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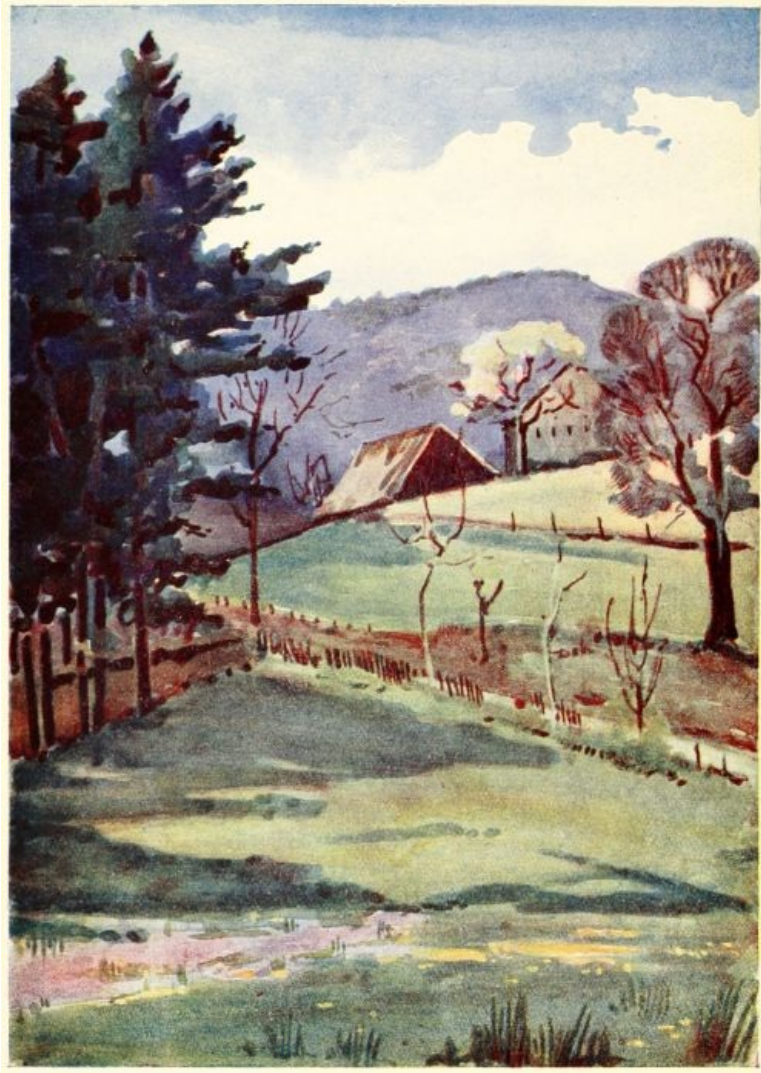
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BURGUNDY: THE SPLENDID DUCHY.
STORIES AND SKETCHES IN SOUTH BURGUNDY ***

BURGUNDY: THE SPLENDID DUCHY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR
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MONT BEUVRAY.

Frontispiece

BURGUNDY: THE SPLENDID DUCHY

STORIES AND SKETCHES IN SOUTH BURGUNDY

BY

PERCY ALLEN

AUTHOR OF "IMPRESSIONS OF PROVENCE" ETC.

Fully illustrated with eight water-colour and 86 line drawings
by Miss Marjorie Nash

LONDON

FRANCIS GRIFFITHS

34 MAIDEN LANE, STRAND, W.C.

1912



TO M.

TANT L VAUT, the Virgin
name,
Five hundred years ago,
On stately hall and tower
aflame,
Blazoned in gold, bade all
acclaim
Her worth in high Rochepot.

Here above London's roar I sit,
To watch the splendour flow
O'er myriad roof-trees glory-lit,
And read,—with golden fingers
writ—
A sunset's TANT L VAUT.

Darkness and stars begin to
be,
Light leaves the world below;
Turning, a gracious form I see,
And vesper music wakes in me
—

Ma deboinaire, très douce
amie,
Seule Etoile, TANT L VAUT.



I have to thank very cordially my friend, Monsieur François Fertault, for his kindness in permitting me to make use of the valuable material comprised in his charming books upon rural Burgundy; and I have also to thank M. A. de Charmasse and his publisher, M. Dejussieu, of Autun, for placing at my disposal the information contained in that author's *Précis Historique* to "Autun et ses Monuments" and in the archeological portion of the same work, written by the late M. H. de Fontenay, a book which I recommend to those who wish to study fully the stones of that interesting city.

I have also to acknowledge the kindness of Mm. Mame & Fils, of Tours, in granting permission to translate the Burgundian legends, "Le Creux du Diable," "Le Puits de St. Martin," and "L'Abbaye de St^e. Marguerite," by the late Abbé B——, published by that house: also the courtesy of M. Gabriel Hanotaux, of the French Academy, and of his publishers, Messrs. Hachette, of Paris, in permitting the reproduction of a portrait of Philippe le Bon (p. 191) from his recent work on Jeanne d'Arc. My thanks are due, too, to M. Perrault-Dabot, who kindly allows me to make use of the engraving of Cluny (p. 72) from his work "L'Art en Bourgogne."

If the support given to this volume on South Burgundy justifies me in doing so, I hope, before very long, to follow it by a second, dealing with the northern part of the duchy.

Among the works consulted in writing this book are the following:—

LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED

THE DATES REFER TO THE EDITION MADE USE OF

Olivier de la Marche	"Mémoires"	1819
Olivier de la Marche	"Le Chevalier délibère."	1842
C. R. de Caumont de la Force	"Histoire secrète de la Bourgogne"	1694
Brugière de Barante	"Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne de la Maison de Valois"	1825-6
Ernest Petit	"Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne, de la Race Capétienne" 9 vols.	1835-1905
Dom Urbain Plancher	"Histoire Générale de la Bourgogne." 4 vols.	1739-81
Philippe de Comines	"Chroniques", etc. 5 vols.	
Claude Courtépée	"Voyages en Bourgogne"	1905
Claude Courtépée	"Description du Duché de Bourgogne"	1775-85
A. Kleinclausz	"Histoire de la Bourgogne."	1909
A. Kleinclausz	"Régions de la France; La Bourgogne"	
Francis Miltoun	"Castles and Châteaux of Old Burgundy"	1909
Sir G. F. Duckett (Bart.)	"Abbey of Cluny"; 1839 "Charters and Records"	1888
P. Lorrain	"Essai Historique sur L'Abbaye de Cluny"	1839
J. Pignot	"Histoire de L'Ordre de Cluny" 3 vols.	1868
A. Penjon	"Cluny; La Ville et L'Abbaye"	
Cistercian Monk	"A Concise History of the Cistercian Order"	1852
H. Collins	"The Cistercian Fathers"	
M. T. Ratisbonne	"Histoire de Saint Bernard"	1843
G. Chevallier	"Histoire de St. Bernard"	1888
François Fertault	"Rimes Bourguignonnes"	1899
François Fertault	"Histoire d'un Chant Populaire Bourguignon"	1883
François Fertault	"En Bourgogne; Récits Villageois"	1898
François Fertault	"Une Noce d'Autrefois en Bourgogne"	1892
François Fertault	"Le Cher Petit Pays"	1903
A. Perrault-Dabot	"L'Art en Bourgogne"	1897
A. Perrault-Dabot	"Le Patois Bourguignon"	
P. G. Hamerton	"Round my House"	

P. G. Hamerton		"The Mount"	1897
H. de Fontenay	}	"Autun et ses Monuments"	1889
and	}		
A. de Charmasse	}	"Autun et ses Monuments, Précis Historique"	1889
Joseph Déchelette		"Guide des Monuments D'Autun"	1907
Joseph Déchelette		"L'Oppidum de Bibracte"	
Alphonse Germain		"Les Néerlandais en Bourgogne"	1909
M. L'Abbé B——		"Légendes Bourguignonnes"	1872
M. L'Abbé B——		"Tebsuma"	1872
Lettres d'Abailard et d'Héloïse; Nouveau recueil, etc.			1720
Matthew Arnold's Poems			1885
Jules Baux		"Richesses Historiques et Archéologiques sur L'Eglise de Brou"	1844
Camille Jullian		"Vercingetorix"	1902
Camille Jullian		"Histoire de Gaule"	1908
Camille Jullian		"Tableau sommaire de la Gaule sous la domination romaine."	1892
S. Cambray		"Lamartine; A Study"	1890
Lamartine		"Confidences; A Study"	1849
Lamartine		"Le Tailleur de Pierre de Saint Point; A Study"	1851
Michelet		"Histoire de France"	
Viollet-le-Duc		"Dictionnaire Raisonné"	

Although the history of Burgundy is intimately connected with that of England—the policy of the Valois Dukes, for example, affected profoundly our national destinies during the hundred years' war—the average English reader's knowledge of the subject is contained within the four corners of a wine list. He knows Beaune—knows the name well, as that of a drinkable brand, may have blessed it in his heart, when a ray from the shaded lamp shot through its ruby depths. If by any chance he loves Meredith, he may, even, under its kindly influence, have whispered to his fair partner, Dr. Middleton's phrase: "Burgundy has great genius; Burgundy sings the inspired ode." But should his lady slip in a question concerning this ruddy heartener of man, he could not answer; he would stumble between the Côte d'Azur and the Côte d'Or.

Not another town of Burgundy could he name. Dijon he knows, and remembers; because there he scalded his throat with hot coffee, gulped down, at three in the morning, on the way home from the Riviera; or, bound for Switzerland, he may have passed through the town. But he does not know Dijon as a Burgundian Capital, nor as a proud city of royal palaces and unrivalled sculpture. At most, when he hears the duchy named, there floats through his mind a shadowy memory of Henry V., or of King Lear.^[1]

Yet Burgundy was the scene of events vital in the making of Europe. It was one of the strongholds of Roman civilization. It saw the genesis of a religious movement that was the greatest feature of eleventh and twelfth century history. Cluny was a nursery of popes; Cîteaux became a breeding ground of saints; their abbots lorded it over mighty kings; they dictated to potentates and princes; they bent all western Europe beneath their sway. Bernard's eloquence fired three nations with enthusiasm for the second crusade.

That Power, when it had passed from the great monastic houses, fell later, in a modified form, to the Valois Dukes. Safely housed in Dijon, or in Bruges, ruling a people sheltered, to some extent, from the appalling disasters that were transforming the fair kingdom of France into a howling wilderness, they kept a more than royal state. Gathering about their persons a great company of distinguished artists and valiant knights, they established a school of sculpture unmatched in their time; they held pageants and tournaments the most brilliant that chivalry had ever seen.

[Pg x]

Headstrong and ambitious, they challenged the crown of France, and defied it; they dreamed dreams of a Burgundian empire extending eastward beyond the Alps and northward to the Channel.

'Tis true that these ambitions were never sated. The house of Valois had not the constructive mind of which empire is begotten: moreover, Destiny, and Louis XI., were too strong for them. But the glorious tale of ducal efforts towards that goal outshines all other sunset splendours of dying mediævalism.

When I think of what might be made of such a theme, I could tear these pages, because my best is not better.

Yet history does not end the attractions of Burgundy. It only begins them. Nature, too, has her pageant "in this best garden of the world," she will hold you here, whether you choose the delicious, poplar-fringed plains of the Saône, the "waterish" Burgundy that the French king sneers at in "Lear"—he would have gloried in the land had it been his own—or the stern and silent hills of the Jura and the Morvan; or the vine-clad slopes of sunny Côte d'Or.

But, best of all, this land and its people have a character wholly their own. You will not feel here the twilight melancholy of Celtic Brittany; the quivering, electric atmosphere of romantic Provence; nor the passionate intensity of dark Languedoc; but you will find a country well typified by its wines, its sculpture, its architecture—a solid, ample, full-bodied, full-blooded land; a people strong and vivacious, concealing, beneath a somewhat harsh and stern exterior, a cheerful heart and an abundant generosity; comfortable, courageous, eloquent, sonorous folk, that love a good dinner, and a good story to follow, that have produced a Bernard, a Bossuet, and a Lamartine.

The key to this Burgundian character, with its blend of Gallic, Latin, and German elements, the key to Burgundian history, too, is the geographical position of the country. Its great water-ways flow northward, by the Yonne, to the English Channel, and southward, by the Saône, to the Mediterranean and the traffic of the East; along its valleys run the great trading roads and railways connecting northern and southern, eastern and western Europe. With the exception of the Jura, no natural barriers exist between Burgundy and the adjoining lands. It was open at all quarters; from every point of the compass it borrowed, and it lent. Michelet's visionary thought has summed up, in a splendid phrase, the secret of Burgundy. He says, speaking of the country round Dijon: "La France n'a pas d'élément plus liant, plus capable de réconcilier le nord et le midi."

[Pg xi]

There you have it. To reconcile the bitter antagonisms of north and south, and, in a lesser degree, of east and west, was Burgundy's destiny; the geographical position that enabled her to do so was at once the source of her greatness, and the cause of her fall. While she remained independent, unity was impossible for France; and England's peace was imperilled by irresistible temptations to attack a weakened neighbour.

In writing this book, I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to preserve historical continuity. That

must be my excuse for geographical flights which, else, might bewilder my readers.

My hope is that these pages may awaken, here and there, lasting interest in a land that, whether for varied scenery, sunny climate, good living, characteristic architecture, or, above all, historical associations of the first importance, can hold its own with any other ancient province of France.

Footnotes:

- [1] Henry V., Act V., Scene 2; King Lear, Act I., Scene 1.

CHAPTER I

BENEATH THE MOUNT

The Hiring at St. Léger—Distant Beuvray—Fun of the Fair—A mad wolf—Legends of the Mount—Gaulish Bibracte—St. Martin at Beuvray—La Pierre de la Vivre—Legend of the Wivern—The Curé of Monthelon 1

CHAPTER II

THE ROMAN CITY

A Suffering Cow—Temple of Janus—The Aedui—Druids—Divitiacus and Dumnorix—Vercingetorix—The Founding of Augustodunum—Pierre de Couhard—Francis I. at Couhard—The Plan of Augustodunum—Temple of Janus—Restoration—Origin of the Name—Roman Gates—Porte d'Arroux—Porte St. André—Date of Construction—Porte des Marbres—Vagaries of Peasant guides 11

CHAPTER III

THE ROMAN CITY (CONTINUED)

French Passion for Statues—Roman Temple at Autun—Ecoles Méniennes—The Capitol—The Roman Theatre—Two Ways of Lunching—Promenade des Marbres—The Amphitheatre 31

CHAPTER IV

THE ROMAN CITY (CONTINUED)

Christian Autun—Relics of Lazarus—Translation of the Relics—Tomb of Lazarus—Exterior of Cathedral St. Lazare—The Porch—The Interior—Romanesque and Gothic—The East End—Imbecile Restorations—The Capital—St. Symphorien by Ingres—Story of St. Symphorien—Fontaine St. Lazare—Hotel Rolin—The Museums—Napoleon at the Hotel St. Louis—No charge for Moonlight 41

CHAPTER V

THE MOTHER ABBEY

Cluny and Citeaux—Cluny still the Abbey—The Birth of Cluny—Duke William's Anathema—Odon—Legend of the Crumbs—Legend of the Boar—Growth of Cluny—Birth of Hugues—St. Odilon—Hildebrand—Glory of Cluny—The Monk's Vision—The new Abbey—Consecration—Gifts—Description of New Cluny—The Narthex—The Interior—Conventual Buildings—Ambulatorium Angelorum—The Rule of Cluny—Monkish life at Cluny—Pierre Damien—Death of St. Hugues—Luxury and Decadence 59

CHAPTER VI

THE MOTHER ABBEY (CONTINUED)

Cluny of To-day—Palace of Pope Gélase—The remaining Transept—Chapelle Bourbon—Tour du Moulin—Tour des Fromages—Gate of the Narthex—The Abbey Gate—Notable Visitors to Cluny—Palais abbatial—Musée—Hotel de Ville—Romanesque Houses—Hotel des Monnaies—Eglise St. Marcel—Hotel Dieu—Bouillon Monument—Prud'hon—Women of Burgundy—Hotel de Bourgogne—An amusing Evening—A Dream—Berzé-le-Châtel—Castle of Lourdon—St. Point—A Poet's Garden—Lamartine's Home—Tramaye 86

CHAPTER VII

MORE POPE THAN YOU

Decadent Cluny—Birth of St. Robert—Abbey of Molême—The Founding of Citeaux—White Robes—Black Scapular—Stephen's Vision—The Coming of St. Bernard—His Appearance—Legend of His Birth—Bernard converts his Family—Bernard a Cistercian—His Austerities—Rise of Citeaux—Daughter Abbeys—Ceremony of Foundation—Character of Bernard—Cistercian Ideals—Self-sacrifice—Simplicity—Bernard's Letter to Pierre le Vénérable—Visitors to Citeaux—Albigensian Crusade—Citeaux's Crime—A Cistercian Site—Citeaux to-day—The Chapter—My Flemish Guide 111

CHAPTER VIII CLUNY'S DAUGHTER

Monkish Paray—"Une Simple Formalité"—Burgundian Manners—Clothes and the Woman—Hotel de Ville—Church of Paray—Splendid Example of Clunisian School—"Diorama-Musée"—Burgundian English—North Door—Porch—Interior—Blasphemy and kindred Matters—A very young Mule—A Snake-charmer [127](#)

CHAPTER IX HER THREE CROWNS

Chalon-Sur-Saône—River Pageants—Gontran—Abbey of St. Marcel—The Story of Bertille [136](#)

CHAPTER X ABELARD AND HELOISE

Church of St. Marcel—Story of Abélard and Héloïse—Olivier de la Marche—Tournament of la Dame des Pleurs—Tournament of 1273—Modern Chalon-Sur-Saône—Eglise St. Vincent [145](#)

CHAPTER XI TOURNUS BY THE SAONE

Abbey of St. Philibert—Oldest Clunisian Porch—Interior of St. Philibert—A Change of Author—The Record of Raoul Glaber—Raoul's Visions—Famine in Burgundy—Human Vampires—In a Tournusian Café—"Au Point du Jour"—Greuze—Morning and Evening on the Saône—Mâcon [160](#)

CHAPTER XII THE VALLEY OF THE OUCHE

A Page of Dialogue—Castle of Marigny—Legend of Tebsima—Albéric—Labussière—Albéric's Dream—Aid from Citeaux—The new Church—Modern Labussière—A magnificent Mansion—Antigny-le-Chatel—A Vignerons' Wedding—Arnay-le-Duc—Study in Roofs and Colours—A charming Town—The Goats—The Poor Man—The Hotel Chrétien—Around Arnay [173](#)

CHAPTER XIII THE CITY OF THE DUKES

Unknown Dijon—The City in 1364—Philip le Hardi—His jewelled Coats—The Madness of the Period—Costume of that Day—Madness of King Charles—Philip's Patronage of Art—Chartreuse de Champmol—Puits de Moïse—Portal of the Chapel—Claus Slater and his Nephew—Tombs of Philip le Hardi and Jean sans Peur—The Pleurants—Character of Jean sans Peur—Murder of Duke of Orleans—Whitewashing—Armagnacs and Burgundians Revenge [184](#)

CHAPTER XIV CITY OF THE DUKES (CONTINUED)

Salle des Gardes—Dijon Castle—A new Post-Office—Final Struggle between Charles le Téméraire and Louis XI—Characters of both Men—Defeats and Death of Charles—Discovery of the Body—Victorious René—Louis' Joy—New Castles—Entry into Dijon—End of Burgundian Dreams—Modern Dijon—St. Bénigne—St. Michel—Notre Dame Jacquemart—Ducal Palace and Kitchen—Sketching—Palais de Justice—Plombières—Talant—Fontaine-lez-Dijon—Memories of Bernard—Tournament of Tree of Charlemagne [203](#)

CHAPTER XV THE DEVIL'S PIT

Easter Morning—Lux—The Devil's Pit—Dialogue—The Legend—Serve him right! [221](#)

CHAPTER XVI BEAUNE AND THE COTE D'OR

"Bits" in Beaune—Notre Dame—Hotel Dieu—An Earthly Paradise—Exterior—Courtyard—Chapel—Devices—Roger Van der Weyden's "Last Judgment"—Nicholas Rolin—Guigonne [230](#)

CHAPTER XVII SAINT MARTIN'S WELL AND THE LEGEND OF SAINT MARGUERITE

Bouilland—Abbey of Sainte Marguerite—The Legend—Vineyards of the Côte d'Or—Meursault—Rocheport—Story of Philippe Pot—Crusader's Return—His Marriage at Dijon—Tant L Vaut—A Talk at Auxey-le-Grand—Through Côte d'Or by Train—Cussy-la-Colonne—Bewitched—The Column—A Democratic Journey—St. Martin's Well—Legend of St. Martin's Well [237](#)

[Pg xv]

[Pg xvi]

CHAPTER XVIII IN RURAL BURGUNDY

The Road to Verdun—Burgundian Folk-song, "Eho!"—Its Story—Verdun sur le Doubs—The First of March—Burgundian Folk-Lore—Teillage—Winter Scene—An old-time Burgundian Wedding—The Patois—François Fertault Rolin—[258](#)
Guigonne

CHAPTER XIX A LAKE IN THE JURA

Swiss Burgundy—Scenes in the Jura—Nantua from the Hills—Real Burgundy—A capable Woman—Church of Nantua [272](#)

CHAPTER XX PRINCESS MARGARET'S CHURCH

Bourg-en-Bresse—Signs of the South—Conveyances—Monument Historique—Cezenat—Princess Margaret's Church—Exterior—Interior—Story of Princess Margaret—Loys von Boghen—Death of Margaret—The Meaning of her [276](#)
Church—The Tombs—Paradin's Chronique de Savoie—Francis I. at Bourg

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

[Pg xvii]

	PAGE
Mont Beuvray	Frontispiece
A Gaulish Soldier	1
On Mont Beuvray	7
The Wivern	10
The Porte St. André	11
Autun; shewing Cathedral and Mediæval Towers	17
Autun; Pierre de Couhard	19
Autun; Temple of Janus	23
Autun; Porte d'Arroux	25
Burgundian Peasant	30
Head of Augustus	31
Autun; Mediæval Towers	35
A Burgundian Welcome	38
Masks of Comedy and Tragedy	40
Roman Vine Ornament	41
St. Lazarus; from the Porch of Autun Cathedral	46
Autun; Fontaine St. Lazare	Facing 50
Autun; Tour des Ursulines	52
Cluny Abbey and Gateway, as they were	59
Cluny; Valley of the Grosne and part of the Abbey Grounds	62
Cluny; Tour Fabri	64
Clunisian Ornament	67
God reproving Adam; from a capital of the Abbey of Cluny	70
Cluny Abbey, as it was at the beginning of XIXth Century (by permission of M. Perrault-Dabot)	72
Cluny; Clocher de l'Eau Bénite	78
Cluny; ruined Gate of the Narthex	81
A Jewelled Crucifix	85
Early Clunisian Ornament	86
Cluny; Tour des Fromages	87
Cluny; Gateway of the Abbey	90
Cluny; Hotel de Ville	92
Cluny; Pascal Lamb; twelfth century	93
Cluny; Hôtel des Monnaies, twelfth century	96
Ornament	99
Cluny; a Capital from the Abbey	102
Château de Berzé	104

[Pg xviii]

Château de Lourdon	106
House of Lamartine	110
St. Bernard	111
St. John: Burgundian School	119
Justice and Truth	126
Paray-le-Monial; the Church	127
Two Priests	128
Paray-le-Monial; North Door of the Church	132
Gontran and Bertille	136
Her Three Crowns	144
Abélard and Héloïse	145
Beaune; Maison Colombier	Facing 150
Chalon-Sur-Saône; Maison de Bois	159
The Saône near Tournus	160
A Street in Tournus	162
Tournus; the Abbey	170
By the Saône	172
Antigny-le-Chatel	173
Arnay-le-Duc; Corner House, sixteenth century	181
Arnay-le-Duc; Tour de la Motte Forte	Facing 182
Dijon	184
Dijon: at the Café	187
Moses; from the Puits de Moïse, Dijon	189
Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy	191
A Corner of the Tomb of Philippe le Hardi	193
Pleurants from the Tomb of Philippe le Hardi	194
Dijon; Corner of the Place des Ducs	197
Pleurant	199
Ornament	200
Sword	202
Dijon: Decorated windows of the Maison Milsand	203
Dijon Museum; Woman at Prayer	204
Dijon; a Street	Facing 208
Dijon; Door of Eglise St. Michel	211
Dijon; A Font in the Eglise St. Michel	212
Sculpture; Notre Dame de Dijon	213
Dijon; Well outside the Duke's Kitchen	214
Vine Ornament	215
Dijon; a fifteenth century Window	218
Ornament	219
Arbre Charlemagne	220

The Three Huntsmen	221
Through the Forest	225
Vine Ornament	230
Beaune; Belfry of the Hospice de la Charité	231
Beaune; Porch of Notre Dame	Facing 232
Beaune; Courtyard of the Hôtel Dieu	235
Star Ornament	236
Saint Martin and Saint Margaret	237
Ruins of St. Margaret's Abbey	239
La Rochepot	241
Beaune: Porch of the Hôtel-Dieu	Facing 242
Tomb of Philippe Pot	245
Taking his Ease	247
Roman Column at Cussy	251
Valley of Nantoux	254
St. Martin Preaching	257
Burgundian Ox-cart	258
In Rural Burgundy	261
Junction of Rivers Doubs and Saône	263
Oxen ploughing	Facing 264
Burgundian Cottage	267
Château de Moux	270
Nantua and the Lake	272
Nantua from the Hill	274
Princess Margaret's Tomb	276
Bourg; in the Street	278
Eglise de Brou: Ste. Madeleine from the Tomb of Marguerite d'Autriche	287
Eglise de Brou: Ornament from the Tomb of Marguerite d'Autriche	290
Princess Marguerite d'Autriche	292
Sketch Map of South Burgundy	293



CHAPTER I

We had expected quiet, rural times in this far-away village of St.-Léger-sous-Beuvray; but I doubt whether we shall get them. The village green in front of the Hotel du Morvan shows signs of unusual animation; it is dotted with carts, which are discharging tent-poles, canvas, golden cars, and other paraphernalia of a country festival; and, surer sign still, through the door of an open shed, I can see hanging, headless and lamentable, the gaping corpse of a fatted calf. Yes! there is his tawny countenance and two mild eyes looking down, like those of a martyred saint, from the cruel hook. The odour of him, wafted in succulent puffs, from the dead-house door, has cheered with a splendid hope half the dogs in the village, and awakened from torpor two ancient hounds, who prowl, almost youthfully, sniffing fragrant memories in the air.

"What is going to happen?" I asked the landlord, who was sharpening tools on a bench.

"'Tis the Louée, Monsieur, the hiring that takes place every year. All in the neighbourhood who want farm-hands, or domestic servants, and those who want places, come to-morrow morning and make bargains. And the Directeur of Enfants Assistés (Foundlings) is coming, too; he is to stop here at my hotel, and so his children get work."

We were up early the next morning. Only deaf men, or dead ones, sleep through a Louée. There came to us in our bedroom, with the sunshine, an indescribable babel of sounds—babble of voices, braying of trumpets, banging of drums. To a Londoner, strange methods of doing business!

[Pg 2]

We went out into the din and the sunshine to find the transformation complete. All the green was dotted with booths bright with gaudy trinkets of every imaginable colour; shooting galleries, and a hundred other sou-trapping devices. Before every inn had sprung up, as if by magic, a *salle de bal*, with a real wooden floor, and a little balcony for the musicians. There was a gipsy encampment, too, where, heedless of the din, a Romany sat upon the trunk of a fallen tree, methodically skinning hedgehogs with a knife; while his two small sons were unmethodically currey-combing the yellow pony, and dusting him down with his own tail, cut off and tied to a stick! The door of the caravan opened; there was a glimpse of a woman's arm, and a pailful of slops shot out, sparkling in the sun, to alight where fate might decree. Brown drops splashed up into the hollow eyes of Grandmother, dreaming on a chair by the steps. Meanwhile the peasants went on hiring and being hired; some sealing the bargain with a glass of red wine, in the Café; some, if the maid were comely, with a kiss. Peasants I call them, though, at first sight, this array of black blouses and black squash hats suggests a meeting of nonconformist parsons, rather than farmers of the Morvan. Yet one learns to accept them so, and to enjoy the deep, black shadows that lurk in the folds of the garments. Straw hats are few; but the white caps of the old ladies are there for contrast.

Wearied of the buzzing crowd, the nerve-racking crack of the rifles, we wandered out of the village, and sat by the edge of a ploughed field, where we watched, above a rampart of firs shot with spring greens, the purple mass of dark Beuvray lifting its crested summit into the cloudless sky,—mysterious Beuvray, whence of old, as darkness closed upon their homes, the wondering peasants in the valley, heard, from the mysterious mountain city above their heads, the sound of great gates creaking harshly upon their hinges.

But to-morrow is for Beuvray. To-day we will watch the long stream of peasants coming to the Fair, by the lanes that wind, up and down, among the buttress hills of the mount. They come on foot, in farm carts, on bicycles; but most of them come in little, trim donkey-carts; husband and wife sitting primly side by side, their tanned faces shewing strongly above the silently twitching, brown ears of the "baudet." Here is a family in a donkey-drawn washing-basket, three generations of them, packed like sardines. After *déjeuner*, when the hiring is done, the older ones leave; the turn of the younger is come. Then the *fillettes* begin to appear—*Fifines* made fine for the Fair—all cut after the same pattern, with white blouses below much be-ribboned straw hats;

[Pg 3]

each carrying, because of the mid-day sun, a grey jacket lined with light blue. These come tripping from village and hamlet, clinging to each other, with little toddlers holding their hands; all chattering, smiling, sweltering, happy. The fiddlers will be tuning up in the Salles de Bal.

So we followed the maids back to the village, and wandered again among the booths. An old, old lady, beside a not less ancient friend was nursing a tin mug. They were discussing bargains and their budget. "I got this for three sous; et je trouve que c'est bien solide." On that point she was cruelly deceived. But what matter? Thinking makes it so. What a popping of corks comes from the Café!

Bang! Bang!! Bang!! Bang!! Bang!!! The crowd surges toward a compelling din. Before the largest of the tents a half-naked, muscular ruffian stands silent upon a tub; beside him another, clad in shiny velveteens, shouts himself hoarse.

"Gentlemen, you all know that the 'lutte est le premier gymnastique du monde.' Come in then, and see. Our professor challenges all comers. He will wrestle with a great bear. Now for la lutte aux ours! Entrez; we will show you the véritable gorille, and the most terrible beast in the world, the Monstre du Pole Nord." And, indeed, above his head was writ in gold letters, the fearsome legend: "MONSTRE DU POLE NORD."

We went in, with other youths and maidens. The baby that followed us, shewing signs of strong emotion, was hastily removed by its mother.

"Up against the canvas, please gentlemen. La séance va commencer au milieu!"

We watched while, before the bars that held the four-legged animals, the naked bipeds struggled furiously; clutching, writhing, rolling, till the bare, oily skins were dark with perspiration and sawdust. Their eyes were so full of it, that, between the rounds, they were gouging it out with their knuckles. "Ca y est! Ca y est!" "At it again!"

[Pg 4]

"Bravo monsieur l'amateur, un petit bravo pour l'amateur"—with arms like telegraph posts—"le plus fort du pays." So it went on—the "lutte aux hommes," the "lutte aux ours."

For a full five minutes the sanded professor leant up against and pushed the furry mass of Jean Pierre, the feebly scratching, tangled bear, who was too bored to be méchant. From behind their bars the Monstre Du Pole Nord (a sloth bear) and "le véritable gorille" (a Barbary ape) grunted approval of their companion's efforts.

Through the crowded entrance we pushed our way into the largest of the Salles de Bal, bright with lit lamps and coloured ribbons. In a scarlet and green box, with a yellow diamond, slung to the roof of the tent, the fiddlers and viol players, sitting in their shirt-sleeves, squeaked and ground lustily. There was babble of voices and rhythmic scuffle of feet. A young soldier, fair and close-cropped, in uniform, crossed the salle, bowed to my wife, and asked for a dance. A moment's hesitation, and she was whirling round with the others. As he said to her at parting; "You are not in France every day." It was three in the morning before darkness and silence settled down upon St.-Léger-sous-Beuvray.

The next morning we rode to the Mount by a lane that, undulating, climbs, through pasture, arable, and woodland, among the buttress hills of Beuvray, to the Poirier aux Chiens, a lonely farmhouse, where we left our bicycles. Cyclists are rather worried hereabout by excitable dogs and hysterical sheep; but the former are not dangerous, as they are in Languedoc and other parts of the south of France; and we are happily free to-day from the dangers of two hundred years ago; as when, on the 18th of June, 1718, at nightfall, St. Léger was visited by a mad wolf from the top of Beuvray, that wounded and disfigured sixteen people, of whom all but one died of hydrophobia. The single exception was a woman, who had only been scratched by the animal's claws. After this incident a Confraternity of St. Hubert was established in connection with the Church, and by the authority of the bishop, for the destruction of wild beasts.^[2]

The easiest path by which those who are not familiar with the locality can climb Beuvray, is from the Croix du Rebout, nearly two kilometres beyond the Poirier aux Chiens, at the top of the col, just where the descent begins. Several other paths lead up to it; but as there are more than twenty miles of Gaulish roads intersecting on the tree-clad slopes of the Mount, it is very easy to lose yourself completely, as I did on my first visit; until there was nothing for it but to descend to the road and seek another path. My only consolation for those two hours of wasted energy was that, while lurching beside the forest path, I met, face to face, a red fox ambling jauntily on his way. How we stared at one another; and how I wished that, for once, he could talk.

[Pg 5]

But, "after all," the reader may ask, "Why climb Beuvray? When you are up there, what is to be seen but a view; and what mean these twenty miles of Gaulish roads through a wilderness of boughs?" To which pertinent question I reply, that in all France there is but one Beuvray.

You will find more romantic peaks in the Alpines of Provence, you will find grander, more striking mountains in volcanic Auvergne; in the Alps you will see summits, clothed in eternal snow, beside which the Mount is but a molehill; but nowhere will you find such a hill as this, whose flanks have echoed to the tramp of Cæsar's legions, whose crest, the council chamber of kings and generals, has flamed through long nights with the beacon fires of a great city. Nowhere else will you find a hill that the centuries have so peopled with dragon and saint, with phantom hound and spectre horseman, and have made as harmonious with legendary poetry and immemorial voices, as nature has made her woods vocal with whispering fern and wandering wind, with the ripple of the brook, and the stir of creeping things in the grass.^[3]

For this Beuvray is no other than Bibracte, the Gaulish oppidum that Cæsar speaks of as "Oppido

Aeduarum longe maximo et copiosissimo."^[4] Tradition, as I have said, had rumoured it for centuries as the site of an ancient city; but many had supposed that Autun was the place referred to, until the researches of M. Bulliot, the Antiquary of Hamerton's delightful work "The Mount," settled the problem once for all. Of the history of the last days of the town I will say something in the next chapter; for the present, let us be content to mount the rocky, rain-washed, Gaulish road that leads up, through interlacing boughs, to the "Grand Hotel des Gaulois," or, in other words, the little house and sheds near the summit, which the antiquary occupied while making his researches and excavations.

The path runs beside many of the most interesting discoveries, though nothing of the remains is to be seen, the owner having stipulated that all "fouilles" should be covered up, a precaution necessary in any event, if the primitive Gaulish homes of stones and wood, with mud for mortar, are ever to be preserved to a later posterity.^[5]

[Pg 6]

After passing the huts, you come, by a grassy woodland path winding up through ferns and bracken, to the terrace on the summit of the hill, now mercifully clear of the ubiquitous trees. Here, on the site of the ancient temple to the Dea Bibracte, one of the many Gaulish gods, M. Bulliot has erected a little chapel in Romanesque style, dedicated to St. Martin. Here, also, is a granite cross, with a carving of St. Martin performing an act of charity at the gate of Amiens; not far away is a memorial to M. Bulliot himself.

Tradition has given much prominence to the doings of St. Martin here, as elsewhere in France, and it seems probable that the saint did visit Bibracte, about the year 377, on his way to Autun. M. Bulliot, and other authorities, agree that he preached on the plateau of Beuvray, possibly from the Pierre de la Wivre; and the legend has it that here he overthrew a pagan temple, arousing thereby such fierce anger among the inhabitants, that he escaped only by a miraculous leap of his ass across the gorge of Malvaux (Mauvaise vallée) to the south-west of the Mount, where the animal's hoof-prints are still to be seen. Later I shall give fully a precisely similar legend concerning St. Martin in the valley of Nantoux.

When once we had got our bearings, and accustomed ourselves to the silence and solitude of the spot, we began to feel the charm of the lonely plateau, and to realize its attractions for those who would live close to nature and to the past. When I first visited it, on a bright autumn afternoon, not a leaf was astir upon the golden oaks, not a spray of the bramble trembled, not a rustle was heard among the dead ferns in the grass; only, from far away in the valley below, came the rumble of a cart-wheel, the crack of a sportsman's rifle in the distant woods.



