white line of surf, and a narrow pathway rose above the surface, on which he passed from the island to the mainland. His astonished persecutors fell on their knees and besought him to return, and to leave them this convenient means of going to and fro.

'While the earth remains,' said St. Jacut, stretching his hand over the new-born isthmus, 'this shall be part of it.'

Then he came and dwelt in all safety among them till his death, by which time the whole community were converted. Among other blessings conferred on the population, he is said to have invented the manufacture of cider, which alone is enough to give him high place in the veneration of Bretons.

In after times the monastery became Benedictine. It was abolished at the Revolution, and fell to ruin; some of the buildings now form part of the Pension. By a strange reversion to the land whence St. Jacut came, the exiled fathers now have their home at Farnborough, where, I believe, all archives of the monastery of St. Jacut de la Mer that survive are preserved. Yet St. Jacut is still not without honour in his ancient domain. On the Fête Dieu and other festivals at which the Procession de Paroisse is formed, a *reposoir*, or wayside oratory, embowered in foliage and flowers, is raised in the garden, the grey walls are decked, the paths are strewn with flowers and rushes. The procession of the whole parish, after perambulating the village, goes round the grounds of the old monas-

tery with swaying censors and chanted litany, and finally mass themselves before the altar. The priest mounts the steps, the *Tantum ergo Sacramentum* is sung, and the Benediction pronounced ; the procession re-forms and, chanting the *Adoremus in æternum*, goes round the courtyard to the church. Here, as in other villages of the coast, a feature of the procession is a band of little boys in sailor costume who carry a miniature ship, correct in spars and rigging to the smallest detail.

As might be expected from his antecedents, St. Jacut is the special patron of those who occupy their business on the waters. In the old days, it is said, a Jaquin in peril on the sea had but to invoke St. Jacut with full assurance of faith, and the white luminous form of the saint floated to him through the storm, took his stand at the prow of the boat, and piloted it safe to land, but I understand that through the spread of revolutionary ideas, and the falling into desuetude of old customs, conditions are so changed that his aid cannot now be counted on as implicitly as formerly.

To the west of St. Jacut is the estuary of the little river Arguenon. Among trees on its eastern shore stand the shattered towers and gables of the castle of Guildo, once one of the strongest fortresses in Brittany. The unfortunate Gilles de Brétagne was here treacherously arrested by order of his brother, Francis II, carried about from prison to prison, and at length starved to death. It is said that the ruins are still

haunted at night by his wife, the beautiful Francoise de Dinan. She sits awhile weeping at the foot of the tower by the sea, then goes slowly up the shore and bending over the village laundry stones, washes her husband's shroud.

Not so ancient as the castle of Guildo, but old and picturesque, is the castle of Mannoury, a little farther on, standing among trees on the steep terraced cliff that dominates the village of Guildo. The bridge that crosses the river here is of comparatively modern construction. On September 1758 the land forces of the mismanaged English expedition that was to meet with disaster at St. Cast crossed the estuary at low tide. Peasants firing from behind houses and hedges harassed the operation, and Guildo was burnt in reprisal.

A little below the bridge on the left bank of the estuary are the Pierres Sonnantes, a group of water-worn blocks of granite that on being struck give a metallic ring. It is said that they were formerly much more resonant than now; in fact, tradition has it that the monks of the abbey, the ruins of which stand near by, struck them instead of bells as summons to the offices. The spot, recessed under a low wooded cliff is very picturesque; by a little creek on the opposite shore stands the castle of Guildo, worn and ivy-clad.

Soon after crossing the Arguenon we come to Notre Dame de Guildo, with a new church surrounded by old elms. The country now becomes more interesting, the trees are larger and freer, the cottages more

picturesque, the road more often dips down into *chemins creux*, or threads shady avenues ; we are, in fact, coming to St. Cast, one of the most charming watering places in one of the loveliest neighbourhoods of the Côte d'Emeraude.

The bay of St. Cast is formed by two projecting bluffs, known as l'Isle and la Garde. Between these, curves a broad shore of firm, clean, yellow sand, some two miles in length ; grassy dunes are scattered casually behind it, broken in the centre by the beautiful wood of Vieuxville, which descends from the plateau to the beach ; elsewhere they are backed by steep, green slopes. On the edge of the plateau the tall spire of the church of St. Cast rises in the centre ; on the right is the village of l'Isle, on the left that of la Garde. On a spur of the plateau, covered with gorse, bracken and bramble, a massive granite column surmounted by a greyhound standing on a prostrate leopard, and inscribed with the Breton device, 'Potius mori quam fœdari,' commemorates the defeat of the English on 11 September, 1758.

Through that judicious editing of history which every nation unconsciously practises, the name of St. Cast has almost dropped out of our annals, but a century and a half ago it loomed large in the public eye on both sides of the Channel. Unimportant though the event may appear in its military aspect, it marked a certain turn of tide, and in its appeal to sentiment on either side seemed pregnant with significance.

In 1757 Pitt had initiated a system of elaborate coastal raids, which it was thought would break the spirit, and sap the resources of France. The French navy had been so shattered in the battle off Cape la Hogue that English squadrons could go where they liked between the two coasts, provided they were strong enough to be free from the desperate onslaught of the little bands of privateers who alone kept the French flag flying in the narrow seas. The first expedition was directed against St. Malo, whose privateers levied such a heavy toll on English shipping. The Corsair City, almost enisled on its granite rock, fortified to the water's edge, and protected by an elaborate fringe of reefs and islets, had defied attack, but a vast amount of its shipping and marine stores had been destroyed at St. Servan. A descent had been made at Cherbourg, Cæsar's town in the patriotic etymology of the day, whence the great Roman had sailed for the conquest of Britain. The town, seated on the northern edge of the Cotentin, which juts into the Channel as though to menace the opposite coast, had been recently elaborately fortified as 'a sword to pierce the shield of England.' The scarce completed fortifications were destroyed, and a rich prize of flags and guns brought back to England, where the most extravagant expectations were aroused. The captured guns were displayed in Hyde Park, and drawn thence in triumph to the Tower amid the delirious enthusiasm of the populace. The ease with which the successes had been obtained, the occupation of the French army on the eastern frontier of the

kingdom, and the absence of all popular resistance, made the conquest of France seem in sight. The flower of the English army was embarked for a still more elaborate expedition under Lord Howe. Lord Bligh, who commanded the land forces, had under him the most distinguished names, including that of Prince Edward, Duke of York, and grandson to George II, whom the soldier king especially commended to his charge. From the beginning the conduct of the grandiose expedition was marked by incapacity and irresolution. The troops were landed at Garde-Guerin, between St. Lunaire and St. Briac, and pitched their first camp on the pleasant downs where now Frenchmen encounter Englishmen in the bloodless contests of singles and foursomes. Apparently the idea was to make some attempt on the impregnable St. Malo, though the broad estuary of the Rance, across which the guns of that day could do little execution, lay between. Howe, not feeling his anchorage safe, sailed to the bay of St. Cast. Bligh, apparently unwilling to re-embark without doing something and not knowing what to do, marched round by land, pillaging and massacring as he went. Tidings having reached him that the Duc d'Aguillon was advancing with forces greatly outnumbering his own, he decided on embarkation. It was proposed to him to effect it on an open beach between Guildo and St. Cast, where any attempt to hinder the operation would be exposed to the fire of the fleet ; but for some inexplicable reason he determined to proceed to St. Cast, where the wood and sandhills would afford

the enemy abundant cover, and where the inhabitants, warned by the proximity of the fleet, had raised an entrenchment to impede the invaders' movements. At Matignon he met and dispersed two companies of regular troops. Embarkation might easily have been effected that evening, but with blind security was put off till next day. So incomprehensible were the English movements that the French, who had hurried up by a forced night march, thought that some surprise was being prepared. 'At five o'clock in the morning,' says a contemporary English account, 'our drums informed them of our proceedings by beating the *réveille*, as though the country belonged to us.' So leisurely were the movements that though only three miles had to be covered it was nine o'clock before the first battalion reached the shore. Even then they might have been got on board, had the sloops and cutters of the squadron been employed to embark them, but they were taken off in driblets by the davit-boats of the ships they were assigned to, and time thus given to the enemy to establish ten guns and eight mortars on a shoreside eminence, whence they directed a murderous fire on the men huddled on the beach or in the boats.

Meanwhile the main body of the French, who, with the view of having as much cover as possible, had been brought through the wood, and along a narrow sunken road, arrived on the scene. General Drury, who was in command of the English troops still left on shore, consisting of the Grenadiers and Footguards, was urged to take them on to a rock on his left and there

await attack, which would be harassed by the guns of the fleet; but he insisted on himself attacking, and with the incredible dilatoriness which marked all the English movements on that fatal day, deferred doing so till the enemy had deployed from the road, and formed their ranks in the open. Then he led his men out of their hurriedly made entrenchments, and drew them up, as sheep for the slaughter, in front of overwhelming numbers of the enemy, who were exasperated by long exposure to the fire of the fleet, and exultant that the foe was at last delivered into their hand. Then followed a great butchery of our people, who broke from their ranks in disordered panic, the French behind them and among them with the bayonet. Many rushed into the sea, and were drowned or were shot from the shore. A small body gained the rock on which the whole detachment might possibly have made a successful stand, and held their ground obstinately, repulsing all assaults until the failure of their ammunition compelled them to surrender at discretion. Invaders and defenders were now so inextricably mixed that the fire of the ships ceased perforce, and it is to the credit of the French that as soon as it was definitely discontinued they desisted from slaughter. English accounts are unanimous in testifying to their clemency and their kindness to the wounded, as soon as the cessation of fire assured them they had gained their end. The Duc d'Aguillon sent off to the English admiral a list of the prisoners, which included three post-captains, with the assurance that the wounded would receive all the care and atten-

tion possible. Accounts differ as to the English loss. Smollett puts it down at a thousand killed and captured, French writers at from three to five thousand. The French killed and wounded amounted to between two and three hundred, but to both sides the import of the event was not to be measured by statistics.

The news of the disaster, following close on the inordinate hopes raised by the capture of Cherbourg, was received in England with a passion of grief and indignation; the troops routed were, in Smollett's words, 'the élite of the English army,' the sands and waters of St. Cast were dyed, as Horace Walpole phrased it, with 'the purplest blood of England.' The incapacity of the command was denounced in parliament and in the press, and there were loud demands that the honour of England should be retrieved, but this had no popular backing. The Breton peasants had done their work; a sense of the risks, and of the futility, of such expeditions sank deep into the heart of the nation. For more than half a century there was to be little but war between France and England, but there were no more English descents upon the coast of France.

In proportion to the depression on one side of the Channel was the elation on the other. France had suffered a long series of humiliations in Europe, Asia, and America. The raids on the coast had produced a feeling that she was not safe even at home. Nor was this all. The spirit of the nation had seemed cowed. The English landing in Normandy had met with no

resistance on the part of the people. It is the just pride of Brittany that she initiated a change. Though without the stiffening of regular troops and professional leading, the popular resistance would probably have been ineffective, yet it was this resistance that appealed to the national imagination and gave peculiar lustre to the event. In contrast to the tame submission of the neighbouring and traditionally rival province of Normandy, all Brittany had risen against the invader. The tocsin had sounded from the tower of every little Breton church, bourgeoisy and peasants had turned out *en masse*, under the leadership of the local gentry. It was even claimed that without them the success would have been partial, that the impetuous ardour of the local levies and their commanders had at critical moments forced the hand of the Duc d'Aguillon when his undue caution would have let the prize slip from his grasp.

Therefore it is, that while in the long roll of the glories of France this destruction of an ineptly led rearguard is but a little thing, St. Cast holds a peculiar place in the pride and affection of Bretons. As a local writer with pardonable exaggeration remarked when the monument was inaugurated in 1858, 'It is well that France should have this memorial of what she owes to an often neglected fragment of her people, but Brittany needs no granite column, no bronze or sculptured marble, to commemorate the victory of St. Cast. The best memorial of that brilliant feat of arms is its simple and characteristic setting, which happily is hardly changed—the dilapidated castle, the

windmills of Anne and of the oak, the little burgh, the village of l'Isle.'

St. Cast to-day cannot boast of its unchanged aspect. The dunes that were the scene of that fierce conflict and slaughter are now covered with hotels and villas; the sands that were dyed with English blood are crowded every summer with bathers and holiday-makers; French and English are mingled in happy abandon in the water and on the beach, with the granite column that commemorates their old warfare looming grimly above. All this has grown up within the last quarter of a century, and of course the spot still has the casual air of a nascent watering place where, to use an historic French phrase, there is nothing permanent but the provisional. In 1886 the artist Marinier was struck with the potentialities as a watering place afforded by the long, broad beach of sand, the ancient wood, and the sylvan charm of the country behind. Without forming a regular company, he and his friends bought the promontory known as the Pointe de la Garde. The example was quickly followed. Two groups of buildings sprang up at the opposite extremities of the beach: one below the old fishing village of l'Isle, stretching to the dunes that descend from St. Cast; the other below the village of la Garde. Marinier himself built an hotel at the latter place, and painted the panels of its long dining-room with clever sketches of the neighbourhood. The tennis courts

are charmingly situated in a glade of the beautiful forest of Vieuxville.

Between the villages of St. Cast and la Garde the tower of the windmill of Anne still stands. It is known as the windmill of the Duc d'Aguillon, for here the French commander stationed himself during the battle. He doubtless controlled it thence as effectively as Edward III ruled a more fateful tide of war from the windmill of Crecy; but Breton chroniclers, who in their desire to monopolise all the glory of the day for the local leaders and their forces, have always decried the regular commander, speak sarcastically of his snug position, and it is a classic joke in the neighbourhood that in lieu of covering himself with glory he was covered with flour.

One of the pleasantest excursions in the charming country behind St. Cast is to Cap Fréhel, the grandest and most solemn piece of scenery in the Côte d'Emeraude. We first go to Matignon, and then descend to the bay of la Frênaie. At Port à la Duc, where the beautiful poplar-bordered valley that a little stream has eaten out of the plateau becomes an estuary, there is a choice of roads, one of which can be taken going, the other returning. If possible, that to the right, which runs between the steep side of the plateau and the sea, should be taken at high tide; it is by far the most picturesque, though it involves a stiff hill at the farther end. By either route we come to the village of Plévenon, lying in a pleasant country,

bleak and wind-swept, but in sheltered nooks farm-houses embowered in roses, and fig trees the size of respectable oaks, show the moderating influence of the neighbouring sea. Here and there are patches of common, the presence of which is also attested by the flocks of geese that court death on the road. Were the land treated from a capitalist point of view, it would probably be mostly common; it is where cultivation is carried on under unfavourable conditions of soil or climate that we see the advantage to a country of small proprietorship; statistics show the average yield per acre in France lower than in England, and we are apt to pride ourselves on our superior farming, forgetting that when all the hands of the family, and all the hours of daylight, are available for labour, soils can be made to pay that would be let alone by the employer of hired hands.

Soon after Plévenon we pass through a desolate, sodden land, which even the small proprietor has had to let alone—gorse, heather, and bracken, dwarfed by bog and matted by wind, water lying in black pools where peat has been cut out for fuel—and arrive at the lighthouse that stands on the edge of Cap Fréhel, a most beautiful spot, with a character of strange tranquillity in spite of the restless sea and the shattered land. The huge walls, buttresses, and terraces of cliff, built of innumerable thin and almost horizontal strata of red rock, enamelled with grey and golden lichen, have the air of massive solemnity, of lordly neglect and repose, of a Roman ruin on a stupendous scale. The sea breaks against their feet or lies in

cyanine depths under their lee, sea-birds perch along the ledges, wheel in the air, or rock upon the waters. The scene is especially impressive at sunset when to a ruin's tender grace of a day that is dead is added the splendour of a day that is dying. In one place a great isolated mass rises from the sea like a tower ; a long ragged promontory stretches east with the picturesque old walls and towers of Fort la Latte on its almost insulated end ; to seaward a triangular mass of rock, rising above the waves like the prow of a titanic stranded ship, is the only break in the picture of ancient repose.

A pleasant walk along the edge of the cliff leads to Fort la Latte, passing a profound, narrow fissure, running for over half a mile into the land, known as the *trou de l'enfer*, from the belief that the groans and sobs of tortured souls in hell ascended from it. The fort is strikingly situated on the point of the promontory, cut off from the neighbouring land by two huge chasms, which are now spanned by bridges. The first fortress here, known as the castle of Roche Goyon, was built in 937 by a lord of Goyon-Matignon. In 1689 it was acquired by Louis XIV, who enlarged and modernized it under its present name. It is now the property of the Duc de Feltre, a descendant of the Goyon family.

The fortress, which was deemed impregnable under seventeenth century conditions of warfare, was stormed during the Hundred Days by a band of royalists, and shortly afterwards retaken by a battalion of marines under General Favre. The keep, a circular tower of two storeys with conical roof, is perched on a mass of

rock that rises in the centre of the fortress, high above the enclosing wall and towers. Beside one of the towers is an old statue of St. Hubert, reputed to have peculiar efficacy in cases of canine madness. This is said to be so well known to all whom it may concern in the neighbourhood that dogs afflicted with rabies rush howling to the spot, and whine and whimper round the statue till they are restored to sanity. We regain the road at a tall upright blade of granite, known as the Doigt de Gargantua.

Cap Fréhel is usually taken as the western limit of the Côte d'Emeraude, but from St. Cast there is a better opportunity than from anywhere else within its imaginary boundaries of making excursions into *la vraie Bretagne Bretonnante*, and seeing types of old customs, costumes, and character that railways and education will hardly allow to exist much longer. Of course the boundaries of *la Bretagne Bretonnante* are also merely conventional, and are daily shrinking before the peaceful penetration of the engineer, the schoolmaster, and the tourist ; but there will long remain corners where the people keep the ply that the race took before the mass of it, in more accessible regions, was Latinized by the Romans and feudalized by the Franks, and where one is reminded of the less Anglicized patches of population on our own coasts and mountains. Superficially there can be no greater contrast than between these stern, taciturn Breton folk and the Scotch gilly, the Welsh revivalist, the Irishman at

Donnybrook Fair or Tammany Hall, yet there is something common to them all that broadly differentiates them almost as much from their Norman and Gallic neighbours on the continent as from the Anglo-Saxon intruder in the great islands of which they have been dispossessed.

It must be admitted that when we compare the Breton with, say, our compatriot at Donnybrook, the psychic base is very much overlaid. Far from flourishing his shillelagh, and inviting the bystanders to tread on the tail of his coat, the Breton through all his history has endeavoured to wrap himself in the isolation of his native mists—spiritual, social, political—has been nervously anxious that his metaphorical coat should have no obvious tail that might involve contact and complication.

Yet, as in the ancient fable, the garment that has been only wrapped closer against the buffeting storm is gradually being laid aside under more genial influences, and soon the realm of the Celt will be not in land or in language but in the thought and nature of the peoples that have absorbed and effaced them. This gives a peculiar and pathetic interest to the *disjecta membra* of the race that are scattered along the last, storm lashed edge of the old world. Trodden down by hungry generations from the east, pent between the invader and the deep sea, we find them everywhere a vanquished and a vanishing race, which yet in disappearing has done its highest work, and in defeat has won its greatest triumphs. Ever as, one by one, they have been blotted out of the book of the

nations, they have entered into and possessed a spiritual hinterland. Whatever conqueror may have laid his head in the bosom of the Celt has always after been haunted by the gleam of their insight and the whisper of their witchery. These are everywhere in English literature, they touch our thought and temper with a hundred anomalous traits, they permeate our national and social life. Lord Morley has said that but for contact with the Celt the English would never have produced a Shakespeare; perhaps he might have added that they would never have produced a Turner; certainly they would never have had a Lloyd George, and for better for worse, would have been quite other than they are.

In all French and English literature, no matter how Gallic or Anglo-Saxon it may be in theme and purpose, there is always the Celtic undertone, subtle, elusive, not to be defined by analysis, nor sampled in elegant extracts. It speaks in innumerable tongues of converse, debate, poesy, romance; all, once they cease to be self-conscious, lapse into the ancient accent that was learnt on nurses' knees. The Celtic admixture is not perhaps an unmixed benefit. It makes our national thought and character hybrid, it makes us emotional and prone to extremes, but it does us many a good turn. Matthew Arnold thinks, for instance, that it is ever trying to rescue us—not always with conspicuous success—from our Teutonic tendency to platitude. It is very hard for us to keep out of this, but at any rate we have the saving grace to be bored by other people's platitudes,

and a little shy with our own. Compare, for example, the halting, jejune sentences meted out in a Speech from the Throne with the pomp of verbiage unwithstood poured forth in a ministerial statement in the Reichstag, or the magnificent floodtide of the obvious that sweeps over ninety millions of appreciative citizens in a Presidential Message across the Atlantic, where the Celtic caveat appears to have lost its force.

IV

MONCONTOUR

The estimable 'Guide Joanne,' with its usual desire to keep its clients up to the mark, observes: 'Assister à un ou deux pardons est le supplément indispensable d'un voyage en Bretagne'; whereupon it gives a list of several hundred Pardons with their localities and dates. These are nearly all in Lower Brittany, which has always been the stronghold of provincial feeling and custom. There the old ideas and ways still hold their ground with a tenacity that is remarkable, considering the tendencies to which unimpeded intercourse with the rest of the world exposes them. In spite of the three R's, and of an even more potent fourth that stands for Railways, Lower Brittany has up to now remained sequestered from the rest of France by no physical or political barrier, but by temper of mind. No doubt this last bulwark is being gradually breached and sapped. It has defied all open assault from friend and foe, but has now to reckon with a subtler attack. The appreciative 'Guide Joanne' and its like are more formidable enemies than any scoffing pamphlet. The religious festivals of Brittany have become attractive not only to the simple peasants and fisherfolk, in whose bones and blood belief has been bred by

centuries of peculiar life, but to the sightseers of all the world. Railway companies run excursion trains to them that unload mixed multitudes of faithful and faithless ; millionaires take them in the course of a motor tour ; cinematographs lie in wait for devout processions and sacred rites, and blazon them round the world ; kodaks snapshot simple votaries kissing relics, or going round shrines on their knees, and postcards that stereotype their naive devotion stare at them from every shop-window of their little town, and thence are distributed over the earth. The old rustic gatherings round some venerated fragment of rag or bone have become sources of profit that the shrewd burgers and peasants are not slow to exploit. In the anxiety to have a share in the spoil, little local festivals have been elaborated into and advertised as Pardons, and every year sees the list grow larger.

Pardons are one of the kindly compromises with the world, the flesh, and the devil, by which Catholicism maintains its homely hold on human nature. Originally, no doubt, they were purely religious : the fame of the miraculous potency of some sacred relic spread beyond its local sanctuary, pilgrims flocked to its festival, they had to be lodged and fed, in the reaction from spiritual tension they did not disdain to be amused, many were drawn by these mundane attractions alone, or by the profit to be reaped in supplying them : so, the world over, the word festival has a double meaning. The line between the spiritual and the secular was not very

rigidly drawn in the good old days, and was easily overstepped from either side. Religion was too robust a thing to need keeping in a glass case: the church and the world jogged on, arm in arm and cheek by jowl, with the neighbourly tolerance and reticence of those who, week days and holy days, have to live together, and must not expect too much of each other. There is always a material strain in Celtic other-worldliness, as in the very Irish paradise described in an old legend of the Emerald Isle: 'Admirable is that land: there are three trees there, always bearing fruit; one pig always alive, and another ready cooked.'

Almost the only Pardon that can be claimed to come within the limits of the Côte d'Emeraude is that of St. Mathurin, which is celebrated at Moncontour every Whitsuntide, though at the rate Pardons are multiplying, there is no saying that before this book appears, one may not have been provided for the summer season within an afternoon's stroll from Dinard. Any one who happens to be within reach of Moncontour at Whitsuntide will do well to spend a few days there, and see a gathering such as cannot be expected to remain much longer what it is in tone and character, no matter how faithfully traditional procedure may be adhered to.

From Dinard to Moncontour is a pleasant ride by Ploubalaye, Plancoët and Lamballe. At Plancoët we may leave the Route Nationale and, after passing through Pléven, visit the imposing and picturesque ruins of the castle of Hunadaye, built by Pierre de

Tournemine in the fourteenth century. The four huge towers and massive walls of the keep are a magnificent example of a feudal fastness. Sculptured stone in the interior shows that it was elaborately refitted at the time of the Renascence. It is now overgrown with ivy and bramble, oak saplings crown its towers and fringe its ledges, a group of lofty ash trees wave above the court, the moat is dry and grass-grown, or choked with swamp and rushes.

After this we have a choice of three routes, all passing through the forest of Hunadaye, then through an elevated, bare, exhilarating country, and finally converging at la Poterie, a little village engaged in making coarse crockery. Soon after leaving it, a lovely picture opens before us of the wooded hill of St. Sauveur, with the little town of Lamballe spread on its slope and at its foot, and the square tower and lofty gables of the church of Notre Dame on its precipitous southern edge. The old church with its deeply moulded doorways, the massive transition pillars of its nave, the soaring gothic arches and tall flamboyant window of old stained glass of its choir, its many gables without and chapels within, is well worth examining. In the south transept is a beautiful organ-loft in carved wood; unfortunately a fine gothic arch has been mutilated for its insertion. North and south of the church, the top of the hill has been laid out in shady walks. Scattered about in the charming little town, especially in the Rue Basse, are many picturesque old houses.

Ten miles south of Lamballe, we come to the

picturesque and beautifully situated little town of Moncontour. Its strong strategic position on a steep-sided spur of hill that projects from the plateau into the plain, between two deep converging valleys, guarding the way from St. Brieuc to Rennes, and from St. Malo to Pontivy, must from very early times have made it a place of importance. Since the eleventh century at any rate, when it first appears in history, it has had its full share in the sorry tale of Brittany.

For the constant wars reduced the country to a sad state. The contending parties did not scruple to call in outside aid; foreign soldiers scoured the land, and lived on the miserable inhabitants. The standard of hostilities was of the lowest; neither honour, nor plighted faith, nor the traditions of chivalrous warfare, were observed. Always in straits for money, the nobles wrung what they could out of the wretched people in imposts and exactions of the most onerous kind. The frequent mention of famine and pestilence throws a sinister light on the condition of the mass of the population. History tells us of the fortunes of the leaders, of battles, sieges, and incessant transfer of territory, but it is only incidentally that we hear of the wretched people who, by conquest or treaty, were continually changing masters, taxed by their own side, and plundered by the other. No man could count on reaping what he had sown, or driving back his cattle to the byre, or his sheep to the pen. The rise of a bourgeoisy, and the growing independence of the towns, of which we have a good miniature

example in the annals of Moncontour, is the one bright thread in the squalid patchwork of medieval Breton history. Out of the ruins of feudalism a stabler and saner order was being built up.

In 1620 the estates of Brittany, at the instigation of Richelieu, demanded the dismantlement of Moncontour, but this was only partially carried out: the vaulting and barbican of the principal gate of the town were demolished, the battlements of the walls and of four towers removed, but the great keep remained intact, its roof and upper story were not removed till last century. Now, filled up with earth, it forms the peaceful garden of the Sœurs de la Providence, and is the most salient and picturesque feature of the city. From the lower garden, which is also terraced on a fortification of the old keep, you mount by the class-rooms, where some two hundred girls are learning lessons, and being taught needle and household work; then a spiral staircase winds up the corner tower, and leads you into a lofty garden overlooking the town that the keep once dominated and protected. Beneath your feet lie the ancient halls of the Beaumanoirs and Penthièvres.

St. Mathurin, the patron of Moncontour for the last thousand years, had, so far as I know, nothing to do with the neighbourhood in life. He was a native of Larchant, brought up a pagan, but converted to Christianity when about twenty; he converted his father and mother, and devoted himself to spreading the Gospel. The fame of his eloquence and of the miracles he wrought reached the ears of the Roman

Emperor, whose daughter was grievously ill. The father desired St. Mathurin to come and heal her. This he did, and afterwards on one pretext or another was detained in Rome till he died. He had told the Emperor he would return alive or dead, and his spirit haunted him night and day, demanding that his body should be sent home. At length it was taken out of its Roman grave, and conducted with great pomp and honour to his beloved Larchant.

There is little in this to account for the veneration in which he has been held. The lives of the saints are often commonplace, sometimes ludicrous and not very edifying. The compilers have conscientiously chronicled all that they could of their deeds and words; what they could not chronicle was that which differentiated the saint from common men, the personal force, grace, magnetism, the loveliness or loftiness of soul, that laid a spell on their generation. The incredible, often grotesque and meaningless, miracles with which they are credited represent this element of wonder in their lives, are a way of accounting for the influence they exercised and the reputation they left; their real record is in human documents, in the impression renewed from soul to soul, in lives quickened, elevated, purified, from their day to this.

In the ninth century, when the Breton relics were brought home after the cessation of the Norman persecutions, a small fragment of St. Mathurin's frontal bone was taken to Moncontour, where it at once acquired a great reputation for miraculous healing.