"So still it was that I could almost hear
The sigh of all the sleepers in the world;
And all the rivers running to the sea."

[Pg 8]

I looked down through the fringing trees. For mile after mile the country lay golden before me, fields rising and falling, till they were lost in the eastern sky. There was little St. Léger, a toy village among tiny hills; there was the Etang de Poisson, a sapphire set in emeralds, and far away the evening sun flashing upon the spires of Autun Cathedral.^[6] The sound of a footstep broke the stillness. A youth was approaching me—a chétif, mis-shapen, shaking thing. He gazed on me with drooping jaw, and passed muttering—an idiot wandering through a night-mare world.

Then I, too, began to dream fantastic dreams, and to see spectres of the past, such as—the peasants tell you—still flit over the crest of Beuvray,—a white horse galloping at midnight, a loud voice commanding ghostly legions in Latin; shadowy riders, moving shades of mediæval knights and barons still climbing the stony paths to this their airy tilting ground. Winged gabble raches passed screaming over my head, and, from afar, baying in deep-mouthed thunder, I heard the hounds of the phantom hunter of Touleur.^[7]

But that was a thundery day last autumn, and this is a soft April evening, with a breeze in the leaves, and silver clouds afloat in a blue sky. Moreover, I am not alone.

We wandered back by the path along which we had come, and made our way to the Pierre de la Wivre, a curious, pointed rock rising from the plateau. Its sulphurous yellow colour is due to the lichen with which it is covered. From the green headland, surrounded with holly-bushes, on which it stands, you have magnificent views over rounded, village-dotted hills, whose brown-green upland fields nestle up to the dark forests that crown every summit. Up from the valleys come the shouts of the teamsters urging on the slow, pale oxen.

This Pierre de la Wivre shows signs of man's handling, and has probably been the scene of human sacrifices, and of other ancient religious rites. We asked ourselves whether there may not have been some religious significance in the surrounding belt of holly bushes, since there are indications of a similar belt round the chapel of St. Martin. Perhaps the holly tree was sacred to the Gauls. Sitting upon the stone we recalled the legend as told by Hamerton.^[8]

[Pg 9]

"The peasants believe that the Wivern dwells near it in a hidden cavern guarding its treasure, but that once a year the cavern opens and the Wivern goes out, leaving the treasure unguarded. As to the time of year when this happens the narrators differ. Some say that it is at midnight on Christmas Eve, others fix it for Easter Day during High Mass; in either case it is during Mass, as there is a midnight service at Christmas. The popular legend in its present form goes on to recount how a certain woman, accompanied by her child, went to the stone of the Wivern, instead of going to Mass, intending to take his treasure. She found the cave open, entered, and took as much gold as she could carry, and came out just in time to escape the Wivern on his return. On looking round for her child, she could not find him anywhere. The cavern being now closed again, she knew not what to do, and went in despair to the priest, who told her to go to the place every day and pour milk and honey on the stone till the expiration of twelve months, and then, when the day came for the opening of the cave, to take her treasure back to it undiminished, and she would find her child. So she went day by day without fail, in heat and cold, in fine weather and foul, and poured milk and honey on the stone. At last the day came when the Wivern left the cave, and the mother found her child within, sitting quite unhurt, and in perfect health, with an apple before him on a stone table. So she restored the treasure gladly, and took away her child."

M. Bulliot thinks that the legend was originally one of some Gaulish sacrilege and reparatory oblation, the Gaulish priests requiring a daily offering (perhaps of milk and honey) until certain stolen treasure was restored. The Catholic character of the legend he looks upon as nothing but an aftergrowth; and the apple has, in his opinion, a distinct though undiscoverable significance.

From the Pierre de la Wivre we could see, on the next headland to our left, the ridge of Pierre Salvée sharply serrated against the sky. There, half an hour later, we found ourselves rewarded by a glorious sight. Westward we could see extending mile upon mile, ridge after ridge, the glowing mountains of Auvergne, and the valley of the Loire, veiled in a shimmering mist, through whose mysterious wreaths flashed, here and there, in diamond splendour, the sun-touched roof of a humble cottage and the tower of a lordly chateau.^[9]

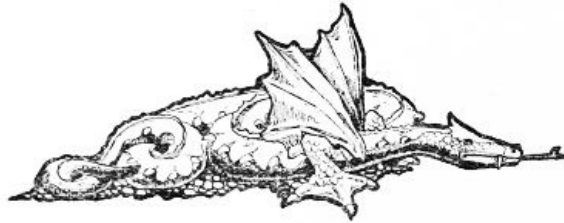
[Pg 10]

With all the thousand other interesting details concerning Bibracte—the Gaulish roads, the ramparts, the remains, the descriptions and industries of the town, the visits of Cæsar—I have no space to deal here; but I recommend particularly to the reader Hamerton's book, from which I have quoted, and M. Dechelette's handy guide, "L'Oppidum de Bibracte."

We cycled from St. Léger to Autun, by way of La Grand Verrière Monthelon, and the Valley of the Arroux. Monthelon, some seven kilometres from Autun, is a place famous in French Ecclesiastical history. It has, as is common in Burgundian villages, a delightful little Romanesque Church, concerning one of whose curés Hamerton tells a good story which I cannot refrain from giving in the original tongue.

This old curé, then, was fond of putting Latin into his sermons, a little bit at a time, his own Latin; not of the best. "Lorsque je paraîtrai devant Notre Seigneur, il me demandera; 'Curé Monthelonius, ubi sunt brebetis meis'—ce qui veut dire; 'Curé de Monthelon, où sont mes brebis?' Et moi je lui répondrai; 'bêtes je les ai trouvées, bêtes je les ai laissées, et bêtes elles sont très probablement encore.'"

Can you refrain from reading "The Mount" after that?



Footnotes:

- [2] Hamerton's "The Mount," p. 26.
- [3] Alesia, though intensely interesting, lacks the mysterious quality of Beuvray.
- [4] De Bello Gallico, lib. 1, cap. 23: "By far the finest and largest town of the Aedui."
- [5] I am told that the fouilles are open every year during a part of the month of August.
- [6] Hamerton says, that, on a clear day you can see Mont Blanc, 157 miles as the crow flies. It is the distance from London to Scarborough.
- [7] "The Mount," pp. 54-56.
- [8] "The Mount," pp. 103-4.
- [9] The Pierre Salvée has no legend; the name is probably derived from some ancient divinity.



CHAPTER II

In the railway station of Autun we had waited long for our bicycles to be taken out of the train. They did not appear. The porters were all busy with a cattle-truck that they were pushing casually down a siding, till it was stopped in mid-career by the buffers of another truck.

Bang!! Rattle! Bang!! The thicket of horns, visible from without, shook like a wood in a winter gale. A mild white head was thrust over the lime-washed barrier, mutely protesting. We echo the animal's protest, and our own.

"Do you always keep travellers waiting like this?"

"You see, Monsieur, it is because of the cow, she is bien souffrante."

"Then why treat her so?" I pointed to the still trembling truck; "but in any case, are we of less importance than a cow? Are not we, too, bien souffrant?"

"Yes, but you see, Monsieur, if the cow died, the *patron* would lose four hundred francs; but, had I known, I would have brought your bicycles earlier." We reached the Hotel St. Louis at last.

Then, wishing to escape, until dinner-time, from the still glowing streets, we crossed the Place du Champs de Mars, followed the gentle descent of the Faubourg d'Arroux, and passed beneath the Roman gate that leads northward from the city of Augustus into the open plain. A hundred yards or so further on, a sharp turn to the left brought us to two bridges crossing the tributary streams that wind among the whispering poplars, beneath which, all day long, the kneeling blanchisseuses have been pounding mercilessly their unoffending washing. Continuing our walk between the dusty green hedges of the lane meandering through the fertile plain of Autun, we saw, rising before us, a building whose mysterious, alluring aspect at once rivetted our attention, as it must that of all who have an eye for the spirit of the past, and an ear for her call. We entered boldly by the gate in the hedge, and shared possession of the field with the pale cows, who, placid as the stones, and not unlike them in colour, lifted to us questioning eyes.

[Pg 12]

The monument,—all that remains of it, rather,—consists of two great stone walls, adjacent sides of a building, ruined and roofless. It rises in the midst of the meadow, from among the grasses and brambles about its base, a huge, weird, Caliban-like thing, shattered, yet still massive, pierced with great tortured openings, and many smaller ones above. The golden light of evening, gilding it, casts into the holes and crevices, between the weather-worn masonry, pitchy shadows from which the stones bristle out defiantly, as though challenging the centuries to undo them, if man will but hold his hand.

This relic of Roman times, called by the peasants, "The Temple of Janus"—though some antiquarians deny that it was ever a temple, and that the three headed god was ever worshipped there—is not the only striking object in the landscape. Away to the north-west, behind the tossing boughs of the poplars, the setting sun is adorning with changing purples the flanks of the distant hills. The broadest of those peaks, crested with dark foliage, is none other than our old friend the Mount.

We turned to the opposite side of the valley. Before us were symbols of two later periods of Burgundy's prosperity—the modern city of Autun, seated proudly upon the lower slopes of a mountain throne, and, high above the roofs, the great mass of the cathedral of St. Lazare lifting her Gothic spire to the sky.

The peculiar interest of the spot, the reason why we chose it as a starting point in our travel through Southern Burgundy, is that here we have, before our very eyes, visible symbols of four clearly marked stages in the history of the Duchy; the Gallic, Roman, Gothic, and modern periods.

We will begin with the Gallic period, in the days when Cæsar wrote of that city, there upon Mont Beuvray; "Bibracte, oppido Aeduarum longe maximo et copiosissimo";^[10] and tell, very shortly, the story of the tribe, in their relations with the Roman conquerors.^[11]

[Pg 13]

The Aedui, concerning whom all our available information comes from the Latin writers, were a Gallic tribe, inhabiting, approximately, the space of country bounded on the east by the Saône, on the south by the chain of mountains between the Lyonnais and Auvergne, on the west by the Loire, and on the north by the valleys of the Vouge, the Oze, the Brenne and the Yonne. They were a virile, warlike race, that, from a very early period, had been recognised as the superior of the neighbouring races, among which the strongest were, perhaps, their enemies and rivals, the Arverni of mountainous Auvergne. For very many years before the Roman invasion, there had been intercommunication—often of an aggressive nature—between the Aedui and the Italian races; but it was not until the year 123 B.C. that anything in the nature of a direct alliance was formed between the former and the Romans, although Tacitus and Cicero both allude to them as "Brothers of the Roman Nation"; and the weaker people naturally would not be slow to take advantage of the great military strength of the new-comers, if it could be exercised on their behalf. The occasion soon came to put that strength to the test, when, after a series of quarrels with the Arverni and other neighbouring tribes, the latter summoned the Germans to their assistance. The Aedui, feeling that their independence was threatened, sent their chief Druid priest, Divitiacus, to appeal unto Cæsar.

Before we see how he fared, let us glance at this leader, whose statue stands to-day in the Promenade des Marbres at Autun. The Druids were the magistrate-priests of their respective cities, where, by the right of knowledge, riches, birth—for all were of noble blood—they exercised almost despotic power. They were the theologians, philosophers, jurists, astronomers, physicians, and moralists of their times; they were the educators of youth, the depositaries of the holy mysteries of their religion, and of the supernatural forces; the arbiters of life and death—since no human sacrifice might be offered without their sanction.

They were also superintendents of the observance of religious rites, of the practice of the ritual demanded by the gods. Still subject to those gods, the people would fear the priest not less than the magistrate. Kings, even, were awed by these mouthpieces of the most high. Such was he whom the Aedui chose for their ambassador.

[Pg 14]

Divitiacus went to Rome, and there, in person, pleaded his cause before the senate. His embassy seems to have been of little apparent effect; but, though he lost his suit, he gained a friend—Cicero.

In spite of the Druid's failure, Cæsar's legions were, nevertheless, soon on their way to Gaul. The Helvetii, coveting the fertile land that lay beside theirs, decided to attempt its conquest. Cæsar, aided by some Aeduen troops, who now fought for the first time beneath the eagle, met the invaders on the banks of the Saône,^[12] and annihilated them in the first great battle of his life. Henceforth, for a time, the two nations are brothers. "Aeduii, fratres nostri, pugnant."^[13] Such they remained; until the next nation that threatened them—Ariovistus and his German hordes—had suffered the fate of the Helvetii.

It was, however, inevitable that the warlike tribes of Gaul should endeavour, sooner or later, to throw off the yoke of an alien civilization, which, while it brought them material blessings of inestimable value—of which not the least was the introduction of the vine,—was, nevertheless, galling to their spirit of sturdy independence. Soon the Aedui were being stirred to revolt. Foremost among the discontents, was the leader of the Aeduen cavalry, Dumnorix, brother to Divitiacus, though his opposite in character. The trusted ally of Cæsar, and the friend of Cicero, Divitiacus the Druid accepted philosophically the Roman dominion; his brother, turbulent, adventurous, restless—a Prince Rupert of his day—had other dreams for his country. Cæsar was about to embark on his second expedition to Britain, when the news came that Dumnorix, who was under orders to accompany him, had withdrawn, followed by the Aeduen cavalry. Cæsar, delaying his embarkation, sent his own cavalry in pursuit, with orders to kill or capture the rebel, if he refused to submit.

Soon overtaken, Dumnorix defended himself valiantly, and fell, sword in hand, with the cry on his lips: "I die a free citizen of a free country."^[14] One is tempted to wish that the people of Autun had raised in the "Place des Marbres," beside that of his more philosophic brother, a statue to this gallant leader of a forlorn hope.

[Pg 15]

The example of Dumnorix was followed, before long, by almost the whole of Roman Gaul; the principal cities being quite unable to resist the temptation offered by the long absence of their enemy at the capital. Cæsar, writing from Rome, protested vigorously against the ingratitude of the Aedui. He reminded them of their grievous plight before his legions freed them; of their decimated armies, of their ravaged land, of the heavy tributes, the noble hostages wrung from them. But he spoke in deaf ears. The Aedui had definitely linked their destiny with that of their nation. Only the final arbitrament of force could be appealed to.

They summoned to a council of war, Vercingetorix, the ablest general of his day, chief of their hereditary enemies, the Arverni; but, accustomed for long to regard themselves as the dominant tribe of the Gauls, they offered him only a subordinate command. His refusal of any command, other than the highest, was followed by an assembly general of the Gallic tribes at Bibracte, when, on the matter being put to the vote, the great meeting, with one voice, proclaimed Vercingetorix their leader.^[15] The story of his last desperate struggle against the Romans at Alesia, and of his defeat and death, do not properly belong to the history of Autun, nor to that of Bibracte.

Gaul had become a province of the great Roman Empire. A higher civilisation, already familiar to the conquered tribes, is to impose its dominion, its architecture, its art, upon the conquered land.

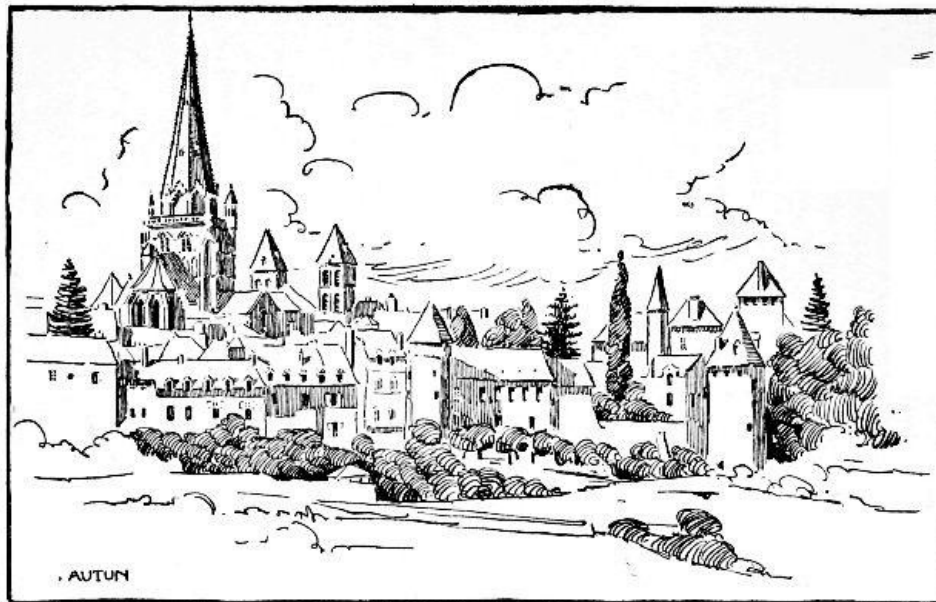
Bibracte, the oppidum on the wooded hills, will echo no more to the shouts of Gauls acclaiming their general or their victory. Deserted, probably in the first years of the Christian era, silence reigns henceforth over the hills; silence broken only by the patter of rain drops, by the moan of the wind, or the weird howl of the wolf, roaming, at midnight, among the ruins of the abandoned city.

Meanwhile, here, upon the plain below, another and fairer city was arising—Augustodunum, the Roman capital of Gaul, now known as Autun. It has often been asserted that the location of Bibracte upon Mont Beuvray is merely legendary, and that Autun is the historic site of the great city of the Aedui. But this theory, as we have seen, has been finally exploded by the researches of M. Bulliot. He proves conclusively, not only that Bibracte was situate on the summit of Beuvray, but also that Autun was built upon virgin soil, and not upon the site of a Gallic city, which would inevitably have yielded tangible proof of its existence in Gaulish coins and other remains. The proportion of Gaulish to Roman coins found in Autun, up to the present time, is about one to fifteen hundred.^[16] Further evidence is offered by the fact that the city conforms to the requirements mentioned by Vitruvius at the time of its erection—about fifteen to ten years before the Christian era—that, in building a town, the first necessity is to choose a healthy site, elevated, not subject to fogs, of good temperature, not exposed to extremes of heat and cold, away from marshy land, and facing south or west.^[17] One of the chief features of Burgundian towns is the excellence of their sites. This feature, due no doubt, to Roman example, is nowhere more noticeable than at Autun, which remains to-day one of the best situate, and among the most interesting, of all the cities of France.

[Pg 16]

The first thing to be done, it seems to me, in exploring such a place as Autun, which comprises a mediæval and a modern town within the Enceinte of a Roman city, is to get your bearings, to orient yourself, as the French say.

On the previous evening, looking up from our sunset seat on the grass, beside that mysterious pile known as the Temple of Janus, we had seen, far above the city, to the south-east, on the slope of the hills which enthrone Autun, a gaunt, grey stone lifting its head over the village roofs of Couhard. The next morning found us descending the Rue St. Pancras, into the hollow that lies between the village and the town. As we climbed the ascent, the rising sun gave us alluring glimpses of the mysterious stone, seen through the curling mists of an autumn morning; yet, many a time, we turned from it, to watch the light playing upon ancient wall and tower, and gilding the spire of the cathedral of St. Lazare.



[Pg 17]

Autun — shewing Cathedral and Mediæval Towers

A bend to the left brought us into Couhard, a straggling group of dishevelled cottages and huts lining the Ruisseau de la Toison, that bubbles merrily along the side of the hill. It is a dilapidated, picturesque, tangled village, given over to ducks and dirt, and to washerwomen, who, like flies in summer, settle upon the running waters of France, to wash their toisons d'or.

"Quite an ancient, conservative, stagnant village," we were saying to ourselves; "built beside a Roman burial ground, and itself going its dirty way to death"—when, suddenly, we made a discovery. Couhard is not conservative. On the contrary, it is advanced. Before us, on a placard, we read: "Association des Femmes de Saône et Loire. Les Femmes doivent Voter." And they tell you there is no feminist movement in France!

Here is the Pierre de Couhard; a gaunt, uncouth, pointed mass of rubble, rising from the hillside, in the midst of a little tangled island—the dust bin of the village—where every ill weed grows. 'Tis

[Pg 18]

a characteristic setting for a Burgundian monument.

But the stone is impressive. Inchoate, formless, it yet suggests a lost form, that of a corpse long-exposed, or of the mysterious, human-inhuman figure, that the mad sculptor, in Andreev's story, hewed out, after he had talked with one returned from the dead, and had gazed deep into death's basilisk eyes.^[18]

A close inspection reveals the truth—that the Pierre de Couhard was in the form of a quadrangular pyramid upon a cubical base—the lower part faced with large blocks of sandstone, the pyramidal portion with limestone. All the facing has suffered the usual fate of similar work in France—it formed the quarry from which the peasants of Couhard built and maintained their village. On the south-east side of the pyramid are two holes, bored about the year 1640, with the intention of discovering whether the monument was hollow within.^[19] It is now believed to be solid throughout. The Aeduen Society, and others, have undertaken excavations at various times; but local antiquaries have not yet discovered any cella containing coins or relics that determine the date of erection, which, however, M. de Fontenay, with good reason, assigns to the reign of Vespasian (A.D. 69-79).



[Pg 19]

As to the purpose of the Pierre, there is now little reason to doubt that it was a memorial stone; a supposition borne out, not only by the shape of the monument, but by its position at the summit of the Champs Des Urnes, as it is popularly called, the great burial ground which bordered the Roman road from Lyons to Autun.

Curiously enough, the same opinion was adopted, after a long examination and discussion, by that mighty hunter, and amateur antiquary, Francis I., when he came here, in August, 1521, accompanied by his mother, Louise de Savoie, and by his wife, Claude de France. While the ladies visited the Churches and Convents, which, to them, were the superior attraction, the merry monarch did the round of the Roman monuments, and afterwards restored his jaded faculties with a day's hunting in the neighbouring forest of Planoise, where he lost himself, and might have passed the night in the wilds had he not happened upon the old castle of Porcheresse, whose lord, Celse de Traves, led him back to Autun. The delighted populace, anxious over their lost king, received him with "chiming bells and flaming torches."^[20]

Yet, however great the preparations and rejoicings with which the inhabitants received their monarch—as, five years earlier, they had welcomed his predecessor, Charles VIII.—it was neither a flourishing nor a cheerful town that Francis looked down upon, from the Pierre de Couhard, on that summer day, nearly four hundred years ago. He saw the towers, spires, and gables of a mediæval city—one might almost say, of two mediæval cities—built upon the ruins of the much larger Roman town, the silent immensity of whose shattered walls, palaces, temples, and

[Pg 20]

amphitheatre, dwarfed into insignificance the small houses amongst which they stood, and chilled, with a nameless fear, the hearts of those who watched the shadows of evening falling about them, and heard the spirit voices of the past calling, in the moonlight, from among the haunted stones.

"Ou ses temples estoient a chaque coin de vue
Les buissons herissez presque y donnent la terreur;
Ou les riches palais furent, le laboureur
Y couple ses taureaux pour trainer la charrue."^[21]

Less fortunate than Dijon and other towns of Burgundy, Autun had suffered a sequence of disasters. When Francis I. saw the town, neither the Roman walls nor the Roman buildings had recovered from the ravages of Tetricus, King of the Gauls, who, about the year 269, after a siege of seven months, sacked Augustodunum, leaving it in such a pitiable condition that the emperor Constantine, when he came from Rome in 310, could not restrain his tears at the sight of the wasted country and ruined towns through which he had passed; nor could the banners of the corporation, the statues of the gods, nor the groups of musicians at the secret corners, blind the emperor to the real poverty hidden beneath official pomp.^[22]

[Pg 21]

There is no better spot than the Pierre de Couhard from which to picture Augustodunum as it was on that day when Constantine rode through the Porte de Rome, now known as the Porte des Marbres, which then stood where the cemetery now abutts on to the end of the Rue de la Jambe de Bois. Thence the main street of the city, the Voie d'Agrippa, bordered by the important and imposing buildings, such as the Temple of Apollo, the Schools, the Forum, and the Capitol, ran in a straight line to the Porte d'Arroux, nearly in the direction of the Temple of Janus, still faintly visible to-day, far away on the plain beyond the river. This Voie d'Agrippa roughly bisected the Roman town, all the streets of which were laid out, like those of a modern American City, either parallel or at right angles to that axial line. Augustodunum, though it lacked the lovely gables, lofty spires, and pleasant disorder of Gothic Autun, must yet have shown to the traveller looking back from the road to Rome, a splendid pile of temples and palaces and gardens, as his glance wandered from the gleaming marble gates, and the flashing dome of the Capitol, to the majestic arches and sculptured columns and colonnades of the great arena and lovely theatre, whose ruins are yet seen through the avenue of lime trees, above the ivy-crowned stones of the ancient enceinte.^[23]

Lovely is this spectacle, even to-day. On the left, to the south-west, the mediæval city, the Castrum, lifts its pile of gabled, palace roofs above the sombre firs, and line of bronzed fortresses, walls, and leaf-clad towers that mark the Roman enceinte. Higher yet, over all, the spires and pinnacles of the cathedral of St. Lazare glitter against the background of hills.

On the way back, our attention was divided between the glories of that view, and the "chasse aux poules" or chicken hunt—the one form of sport indulged in by the old ladies of a Burgundian village.

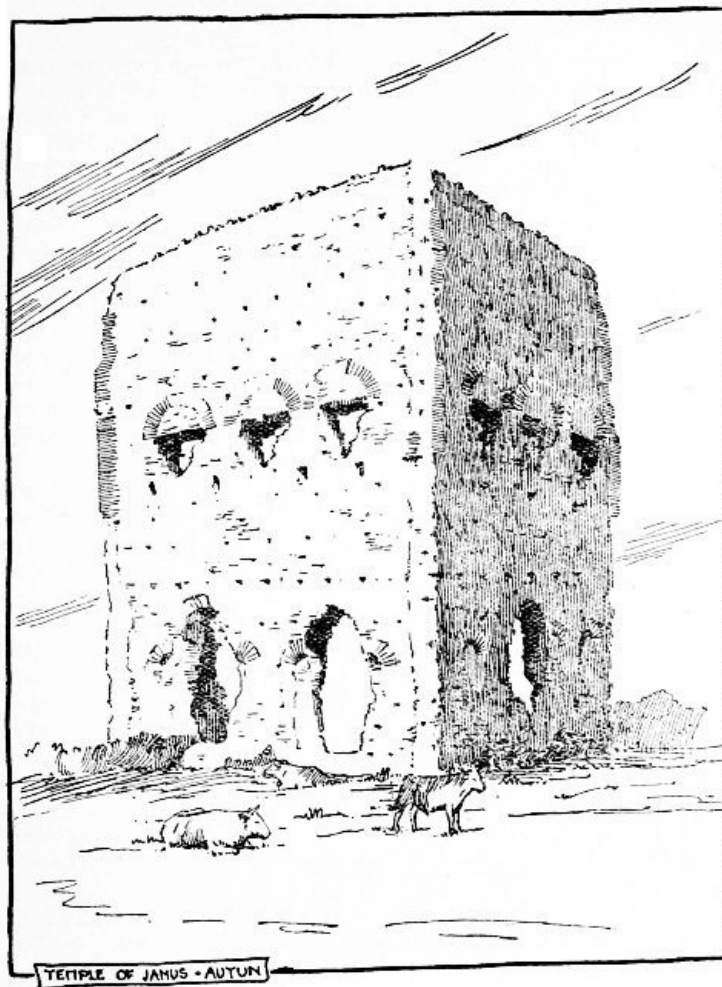
[Pg 22]

A very few hours in Autun were enough to reveal the fact that this largest Gallo-Roman city of Burgundy contains Roman remains as interesting as any in France, known to me, excepting those of Nimes, Orange, and Arles; while, around two of them—the Temple of Janus^[24] and the Pierre de Couhard—there still lingers an element of mystery that renders them doubly attractive to the curious mind.

The "Temple de Janus" lies, as the reader will remember, at the foot of Autun, in the meadow beside the Arroux. Its original purpose is doubtful. M. Viollet le Duc held it to be a Fort Détaché, built outside the ramparts, for the purpose of barring the passage of the river, and commanding the plain.^[25] M. de Fontenay, on the other hand, asserts,—and I venture to think proves,—that the building was not designed for military purposes, and was, in fact, a temple; though there is no evidence to tell us to which deity it was dedicated.^[26]

M. le Duc contends that the tower had no door on the ground floor, and was entered by means of a ladder; but one of the features that first strike any observer who is endeavouring mentally to reconstruct the building, is, that, along both remaining walls, between the lower openings and the upper windows, run two lines of rectangular holes pierced in the masonry. The purpose of those holes, was, undoubtedly, to carry the roof timbers of a peristyle, or outer gallery, whose foundations have been unearthed at a distance of between five and six metres from the main wall,—a discovery which seems at once to demolish M. le Duc's theory of entry by ladder. The design of the peristyle is not known, nor the order of its architecture; but it probably took the ordinary form of a stylobate, or base, columns with capitals supporting an entablature, and a sloping roof. The niches on the interior sides of the walls, and the traces of red colouring—a mixture of powdered brick and chalk, still easily visible in their more protected parts—are further evidence that the tower was indeed a temple.

[Pg 23]



[Pg 24]

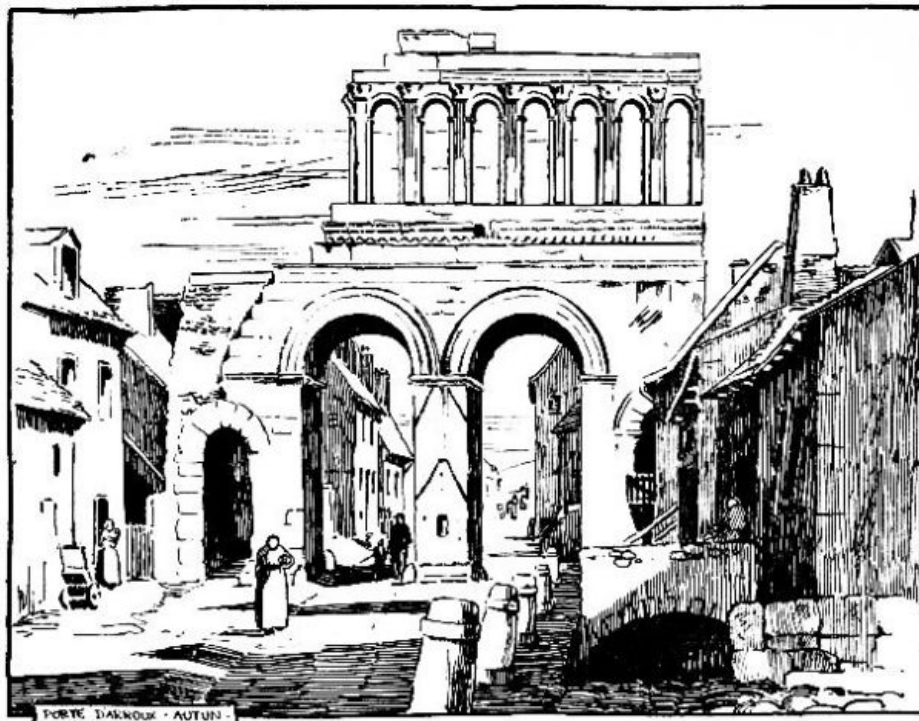
M. de Fontenay dates the building, conjecturally, from the founding of Autun. Concerning its popular name, "Temple of Janus," he has some very interesting information to give.

It appears that, until the 17th century, the tower was known as the "Tour de la Gênetoie," a term which a local savant took to be a corruption of Janitect, "à Jani tecto." This legend was accepted by the historians for about the next two centuries, until, in 1843, another Burgundian writer reluctantly announced the truth,—that Gênetoie did not mean "Temple of Janus," but simply, "Champ des balkins" or "genets," the broom known to all Englishmen as the device of our Plantagenet kings. So much for the Temple of Janus. Whatever may have been its purpose, no one who has visited Rome, looking up at the huge, shattered walls, gilded by the sunset, standing out against the purple shadows of the hills far away across the plain, can fail to recall memories of the Roman Campagna.

The Roman city of Augustodunum possessed four gates, at the north-west, north-east, south-west, and south-east corners of the town, leading to the roads for Boulogne, Besançon, Bourbon L'Archambaud, and Lyons respectively. The first and last of these was known also as the "Voie d'Agrippa." The gates, taking them in the same order, are known as the Porte d'Arroux, the Porte St. André, the Porte St. Andoche, and the Porte de Rome. The first two of these are still standing; the others have disappeared.

The Porte d'Arroux is distant only a few minutes walk from the Temple of Janus, near the river, at the foot of the Faubourg d'Arroux. Incomplete though it is, the grace and dignity of the fallen monument yet contrast strongly with the squalor of its setting. It is backed, on either side, by a medley of disreputable villas, and dilapidated, half-timbered cottages, whose squalor is not without charm. To-day hordes of ragged children play beneath the arches that once echoed to the roll of chariot wheels, and to the tramp of lictors' feet.

[Pg 25]



The Porte d'Arroux has four openings for traffic,—two large central arches, by which chariots could pass in and out, and two smaller gates, at the sides, for foot passengers. Each of the central arches is grooved for a portcullis, which some authorities, including M. Viollet le Duc, think were not added till the middle ages,^[27] a supposition that M. de Fontenay seems effectually to disprove by pointing out that, since the Roman rampart at that period was broken down in many places, any additional defences to the gates would have been a useless precaution.

[Pg 26]

Autun, in mediæval times, comprised what were, in effect, two distinct towns, both built within the Roman enceinte. These were the Castrum, the centre of which was the Cathedral of St. Lazare, and the Marchaux—still known by the same name,—in the lower part of the town, north of the Place des Champs de Mars. Each of these towns was then sheltered within its own walls and towers, of which portions are still in existence.

The upper part of the gate consisted of a pierced gallery or arcade, of ten bays,—seven of them still intact,—forming a Chemin de Ronde, on a level with that running along the crest of the Roman wall. This gallery, serving the double purpose of ornament and defence, could be closed at any time by wooden shutters.^[28] The gate was flanked on either side by two rectangular towers (corps de garde) with semi-circular apses projecting far beyond it, as though—in the phrase of Eumenes, a local historian and orator of the late 3rd and early 4th centuries—they were stretching out welcoming arms to those about to enter the town.^[29]

All who are interested in the development of Burgundian architecture, should give careful attention to the Porte d'Arroux, which is certainly the source of one of the most marked characteristics of the style,—the use of the fluted pilasters, which, for some reason or other, seem to have struck the fancy of the architects of this part of France. We shall see this arcade imitated closely in the triforium gallery of the cathedral of St. Lazare, and also influencing, in turn, the churches of Cluny, Paray le Monial, Notre Dame de Beaune, and others.

The masonry of the gate is very finely executed, with close joints, without mortar, in the manner of the period, and is, on the whole, in a wonderfully good state of preservation. The lower part of the work is quite plain. The archivolts, the entablature, including the architrave and the frieze, show little ornament; the cornice, however, is richly decorated with dentals, palmettes and other designs, as is also the remaining fragment of cornice above the arcade, whose fluted pilasters have beautiful capitals in the Corinthian style.

The other surviving Roman gate,—the Porte St. André,—is on the north-east boundary of the city, not far from the Porte d'Arroux, by way of the Faubourg Arroux and the Rue de la Croix Blanche. It is less picturesquely situate, and, though very similar, is distinctly inferior to its neighbour in design and finish. The central arches are lower, and heavier, while the gallery lacks the lightness and grace which are characteristic of the Porte d'Arroux, and is, moreover, built in a stone darker and less pleasing to the eye than the oolitic limestone of the lower portion.

[Pg 27]

M. de Fontenay suggests that this upper part was restored at some later and degenerate period of Roman architecture. Certainly the plain pilasters are badly designed and carelessly set, while the capitals, of a composite, semi-ionic order, appear to be too narrow for their pilasters—not too wide, as stated by M. de Fontenay, and also by M. Déchelette in his careful little guide to Autun. The Porte St. André shows no signs of having been fitted with a portcullis. Hamerton^[30] states, no doubt correctly, that the door was barred by strong beams inserted into holes and grooves. These are still visible.

The Porte St. André, it should be noted, is one of the most complete Roman gates existing in

France. The lower portion of one of the flanking towers, which rose originally several feet above the attic story of the gate, owes its escape from destruction to its shape, which, coinciding with that of a typical Romanesque chapel, tempted certain ecclesiastics of the middle ages, to dedicate it to St. André, as a place for Christian worship.^[31] These flanking towers comprised three stories. The first communicated with the Chemin de Ronde, along the crest of the walls, the second was a vaulted chamber, and the third remained open to the sky. Access was obtained by a double staircase.

On the question of the period during which these gates were built, M. de Fontenay and Viollet le Duc are again at variance,—the latter attributing them to the fourth or fifth centuries,^[32] the former to the reign of Vespasian (A.D. 69-79).^[33] Strange as it may seem that another writer should contradict continually so eminent an authority as the last-named, the author of "Autun et ses Monuments" again has reason on his side, since he can refer to the orator Eumenes as describing the gates in the year 311 A.D.