Imbedded in the forehead of a silver bust of the saint, it constitutes the great treasure of the place, and yearly attracts crowds of pilgrims on his festival. These nearly all come from Lower Brittany: all through Saturday they swarm in, some by train, but mostly in carts, on horseback, on bicycles, and on foot. The days of making the pilgrimage with lighted tapers, barefoot, and in shirts, are past. As soon as they arrive they betake themselves to the church, ring a stroke on the bell, kiss the sacred piece of bone, and make their offerings. In addition to the coins put into the box near the bust, many of them *s'arrentent*, that is undertake to pay a certain sum for several years. Some go round the church on their knees; it is recorded in the archives of the town that in 1613, with the view of alleviating the sufferings of the pilgrims who went round the church on their bare knees, a track *en pierre verte* was made.

In the evening there is a sermon in Breton, which is solely for the benefit of the pilgrims, for within recorded times Breton has never been the language of Moncontour. On the occasion that I was there the preacher gave the impression that he himself was not very much at home in it. As darkness approaches the whole town is illuminated, cords decked with flags and foliage, and hung with lanterns, have been stretched ready across the streets, every house has its rows of little lamps on the window sills, and a few coloured lanterns suspended, some have more ambitious decoration. About nine o'clock the procession forms in the Place de Penthièvre in front

of the church. The Bas-Bretons contend keenly for the honour of bearing the silver bust, which, preceded by the Cross, and surrounded with tall tapers and lanterns fixed on poles, is escorted by a band of whiterobed priests chanting the litany of the saint. The chant is taken up by some two thousand persons, men, women and children, who follow, bearing tapers and banners. Persons too old or too ill to join kneel at the lighted windows, or watch from chairs and couches; babies are taken from their beds and held up. The long procession winds slowly through the upper part of the town and then outside to the Champ de Foire, a broad elevated plateau planted with spreading beech trees. A large stack of dry gorse that has been raised in its centre is fired. The quick, fierce flames leap, quiver, wrap round and penetrate the pile, rise high into the air, lighting up the ardent faces of the vast, silent crowd, awed and rapt by the suggestion of that gleaming face and soaring fire. The worship of great souls and elemental forces is older than any creed; perhaps for ages before the Birth at Bethlehem, the ancestors of these people had gathered on this spot and lit a sacred fire, and Christianity, with the large humanity of its early missionaries, did but adopt a custom too deep rooted and hallowed to be lightly discarded.

The flames die down to a heap of glowing ashes, the procession reforms, raises again its long-drawn, moaning chant, and winds down by another road to the church. There and in the taverns, the Bas-Bretons spend the night till the great bell tolls for

the Mass that is celebrated for them at three o'clock in the church. By the morning hardly one of them is left, and the festival becomes a local gathering for the town and countryside.

All the Bas-Bretons, men and women, are in costume ; of people of the neighbourhood only the women wear it, and unfortunately not all of them. The contrast between the old style and the new, especially in the case of children, is regrettable. The delicate white coiffure is singularly becoming to the dark, shy, mobile faces characteristic of the people here, which, on the other hand, in broad brims, big, bedizened crowns, and other finery of modern feminine headgear, look like a hare in a rabbit hutch.

It is distressing to see the forms of modern fashion that commend themselves to peasant taste, contrasted in the procession with the neat, sombre Breton costume : a square bodice of silk or muslin, a cross or a heart as a brooch with a long chain, a short pocketed apron, a fringed shawl hanging down behind, fastened by a large clasp at the back of the neck, and by a half waistband pinned on in front. The white headgear varies immensely, but is always charming, and is usually retained even when the rest of the costume is discarded.

On Sunday afternoon the silver bust is carried in procession with chanted litanies through all the streets of the town. Then iron stanchions are driven in between the stone sets of the square, a cord stretched round them, and within the enclosure thus formed the schoolboys engage in various comic contests,

amid a sympathetic and enthusiastic crowd of relatives and friends. When this is over, scaffolding is erected on which, as soon as it is dark enough, fireworks are let off.

The Place de Penthièvre is reserved for official merrymaking, but in the several open spaces of the town, booths have been set up in which various wares, drinks, delicacies and diversions are purveyed; hawkers vend miscellaneous attractions about the streets, jugglers spread their mats amid clusters of wondering children, all bawl their offers of bargains or entertainment; merry-go-rounds whirl in mad career to the accompaniment of strident automatic strains, rifles crack in miniature ranges, varieties of vocal and instrumental music, each entirely independent of the rest, contribute to the general din. It is notable how, when any ecclesiastical procession comes in sight, the hubbub instantaneously ceases, and a way is opened for it as by magic, between bared heads and reverent faces. The neighbourly partnership of the church and the world is still complete.

On Monday by ancient custom there are Breton dances and music on the Esplanade, a vast turfed and levelled space in front of the Château des Granges, the beautiful park and gardens of which are thrown open by the owner, Monsieur de Belizal, for the occasion. It is about a mile from the town by a pleasant footpath through fields and woods, or by the road, the last windings of which can be cut off by taking one of the loveliest *chemins creux* in Brittany. Early in the afternoon crowds begin to

gather from all the country round, coming in parties grouped by neighbourhood or social solidarity, or in pairs, *chacun avec sa chacune*, he carrying her umbrella, which through all the dance he dutifully bears as token of his lady's favour. Soldiers in various uniforms, sailors in the free-and-easy attire that is as convenient for dancing as for going aloft, or over the side, give variety to the crowd of fleecy, fluttering head-dresses. When about half-past two the great bell of the church booms the announcement that vespers are over—for the Breton in his merriest mood gives respectful precedence to the church—the fun commences. The little band marches up, drums beating and *binious* squealing, and takes its post on a small platform in the centre of the Esplanade screened with green boughs. Hidden in this sylvan bower, it strikes up inviting strains for *la ronde* or *la dérobée*, the two traditional Breton folk-dances, simple, jolly, old-time dances that a whole community may join in, and that any one can fall into and fall out of at will. A few adventurous spirits lead off in a chain made by joining hands, men and women alternately, and for a while have it all to themselves. The band appeals vociferously; others catch on, two by two, as the outstretched hands at each end of the lengthening chain pass them, until at length several hundred couples are linked together in *la ronde*, that circles, coils and uncoils, opens out and closes in. The step is something of a hop, skip and jump, which is always dropping into a walk, or breaking into a run. Of course the chain is continually parting somewhere,

fragments fly off at a tangent, and disperse, or join in again, if they can before the two ragged ends are linked; little supplementary chains cruise round, looking for a chance to fill a gap, or hitch on to an end. Suddenly, without a note of warning, the exhausted band ceases, as though it had held out to the last gasp and broken down, and *la ronde* falls to pieces in couples that disappear through the grounds, he carrying her umbrella.

In *la dérobée* the chain is double, formed by separate couples hand in hand. Every now and then a couple turns round, she drops his hand and dances back between the couples behind, who unclasp hands to let her pass; he follows outside, till finally she holds out her hand to him, when they join in again wherever they may be. Originally the lady was supposed to have escaped and be hiding from her partner (whence the name of the dance), he to be seeking and recapturing her, and a simulation of this is sometimes kept up.

The happy, orderly crowd, circling in the mazes of the dance, or walking or sitting about on the green grass or under the spreading trees, forms a very pleasant picture. Across the wooded gorge that lies abruptly below the park, the old flower-decked walls and grey houses of Moncontour cluster on their steep hill, crowned by umbrageous beech trees, and backed by the blue rim of the plateau. The grounds that surround the dove-coloured, steep-roofed, many-windowed old house, are very lovely. The moat, which must have once guarded a more warlike building, is now a sunken garden. Behind is a formal,

old-time garden of clipped alleys, bushes and arbours, broad sunny walks between borders of flowers or orange trees ranged in tubs, dim groves and pleached avenues, where the sun only chequers the grass here and there. Beyond the great iron gates by the chapel is a little wood of immemorial trees, immensely tall. The day filters through the interlacing boughs in a mystic twilight. On one side is a little lake, with an embowered island and swans floating round, on another is a long broadwater, its dark still surface reflecting every leaf and twig of the trees that arch over it from either side. One walks along the mossy paths silently as in a dream.

There are of course ideal haunts for the knight of the umbrella and his lady-love—or to speak more locally *sa douce*. Pardons are traditional occasions for contracting and confirming engagements, which are open and formal compacts with full family sanction. The lovemaking is of a very coy and decorous kind; to the peasants and fisherfolk of Brittany marriage is still the fundamental sacrament of life, and all that leads to it has a certain sacredness; courtship and betrothal are things to be taken shyly and gently, with something of old-time formality and reticence.

In the evening dancing is renewed in front of the church, and kept up far into the night. The band is installed in a similar green booth, decked with lanterns. *La ronde* and *la dérobée* are varied with more modern dances, the mazurka being a favourite. The involved wreathing and circling of the folk-dances is very picturesque in the decked and illuminated

square. Dancing on the green is heavy enough, but to keep it up for hours on stone sets argues robust enthusiasm. The Moncontourois seem always to have been given this way; a statute of Bishop Jean de Bruc forbade dancing in the churchyard, or selling anything there except tapers or wax to make them.

Apart from its Pardon, the picturesque little town with its spent feudal air, as of a peaceful close to a troubled life, is well worth a visit. Its narrow streets wind or mount by steps between grey houses; branching trees grow out of the old towers and ramparts, which have been filled up with earth and are now terraced gardens; the mouldering stone is decked with ivy, and red and pink valerian; nowhere have I seen it growing so luxuriantly or in such masses. The visitor should ask leave to mount to the convent garden that, as has been said, crests the huge keep of the old castle. A kindly sister will conduct him, and tell him of the good work to which they give their lives, its aims and disappointments, its trials and rewards. On part of the platform that belongs to a private proprietor, is an enormous wide-spreading acacia, which at Whitsuntide is laden with white blossom, and forms a radiant crown to the vast pile, visible from all parts of the town.

The church, which dates from the sixteenth century with many later additions, has little architectural interest, but contains some old stained glass that is alone worth a pilgrimage to see. The east window,

which depicts scenes from the divine infancy, with the donors kneeling below, is very early Renascence, possibly even earlier. Unfortunately a border of modern glass has been put round the old, to enlarge the window, and a medallion of God the Father inserted in the apex of the old work, perhaps to replace some glass broken in the alteration. The inferiority of the new work to the old is deplorable. Of the three windows on the north wall of the nave, that nearest the choir gives the life of John the Baptist, with the donors, a knight and lady, kneeling below. The next, dated 1538, tells the story of St. Barbara. The third, dated 1537, is a glory of subdued light and opulent hues, the work of a great artist, masterly in colour-scheme and drawing. It represents the life of St. Yves as illustrating the cardinal virtues. In the apex light is God the Father in a tiara, clouds roll below around four angels bearing sacred books. Of the two old windows on the south wall, one is a tree of Jesse, the Virgin in glory on its summit, ten kings of Judah in sixteenth century costume below. The other, apparently the oldest in the church, unfortunately much restored, gives the life of St. Mathurin. The donor, Jacques de la Motte, is represented above on the left, kneeling before the Virgin, to whom he is presented by his patron St. James the Great. Two modern windows on this wall look very poor and pale, beside their elder brethren.

The country round Moncontour is very pleasant —more spacious and gracious than that near the coast

—and affords innumerable objectives for rambles on foot or wheel. By a charming path, or by road, we can go to Notre Dame du Haut, a little late gothic church standing on a green by an ancient granite cross. In its north transept are seven rude statues of *le saints guérisseurs :* SS. Lubin, Mamert, Méen, Eugénie, Hubert, Livertin and Houarnian. The artistic conception of them was clearly *non ignara mali, miseris succurere disco :* St. Livertin, the healer of headache, holds his woebegone face between his hands; St. Mamert, who is invoked for intestinal disorders, holds his entrails before him in his hands, smiling as though to assure you that he knows all about them; St. Méen, whose aid is implored for mental derangement, lolls his big, bewildered head over a book in his left hand, and grasps what looks like a hockey stick in his right; St. Houarnian, the protector of flocks, has a wolf in leash. Pilgrims who invoke St. Mamert or St. Livertin hang a fringe of tapers round their waist or head, as the case may be, make the tour of the church upon their knees, and then burn the tapers before the altar. The story of the founder, whose statue kneels on a bracket on the north of the choir, is depicted in the east window. Near this spot on his way from Moncontour to Rennes, he fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and hanged him on an oak. Happily a statue of the Virgin was niched in the tree. In answer to his prayer she sends an angel to his rescue. He renders thanks at her shrine, and builds this chapel in her honour.

This lonely little church is one of those in which the

nonjuring priests secretly officiated to crowded congregations, and 'rectified' rites that had been solemnized by their conforming brethren. On August 21, 1792, two of them were arrested here, but peasants lay in wait for the troops who were taking them to Dinan for trial, and rescued them. Shortly after the Abbé Saillet, who had been rector of the neighbouring Tredaniel, was surprised here celebrating Mass; he escaped, but his assistant was hanged from a beam of the building.

V

DINAN

DINAN is about twenty miles from Dinard by road or rail. As usual when one leaves the coast, the scenery is featureless, though with a certain higgledy-piggledy pleasantness. The country is all up and down, as the cyclist knows, but the hills vary so little in height that the plateau seems to stretch to the horizon as a plain. The pollarded hedgerow trees give it a bristling aspect, especially in spring; all the little fields into which the land is cut up are hedged with them, their lateral branches are periodically cut for fuel, the twisted, tortured trunks stand bare and lorn, like a forest in Dante's Inferno; gradually they bristle out again into painful little boughs, to be again cut back to the bone. The English traveller regards them with supercilious satisfaction, bethinking him of the tall umbrageous elms that line his hedge-rows at home, of broad peaceful parklands stretched between immemorial oaks and beeches. But there is another side to the matter. These bare, mutilated trunks, this unlovely, bristling landscape, exemplify and symbolize the frugal, careful industry that, more than soil and climate, than her armies or colonies, is the great national asset of France. They

THE GOLF LINKS BETWEEN ST. LUNAIRE AND ST. BRIAC.
ST. CAST IN THE DISTANCE

represent, too, the general possession of her soil by her people, and remind us

> how wide the limits stand
> Between a splendid and a happy land.

What a rich compensation we should have in the bodies and souls of our people could we bring them back to the land, even though many a stately tree should fall, and many a park be cut up into potato patches. The unsightly trees might perhaps be made the text of another sermon: did our population thus universally supplement its coal fuel, it might do something towards setting back the ominous and unheeded handwriting on the wall, that is ever shortening the duration of that irreplaceable deposit.

By far the pleasantest way, however, from St. Malo or Dinard to Dinan is by boat up the Rance. The voyage is full of surprises; the river seems by turns, sea, lake and stream. Every here and there it spreads out into broad sheets of water dotted with islands, fringed with little coves of yellow sand that are set between black rocks, and backed and topped with slopes of gorse. Here and there a fishing hamlet stands at the water's edge, with boats drawn up, and nets drying on the beach, and perhaps a lugger anchored in the offing. Grey farmhouses nestle in sheltered coombs, or behind belts of copse, their trim stone-walled fields, and storm-bent orchards, sloping down to the shore. You see no outlet ahead, the boat appears

steaming stem-on into the landscape, when with a sudden sheer to port or starboard, she glides through a gap in the rocks, or a break in the foliage, into a hidden channel, and threads her way between cliffs or woods into another lake, which looks as land-locked as the last. Of course she knows how to get out of it, yet she hardly keeps the same course for a minute together, but picking her way, twisting and turning, shoots at last into another winding waterway that leads to another lake.

The divagations of the little craft are, indeed, as full of surprises as the scenery; she seems perfectly mad, but you soon perceive there is a method in her madness. She has, in fact, to negotiate a very tortuous and shifty channel that any tide may change ; every now and then she takes the ground, bumps off, darts across the stream, as though possessed with a suicidal desire to become a standing feature in the scenery of the opposite bank, then, apparently attracted by something on the other side just in time to save her from wreck, turns at a sharp angle on her course, and thus zigzags up the stream according to private landmarks of her own. At Châtelier she enters a primitive, leisurely lock, and, while motors, baffled in their mad career by the opening of the pivot bridge, fume on either side, is floated into the quiet lakelet where the upper waters of the little river rest before plunging down to the swirling tides of ocean.

We are now in clear, fresh water, bordered by ruddy rocks that are inlaid with golden lichen and fringed with golden gorse, or by banks of pasture, wood and

copse that slope away more and more gently as we proceed. At length the Rance shrinks to a straitened stream between steep escarpments, leaning woods, or flat reclaimed meadows, fringed at the water's edge with fern and flower. Finally we come alongside the Dinan quay shown in Sketch 14, just below the picturesque old bridge, with round arches and moss-grown buttresses on either side of the central timber span that was removable in case of war. Behind and above it, in singular contrast, tower the lofty stone arches of the fine Lanvallay viaduct, which now connects the isolated hill of Dinan with the surrounding plateau. Steep wooded slopes rise to tawny battlements and towers, behind which are packed the roofs and spires of the ancient little city.

The Dinanais term the casual group of houses where we land, which have the air of the seaside wandered inland, the port. Vessels of one hundred tons ascend the Rance to this point with divers sea-borne wares, lading up in return with cattle, and farm and dairy produce. The long Rue du Petit Port winds up hence to the Porte de Jersual. The broad low-browed doorways, the wide granite sills of the windows on the ground floor, the massive beams and corbels, by which storey projects beyond storey over the street, the leaning gables above, the glimpses of dark panelled interiors below, and finally the great gothic gateway, with arch groined behind arch, framing the steep, twisting Rue de Jersual with its sixteenth

century houses beyond, form a characteristic entrance to the most picturesque city of the region.

The sketch of the Rue de l'Horloge and the clock tower of the Duchess Anne gives a good notion of its character. There are two noble churches, that of St. Sauveur dating from the twelfth century, that of St. Malo, late gothic, commenced 1490 but not finished till 1880. Great part of the old wall still remains, draped with ivy and clematis, tufted with wallflower, valerian and other stone-loving plants; the towers and ramparts have been filled up and made hanging gardens, crested or fringed with fruit trees and flowering shrubs. The moat has been made into sunken gardens and orchards, crowded with luxuriant vegetation. On the west and north the eastern rampart has been planted with delightful avenues.

A great tower in the south-west angle of the enceinte, known as the keep of the Duchess Anne, has been made a museum, a destination for old feudal strongholds that is happily becoming frequent. The massive and careful masonry, the little chapel, the vaulted and arcaded halls with their huge chimney-pieces, are a fine example of medieval domestic architecture, and are gradually being filled with antiquities and curiosities. A spiral staircase, the newel of which spreads out at the landing of each storey into umbrella-like vaulting, ascends the whole height of the building to the roof, whence are extensive views in all directions.

Among groves of limes in the open rectangular space known as the Champ du Guesclin is an equestrian

statue of the Breton hero. The spot, which has been from the earliest times and still is the general meeting place of the citizens, was in 1359 the scene of a famous combat between du Guesclin and an English knight. In the beginning of that year the Duke of Lancaster laid siege to Dinan; a truce was arranged, the Governor agreeing to surrender the town if it were not relieved by a fixed date. Olivier du Guesclin was riding unarmed outside the town when he was made prisoner by Sir Thomas Canterbury, who demanded a thousand florins for his ransom. Bertrand, furious, rode into Lancaster's camp and demanded the immediate release of his brother. Canterbury denied that he had done anything dishonourable, and offered to maintain the same against du Guesclin, body to body, in equal fight. Sir John Chandos, of Lancaster's following, lent du Guesclin his best war-horse. The lists were raised in this square, Lancaster with twenty knights presiding as umpire. At the first onset the lances of both combatants were shivered. They fought desperately with their swords till that of Canterbury, missing a tremendous stroke at his opponent, fell from his hand. Leaping down, du Guesclin flung the weapon outside the lists, and called on Canterbury to dismount and fight on foot. Canterbury, though without lance or sword, declined, trusting to the vantage given him by his horse, but when he endeavoured to ride his adversary down, du Guesclin thrust his sword into the animal's flank; he swerved violently and fell, his rider rolling over on the ground. Du Guesclin

sprang upon him, and tearing open his basnet struck him in the face with his mailed fist till he was blinded with blood. The Governor and Lancaster intervened.

'I beg you to testify, my Lord Duke,' cried du Guesclin, 'that I should have been free to kill this traitorous knight.'

'He deserves it,' said the Duke, 'and he owes his life to your clemency. Your brother shall be freed, and have one thousand livres to equip himself. You have the arms and horse of this dishonoured knight, who never shall appear at my court again.'

So runs the French chronicle; a narrative by Sir Thomas, did we possess it, might differ in detail. The story is an interesting illustration of the international solidarity of medieval chivalry.

The English traveller in Brittany must be prepared for many a rude shock to his national pride, indeed the local history seems mainly made up of English reverses. Of course there are incidental English successes, but these are due to perfidy or mischance, and are heroically retrieved or avenged. This is not exactly the aspect of the Hundred Years and other wars that we have learnt at school. Every nation instinctively edits history for itself, with judicious selections and omissions, and its whilom antagonists have to content themselves with the reflection that there are two sides to every story. It will be remembered that Æsop fables a lion and a man strolling during an *entente cordiale* past a group of statuary that represented a similar pair when their mutual relations were more strained, and which the

lion remarked might have been differently conceived had lions had the gift of sculpture.

Poetry and legend have been so busy with du Guesclin's name that we are sometimes at a loss whether to put him down as a romantic knight-errant or a swaggering swashbuckler. He was neither one nor the other, but an astute, level-headed soldier.

He was born in 1320 in the castle of Motte de Broon between Dinan and Rennes. His father Robert du Guesclin was himself a redoubtable knight. Bertrand, his eldest son, was a boy of uncouth appearance, rough manners, and herculean strength. His pugnacity and headstrong temper made him the pest of the neighbourhood, and at home he was neglected and kept in the background.

In 1338, when he was only sixteen, a tournament was held at Rennes to celebrate the marriage of Jeanne de Penthièvre, heiress of Brittany, with Charles de Châtillon, Count of Blois, a union fraught with disastrous consequences. The flower of the nobility of France and England were gathered there; Robert du Guesclin with a gallant company of retainers was among the number, having left Bertrand at home. No sooner were they gone than the lad set his brains to work to have his part in the day. Every available horse had been taken; a brood mare was the only animal that he could lay hands on. On this sorry steed he rode into the throng round the lists to see what happy chance might send. Seeing a nobleman

of the neighbourhood who had been worsted and was riding away, he begged the loan of his horse and armour, presented himself at the entrance, and offered combat. His first antagonist was rolled over senseless. Bertrand's father, who had hitherto held the field, came up to take his place, but the son, recognising him by the device on his shield, lowered his lance in token that he declined combat. His refusal was taken for fear, and he was challenged by knight after knight, whom he successively vanquished. At length his visor was carried away by a Norman gentleman of great skill; his father recognised the *mauvais sujet* of the family, and conducted him in triumph to receive the prize of the tourney, which he handed over to the knight who had lent him horse and arms.

The war of the Breton succession gave du Guesclin a chance of distinguishing himself in sterner lists. He espoused the cause of Charles de Blois, and commenced that inveterate war against the English which was to be the occupation of his life. His individual feats of arms, his victories over fearful odds, his desperate ventures, adroit stratagems, clever ruses, hair-breadth escapes, fill a larger place in French chronicles than in our own, but however we may discount them, he remains one of the greatest soldiers of his time, to whose example and spirit, even more than to his achievements, France, unmanned, dazed and humiliated, owed an incalculable debt. He has indeed become, like Arthur, Roland or the Cid, one of those epic heroes who sum up the ideals and aspirations of a time and people.

'The life of this famous Chef de Compagnies,' says the French historian Michelet, 'has been sung, that is has been spoilt and obscured, in an epic of chivalry, "Romaunt de Bertrand du Glaicquin," which was probably composed to revive the warlike spirit of the nobility. Our histories of du Guesclin are little more than translations of this epic into prose. It is not easy to disentangle what is historic from what is poetic. This indomitable fighter was, like a true Breton, a good fellow, free of hand and of tongue. By turns rich and ruined, giving often all he possessed to ransom his men, but on the other hand greedy of loot, hard and merciless. He preferred craft when he could use it to fighting, and never let good faith or plighted word stand in his way.' Again, Henri Martin says of him: 'As sensitive as a man could be regarding his personal honour, ever ready to enter the lists against all comers, he looked on the application of the code of honour to war as an absurdity, and once he took the field, recognised no aim but success, and sought it by force or craft, as either served his turn. Formidable as he was in open fight, he preferred, when he could use them, night surprises, ambuscades, stratagems, that gave opportunity to his readiness and resource; he delighted in complicated operations, studied the lie of the ground, turned to account every circumstance that could influence the issue of the fight. War was to him a business not a game; he has been accused of destroying its chivalrous romance, but he rather called back to life the military genius of France, which had been stifled by the theatrical

chivalry that the early kings of the house of Valois had made the fashion.' The estimate of the Black Prince and the Duke of Lancaster of their redoubtable antagonist would probably have differed little from that of these two French historians.

In truth, the more we strip du Guesclin of legendary glamour, the more clearly we bring out the work that he did for France. The sagacious commanders of the little English armies had won their victories by recognizing that the day of chivalry was done, and that infantry was to be the main arm in war; that battles were no longer mêlées of men-at-arms but matters of skill and calculation, in which discipline told equally with valour, the yeoman was worth as much as the knight, and an eye for country more useful than all the tricks and graces of the lists. This was the lesson that Wallace and Bruce had taught the English, but France had been slow to recognise the weapon that had beaten her to her knees. She did not lack brave men or material resources, she needed confidence and common sense. It is the merit of rough, practical, unscrupulous soldiers like du Guesclin that they gave her these, that they looked facts in the face, and brushed aside pedantries and pretensions. As soon as this was done the spell that had enabled a handful of English to win amazing victories, march where they would and do what they liked, was broken, and their expulsion from the country was only a question of time. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that du Guesclin and his like did a work for France similar to that which, in a higher sphere, was to be

done for her in the following century by Jeanne d'Arc.

Brittany is so full of memorials of the war of succession, which for nearly a quarter of a century rent its people in twain, and deluged it with blood, that some brief notice of it should be given here. When Duke Jean III died without issue in 1341, his younger brother, Jean Comte de Montfort, and his niece, Jeanne de Penthièvre, wife of Charles Comte de Blois, contested the succession. The latter invoked in his favour the so-called right of representation, which regulated baronial succession in Brittany: the former took his stand on the principle of male heredity under the salic law. It was nevertheless to Charles that Philip as suzerain adjudged the duchy, while Edward III espoused the cause of Jean. Thus the kings of France and England were seen opposing in Brittany the principles on which they grounded their own claims to France.

Between the two competitors and their partisans—the Bretons-Gallots were for Charles, and the Bretons-Bretonnants for Jean—war at once broke out, a war of skirmishes, ambuscades, sudden onslaughts and surprises, which lasted from 1341 to 1364. At the outset Jean was taken prisoner at Nantes, and passed the greater part of the war in the tower of the Louvre; his wife, Jeanne of Flanders, with English aid, maintained the struggle in the name of her husband till his death in 1345, then in the name of her son Jean. The

intervention of the English did not prevent Charles from subjugating the greater part of the country, but the battle of la Roche-Derrien, June 1347, in which he was defeated, captured, and his faction crushed, suspended the struggle for a time.

Hostilities recommenced in 1351 at the instigation of King Jean the Good; Charles, thanks to papal intervention, recovered his liberty and returned to Brittany. The one pitched battle of this last phase of the war—a very small affair at Auray, in which four thousand men were engaged on Charles' side and three thousand on Jean's—decided the long dispute. Charles had a strong position, and the wary du Guesclin urged him to stay there and await attack, but trusting to his superior numbers, he yielded to more impetuous councils, and marched down to give battle. Sir John Chandos, who commanded the little army of De Montfort, did the same. He had hardly any English under him, beyond two hundred invaluable archers; it must always be remembered that the superiority of the English longbow over the crossbow of the continent gave our countrymen almost the advantage that was afterwards given by gunpowder over more primitive weapons. After a long, obstinate combat, the army of Charles was completely defeated, he himself was slain, and du Guesclin taken prisoner. Jean de Montfort was recognised as Duke of Brittany by Charles V, in the Treaty of Guérande 1365, and as such swore fealty to the King of France, his quondam gaoler and foe. This triumph of what most Bretons considered the rightful cause,

which had been supported by England and opposed by France, alienated Brittany from France throughout the Hundred Years' War, and retarded its natural and inevitable absorbtion by the predominant partner in the congeries of states that were gradually unifying.

Sir John Chandos, who is always mentioned with peculiar regard in Breton chronicles, was one of the greatest soldiers produced by the war; his splendid presence, his personal prowess, his chivalrous temper and unimpeachable loyalty, made him a beau ideal of knighthood, and at the same time he was a skilled exponent of the new tactics of the day. It is impossible to say how much of the brilliant achievements of the Black Prince was due to his tutelage and counsel; at Crecy, where 'the boy won his spurs,' Edward III especially committed his son to his charge, and he was his companion and counsellor in all subsequent campaigns. Froissart credits him with the skilful dispositions that won the battle of Poitiers against tremendous odds, and at Navarrete he was practically in command. His death in a skirmish in 1369 was a disastrous blow to the declining English fortunes.