Moreover, since the Roman walls were admittedly broken down in many places during the siege by Tetricus, in the year 269 A.D.,—an event of which Eumenes was a witness,—and the inhabitants were already beginning to retire within the safer precincts of the Citadel; what would be the reason for erecting elaborate gates on the line of the ruined wall? I am not an authority upon ancient architecture; but I was certainly astonished to read the date given in the "Dictionnaire Raisonné"; and I should be glad to know whether other experts support M. le Duc's theory.

[Pg 28]

Of the two other gates—the Porte St. Andoche, on the south-west, and the Porte de Rome on the south-east, in the direction of Lyons,—nothing remains except the rectangular portion of one of the lateral towers of the former. The loss of the Porte de Rome, or the "Porte des Marbres," as it was popularly called, is especially to be regretted, since that name alone suggests the truth, of which evidence exists, that it was by far the most beautiful of the four. Moreover, it has additional historic interest as being the gate by which Constantine entered Autun in 311.

The old writers agree in describing the Porte des Marbres as a thing of beauty,—a quality which was its undoing, as offering an irresistible attraction to the Mediæval and later builders. Several ancient Corinthian capitals, not otherwise easily accounted for, are to be seen to-day in the porch of the cathedral built at the close of the 12th century. It appears, indeed, that around the present site of the Fountain of the Pelican was a burial ground named Les Marbres, on account of its richness in borrowed sculpture. The site of the gate was known from the 14th century onwards as "à Marbres" or "de Marboribus." At the time of the construction of the bastion of the Jambe de Bois, the workmen unearthed many marbles, including columns, capitals, and bases of the Corinthian or some composite order.^[34] The date of the final destruction of the Porte des Marbres is uncertain; but its flanking towers, then known as the Fors de Marboribus, were still standing in the middle of the 14th century.

Before beginning another chapter, let me speak one word of warning. If you ask one of the humbler inhabitants of Autun where the Porte St. Andoche stood, you will be directed, without hesitation,—as we were,—to the bank of the river, near the railway station. Having reached that spot and crossed the bridge, you will obtain a lovely view of the Roman wall and the river beside it, but will fail to find the remaining tower of the gate, for the reason that it is not there. The Porte St. Andoche stood at the foot of the Boulevard Schneider, opposite to the Couvent du Sacrement, on the road leading, by way of the enceinte, to the Tour des Ursulines.

[Pg 29]

The reader may ask why the peasants should misdirect him? They misdirect him, in this particular instance, because they believe that the gate really stood on the town side of the western bridge of the Arroux, in the corresponding position to that of the Porte d'Arroux. But my point is, that, had your informant been utterly ignorant of the supposed whereabouts of the gate, he would, very probably, have directed you with almost equal facility. The Burgundian peasant is very ignorant; but he is also very proud,—much too proud to admit that he does not know the whereabouts of a monument that a stranger has come, perhaps, a thousand miles to visit. His swift imagination, therefore, promptly creates the site; and he, or she, will tell you promptly, volubly, and with much circumstantial detail, exactly how to get there. In this snare we have been taken many times during our travels among the Burgundians. The Provençals have a different and preferable method. They do not invent a site for the monument; they deny its existence. Speaking with some experience of the peculiar ways of the French peasant in such matters, my advice to the gentle stranger is—not to trust him. Get the best guide and map that you can find in the local librairie; and rely on them, and on your own intelligence. You may then, when you are at fault, consult the passer by as to details, letting your judgment decide whether, in his particular case, he is to be trusted.

If it be a Château that you are seeking, you must be doubly careful. To a French peasant many a tiny cottage is a "fine house" (*belle maison*), and almost every modern house, of any pretensions at all, is a château. To us, on the contrary, a château means a castle; usually an ancient one.

Many a time has a blue-shirted peasant looked up from his work by the road side, to address me somewhat as follows:

"The Château de Bon Espoir; Certainly, Monsieur, 'tis there, three kilometres away, up the hill, tout droit en montant."^[35]

We climb the three kilometres, wander about for an hour, and return disconsolate. The labourer, hearing the whirr of bicycle wheels, looks up again.

[Pg 30]

"M'sieur et Dame have found the Château?"

"No, Monsieur. They told us up there that the ancient Château de Bon Espoir was on the other side of the valley to the north."

"Oh! that one? That's only an old ruin. I thought you meant the château de Monsieur Pigot."

"No. Who is Monsieur Pigot?"

"Monsieur Pigot, 'Sieur Dame, is the proprietor of the grand magasin du Louvre at Paris. He has a lovely château, up there where you went. They would have let you in if you had gone up the drive."

"We are sorry we missed it. Good day, Monsieur."

The "lovely château" was a terrible erection of red brick and stone, defiling the landscape for a mile around.



Footnotes:

- [10] De Bello Gallico, lib. 1, cap. 23: "Bibracte, by far the finest and largest town of the Aedui."
- [11] I refer all who want full details of the period to M. Camille Jullian's book "Histoire de la Gaule," and to Mm. de Fontenay and de Charmasse's "Autun et ses Monuments avec un précis historique," a very useful book obtainable at the "Libraire Dujessieu" at Autun.
- [12] The battle took place probably near Montmort, about 5 kilometres north of Toulon.
- [13] De Bell: Gall: lib. i, cap. 15: "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 12.
- [14] "Ille enim revocatus resistere, ac se manu defendere—saepe clauitans liberum se liberaque civitatis esse." Cæsar de Bell. Gall. lib. v. cap. 7; "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 19.
- [15] "Autun et ses Monuments," Précis Historique, p.27.
- [16] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 8.
- [17] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 8 and 9.
- [18] See "Lazarus" in "Judas Iscariot" by Andreev.
- [19] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 216-232.
- [20] "Autun et ses Monuments," "Précis Historique," p. 206-7.
- [21] François Perrier, poet of the 16th century, quoted in "Autun et ses Monuments," from the Mémoires of the Société Eduenne.
- [22] Ibid, p. 71-73.
- [23] See the interesting map of the Roman City in "Autun et ses Monuments." Roman Autun was sacked again by the Saracens in 731 A.D.; the havoc on that occasion being even more complete than that wrought by Tetricus.
- [24] "Dictionnaire Raisoné," Tome 9, p. 68.
- [25] "Dictionnaire Raisoné," Tome 9, p. 68.
- [26] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 216-232.
- [27] "Dictionnaire Raisoné," Tome vii., p. 214. Note I.
- [28] "Dictionnaire Raisoné," Tome vii., p. 314.
- [29] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 36.
- [30] P. G. Hamerton, The Mount, p. 190.
- [31] Déchelette, "Guide des Monuments d'Autun," p. 10.
- [32] "Dictionnaire Raisoné," Tome vii., p. 314.
- [33] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 46.
- [34] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. cliv., 45 and 414.
- [35] Straight ahead as you go up.



CHAPTER III

Leaving the Hotel St. Louis, about which I shall have more to say later on, and passing along the Rue de l'Arquebus, you emerge upon an open space, where stands a statue to a Gaulish chieftain with whom we have already made acquaintance—the Druid, Divitiacus.

It may be heresy on my part, but I must admit that I have very little sympathy with the French passion for erecting statues of known or unknown persons, in every public place, quite irrespective of any ulterior considerations, such as whether such a monument is in any way expressive of the celebrity's particular talent or genius, or whether modern garments in carved stone are desirable in a "Place," often bordered with the most beautiful examples of Gothic or Renaissance architecture.

Many an open space in the ancient cities of France might have been spared such an indignity, had the French people cared to remember that, in the absence of a more worthy memorial—such as a house that can be lived in—a wall-tablet is sufficient for all practical purposes. M. Emile Montégut, in his "Souvenirs de Bourgogne," has very justly satirized the French idiosyncrasy; but France in general, and Burgundy in particular, still bristles with unnecessary statues.

The memorial of Divitiacus, however, is an exception to the general rules, for the figure is a successful and spirited piece of work, showing the Druid, bareheaded, pointing down the Roman Road. His helmet lies at his feet, and he carries a shield on which a battle scene is engraved. The figure stands upon a historic site; for here, on the west side of the Voie d'Agrippa, joining gate with gate, stood three of the most important buildings of the Roman city,—the Temple of Apollo, the Schools, and the Capitol.

[Pg 32]

The Aedui had always conceived of Apollo as surrounded by the Muses. He was their God of poetry, of youth, of joy, of prosperity, and of beauty; he was the healer and enlightener; to him the woods and streams were consecrated in the days

"When holy were the haunted forest boughs,
Holy the air, the water, and the fire;"

In the third century the Healer was already the most venerated of the Roman divinities in the hierarchy of Augustodunum, and his temple was probably the most important of them all, until 270, when it fell, with many another Roman temple and palace, before the hordes of Tetricus.

The Emperor Constantius Chlorus, however, decided that the temples should rise again; and it appears, from the records of Eumenes, that, by the end of the third century, the house of "Apollo Noster" was restored to more than its former beauty. The house was restored; but not the cult. Influences more powerful than the decree of Constance Chlore, or of Constantine, were at work within the Roman city. Every year, meaner gifts were offered, fewer vows were made before the Temple of Apollo; every year more citizens—at first in fearful secrecy, later with open enthusiasm—worshipped the Carpenter of Nazareth.

Excavations have revealed the substructure of the circular building which is generally accepted as having been the Temple of Apollo. The character of the remains, shewing that strings of bricks were used in the construction of the building,^[36] point to the reign of Constantius Chlorus, or of his son Constantine,^[37] as the probable date. Readers familiar with the Roman buildings of Arles, will recognise the same architectural feature in the Palace of Constantine in that town.

The great schools of Autun, the Ecoles Méniennes, as they were called, were probably situate between the Temple of Apollo and the Capitol, just below the site of the present Sous-préfecture. They appear to have been well known throughout the Roman Empire; for Tacitus^[38] mentions the capital of the Aedui as a place where the children of the Gaulish nobility were wont to apply themselves eagerly to the study of the liberal arts, while Eumenes speaks of them as "a sanctuary consecrated to instruction and eloquence, a very home of literature; for," says he, "the study of letters is the foundation of all the virtues; they are, indeed, a school of temperance, of modesty, of vigilance, of patience; and when all these virtues are implanted as a habit in the heart of childhood, they penetrate, like a vigorous sap, all the functions of civil life, and even those which

[Pg 33]

seem to be in opposition to it, I mean the charges and duties of military life."^[39]

Many men, celebrated in their day, must have attended these schools, which seem to have retained their popularity well into the third century, though, at the time of their destruction in the catastrophe of 270 A.D., they may, perhaps, have been living, to a certain extent, upon their past glories. We do not know much concerning their architecture; but Eumenes says they were known as a monument of imposing beauty, and adds this interesting detail—that "the buildings were surrounded by galleries or porticos, in which the students could see every day the extent of all the lands and of all the seas, the towns restored by the good-will of the invincible emperors, the nations conquered by their valour, and the barbarous countries chained by the terror of their arms. There were shewn the name and situation of each country, its extent, its relative distance, the source and outfall of each river, the windings of the banks, and the circuits of the sea which washes the continents and the shores of the countries swept by its impetuous movement. The whole universe was there pictured. There were to be seen the two rivers of Persia, the parched regions of Lybia, the joined branches of the Rhine, and the many mouths of the Nile."^[40]

The schools had been named after these galleries, on whose walls or ceilings the young nobles of Gaul could learn all that was known of the world of their day, that is to say, the whole of the Roman Empire. Maeniana,—in French, Ménienne,—means a construction projecting from the front of an edifice, an exterior gallery or balcony, which appears to have been so common a characteristic of the schools of Augustodunum, that the term Maeniana came to be applied to them generally.^[41]

In 270 A.D. the schools suffered the general fate, and the scholars, henceforth, had to be accommodated in separate quarters. Eumenes talked of restoring the porticos, and repainting the map of the world; but, probably, the work was never carried out, and the schools remained in their shattered state, even after the adjoining buildings—the Temple of Apollo and the Capitol—had been restored to something of their former glory.

[Pg 34]

The Capitol was probably the building whose foundations, circular on plan, have been traced to the garden of the Hospice St. Gabriel, beside the Ecoles Méniennes, and fronting also upon the great central street leading from gate to gate. Authorities appear to have differed considerably on this point; but many Corinthian capitals, fragments of entablatures, statuettes, groups of goddesses, etc., have been found on this site, suggesting that it was once occupied by a building of great importance,^[42] decorated as one would expect of such a temple, and dedicated, as the Capitol was, to the principal divinities of the official hierarchy. Eumenes, moreover, states that the Capitol was situate beside the schools. M. de Fontenay, however, thinks that, possibly, the Capitol may have occupied the other circular site, now attributed to the Temple of Apollo; and, conversely, that the latter building should be placed below the schools.

Not far from this centre of Roman civilization, beyond the shady plantation of plane trees, the Promenade des Marbres, dotted with seats of Roman stone, and stretching eastward from the statue of Divitiacus, you will find, if you follow the Faubourg des Marbres, on the right side of the downward slope, a board with the legend "Caves Joyaux." Then, turning up the path to the right, passing a hideous modern cottage devoted principally to "tir," from the walls of which the counterfeit presentments of dead citizens look out stonily upon you from the Roman stele, you will come upon a grassy, semi-circular terrace, planted with lime trees, whose green banks slope down towards a smaller semi-circle of sward below.

Beyond it lies a broad expanse of allotment garden, in which peasant women are bending over their crops. Standing among the leaves, that, on this bright autumn day, are fluttering upon the grass, and looking down more closely into the semi-circle, one observes irregularities in the surface of the horseshoe, lines suggestive of terracing; strangely shaped, hollow, grassy boulders that seem to have shouldered their way up from below. Here, at the end of the curve, is a mass of broken stone; there a black shadow below the revealed head of an arch projecting from the weed-entangled débris.

[Pg 35]

The reader will have guessed his whereabouts. This is, or was, the Roman theatre. Upon those heavy shoulders rested the marble seats; there were the entrances and exits by which the spectators passed to and from the staircases and corridors. From the flat semi-circle below us, the chorus chanted their melodious comments upon the play that was being enacted on the stage where now the women are at work.



There are those who will tell you that the Theatre is not worth the trouble of a visit,—that it has lost all charm. I cannot agree. On the contrary, ruined though the monument is, hardly one stone of it left upon another, there is nothing more impressive to be seen in Autun; for the general contour of the building is so preserved, that, for any person in the least degree familiar with the forms of these monuments, no great effort of the imagination is needed to restore the play-house to some of its ancient glory, and to re-people it with the voices of the past. Moreover, the spectator, though he cannot see the graceful columns, that, probably, as at Arles, rose from the back of the stage, nor the sculptured frieze, nor the marble capitals and statues that adorned the proscenium, nor the arcaded gallery that crowned the upper rows of seats, though he may not follow with the eye the distant white roads of Vesentio and Agrippa; yet still his glance can range over the same landscape that met the Roman of old, the near fields and meadows, the distant uplands and gloomy forest lit by the rising sun.

[Pg 36]

Still more impressive must the theatre be, when moonlight has shed her revealing mystery over the terraces of this forsaken garden.

Tradition has it, that, until the latter part of the 17th century, a considerable portion of the Roman theatre was still standing; and M. de Fontenay gives a very interesting sketch of the ruins in 1610, showing that soil and débris had not then obliterated the tiers of seats, and that the fore-part and the arcaded gallery of the semi-circle were still in existence.^[43] This comparatively happy condition of affairs might have endured until to-day, but for an unfortunate temptation that overcame Gabriel de Roquette, Bishop of Autun, in 1675, to make use of the Roman theatre as a quarry for the new seminary he was building. It was a deed doubly inexcusable, because, at so late a period, after the publication of Eden Thomas' book, and others dealing with the subject, he had no longer the commonly-urged excuse that no interest was taken in the ancient monuments of Autun.^[44] It is quite possible, however, that we are blaming the bishop needlessly. After the fate of Cluny, who shall say of what a Frenchman is not capable, when the lust of destruction is upon him?

The theatre of Autun was 147m.80. in diameter, the largest in Gaul, and the fourth largest of the known buildings of the kind; coming immediately after that of Bacchus at Athens, and those of Ephesus and Smyrna.^[45] The orchestra was paved in red marble, and the stage lined with white marble veined with red.

The exterior arcades of the hemi-cycle were formed of large blocks, the space between ornamented with pateræ. Anfert's, the oldest description we have, dating from the 17th century, mentions that the circumference of the theatre is broken by several chambers and subterranean passages; these chambers are vaulted; they are seven or eight feet wide, and known as "Caves Jolliot."^[46]

[Pg 37]

This brings us back to the legend "Caves Joyaux," which greeted our approach to the theatre. Up to the end of the 16th century, the remains appear to have been known as the "Grotto" (Grottes), an interesting example of the extraordinary vulgarity of popular nomenclature. Later, a certain worthy Autunois, whose line of business has not come down to us with his name, decided that these vaulted chambers would suit him excellently as a domicile. No doubt his venture proved successful, for the Grotto soon became known as the "Cellier Jolyot," or "Caves Jolyot," a name which, in the form of "Caves Joyaux," still passes current among the vulgar of Autun.^[47] This is by no means the first time that the substructure of a Roman monument has been dubbed "cellars" by an indiscriminating public.

For us the Roman theatre was more than a historic relic,—it was our favourite lunching place in Autun! However severe a shock the admission may be to some of my readers, I admit boldly, that never, during all our travels in France, do we, if we can avoid it, lunch either in restaurant or hotel. To go twice a day, with credit, through the six courses of a French déjeuner and dinner, is

a gastronomic effort of which we confess ourselves wholly incapable; consequently, before setting forth on our day's excursion, we may be seen passing into the épicerie, boulangerie, or other boutique of the village street, whence, our pockets bulging with sundry small paper parcels, we emerge, amid the not wholly disinterested curiosity of all the old ladies who have been eyeing us from door and window during our journey down the street.

The custom of picnic lunches is one that I recommend to all travellers in Burgundy, including those to whom the saving of a five-pound note, at the end of a month's holiday, is a matter of no moment whatever. The Burgundians feed more richly, perhaps, than any other people of Europe, and their dinners, like the country's monuments—rich rather than dainty—need a healthy appetite to do them justice. Further, the secrecy that these picnic methods necessarily involve—for you cannot proclaim your intention to a maître d'hôtel, whose luncheon tables groan beneath their burden of good things appointed for you to eat,—will titillate deliciously the insatiable curiosity of the lady his wife, who passes hours in wondering where and how you lunched.



"Monsieur et Dame will not be in to lunch to-day?"

[Pg 38]

"No, Madame."

"Monsieur et Dame were not in to lunch yesterday."

"No, Madame." A pause, during which our hostess, screwing up her courage for the plunge, eyed us with a glance, half-timid, half-amused.

"Where did Monsieur et Dame lunch yesterday?" The speaker looked at my wife; my wife looked at me. I looked innocently at Madame.

"On a wall, Madame." Madame's eyebrows rose slightly. She could make nothing of it.

"But it was raining all day yesterday, Monsieur!"

"Not on the wall, Madame. The fact is, we never lunch at an hotel—even when it rains."

"Vous faites bien" was what she said to us. What she said to her husband, an hour later, I leave to the reader to guess. But we parted excellent friends.

These picnic lunches, of course, are rather scrappy. Things get blown away sometimes, or are fastened upon by ants. Il faut souffrir pour bien vivre.

While I have been writing these notes, my wife has left the bench of Roman stone that is our table, and is seated on the grass half way down towards the orchestra, where she is exercising her not inconsiderable powers of imagination in recreating the traditions of the spot. Also she is proving, unwittingly, the excellent acoustic properties of the natural theatre, constructed in the Greek, rather than in the Roman method; that is to say, by hollowing out of the hill, not building up upon the plain. The keeper of the buvette told us that a play is to be given in the theatre next June (1911) and "a little bull-fight."

[Pg 39]

Going back to the hotel that day, we noticed, among the crisp leaves of the Promenade des Marbres, many a handful of confetti,—souvenirs of the great fair or festival of St. Lazare, that, for nearly the whole of September, disturbs the tranquillity of Autun. Let the traveller, therefore, see the Roman city before September, or after it.

The stone benches beneath the trees of the Promenade des Marbres, placed there about 1765, appear to have been taken from another of the most important Roman monuments of Autun, the Amphitheatre, a building which, in the middle ages, was known by the same name as its neighbour, the Theatre, and suffered a similar fate. It was situate to the north of the Caves Joyaux, close to the wall of the town, in such a position that the Faubourg des Marbres nearly bisects its site. Not very much is known concerning it; but its dimensions have been determined by excavations that prove it to have been the largest of the known amphitheatres of France, as it is of Burgundy as a whole.

Here are the figures, compared with those of the Arènes of Arles and Nimes, both of which still exist.^[48]

	Large diameter.	Small diameter.
Autun	154 metres	130 metres.
Arles	140 metres.28	103 metres.20.
Nimes	135 metres.27	105 metres.87.

M. de Fontenay publishes in his work, a drawing which shows that, in 1610, there remained of the amphitheatre two parallel, vaulted arcades; but he does not venture on an attempt to reconstruct the building. It appears that, by the 18th century, all trace of the construction had vanished, except the oval site, which, being at a lower level than the surrounding land, is still popularly known as the Crot-Volu (Creux Volu), the latter name being that of a 14th century family who occupied part of it.^[49] One of the most significant discoveries made among the ruins was that of the skull of a lion, probably the victim of a gladiator. It is supposed that the amphitheatre was built contemporaneously with the theatre, and, in the year of the siege,

suffered the same fate.

A walk round the quiet roads and avenues of this outlying portion of Autun, and half an hour spent on the grassy slopes of the theatre, cannot fail to impress the most casual observer with a sense of the grandeur and extent of the Roman city. Modern Autun is a town of respectable dimensions; but here, within the Roman Enceinte, the few dwelling houses stand isolated among their own gardens; and ancient, immemorial trees cast their shadows over quiet spots once resounding with the hum and rumour of Roman life.

[Pg 40]

All those who would visualize Burgundian history will be grateful that, in spite of the destructive enmity of her foes, and the scarcely less destructive ignorance and folly of certain of her inhabitants, enough of Augustodunum is left to enable us to group round her our mental pictures of this part of Gallo-Roman Burgundy.



Footnotes:

- [36] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 151.
- [37] Constantius Chlorus died 306 A.D. Constantine reigned from 306-337.
- [38] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 160.
- [39] Ibid, p. 161.
- [40] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 165.
- [41] Ibid, p. 167.
- [42] Ibid, pp. 152-158.
- [43] "Autun et ses Monuments." Facing p. 181.
- [44] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 183.
- [45] Ibid, p. 189.
- [46] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 181.
- [47] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 178-179.
- [48] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 193.
- [49] Ibid, p. 196.



CHAPTER IV

After two or three days among the relics of Pagan civilization, we were ready to turn our attention to Christian monuments of the town, and it was with our expectations fully aroused that we left what might be described as the neutral ground of the Hôtel St. Louis, and climbed the busy streets that lead within the castrum to the Cathedral of Saint Lazarus, in which the relics of the saint are enshrined.

Readers unfamiliar with the Provençal legends will ask, not unnaturally, how the body of Christ's friend came to the city of Autun. The answer is that, according to tradition, Lazarus, Martha, Mary, and others, driven from Palestine after the crucifixion of Christ, and cast adrift in an open boat, were blown, on the wings of a great wind, westward across the Mediterranean, and eventually, by miraculous aid, were cast ashore, unhurt, on the coast of Provence. This land they proceeded to evangelize, Lazarus finding his way to Marseilles, of which city he became the first bishop.^[50]

Nearly a thousand years later, at the end of the 10th century, the body was translated to Autun, through the efforts of one Gerrard, the then bishop, and was housed in the basilica of St. Nazaire. So holy a relic naturally demanded a worthy shrine, and already, during the first quarter of the 12th century, we find proposals on foot for the erection of a new church for the housing of the body.

Hamerton, indeed, says that the work was planned in the 11th century; the original idea being due to Robert I., Duke of Burgundy.^[51] This building, the existing cathedral of St. Lazarus, begun in 1120, was ready for consecration by Pope Innocent II. when he passed through Autun, in 1132.

[Pg 42]

Although the work was not completed at this time, the porch, in particular, being wanting, the Bishop of Autun resolved to take advantage of the great gathering of Vézelay, for the preaching of the second crusade, to announce the translation of the relics. King Louis VII. attended in person, and the ceremony was performed with great éclat, on Sunday, October 20th, 1146. Four weeks of continuous rain had given place to warm sunshine, and enormous crowds of pilgrims gathered to celebrate the event, among whom were Eudes II., Duke of Burgundy, and many bishops and nobles. After the all-night ceremonies which preceded the principal function, two stonemasons, says the old chronicle, were taken into the church to effect the opening of the tomb. The stone was raised, the vault exposed, and, to the sound of the *TE DEUM*, those present pressed forward to venerate the relics.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, followed with the fervent religious emotion characteristic of the time, Humbert de Bage wrapped the body of St. Lazarus, together with the winding-sheet and the deerskin bag which covered it, in a silken covering, and with new straps bound the precious bundle upon a wooden bearer destined for the solemn translation. Meanwhile, outside the church, an immense crowd was awaiting admission. Soon the pressure became so great that the gates of the church were forced, and the mob broke in with such violence that the iron grill barring the sanctuary would have been broken, had it not been supported by sheer muscular effort on the part of the clerks. "Eudes, Duke of Burgundy, William, Count of Chalon, and other brave nobles, each hurriedly putting down his chlamys, and arming himself with sword or stick, began to cut and thrust, right and left, among the crowd, to open a passage for the cortège, which, with great pomp, was transporting the holy relics to the church of St. Lazarus. This church, too, was so gorged with humanity, that the bearers, breathless with fatigue and fright, and despairing of ever reaching the altar, set down their precious burden upon some wooden planks, where it long remained in the middle of the nave."^[52]

During the whole of the following week, the crowd surged round the holy relics, and miraculous cures followed one another with such rapidity that the priests engaged in chanting *Te Deums*, in gratitude for each healing, were unable to keep pace with the calls made upon them. While prayer, praise, and cries of "Miracle!" were resounding through the church, blood was being shed freely outside. A trivial quarrel between some nobles had strewn the neighbouring streets with wounded men.^[53] Such contrasts were a common feature of the age.

[Pg 43]

The tomb of Lazarus occupied a position in the apse, behind the great altar. According to the

evidence of an eye-witness, it was a monument of unusual magnificence, built in the form of a church, constructed of porphyry, and black and white marble. Its sculpture comprised a recumbent figure of Lazarus, in his winding-sheet, with Christ's word, written below it, "Lazare veni foras (Lazarus, come forth)." Among other figures were those of Christ, Saint Peter, Saint Paul, and, before the head of Lazarus, two statues in stone representing Martha and Mary, one of them lifting to her nose a handkerchief, recalling the "jam foetet" (by this time he stinketh) of the Gospel story. This priceless monument, interesting to all, doubly interesting to those who believe that it did, indeed, house the relics of the friend of Christ, was destroyed during the course of improvements carried out in the choir of the cathedral during the 18th century; but three of the figures—those of St. Andrew, Martha and Mary, are still preserved in the little Musée Lapidaire of Autun, of which collection they are the gems. A glance at them reveals the fact that, even at this early epoch, the art of sculpture was well developed in Autun. The rapt expression of the countenances, the graceful lines of the draperies, the comparative delicacy of the execution, without sacrifice of strength, recall something of the Græco-Roman tradition, that probably had never perished wholly from the Roman city. That these figures, the work of one Martin, were the result of no mere sporadic outbreak of genius is proved, I think, by the rapport they bear with the work of Geraldus, which, when seen in the apse of the Musée, they instantly recall.

But before succumbing to the attractions of that unique porch of the cathedral of Autun, we could not resist the temptation to get a first general impression of a building which, we had always been told, was one of the best to be found, even in this land of beautiful Romanesque churches. The exterior effect, however, is not entirely satisfactory, especially if the approach be made by one of the streets leading up from the middle of the town. The western towers are, indeed, still Romanesque; but they have been re-handled, not too happily; and the unity of the whole has been lost by the substitution, for the Romanesque work, of Gothic side chapels, and pierced parapets of varying designs, with a profusion of mediæval and classical ornament, in the spandrels and below the parapets, all utterly at variance with the simple grandeur of the original building. Moreover the north-east door, in the tympanum of which was a magnificent piece of sculpture representing the raising of Lazarus, has been replaced by a heavy production, of the revolution period, in the latest and ugliest classical style. The 15th century spire,—a beautiful piece of work, somewhat after the manner of that of Lichfield Cathedral,—has a rather squat appearance from this lower side of the church. Its grace and lightness, and the harmony of its proportions, are better seen from the higher lane to the south-east; but the finish of the spire, is not, in my judgment, wholly successful. The crocketing is somewhat overdone, and the decoration rather fussy in treatment.

[Pg 44]

The original Romanesque tower, which was probably in some danger of collapse, was at last destroyed by fire. Cardinal Rolin, brother of Nicholas Rolin, whom we shall meet later on, rebuilt the new tower in 1480. The state of the foundations necessitated lightness for the new work, which relies for its security almost wholly upon excellence of construction. The spire, built without any internal support whatever, is said to be only seven inches thick at the base, and six towards the summit.^[54] Towards the close of the 13th century, probably, the walls of the nave, threatening to collapse under the vault, were supported by flying buttresses surmounted by heavy pinnacles. These additions, lightened during the 15th century, almost complete the transformation of the exterior effect from that of a Romanesque to a late Gothic church.

The greatest glory of Autun Cathedral, is its magnificent two-storied, barrel vaulted, open porch with aisled bays, forming the western entrance. In the tympanum of the door is the famous sculpture by Geraldus, representing the Last Judgment. Standing at the foot of the noble flight of steps leading up to the stately hall, where of old the lepers, and the horde of unclean, torn between the love of life and its miseries, must have trembled and hoped before that awful vision of judgment, we first realised that here is one of the most majestic and impressive ante-chambers that Burgundy, or France, ever built at the gates of her houses of God.

[Pg 45]

This porch owes its existence indirectly to Clunisian influence, and directly to the cult of Saint Lazarus. Among the thousands of pilgrims drawn every year, for solace or for healing, to the sacred tomb, were many ladres, or lepers, whose admission to the interior of the church would have been a menace to the public health. Under these circumstances, the Chapter obtained from Hugues III., Duke of Burgundy, in 1178, permission to construct a porch, on the condition that it should not be of a military character.^[55] This work was duly carried out; but it must not be supposed that the original was as we see it now. The first porch did not extend as far as the two side doors, but comprised a vault supported on two walls, whose position is now represented by two pairs of columns. The ground adjoining was levelled up to the porch, and the entrance was through an arch pierced in the eastern wall.^[56] Some years later, as the cult of St. Lazarus increased, the porch was modified to its present design. The magnificent flight of steps, built in the 18th century, was the only improvement that the colossal foolishness of the revolutionary iconoclasts succeeded in effecting in the cathedral.

The upper storey of the porch, and the niche in the facade above it, is also interesting, as being entirely characteristic of the architecture of this part of France, though limited to a very short period, from about 1130 to 1200.^[57] In the 13th century, with the advent of developed Gothic, these appendages disappear.

The magnificent central doorway, taken as a whole, is the best example of its kind, both as regards design and sculpture, to be seen in Burgundy, with the exception of Vézelay, which, politically, belongs rather to the Nivernais than to the land of the Dukes.

The God in Judgment of the tympanum, one of the most ancient and complete

[Pg 46]



ST. LAZARE

of the many examples of the subject to be seen in France, is striking, terrifying almost, in vigour, in that dramatic power which, even so early, was one of the marked characteristics of Burgundian sculpture. With hands outstretched He sits between the elect and the damned. On His left, in the place of torment, the sinners, weighed in the angel balance, and found wanting, are handed over, for torment, to the powers of darkness, whose bony claws, reaching down, fasten upon more victims from a sinful world. The hideous malignity upon the faces of these tormentors, the twisted, tortured postures of the despairing victims, all heighten the effect, and contrast strongly with the still somewhat rigid, though easier, lines of the other picture, where mighty angels are lifting into a heavenly mansion the spirits of the redeemed.

Not less effective, probably, in execution and symbolism, was the figure of the door-post upon which rests this early conception of the world's destiny. Here was Lazarus, who triumphed over death, and beside him, his sisters, Martha and Mary, symbols of two aspects of personal service. The original statues were destroyed at the Revolution, but the lines of their substitutes, among the most successful modern imitations that I know, have still, in form and drapery, something of Hellenic delicacy, suggesting that the original sculptor's eye was lit by the dying radiance of Grecian art, or by the herald beams of an earlier, unremembered Renaissance. The author of this ancient sculpture is known. He has written his name above the lintel: "Gisilbertus hoc fecit."

I need not enumerate all the other subjects of the carvings on this beautiful porch; the reader will not have any difficulty in discovering some of them for himself—Jerome and his Lion; Hagar and Ishmael driven out by Abraham; Balaam and the Ass; the Presentation in the Temple; and, on the archivolt, the signs of the Zodiac.

[Pg 47]

It is curious that Voltaire appears to have had some influence, good and bad—the good was involuntary—over the destiny of this porch of Autun. While staying at the Château of Montjeu, where he attended the marriage of the Duc de Richelieu, he condescended to visit the cathedral, and so ridiculed the barbarism of its architecture, and especially of its sculptured adornments, that the Canons had the whole of the great tympanum plastered over, to hide the composition of the Last Judgment. In doing this, they preserved it from damage during the Revolution, and it remained so hidden for seventy years.^[58] Eventually, after its existence had been entirely forgotten, an intelligent inhabitant of the city suspected that there might be carving beneath the plaster, and made the great discovery.

One glance round the interior of the church is sufficient to show that, in spite of the loss of unity caused by the addition of a Flamboyant Gothic Jubé, and Gothic side chapels, we have here the best of lower Burgundian churches, modelled on Cluny, and comprising all the characteristics of the classical Romanesque style; although the pointed arches of the bays of the nave, and of the high vault, not quite a barrel vault, might lead some people to suppose, wrongly, that the church is essentially Gothic. The fluted pilasters on the piers, a feature which we shall see repeated in many a church hereabouts, and the triforium gallery, imitated obviously from the arcade of the Porte d'Arroux, with further fluted pillars between pierced arches, and the cornice above, all show how persistent was the influence of the Roman tradition. Another feature that strikes one immediately is the stunted height of the triforium and clerestory, a fact easily accounted for when we remember that the Burgundians of the 12th century, while they liked a lofty first storey, had not developed the art of buttressing sufficiently well to enable them to lift their vaults very high. Even so the settlement, in an outward direction, above the springing of the aisle arches, is very noticeable, and, as we have already seen, necessitated the insertion of flying buttresses to prevent collapse within two hundred years of their erection.

Yet, despite these drawbacks, an observer, standing in one of the transepts, and looking across at the other transept, and down the nave, cannot but be struck by the grandeur of the whole effect; by the lightened solidity, the well-tempered massiveness which is characteristic of Burgundian architecture, as it is of Burgundy as a whole.

[Pg 48]

I am not one of those who consider that the building art of the 12th century, here or elsewhere, can ever rival the developed Gothic in inspiring power, as a setting for, or as a symbol of, the mystical spirit of Christianity, and I think that this opinion applies especially to the work of these Burgundian architects, whose adherence to classic detail must inevitably recall, to cultured minds, the Hellenic myths with which they are historically associated, and carry down an architectural tradition of horizontal effect, utterly at variance with the dominance of vertical line that was to be one of the main characteristics of 13th century development.

This clashing of two styles, however, has been tempered in Autun Cathedral by the insertion at the transepts, between the piers, of round shafts which carry the eye up to the vault, and break the severity of the square angles of the crossing.

The top of the little spiral staircase in the north transept, is the best place from which to see the detail of the triforium arcade, the decoration of the archivolt, and the band of roses above them. Here, too, is to be had a good view of the domed vault.

The eastern end of the cathedral has no ambulatory, but is in the form of a circular apse, with eastern chapels. In the 15th and 16th centuries were carried out the drastic changes that have completely altered the character of the exterior, and destroyed the unity of the cathedral. At this time the Romanesque apse underwent considerable modifications; and, two centuries later, further futile improvements were made. The western towers were practically rebuilt and domed; the Last Judgment in the porch was mutilated and covered with plaster, and—crowning feat of all—the magnificent tomb of Lazarus, by Brother Martin, which had sheltered for 600 years the relics of Autun's patron saint, was utterly destroyed. Lastly, these imbecile clergy of the 18th century, lined the apse, nearly up to the walls of the comparatively new Gothic windows, with panels of red Sicilian marble, divided by columns of grey, antique marble, and adorned them with gilded capitals, fat cherubs, and other utterly incongruous ornaments. It is generally believed that a portion of this marble was taken from the tomb of Lazarus, which they used as a quarry, and the remainder from the Roman ruins.