The war of the Breton succession is frequently styled 'the war of the two Jeannes,' from the prominent part that the lady on each side took in it; in fact their husbands had such a singular faculty for being captured that hostilities could hardly have been continued had they not left capable wives at home. Montfort's Jeanne was the heart and soul of his cause

and, Fleming though she was, is one of the popular heroines of Brittany. She frequently commanded in the field, mounted on a war-horse and clad in mail. A ballad gives her the title of Jeanne la flamme, gained by firing with her own hand the siege-works of the enemy when beleaguered at Hennebon. Her case seemed so hopeless on this occasion that it was all her obstinate courage could do to keep the garrison from surrendering. And her obstinacy was justified; when all seemed lost, an English fleet sailed into the harbour, and Hennebon was saved. Blois' Jeanne, though not so militant, was a leading spirit on the other side. Her husband, when not a prisoner, bore himself with dignity in court and camp, but was little more than a lay figure.

All this was very Breton. There are few countries in which the grey mare is more universally the better horse. The broad, brawny Breton housewives, with their shrewd kindly eyes and strong capable hands, are the very type of confident capacity. It is they who keep the accounts, decide sales and purchases, make bargains, and arrange marriages. Their husbands are constitutional sovereigns whose functions are mainly ceremonial; they vote at elections—a matter of supreme unimportance to the average Breton peasant, solely concerning *ces Messieurs de Paris*—get respectably inebriated at fairs and Pardons, and sign any document necessary to legalise transactions arranged by their wives, but it is these unenfranchised better halves who run the country; the men know better what is good for them than to interfere with

the real executive. Du Guesclin, the most illustrious of Bretons, who is said seldom to have gone against his wife's advice, and to have been always sorry for it when he did, is credited with a saying that should be inscribed over every hearth :

'Qui sa femme ne croist, à la fois se repens.'

There is a pleasant walk to Léhon, crossing the old bridge and following the right bank of the Rance, shady poplars on one side of the stream, the steep wooded banks that rise to the city on the other. After about a mile, another picturesque old bridge having, like that of Dinan, a midspan of timber that could be removed in war, crosses to the village. On flat stones beneath sheds on either side innumerable washerwomen beat and scrub their clothes. In front of a rude wooden hut, a broad, jovial Breton offers to make you sabots to measure as he plies his primitive trade, shaping blocks of wood into shoes with a long sharp blade hinged at one end to a balk of oak, and worked by a handle at the other. When they are in due shape outside, the inside is hollowed out with various gouges.

The romanesque doorway of the old church stands in the graveyard. The present church dates from the thirteenth century, but fell into ruin, and has been rebuilt with judgment in the nineteenth. All the vicissitudes of its history, from the miracles that accompanied its foundation to the massacre of the Revolution, and the recent rebuilding, are depicted

in modern stained glass of more historic than artistic interest. On the right as we enter is an ancient granite font sculptured with rude heads outside, with fishes beneath the water inside. The broad edge has been worn by the sharpening of weapons, which it was believed gave them good luck in their bloody work.

The chief interest of the church is in the tombs of lords and priors of Beaumanoir, with recumbent statues that exemplify the costume and armour, and recall the lawless life, of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. On the north of the choir is that of Tiphaine de Chemille, 1345, wife of Jehan III of Beaumanoir, and niece and namesake of the wife of the great Constable, which is very illustrative of the days when even women had to hold honour, life, and goods by virtue of the mailed fist. She is attired in full armour, her sex only indicated by her long hair and a belt of roses round her waist, from which her sword is suspended. Her mailed feet rest on the double-headed eagle of the du Guesclins.

On the south-east is the chapel of the Beaumanoirs, a good specimen of fourteenth century gothic. Its light and graceful vaulting springs from slender granite columns; only a few are original, but the whole has been excellently restored. On one side of the west front of the church, a fine gothic gateway leads under the light and lofty flying buttresses of the north side of the nave to some ruined cloisters of the seventeenth century. The northern arcade flanks the dilapidated refectory of the monastery; its

LE PORT, DINAN

trilobed flamboyant windows and the screen of its reading chair still retain their tracery.

Here in 920, during the terrible time of the Norman invasion, priests and monks from all parts of Brittany, bringing with them the relics of their patron saints, met in council to discuss the situation. Salvator, Bishop of Aleth, presided. After exhaustive discussion, it was decided that the only safety for themselves and their sacred trusts lay in exile. Then there set out from Léhon to the frontier a long, melancholy procession bearing in caskets and reliquaries, fragments of the bodies of the old British Saints who had found the population a horde and made them a people. Had any of those great souls, who bearded kings, put down tyrants from their thrones, and set righteous rulers in their stead, been there, we can imagine they would have said that it were better the last shred of their flesh should be scattered to the winds, than that their successors should desert their country.

Dominating the village, is a steep wooded hill crowned by the ruined walls and towers of the old Castle of the Beaumanoirs, which was dismantled by our Henry II. It was only taken after a good deal of tough fighting, but he had sworn to demolish it and he did. It was never rebuilt, its importance having been probably superseded by the fortification of the neighbouring Dinan. Various shady paths wind up the sides. On the grassgrown platform of the old keep is a modern chapel of St. Joseph. The crumbling bastions, overgrown with ivy and bramble, command

a fine view of the surrounding country: the little village with its grey church and ancient bridge nestles below beside the winding Rance; Dinan, its houses crowded behind hoary walls, verdant ramparts, and wooded slopes, rises beyond.

VI

DOL

The country passed through in going by train from St. Malo to Dol is a vast apple orchard. On either side of the road, over flats and undulations as far as the eye can see, are apple-trees of every sort and size and shape : there are little saplings just out of the nursery, there are trees in the prime of life that stretch and toss their arms as in robust joy of existence, and gnarled, gaunt, scraggy veterans, worn and spent by a life of struggle with the storm ; there are prim little trees that appear to have stepped from a Noah's Ark, and trees that have put on a semblance of human architecture, stretching flat roofs of leafage over field and pasture, or curving domelike as over a sylvan shrine. In spring, when they are all in blossom, it is as though a rack of sunset cloud had floated in from the west and settled over the land.

The cyclist will probably start from St. Servan, and take the road to Grouesnière. Soon after this a fine iron gate and a magnificent avenue of beeches leads up to the castle of Bonnaban, an interesting sixteenth century edifice with beautiful park and gardens. On the other side of the road is the Bois Renou, in the midst of which a hill has been lately crowned with

a rockery, surmounted by a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes that attracts many pilgrims. From this hill we have an extensive view of the Marais de Dol, which the road now skirts, a vast tract of reclaimed marsh extending over forty thousand acres of extraordinary fertility. A short detour before reaching Gouesnières would have taken us by the Mare de St. Coulman, the sole relic of the arm of the sea that once connected the Bay of Mont St. Michel with the estuary of the Rance. This stretch of country is still below the level of the sea, and would revert to tidal swamp but for the assiduous care of the Department of *Digues et Marais*. The Mare de St. Coulman is continually shrinking, and is doubtless destined at no distant date to disappear. After the rains that close the winter in these parts, it expands into a little lake of about twenty square miles, abounding in wild duck and other waterfowl, and navigated by the inhabitants in flat-bottomed boats amid the tops of alders and willows. At other times it affords scanty pasture, and rushes much used for thatching. In dry summers the peaty soil easily takes fire, and smoulders for a long time, emitting a nauseous fume; the ignited soil is often a yard in depth, and the fire creeps underground, causing accidents to man and beast. The pasture land, known as *nata*, and divided into the two *béliards* or commons of Miniac and Plerguer, is the subject of traditional rights and disputes. The owner of any property bordering on it, be it only a corner of field or patch of garden, has the right of user, but no question of proprietorship or division has ever been

Dinan.

RUE DE L'HORLOGE, DINAN

raised. These rights are enjoyed by some fifty homesteads, scattered among seven villages. The State levies a small land tax, and there is also a tax for the *Digues et Marais*. These are obviously earned by public work done, and are cheerfully paid. Not so, the much heavier communal tax that, early last century, was imposed on the borderers of Plerguer, and that is still looked on as a grievance. The borderers of Miniac have always stoutly resisted any trenching on their rights, and have been upheld by the courts : by the Parliament of Brittany against the lords of Gouillon in 1661, and by the Prefecture of Ille et Vilaine against their own commune in 1823. When the railway came, it recognised these rights by paying compensation, not to the communes but to the borderers.

There is abundant evidence that the marshland was once forest, on which the sea encroached. Trunks of trees, which are said to be always working their way slowly to the surface, are dug up all over it. There are oak, beech, chestnut, birch, alder and hazel, the latter often with abundant nuts, the kernel rotten but the shell hard ; the oak alone withstands exposure to the air, trunks of it have been found eighty feet long and four feet in diameter at the roots ; when first dug out the wood is soft, but after a time it becomes extremely hard and durable, it is as black as teak, and is largely used for furniture and for the timber-nogged houses of the region.

This tract is one of the few instances of man's reconquest of land lost in the secular encroachment

of the sea that goes on without intermission along the Channel coast. The great world wave, rolling majestically from the Pacific 'with pomp of waters unwithstood,' is suddenly cabined, cribbed, confined, as it passes the two rocky ends of France and England, Finisterre and the Land's End; its level is raised, its rate accelerated, and its destructive force tremendously intensified, as it rages up its narrowing bed. Ever since the depression of the land enabled it to burst a way across this corner of the old continent, and make our country an island, it has been ceaselessly gnawing, buffeting and sapping the coast. Ordinarily its advance is slow and imperceptible, *paulatim assurgens*, as an old MS. in the Library of Avranches puts it, but every now and then a combination of atmospheric and hydrographic conditions have given it cataclysmic force, and it has swept over the land, annexing vast tracts to the domain of the sea.

The remnant of the submerged land that longest held its ground was the tract known as the Prairies de Cézembre, the ragged relics of whose seaward rampart are seen extending from the islets of les Cheminées to to that of Cézembre, and thence to the Roc aux Dogues. The present islets of the Grand and Petit Bey, Harbour, and Cézembre, stood as hillocks in these meadows. There are frequent references to the meadows in the archives of the Bishops of St. Malo, between whom and the Dukes of Brittany they seem to have been a constant subject of dispute. For many centuries, in spite of breaches here and there, they maintained their position against the buffeting

of the waves and the sapping of the tide. The great tide of 1163, which consummated the work of destruction in many parts of the coast, swept over them, but when it swirled back they were still dry land. When and how they ultimately succumbed is not recorded; it is thought that the disintegrating effect of the great earthquake of 1227, which levelled Nantes, and destroyed thirteen villages in the neighbourhood of Dol, may have paved the way to their final disappearance; for many hundred years the only vestige of them has been the long banks of sand and rock that spring tides uncover near the Grand Bey and Dinard, but it is probable that for a long time they lay slightly below the surface; as late as 1563 the rents are entered in the Episcopal account-books as 'due, but not collected,' as though to preserve a claim to the disputed area should it ever be recovered from the sea.

One of the most interesting records of this lost land of France are the megalithic monuments that now lie full fathom five, as the cromlech of the islet of Er Lanic in Morbihan. The innumerable bays and headlands that fringe the coast of Brittany are no doubt due to the unequal resistance of the veins of granite and its associated rocks; the deep inlets are the ends of estuaries, hollowed in open air, and submerged by the gradual depression of the coast.

About a mile before reaching Dol is Mont Dol, a mass of granite standing in the flat reclaimed land like an island; it is about 330 feet high, an unfailing spring of water wells up on its western eminence. So remarkable a natural feature has, of course, in Brittany

always had a sacred character : it was a Druid shrine, the Romans connected it with a temple of Diana, and Christians with a chapel of the Virgin, which has been several times rebuilt. A hollow in a weather-worn rock on the edge of the eastern summit is said to be the footprint of the Archangel Michael, when in some local crisis he sprang hence at a bound to the island rock that bears his name.

'It is also called *le pied du diable*,' said the farm lad who showed it to me, 'and look, you can see where his claws scratched the rock as he sprang.'

It seemed strange, I remarked, that there should be such different explanations.

'We must try to meet all tastes,' he said.

I assured him that personally I preferred the archangel.

Let no one be deluded by the 'Guide Joanne' into going to Mont Dol on the Monday after Ascension, in the hope of seeing a fair. The great fair formerly held on that day on a neck of rocky down between the two summits fell into desuetude, owing, it is said, to the day being rainy on a succession of years, and the recent attempt to revive it has not got beyond a refreshment booth and a concertina.

In the village church below are some curious frescoes representing the Passion and Resurrection with costumes of the fifteenth century. These were apparently painted over old frescoes, that are put down to the twelfth century.

Dol

Dol stands on rising ground at the edge of the marsh-land. Here in the old kingdom of Domnonia a little log church was built by St. Samson, one of the greatest of the British evangelists of Armorica. I was shocked to see him spoken of in the *Guardian*, in connection with his church at Cricklade, as 'an obscure bishop of Dol': such is a prophet in his own country. In his adopted country St. Samson was a prophet indeed. He had not been long there before his character and ability gave him such authority that his aid was asked against the tyrant Conomor who, ten years before, had murdered the king Iona, and usurped the throne. It was a difficult matter. Judual, the son of Iona, had taken refuge with Childebert I at Paris, and Conomor had become Childebert's vassal on condition that he kept Judual from returning to Brittany. St. Samson, however, went to Paris, obtained charge of the young prince, brought him back to Domnonia, mustered all loyal subjects, and marched against the usurper, who was defeated and slain in a pitched battle. Judual was not unmindful of what he owed to the great prelate, who was virtual ruler of the country during his life.

Dol was the centre of the Chouan resistance to the Revolution, of which so lurid an account is given by Victor Hugo in 'Quatre-vingt-treize.' The old houses with columned porches, and other picturesque features of the little city, which he describes, have been rapidly disappearing of late years, but there are still many good bits for brush and kodak, and the cathedral is the noblest church

in Brittany. The narrow and lofty nave, of severe simplicity, and the soaring arches of the rood tower, are singularly effective. The great east window is a magnificent specimen of old stained glass; the eight shafts into which it is divided by the mullions represent the Last Judgment. In the tracery above are scenes from the Bible and the life of St. Samson; he and two monks are shown crossing the Channel in a boat under full sail, a spiteful-looking demon flying above, and bending back the mast in the vain endeavour to stop him. There are low massive choir stalls and bishop's chair in dark carved wood; at the end of the choir twin arches, not blocked up by a reredos, give a view of the lady chapel behind. Beside this is the Chapel of St. Samson, with an iron-barred cell in the wall for lunatics brought to be cured by him. There is a very beautiful south porch, elaborately sculptured. On the north, the side towards the ramparts, the choir is battlemented and loopholed.

Behind the cathedral a pleasant avenue of limes runs round part of the town; on one side are the moat and the old ivied ramparts, on the other we look down on slopes of orchard, and across the fertile marshland to the great mass of Mont Dol, surmounted by its windmill and tower.

The classic pilgrimage from Dol is to the Castle of Combourg, where Chateaubriand spent his later youth, and of which he gives such a striking description in his memoirs. After about a mile, a grassy

lane on the left of the road leads to the fine menhir of Champ Dolent; the top is now thirty-one feet above the ground, and it has been ascertained by examination that there is nearly the same length below the surface; the circumference of its present base is twenty-nine feet.

Ten miles from Dol is the little village of Combourg. Standing on a slight eminence near it, in magnificently timbered grounds, is the castle, a fine specimen of a later medieval stronghold. The splendid granite masonry is of different dates, one of the towers claiming to be as old as 1016. Of late years the interior has been rather unfortunately decorated, and it has no longer the gloom and romance so forcibly described by Chateaubriand, when he and his sister cowered by the fire through the long winter evenings, listening to the sighs of their mother, and to the measured tread of their mysterious and taciturn father, pacing up and down the great hall. Chateaubriand's room at the top of the south-east tower is left in its old simplicity. Here have been collected various relics of the great writer, including the little iron bedstead with white curtains in which he died in Paris on the 4th of July, 1848.

In these lonely and sombre halls, and in the umbrageous solitudes around, Chateaubriand's adored companion was his sister Lucile, a romantic, highly strung girl, whose life was passed in a dreamland of marvel and adventure. His mind now took the cast that it retained through life; all notion of the priesthood, to which his education had been hitherto

directed, was dropped ; he thought of serving in the French Army in India, or in exploration in America ; his father settled the question by procuring him a commission in the regiment of Navarre. His father's death and the outbreak of the Revolution liberated him, and he was at length able to realise his youthful dream of travel, crossing to America with the ostensible object of exploring the North-West passage, but adopting the somewhat singular route of the Ohio and Mississippi. Returned to France, he married a devoted and well-dowered wife, joined the Army of the Emigrés, was wounded at the siege of Thionville, escaped to England, where he taught French and wrote his 'Essai Historique, Politique et Morale,' in which he reviews revolutions old and new in connection with the great upheaval in France. In this confused work, full of ill-digested learning, illumined with flashes of genius and drenched with pessimism, he sees mankind ever travelling in a hopeless circle of error and misery. His point of view was still that of the age that was ending, from the style of which he was never liberated, but whose spirit, even while he shared it, filled him with revolt. Then occurred the great spiritual crisis of his life, brought about by the death of his mother, quickly followed by that of his sister. 'I wept and I believed,' he wrote—little knowing how many a Paul Pry would be on his track. He at once set himself to lead others in the way by which he had found salvation, to lead them, as he had himself been led, by sentiment and emotion, by appeal to the subconscious heritage of faith and hope

CHÂTEAU DE COMBOURG

to which the mind of the time was instinctively reverting. The flimsy framework of reasoning on which he stretched his gorgeous tapestry of imaginative prose was a hardly needed concession to the intellectualism that the time professed and was weary of. As he himself said of 'La Génie du Christianisme,' *il est venu juste, et à l'heure.* All France was halting at the crossways, and waiting for a lead; the philosophers had said their say and had their day, their tenets had become a superstition and their doctrines cant; the brilliant banter, the liberation and illumination, of the Voltairian revolt against tradition, had crystallized into conventions as narrow, tyrannous and barren as those that they had destroyed; Christianity had been derided as barbarous and ludicrous, a refuge for weak minds and straitened souls, but it only needed that some one should brave the mechanical ridicule that greeted any assertion of faith or reverence, that some one should reassure French *amour propre* against the stereotyped Voltairian sneer. Chateaubriand's sublime egotism, his constitutional pose, his command of lofty, imaginative language that concealed poverty of ideas and reasoning by a wealth of imagery and emotion, equipped him eminently for the task. France did not want ideas and was sick of reasoning: she wanted to feel and to trust; it is to the eternal honour of Chateaubriand that he saw the trend of the age, and justified it to itself. We in these days search his brilliant pages in vain for an explanation of the profound impression they created, and the work they did. We may smile at the reasoning that

deduced the existence of God from the architecture of a bird's-nest, and the remarkable coincidence of crocodiles laying eggs like fowls; that found assurance of the immortality of the soul in a night in America, a sunset at sea, or the delight of parents in their baby's babble; we may point out that Bernardin de St. Pierre and a dozen other sentimentalists had done the same sort of thing. But there was this enormous difference: their God was a new-fangled abstraction, the God of Chateaubriand was the living God to whom Frenchmen were bound by generations of believing forbears, by centuries of historic faith, by a venerable ceremonial that had linked itself with the tenderest feelings and most hallowed moments of their lives. They needed an apologia to awaken what was dormant, not to demonstrate what was doubted, and that is why, while the 'Études' and 'Harmonies de la Nature' were voices in the wilderness, the 'Génie du Christianisme' was a gospel of life. 'Un coup de théatre et d'autel,' sneers Sainte-Beuve: yes, but the theatre was staged with the history of the world, and the altar was that ancient one which was broken down, and on which fire from heaven descended.

Our point of view has so wholly changed, that the book no longer sounds its old trumpet-call. The Christian of these days may agree with the sceptic that it 'rétablissait la religion sur un équivoque et un malentendu,' but it will ever remain a superb literary monument. In gorgeous word-painting, in magic of descriptive phrase, in felicitous indication of the

enchantment and the charm of nature, the great forerunner of romanticism has been surpassed by none of his successors. Make what deductions you will on the score of extravagance and inconsistency, point out that this is fustian and that is false, that the traditional machinery of epic, lyric and drama are jumbled confusedly together, and strained to the breaking-point; it is all true and all beside the mark; it is taking the canvas of a great painter as a legal document. For Chateaubriand was above all things an artist, an artist whose large brush revelled in all the pageant of the past, all tones of nature and moods of man. What a glowing vision of the beauty of the antique world is given us in 'Les Martyrs,' with all its extravagance and tinsel; what a vast and sumptuous picture gallery is 'La Génie du Christianisme'; what a panorama passes before us in his travels; in the 'Memoires d'Outre-Tombe,' self-centred and overweeningly self-important though they be, how real are the scenes, how graphic the portraits, drawn with a few masterly strokes. And all this wizardry burst on a world accustomed to the cold and polished diction, the restrained conventional treatment, the cynical scepticism, of the so-called classical school. What wonder that logic was ruled out of court, and criticism swept off its feet: philosophy and theology be hanged, says in effect the enthusiastic Joubert, 'qu'il fasse son métier, qu'il nous enchante.'

Recent writers have made excellent game of the seamy side of Chateaubriand, and of his autobiographical insincerity, but what we are concerned with

in a great writer are his writings. In Chateaubriand, it is true, we have also to consider his public life, and this, with all its changes, was dignified and, in essence, consistent. He sacrificed what might have been a great career under the Empire, on the infamous kidnapping and execution of the Duc d'Enghien; he forfeited position and emolument under the Monarchy through not suppressing his liberal convictions. A very little suppleness and reticence might have made his last years affluent instead of straitened.

His view of public questions was always large and statesmanlike, and much of the pose that his modern critics cannot away with was probably due to the conflict between his sympathies and his convictions. By birth and temperament he was aristocrat, royalist, conservative, but by intellectual conviction he was democrat and republican, and was conscious that all the political gerrymandering in which he took part was but weaving ropes of sand. He saw his generation 'obscure and intermediate, doomed to be forgotten, a mere link in the chain that bound the sowers of the past to the harvesters of the future.' In his last writings—in the preface to his translation of Milton, in the 'Memoires d'Outre-Tombe,' and above all in a remarkable article contributed to the *Revue des deux Mondes* of April 15, 1834—he is no longer the politician but the prophet; the reticence that he had felt imposed by loyalty is laid side: 'In life I have belonged to the Bourbons, in death I belong to my country.' In a strain that recalls the sombre passion of the Hebrew prophets he tells the course that the world will take, strips the

veil of convention and pretension from the political and social life of the day, lays his finger on lurking disease, hidden sore, smothered unrest, and points to their sure results: 'A prophet, whose day is nearly done, I lay my predictions on my tomb, futile and withered leaves that the breath of eternity will sweep away in fulfilling them.'

VII

L'AVRANCHIN

A good road leads from Dol to Pontorson and Mont St. Michel. A cyclist going from St. Malo to the Mount, will do well to take a slightly longer route by Paramé and la Coudre. After a steep descent at this point from the plateau to the shore, he will ride some eight miles along the great dike of immemorial origin that keeps the sea out of the reclaimed land ; on one side of him is the blue, restless water, on the other the flat green fields that have been rescued from it. At Cherrueix he turns inland, and after three miles along a road edged with trees, still in low reclaimed land, arrives at St. Brolade, after which the country becomes hilly and wooded.

Just before Pontorson we cross the little river Coesnon, the Coetno of the old chronicles, the historic boundary of Brittany and Normandy, whose caprices were the cause of constant disputes between the two duchies. Within recorded times it has entered the bay near the estuary of the Sée and the Sélune, far to the right of its present mouth, and again, has made its bed considerably to the left of that in which it is now straitly embanked. According to Breton tradition, it is only through a freak of

the turbulent little stream that the famous shrine of the Archangel is not Breton :

Un jour Coesnon
En sa folie
A mit le Mont
En Normandie.

In truth it was but fitting that when the sea-girt rock became an embattled church, it should pass from Brittany to Normandy. The Celtic genius, with its passionate resentment of the forlorn and fleeting lot of human kind, seems ever asking with its ancient poet, 'Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days ?'

More perhaps than any European nation, France has been a crucible in which the various ingredients of our civilization have been fused. Greek and Roman, Frank and Fleming, Celt and Norman, unchronicled and unnamed peoples from the East and South, slowly wandering, long stagnating hordes in the dim childhood of the world, have each contributed their quota to the electric product that has so often thrilled through Europe. Yet, as though to furnish an ethnic object-lesson, samples of many of the components remain distinct, like historic backwaters, round the seething central mass ; the lower Loire is like an anthropic frontier ; here, as we pass from Brittany to Normandy, farther on as we pass from Normandy to French Flanders, and so on through all the eastern and southern borders of France, we find populations wholly different not only in physical

aspect, but in character and ideal. If ever war is to cease among mankind it will be by the extension of some such process as that which has brought all these jealous, hostile, and still diverse states to dwell together in unity.

In crossing the Coesnon we pass from a people who, though they doubtless came in as conquerors of a population still less efficient, have through all their known history been a subject and a submerged race, who though now they share with other Frenchmen an ample place in the sun, yet bear on their brow the shadow of a gloomy past, evince in all their notions a sense of failure and disinheritance. We pass from them to a people who have been conquerors in every land for which they left their rude and straitened northern home; who, wherever they have come, have made themselves overlords, and yet have so known how to lighten the mailed fist, and to exercise the magnetism of a noble and chivalrous nature, that the peoples they ruled have gloried in their masters. The Englishman is affectionately loyal to sovereigns who commence their line from the Norman conqueror, and ignore the English Kings who preceded him; he is conscious of no slur in that, as a result of the conquest, he speaks a hybrid and pollarded tongue in which all that denotes honour, rule, and dominion—with the notable exception of the two highest titles of all—is expressed in the alien element; he has no sense of grievance in that the polity imposed on him by the conquest is as anomalous as his language, and its history for centuries that of a slow, painful and

GENDARMERIE, TOUR GABRIEL, AND RIVER COESNON,
MONT ST. MICHEL

imperfect conquering back of its native character. The Sicilian, who is as alien to and unlike the Norman as any European, yet looks back to the two hundred years of Norman governance as to the golden age in his island's history, and with droll indifference to patent facts, claims the Norman as the most honoured of his many ancestors.

Of course there was not this racial cleavage between the English and their Norman conquerors, who were, in fact, identical with the Danes to whom the Peace of Wedmore had given half the land, and who had already become good Englishmen; but in the history of England it is the Latin civilization of the Normans, not their Teutonic kinship, that counts. In Normandy, on the other hand, it is kinship rather than contrast that strikes us; the appearance, the bearing, the character of the people are almost more English than French. The Norman—as I think the most uncompromising of English historians puts it—is like a Yorkshireman who has got into a bad habit of talking French. There is no part of France that seems so homely to English folk as the pleasant land of hill and dale that Rolf the Ganger wrested from Charles the Simple.

The castle of Pontorson was dismantled by Richelieu to prevent its becoming a rallying-point for Protestants, who were strong in the neighbourhood. Only a fragment of it now remains, fallen upside down into the stream. It was built by Robert the Devil, Duke of

Normandy, to secure his dominions against surprises from Brittany, and was almost reconstructed in 1135 and 1171. In the War of Succession it was placed under the command of du Guesclin and bid defiance to the English. During the frequent absence of du Guesclin, he confided the command to his intrepid sister Julienne. According to local tradition our countrymen had recourse to tactics that were hardly sportsmanlike. They made friends with Julienne's maidservants, with whose connivance they planned a midnight assault on the impregnable fortress. They succeeded in placing a scaling ladder against a part of the wall where their fair accomplices had told them they would escape the observation of the guard. But Julienne du Guesclin was not to be taken by surprise: sword in hand, she rushed to the spot where she heard a muffled noise, smote down the foremost of the assailants, and threw down the ladder on which the others were mounting. Meanwhile her cries had roused the garrison, a sortie was made, and the attacking force, huddled in confusion and darkness, were cut to pieces. Then Julienne, laying aside the sword for the needle more proper to her sex, had the faithless maids sewn up in sacks, and cast into the Coesnon.

The village of Pontorson edges the road on both sides, making it into a street for about a mile. The church, which stands a little away from this, is romanesque with some gothic modifications. In a chapel on the north is a renascence stone retable, barbarously mutilated, containing twenty scenes from the life of

our Lord in high relief; of the same period is a low relief of the Ascension; there is a naive sincerity in both. This is, so far as I know, the only interest of Pontorson, beyond its cottage gardens of mixed fruit, flowers and vegetables, examples of the affectionate cultivation that we shall find universal in the peasant properties of Normandy. Homely though the country seem to the English traveller, he cannot but note one enviable difference between it and his own. Normans, like other Frenchmen, enjoy the Biblical blessing of possessing the land. When one sees the multitude of trim little homesteads, each with its own croft, orchard and kaleyard, one reflects regretfully how comparatively few Englishmen own a rood of England.

The mad little Coesnon is now straightwaistcoated by embankments of stone, which were commenced as far back as the First Empire by Spanish prisoners, who, in the words of a contemporary chronicle 'died there like flies.' Of late years it has been extended as far as Mont St. Michel by the Polder Company on the more humane basis of paid labour.

Shortly before reaching the shore we come to Beauvoir, seated on a slight rising of the level land. It was formerly called Austeriac, and shares with several other places the legend of the wolf succeeding to the work of the ass that he had devoured.