[Pg 49]

The capitals of the church,—among the best of their period existing in France—are typically Burgundian in their animation and vigour, their richness of detail, and their freedom of treatment, both as regards figures and foliage. They are at too high an elevation, and not sufficiently well lighted, to be studied thoroughly from below; but they are full of interest; and any enthusiast who is well versed in these matters, can pass a very pleasant hour in making more or less successful guesses at the subjects illustrated. Here are some of them. On the south-west side: The body of Saint Vincent guarded by Eagles; The History of Simon the Magician; The Washing of Feet; The Martyrdom of Stephen; The Ark on Mount Ararat; The History of Judas. On the north-east side: The Birth of the Virgin; The Sacrifice of Isaac; Saint Joakim in the Desert; The Hebrews in the Furnace; Daniel in the Lions' Den; Christ on the Roof of the Temple; The Resurrection; The Visit of the Magi to Herod; The Flight into Egypt.^[59]

The few monuments to be found in the cathedral are not of great interest. The best are the kneeling statues which originally formed part of the Gothic tomb of Pierre Jeannin, the famous Minister of Henry the Fourth, and of his wife. The tomb, now destroyed, was by Nicolas Guillain, about the year 1626; but M. de Fontenay thinks that the bust of Jeannin, much superior to the other, dates, more probably, from the end of the 16th century. Those who wish to know more than I can tell them of the subjects of this monument, are referred to Montégut's charming book, "Souvenirs de Bourgogne," which is well worth reading, for the aptness of its observation, its many interesting historical and local references, its delicate wit, and its literary style.

The many Gothic chapels thrown out from the aisle in the 15th and 16th centuries, and the flamboyant jubé, are not of particular interest, and, moreover, destroy the unity of the interior. I will, therefore, pass them by; but, before leaving the church, I must call attention to what some people consider to be one of its chief treasures,—the martyrdom of Saint Symphorien, by Ingres—a painting ranked by some connoisseurs as the masterpiece of the 19th century. It was specially ordered for the cathedral in 1824, but was not delivered until some thirty years later.

One cannot pretend to any enthusiasm for the result of those thirty years of labour. The picture leaves me absolutely cold, as it does nine out of every ten who see it. The figures are vigorous, and the colouring is, perhaps, more pleasing than is the case with some of Ingres' paintings—probably because the canvas is dirty and ill-lighted—but the picture is overcrowded, and the general effect theatrical. On the whole I am not disposed to quarrel with the critics who regretted that ever Ingres forsook the pencil for the brush.

[Pg 50]

Here, in a few words, is the story of Saint Symphorien which the reader will find in full in the "Précis Historique" of "Autun et ses monuments." It appears that, in the middle of the twelfth century, the gods chiefly favoured by the Autunois, were, Berecynthia—or Cybele—Apollo, and Diana. One day, when the image of Berecynthia, accompanied by an enormous crowd, was being wheeled on a cart through the streets of the city, Symphorien, having refused to do homage to her, was arrested and brought before the Roman magistrate, Heraclicus, to whom he boldly confessed his Christian faith. The magistrate, unwilling to deal harshly with a patrician youth, read to him the ante-Christian edict of Marcus Aurelius, which decrees the capital punishment of obstinate heretics, and endeavoured, in vain, to bring Symphorien to reason. Finally, he gave orders for the prisoner to be beaten by the lictors, and brought before him again, after passing three days in prison. Some of the dialogue that took place at the second interview is worth recording as the *acta sincera* of Symphorien probably give it to us in a nearly verbatim form, and support, in a very interesting way, the other evidence we can produce to show that the worship of the Romans, as of the Greeks, whose religion they honoured, was, to our way of thinking, somewhat indecently commercial—the purchase, for value received, of the divinity's favour. Thus the magistrate: "How much wiser you would be, Symphorien, by sacrificing to the immortal gods, to obtain promotion in the army, and rewards from the public treasury. If to-day you do not bend the knee before the image of the goddess mother, if you do not practice the cult due to Apollo and Diana, you will be put to death, and nothing can prevent it. If you consent, I will have the altar of the gods made ready; prepare, then, to let the smoke of the incense rise in their honour, and to render to the divinity the rights which are his due."

Symphorien replied:



FONTAINE ST LAZARE—AUTUN

Facing page 50

"The judge in whom is vested the public authority should not accompany his sentence with vain and useless words. If it be perilous not to make every day further progress in the way of perfection, how much more so to wander from the straight path and to risk foundering upon the reefs of sin?"

[Pg 51]

Again the magistrate spoke:

"Sacrifice to the gods, that you may enjoy the honour granted by the prince to those who serve him." Symphorien replied in the same strain.

"A judge degrades his authority when he thus publicly puts a price upon the observance of the law. He does irreparable wrong to his soul, and shames his good name for ever."

Finally, the official, irritated, cut short Symphorien's discourse, with the following sentence:—"That Symphorien, guilty of public crime, in having committed sacrilege by refusing to sacrifice to the gods, and seeking to profane our holy altars, should be struck by the avenging sword, that the dread effects of his crime may be cancelled, and the law, human and divine, satisfied."

In Ingres' picture, Symphorien is on his way to execution outside the town walls, while, from the rampart, his mother is addressing to him her last words of farewell and encouragement. He was decapitated by the executioner, and his body buried at night near a fountain "extra publicum campum," probably one of the vast burial places on the road to Langres and Besançon.^[60]

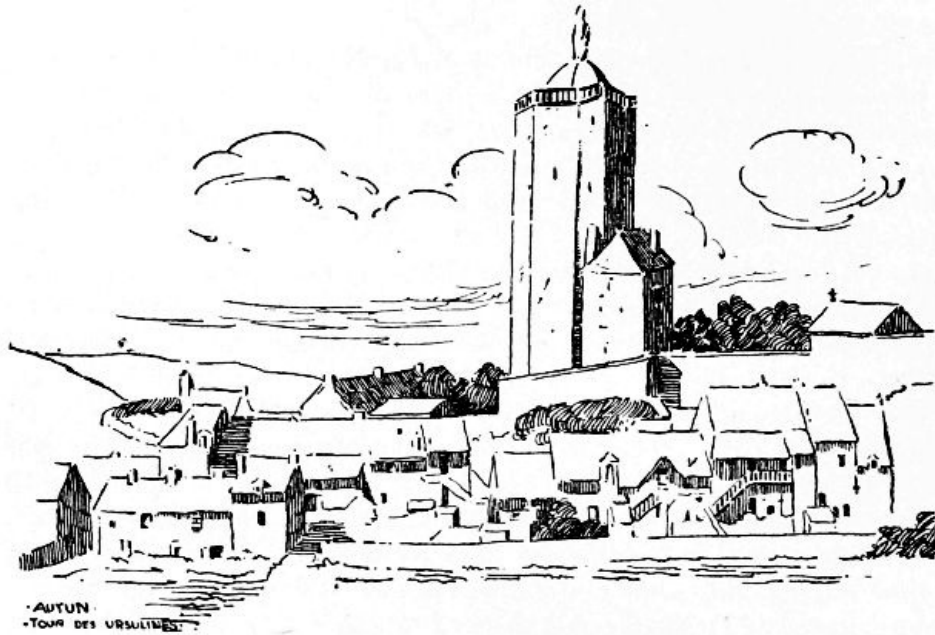
Here we leave the cathedral of Autun, comforting ourselves with the assurance that, though we pass no more beneath its magnificent porch, we shall meet sister churches, not less beautiful, in other ancient towns of Burgundy. Meanwhile, before descending the steep old street that leads downwards, by the Hotel Rolin, to the centre of modern Autun, wander awhile through the narrow ways of the cathedral precincts, where still, as of old, the priests, living relics of a shadowy past, muttering into their breviaries, pace up and down before many a curious Gothic building.

In the sixteenth century—1543, to be precise—the chapter of the cathedral commissioned an architect unknown, who may possibly have been Jean Goujon, to erect a fountain which was placed, at first, near the corner of the Place St. Louis and the Place des Terraces.

In 1784, it was decided that the fountain obstructed the road; and it was accordingly removed to its present site, where it remains, after many moving accidents and adventures, and in spite of alterations, a gem of the Renaissance.^[61] No description can convey an idea of the harmonious and decorative effect of this little fountain, unmatched for felicity in all France. The design is in two superposed pierced lanterns, the lower one surrounded by a cupola, and containing a basin

[Pg 52]

below. The Ionic columns, the pilasters, the vases surmounting the entablature, and the pelican crowning the whole, are all perfectly proportioned and harmonized; and enough is left of the original sculpture to show how exquisite in every detail was the execution of the original work.



Just below the fountain, in the Rue des Bancs, is the Hotel Rolin, the most interesting of the many museums with which Autun is favoured. Personally, I must confess to a very lukewarm enthusiasm for the majority of provincial museums; and I am inclined to wish that Autun had collected its relics in one good building, instead of having them in various quarters of the town; but the Hotel Rolin is well worth a visit for its own sake. It is the annexe of the ancient palace of the Rolins, the *magna domum Johannis Rolini*, which faced the church of Notre Dame on the site of the Place St. Louis; and was built by Guillaume de Beauchamp, son of Nicholas Rolin, the famous chancellor of Burgundy, to accommodate the numerous members of the suite of that august personage.

The courtyard and the glimpse it gives of the Hotel, when you have emerged from the darkness of the gate, is quite characteristic of its period, though, if nature should have imparted to you the least degree of timidity, where animals are concerned, you will probably leave that courtyard without regret, owing to the attentions of the concierge's very strenuous dog, who will make frantic and disconcerting endeavours to break out upon you through a frail, ground-floor window, which alone stands between you and a violent death. But all travellers must be prepared to face danger, and Cerberus at the gate will enhance your appreciation of the home of the Eduen Society.

[Pg 53]

The building contains some stele from the Roman burial grounds, and numerous interesting relics, collected, for the most part, by M. Bulliot, from the Oppidum Bibracte. It has also some good recumbent mediæval statues, Guillaume de Brasey, 1302, Jehan de Brasey, 1305, and the Sire de Rousillon, of the end of the thirteenth century. There is a relic of Charles le Téméraire, from Granson, and good portraits of Nicholas Rolin and his brother.

Just below the Hotel Rolin are the remains of the old tower of the Porte des Bancs, of the fifth century, part of the rampart surrounding the Castrum, or upper city of Autun.^[62]

The museum which ranks next in interest to the Hotel Rolin, is the Musée Lapidaire in the Rue St. Nicholas, in the Marchaux, the lower part of the town. It is housed in a nice little Romanesque chapel of the twelfth century, once attached to the Hôpital St. Nicholas et St. Eloi de Marchaux. I found the bell at the entrance broken, and had to apply for admission at the concierge's cottage, No. 10, on the right. Knowing what I do of French provincial museums, I have little doubt that the reader will find the bell in the same condition. But let him not be deterred. The building, a charming and typical example of Burgundian Romanesque, on a small scale, is worth seeing. Its walls still show the remains of some faded frescoes, probably, thinks M. Fontenay, of late twelfth century, representing Christ in glory.

The chapel is filled with odds and ends of different periods; of the most important of which, the statues of Martha and Mary, from the cathedral, we have already spoken. In addition to these, there is, in the apse, a good Renaissance vierge from Autun, treated in a manner that contrasts very thoroughly with the saints on the wall behind her. The Renaissance remains from the chapel of Denis Poillot, ambassador of Francis I. in England, are of the highest order of merit, and make one regret much that the building has not survived. On the floor is a fine Roman mosaic, now covered with a cloth, and, close to it, a well-executed Roman sarcophagus, from Arles, representing the chase of the wild-boar of Calydon. The realistic sculpture is typical of much that is still to be seen in the most interesting Musée Lapidaire of that provincial town.

[Pg 54]

Beside the chapel is a pleasant little garden, surrounded by an open shed which houses numberless relics of Roman and early Christian Autun, chiefly stele, tombstones, fragments of mosaic, etc. Historically the most interesting are the débris of the grey marble sarcophagus that once contained the body of Queen Brunehault, one of the most energetic and clear-sighted

personalities of Merovingian times. In the name of her grandson, Thierry, she governed Burgundy for fifteen years (598-613), establishing her court at Autun, and, although more than sixty years of age, showed a "sagacity in council and administrative ability" which is noted by Gregory of Tours. Finally, some of the Burgundian chiefs, who hated her, delivered her over to her enemy, King Clotaire II. He caused her to be paraded for three days on a camel's back, in sight of all the army, and then had her tied by her hair, and by one foot and arm, to the tail of a wild horse, which was then driven far away. Her remains, buried in the Abbey of St. Martin, at Autun, not far from the chapel of St. Nicholas, were discovered there in 1632, in a leaden coffin, which contained, also, among other objects, a spur, said to be that which was used upon the horse to which the Queen was bound.

There are worse places to wander in, and to dream in, than these open galleries, where the silent ones stand, side by side, upon their funeral stones, and the chickens scratch among Roman capitals. The gardienne's children are at play on the path, and, in the centre of the green cloister garth, the ripening pears tremble upon the swaying branches. The old caretaker—blessed among caretakers—leaves you alone, until you summon her. She is ready for a chat, but can impart no information whatever concerning the monuments in her charge.

"Good-bye, Madame; and when I come again, in the spring, I shall expect to find the bell mended." "Parfaitement, Monsieur; Ha! ha! ha!" and her gossip friend, across the road, joins in the chorus, "Ha! ha! ha! Ha! ha! ha!" But the bell will not be mended—and they know it.

[Pg 55]

The Musée municipal in the Hotel de Ville—the last musée which I shall inflict upon the reader—is as dreary as a haunted house, and much less interesting. You wander through gallery after gallery of second and third rate paintings, to be rewarded, at last, in the end room, by two little bronze crupellaires, or fighting gladiators of the first century, so called because, according to Tacitus, they were completely hidden beneath an iron armour, so thick as to make the wearer as immune against blows as he was incapable of dealing them.^[63] The most interesting thing in the museum is the famous Greek inscription which has excited the interest of antiquarians and theologians all over the world. The stone is a piece of white marble, broken into fragments which are pieced together again, and on which is a Greek acrostic, and something supposed to stand for a Sigma. The inscription, believed to be of the third or fourth century, is as follows. The translation I give is from the French, as quoted by Hamerton in "The Mount."

"O divine race of heavenly Ἰχθῦς, receive with a heart full of respect life immortal among the mortals. Renew thy soul's youth, O my friend! in the divine waters, by the eternal waves of wisdom that flow from the true riches. Receive the delicious food of the Saviour of saints. Take, eat and drink, thou holdest Ἰχθῦς in thy hands. Ἰχθῦς grant me this grace, ardently I desire it, Master and Saviour; may my mother rest in peace, I conjure thee, light of the dead. Aschandeus, my father, thou whom I cherish, with my tender mother and all my relations in the peace of Ἰχθῦς. remember thy Pectorius."^[64]

The Hotel de Ville in which the Musée Municipal is housed, fronts upon the Champ de Mars, formerly the Champ St. Ladre (campus sancti Lazari) the centre of the life of the town. It was built over in Roman times, as proved by the substructures that have been found, but the land was cleared about the twelfth century. Throughout all the middle ages its convenient position between the Castrum and the Marchaux rendered it a kind of forum, or general public meeting place, and the site of the great fêtes and fairs.

During the visit of Charles VIII. to Autun, in 1516, the inhabitants constructed in St. Ladre an immense wooden amphitheatre, with a linen velarium as a protection, quite in the old Roman manner. Here, too, from time immemorial, has been held, and is still held, in September, the great fête de St. Ladre, and cattle fair that draws so many traders to Autun, and destroys for a month the peace of the cathedral city.^[65] The wars of religion and the great revolution have brought their quota of victims to the stake, the gallows, or the guillotine, that in turn were set up in the centre of the place. At the north-east corner, opposite the Hotel de Ville, are the best cafés of the town, where, I remember, we learned the latest news of the Portuguese Revolution.

[Pg 56]

Just round the corner, in the Rue de l'Arbalète, is the best Hotel of Autun, "St. Louis et de la Poste," a great rambling building of the early seventeenth century, that, in itself, is a lasting souvenir of great historical events. On the 10th of January, 1802, Napoleon Buonaparte passed through Autun on the way to Lyons. He stayed one night, with the Empress Josephine, at the Hotel St. Louis, where he received the local authorities. Several ladies of the town, eager for a sight of the great man, obtained the hotelier's permission to officiate as waitresses, for that night only. Josephine discovered the ruse at once, and was so amused thereby that she proceeded to play her part in the game with the utmost grace and charm.

The hundred days saw Napoleon again at the Hotel St. Louis. He had left Elba on the 26th February, 1815, and arrived at Autun on the 15th of March. According to the account of an eye witness^[66] the troops accompanying him were utterly exhausted, and could keep no sort of order; their ranks were broken, and soldiers of all arms were marching pell-mell. Napoleon was surprised and deeply hurt by his reception at Autun. No crowds came out to meet him, and scarcely a cry of "Vive l'Empereur" was heard. The houses were shut, the streets deserted, and only a small company of nobodies, in blouses and sabots, formed his cortège.... No sooner had he descended at the Hotel de la Poste, than he asked for the mayor and the municipal council. They were brought into a balconied room looking on the street.

The Emperor, attended by Marshal Bertrand, General Brayer, and five or six other military men, appeared to be in a state of great agitation. He was pacing up and down, holding in his hand the

[Pg 57]

proclamation of the night before, stepping at every moment on to the balcony, and leaving it with angry looks. When all had entered he stood in the middle of the apartment, and asked which was the mayor of Autun.

"I am," said M. Piquot.

"I know what you are," the Emperor replied, "a man always ready to pay court to nobles; one who would sacrifice his dignity for a dinner. You are mayor no longer; only a fanatic and a madman could have drawn up such an act as this. You dare to treat me as an usurper!"

"Sire," said M. de la Chaise, president of the civil tribunal, "by your abdication you have freed us from our oaths, and we have sworn fealty to Louis XVIII."

"I have abdicated, you say. I did it only to assure the happiness of the French. France is not happy. She recalls me, and you would oppose her.... Madman! you would have civil war, then!"

"But, enfin, sire, you have abdicated."

"Be silent!" cried Napoleon, angrily, "you are only a wretched attorney."

We need not follow any further a quarrel which led nowhere. Amid the same cold silence that had marked his arrival, Napoleon left early the next morning, to face the last triumphs and the crushing disaster of those fateful hundred days.^[67]

Another visitor to the Hotel St. Louis was George Sand, who came in the midst of all the bustle and excitement of the fair of St. Ladre, on the 2nd September, 1836, and was served, with two children and a nurse, under a fruit tree in the garden into which the guests had overflowed. She must have overheard, at the large table, words which offended her, for, says St. Fonteney, she left her repast and the hotel in haste, and, two months afterwards, took a full revenge in the columns of the "Revue des deux Mondes," in which she referred darkly to the occasion as an "obscenity" and an "orgie of patricians." One would hardly have thought George Sand so squeamish.

We, too, being only passers by, must leave Autun in haste. The autumn sun was setting, and the ruby mists of evening were creeping up the purple slopes of the Morvan, as the train steamed out of the station. Our compartment was quite unlit, and gradually, as night fell, darkness enwrapped us so completely that we could not so much as see a hand held before the face. When we drew up at Epinac, a bent old woman, standing huddled up on the platform, peered into the compartment, in a futile endeavour to see what it might contain. She called the guard. They both looked in. "Fait ben noir" (very dark), she muttered. He shrugged his shoulders. The old woman wandered off vacantly. Third class fare on a monopoly railway does not entitle you to light; and she knew it. Along the darkened train ran a legend that they were buying oil and wick in the town. We waited, waited, long enough for them to have bought up the whole town and the one beyond it. But no light came, until, southward, I saw a faint, silvery glimmer. Then I knew what we were waiting for. There is no charge for moonlight—not even on that railway. But it was still dark as pitch. With a jerk the train began to move out; a large parcel, the property of a young French girl in front of me, fell down upon the head of her small and sleepy nephew, Madelon, who howled plaintively. The soldier in the corner, compelled by the presence of ladies to refrain, for an hour past, from indulging in his ruling passion, could contain himself no longer. He spat voluminously, vociferously, like a hen clucking. Almost as loudly Madelon sucked at a lozenge bestowed for the soothing of the bruised head. As the moon rose, the darkness paled. I could just see Madelon regarding complacently the lozenge that he had removed from his mouth.

"Madelon, Madelon, how many times have I told you not to take things from your mouth when you are eating? Once in, they must stay in. Veux tu m'obéir." The rich sucking noise ceased, to be followed by the light breathing of a child asleep. We stopped at another station. Not content with the moon, people put their heads out of the windows, and clamoured for light. They chaffed the station-master; they ragged the guard. Like rabbits the men ran up and down over the roofs of the carriages. Five porters gathered in a little woe-begone group, and looked on vacantly. But no light came. A tin trumpet blew, and the train started. An hour later we were climbing the hills of the Côte d'Or and dropping down into the eastern plain. That is how we left Autun.

[Pg 58]

Footnotes:

[50] "Impressions of Provence," pp. 118-121.

[51] P. G. Hamerton. "The Mount," p. 115.

[52] "Autun et ses Monuments."

[53] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 143-147. For full description of the tomb of Lazarus, see p. 148.

[54] P. G. Hamerton. "The Mount," p. 167.

[55] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 153.

[56] Dictionnaire Raisoné, V. le Duc, tom: vii., p. 275.

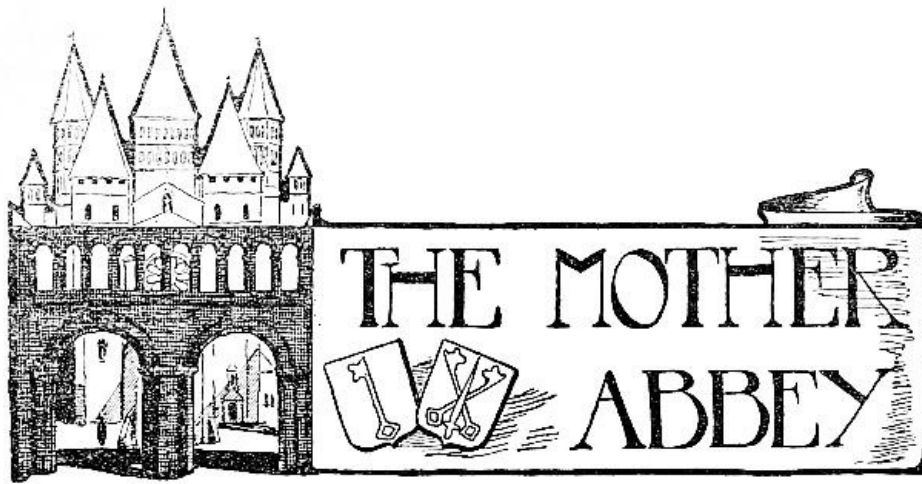
[57] Dictionnaire Raisoné, V. le Duc, tom: vii., p. 278.

[58] P. G. Hamerton. "The Mount," p. 171.

[59] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 422-438.

[60] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 52-54.

- [61] In 1863 it was removed for some years to the Musée Lapidaire.
- [62] The Rue des Bancs was so called from the butchers' benches which once lined it. "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 379.
- [63] "Crupellarios vacant, inferendis sitibus inhabilis, accipiendis impenetrabilis."—Taciti Aun: lib. iii., c. 43, quoted "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 38
- [64] Hamerton. "The Mount," p. 184.
- [65] "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 332.
- [66] Dr. Guyton. "Mes Souvenirs de Soixante Ans pour servir à l'Histoire d'Autun," quoted in "Autun et ses Monuments," p. 354.
- [67] "Autun et ses Monuments," pp. 354-357.



CHAPTER V

The loitering train, that, climbing, winds among the vine-clad slopes of the Mâconnais, gave us our first glimpse of the vendangeurs gathering the last of a scanty crop. Those blue shirts, moving through the bronze-clad bushes, were our first intimation that the Saône-et-Loire had escaped the utter ruin that the winds and rains of a wintry summer had wrought among the vines of the Côte d'Or. But this incident did not impress us as it might have done at another time or in another place. Our thoughts were not with the wine-harvest; they were ahead, busy with the memories the name of Cluny evokes.

To one who cares for what was best in the middle ages, no place in France, no place in Europe, unless, perhaps, it be Cîteaux, can exercise an equal charm. But, as we shall see, though Cîteaux rivalled, and ultimately eclipsed Cluny in power, and, through the influence of St. Bernard, outshone her, not in material splendour, but by the dazzling whiteness of her purity, the historic interest of the site of the Cistercian house, there, by the deserted woods and wind-ruffled pools of the eastern plain, could not survive, in the minds of many, the destruction of the ancient monastery. Cluny, the Mother Abbey of Europe, the school of popes, holds first place, by right of birth, by right of what she was, and is. For Cluny still stands. The little town nestling upon the lower slopes of the valley, through which the Grosne winds between her poplars, is not merely built upon the site of the Abbey. It is the Abbey.

[Pg 60]

From the moment, when, on the way from the station, you see the ancient towers raising, one by one, their hoary heads above the roofs, as they have raised her past from oblivion, till, having climbed the cobble-stoned street that winds upwards through the town, you look down through the ruined gateway that once gave passage to kings and abbots, from every street corner, from every church, and dwelling-house, Cluny calls to you out of the past.

We did not hear her at first; and we were disappointed. The Grande Rue, by which you enter the town from the east, is so narrow, that it affords no glimpse of what lies on either hand; and it was with unexpected suddenness, that, turning to the right, after a few minutes of wandering, we stood before the Hotel de Bourgogne, and looked up from the little, white building, at the great, grey, octagonal tower and the wall of masonry, that, we knew, must be the last survival of the Abbey Church itself. At that moment we were standing on the site of the nave; but we did not know it. It takes time to orient oneself.

Following upon the Gallo-Roman and early Christian periods, centred in the Autunois, the story of the rise of Cluny from humble beginnings to her apothegm of spiritual and temporal power marks the second notable period of Burgundian history. From this source, also, was to flow the main stream of progress, religious and artistic, that culminated in the mediæval triumphs of thirteenth-century European civilization. At the time of the rise of Cluny, Burgundy, under the capetian dukes, was already established as a vassal province of France, but the inwardness of Burgundian history—of French history, indeed, in the 11th and 12th centuries—will be understood only by those who realize that, until the advent of the semi-royal dukes of the house of Valois, in 1364, the controlling forces of the duchy are to be sought, not in Dijon, nor in Auxerre, but here, in this the mother abbey of Western Europe.^[68]

In the year 909, the veteran Duke William of Aquitaine, haunted by the shades of the many warriors who had fallen in the service of his ambition, or troubled by the whispers of conscience, or moved, perhaps, by that not wholly disinterested piety which sometimes awakens with the approach of death, decided to follow the course then usual in such cases, and to found a monastery. For this purpose, he took into his confidence his friend, Bernon, Abbot of Gigny, who, accompanied by Hugues, Abbot of St. Martin at Autun, paid a visit to the Duke in his villa of

[Pg 61]

Cluny, and was bidden to search out a place meet for the service of God. But the monk, gifted with a keen eye for all the amenities of a monastic site, could find none more fitting than this "in a spot withdrawn from all human society, so full of solitude, of repose and of peace, that it seemed in some sort a picture (image) of the heavenly solitude."^[69] The Duke, however, stung by a last pang of regret for the loss of his lovely valley, had objections to raise. The spot was not suitable; for, all day long, the shouts of huntsmen and the baying of hounds broke the silence of the neighbouring forest.

"Drive the dogs away," said Bernon, with a laugh, "and replace them with monks; for you well know which shall stand you best before God, the bay of the hounds, or the monks' prayers."

"Surely, Father," replied the Duke, "your advice is sound, and since you give it unfeignedly, be it done, with Christ's aid, as thy goodness bids me do."

In the year 909, the 11th year of Charles the Simple, the old Duke, lest, at his last hour, he should deserve the reproach of having thought only of the care of his body, and of the augmentation of his earthly possessions, wrote in his will, as follows:—"I declare that, for the love of God and of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, I give and bequeath to the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, all that I possess at Cluny ... without excepting anything dependent upon my domain of Cluny (Villa), farms, oratories, slaves of both sexes, vines, meadows, fields, water, water-courses, mills, rights of way, lands, cultivated or uncultivated, without any reserve."^[70]



[Pg 62]

He gives this, he goes on to say, for the good of soul and body of himself, his wife, his relatives, and dependents, "on condition that a monastery shall be built at Cluny, in honour of the apostles, Peter and Paul, and that there shall gather monks, living according to the rule of St. Benedict^[71] to hold and administer for ever the things given, so that this house may become the true house of prayer, that it may be filled for ever with faithful vows and pious supplications, that here shall be desired and besought, with ardent wish and earnest longing, the wonders of communion with Heaven, that prayers and supplications be addressed without ceasing to God, both for me and for those persons of whom I have already made mention."

[Pg 63]

Further:—"By God, in God and all His Saints, and under the fearful menace of the last judgment, I beg, I beseech, that no secular prince, nor count, nor bishop, nor the Pontiff himself of the Roman Church, do invade the possessions of God's servants, nor sell nor diminish, nor give in benefice to whomsoever it may be, anything to them belonging, nor allow any head to be set over them against their will. And that this prohibition may be more strongly binding upon the wicked and the headstrong, I insist and I add, and I conjure you, Oh! Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and Thou, Pontiff of the Pontiffs of the apostolic seat, to cut off from communion with the Holy Church and from life eternal, by the canonical authority thou has received of God, all robbers, invaders, or sellers of that which I give, of my full satisfaction and of my evident will."

Sometimes, reading the old Duke's powerful anathema, that tells us more of the spirit of the time in which he lived than could any long narration of facts, I wonder, as I think of the after history of Cluny, whether that awful curse may not have alighted, or may not alight hereafter, upon the souls of those who have violated the conditions of its grant, or in blind fury have laid impious hands upon the hallowed stones of its church.

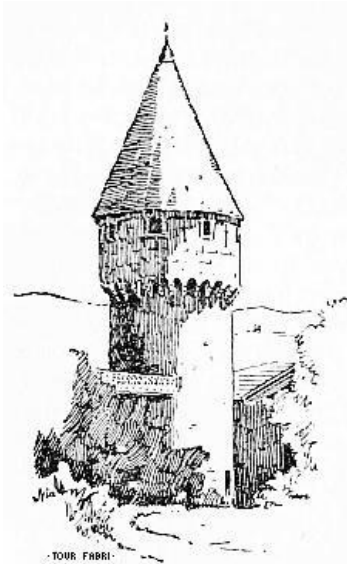
Here, then, in the solitary valley of the Grosne, on the slope of a hill forming one of a range which marks the northern extremity of the Cevennes, was planted the tree whose branches were to over-shadow Europe. The site was well chosen for the birthplace of such a destiny.

Occupying a middle position between Gothic and Latin influences, Cluny could here best fulfil her mission, which, indeed, has been and is still, in some sort, the mission of Burgundy, that of reconciling the conflicting, and often bitterly antagonistic, elements of north and south. Situated within a few kilometres of the Roman Road of Agrippa, which, passing Clermain and St. Cécile,

connected Lyons and Boulogne, by way of Mâcon and Autun, the Abbey was also connected with Italy by that magnificent waterway, the Saône and the Rhône. Travellers could come by land or by river to Cluny.

In the early years of the monastery, few came. Faith had weakened throughout all the land, and in many houses the monks of Gaul had departed from the strict rule of St. Benedict. It was the mission of Odon, the first of the long line of great and saintly abbots, to be a reformer of that rule, and, by the example of his holy life, to augment the numbers, and increase the prosperity of the Abbey. From his earliest years, while yet he was in the monastery of Balme, says his chronicler, Jean de Salerne, his merits, becoming known throughout all the district, were finding expression in the gracious legends of the time. One of the best known was the miracle of the crumbs.

[Pg 64]



An article of the rule bade the monks gather carefully the crumbs of bread from the table, and eat them before the end of the meal. When the signal to rise had been given, it was forbidden to lift any more food to the mouth. Odon, intent, one day, upon the lesson that was being read aloud in the refectory, forgot the crumbs. Not daring either to eat them, or to leave them on the table, he kept them in his hand, while he and his companions left the refectory and went into the church where grace was sung. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Odon threw himself at the feet of the father, and asked forgiveness; but, when he opened his hand to show him the crumbs, behold, to the astonishment of the brothers, each crumb was a precious pearl! By the order of Bernon, the stones were fastened to one of the ornaments of the church.^[72]

Under such heavenly guidance, even the very beasts of the forest ministered to the growing community. When Odon had completed the early church, which Jean de Salerne modestly speaks of as an oratory and chapel, replaced, a century later, by a larger one, the bishop came to consecrate the building. Forgetting the poverty of the monks, he brought with him such a lordly retinue of attendants and servants, that the abbot was sorely troubled as to how his guests were to be worthily received, and suitably fed. On the day of

[Pg 65]

the ceremony, when the grey dawn had driven westward the shadows of the night, a great wild boar emerged from the neighbouring forest, and ran, at full speed, to the monastery. The guardian of the church, who was busy adorning the exterior porch, struck with terror at the sight, retreated hastily, shut the door behind him, and drew the bolts. But the fierce animal, fierce no longer, began to lick the door—leaving upon it marks of white foam—and to tap gently with its hoof, as though to beg admittance. But all who saw the beast, fled, until, weary with much knocking, it lay down across the threshold. When the bishop and his suite arrived, a cry of terror rose from the company. They aroused the neighbours, who came, armed with sticks. But the boar, instead of shewing fight, offered himself voluntarily to death, and his flesh, prepared with all the art of the monastic cooks, satisfied the refined tastes of the prelates.

Every day Cluny grew in grace, in wisdom, in numbers, in riches, in influence, in power civil and spiritual. One after one, she founded new monasteries, and reformed those already in existence, until, under Odilon, in the beginning of the 11th century, a cluster of priories had been built upon lands ceded to the abbey, and Cluny was attaining an importance greater than any other order had acquired until that day. In the plains, upon the summits of the hills, by the banks of river and stream, in the depths of the forests, in the solitude of the valley, even in remote and silent places, were springing up little communities of monks, whose clocher, was, for the peasants, a symbol of charity, of refuge, of God come down among men,^[73] and every year, nobles, not a few, gave lands in the neighbouring comtés to the Abbey of Cluny.

The great fervour with which the monastic revival was received, had been due, in part, to the awful miseries of France during the 10th century, and in part to an almost universal belief that the year 1000 A.D. would herald the second coming of Christ, and the end of the world; but, by the time that year had passed without the advent of any of the expected phenomena, the more clear-sighted, perceiving the immense possibilities which the religious revival shadowed forth, for the welfare of a people crushed beneath the harsh feudal laws of the time, saw therein an additional inducement to encourage monastic effort. Gratitude for preservation had also its effect. All omens were propitious for the rise of Cluny to great glory.

In the year 1024, a lady of noble Burgundian family, knowing that the hour was come in which she should give birth to a child, and following the custom of the time, summoned a priest, who, by the sacrifice of the mass, should assure her a happy delivery. At the moment when, while consecrating the host, he was wrapt in fervent prayer, there appeared to him, shaping itself upon the golden bottom of the cup, a child's face radiant with a heavenly light. At the conclusion of the ceremony, he hastened to tell the mother what he had seen, and, finding the child already born, predicted that, God granting him life, the boy was chosen out for a great destiny, and would surely be found worthy, one day, to minister the cup in which his birth had been thus signaled. To the great joy of the mother, that hope was gloriously fulfilled; for the son born under such happy omens was Hugues, the greatest of the great abbots of Cluny, he, under whom the abbey, and, indeed, the whole church of Rome, was to establish an authority never before dreamed of in Christendom.

[Pg 66]

Braving the anger of his father, Delmace, an ambitious and violent Seigneur, who would fain have seen his son don the knight's armour rather than the monk's cowl, Hugues, already ardently set upon a life of piety, obtained admission to the monastery of St. Marcel de Chalon, which he soon left, in order to place himself under the protection of Odilon, the then abbot of Cluny. This new father of the young Hugues was one of the best beloved of the abbots of that monastery. Lacking the austerity of his predecessor, Odon—the great reformer whose energies had given new life to the Benedictine order—Saint Odilon, this "dernier et le plus méprisable des frères de Cluny," as he styled himself, though short and thin in person, was, at the same time, robust and virile; a humble, grave, sympathetic, fatherly man, whose pale face could flush with anger, and his gentle voice become terrible in rebuke of wrong-doing; one whom the sins and sorrows of the living and the dead^[74] touched to the heart, as attested by the many healings with which legend has credited his name.

Such was the man, already abbot for more than forty years, under whose worthy protection young Hugues placed himself. The new-comer, elected abbot on the death of Odilon in 1048, soon showed himself to be of yet sterner stuff even than his predecessor. Humble as regards his personal pretensions, kind and charitable to the poor and needy, he had, nevertheless, an eye which could read in their faces the souls of men; and he was fired with a holy ambition for the glory of the church.