In the early centuries of our era, it is said, when the vast forest of Scissy stretched over the area that is now the Bay of Mont St. Michel, and a crowd of saints and

hermits found retreat in its dense recesses, it was the custom of the holy men, when they had fasted to the verge of human endurance, to kindle a fire as a signal for supplies. As soon as the good people of Austeriac saw the smoke rising, they loaded an ass with provisions, and the animal forthwith started off alone, and divinely guided, made her way from hermitage to hermitage. One day, however, she was encountered by a wolf who incontinently devoured her and her load. But the ravenous beast found he had assimilated more than he bargained for. By some subtle sacramental process, his regenerate carcase became possessed with the spirit of the martyred ass, and his one thought was to make amends for the errors of his past life. Rushing into Austeriac, he intimated to the scared villagers, by the means of communication between man and beast so well understood in those days, but of which we have now quite lost the secret, that he henceforth charged himself with the sacred commisariat, and spent the rest of his life trotting backwards and forwards, distributing to the necessities of the saints.

Some of us remember when Beauvoir was a shoreside village, but now the road after passing it runs between tracts of scattered herbage struggling with swamp, sand and salt, and browsed over by innumerable sheep. These reclaimed tracts, the domain of the Compagnie des Polders de l'Ouest, are the *prés salés*, a term which in French menus has become a synonym for choice mutton. Finally the road runs on a long causeway between the imprisoned Coesnon and a vast stretch

of shifting sands, which are only inundated by spring tides; at ordinary high tides they are furrowed by wandering streams of sea that change their bed continually.

This slender streak of ground is the omen or the earnest, which you will, of the vast transformation that is almost imperceptibly in progress along the coast: as it were, the symbolic sword laid across the bare bosom of the bay, by which the land has taken seizin of its ancient domain, so long usurped by the sea. In 1856 the Polder Company obtained a concession of 70,000 acres of *lais*, or tidal land, in return for which they undertook to complete the embankment of the Coesnon, and to continue the road across the tidal sands to the Mount. The manner in which they have carried out the work—*cette œuvre néfaste*, as the Head Architect of Historical Monuments calls it—has been the subject of wide animadversion. It is alleged that the old ramparts have been unnecessarily subjected to the sapping of the straitened tide, while all the operations indicate a set purpose to destroy the insulation that, through stormy centuries, has kept the Archangel's Mount inviolate, and that is still its most picturesque and peculiar characteristic. If the process be allowed to go on at the present rate, it is estimated that in another quarter of a century, the tide-girt shrine, 'mons in periculo maris,' will be but a coastal hillock, standing amid pastures and potato fields. In face of the unique historic and artistic appeal of the Mount, all economic commonplaces are reversed; the beneficent industry that makes a

blade of grass grow where none grew before, the peaceful annexation that replaces bitter sea and barren sands by smiling fields that give food for the use of man, are denounced as a sordid sacrilege. Is France so poor in land, it is asked, that she must barter her birthright, and forswear her ancient story, for a few more acres to raise mutton and vegetables ? I believe that the Government have acceded in principle to the agitation, though the steps to be taken are not yet decided in detail. Meanwhile those who would see Mont St. Michel at its best, should time their visit about thirty-six hours after new or full moon, so as to be there at a spring tide. At ordinary high tides the sea now barely reaches it.

Soon after leaving Pontorson, the Mount is in sight, silhouetted against the sky in delicate grey, an irregular spire-crowned cone of peculiarly graceful pose. As we proceed, the shadowy outline details into shape and hue ; rising from the water or the sands, according as the tide is high or low, are massive machicolated walls with round projecting bastions, the tawny weather-worn stone brilliant in spring with golden wallflower ; behind this are closely huddled roofs, ranged one above the other, as in irregular steps ; above them the granite rock, tufted with grass and blossom, rises for a little space, and then merges into tall arcaded walls crowned with a forest of sculptured buttresses and pinnacles ; out of the midst of these tapers a soaring spire, bearing on its point the

golden figure of the archangel, his sword uplifted and his wings outspread, the dragon writhing under his feet. It is as though the whole upper half of the great rock had been chiselled into an embattled church.

Whatever may have been the ulterior design of the Polder Company, the approach that they have provided to the Mount is most unfortunate. Instead of arriving at the one gateway that from time immemorial has given entrance to the sacred fortress, the causeway makes straight for the blank wall, and terminates in a cul-de-sac between two frowning bastions, which seem to refuse admittance to anything short of a battering-ram. Then you see below you on the left a ramshackle wooden footway curving round to the gate, and stopping short within ten feet of it. The interval at spring tides is filled with swirling water, which can only be crossed barelegged or on somebody's back. This is the chance of the hotel touts, male and female. They may be seen mustered in great force, and engaged in friendly gossip, prior to the advent of the train, but the arrival of their prey inspires them with furious and vociferous hostility. Half a dozen clamorous emissaries claim to represent the one and only Mother Poulard, each denouncing the others as impostors. The attractions of other inns are shouted into your ears, your luggage disappears in different directions in the hands of mutually vituperative porters. Of course, it is all make-believe. They are the best of friends, who play the game in the most sportsmanlike manner. As soon as you have irrevocably

made your choice, the commandeered articles are cheerfully surrendered to your selected agent.

I had told the artist of my old quarters at Madame Poulard's: the ubiquitous and charming hostess, the cavernous eating-room and kitchen, on whose walls generations of artists and poets had left their imaginations, the deep-browed fireplace before which chickens revolved continually on the great spits, and quaint, three-legged pots steamed with ineffable stews; from which, above all, the huge frying-pan served out the famous omelettes, the very apotheosis of egg:

> 'Joan of Arc, at point of lance,
> Drove the English out of France,
> Madame Poulard, better yet,
> Brought them back with omelette'

was among the mural tributes they had inspired.

He was vastly taken with the picture, I could almost see his brush watering to get to work on it. But my standing as a cicerone was to be sadly taken down. We were met on arrival by the porter in uniform, and the boy in buttons, of the 'Société des Établissements Poulard.' This hardly suggested medieval conditions, but might be an outside show. Surely even so crass an organism as a joint-stock company would have had sufficient business instinct to let the historic hostel alone. So we hoped against hope till we arrived at what had been the domain of Madame Poulard's genial despotism——

'You can't eat your omelette and have it,' said the artist cryptically, as we sallied forth from the

MOONRISE AT SUNSET, FROM LA CROIX BLANCHE,
MONT ST. MICHEL

unappreciated improvements to seek quarters with more local character.

The handmaid of la Croix Blanche, who had from the first marked us as her own, was patiently waiting for us outside, and triumphantly led us through the murky bar-room that forms the lower storey, up a spiral staircase to the dining-room on the second floor, whence we could step directly on to the ramparts and wander along them, up and down and in and out, to the great gateway or to the abbey.

Within the last twenty years the town of Mont St. Michel has aged—or should I say juvenated—a couple of centuries. To recover something of the quaint, old-world air that used to charm you, you have to ignore innumerable bazaars, acres of postcards, miscellaneous advertising and window-dressing, importunate offers of wares you don't want and services you don't need. The artist, as may be seen, made most of his sketches by twilight : he said it drew a veil.

One enters the town by three successive gates. In a corner of the barbican court are two medieval cannon, huge cylinders of iron bound by hoops, the stone balls that they projected lying piled beside them. These are the *Michelettes*, or daughters of St. Michael : adopted daughters, who in their unregenerate days did their best to batter his shrine to pieces. They are, in fact, relics of the intermittent siege of the Mount kept up by the English during the Hundred Years' War. Their guns were left in the sands after a final repulse by a sortie of the garrison ; several of them were sold, but these two lay half

buried, corroded by salt and moisture, till 1835, when they were taken up and placed here.

Hence the one street winds steeply up; on the left of it, long stone stairways mount between serried houses; on the right, tall narrow houses cling to the ramparts. If you wish to mount to the ramparts, you enter the nearest house, and ask leave, always cheerfully given, to go upstairs; after ascending one or two storeys, according as you are in the upper or lower part of the street, you step out on the battlemented walls. Once, on a former visit, Madame Poulard got my wife and myself a room in one of these houses, all her own being occupied. Coming back late along the ramparts from a moonlight ramble, we went by mistake into the wrong house, stepping right into the family room, with alcove beds all round the walls. A head thrust out from one of them, with the demand 'Qui est la ? led to a hasty and apologetic retreat, watched by half a dozen wondering little faces popped out from the curtained recesses. Next morning we learnt that it was not the custom of the Mount to fasten doors at night, and that we had wandered into the house of the Syndic. But this was in the good old days.

At the top of the street on the left is the parish church. The humble little fane, perched on a projecting spur of rock that partly forms its walls, is almost obliterated by the immense pile of the abbey that looms above. The dim, impressive interior is hung with banners, and panelled with escutcheons, placed by pilgrimages from towns all over France.

Then we come to the great embattled abbey, a building as unique in its character as in its situation : the various departments of a great ecclesiastical and military establishment piled into the air, instead of ranged upon the ground. I doubt if there be anywhere so fine an object-lesson of gothic architecture in all its phases and uses. It is now happily in charge of the Department of Fine Arts, who are gradually restoring it with great taste and scrupulous regard for the original design.

Passing through the barbican gate, we find ourselves in face of the imposing gateway of le Chatelet with its two lofty corbelled towers, the work of Abbot Pierre le Roy in the fourteenth century ; beyond this, a remarkably fine doorway leads into the Salle des Gardes, the floor of which follows the natural slope of the rock. Hence ascends a long flight of steps, between the Abbot's apartments and the huge substructure of the church, spanned by a fortified bridge, and higher up by the wooden bridge by which the Abbot passed to the church. At the top is a gothic screened cistern, near which we enter the church by its southern door. The nave dates from the eleventh century, and represents the climax of romanesque, when the style, without losing its massive simplicity had outgrown its primitive heaviness, and had an earnest of the solemn grace of early gothic. The granite stones are still blackened by the smoke, and calcined red by the flames, of the conflagration kindled in 1834 by the crowds of prisoners kept at work here ; the building was then divided into three storeys by wooden floors,

and filled with inflammable material. A clumsy renascence façade erected in 1786 after the demolition of the three western bays of the nave, which were threatening to fall, is happily condemned to disappear; on the terrace beyond are marked the dimensions of the original church.

Here we can realise the grandeur and boldness of Abbot Hildebert II's architecture. Instead of cutting down the summit of the rock, he spread high in air a vast platform supported in the centre by its apex, and at the sides by huge walls, and piers linked by vaulting, the whole forming a substructure as solid as the everlasting hill. On this he and his successors raised a veritable cathedral, perfect in all its parts.

The choir, built in the fifteenth century, is perhaps the purest and most beautiful example of flamboyant gothic that exists. A stairway in its south-east corner —the continuation of one that ascends from the crypt —mounts to the roof; the interesting further ascent along the elaborately sculptured *escalier de dentelle* that fringes one of the flying-buttresses is no longer permitted. Between the perforated balustrade and the beautiful flamboyant windows of the triforium and clerestory, with the severe romanesque of the rood tower close at hand, we find ourselves in a forest of gothic sculpture. Walking under the intricate arches of the buttresses, amid pinnacles, finials, and gargoyles, we can appreciate both the exquisite art and finish of the work, and the chastening effect of the hard granite in which it is executed. No detail of curve, moulding, or ornament, pertaining to this culminating

phase of gothic has been omitted, but at the same time the intractable material has curbed the tendency to exuberant and florid detail into which the style is apt to run in more easily wrought stone. Very beautiful, too, from here are the views, framed in hoary stone, over sea or sand to the horizon or to the green curve of coastal plain and the plateau behind.

Leaving the church by the north door we come to the cloisters, where we see the exuberant fancy of the thirteenth century craftsmen liberated from the restraints of granite. The colonettes of rose-coloured breccia, and the delicate underwrought carving in freestone of the spandrels, are masterpieces of handiwork, but out of character with the rest of the building; still more so is the new roof of glazed, particoloured tiles.

Adjoining is the beautiful refectory. Standing in the doorway we are at a loss to know how it is flooded with light, but on advancing see a window deeply recessed behind each of the sixty narrow, columned arches that form the sidewalls.

Descending, and passing through the two fine early gothic halls that served as almonry and cloisters until the thirteenth century, and the beautiful Chapel of St. Etienne, we arrive at the dim, rude Chapel of Notre Dame sous Terre, where it used to be thought we had some of the actual construction of the original church built by St. Aubert in the eighth century, the seed from which the vast, soaring structure has been evolved lying buried, as it were, among its roots. The present restorers, however, consider that anything that

may remain of this humble mother church is buried deeper yet, in the mass of masonry below the adjoining cistern.

A narrow passage between the wall and the rock leads hence to the Eglise Basse, or Crypte de Gros Piliers, which supports the enormous pile of masonry poised above. The whole plan of the upper church is reproduced in massive columns and vaulting, pillar beneath pillar, and groin under groin, an impressive illustration of the masterly and careful architecture of the builders. Wherever possible, the living rock has been utilised. One seems to be standing amid the foundations of the earth.

Close to this is the Salle des Hôtes, which with its great twin fireplaces at one end, and range of graceful columns down the centre—seeming incredibly slender for the vaulting that springs from them, yet giving no notion of strain or risk—is as fine an example of domestic gothic as exists.

Adjoining this is the magnificent Salle des Chevaliers, the common-room of the community, divided into four vaulted aisles by three rows of columns. It received its present name in the fifteenth century, when Louis XI here instituted the Order of the Knights of St. Michael. Two large pillared halls below this were the cellar and almonry.

The three storeys of the cellar and almonry, the Salles des Chevaliers and des Hôtes, the cloisters and refectory, form the lofty building known as la Merveille, the great design of Abbot Jourdain, which it is marvellous to think was executed in nineteen years.

The exterior is singularly noble in outline and proportions. It is the main subject of Sketch 19, taken from the King's Tower at the north-east angle of the ramparts. The eastern pinnacles of the church rise behind it on the left, below are the Chatelet and barbican gateways, and on the right the *échauguette* or watch-tower. The trees seen on the northern slope claim to be the sole representatives of the vast forest of Scissy, which once covered the area of the present bay.

It is a pleasant barefoot walk at low tide to Tombelaine, an islet lying about two miles north of Mont St. Michel, of which it looks a rough understudy. It was twice occupied by the English during their unsuccessful siege of the Mount. On its granite rocks, amid abundant wildflowers, are some vestiges of old fortifications. According to a most irresponsible legend, these are not the only vanished architecture of which it was the site. It is said that in the early centuries of Christianity, when the two rocks still stood in the Forest of Scissy, where innumerable cœnobites and hermits had their retreats, Satan disguised as a pilgrim was roaming about to beguile their souls. The watchful archangel, who already had his eye on the great rock that was to bear his name, confronted him in his baleful work, and proposed an attractive spiritual gamble. It was agreed that all these anxious souls should fall to him who could raise the finest building in the forest. It was a lordly prize, and

the evil one exerted all his diabolical art and craft to win it. Slowly and majestically, a stately pile rose on the ancient Mount of Belenus; St. Michael did nothing, he seemed quite oblivious of the sorely bestead souls whose destiny he had so lightly wagered. Midnight on the longest night of the year had been fixed for deciding the fateful competition. The hour came, and the two champions met. With just pride Satan conducted his old chief to the stately structure, crowning the mount very much as we see it to-day, and triumphantly asked what he had to show to compare with it. With serene confidence the archangel turned and pointed to the rock of Tombelaine. Lo, glittering in the moonlight, stood a shining edifice of sculptured towers, pinnacles and buttresses, soaring spires and solemn domes, rising in intricate harmony. Gnashing his teeth with rage, the evil one acknowledged himself vanquished. As though commiserating his chagrin, St. Michael proposed that they should exchange handiwork. The devil was delighted, and hastened with a few select friends to take possession of his bright abode. This naturally raised the temperature, and soon there were little rifts in the Satanic satisfaction, and in the edifice. The exquisite sculpture of the interior lost shape and sharpness; here and there a fragment fell to the ground; moisture trickling down the walls, and dripping from the ceiling, made the distinguished company think regretfully of the central heating to which they were accustomed. But worse, much worse, was to follow. The long night at length was spent, and

FROM THE JARDIN DES PLANTES, AVRANCHES

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no sooner did the rays of the rising sun glint on the fairylike building, than like the insubstantial fabric of a vision, it commenced to fall to rack and ruin. The delicate sculpture and tracery vanished into the air; then a spire crashed to the ground, a tower toppled over, domes and walls fell in. The gorgeous edifice was, in fact, built of ice; before the day was far advanced it had entirely disappeared, and the poor deluded devil was left shivering on the rocks, having only the sorry consolation that he had signally discredited the maxim that honesty is the best policy.

A popular extension of the legend relates that it was agreed that Satan should have his own again if ever the church became a prison. At the commencement of last century, after the first instalment of prisoners, a black-hulled, sailless craft, vomiting clouds of smoke, was seen advancing across the bay. The good people of the mount were greatly concerned, thinking that Satan was coming into residence, but it proved to be only the first steamship that had been seen in those parts, bringing a batch of prisoners, and burning very bad coal.

The pleasant road from Pontorson to Avranches passes by Servon with a church and castle of the sixteenth century, the castle with a fine gateway of the twelfth; Janis, where is an old church with a new tower, and a Romanesque chapel turned into a barn; Pontalbault, with its fine old bridge of eleven arches over the Sélune, here commencing to be tidal;

and finally climbs steeply to Avranches, finely placed on the end of a promontory that projects from the plateau into the strip of coastal plain.

Avranches may be called the crown and symbol of the Côte d'Emeraude. In its wide prospect of hazy sea and verdant land, its grey streets and shady gardens, its absence of picturesque pretension, and pervasion of homely pleasantness, it sums up and represents the region. Strongly placed at the entrance to Normandy from Brittany, it has had an ample share in the stirring history of the duchy, but the Avranches that now is may be called an altogether modern town. Beyond a few fragments of wall and tower, there is not an old building in it. Yet, despoiled and discrowned, shorn of its bishopric, dismantled of its castle and ramparts, it still has an indefinable suggestion of the historic past of which hardly a relic remains, a respectable well-to-do air of notability and long descent, which, combined with its striking situation, with the lovely views that close the vista of its streets, and are spread below its terraces, give it a singular note of distinction and amenity.

The centre of the town life is the Place Littré, formerly an esplanade in front of the principal gateway of the city. Some dozen years ago it was planted with avenues of limes, which may in time rival their lofty and umbrageous neighbours in the charming garden of the old bishopric, which forms one side of the irregular quadrangle; two other sides are lined with shops and restaurants; the fourth is filled with the Hôtel de Ville, which contains a large

library rich in MSS. including a copy of Domesday Book.

In the Bishop's Garden is a colossal statue of General Valhubert, a restrained and stately work by Cartelier. The refined and thoughtful face seems gazing into the heart of battle with comprehending eyes. This is not the only monument to Valhubert; another, confided by its inscription to the vanquished foe, stands on the field of Austerlitz, where he was slain in the moment of victory. He was more than a mere soldier, and had he not felt the call to arms in 'that tremendous time,' would probably have made a name in science and literature.

By lanes of clipped hornbeam in the Bishop's Garden we mount to the magnificent site of the cathedral, which collapsed one night in 1720, in consequence of a cutting made in its walls for some alterations. Stretched round with chains suspended from inverted colonettes of the old building, is an irregular slab of pink granite from its threshold, known as *la pierre Henri II.* Here, after the murder of Thomas Becket, the most mundane and masterful sovereign of his day humbled himself to the ground before the legate of the mightier potentate who ruled men's spirits from distant Rome.

Close by is a spirited monument to natives of Avranches who have died for their country in war; a rifleman below marks some distant foe before aiming, another above holds aloft the flag of France.

The law courts are now installed in the old Episcopal Palace. The chapel, an excellent little structure of

granite—the only old gothic remaining in Avranches—serves as a *salle des pas perdus;* a spiral staircase on one side of it descends to the old kitchen which, the palace having been built on the slope of the hill, gets light of day on the garden side. Here is an interesting collection of gothic sculpture saved from the wreck of the cathedral. On the walls are English graffiti, said to have been made by prisoners of war confined here.

The fallen cathedral has been lately in some sort replaced by the erection at the other end of the city of the church of Notre Dame des Champs, a successful granite building, which combines early and late gothic features without any undue air of anachronism. The stained glass windows from Evreux are good examples of the modern art in France. The white plaster walls of the interior need, and will doubtless receive, fresco colouring, which it is to be hoped will be in deep, subdued tints to harmonize with the brown-grey stone.

In front of this is the beautiful Jardin des Plantes, the garden of an old Capuchin convent. From its terraces we have an extensive view; in front the vast amphitheatre of the bay, Mont St. Michel and Tombelaine enisled at its edge, the long curve of the Breton and Norman coasts, dotted with villages and towers, stretching into the haze on either side; behind is the plateau of pasture and woodland; immediately below is the river Sée, a shining riband of water winding amid yellow sands; as it reaches the sea the Sélune joins

it on the left. The flat, green land around has been the immemorial battlefield of the two rivers and the sea ; time after time they have strewn it with fruitful earth, on which forest has grown thick, and man has pastured his flocks and sown his seed ; the devouring sea in some cataclysm of storm and tide has drowned it again ; and again the resolute and patient rivers have set about the work of reclamation.

Avranches well merits its appellation of *la ville des fleurs*. Apart from the beautiful public, and many large private gardens, the grey city is interwoven with greenery and blossom, nooked in little railed courts in front of the houses, or walled yards behind them, terraced on the edges and steep slopes of the hill, or behind fragments of the old city wall. Two round towers and some massive walls of the old castle, which stand on a rocky eminence in the north part of the town, have been filled with earth and made into charming terraced gardens.

Just below Avranches is the village of Genêts, whence is the most interesting approach to Mont St. Michel. You drive for about four miles over the sands in a light cart with high, broad-tyred wheels and two horses, harnessed tandem ; a man armed with a trident runs barefoot in front, testing the firmness of the sand, and the driver follows carefully in his footsteps. The sands are largely exploited for manure known as *tangue ;* in addition to siliceous sand, it contains much organic and mineral matter. At Genêts is a fine old manor house, with façade of sculptured stone.

The villagers have a traditional form of la crosse that resembles cricket, the stumps are called *jax*, the ball *horret*.

It is a delightful ride from Genêts to Granville, passing the pleasant little watering places of Jean le Thomas, Carolles, Jallouville, St. Pair, Hagueville. Various digressions may be made inland, as to the Artists' Valley near Carolles, and the village of Bouillon, nestling in verdure, with a church of the eleventh century. An apple tree grows out of its tower, forty feet from the ground; though it is said to be a hundred years old, it gives an abundant annual crop of fruit. The cliff scenery to the left of the route is often very fine.

Granville—where the Côte d'Emeraude is considered to end—is an old-fashioned little grey town, built on a rocky promontory that juts westward into the Channel and is almost separated from the main plateau by a great cleft known as the Tranchée des Anglais; the Monaco of the North, it is not inaptly called. Nearly on the apex of the rock is its church of Notre Dame, a severe, sombre edifice in granite, which almost seems hewn out of the rock it stands on. The grey, storm-beaten cliffs are draped with ivy, wallflower, pinks and other rock plants. On the south side three artificial basins make a port, which is presided over by a bronze statue of Pléville le Pelley—'Mousse, Corsaire, Officier de Vaisseau, Amiral, Ministre de la Marine, 1726–1805'—looking the mildest mannered

man that ever scuttled ship, or cut a throat. Under the cool north side nestles the Casino by a long beach of sand, which in summer is crowded with bathers, idlers, and happy little people having the grandest time that ever was, engrossed in the hundred industries and adventures that sand, sea, and rocks furnish in the golden age of life; here are lilliputian works of engineering, fortifications, canals, and all human architecture from pyramids to casinos.

Floating mistily in the distance like a herd of sea monsters, are the Chausey Islands, which furnish an interesting excursion. Little steamers run thither from Granville in about an hour. The village of Blainvillais on the largest island is mainly hewn out of the rock. On an eminence that dominates the whole archipelago are the imposing ruins of an old castle; near the south end is a more modern, but now disused, fortress. In the centre of the island are the beautiful grounds of *la Ferme;* owing to the mild climate, oranges, figs, olives and other Mediterranean flora grow in the open air all the year round, if only they be afforded shelter from the wind.

There are said to be fifty-four islets, without counting those that emerge at low tide. Many are the lives risked and lost in saving, or vainly trying to save, those who are driven on their cruel teeth of gneiss and granite. Often the salvage is left to those whose place in other communities would be the fireside corner or the schoolroom; sometimes the curé is the only able-bodied man in the boat that puts off with a forlorn hope of rescue, all but the very old and the

very young are risking their lives far and wide upon the sea ; the oars are manned by hoary veterans and sturdy lads, perhaps a woman makes up the crew. Over and over again the boat may be swamped or beaten back ; sometimes all efforts to launch it fail, and the baffled islanders tell the curé, who, with the confidence of active manhood, is perhaps the last to desist, that nothing can be done. He points upwards and says 'There is always God.' All know what he means as they follow him up the rugged side of some bluff or hillock by the shore. Some one has hurried to the sacristy of the little church for the simple accessories of the last rites. Hastily the curé puts the priestly vestment over his drenched garments, takes in his hand the needless book for the office that he knows too well. If it be night some one stands by him with a flickering lantern ; the others crowd behind with bare, bent heads, and the air of stolid resignation to the irresistible and incomprehensible, common to all populations who live in constant touch with the powers of nature, and are never allowed to forget that in the midst of life they are in death. Through the driving storm, the doomed men, clinging to riven spar and fraying cordage, catch the gleam of the light, see perhaps the fluttering surplice and uplifted cross, and know that their spirits are not alone in their last voyage across the dim horizon of reality.

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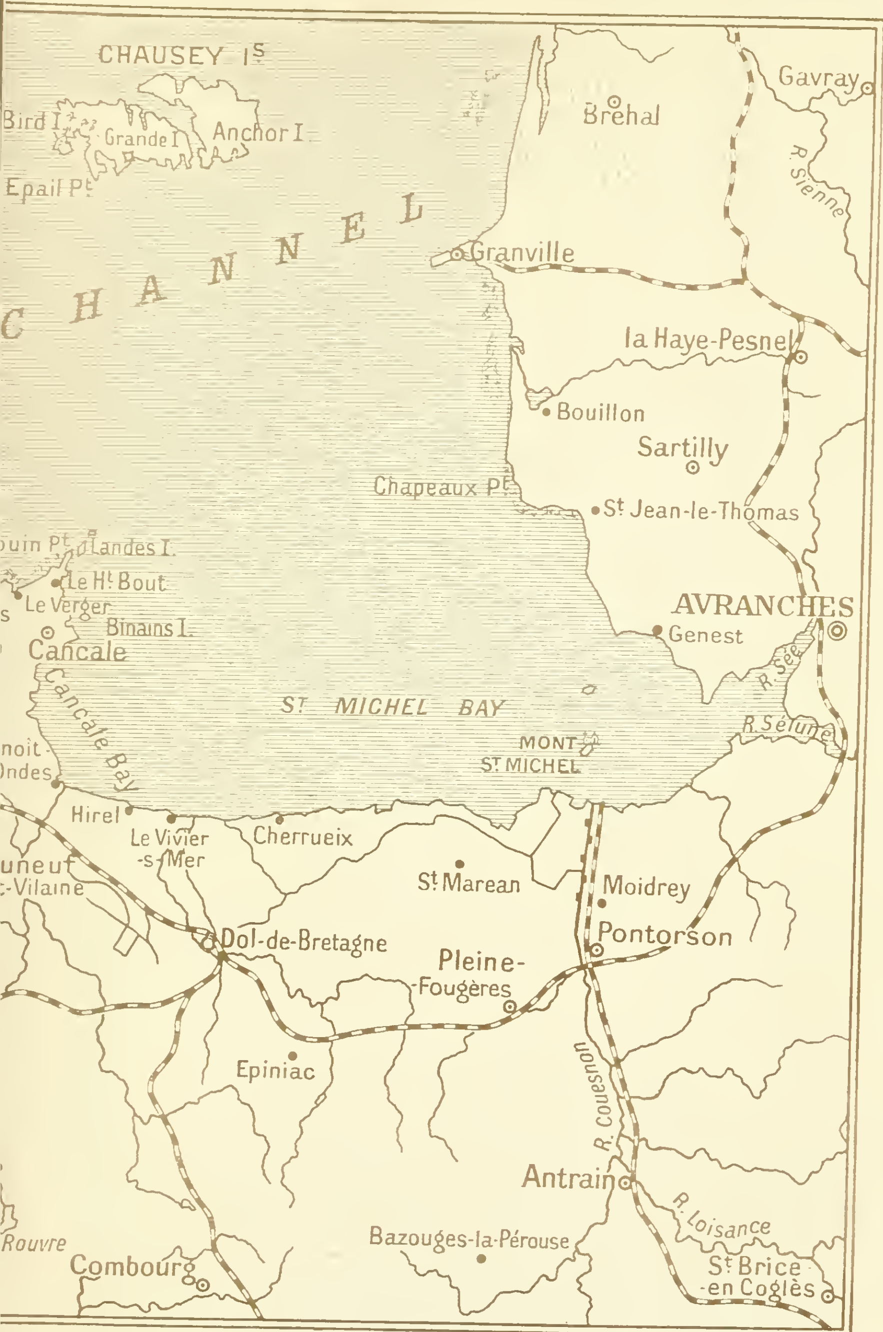

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