[Pg 67]

In bringing about the realization of these dreams, he found a worthy ally in that Napoleon of the Church, Hildebrand (Gregory VII.), one of the four monks, who, from a cell at Cluny, passed to the throne of St. Peter.^[75] We need not here deal at length with that long struggle—

the most significant event of the eleventh century—between the civil and religious rules of Christendom, in which Gregory succeeded in enforcing, if only for a time, the most tremendous and all-embracing claims that the church has ever advanced; but I shall be excused for recalling again that extraordinary scene enacted, in 1076, on the castled summit of the craggy Apennine hills, the rock of Alba Canossa, where the representative of temporal power, Henry IV., King of the Germans, attired in a penitent's garb of coarse wool, waited barefoot, through three bitter winter's days, in the courtyard of the castle, upon the pleasure of God's vice-regent on earth. Hugh, then Abbot of Cluny, was present at that scene; and it was largely owing to his mediation, backed by the influence of the Countess Matilda, that Henry was at last admitted to the royal presence.^[76]



Remembering how brief was Gregory's pontificate—a span of ten years—and his bitter last words at Palermo: "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile," it may appear to some readers that the triumph of this little, ill-shaped homuncio was short-lived; but we have to remember that, as Bishop Mathew has pointed out, his influence upon succeeding generations was greater than upon his own, and that without Gregory VII. there would have been no Innocent III. to become, in effect, "the king of kings, lord of lords, the only ruler of princes" in all Christendom.

[Pg 68]

In many sublime and dramatic scenes, then being enacted throughout Europe, Hugues was called upon to play the part of peacemaker, but in none was his task more difficult than in that struggle between Gregory and Henry, to whom he was equally bound by ties of close friendship. That he remained on good, even on intimate terms, with both men, is strong testimony to his integrity of character. More than once, in later years, he allayed the storms that Gregory was raising; he defended Henry IV. against the ingratitude of his son; and it is to Hugues that we find the dethroned and fugitive emperor turning for consolation and advice concerning that revolt.^[77]

In such hands, at such a time, the glories of Cluny were safe. Nor was the papacy unmindful of all it owed to the great abbey. Here is Gregory's own eulogy of Cluny, delivered before the Council of Rome, in 1077. "Among all those situate beyond the hills, shines in the first rank that of Cluny under the protection of the holy seat. Under its holy abbots, it has reached so high a degree of honour and of religion, that, by the fervour with which God is there served, it surpasses undeniably all other monasteries, not excepting even the most ancient; so that none other in this part of the Christian world may be compared with it. To this day, all her abbots have been raised to the honour of sainthood. Not one among them, not one of their monks, obedient sons of the Romish Church, has fallen away nor bowed the knee to Baal; but, faithful always to the dignity and liberty granted to them by the Church from the foundation of the monastery, they have nobly upheld its authority, and will submit to no other power than that of St. Peter."^[78] The privileges of Cluny became the ideal type for all others, and Gregory always regarded a comparison with the Burgundian abbey as a peculiar sign of favour, as in the case of St. Victor of Marseilles, whose monks he wished to console for the loss of a beloved abbot.

Not unnaturally, an institution so growing in grace, power, and riches, was growing also in numbers. The new monks must be housed; God must be honoured in, and by, a nobler Church. Nor was the Deity long in making known His will.

[Pg 69]

One night, a monk of Cluny, sick and paralytic, was asleep in bed, when he saw appear before him the Apostles, Peter and Paul, and Stephen, the first Martyr. The monk asked them who they were, and what their will might be. Then St. Peter spoke:—

"I am St. Peter, and these are St. Paul and St. Stephen. Rise, without delay, brother, and bear our orders to Hugues, Abbot of this Church. It pains us to see so many brothers gathered into so

small a space, and our wish is that the Abbot should build a greater. And let him not consider the cost; we shall know how to provide all things necessary for the work."

"I dare not take it upon me to bear your orders," replied the monk. "For no heed would be given to my words."

"You have been chosen before all others," said St. Peter, "to transmit our commands to Hugues, so that your miraculous healing may gain credence for your message. If you obey faithfully, seven years shall be added to your life, and if Hugues defers the execution of our will, the sickness, upon leaving you, shall pass into his body."

So speaking, St. Peter proceeded to measure out with cords the length, breadth, and height of the new building; then, showing the monk its proportions, the style, the necessary ornament, and the nature of the materials to be used, he counselled him to keep all these things faithfully in his memory.

The monk, for whose funeral the bell-ringers were already awaiting the summons, awakened with a start, ran, safe and sound, to the Abbot's room, and told him the whole story. This midnight appearance of a man, dying an hour ago, and now healed by a marvellous vision, greatly astonished the good Abbot. Threatened with his brother's sickness, if he postponed the commencement of the building, and encouraged, moreover, by the heavenly aid promised to the enterprise, he believed, obeyed, and, with God's help, raised, in twenty years, a temple that was the glory of its age, and remained, for centuries, one of the marvels of Western Europe.^[79]

Tradition adds, that Hugues, not knowing exactly where to build the Church, threw a hammer into the air, and chose the spot where it fell for the site of his sanctuary. In after years, before the abbey buildings were mutilated, the inhabitants would still show, near one of them, an enormous stone that all the workmen and all their machines were unable to lift. St. Hugues only, during the night, by Divine help, could raise the huge mass, and place it in position; and ever after the stone retained the imprint of the Holy Founder's hand.

[Pg 70]



Often the workmen, as they built the walls of the Church, would notice, watching them unweariedly, working silently in their midst, but sharing never in their repasts, a mysterious and wonderful figure. Some said that he was an angel presiding over the erection of the House of God; some said that he was none other than St. Hugues himself.

It was in 1095 that Pascal II., crossing Provence by way of Tarascon and Avignon, arrived at Cluny, in the month of November, accompanied by a large suite of cardinals, bishops, and priests. Everywhere he was received with transports of joy; for no living man had yet seen the Vicar of Christ in this part of the land of Burgundy. At the request of Hugues, he had come to consecrate the great altar of the unfinished basilica. This he did, and also superintended the consecration, by attendant archbishops, of the other altars in the transept. In the midst of these ceremonies, turning to the crowd of on-lookers who had surrounded the building on all sides, Pascal reminded them of the special privileges with which the monastery had been endowed, of his own connection with it as monk under the same Abbot, who still, by God's mercy, was alive and well in their midst; then, in the name of God, and by the holy memories he had awakened, he implored all to uphold and respect the sanctity of the new abbey-church.

It was not until 1131 that the great basilica, completed at last, was consecrated by Innocent II., amid scenes similar to those that had attended the visit of Urban II.

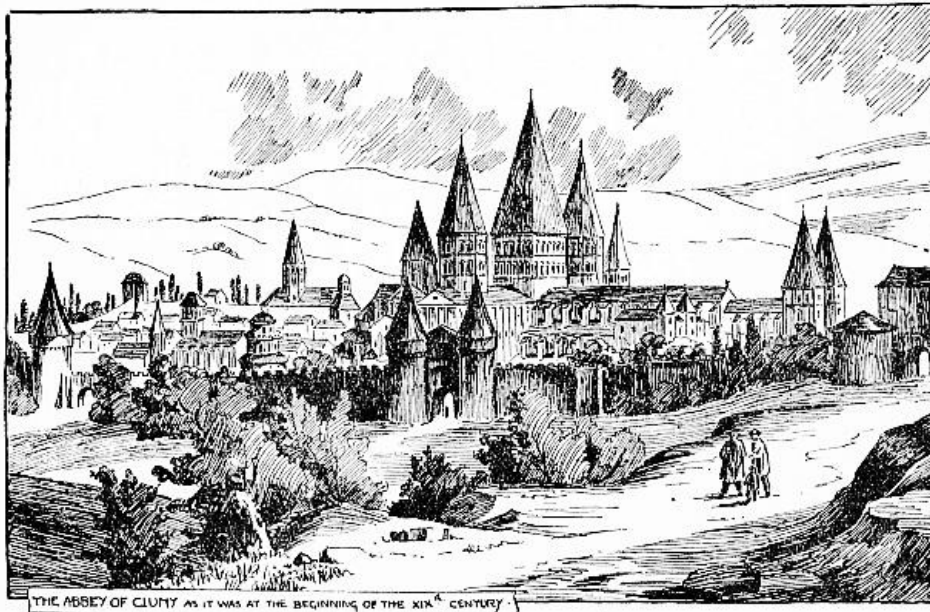
[Pg 71]

Whether the building was inspired of God, or was merely a successful exercise of a fast-developing art, the new Cluny was not unworthy of the great order for which it stood. Not only was it, with the exception of St. Peter's at Rome, the largest Church in existence,^[80] but it remained also one of the most perfect examples of the Romanesque architecture, and became the accepted model for many a later Burgundian church and cathedral. The architect, according to Pignot, was a former canon of Liège, named Etzebon; artist, orator, theologian, and author of the life of St. Hugues. He appears to have had no difficulty in acquiring the first necessity of his work, namely, funds. Kings, nobles, and bishops vied with one another in their eagerness to make offerings to the new Church; the neighbouring princes made handsome donations, the pious of all classes brought gifts, offered voluntary labour, or the loan of beasts of burden. The two lordliest givers were Alonzo VI., King of Castille, and Henry I. of England, the former of whom was deeply indebted to Hugues, whose influence with his kinsman, Eudes, Duke of Burgundy, had often smoothed Alonzo's path. The Abbot, in recognition "of the incessant benefits of this faithful friend," founded, on his behalf, almsgivings and special prayers throughout the order, and every day served, at the chief table, as though the King were present, a royal dinner, which was afterwards distributed among the poor.

Meanwhile, as the gifts poured in, the building grew. From the great double gates,^[81] Roman in style, and imitated, probably, from the Porte d'Arroux, at Autun, the land sloped downwards to the parvis, from the midst of which rose a great stone cross. Thence flights of balustraded steps, broken, at intervals, by terraced platforms, led down to the porch, flanked on each side by square towers, the Tour de la Justice, and Tour des Archives, each a hundred and forty feet high, and

crowned with a pyramidal flèche. This porch, ornamented with statues of the saints and the Virgin, was surmounted, in the space between the towers, by a great rose, thirty feet in diameter, with the figure of a Benedictine monk above.

[Pg 72]



THE ABBEY OF CLUNY AS IT WAS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE XIXth CENTURY

It opened into a magnificent church of five bays, one hundred and ten feet long, and one hundred and eighteen feet high, the narthex of the great basilica.^[82] It was divided into a nave and two aisles, the whole supported by enormous square pillars, their sides decorated with fluted pilasters, which also helped to carry the pointed arches of the bays. From the capitals of the pilasters, clusters of four shafts rose to the level of a frieze, just above the tops of the arches, from which other columns carried the high vault. A cornice supported on consoles separated the clerestory from the triforium arcade of four round-headed arches, enclosed in pairs under a larger arch. Cornices, friezes, and capitals were decorated with flowers, birds, figures, and grotesque animals in the Clunisian style. Many a pilgrim visitor, standing in this great church, nearly as large as the Church of Notre Dame de Dijon, believed himself to be in the basilica itself, never dreaming that this was but the porch or ante-nave.

[Pg 73]

Many theories have been advanced as to the purpose of this narthex, which became a usual feature of Clunisian construction, from about the middle of the twelfth century. Some have suggested that it was for overflow congregations from the new church, or that it served for the servants of the Abbey, for the suites of noble visitors, for the peasants from the neighbouring towns, or for criminals seeking refuge, as they were wont to do, in the shadow of the porch. Others have supposed, perhaps rightly, that it was used for the reconciliation of the excommunicated, for rites of exorcism, or for the dispensation of justice; but the most probable solution is that the narthex was a temple, in which, at Easter and other seasons of the year, the crowds of penitents and pilgrims—too numerous to be admitted into the basilica, or to be left outside—might hear the Word of God at the very threshold of, but not within, the building reserved for the monks. The narthex was, in effect, a purgatory, a sojourning place between earth and Heaven; the natural development of a custom which had arisen, for the priest, by order of the bishop, to say mass as near as possible to the gates of church, for the benefit of the penitents in the porch.

There existed, until the 18th century, on the left of the door of the narthex, a stone table, which, perhaps, was formerly an altar, though made use of, at that time, only by mothers and nurses, who believed that they could hush their crying charges by depositing them thereon.

[Pg 74]

At the end of the vestibule was the original gate of the basilica, of which the impost was the stone that St. Hugues had miraculously raised. Twenty-three figures were carved upon it in relief, and in the tympanum above was seated the Heavenly Father, as Teacher, His right Hand raised in benediction, His left holding the Gospel. Beside Him the four Evangelists listened to His words, and cloud-borne angels held the medallions upon which were shown the Throne and Person of Christ.

The interior of the great basilica must have been of the most majestic and impressive character, with its two transepts^[83] and double row of aisles on each side of the nave. The great pillars supporting the central vault were seven and a half feet in diameter, with pilasters on the side of the nave, and engaged columns on the other three sides, meeting the aisle vaults. At the transept, the columns, together with the pillars they surmounted, rising in unbroken lines, formed the ribs of the vaulting. Above each bay was a triforium of two rows of superposed, romanesque, round-headed, arcaded arches, in threes, the lower row separated by pilasters, and the upper by colonnettes. The arches of the bays and the transepts were pointed; a feature, which, though quite usual in Burgundian work of the period, was more or less accidental, and was necessitated, or rendered advisable, by practical considerations, rather than by a deliberate departure from an architectural style that was still of the purest Romanesque. The capitals everywhere were ornamented with characteristic sculpture, of extraordinary freedom and

boldness, representing scriptural, and many other subjects.

At the bottom of the nave, close to the entry of the choir, was placed, in after years, the tomb of Pope Gélase, and two altars, which, with a gate at the entrance, screened the monks from the eyes of the laymen. Here, too, against the pillars of the nave, were four large, painted, wooden statues, representing St. Hugues, holding the model of the church in his right hand, St. Mayeul, St. Odon, and St. Odilon.

The choir occupied the space between the two transepts; the sanctuary was carried on eight columns, three of which were of African marble, and three of Pentelic Greek marble, veined with blue, which St. Hugues brought from Italy by way of the Durance and the Rhône. The transept had many lateral chapels, and the east end, which was in semi-circular form, had five apsidal chapels, vaulted in half dome. A processional ambulatory circled the sanctuary and the tomb of St. Hugues, in front of which stood the great altar. Here, too, at opposite ends of the ambulatory, were placed the tombs of the Abbot Pons, and of Pierre le Vénérable. The vault of the apse was adorned with a fine painting, of the end of the eleventh, or beginning of the twelfth century, representing the Eternal Father borne upon clouds, one hand raised, and the other placed upon the Apocalypse sealed with seven seals. At his feet was the Lamb without Blemish, and about Him were winged figures of man, the lion, the eagle, and the ox.

[Pg 75]

But, in spite of the realism of the sculpture and the painting, in spite of the gorgeous tapestries, the golden candelabra, the pearl-encrusted ornaments of every kind, which the noblest men and women of the time, and of later times, showered upon Cluny, it is in the sense of spacious dignity and majesty, rather than in the sense of ostentation and magnificence, that we must interpret the words of Hildebrand de Mans, when he said that, "If it were possible for the inhabitants of the heavenly mansions to be happy in an abode fashioned by the hand of man, Cluny would be the angels' walk (ambulatorium angelorum)."

Nor was the church less noble without than within. From the circular chapels lying about her transepts and her apse, along the collateral and the double row of flying buttresses,^[84] rising higher than the narthex, the eye was lifted, stage after stage, high above her lofty nave, to the mighty towers that rose to the sky, in witness, for ever, one would have said, of Him whose Dwelling was not made with hands.

The conventual buildings were on the south side of the basilica. From the principal south transept, a processional, and a smaller, door, opened upon the great romanesque cloister, of which a fragment here and there remains, built into the modern work. It was similar in style to the other buildings of the period. Further south were the Lady Chapel and the great refectory. Abutting on the great wall of the Abbey, by the side of the Grosne, was a mill and a thirteenth century bake-house, which still exist. Among the many other buildings, chapels, baths, schools for the young, pharmacy, workshops, dormitories, and stables, which are the necessary equipment of a great monastery, was a large infirmary, with its own cloister and refectory—a small establishment within the larger one. On the east side, extending to the fortified wall that enclosed the whole monastery, were the gardens of the abbey.

[Pg 76]

Such, in its essential aspects, was the "ambulatorium angelorum." How did its occupants live? What was the rule observed within those walls? The rule, as kept in those early days, was stern and exacting. The first of the regulations was silence, except at stated intervals. In the church, in the dormitory, in the refectory, in the kitchen, absolute silence, broken only by the summoning bell or by the chanting of prayers. Like ghosts, the sandalled monks glided about the echoing corridors; deaf mutes speaking by signs. The times for speech were the mornings, after chapter, and evenings after sexte. A parlour was reserved for the talkers, where, seated, book in hand, they might converse on spiritual and other topics. Yet they were recommended rather to remain in the cloister, and there meditate, read, pray, or copy manuscripts. This was the hour, too, for drying their clothes in the sun, for visiting the sick in the infirmary, for washing their cups, or for sharpening their knives on the grindstone in the cloister. Their daily food was limited to bread, vegetables, and fruits—meat was given only to the sick—eggs, cheese, and fish were allowed only occasionally, and nothing whatever might be eaten after complines. At certain seasons, the use of fat for flavouring vegetables was forbidden. If wine were permitted, on days of great solemnity, and during exhausting fasts, it must be free from spirituous seasoning, and from the spice that flatters the palates of the worldly. Still less was it permitted to drink hypocras, or oriental or Italian liqueurs—the "little wine" of the apostle was to suffice them. Only two repasts a day were allowed, except to the young, or to those engaged in specially hard work.

The monks might shave one another once in three weeks, chanting psalms the while, and not until the days of decadence were they shaved by a secular barber. "In bygone times," says the chronicler, "they were not shaved, they were skinned."^[85] They might not bathe often, lest the habit should engender softness, and they did not usually indulge in full ablution more than twice a year—before Christmas and Easter. Sick monks, however, might bathe as often as they pleased.

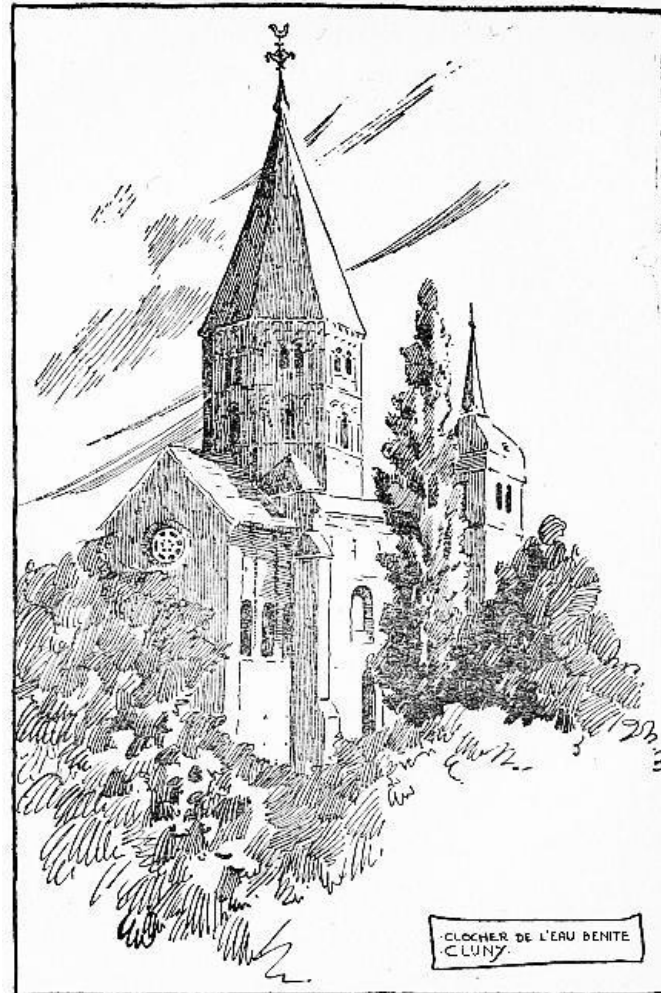
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The clothing allowed to the brothers consisted of a woollen shirt of dark colour—one for the day, another for the night. Their garments were rustic in form and substance; such as were worn by the peasants. Over the tunic was a scapular, with a hood or capuchon attached, and over all the frock was sometimes worn. Precious stuffs, silks, and gay colours were forbidden; for it was unfitting, said the statutes, that monks should be apparelled like brides for the nuptial chamber. The strict rule of St. Benedict allowed no furs; but a concession was made to the rigour of the Burgundian climate, and the monks might wear sheep-skin or goat-skin cloaks in winter, and fur boots for sleeping in, but no rich and costly skins from foreign lands—"For those who are softly clothed dwell in kings' Palaces." No monk might eat or drink at other than the regular hours; he

might not go out at night, nor leave the monastery without the abbot's permission. When on a journey, he should receive only monastic hospitality, and, in any event, must never accept wine or meat; nor might he eat outside the gates, unless it were impossible for him to return home before sunset.

The vice of property was resisted to the utmost. Each monk received from the Superior, in addition to his clothing, all necessary articles, such as a handkerchief, a knife, a needle, a writing pencil and tablet. Nothing was the monk's own; no brother possessed money; testaments were forbidden; and those who violated the precepts were excommunicated, and refused ecclesiastical burial.

Above all, the Clunisian monk must earn his bread with his hands. The earth, whence his body came, and whither it should return, must support him. This held good for long; but in later times, the monasteries increased in size, manual labour naturally became specialized, and some did little more than mend their clothes, wash their linen, clean and grease their boots, and take their turn in the kitchen.



[Pg 78]

"To speak truth," remarks Udalric, "the work which I saw done most often was to free the beans of the leaves which retarded their growth, to pluck the ill weeds from the garden, and sometimes to knead the bread in the bake-house." Manual work, however, remained always part of the strict rule. "Then will you be monks," said St. Benedict, "when you live by the work of your hands, after the example of the holy preachers of the monastic law." Bitter must it have been to Pierre le Vénérable, the last of the great abbots, to have to write as he did of the growing decadence:—"Idleness is the enemy of the soul: and do we not see the greater part of the brothers ... both within and without the cloister, in a state of absolute inactivity. How few are they who read, still fewer they who write! Do not the greater number sleep, leaning against the walls, or do they not waste their day from dawn to sunset in vain and idle, or in what is yet worse, malicious conversation." But, in the earlier years of Cluny, the rule was not easily broken, nor broken with impunity. A continuous surveillance, day and night, was exercised so regularly, by monks called "circateurs," that scarcely the least fault could be committed unseen, and punishment, inflicted in grave cases by the abbot himself, followed hard upon the offence. Sometimes the delinquent was condemned to solitary confinement, or to stand, all day long, at the door of the church; sometimes he was flogged, in full chapter, by his brother monks, or, if the fault had been publicly committed, the whipping was administered before all the people. It was customary, also, to expose certain delinquents before the door of the basilica, at the hour of mass, while one of the servants of the abbey announced the cause of his penance to the worshippers as they entered. The sinner was denied all participation in the solemnities and in Christian communion; he was denied the kiss also. If he revolted against his punishment, the outraged monks would drag him voluntarily to a fearful dungeon, without door or window, into which he must descend by a ladder.

[Pg 79]

And over all their day of toil, of silence, of fasting, and of prayer, hung a shadow, dark as those that fell from the vaulted nave, or lingered at sunset in the cool cloister galleries—the shadow of ever-present death. When a brother died, each monk, with his own hand, must sew stitches in the winding-sheet, whose clinging folds should recall vividly to his spirit that all flesh is as grass, and that the way of life is the way of death.

The monks' day was divided between work, prayer, and psalmody; the latter sub-divided into the office and the mass, thus fulfilling literally the words of the psalmist,^[86] "Seven times in the day have I celebrated Thy praises, and I rose in the middle of the night to confess Thy Name."

The intervals for rest or sleep were short, and, during a part of the year, the monks slept less than half the night. Udalric, the author of the widely-circulated manual of the customs of Cluny, gives a vivid picture of the discipline observed by the brothers during the "regular hours," as they were called. At the first sound of the bell announcing nocturnes, they sat up in bed, put on the frock without throwing off the blankets, finished dressing without showing their legs, and descended to the church. As it might well chance that one of them would be overcome by sleep during the psalmody or prayer, a brother was appointed to go the round of the choir, carrying a wooden lantern, which he would hold under the eyes of any monk whom he believed to be asleep. If he had made a mistake, and found that his brother was merely wrapped in meditation, he would bow low before him by way of excusing himself; if, on the contrary, the delinquent was really asleep, the light would be held awhile, close to his eyes. This warning would be repeated three times during the round, and if, at the third time, the light did not awaken the sleeper, the lantern would be left at his feet; and upon the somnolent monk, when he awoke, fell the duty of doing the next round.

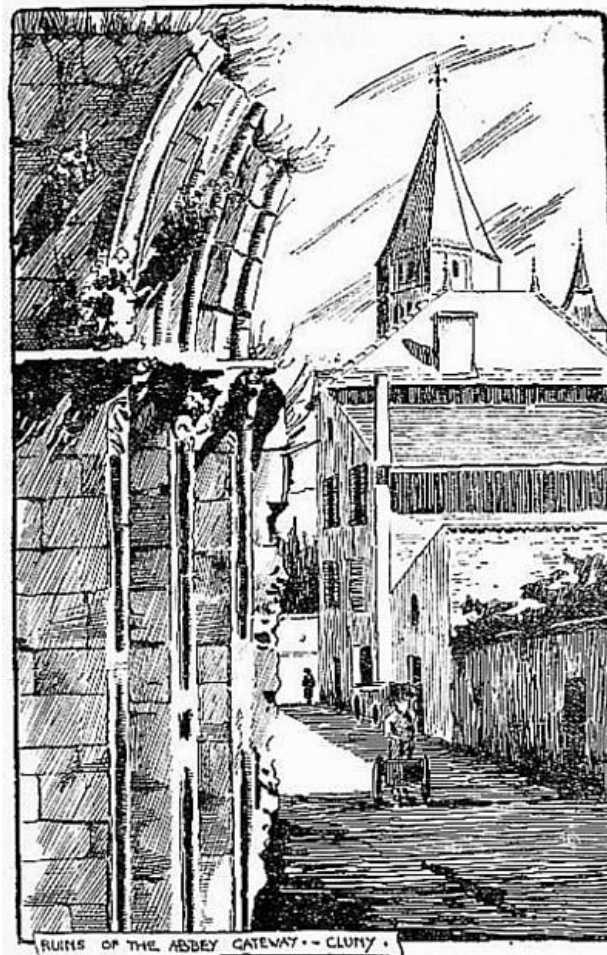
[Pg 80]

At the signal for matins, the monks would descend to the cloister, and there wash their hands and faces, and comb themselves, returning to the choir before the last stroke of the bell. There, whether they were sitting or standing, the feet must be in line, and neither the long sleeves, nor the skirt of the frock, must touch the ground.

With the addition of regular hours for reading and study, such, in short, was the life led by the Clunisian monk, from the day of his entry, until the tolling of bells, and the coming of the brothers with cross, candles, and incense, announced that one more devotee had gone to receive—let us hope—the reward of a life of self-sacrifice.

One might be pardoned for supposing that an existence such as this we have outlined, would have been austere enough to satisfy even the most rigorous ascetics of the time. But it was not so. To old Pierre Damien, for example, when he rested awhile at Cluny, to nurse in good company his aged back, scarred by the strokes of iron rods, the rule seemed almost voluptuous. He spoke about it to Abbot Hugh.

"If you could abstain for two days more in the week from using fat in your victuals, you, who are so perfect in other points, would, in the matter of mortification, be in no way behind the anchorites."



[Pg 81]

"Before attempting, well-beloved father, to augment our merits by augmenting our abstinence, try yourself to bear, for eight days, the burden of our rule; and then judge whether we can add aught to our austerities."

The brave old ascetic accepted the challenge, and at the end of eight days decided that things might well remain as they were.^[87] The rule of Cluny was more severe than his own.

Under the government of St. Hugues, grown old and gray, Cluny had reached the summit of worldly power, and of moral influence; with him, her best days passed. On the 29th April, 1109, the priests, loudly lamenting, were gathered round the body of their dead saint. Clothed in his sacerdotal robes, he lay, for three days, in the church, and a great crowd of lords and ladies, of bourgeois, woodsmen, labourers from field and vineyard, women and children, came to kiss his feet, and lift his raiment to their lips. On the day before, Bernard de Varennes heard Saint Denis the Areopagite announce to him, in a vision, that, if he wished to see again, for the last time, his friend and abbot, Hugues of Cluny, he must haste to the dying man. Bernard obeyed the summons, but, on his arrival, fell sick and remained three days in a lethargy. When he came to himself, he said to the monks around him, "Unhappy man that I am. I had come to salute my abbot, and he is dead before the grace is granted me. But what I might not see with the eyes of the body, I saw with the eyes of the spirit. I saw the dwellers in Heaven descend among men, and the Mother of God, brighter than the morning star, standing in the midst of the monks around the death-bed of Seigneur Hugues. At the moment of the passing of his soul, spirits, armed with arrows, flew to seize upon it, but the Mother of Mercy, raising her hand, struck them with terror, and put them to flight, as the wind scatters the autumn leaves. Martin, the pearl of priests, Benedict the sun of abbots, at the head of the heavenly cohorts, bore the soul of Hugues into a fair and fertile vineyard, that there it might rest awhile. Hugues, perceiving me in this place, addressed me thus: 'Eat, dear friend, these bunches of white grapes, eat and rest with me awhile; not for long am I here. When my feet are freed from the swelling and the dust of a long earthly pilgrimage, I shall pass into the home that God hath prepared for me throughout eternity. Recommend to Pons, my successor, to treasure humility and innocence, to forget his own needs for those of others, and to follow my example of monastic rule.'"

Pons did not follow Hugues' example of monastic rule. When his vanity, weakness, and love of pomp had alienated a portion of his following, he resigned his abbacy and retired. His successor, Hugues II. held office only a few months, when the task of presiding over the destinies of Cluny passed to Pierre le Vénérable, the last of the great abbots, a name that already links us in memory with him whose destiny it was, by a return to simplicity, as a source of strength, to rival, and, for a time, to exceed the power of Cluny. I speak of St. Bernard, the champion of the Cistercian order. We shall meet him again at Citeaux and elsewhere.

[Pg 83]

It is probable that St. Hugues himself, by acquiring such great wealth for the abbey, prepared its ultimate downfall. Be that as it may, though the rhyming Burgundian proverb,

"En tous pays ou le vent vente
L'Abbaye le Cluny a rente,"

may not have been coined until a later century, it is certain that Cluny was fast acquiring wealth, and succumbing to a luxury utterly alien to the Spirit of Him Whose benediction was upon the poor and the humble. It was natural that the order, following the fashion of the age, should wish to house worthily the many priceless relics brought back by pious, though too credulous, crusaders from the Holy Land, and the members of the Clunisian school of art soon learned to vie with one another in fashioning châsses for the miraculous rod with which Moses brought forth water in the desert, or for the stone from Mount Sinai on which he kneeled when he received from God the table of the law, or for the alabaster vase from which Mary Magdalen anointed the Saviour's Feet.^[88]

As the treasures grew in number, the skill of the artificers, and their passion for exercising it increased simultaneously, until, at last, the story of the treasures of Cluny, in the monastic inventories, is like a tale from the "Thousand and one Nights," told in gold and jewels. When there were no more relics to work for, the monks turned to what was next to hand, and soon, from the crosses, from the pastoral baton, from the candelabra of gold and silver, of crystal and ivory, from the draped altars, from the pontifical mitres, even, diamonds and rubies flashed, opals sparkled with their changing rays, while, sometimes, a softly-shining pearl dropped from the Abbot's sandal, as he stepped into the blaze of light in which the great altar was bathed.

[Pg 84]

Not less gorgeous were the sacerdotal robes, woven always of the most precious stuffs, and in the choicest colours, and worked, on body and sleeves, with an infinite number of designs, lions and griffons, kings and dragons, angels, eagles, leopards and serpents, crosses, arms, lilies, and roses. All the rich and varied symbolism of the times shone out from the robes of Cluny. Nor were the altars, statues, and tombs less gorgeous. The magnificent châsse of St. Hugues was of precious wood, entirely covered with silver, the reliefs representing, in gold, the mysteries of the Life and Death of the Saviour. The pictures and altar pieces were similarly treated. One of the statues of Mary was of gold; she held in her hand a silver candle adorned with great pearls; she was crowned with a golden crown; precious stones flashed upon her brow. The Infant Christ was playing with a golden rattle, and wore, upon His Baby head, a golden crown enriched with rubies and emeralds.

To such a Cluny there could only be one end. Her days, as a spiritual force, were spent.

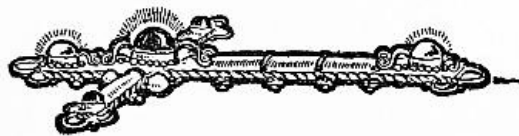
Henceforth, to the religious world, she was to be no more than a splendid memory; yet the soul of goodness that ever lives and moves in things seemingly evil, had reserved wonderful uses for the work that deft hands, otherwise idle, were still fashioning in the cloisters of Cluny. Her lions, her lilies, her crosses in wrought gold, her symbols in chased silver and in precious stones, had already awakened the spirit of emulation in a thousand brooding minds. Who shall tell the debt that Gothic art owes, that we, its inheritors, shall ever owe to the decadence of the mother abbey.

When we come to talk of Bernard and Cîteaux, we shall hear again of Clunisian luxury; but we have not time, nor would it repay us, to follow, through all its stages, the decline and fall of this Mother Church of Europe, from its glorious position as "the light of the world," to a mere asylum for feudalism—interesting to the student of sociology, but no longer in touch with the great onward movements of history. The last three centuries of the Abbey's existence make sad reading. The envy and jealousy with which the monks were regarded on all sides, made it hard for them successfully to cultivate and harvest their enormous territories. Their rights and privileges, grown old and almost forgotten, could scarcely be asserted and maintained, except by threats and violence. The Revolution found the Benedictines in conflict with the town, over pasturage and other rights in the woods of the monastery; and, on July 29th, 1789, the abbey was threatened by a band of armed peasants, who were repulsed only by the united efforts of monks and townsmen.

[Pg 85]

On the 21st April, 1799, after considerable discussion, in which it appears that the inhabitants of Cluny did their best, or at least made an effort, to save the abbey, the buildings were sold to Citizen Batonard, a merchant of Mâcon, for the sum of two million, fourteen thousand francs.

In spite of the lively protests of the municipality, the new-comer at once proceeded to play havoc with the church ornaments, a feat which he followed up by making a new road, north and south, through the precincts, cutting the church in two. Later, the Empire completed what the Revolution had begun. In the summer of 1811, Cluny was shaken by a series of terrific explosions. They were blasting, with 75 bombs, the towers and sanctuary of the Abbey.^[89]



Footnotes:

- [68] *Note.*—For the condition of France in the 10th century and the causes that contributed to the Christian revival, see Chapter xi.
- [69] Loraine's "Cluny," p. 19.
- [70] "Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny," Pignot; "Essai Historique sur Cluny," Loraine. Duckett's "Cluny."
- [71] For the principles of the Benedictine rule, see Chapter on Cîteaux, pp. 119, 120.
- [72] Pignot's "Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny," Tome i., pp. 97-8.
- [73] Pignot. Tome i., p. 413.
- [74] Odilon founded the "Fête des Trépassés."
- [75] The three others were Urban II., Pascal II., and Urban V.
- [76] "Life and Times of Hildebrand," p. 128, by Right Rev. A. H. Mathew, D.D. Bishop Mathew describes Hildebrand's connection with Cluny as a myth, probably originating in his visit to this monastery during the pontificate of Leo X.; but Creighton, Milman, and other historians have accepted Cluny's claims to Hildebrand. Whatever the truth may be, certainly Hughes and Hildebrand were friends, united by a common aim.
- [77] P. Lorain. "Essai Historique sur l'Abbaye de Cluny," vol. II., pp. 99-100.
- [78] Bull: Clun, p. 21. Quoted in Pignot's "Histoire de l'Ordre de Cluny," Vol. ii., pp. 99-100.
- [79] P. Lorain. "Essai Historique sur Cluny," pp. 72-73.
- [80] Its total length was 555 feet, about the same as that of Winchester Cathedral; that of St. Peter is about 560 feet.
- [81] These gates still exist.
- [82] This narthex did not form part of Hugues' Church. It was not added until the time of Robert I., twentieth abbot of Cluny, in 1220—but it is more convenient to deal with it here.
- [83] Cluny is the only church in France with two transepts. English examples, which are rare, include Salisbury and York. The purpose of the second transept was probably to add to the architectural beauty of the church, by opening up more vistas, and to provide additional space for altars. See Bond's "Gothic Architecture in England."
- [84] Flying buttresses were added in the thirteenth century to prevent the collapse of the nave walls.
- [85] Lorain, p. 237-8. "Non rasura, sed potius excoꝛatio." In view of this statement, the

accompanying psalm-singing is rendered the more meritorious.

[86] Psalm cxviii., v.

[87] Pignot, Vol. II., pp. 62-67.

[88] The relics of Cluny included also, among many others, a veil, hair and clothing of the Virgin; the palm which Christ carried on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the vessel in which Jesus changed water into wine at the marriage of Cana in Galilee; portions of the true cross and the crown of thorns; two rings of the iron chain which held St. Peter when the angel came to deliver him from prison, etc., etc. See Lorain, p. 330.

[89] See "Cluny, la Ville et l'Abbaye," by A. Penjon, pp. 159-166.



VS · VT · NABAT · GREX · LANGVIDVS · ACCEL

THE MOTHER ABBEY

CHAPTER VI

It is time to turn from Cluny of the past to Cluny of the present. We have not far to go; for the town is still the abbey, and will be so yet, I hope, for many a year to come.

Early on the first morning of our stay, we left the little Hotel de Bourgogne, which stands on the site of the nave, in the very shadow of the last remaining gaunt tower of Cluny. The entrance to the alley is through the façade of the ancient "Palace of the Pope Gélase," as it is called, a fine, fourteenth-century building, restored—rebuilt one might say—in 1783, and fronting on the old courtyard of the monastery, now known as the Place de la Grenelle, or the Place du Marché, on the opposite side of which is a building that was once the monastic stable. The upper story of the façade has fine Gothic windows, forming almost an arcade. The trefoiled tracery is satisfactory, and exquisitely carved faces look down upon you from the corbels of the drip-stones. It was to Cluny, during the abbacy of Pons, that Gélase II., ill-treated and threatened by the partisans of Henry V., fled for rest and refuge; and here, a few days afterwards, lying upon ashes, clothed in the robe of the Benedictine order, and surrounded by his cardinals and the monks of the community, says a contemporary, he died "as in his own house."^[90] This palais du pape Gélase is now the principal building of the secondary school, the "Ecole nationale des Arts et Métiers," established in the precincts of the abbey. We wandered for an hour about the building, endeavouring to fashion again, in our minds, Cluny as it was.

Standing in that echoing transept, the sole relic of the great Mother Church of Western Christendom, following the noble shafting up to where, above the mutilated capitals, sculptured with all the naive skill and courage of the time, the eye can reach the lofty vault, and follow round the fluted pilasters of the triforium arcades, I felt that, of all the thousand acts of Vandalism that the incredible, immeasurable folly and ignorance of man have inflicted upon a long-suffering world, this is the most insufferable, the most unpardonable. I can understand, I can almost forgive, a Puritan Cromwell, blinded by a fanaticism, that, though savage and ignorant, was yet, in intention, religious, battering down the statues of Mary from their niches, and shattering with fusilades the glass that, for hundreds of years, had bathed in loveliest colours the sunlit aisles of our Gothic cathedrals; but this I can neither understand nor pardon—that those who, discarding all other religions, have bowed the knee to Reason, as the most divine attribute of man, should have found, in her name, a warrant to drive a street through the abbey's cloister garth, and blast, with the dynamiter's bomb, the hoary arches of Cluny.

[Pg 87]

This chapel of the normal school, as it now is, was once the southern limb of the great transept. With the tower of the Eau Bénite, the smaller tower of the Horloge, and the Chapelle Bourbon, it is the sole remaining relic of the church itself. Until after 1823, the transept was open to the wind and rain, which threatened ruin to the fabric. It was decided, therefore to close the gaping arches of the collateral on the east and west, and to build a wall on the north side. The immense height of the transept, emphasized by the vaulting shafts, is made more striking by the small space within which it is viewed, and the blind gallery and clerestory, with their arcades, and coupled, engaged columns, and fluted pilasters, enable one to break through, in imagination, that northern wall, and get a realistic glance, east and west, into the sanctuary, and down the five aisles of the church as it was.

The two chapels remaining in the transept, are those of St. Martial and St. Stephen. The former, half domed and lighted by three windows, is similar in style to the original apsidal chapels; that of St. Stephen is fine Gothic work of the first half of the fourteenth century. Here was buried Pierre de Chastelux, abbot from 1322 to 1343, who bought the Palais des Thermes, at Paris, where Jean de Bourbon, a century later, was to commence the Hotel de Cluny. Here,



[Pg 88]

too, was buried, in the middle of the chapel, Jacques d'Amboise (1480-1510), the successor of Jean de Bourbon, and the completer of the Palais Abbatial, here at Cluny, and of the Hotel de Cluny at Paris. The brickwork of the south wall of the transept still shows the position of the two doors, one for ordinary use, and one processional gateway, leading into the cloisters.

The most important remaining building is the Chapelle Bourbon, which was added to the south end of the smaller (eastern) transept by Abbot Jean de Bourbon (1456-1480), who had his own private oratory here, whence he could assist, through an aperture in the wall, at the ceremonies before the great altar in the sanctuary. Enough remains of the decoration of the chapel to show, at a glance, that it was a good example of late Gothic art. Around it were ranged, on a series of sculptured corbels or consoles, the heads of fifteen prophets, painted in colours. They are not lacking in expression, but are clumsy and heavy. These busts served as supports for fifteen stone statues, those of St. Paul, the Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, and the twelve Apostles, all of which have disappeared, no one knows whither. The guide told us that one of these statues, that of Christ, was in gold, and all the others in silver; a statement which, if it be true, accounts sufficiently for their disappearance. The only thing of interest remaining in the grounds of the école normale is the thirteenth-century bake-house, close to the Tour du Moulin, by the river wall.

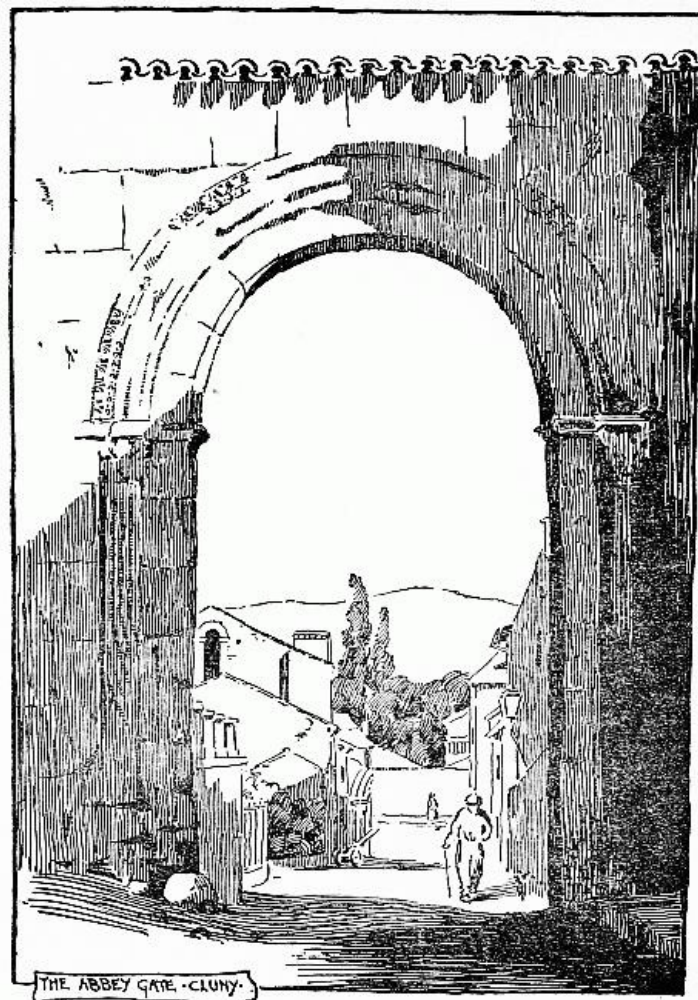
The ancient wall of the abbey is broken down in many places, and part of it is engulfed by the buildings of the town erected against it. Of the interior towers of the abbey—besides those of the church—only two remain, the Tour du Moulin, and the Tour des Fromages. The first, as we have just seen is close to the river, and the second is close to the church of Notre Dame. The origin of its curious name is not known. Of the exterior relics of the abbey, the most interesting, architecturally and historically, is the great entrance gate, which is high up on the side of the hill, at the top of the road leading from the Hotel de Bourgogne, the street that extends along the site of the nave, the narthex, the porch, and the parvis of the basilica. On your right, as you mount the rise, you pass part of a gateway, to the crevices of whose moulded stones cling rock plants and grasses—a beautiful, time-mellowed ruin—all that remains of the gate of the narthex.

[Pg 89]

The great abbey gate is a dark and forbidding piece of masonry, in the Roman manner, and evidently imitated from the gates of Autun. It comprises two arches, each with fluted, engaged columns, whose richly sculptured capitals support an ornamented archivolt. There were also fluted pilasters supporting a cornice. The greater part of these has disappeared, as has the attic colonnade, also imitated from the gates of Autun, and similar to the colonnades which exist still in the Romanesque houses of Cluny. The thickness of the pillars behind the door, and the absence of windows in the adjoining wing of the Palais Abbatial, point to the conclusion that the gate was fortified in the late middle ages, probably by a quadrangular tower. Interesting as this shattered old relic is architecturally, its charm lies in the memories of the great ones to whom it opened. All those who made the most glorious pages of the history of Cluny have passed beneath its arches—Priests and Saints, as St. Hugues, Pierre Damien, Abélard, and Anselm; great Popes, as Hildebrand (Gregory VII.), Gélase II., Innocent IV., Boniface VIII.; among Kings, William the Conqueror, Saint Louis, Philippe le Bel, and his sons; Charles VI. and his uncles. Some of these passed through in humble guise, but most came with royal, or semi-royal pageantry, mounted on proud chargers, at the head of glittering cavalcades, and followed by a long retinue of lords, soldiers and attendants, to partake of the limitless hospitality of Cluny.

On the north side of this famous gate, is the Palais Abbatial, comprising two buildings, once joined, but separated at the time of the Revolution, and now serving as the Musée and the Hotel de Ville. That nearest to the gate was built, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, by the famous abbot, Jean de Bourbon, who added the Chappelle Bourbon to the basilica, and commenced the Hotel de Cluny at Paris.

[Pg 90]



He was, in effect, the first of the commendatory abbots, a system which Julien de Baleure rightly calls "vraye sappe de l'état monastique et ruine des bons monastères,"^[91] since under it the rule and revenues of the abbey passed into the hands of a stranger, who often wholly neglected his charge, or, if he visited it at all, paid only infrequent, ceremonial calls.

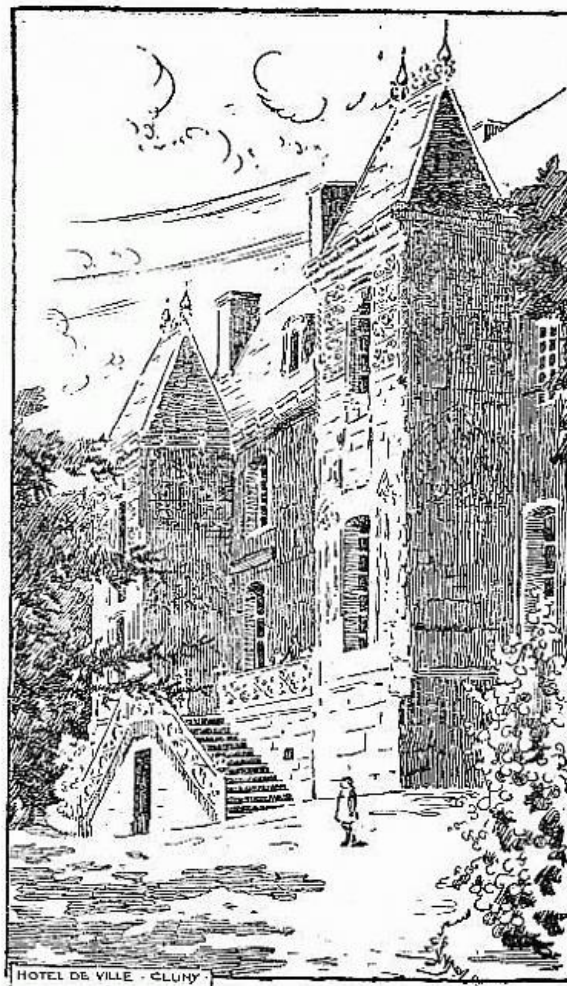
[Pg 91]

Jean de Bourbon, though Bishop of Puy when Charles VII. recommended him to the choice of the monks of Cluny, was not a member of any monastic order; nevertheless, while still remaining the "grand seigneur," he appears to have done something to re-establish discipline in the monastery. It soon became apparent to him that the frequent visits of distinguished persons to his palace within the church precincts, were a menace to the peace of the cloister. He accordingly bought land from the monks, and built his palace adjoining the great gate, one arch of which was reserved for his private entrance.

The building has undergone some modifications, but it remains a good example of fifteenth-century work, especially the windows, which have the typical flat arch of the period, and drip-stones with finely sculptured heads for corbels. On the east side, a later age has painted imitations of similar windows upon the stone wall. Within the palace are some handsome staircases and doors, and two excellent chimney-pieces, restored, showing the arms of Jean de Bourbon, of the Bishopric of Puy, and of the Abbey and Town of Cluny. The arms of the town are a silver key, on azure, with the ring below; those of the abbey are two golden keys crossed by a sword with silver blade, the hilt downwards.

The musée lapidaire on the ground floor is full of interesting relics. They need not all be catalogued here, but I must point out two or three of the best. Probably the oldest relic there is a triangular memorial stone, in the corner, on the left of the fire-place, with the epitaph of Aimard (Sanctus Aimardus), third abbot of Cluny, who died in 964. Until 1872, this stone formed the threshold of a house in the town. Another relic, not to be missed, is the pierre tombale of St. Hugues (Abbot from 1046-1109), which is over the door opposite to the entrance; there is also the urn that contained his heart.

[Pg 92]



But the most interesting of all are some twelfth century capitals from the ambulatory of St. Hugues' church. All of these, though showing the naiveté of treatment characteristic of early Gothic art, are carved with wonderful freedom, vigour, and sincerity. Figures, foliage, fruit, and animals are all realistically produced, and grouped with a fine sense of design and decorative effect. So strong are they, that the Gothic capitals in the collection look weak beside them. The best of them represents God driving a terrified Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden. Eve is hiding behind Adam, who is draped in fig leaves. Another shows the sacrifice of Abraham at the moment when he is interrupted by the angel; another the creation of the world; and another has figures of musicians, playing various instruments, sculptured from elliptical medallions. More of these capitals would probably have been preserved, had the church been demolished with less fracas; but the revolutionaries chose the easier way, which was to blow it to pieces with bombs; consequently the capitals, falling from so great a height, were nearly all destroyed.

[Pg 93]



Among other notable things is a frieze from a twelfth century house, and a delicious cobbler's sign, of the same period, showing the man hard at work at his bench, assisted by his wife holding a little pot in both hands, while, beside them, a fiddler passes the time in harmony. There is also a charming Pascal Lamb, endowed with a seeing eye and a cloven fore-foot, which, turned upwards, balances a Greek cross. Another remarkable stone is that known as the "Belle Pierre," so named from the street in which it was found.^[92] It represents two knights tilting, and a bearded man riding upon a strange beast.

[Pg 94]

Upstairs is a picture gallery containing old views of the Abbey, and a number of other things worth seeing, one of the most notable being a wooden chest of the fifteenth century, banded with iron, in which were kept the famous Rouleaux de Cluny, archives that disappeared during the Revolution. No official catalogue is published, so far as I am aware; but those who desire fuller information than I have given here, can find it in M. Penjon's book.

The Hotel de Ville is the eastern-most building of the two forming the Abbot's palace. It was built by Jacques d'Amboise, in the early part of the seventeenth century, and, during the period of the Abbés Commendataires, was the official residence of the grand prior. It has been so much altered within as scarcely to be worth a visit, but the exterior, though somewhat mutilated, retains much of its original charm. At the west entrance is a beautiful little tower, in transitional style, with a late Gothic arch, and cupids and foliage sculptured on the spandrels and the tympanum.

The main eastern façade, though somewhat unusual, is of very effective design. Its chief characteristics are two square projecting towers, connected by a raised balcony, with a double staircase surmounted by an ornamental, pierced parapet. The stone towers are decorated with sculpture, in the form of flamboyant church-window tracery below, and panels above, carved with arabesques, foliage, lilies, grotesques, shell ornaments, etc., all in the purest and lightest style of that early Renaissance work, which the discovery of Italy by Charles VIII. had been the means of developing in France. The effect of the whole, though rather conscious and artificial, is quite pleasing and graceful. On the south wall is an inscription of Claude de Guise, 1586.

From the buttressed terraces of the public gardens, around the Hotel de Ville, you get some fine views of Cluny and the Tour de l'Eau Bénite, extending right away to the wooded hills beyond the valley of the Grosne.

Close to the great gate of the Abbey, in the Rue d'Avril, a narrow street leading upwards out of the Rue de la République, are a number of those Romanesque houses of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, for which Cluny is famous. Up to about sixty years ago, whole streets of this little Burgundian town had remained for seven or eight centuries almost unchanged, but the utilitarian and commercial spirit of the age has made itself felt, even in this out of the way corner of Burgundy, and, one by one, the Romanesque houses are disappearing. Two remain, however, in the middle of the town; and, in addition to those in the Rue d'Avril, there are two adjoining one another in the Rue de la République, above the Hotel de Ville. Beside these is a house of the fifteenth century. Indeed, it would be still possible, in this town, to trace the evolution of domestic architecture, almost without a break, from the twelfth century to the present time.

[Pg 95]

The Romanesque houses of Cluny follow, pretty closely, a general type. The window arcades reveal at once the great influence of the abbey church. The majority of these houses are what we call terrace-built; and are entered from the street by a door which opens into the front room, or shop, and leads up the staircase to the first floor. At the back of the front room or shop was an open court yard, with a well in one corner of it. Across the court yard a covered passage led to a kitchen at the back. The upper floor was similar in design, with a roofed gallery leading to a room above the kitchen. The first floor front room was the bedroom of the tenant, his wife, and children; while the servants and apprentices did as best they could in the attic above; for the practice of rigidly separating the sexes did not come in until the twelfth century. Each house showed a pleasing elevation, and was erected with a solidity and elegance of design far excelling anything seen in the same class of building to-day. The shop front was formed by one great arch, without windows, but closed at night by a shutter, which, dropped during the day, formed a counter for the exhibition of the shopman's wares. Customers did not enter the shop, but transacted their business across the counter, and no tradesman might call a purchase from another shop until the latter had finished his business. Different trades were kept together in particular streets—hence such names as the Rue des Tanneurs, which still exists in Cluny. Above the ground floor were two other stories, of which the upper one was generally lighted by an arcade of round-headed arches, imitated from the Abbey, with sculptured piers or colonnettes, surmounted by a carved cornice or architrave, and protected by overhanging eaves.^[93]

[Pg 96]



These charming houses were among the earliest examples of domestic architecture in stone, and it is very interesting to notice that the builders have made no attempt to adhere to the principles of wooden construction; but have followed the right masters, the ecclesiastical builders. One of the best of the old houses is that popularly known as the Hotel des Monnaies, on the right as you go up the Rue d'Avril. In this case the windows are square-headed, but the most interesting characteristics are the projecting chimney, and the great arches, revealing the extraordinary thickness of the walls, a feature which lends some colour to the legend that this is the old mint of the Abbey. I will not mention any more particular houses; only let me assure the reader that he who walks the streets of Cluny remembering that the older portions of it are built with the very stones of the ruined abbey, will assuredly have his reward.

[Pg 97]

The churches of the town are not particularly interesting. St. Marcel, a somewhat barrack-like building of the twelfth century, at the station end of the town has a good Clunisian clock-tower. The building is roofed with wood, because, having no buttresses, it would not stand the thrust of vaulting. The *église Notre Dame*, in the centre of the town, is more attractive; though its thirteenth-century façade is mutilated. Birds rest upon the backs of the gargoyles, and upon the ends of the broken shafting; and dirty children play, all day long, upon the steps of the porch. The interior, however, has some good work in the capitals, mouldings, and vaulting shafts of the nave. The engaged vaulting shafts of the aisles are probably remains of an older church, as they have squared plinths and clawed angles, transitional in style. If anyone cares to see to what a plight the lost art of making stained glass can come, let him look at the tympanum of the door of Notre Dame de Cluny. The building adjoining the church has a Renaissance door, and a thirteenth-century arcade on the upper floor.

There are two other houses, at least, in Cluny, to which, I suppose, I should draw attention. The first of them is the Hotel Dieu, a seventeenth-century building on the site of the old hospital of Cluny, of which a few vestiges yet remain. Neither the architecture, nor the kindred arts of that period, have ever aroused much enthusiasm in me; consequently, I remember almost nothing of the fabric itself, and my general impression is little more than a blaze of garden flowers, tempered by delicious palm-leaves, and dotted here and there with pale invalids, chatting in groups, or walking or sitting beside the flowers. Within the entrance hall the frail voices of nuns earnestly intoning prayers in unison awakened the religious spirit within me far more effectively than had the deserted nave of Notre Dame, or of St. Marcel. Their solemn chant and the austere cleanliness that reigned everywhere, awed me so that I crept out on tip-toe into sunlight again, without more than a glance at the famous Bouillon statues that I had come there expressly to see.

[Pg 98]

The Cardinal de Bouillon, abbot of Cluny from 1683 to 1715, had intended to erect, to the memory of his father and mother, at the southern end of the small transept of the abbey church—opposite to the Chappelle Bourbon—a monumental tomb that should be worthy of a family and individual so illustrious as that brother of Turenne, who had faced Richelieu, and played a leading

part in the Fronde.

But the cardinal had reckoned without Louis XIV. That monarch, hearing of the project, made further inquiries; and decided, as the report of d'Aguerriau, which preceded the royal veto, put it, "That every part of this design tended equally to preserve and immortalize, by the religion of an ever-durable tomb, the too-ambitious pretensions of its author towards the origin and grandeur of his house."

It was an ironical fate that chose such means for preserving the statues, which were already on their way from Rome. Had the Roi Soleil permitted the erection of the monument, not a vestige of it, probably, would have survived the Revolution; consequently, its statues would not, to-day, adorn the chapel of the Hotel Dieu at Cluny. The loss of the mausoleum we need not regret; but the statues, though, to my mind, too artificial and conscious to be pleasing, are carved with skill and vivacity, and are generally considered to be among the best examples of their kind. The bas-relief of the battle scene, on the plinth below the male figure, is, to many, the most interesting part of the work.

On the way back to the town, on the right hand side, a lion, quite Byzantine in character, and taken, I imagine, from the abbey church, forms the sign of the café "Lion d'Or." In the lower part of the town, in the Rue Prudhon, not far from the church of St. Marcel, is a modest little dwelling, whereon the passer-by may read the name of the greatest Burgundian painter, Prudhon, born there on April 4th, 1758. The French Correggio, as he has been called, after the Italian master who exercised most influence upon him, represents very faithfully, in the quality of his art, some of the characteristics of the land of its birth. On this more mountainous side of Burgundy, west of the Côte d'Or, we should expect to find, in a modified form, along with the typical Burgundian qualities of vivacity, strength, solidity, and grace, some of the passion, the sterner qualities of the harder, hill-bred race, more closely in touch with the sterner aspects of nature—especially in the case of one whose birth synchronized with the birth-throes of the great Revolution. It may be, too—and it appeals to one's historic sense to believe—that something of the stern ethical ideal of Cluny had passed into the mind of one who was born beneath the shadow of the abbey towers. Many of those, however, to whom the works of Prudhon are familiar, find greater pleasure in his lighter, allegorical paintings, such as those in the Musée at Montpellier, which, perhaps, show the influence of his predecessor Greuze, who, born in Tournus, by the wide pastures of the Saône, represents the more peaceful, pastoral, and lighter aspect of Burgundian art.

[Pg 99]

In connection with Prudhon, and with a parallel drawn between his work and that of Greuze, M. Perrault-Dabot, in his book, "L'Art en Bourgogne," and Montégut also, in his "Souvenirs," speak of a type of feminine beauty at Cluny, which, I must confess, escaped my notice, as it did also the not unobservant eyes of my wife.

"In the same way," says M. Perrault-Dabot, "the type of woman that one still meets to-day, at Cluny, recalls to us the shadowy grace and the warm suavity of Prudhon's talent. Cluny belongs to that region of our province where the massy heads and highly-coloured complexions that distinguish the mountain-dweller, disappear, to give place to subtler, slighter forms, and to faces of an exquisite pallor. It is not that perfect beauty in which every feature is regular; but it is beauty in its most suave and touching form."



[Pg 100]

We were the more disappointed, because, though we had not expected to find in Cluny any rivals to the classic beauties of Arles and St. Rémy, we had come prepared for a welcome break in the monotonous plainness of Burgundian humanity, a subject on which I shall have more to say later on. Yet the types we met hereabouts, if not, on the whole, attractive, were certainly not without the individuality that natural vivacity imparts. My wife, sketching the great gate of the abbey, was scandalized by the inordinate amount of child-smacking indulged in by the mothers of the neighbourhood. I was not a witness on that occasion, but I am inclined to think, that, in most cases, she failed to allow for the excitability of a semi-southern temperament, and, could she have read them, would have found more hardness in the hands than in the hearts.

The little Hotel de Bourgogne, a white, straggling old building, snugly placed beneath the protecting walls of the Tour de l'Eau Bénite, added its quota to our amusement. The ways of the establishment were refreshingly unconventional. For example, they rang neither bell nor gong for dinner, but sent up two maids, who popped their tousled heads simultaneously in at the bedroom door, and invited us to come down to a meal, which, by the way, quite maintained the traditions of later Clunisian luxe.

The company, too, was notable. We sat at the head of the table. On my right was an individual whose cruel, yet suffering, face reminded me of the executioner in Van der Weyden's great picture in the hospital at Beaune. I gathered that the digestive organs were the seat of his troubles; for he rejected, with a grunt, the normal fare, preferring to dine on lightly-boiled eggs, whose liquid contents he imbibed by a peculiar, sucking process, that was, in its way, a clever, though noisy, gastronomic feat.

To us there entered an angelic newsboy, ragged yet smiling. He distributed evening "Matins" all round the table, and departed, as radiant as he had come. At the far end of the table, a twentieth-century Mephistopheles, with the traditional lowering brows and cunning smile, was transmitting improper stories to a delighted Falstaffian neighbour; just as certain decadent fat abbots of Cluny were wont to do, over a bottle of sparkling Meursault, in those generous, degenerate days. The ample man on his left listened covertly, and cleaned his mouth with his fingers, while the red wine, poured in that nervous, spasmodic, Burgundian manner, gurgled from the bottle neck into

[Pg 101]

the bubbling, ruby lake below.

After dinner, came coffee and cigars, in the little café adjoining, of which the floor is covered with sawdust, and the ceiling with flies. Madame, a good-natured woman, dressed in flaming yellow satin, adorned with much lace and passementerie, and possessing a very arch manner, where the men were concerned, suggested to some of her intimates that they should join her in a game of cards. Two of them at once consented; but a third invité—an elephantine Burgundian voyageur de commerce—ruminating over a petit verre in the corner, declined, on the plausible pretext that he had "no small vices." Indeed, nothing about him was small! For our part, we fell into agreeable conversation with another habitué of the hotel, a gentleman also suffering from the amplitude engendered by two six-course meals a day, washed down with copious libations of red wine. He displayed a kindly interest in my wife's sketches, and was particularly complimentary concerning one reproduced in this book, representing a corpulent person—who might well have been himself—sitting on a dangerously small chair before a café table.

He had commenced to practise upon us his limited supply of English, when our intercourse was interrupted, during the temporary absence of Madame on domestic duties, by the advent, through the balcony leading to the street, of a small pinched boy and girl, both in advanced stages of tatters and dirt, who abruptly announced their intention of entertaining us with a "petit chanson." Taking our silence for consent, they stood, side by side, in the middle of the sanded floor, and, lifting grimy faces to the fly-spotted ceiling, proceeded, with one accord, to give vent to a series of extraordinarily discordant sounds, which, to the universal relief, were interrupted by the reappearance of Madame, who bustled into the room, and "shoved" the juvenile vocalists out of it, barely giving them time to collect largesse during their flight.

"Two young hooligans!" (apaches), she said severely, and, smoothing the ruffled yellow satin, sat down again to enjoy her "small vice."



CAPITAL
CLUNY ABBEY.

That night I dreamed a dream. I was back in the twelfth century, as a brother, participating in a solemn mass in the great abbey of Cluny. The sanctuary and the transepts of the mighty church were flooded in the soft light, that, streaming from gold and jewelled candelabras, flickered upon the bent forms of the dark-robed priests, and threw into strong relief the flutings of the pilasters that adorned the huge piers, and the strange birds and beasts that gazed from the foliage of the capitals. Above us, the lines of the soaring vault were lost in eternal shadows, and before us a thousand lights and jewels blazed upon the High Altar, where Hugues himself, gloriously arrayed in cope and mitre, was kneeling before the holy rood. The solemn chanting of the mass sobbed and echoed down the lofty nave, across the shadowy aisles, and up to where, upon the eastern dome, the Eternal Father Himself, cloud-borne, among the symbols of His creation, lifted the Right Hand in blessing, and laid His Left Hand upon the Book sealed with seven seals. Suddenly, while our souls were pouring themselves out in rapt adoration, a fearful detonation resounded above our heads. Startled,

[Pg 102]

terrified, we looked up. As we did so, while yet the echoes of the shock were rolling through the upper darkness, a series of crackling explosions shook the whole fabric to its foundations. The floor heaved, the vaulting above our heads cracked from side to side, the huge pillars trembled and tottered. Then an awful cry of alarm was stilled into the louder silence of horror, as the whole mighty building swayed, and towers, columns, vaults, and capitals collapsed, and, with an appalling crash and a roar like the fall of many waters, buried all in universal ruin.... I awoke—to find myself yet alive, in the prosaic twentieth century, while from the house opposite proceeded uproarious sounds of revelry by night, carried on with that sustained exuberance which the Latin races alone can impart to their festivals. It was not Cluny that was falling again, but furniture, glasses and crockery. Then it all came back to me—the tale I had heard of the impending marriage of Yvonne. They were worthily celebrating the occasion. Blessings upon her! I rose and leaned out of the casement. Two or three songs were being sung, simultaneously, to the accompaniment of a running chorus of applause, and an obligato with the chairs of the salon.

[Pg 103]

Until the orgy was at an end, I lay awake, meditating upon my dream, and finding, to my sorrow, a real historical analogy between that tipsy revel and the ever-to-be-regretted fall of the stones of Cluny.

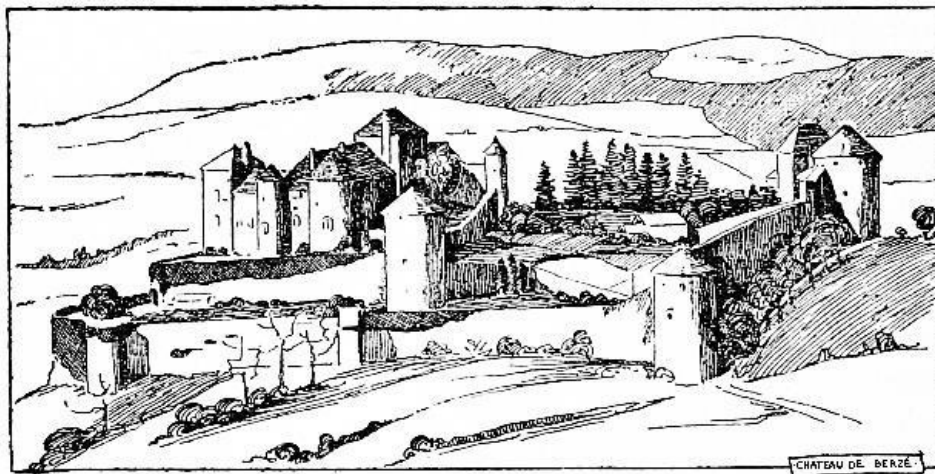
The next morning, I started on my bicycle for Berzé-le Chatel, a castle about twelve miles from Cluny, on the road to Mâcon. On the steps of the hotel I was accosted affably, in the English tongue, by a gentleman, whose face was quite unfamiliar to me. He assured me, however, that he had met us at Bourg en Bresse; and I, being unable either to deny or to affirm the assertion, must needs listen. Having finished with the weather, he paused, turned, waved his hand towards the gray abbey tower, that rose above our heads, and said majestically, with an air of imparting valuable information; "C'est ancien." Being still heavy for want of sleep, I just cursed him inwardly, and went my ways.

As you mount the road that winds upwards towards Berzé, there opens out a most lovely view over the green valley of the Grosne, whose windings are marked by tall poplars, through which

shine the distant towers and hills of Cluny. Then come four or five kilometres of typical Burgundian climbing, before you gain the crest of the ridge, and find yourself looking down, and away for mile after mile, until, between a succession of rugged hills, that lie like prehistoric monsters couchant towards the southern sun, among golden vineyards dotted with ancient villages and immemorial walls, the serpentine, poplar-fringed stream is lost to sight, where at last, far off, in the blue distance, the valley merges into the great plain of the Saône. To the left, on a spur of the hill, guarding proudly the hamlet that shelters at its base, rise the time-bronzed towers of the great castle of Berzé.

The Castle of Berzé, now the residence of the Comte de Milly, became one of the defensive fortresses of the Abbey and town of Cluny, according to the treaty of 1250, which, through the intervention of Blanche de Castille, set forth the respective powers, and adjusted the somewhat strained relations of the lords of Berzé and the Abbots of Cluny. It gave to the Seigneurs of Berzé-le Chatel, the right to administer justice over the abbatial lords in the neighbourhood of the castle, including Berzé-la Ville. Moreover, it bound the tenants of these lands to come together "at the clamour of the castle," to defend and guard it, in return for which assistance, they were granted, in war time, the right of shelter within the fortress, both for themselves and their goods. From that time forward, the Abbots and Seigneurs were on such good terms, that some of the latter subscribed liberally to the Abbey, and even obtained the privilege of burial within its precincts.

[Pg 104]



In legend, as well as in history, Berzé has played its part. A Seigneur of the castle, it is said, piqued by a morbid curiosity, shut up in the lowest donjon an ox and a man, that he might know which would die first. Tradition avers that his passion for knowledge remained unsatisfied, since both died together. In 1315, Geoffrey de Berzé, tiring of his diurnal occupations, namely, hunting in the morning and beating his servants at night, raised an impious hand against, and let it descend upon, the archdeacon of Mâcon, who, through the chapter, brought a complaint before parliament; with the result that Geoffrey and his successors were condemned, in perpetuity, to burn, every year, a candle of fifty pounds weight in the choir of the cathedral of Mâcon. This fine was still being paid, up to the close of the eighteenth century, when it was customary to set forth in bad verses, on a card at the foot of the chandelier that carried the candle, an explanation of this "amende honorable."

[Pg 105]

Berzé-le Chatel was prominent, too, in those bloody wars of the Armagnacs and Bourguignons, which, for more than thirty years, drenched the stricken land of France in the blood of her bravest men. Later on, it fell into the hands of the Dauphin, afterwards Charles VII., who, by magnificent promises, succeeded in inducing the governor to betray the Duke of Burgundy. It did not remain long in the hands of the French; for local knowledge of the subterranean passages soon effected its recapture by the Burgundians, who, to the terror of the French soldiers, seemed to have arisen mysteriously from the earth. The last siege of the castle took place in 1591, when the Duc de Namours after making a breach in the walls with artillery, captured it for the Huguenots, whose attacks it had resisted hitherto.^[94]

A path leads off the road, down through the vines, and up to the cottages at the castle foot, where you can climb, by another steep stony way, to the great, double-towered gate, guarded by machicolations and portcullis, and bearing the coat-of-arms of the house of Berzé. Within is a lawn, encircling a little pond, and an ivied avenue of ancient firs, whose sombre hues set off, in summer, the vivid scarlet of the geraniums, and the soft tints of the laburnum. Crossing this grassy, stoutly-walled terrace, you pass beneath another fortified gate, where scarlet creepers cling, to the court yard of the castle, bright with beds of fuschias, and masses of ball-shaped white flowers. Shade is given by a great walnut-tree; and here, too, is an adjunct, indispensable now, as in mediæval times,—a well. The façade of the house shows, upon its soft, gray stone, the typical cupid's bow windows of the fifteenth century. Across the dwarf wall, the view extends away, eastward, over a lower terrace, to the trimly-kept kitchen gardens, and ancient out-buildings; westward to the vine-clad hills. This is a castle of enchantment, in whose flowery courts one can recall visions of the purple past that has floated over the towers of Berzé.

Leaving the castle, and passing down the great double avenue of walnuts and sycamores which connect it with the romanesque church of the Village of Berzé, I stood, looking at the curious

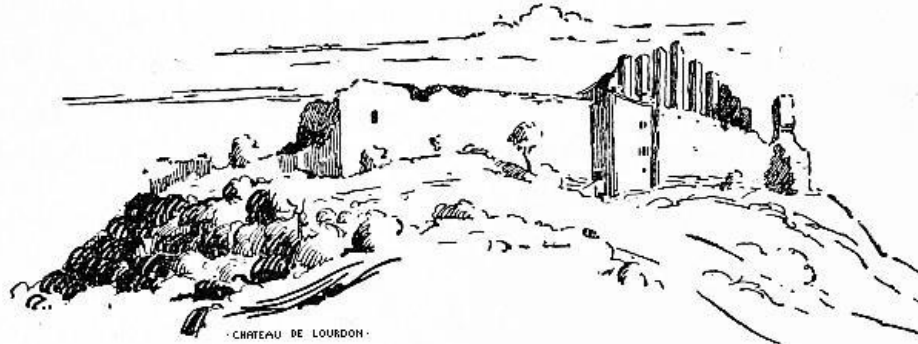
staircase that leads, between roofed-in buttresses, to the church tower. An old woman passed me, carrying, by a yoke on her shoulders, two large buckets of water.

"Whose castle is this, Madame?"

[Pg 106]

"This is Monsieur le Comte de Milly's, monsieur," and she bowed slightly; whether to me or to the great name, I do not know. Two jets of water splashed over her sabots.

We went our ways; she looking down at her wet feet, and I thinking of the Marquis of Carabas—not by reason of any legendary connection between that potentate and the château of Berzé, but because the turn of her phrase had recalled my first reading of "Puss in Boots."



Another of the guardian castles of Cluny, that to which in dangerous times the treasures, charts, and title deeds of the Abbey were taken, was the Château de Lourdon. It was pillaged in 1575 by the partisans of the Duc d'Alençon, who burned so many of the original papers that Claude de Guise, after his reconciliation with Henry IV., obtained letters patent rendering valid the existing copies of the parchments. In 1632, Richelieu, who had obtained possession of the Abbey of Cluny, ordered the demolition of the donjon and castle of Lourdon, a command so faithfully carried out that nothing was left of the fortress, except what is to be seen to-day—a ruined ivy-hung wall, its line broken by a round tower, through whose windows you can see the concierge moving, and by a curious row of great columns, like organ pipes, now generally supposed to be the remains of a kind of mediæval tennis court. From the castle rising high above the bush-covered rocks, you can look down over the grape vines to the village of Lourdon, and the hills of the Grosne valley. Looking up at it, through the houses of the village street, it must have appeared a not unworthy guardian of a trust so great as were the treasures of Cluny.

[Pg 107]

The best way to get there by the valley road from Cluny, is to turn up the hill when you come to a small sentinel tower. If you ask the way, you will probably be told, as we were, to turn at the next lane, which is longer, less convenient, and gives a much less striking approach to the castle. Persistent mis-direction of strangers is a common Burgundian failing.

Those who have wandered about the streets of Cluny may have happened upon the late fifteenth century, or early sixteenth century, house of the Prat family, the ancestors of the poet Lamartine, whose name is frequently heard by travellers in the Mâconnais or the Dauphiné; though the nation as a whole, soon forgot him, after that swiftly rising wave of latin enthusiasm had swept him into the seats of the mighty, and, receding, had dragged him with it, to face, as best he might, the obscure, penniless life of a literary hack.

His birthplace, at Milly, is not now in existence; but the prospect of seeing the family Château de Saint Point, where part of his youth, and some later years of retirement, were passed, tempted me to pay a visit to that valley. In a very improbable, though naturally written and pathetic study of rustic life, "Le Tailleur de Pierres de St. Point"—he who died of that, unhappily, rare malady, the love of God—we have Lamartine's own description of his home.

From the mountain side projects a low hill "dominated at its summit by an old castle flanked by compact towers, and by the notched spire of a romanesque church tower. At the foot of the hill are pastures bordered with alders, cherry and large nut trees, between whose trunks can be seen the walls, roofs and rustic bridge of a hamlet built in the shadow of the castle and comprising fifteen or twenty cottages of workmen, small farmers or shopkeepers, all grouped around the village church. These old towers, undermined at their bases by the weather, and cracked by the weight of stone above them, shorn of the spires at their summits, are useless to-day, except to flank a heavy square mass of naked stone, pierced with a winding stair and several vaulted rooms—such is my abode.... Thence the view, falling and rising, extends over the most beautiful part of the valley of St. Point. One's glance, following the rapid slope of the pastures, rests upon a field through the middle of which runs the river 'Vallonge.' Great nut trees with bronze foliage, motionless as metal leaves, poplars with trunks storm-twisted, and with foliage more hairy and whiter than the head of an old man, European cypresses, alders, birches, willows rescued by me, twenty-five years ago now, from the bill of the tree-trimmer, leaning from bank to bank of the river they love and are loved by, interwoven over its course, form a lofty, floating, capricious

[Pg 108]

vault of foliage of every tint, a very mosaic of vegetation. The lightest airs of summer sway this moving curtain, and summon thence waves of sound, breathings, the watery sheen of leaves, flights of birds and vegetable scents, which gladden the eyes, vary the outlook, and rise in sweet sounds and wandering fragrances to the balcony of my house."

This balcony was the construction in sculptured stone, in imitation of the old Gothic Balustrades of Oxford, that he had added to the principal façade. Here the peacocks perching, day and night, bordered its heavy stones with a row of living caryatides, as they spread their brilliant tails to the sun.^[95]

Meanwhile, with such passages as these in my mind, I was making for the village. Having climbed the winding staircase that leads up to the terraced churchyard, I saw, as I drew near, across the tangled graves, the tomb of Lamartine, a pretentious, but quite unsuccessful, production, in bastard gothic style, the interior hung round with horrible wreaths of artificial flowers. On a pedestal was a bust of the poet, with a metal urn on each side, and, below, a recumbent statue of his wife, and memorials of other descendants.

It was with a feeling of intense relief that I turned from the artificial to the real, to the monument in which nature's art, that is not artifice, has immortalized the memory of Lamartine.

Here is the primitive little romanesque church, whose gracious tower is now hoary with years, and golden with the kisses of the sun. One's glance rests long upon those stones, where, above the slender colonettes, among the waving grasses, wild flowers, ferns, and soft moss of the slag roof, the stone corner-heads of a thousand years ago watch silently over a tree-embowered, weed-entangled, dreamy garden of the dead. For these are the living memorials of a poet—the wide, green meadow of the valley, the undulating boughs, and gray and silver glimpses of the breeze-swung poplars, the red tiles of the ancient village, the stream willow-fringed, the creamy cattle browsing in upland pastures, the gracious contours of woodland hill, touched by Autumn's mellowing hand, the blue dome above, whose silver islands float on the wings of a warm, south wind.

His memories linger, too, in melodious songs, sung by poets not less than he, the lark in the blue, the thrush on the bough, the zephyrs among the leaves; the distant tap, tap, tap, of the woodpecker in the far-off forest, or of some follower of that stone-cutter of St. Point, with whom Lamartine, high up in the mountain quarry, talked of the ways of God with man. One day, perhaps, France will realize these truths; then she will cease to desecrate, with hideous monuments, the open spaces of her ancient villages, and the resting place of her illustrious dead.

[Pg 109]

Having been assured by a villager that visits to the Château were permitted, encouraged even, I effected an entrance to the grounds, through a gate in the wall on the north side of the church. The building appears to be a patchwork of many dates, marred by some wretched, modern imitations, and the hideous device, not infrequent hereabouts, of painting sham gothic windows on a plaster wall; but the general effect of the whole, matured by age, set in finely timbered grounds, is not displeasing. I wish I could say the same for my welcome, which might be summed up in these words: "Come in, go through; damn you, get out!"

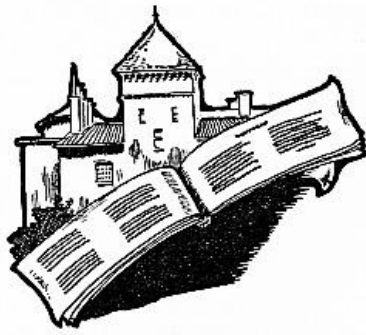
The cicerone who, by the way, was kind enough to inform me that no part of the building was of earlier date than the nineteenth century,^[96] was so rude that I felt much more disposed to discuss with her, gently but firmly, the question of manners, than to look at the many relics she was able to show me.^[97]

It is obvious that only three courses are open to the owner of an historic house. He can refuse admission to the public; he can grant admission unconditionally; or he can grant admission on payment, or on other reasonable conditions; but, upon whatever terms he admits you, he must make you welcome, so long as you, in your turn, conform to the exigencies of polite society. A thinly veiled attitude of hostility deprives the self-respecting visitor of all pleasure.

Be it added, however, lest I should discourage others from visiting the castle, that the account of my experience was received most apologetically by several villagers, who assured me that the present inhabitants were "gentils," and that my cold reception must have been due to the fact, of which I was, of course, unaware, that there was illness in the house.

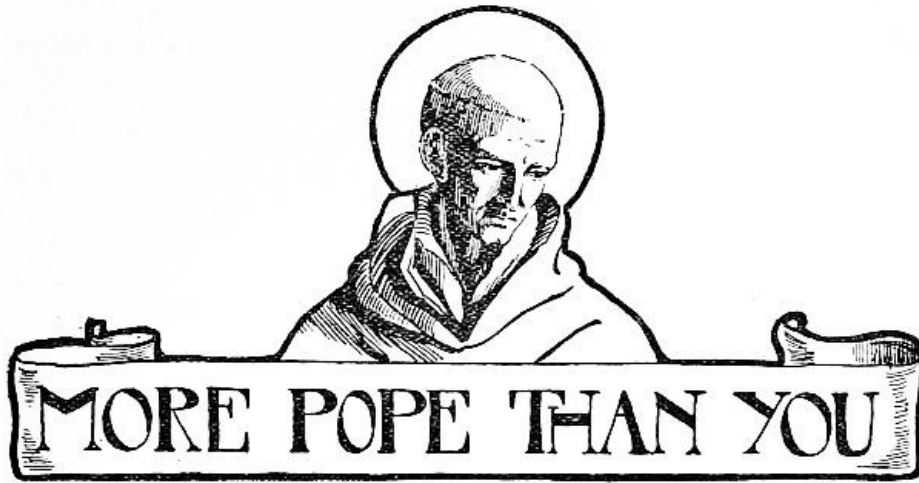
[Pg 110]

My wrath having been appeased by lunch, and the attentions of a good-natured hostess, I proceeded boldly to climb to the head of the Valley of St. Point, and, after many kilometres of very hard work, was rewarded by a look back over the Valley, from below Tramaye. In the middle distance, shone, in the afternoon sun, bronze and white among the tapering poplars, the Village of St. Point, crowned by the ancient gray church; and, higher yet, the sombre trees of the garden, and the towers of Lamartine's château. Above Tramaye, itself a very eagle's aerie, one by one the lower valleys open out to view, until, at last, crossing the "col," you descend, for kilometre after kilometre, to Clermain in the Valley of the Grosne, one of the once-fortified advance-guard villages protecting the approach to Cluny from the South.



Footnotes:

- [90] Lorain, p. 95.
- [91] "Undermining of the monastic state and ruin of good monasteries."—Penjon's "Cluny," p. 125.
- [92] It was found in the façade of a barn, but once formed part of the arch of a Romanesque house.
- [93] For further particulars see the article on "Maisons" in Viollet-le-Duc's "Dictionnaire Raisonné," Tome vi., p. 222 and on. Also the chapter "Maisons Particulières" in M. Penjon's book.
- [94] "Cluny, la Ville et l'Abbaye," par A. Penjon, pp. 4-5.
- [95] "Le Tailleur de Pierre de St. Point," cap. vii., viii.
- [96] In the sixteenth century the castle was occupied by Guillaume de St. Point, Governor of Mâcon, a bitter enemy of the Calvinists.
- [97] You are shown the bed on which he died, many interesting photographs, articles of wearing apparel, and other personal relics of Lamartine, also many paintings by Mme. Lamartine, an English lady. There are others in the church.



CHAPTER VII

Purity and simplicity having been always potent factors in the development of the spiritual life, it followed, as the night the day, that Cluny's ever-growing indulgencies and luxury, while they sapped her own strength, laid her open to supercession by the devotees of an uncorrupted order. By the time of Pierre le Vénérable, that rival had already arisen. The Cistercian Order, under the rule of St. Bernard, at Clairvaux, had already supplanted Cluny as the first religious power of Europe. The story of the rise of Cîteaux is full of legendary and historical interest.

About the middle of the eleventh century, Eringarde, the wife of Theodoric, a nobleman of Normandy, was about to become a mother. On the eve of the expected birth, the Holy Virgin appeared to the lady, and showed to her a golden ring, saying: "With this ring I betrothe to myself the son whom you shall bring into the world." The child was baptized under the name of Robert. When he was grown up, and had heard the story of his mother's vision, he left his native home, and betook himself to Burgundy, there to consecrate a monastery to the cult of God and St. Mary. The spot he chose for the foundation, in the year 1075, was in the forest of Molême, beyond Châtillon. There a company of fellow anchorites built, of the branches of trees, a chapel in honour of the Virgin, and there, in that solitude, they led a life so austere, so laborious, so fervent, that the monks of Molême came to be known rather as angels than men.

[Pg 112]

But, before many years had passed, abundance and prosperity had brought about a general lassitude, and departure from the austerity of the early rule. Robert's disciples mutinied against their Abbot, who then knew that the time for departure was come. Early in the year 1098, a little band of Benedictine monks, twenty-one in number, including Robert, the prior, and sub-prior, might have been seen issuing from the abbey gateway of Molême. They took with them no other provision for their travels than the vestments and sacred vessels for the celebration of the most holy mysteries, and a large breviary for the due performance of the divine office. Through wild and rugged paths, by mountain and forest, they journeyed on, chanting the divine praises, until, in the midst of the great plain of Burgundy, they came upon a vast solitude, the haunt of wild beasts, which, among the forest trees, found shelter in the underwood and brambles. Here, as they wended their way along the banks of a stream, beside reed-fringed, stagnant pools, where only the discordant cry of the water-fowl broke the awful silence of nature, the travellers heard a voice from Heaven, crying "Sistite hic!" (halt here), and knew that this forest was the spot in which God willed that they should serve Him.

Obtaining grant of the land, and aid, from Eudes, Duke of Burgundy, and the Vicomte de Beaune, whose it was, they raised their monastery, which was solemnly dedicated, on the 21st March, 1098, to the Virgin Mary, and named Cîteaux, in memory of the divine command they had heard.

[98]

St. Robert stayed only for one year in Cîteaux, before an order of the sovereign pontiff recalled him to Molême; but the new monastery continued to flourish under the guidance of Stephen Harding, a young English monk.

About this time it pleased the Virgin to show conspicuously to the brethren her good pleasure in the life they were leading in her honour. One day, when they were chanting matins, Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, resplendent in glory, appeared to them with the first rays of the dawn, and, in a moment, with a touch of her hand, changed the tawny robes of the Cistercians into garments of spotless purity. The vision vanished; but cowl and tunic retained the dazzling brilliancy of snow.

Then the pious cenobites understood that they must adopt, henceforth, the white dress, as symbol of her—that flawless lily-of-the-valley—whose servants they were, and towards whose unspotted purity they were ever to strive.

[Pg 113]

In after years, when the black monks reproached the Cistercians with wearing a garment fit only

for a time of joy, whilst the monastic state was one of penitence, the white monks would answer, that the religious life was not only one of penitence, but was like that of the angels, and therefore they wore white garments to show the spiritual joy of their hearts.^[100] The Cistercian habit bore about it another touch of grace, derived from long and holy association. In the black scapular, worn over the white tunic, broad about the shoulders, then falling in a narrow strip to the feet, they saw the form of the Lord's cross, and thus they loved to bear it about with them, even in their sleep.^[101] And notwithstanding their coarser bread, hard beds, and clothing no better than that of the peasantry, there was ever a cheerfulness about the Cistercians that comes always to him whose heart beats in sympathy with the warm heart of mother nature, whose work lay where their days were passed, not in towns, but in sequestered valleys and lonely uplands, among fruitful vineyard, meadow, and cornfield.

After a while, upon Cîteaux, too, in its turn, came evil days, when one by one the monks fell away and died, until Stephen began to doubt whether the austerities of his rule were not above human strength, and to fear that God had willed the destruction of the new community. One day, when he, with his brothers, was seated at the bed-side of a dying priest, he told the sufferer of his fear, and ordered him, in Christ's Name, to return from among the dead, and reveal to him God's Will concerning the future of the Abbey.

The monk promised to do so, in so far as might be permitted him. Then he died.

[Pg 114]

Some days after the passing of that brother, Stephen, at work in the fields, gave the signal for rest. Withdrawing himself from the others, he knelt down to pray, when the dead monk, ashine with heavenly light, and seeming rather to float above the ground than to be standing upon it, appeared to him.

"Father," said he, "The Lord Christ has sent me to tell you that your way of life is good in His sight, and that the desolation and sterility of Cîteaux are about to pass away. Soon your children will be saying to you, 'Make room for us; the abode is too narrow; enlarge its boundaries.' Multitudes of men will come to range themselves beneath your crook, and among them shall be many learned ones, and many a lord. Your disciples, in number as bees when they swarm, shall go hence to found new abbeys in far off lands."

Not long after this vision, one evening, in the year 1113, whilst Stephen and the remnant of his little flock were imploring God to fulfil His promises, a band of thirty persons, under the guidance of a young man, was slowly traversing the forest towards the abbey. Soon the sound of the iron knocker, clanging upon the gate, summoned the porter, whose bell announced the arrival of strangers. The new-comers entered, prostrated themselves at the feet of Stephen, and begged to be admitted into the number of his monks. They were a notable company; young lords, noble in feature and deportment, from among the greatest houses in Burgundy; older men who had shone in the councils of princes, and had worn, hitherto, only the furred mantle, or the steel hauberk, now to be exchanged for the lowly cowl of St. Benedict.

"At the head of the troops was a young man of about twenty-three years of age, of exceeding beauty. He was rather tall of stature, his neck long and delicate, his whole frame very thin like that of a man in weak health. His hair was of a light colour, and his complexion fair; but with all its pallor, there was a virgin bloom spread over the thin skin of his cheek; an angelic purity and a dove-like simplicity shone forth from his eye, which showed at once the serene chastity of his soul."^[102] Such, in aspect, was Bernard, the young saint, who, before many years had passed, was to be the dominant force in the policies of western Europe.

Bernard's origin was not less worthy than that of his companions. His father, Tescelin le Roux (the Red), could trace back his descent through the chevaliers of old, to immemorial times. Born at Châtillon on Seine, he belonged to the seigneurial family of that town, though he resided much at his castle of Fontaines-les-Dijon, where Bernard was born, only a short distance from the Burgundian capital. Tescelin's wife, Alethea, was descended in direct line from the Counts of Montbard, and through them was connected with the Dukes of Burgundy, in whose court, as counsellor of Eudes I. and Hugues II., Tescelin was high in favour. He was a man of honour, strong and firm of character; she, a girl of fifteen at the time of her marriage, was of gentle disposition, sorrowing often because God had seen fit to thwart her leanings towards the cloister life. As the mother of Bernard, third of her seven children, a yet nobler destiny was reserved for her. Shortly before the birth of this third child, there came to Alethea a mysterious dream, in which she seemed to see, imprisoned within her own body, a little red and white dog, who barked without ceasing. Astonished and troubled by this vision, she consulted a priest, as to what it might mean. His interpretation filled her heart with joy.

[Pg 115]

"Fear not," said he, "You are to become the mother of a marvellous child. Like unto a faithful dog he will keep guard over the House of the Lord, and shall make his cry heard against the enemies of the faith. He shall surpass all other preachers, and his word, full of light and authority, shall be the saving of many."^[103]

The young child in every way fulfilled the heavenly promise; yet, for many a year, he was torn mentally between the calls of the world and of the cloister; both in his early training at the schools of Châtillon-sur-Seine, and later, when in spiritual solitude, at the château of Fontaines, he looked down upon the dead body of his mother. The world would not yield, without a struggle, so promising a recruit as Bernard, whose father, never dreaming that the gates of the monastery were soon to close upon him too, was not alone in his endeavours to keep his son from the religious life.

[Pg 116]

Bernard, however, was proof against all persuasion; nor was it long before his fast-developing strength of character and conviction caused him, in his turn, to become the aggressor. One by one the brothers were won over, until, at last, all, save Gérard, were upon Bernard's side. Resolute, he still turned with indignation from all the young saint's proposals. Bernard laid his hand upon his brother's side:

"I see," said he, "that misfortune alone can enlighten thee. A day is coming, and it is not far off, when a lance shall pierce this body, and open, towards the heart, an easy passage to the thought of salvation."

And so it came about; for some days later, at the siege of the castle of Grancy, Gérard fell, struck by a lance; and, covered with blood, was carried into the fortress prison. Then he recalled Bernard's saying, saw his destiny clearly, and accepted the religious life.

Bernard's brothers were among the company who had knocked that day at the gate of Citeaux. The new-comers remained for a week in the guest house of the monastery. On the eighth day they were taken into the chapter house, where the Abbot and his monks were assembled. As they knelt before him, the Abbot put to each of them the question prescribed by the rule:

"What seek you?" to which they replied in turn:

"My Father, God's Mercy, and yours." Then were read to them the stricter points of the Cistercian rule, and the Abbot dismissed them saying,

"My sons; may God fulfil in you that which His Grace has begun."^[104]

From the commencement of his novitiate, Bernard practised austerities that were severe—even for a Cistercian. He would kneel until, on rising, his swollen limbs refused, almost, to support him, and, while always ready with a helping hand to lighten the toil of other monks in the forest or the marsh, he prepared himself for his labours with nourishment so poor that his body wasted and fever consumed him, until his life was despaired of. Devoting all his mind to the inward and spiritual, to answering well the question he was always asking himself, "Bernarde ad quid venisti?" (Bernard, wherefore art thou here?), he seems to have been almost unobservant of outward things. The old chronicler relates how, one day, being thirsty, the saint drank, without noticing its taste, (*nihil sapiebat gustandi*) a jar of oil whose contents he had mistaken for water. On another occasion, when asked whether the ceiling of his cell was flat or vaulted, he was quite unable to answer.

The immediate result of the coming of such a man, with such companions, was an enormous increase in the numbers and power of that order. Postulates flocked in hundreds to the Abbey of Citeaux, and, by the year 1113, it had become necessary to establish daughter abbeys. The first was La Ferté (*Firmitas*), so called to signify the strength and consistency that the Almighty had already bestowed upon the rising order. Then followed Pontigny, where Bernard's friend, Hugues de Mâcon, was sent as abbot; then, in 1115, Morimond, and Clairvaux (*Claire Vallée*)—once the robber-haunted Valley of Wormwood. Before long, the order had the choice of the fairest fields of France; indeed, of all Europe.

[Pg 117]

But Clairvaux had no abbot; and Citeaux must supply one. The choice fell upon St. Bernard, twenty-five years of age, hardly out of his novitiate, scarce able to support the exercise of his rule, and little fitted, as it seemed, to undertake a voyage of discovery to the loneliest forest in all the diocese of Langres. Yet he must go.

The form in which such an expedition set out was characteristic, and impressive in its simplicity. The monks, having been assembled by sound of the bell, all the community went down upon their knees. After a long silence, the Abbot intoned a psalm; then, taking a cross of wood from the altar, he handed it, as the token of office, to the new Abbot. The latter received it in silence, kissed it, still without speaking, and left his stall, followed by twelve other monks, symbols of the Christ and apostles. All the brothers then ranged themselves in the cloister, while, with heads bowed, the thirteen passed between them. Silently the gates of the monastery swung open, revealing to all a glimpse of the dangerous world beyond. The pilgrims filed out; and the clang of closing gates announced the termination of the ceremony.

We have not space to follow further the career of the "Last of the Fathers," as he was called, or to trace in detail the growth of an influence so extraordinary, that about the year 1148, we find Pierre le Vénérable, Abbot of Cluny, writing of "Bernard of Clairvaux, the splendid and immovable column that sustains not the monastic order only, but the entire church," while Bernard himself, broken down by the weight of affairs pressing upon him, writes to Eugène III: "People are pretending everywhere that you are not pope, but I; and all who have business, flock to me for help," (*Aiunt non vos esse papam, sed me*). Geoffrey, Bernard's secretary and successor, writing two years after his master's death, said: "Whoso has met Bernard has seen Christ. For in him the whole Christ dwelt."^[105]

[Pg 118]

Without, indeed, going so far in praise as did his secretary, we may agree that Bernard's character comprised most of those elemental virtues, that, blended, make the perfect man. In him, calmness and vehemence, tenderness and serenity, tenacity and flexibility, vivid imagination and unswerving rectitude, were all present; ever ready to meet the necessities of any occasion that might arise. With all these varied gifts he never flattered, never betrayed the truth, never dissembled the sacred ardour that burned within him. Everywhere he was listened to with profound respect; his stern voice was heard in the cottages of the poor, and in the palaces of kings. Neither his enthusiasm, nor his ceaseless activities, caused him to lose lucidity nor precision of argument in debate. His repartee was gentle and penetrating; swift to disentangle

truth from error, without practising the subtleties of the schools. He was that rarest of phenomena, a practical idealist, an enlightened fanatic. And with all these varied faculties, high above men of his time though his intellect was, he remained ever a true son of the Church, nor sought to free himself from the yoke of Catholic authority. Therein lay the secret of his subsequent bitter antagonism to the teachings of Abélard.

A few words as to Cistercian ideals, and especially as to Cistercian rule, as compared with that of Cluny, may not be out of place here.

For the sites of all their monasteries, they chose invariably lonely and wild lands, marshy valleys, swamps, or lake, or forest, where the monks would be under no temptation from the vicinity of worldly attractions, nor from too close contact with the secular clergy, whose influence was sometimes harmful. The Cistercian's first duty was the first duty of man—to reclaim the dark places of the earth from watery desolation to culture and fertility; just as, later on, the first duty of preaching friars was to win back the souls of men, from the power of Satan unto God. Faurtride, third abbot of Clairvaux, quotes St. Bernard as giving another reason. "It is not sufficient for a monk to allege illness (as an excuse for shirking the austerities of the rule).

The holy fathers, our predecessors, sought deep damp valleys for their monasteries, so that the monks might be often ailing, and having death always before their eyes, should never live in security."^[106]

[Pg 119]

It may be well imagined, that an order founding its houses upon such sites, and for such a reason, did not err upon the side of indulgence. The rule was more strict, even, than that followed by Cluny in early days, both as regards abstinence from food and the rigid enforcement of silence. Vegetables were not to be served with fat or butter; meat was absolutely forbidden, unless sometimes to the sick; and fish, except herrings during Advent and Lent, was allowed only on rare occasions. When Pope Innocent II. visited Clairvaux in 1131, the monks had a hard task to find a single herring for his table. In the matter of clothing, too, they were much more simple than the Clunians, and closer to the Benedictine rule; for instance, the gloves, boots, and furred pelisses, permitted in the older abbey during the winter, were forbidden to monks of the rival order.

The whole secret of Cîteaux's influence may be summed up in two words—simplicity and self-sacrifice. These principles extended right through the life of the order, even to its architecture and to its art. Already, at the time of the coming of St. Bernard, the Clunians were beginning to lighten with sculpture the splendid severity of their Romanesque buildings, to deck their statues with precious stones, and with beautiful glass; to adorn with gilding and voluptuous colour the gray stones of aisle and nave.

St. Bernard, quick to see the danger, sent his masons back to the essential. Nave and choir were to be of low elevation, and without towers; within must be neither painting, nor sculpture, nor crucifix, nor colour, nor any other ornament. Even the tympanum of the porch, so richly carved in Clunian churches, might show only a cross in bas-relief, sometimes surmounted by the Lamb of God. Any sculpture in the interior must be confined to simple flowers and foliage on the capitals, with perhaps a claw at the base of the pillars; the apse and chapels were to be square, not polygonal nor semi-circular, as in the work of the other school. Above all, the Cistercians banished from their churches the scenes from the Ancient and New Testaments, the symbolical figures and fantastic animals, of which the Clunians were so fond. Their cloisters were low and heavy, and the windows of the monastic buildings were narrow, almost, as loopholes.

In ceremonial observances they were equally simple, and contented themselves with a monotonous psalmody, poor and thin compared with the melodious chants that rang down the aisles of Cluny. The manuscripts showed the same scorn of art. Cluny bound their parchments beautifully in gold and silver, and ornamented them with precious stones; Cîteaux was content with a rough binding of pig-skin, decorated with nails, and fastened with copper bands.

It was inevitable that such vital difference of opinion should find contemporary expression in words, as well as deeds. Bernard protests vehemently against luxe. His correspondence on the subject with his friend, Pierre le Vénérable, is full of interest.

"I do not speak," he writes, "of the prodigious height of the churches, of their immeasurable length, of their unnecessary width, of their sumptuous ornaments, of their curious paintings, which draw the glances of those who are at prayer, and prevent them from praying. As a monk, I address myself to monks, and I say to them: You who should be poor, what do you with this gold in the sanctuary? Other than this should be the conduct of the bishops, other than this that of the monks. The bishops, as we know, extend their solicitude to the foolish as well as to the wise. That they should seek to arouse by exterior ornament the devotion of a carnal people insensible to the ornaments of the soul, we can well understand; but we who have come forth from the bosom of this people, who, for the love of Christ, have left the world and all which is precious and apparent, we who regard as dung all that shines by beauty, all that flatters the ear by harmony, that pleases the senses of smell and touch, in a word, all that can give rise to sensual pleasure, whose devotion do we aspire to arouse by these ornaments?"

[Pg 121]

"And to speak my thought openly, is it not avarice, that idolatry of slaves, which inspires us, and



ST. JOHN,
BURGUNDIAN
SCHOOL

[Pg 120]

do we not seek rather the gifts of matter than the fruits of the spirit? How so, will you reply? I will tell you. Gold is lavished on every hand that it may multiply; it is spread abroad that it may be augmented. At the sight of these sumptuous vanities which excite astonishment, men feel themselves inflamed with the will to give, rather than with the will to pray. I do not know what this penchant may be, that bids us give more willingly to him that already has much. Eyes are dazzled by reliquaries covered with gold, and the sight of them opens every purse. The more the chasse shines in beauty, the more sacred are the relics held to be. We hasten to kiss them, and we feel ourselves drawn on into giving; we admire that which strikes the eye, rather than venerate holy things. In the churches are exposed, not crowns, but wheels encrusted with pearls, and the lamps which surround them cast a light less bright than the precious stones. For candalabra, we see rise a tier of enormous weight, fashioned with a marvellous art, which glitters less by the candles which surmount it, than by the diamonds with which it is adorned.

"What seek ye in all that, I ask you; is it the compunction of penitence or the astonishment of the eye? O Vanity of Vanities, O Folly! In her buildings, the church is ashine, in her poor she is all impoverished. She clothes her stones with gold, she leaves her children naked. 'Tis at the expense of the poor that we seek to flatter the eye of the rich. The curious find wherewithal to charm them; the unfortunate seek in vain their daily bread. Do we not abuse our veneration of the images of the saints, until they are ready to rise from the paving-stones? Here one is spitting in an angel's mouth; there the passers-by tread upon the face of a saint. If you do not respect these holy images, why do you not respect at least their brilliant colouring? Of what use is it to decorate these figures if they are to be continually soiled with dust? Of what use are they to the poor, to the monks, to spiritual men?"

"What is the meaning in the cloisters, before the brother occupied in reading, of those ridiculous monsters, those deformed beauties, those beautiful deformities? What do they there, those unclean apes, those fierce lions, those monstrous centaurs, those figures half man, half beast, those striped tigers, those fighting soldiers, those huntsmen who sound the horn? On one side, I see many heads on a single body; on the other, many bodies with a single head; here a beast with a serpent's tail; there a fish with an animal's head. Half a horse ends in half a goat; a horned animal bears a horse's croup. Everywhere appears a multitude of varied and uncouth forms. More pleasure is taken in reading on marble than in books; we choose rather to pass the whole day in looking upon these pictures than in meditating upon the Divine Law. Great God, though we blush not at such follies, let us blush, at least, at the sums they cost!"^[107]

[Pg 122]

However worthy such ideals might be from the spiritual point of view—and no one, surely, can read Bernard's letter without feeling its power and sincerity—it is obvious that, like those of the later Puritanism, they bore within them the germs of their own destruction. No community of man, even in those glorious days of the early middle ages, could live, for long, up to that standard; and as the order established itself all over Europe, almost, the diffusion of its forces resulted necessarily in a swift falling away, and loss of prestige. That change, though, perhaps, a disaster for the Christian church, was the salvation of Western Europe; for, had the ideals of Citeaux finally prevailed over those of Cluny, the glorious Gothic arts of the next three centuries, upon which Cluny certainly exercised great influence—of which, indeed, she was the mother—would not have attained the same development.

Among the distinguished visitors to Citeaux, were Louis le Gros, in 1127; Pope Eugène III., who presided over the chapter general, in 1148; Louis VII., in 1166; and Louis IX. (St. Louis), who came here from Vézelay, in 1244.

On that occasion, according to custom, the Duke of Burgundy, Hugues IV., preceded the royal cortège up to the limit of his lands. As they approached Citeaux, coming in sight of the church, all left their horses, and advanced on foot in the attitude of prayer. The prelates, the abbots who were there, and the monks, to the number of five hundred, came forth in procession to welcome the monarch visiting them for the first time. Louis IX. and Queen Blanche did not lodge in the abbey, but in the Hotel du Duc de Bourgogne, without the walls. They were specially authorized to eat meat during their stay, on condition that such permission would not be granted on a future occasion.^[108]

[Pg 123]

Upon the fair fame of the later history of the order there rests one indelible stain. Citeaux was largely responsible for that series of awful crimes and massacres known as the Albigensian crusade. Early in the thirteenth century, Innocent III., weary of vain attempts by spiritual force to crush out heresy from the church, decided to employ the not unwilling Cistercians to preach a new crusade. A great army of "Crusaders," under the command of Eudes III., Duke of Burgundy, crossed the Rhône at Avignon, and passing through Montpellier, came to Béziers, where they proceeded to indulge in "the greatest massacre ever committed in all the world; for they spared neither young nor old, nor even infants at the breast." It seems a cruel irony that from Arnaud, Abbot of Citeaux, a successor of St. Robert and St. Bernard, should have come the answer to the question how they were to deal with the heretics: "Kill them all; God will know His Own!"

But happier recollections than those were in my mind when last I rode to Citeaux from Dijon, on a dull and rainy morning of October, a fitting day on which to visit that savage and lonely site.

There are people—cultured people, even, such as Emile Montégut—who will tell you that, because the country here is flat, and the old monastery almost entirely destroyed, Citeaux is not worthy of a visit. I find it hard to understand how anyone possessing a spark of historic imagination, can thus deprive himself of the pleasure of seeing the abbey; though there were certainly less inducement to go there when the place was a penitentiary school, than now, when it is again in the occupation of the white monks. I hope that this account of my own pilgrimage there will induce others to follow my example.

I rode to Citeaux by way of Rouvres, a lonely village on the plain south of Dijon. It has, or had, a château—not now visible within its belt of trees—that has some interesting historical associations, and there is a Romanesque church accessible, I remember, by a somewhat unique bridge, consisting of gravestones, evidently taken from the churchyard, laid, with the inscriptions uppermost, across the stream where the ducks paddle.

[Pg 124]

Passing through many a tangled and dilapidated Burgundian village, I came at last, after miles of plodding across the plain, to a spot so savage of aspect, that it might well be a halting-place, even to-day, for an ascetic brotherhood faring forth in search of a site for a new foundation. On the left of the lonely road was a stagnant marsh, bordered with clumps of yellow reeds and brown bullrushes. Before me, a great expanse of sullen water, fringed with a line of distant, black fir trees, reflected on its broken surface the drifting, gray clouds. A dismal lake it was, marged with red and green rushes, dappled with broad-leaved water plants, and spotted with splashing drops. No human note broke the silence; no sound but the harsh cry of wild fowl, the croaking of frogs, the monotonous swish of falling rain. At my feet were growing thistles and deadly night-shade; through the reeds I caught a glimpse of a pink sow snouting in the mud. A feeling of intense exaltation arose within me—the delight born of unity with Nature in her elemental mood. I knew now why the Cistercians loved these spots. There welled up in me the same sensation of burning pleasure that lightened the life of the ascetic of eight hundred years ago, when, leaning upon the handle of his spade, as he paused for a moment from his labour, he watched the wind furrowing the rippled water, and heard the holy spirits of the air singing to the bending rushes on the bank.

I rode on, past the gateway of the Abbey grounds, to the village of Citeaux, where I lunched with an asceticism that, though not inappropriate to the occasion, was due, I must confess, rather to the limitations of the innkeeper's resources, than to a voluntary compliance with the rule of St. Benedict. During the repast, Madame, standing before me, and punctuating her remarks with an occasional sweep of the back of her hand across her mouth, held forth upon the history of the Abbey. Learning from her that the buildings could be visited, I determined to see what was to be seen. Cycling boldly up to the gate of the monastery, and ignoring utterly a mighty hound, who nearly strangled himself in his efforts to rend me limb from limb, I looked about me. Near the gate was a white monk, walking slowly, with his eyes upon the ground. He bowed in response to my salutation; but, when he raised his head, his hesitation, and the spasmodic movements of his lips before he spoke, betrayed the effect of the rule of silence. The words came with an effort.

[Pg 125]

"Vous n'avez qu'à sonner à la porte."

I rang the bell accordingly, when there emerged, from the lodge opposite to the gate, another little, square-headed, white-robed monk, who, smiling, and bowing low, with spread hands, welcomed me to the monastery.

My guide was an intelligent, affectionate, resigned little Flamand, his natural cheerfulness of disposition tempered by the inevitable sadness of a vocation now generally despised, and quite apart from the swiftly-flowing current of modern life. Together we traversed the rooms and corridors of the modern buildings—until recently a penitentiary school—from which the members of the chapter, held annually in September, had departed only the day before my visit. On the walls of the assembly room were plans of the four daughter abbeys of Citeaux—La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond; "Une mère bien féconde," as my guide said—and the signed letter of Pope Leo XIII., restoring Citeaux to the Cistercian order. The chapter table, round which ran the names of the abbeys represented, was still littered with pens and ink for use at the function. My monk pointed out the little ballot-box, filled with white beans, by means of which the voting was done. A majority of one carries the day, and the ballot is open, unless one member expresses a desire for it to be secret. The rule of St. Benedict, and the book of the constitutions, are kept on the table for reference, if necessary.

We passed beneath the bust of St. Bernard, which is over the door, and descended to the foot of the stairs, where my companion put on again, over his sandalled feet, the sabots he had kicked off on entering. A moment later we were standing in the refectory, where, upon the table, were laid the spoons, the brown earthenware plates, the bowls and the napkins, all ready for the next meal. The abbot sits, as of old, at the head of his twenty-five monks, and in the middle is a table with three "couverts," where the same vegetarian repast is served to three souls in purgatory, the remains being given to the poor. Thence, I was taken to see the little cloister, the staircase tower and library, probably of the fourteenth century, all that remains of the great Abbey. On the way we passed through the garden, where a dozen or more black and white-robed brethren were busily digging the ground, still carrying on the tradition of St. Benedict, that in the sweat of their brow they should eat bread. That sight alone repaid well the trouble of coming to Citeaux in the rain.

[Pg 126]

Meanwhile, my gentle guide talked resignedly of the ruin of the building, of the decay of the order. There was a note of deep sadness in his voice, as he said:—

"Justice and truth are like the sun; they traverse the earth; they set."



"They rise again on the other side," I added. A smile lit up the peaceful, flamand face.

"Yes, they rise again on the other side."

We were at the gate.

"How I wish my wife had been here," I said, thoughtlessly. "She would so have enjoyed talking with you."

The little monk smiled, twinkled almost. Here was an artless stranger, indeed!

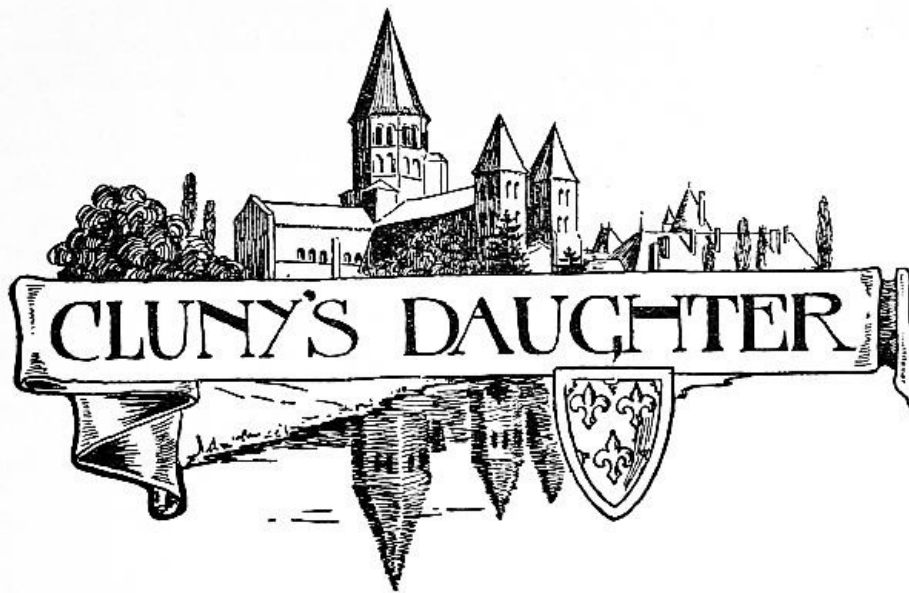
"Monsieur," shaking his head, "We do not allow ladies to pass the gate." It was my turn to smile, and to apologise. My friend guide understood. He took my hand.

"Probably," he murmured, "we meet no more in this world. Then, adieu."

Again he bowed low, with spread hands. The iron gate of Citeaux clanged behind me; I was out in the living world once more. As I rode to Nuits in the rain, between the dripping trees of the ancient forest, whose glades had echoed to the foot-fall of St. Bernard, I felt, more strongly than ever before, how close is the rapport existing between the ascetic mysticism of that time—symbolising the soul of things in saint and hermit—and the wider transcendentalism of to-day, that, taking, as Bacon took, the all for its medium, works, through art, through science, through poetry, through even subtler and more recondite communion of the human spirit with fellow spirits and with nature, towards the ultimate goal of truth.

Footnotes:

- [98] Some authorities think that the name refers to the many pools, overgrown with bulrushes and other aquatic plants—Cit-eaux.
- [99] The author of "A Concise History of the Cistercian Order," cap. iii. p. 67, states that tradition assigns the appearance of the vision to St. Alberic, but he adds that the immediate historical cause of the adoption of the white habit is somewhat mysterious. I venture to think that the legendary cause was also the historical one, seeing that all the Cistercian houses were dedicated to "the Queen of Heaven and Earth, Holy Mary." Moreover, what more natural than such a symbol in a wholly symbolical age?
- [100] See Life of St. Stephen in "Cistercian Saints" quoted in "A Concise History of the Cistercian Order." p. 68.
- [101] Martenne Thes. Anec. Tome v., p. 1650, quoted in "History of Cistercian Order." p. 71.
- [102] "Cistercian Saints" cap. xiii., quoted in "A Concise History of the Cistercian Order." Chevalier speaks also of a boy face, and a white forehead; and adds that his bearing would have appeared proud but for a slight drooping of the head upon the shoulders, which lent sweetness to his general appearance.
- [103] Guill. Vit. S. Bern: lib. 1, n. 2. Quoted Chevalier's "Histoire de St. Bernard," p. 8.
- [104] Chevalier's "Life of St. Bernard." p. 55.
- [105] Chevalier's "St. Bernard," vol. xi., p. 357.
- [106] Quoted "Histoire de St. Bernard," Chevalier, vol. ii., p. 350.
- [107] Pignot's "Cluny," Tome iii., pp. 108-114.
- [108] Petit. "Histoire des Ducs Capétiens."



CHAPTER VIII

The country, as one travels from Cluny to Paray-le Monial, is varied and interesting—so were the other passengers. At Charolles, there entered our compartment two priests, one of whom devoted himself to his book, while the other, a very tall, spare ecclesiastic, divided his time evenly between his breviary, the sign of the cross, and a close scrutiny of my wife. Whether there was any connection in his mind between the last two occupations, I am unable to determine.

This little incident was sufficient to remind us that Paray—as the adjunct Le Monial implies—is a town of ecclesiastical origin and tradition. It was, in fact, a daughter of Cluny, an annexe of the maison abbatiale, and a place of rest and of villégiature for the abbots, who had their country seat here. To-day it is the centre of the cult of the Sacré Cœur, and a favourite place of pilgrimage for the French peasantry of the district.

On arrival at the station, while I was engaged with the luggage, a straw-hatted individual, who had been lounging about in the company of a young woman, drew my wife's attention to the fact that there was no "plaque" on our bicycles. On being referred to me, he demanded my permit, which I naturally refused to exhibit, until he had proved his authority to ask for it. He then produced, from his pocket-book, a printed paper, which appeared to be the document required. I showed my permit accordingly; whereupon, with a satirical smile, and the remark, "Une simple formalité, Monsieur," the insuppressible strolled off. Insolent officialism is one of the "désagréments" of France, to which a few more years of democratic supremacy will probably expose this country also. A breach of that "simple formalité," as he called it, would inevitably have brought me to the sub-prefecture, and would have cost me thirty francs and costs, for each machine. Let cyclists in France see that they comply with all "simples formalités."

[Pg 128]

Setting out in the morning to explore Paray, we had corroborative evidence of an impression already formed, concerning the manners—or want of them—of many Burgundians. Two or three groups of young girls, passing us in the streets, burst into shrieks of laughter under our very noses; and a band of school children, who intercepted and surrounded us at a corner shop, in a narrow lane, could not have shown deeper interest had we been two teddy bears, or a Punch and Judy show. They made the street absolutely impassable; we could not move until the shop-keeper emerged, and drove them away.



Modesty compels me to add that my wife was always the chief cause of this hilarity and interest. These public attentions made her so uneasy that she asked me plaintively, on one occasion, whether she had grown a hump in the night! Though able to reassure her upon that point, I could not, nor can I at this moment, satisfactorily account for the undisguised astonishment her appearance caused; but I lean to the conclusion that the secret lay mainly in her clothes. My wife was dressed—quite simply—but she was dressed; whereas the women of Burgundy merely wore clothes; garments that bore no

relation to each other, nor to the individuality of the wearer. The directors of the Grands Magazins du Louvre have much to answer for in these matters, and it was positively refreshing, in the remoter parts of the country, to see the village women, naturally dressed, walking like goddesses, freely, and in the shape in which Nature made them.

[Pg 129]

But to return from flesh and blood to the stones of Paray. Her old monuments, though few, are choice. The best of them, excepting the church, is the Hotel de Ville, a building with an exquisite Renaissance façade, beautifully harmonized, showing Italian influence, and dating from 1525. The flatness of the elevation is relieved, and the whole bound together vertically, by three half-

round turrets, which spring from corbels below the sill strings of the first floor windows. Three moulded courses ornamented with heads and busts in medallion,^[109] and panels in relief, extend right across the building, below the windows. Several of the heads, including that of Francis I., are still recognizable portraits. Between the windows, and beside the turrets, are decorative, sculptured pilasters. There are many figures in niches, and a profusion of scallop-shell ornament, all showing the transitional character of the work. The top story, with alternating turrets, and gables surmounted by statuettes, is extremely effective. All the windows are beautifully proportioned, and finely, though not deeply, moulded. As a whole, weathered by time to a rich, warm brown, this is one of the most effective façades of its kind that I know in France.

The interior, which might easily be restored, has been spoiled by whitewashing the oak beams of ceilings that shelter many exhibits, of little interest, excepting some nice tiles from the old house. This was built by a rich cloth manufacturer, Pierre Jayet, from 1525-1528. According to Montégut, Pierre's brother was so jealous of the beauty of the building, that he determined to eclipse it; and accordingly erected the church of St. Nicholas, which, with the later tower of that name (1658), still stands opposite to the Hotel de Ville. If the date of the Church, as given to me, namely 1505, is correct, the legend must be without foundation; but, whether it be true or false, that lovely façade has nothing to fear from comparison with any other building in the town.

Paray-le Monial's church is a splendid and typical example of the Clunisian school of Burgundian architecture, about contemporary with the Cathedral of Autun. In fact, you have only to create, in imagination, a longer nave, transeptal towers, a second transept, and flying buttresses, to form a very good idea of the appearance of Cluny abbey in the middle ages.

From the eastern end you get the typical Burgundian effect of a series of apsidal chapels and collaterals, lifting the eye, stage by stage, up to the central clock tower, and thus conveying an impression of dependent solidity unique in architecture, and quite symbolical of Burgundian character. The apsidal chapels are buttressed by engaged columns, and lightened by a string, ornamented with a billet, run right round, to form the drip-stones and the abaci of the capitals, some of which are very beautiful.

[Pg 130]

'Tis sad that Cluny's fair daughter is content to keep such ill company. The approach to, and view of, the church from the north, is almost completely blocked out by hideous booths filled with tawdry trinkets, by a "Diorama Musée," and other mean erections, which should be ruthlessly swept away by the authorities. Visitors may be annoyed, too, as we were, by the attentions of an imbecile woman, employed by the hangers-on of the church, to fetch water and run errands for them. She looked over my shoulder diligently while I took notes, and only replied with a wild stare, and a "Rien, rien," to my request to know what I could do for her. A few yards further on, we came upon the following:—

*Apparition of the Sacred Heart to Blessed Margaret Mary
Alacocque.*

*The Nusstree and Garden of the Visitation
Figures in natural size,*

Entrance ... Centimes. [110]

On reading this effusion, our first impression was, that there must be some mental affinity between the dreadful woman who had just been jibbering at us, and the promoters of this novel entertainment; until we realized that the wax-works were merely another catch-penny, aimed at pilgrims' pockets—the invitation I had just read being no more than a weak attempt to rope in an occasional English enthusiast. The discovery, not far off, of a similar legend, written in bad German, revealed the origin of the "Nusstree." It is curious how seldom French attempts to break out publicly into the English tongue, meet with any degree of success. From the "High Life Tailor" of Parisian boulevards, to the "Nusstree" of Paray-le Monial, it is always the same story; one English word is as good as another to a Frenchman who understands neither.

The north door of the church, flanked though it be by disreputable buildings, is a graceful construction, of somewhat unusual classical design, well harmonized and proportioned, and exquisitely carved. All the sculpture, from the flowered architrave within the pilasters, to the ornamentation of the shafts and the shouldered arches, is very pleasing, as are the doors themselves, with their quatre-foiled iron ornament, surrounding an inner cross.

[Pg 131]

The primitive porch, and the western towers of the church are somewhat remarkable. Murray, on what authority I cannot say, puts their date at 1004, but Viollet-le-Duc contents himself with admitting this portion to be earlier than the remainder of the Church. The northern tower is the later of the two. The porch is arched, and of two bays, forming six quadripartite vaults between the arches. The weight of the towers above was originally taken by two central clusters of stone columns, which proved quite inadequate for the purpose, and were replaced—in the 19th century, I think—by a granite column.^[111] The western precincts of the Church exhibit the usual signs of decadence of ecclesiastical power and influence. Dead leaves littering the porch, mercifully screen the "choses immondes" and the building materials with which the floor is scattered; and as though the building were not yet sufficiently defiled, a board invites the public to deposit its rubbish between the porch and the river, on a site at present in the occupation of noisy children.

Seen from within, the church is noble and impressive; but the eye at once notices a want of proportion; the height of the first storey being too great for that of the triforium and clerestories. This is due, in part, to the shortness of the nave, which might be three times as long, and, in part, to the flatness of the triforium, a true blind-story, rendered mean for lack of shadow to break up

the flatness of the arcades. The supports for the vaulting take the form of fluted pilasters, which rise to the capitals, on a level with the sill string, below the triforium; whence the thrust is taken by half round vaulting shafts.

[Pg 132]



Here, as elsewhere in Burgundy and Southern France, the pointed arch is obviously used as a necessity of construction, rather than for any inherent love the builders bore it. Before the art of buttressing had developed, no other method was open to them.^[112]

[Pg 133]

Grateful memories still linger of that vista—down the wide-aisled nave to the well-proportioned columns of the apse, bathed in rich colours from the stained glass, which, modern though it be, is worthy, when compared with our recollections of Notre Dame de Cluny. The interior has not many decorative features, except the fluted pilasters, and the archivolts, somewhat in the Lombard style, in which the lozenge and the billet ornament are effectively used. Very local, on the contrary, and very characteristic are the Byzantine beasts carved among the foliage on the capitals of the ambulatory.

'Tis a pity that the crossings are so prominent; their nudity enhances the ill-effect of the debauch of whitewash that renders the interior so cold. One of the few good monuments is a fifteenth-century, south-eastern, transeptal chapel, with the remains of the gothic canopied tomb of the Seigneurs of Digoin. The windows, doors and niches of the chapel are satisfactory, but the ribbed vaulting is clumsy, and much too heavy for so small a roof. I believe that the figures are all modern.

As we left by the north transept, we noticed a lady standing before the statue of St. Peter. Rising upon her toes until her bonnet feathers nodded, she was just able, with an effort, to kiss the toe of the Saint. I examined that toe; it was bright with the salutes of the faithful.

Nowhere do I remember to have seen so many appeals and warnings against blasphemy and desecration as are displayed in the church of Paray. No doubt they are needful and salutary; but it struck us, that, before enforcing too severely their observance, the ecclesiastical authorities would do well to set their own house in order, and, once for all, to sweep the precincts of their basilica clear of all rubbish, human and inanimate, that now defiles it. I wonder, sometimes, whether those who are responsible for the condition of affairs at Paray, and other great French churches, have ever seen the close of Salisbury, or of Wells, or can ever have realized how enhancing to the dignity and grandeur of mediæval architecture, and how seemly, as settings to a sacred building, are the delicious haunts of peace, upon whose trim, green lawns and ancestral elms, those ancient cathedrals look down. That, having done so, they can be content to let the towers of Paray rise from among tawdry booths and a howling wilderness of filth and débris, is something I do not care to believe. That is why, having visited in hope Cluny's lovely daughter, we left her with little other feeling than one of sadness that such things should be.

[Pg 134]

The country around Paray is not particularly interesting; but some fine views of the Church are to be had from the other side of the Bourbince. Having set forth on bicycles to explore the land, we halted on a little bridge that crosses the Canal du Centre. The waterway was lined, on our side, for about a hundred yards, with small tumble-down cottages and sheds. The other bank was alive with washerwomen all thumping mercilessly at soapy garments. As we appeared, the thumping ceased. Every scrubbing-brush was put down, or remained poised in mid-air, and all eyes turned towards the two figures, who, even at that distance, bore the stamp of aliens.

We approached a cottage labelled "Café." Before it was a perambulator containing a howling baby, whom a very serious little maid of about fourteen was trying unsuccessfully to hush. We sat down on a rickety bench, and ordered things. The little maid was so shy that her lips refused to part; but her ears were open; she fetched and carried willingly, though dumbly. We sat sipping, and contemplating nature. The washers returned to their thumping; the baby howled.

Presently a lanky mule, into whom the spirit of devilment had entered, broke from a neighbouring shed, and made for the bridge. The girl left her charge, and endeavoured to "shoo" the beast to his stall again. He would neither be coerced nor cajoled, but, with a wicked gleam in his eye, turned his back upon her blandishments, and, to the great peril of the baby, lashed out fiercely with both heels. The girl rushed to the perambulator. Conscious of victory, the ass lay down upon the towing path, and rolled and kicked, until the washers across the water were screened from us by clouds of dust. Then, in due season, he arose and walked quietly back to his stable. As my wife observed: "He is a very young mule; and there is no fun in being naughty, if nobody minds."

A moment later, we saw coming towards us with swinging strides over the bridge, a tall, swarthy, handsome figure, dressed as a stage bandit, in copper-coloured leather coat, of the same tint as his face, a dark slouch hat, and black leather gaiters. From each capacious side pocket projected the neck of a large, white-glass, wine bottle. He called for a drink, and sat down near us on a bench before the café; then, removing one of the bottles from his coat, he revealed two snakes wriggling within it. Holding the bottle by the neck, he shook it before the eyes of the howling baby, who promptly fell into such strong convulsions that my wife feared for its life.

[Pg 135]

"What are those?" I asked, pointing to the bottle.

"Vipers," said the bandit, "'Tis my trade." Diving into the coat again, he produced a metal armband inscribed "Charmeur de Vipères." Thence followed, one by one, all his certificates of efficiency, signed by the mayors of places in the neighbourhood—Digoin, Mâcon, and Paray. Here were forty-six killed in one day; thirty-five more in the woods of Charolles; "Et il y en a encore." He did not stay long enough for us to question him concerning his methods of procedure; but, rising abruptly from the wooden bench, strode off, a great, bronzed figure, and was soon lost among the copper tints of the Burgundian forest.

I have often wondered since, whether he worked solely by close observation, or whether he had developed that supernormal or subnormal faculty, withheld from most, but granted often to undeveloped minds, as it was to the boy in Rollinat's song:—

When Autumn has tinted the boughs and the brakes,
With fixed eyes, sadly and sweetly asway,
The wandering idiot who charms the snakes,
Wearying never, hobbles all day.

The vipers asleep on the marge of their lakes
In chorus awaken at sound of his song;
And, shrilling thin hisses, they follow along—
A crowd of old gossips—each path that takes
The wandering idiot who charms the snakes.^[113]

We saw the mysterious snake-charmer once more in Paray. He raised the wide, slouch hat, and saluted with all the dignity of a forest king.

Footnotes:

[109] Hence the original name, "Maison des Pompons."

[110] The Reference is to the alleged apparition of Christ, revealing His Bleeding Heart, to a young girl, Marguerite Marie Alacocque, in 1690, beneath a nut-tree, the site of which is now marked by the Chapelle de la Visitation. It was this vision which established in Paray the "Culte du Sacré Cœur," now common throughout France.

[111] Viollet le Duc. "Dictionnaire Raisononné" Tome vii. p. 283.

[112] Bond's "Gothic Architecture in England," p. 265.

[113] "Songs of old France," Percy Allen.



CHAPTER IX

To the outward eye Chalon-Sur-Saône is no more than a thriving, modern, commercial town, containing little of interest to the antiquarian; though the stir of life on the busy wharves may prove enticing to those who weary, sometimes, of the sleepiness of country towns, and the faded glories of mediæval cities. Yet, for our part, especially when we are in France, we prefer the shadows of the past to the realities of the present; and, no sooner were we in Châlon, than we set ourselves to picturing the town as it had been, when the river was the scene of royal pageants, when three golden bands girdled the city walls, and great tournaments were held on the island where bold knights laid lance in rest round the banner of La Dame des Pleurs.

One of the last of the river pageants was in 1371, when the Duke of Anjou gave rendez-vous to Philippe le Hardi, his brother, at the papal city of Avignon. The Duke embarked at Châlon with a great suite. In the first vessel was Philip and his principal barons; then came the Chancellor's boat, with other nobles; then the barges of the kitchen, the wardrobe, the wine-cellar, and the fish store. The Duke appeared with great éclat at Avignon, and offered the pope a courser, a hackney, two flagons, and two basins of silver-gilt. He also dealt so generously with the cardinals, that, to enable him to return, he was obliged to pawn his jewels with a Lombard, as security for a loan of twenty thousand francs.^[114]

[Pg 137]

But I want now to go back to earlier days, even, than those—to the year 589, when Gontran was king of Burgundy, and had his court at Châlon—whenever his wars with Childebert and Chilperic allowed him to hold court anywhere. Gontran, it was, who, twelve years before, in 577, had founded two miles away eastward, in the plain, a great abbey in honour of St. Marcel, the apostle of the Châlonnais, martyred upon that very spot. Gontran too, it was, who rebuilt the walls of Châlon, broken down by the Huns, and ornamented them, for a belt, with three bands of golden stone; so that, in after years, the early historians and the poets, singing of the city by the Saône, hailed it as Orbandale, the town "aux bandelettes d'or." That is why, to-day, the arms of Châlon are three golden circles, two and one, on a field of azure.

I am going to tell here, briefly, the story of Bertille, the heroine of the golden bands—surnamed, not too happily, La Judith Châlonnaise.^[115]

In the year 589, there dwelt in the royal city of Châlon, a worthy man, Vulfrand by name, and his wife, Ludwige. They had a daughter, Bertille, supple, graceful, dignified, and so lovely and virtuous, that she was the pride, not of her parents only, but of all the town, famous though it then was for producing beautiful women. Bertille was nearly seventeen years old, and she had been brought up in the Christian faith, at a time when that religion, then still young, needed every proselyte it could win. And she was her parents' only child.

One summer evening, after Bertille had read aloud the vesper prayer, her father, having made the sign of the cross upon his brow, rose, and went to the door of the apartment, which opened upon the street. Standing upon the threshold, he was enjoying the freshness of the twilight air, when suddenly he was aware of a commotion in the neighbouring street—the stir of a great crowd, men's voices, and the clatter of horses' hoofs.

"Bertille!" he called, "Come, come quickly, or you will be too late!" And, indeed, already there drew near a great cortège, ecclesiastics for the most part, proceeding in some dis-array, and hastening, because of the late hour, and the distance they had yet to go.

King Gontran had convoked a council in the church of St. Marcel—the town then named Hobiliacus—and thither this cortège of bishops and priests was bent, eager to arrive before nightfall, that they might begin their conference early the next morning.

[Pg 138]

Bertille came to the door just as the last members of the cortège were passing. Among them was a rider whose costume showed plainly that he was no ecclesiastic. From the scutcheon embroidered upon the front of his garment, he appeared to be a noble—lord, perhaps, of some neighbouring kingdom. His steed was rearing; and he, not averse from showing to the crowd his

strength and skill in horsemanship, let it plunge at its will. Then he reined it in, and was looking proudly around him at the moment when Bertille ran to the door. His eyes rested upon her, in a fixed gaze. Bertille felt the stare; and shuddered before it.

"Father, that horseman is not following the cortège," said the girl, blushing and hiding her head behind Vulfrand's shoulder. "Let us go in," she added, "I have seen enough."

"What is the matter, ma belle, are you feeling ill?"

"No, but that lord's stare has tired me."

"And reddened you, too, little angel of Paradise! But in with you! though there's small harm in being seen; even when one is as pretty as you." He kissed her forehead, smiling, and together they went in. They told the mother what had chanced. "His eyes," said Bertille, "were upon me like a serpent's upon a bird."

Night fell, and with it came the hour of sleep.

"Allons!" said Vulfrand, "Good night, my Bertille; sleep well, and above all, forget the eye of that serpent."

"If only you were there, to put your foot on his head," said she, smiling, to her father.

"Oh! you are no big girl, are you?—no more than the little bird was a big bird. Go to bed; sleep, dream of him, and crush him under your own heel." Half an hour later, Bertille was asleep.

Meanwhile, the young horseman in question, Amalon by name, a Duke in rank, from the country of Champagne, charged with the conduct of negotiations at the court of Burgundy, was following the cortège of ecclesiastics, with whom he must attend to-morrow's council at St. Marcel. But, ever, as he rode, the beautiful face of Bertille shining before his eyes, awoke evil thoughts within him. He soon decided that so fair a maid was better worth his attention, than a discussion with the bishops concerning the goods of the church. So, after waiting until the boats had carried the learned company across the Saône, he returned to his own apartment, preoccupied, and with his heart beating rather faster than was its wont.

[Pg 139]

"Surely the girl is very fair," he said to himself, "and well worth a little trouble. These are quiet days in my town of Troyes; and who knows but the name of Duchess may tickle her ears." Then he, too, slept.

The next day, the Duke Amalon, faring forth earlier than was his custom, chanced to meet Bertille in the street, as she was going forth to do marketing for the household. Making her a low obeisance, he accosted the maid, told her who he was, and how her charms had brought him, at one glance, to her feet. But, to his great surprise, he found that neither the magic title of Duke, nor of Duchess, even, wrought favourably with the girl. On the contrary, her dark eyes showed only fear and resentment, until, taking advantage of the protection afforded by passers-by, she turned swiftly and fled from him, homeward.

"Fly away, shy dove," hissed the young lord between his teeth. "None the less there shall be good bird-nesting to-morrow."

A week later, Duke Amalon sat at the board. He was sick at heart, his proud face aflame with wine and anger. Messengers were announced, and there entered to him the five servants he had left behind at Châlon.

"You have been longer than long enough," he growled at them, "Ere now I would have caught her six times over."

"She did not quit the house until this morning, Prince, and 'tis a day's journey twixt there and here."

"'Tis well enough, for this time," said he, relenting somewhat. "Bring in the shy dove." And he threw them a purse of gold. As they withdrew, Amalon retired into a far corner of the apartment. The valets led into the room Bertille, pale as the morn, and trembling, her hand upon her breast.

"Where am I?" she cried. "Mother of God, whither hast thou let them bring me?" And her beautiful, terrified eyes searched the room. They lighted upon the dark face of the Duke.

"Ah!" she cried, and uttering a piercing scream, fell upon her knees.

"Well, shy bird; are you still so little fain to become the lady of fair Champagne?" And he drew near to her. The girl raised her eyes. "Do not come near to me," she whispered, and turned away her head.

"Come, come, listen to reason, little one. A duchy for your beaux yeux; sooth! tis not too much; yet, for all that, be not too exacting." He laid his fingers under the chin of the kneeling girl. Shuddering, Bertille sprang to her feet; his touch had aroused anger, and, with anger, courage. She turned from him, the red lips blanching, so firmly were they set.

[Pg 140]

"Nay, do not fly my sight, wild dove."

"The dove flies the serpent's gaze," she replied. Amalon made a step nearer. She heard the foot-fall, and could not restrain a little cry, that was half appeal, half prayer. As she prayed, her eye caught the glint of something shining upon the wall opposite. That cry irritated the lord. His sensual face grew darker.

"Cry on," he scoffed; "Walls hear naught; and my men without hear only my voice." With a sob, she flung herself on her knees before him.

"Pity! lord duke, pity! for my parents' sake. Soil not your honour, nor mine; yield a frail girl to her mother again. Already she has wept long for me." Then, as she humbled her beauty before him, and her long, black hair, dishevelled, swept his very feet, strong passion burnt out all pity from Amalon's heart. He bent low, and took her in his arms. With a wild cry, the girl broke from his grasp, and rushed to the thing shining on the wall. Cursing, the duke followed her. As he reached her, she turned.

"Serpent, feel how the dove can peck!" Torchlight flashed bright upon the uplifted blade. There came the sound of a blow, an awful cry, and Duke Amalon, his skull cloven, lay prostrate at the feet of the maid.

With a crash, the doors flew open; five poniards were raised over Bertille's head. The Duke saw them, before darkness swam into his dying eyes.

"Slay her not," he whispered, "Slay her not, but let her go. This is God's hand; so should virtue strike." He shuddered in every limb; then lay still in death.

The great council at St. Marcel was nearing its end. Already King Gontran had withdrawn to his private apartments, and the fathers were deeply occupied with the last session of the conference. The voice of the speaker was filling the vast nave, and all were rapt in the closest attention, when suddenly the door of the church was seen to open swiftly, and a figure, heedless of the guardian's stern warning, entered the church, and ran down the nave towards the choir. At the barrier behind which the conference was assembled, the new-comer knelt; and the astonished prelates saw before them a young girl, weary and travel-stained, whose disordered dress and dishevelled hair could not conceal her natural beauty.

[Pg 141]

Crossing her hands upon her breast, she looked upwards.

"Mother of Christ! it was to keep me still worthy of thee!"

The priest, who had been addressing the conference, stood silent. Every eye was fastened upon the maid. The ecclesiastics gathered round her, putting questions.

"My fathers, I have but one boon to ask of you. Deign to take me to the king. It is with him that I would speak." So the fathers brought her to the king's presence, within the monastery. The Prince received her kindly; but Bertille hesitated, her beautiful eyes downcast.

"Speak," said Gontran, smiling; "A maid as fair as you are has little to fear."

"Prince," replied the young girl, "I know not how it may have pleased God to fashion me; but if it be, indeed, beauty that He has given me—then is beauty a fatal gift?"

"How so?" said the King, with rising interest. The girl stood silent. She reddened, and bent her head still lower. Her breast heaved, and the tears flowed down.

"Prince," she said in broken tones, "I am ... guilty ... and I come to yield myself into your hands." All eyes looked at her in astonishment.

"Guilty, my child, you!" said Gontran, not less amazed than the others. "That is not easily believed."

"Yet it is true, Prince; and the proof is, that for three days I have seen neither father nor mother."

"And where are your parents?"

"At Châlon."

"And why have you not seen them for so long?"

"I dared not return to them. Look, Prince, look!" She loosened a fold of her dress; and there, plain for all to see, was a large, red, stain.

"Blood!" cried Gontran.

"Blood, my King!" Then the girl told all her tale. As they heard it, indignation, writ at first upon every face, gave way to nods and smiles, and murmurs of applause scarce restrained, when the end came.

"No criminal here, holy fathers, methinks; but rather a heroine!" said Gontran. Then, turning to the maid, he added:

[Pg 142]

"You hold yourself guilty; but, meseems you have been guided rather by the Hand of God. Was the widow of Bethulie guilty when she delivered her people? Yet, in my thought, your maiden modesty and fear rank you above even that noble Judith. Be comforted then; to-morrow you shall see your parents again. Now, go to rest; and God have you in His care this night." So they made ready a chamber for Bertille; and there she slept, and that right soundly.

On the next day, Gontran sent secretly to Châlon certain servants, with commands to bring the parents of Bertille to his presence. The good people were much terrified, and refused, at first, to follow the king's men, saying that the loss of their daughter had stricken them so deep in sorrow, that they would go no whither for no man—even though he be their own beloved king, Gontran. But at length they let themselves be persuaded, and went—not without fearful questioning as to

what their lord the king might want with such simple folk as they.

So they came before the king at the monastery of St. Marcel, and Gontran told them that he wotted well their story, and asked them whether they were indeed fain to see their child again.

"Ah! Prince," moaned the naïve old Vulfrand, "If the dear God had but one angel in all heaven—and he lost her—dost think he would not be fain for her face again?" And Ludwige wailed an echo to that plaint. Then the king spoke much with them both, and knew that, in sooth, these two loved their daughter well.

Meanwhile, one after one, the priests and bishops were filling the chamber; but Vulfrand and Ludwige, with eyes only for the king, knew nought of this, until Gontran made a movement causing them to look round. Then, when they saw themselves in the midst of this royal assembly, they feared greatly, and Ludwige clung to her husband. But, with a smile and a gracious nod, the king reassured them, and bade them be seated upon two stools, not far from his own person. So they sat amazed, and knew not yet whether good was to befall them, or evil.

Gontran made a sign, and a great silence fell upon all. Then there entered a young page, bearing, upon a cushion of azure velvet, three small, golden crowns, the which he laid at the king's feet. Then that sainted and holy bishop, Gregory of Tours, rose from his chair in the great hall, and approached the throne. The page lifted, and put into his hands, the cushion and the three crowns. Holding them forth, Gregory turned to that august assembly.

[Pg 143]

"These three crowns," said he, "are each the reward of a merit—merits widely differing, yet such as Heaven is pleased to unite, sometimes, in a single being. Yestereve were you and I permitted to see and to hear her whom God has so privileged; and you shall now judge whether she is worthy of these rewards, or rather, whether these rewards are worthy of her."

"The first of these crowns is the crown of beauty—you have seen her, lords. The second is the crown of virtue—and how great hers is, you know well. The third is the crown of courage—you have heard her, and you have acclaimed her, even as have I." A murmur of assent rolled through the assembly.

Meanwhile the young maid had been brought into the hall. She was dressed in fair, white raiment, and veiled, even to her feet. She drew near to the throne; and her tread was light as the foot-fall of an angel. Ludwige and Vulfrand could not take their eyes from off her. Their hearts beat within them as never before; yet they scarce knew why; though, indeed, they sat beside a king.

"Come hither, noble child," said Gregory of Tours. And he took the golden crowns in his hands, and laid upon the royal dais the azure cushion, and bade the maid kneel thereon. Then he gave the three golden crowns in to the hands of the king, and yielding place to him, stood respectfully by his side. The king spoke.

"Noble child, Heaven has granted you beauty, and beauty deserves a crown. Here is the crown of beauty." And he laid upon her brow the first golden circlet. Then he spoke again.

"Noble child, thine is the purest virtue; virtue deserves a crown. Here is the crown of virtue." And he placed upon her head the second golden circlet. A third time the king spoke.

"Noble child, you have given proof of strong courage; and courage deserves a crown. Here is the crown of courage." And he laid upon her head the third golden round. Vulfrand and Ludwige gazed breathlessly.

"Now, brave maiden," added the king, "raise your veil." The girl obeyed.

"My daughter!... Bertille!" ... "My Mother!" The two women wept in each other's arms. Vulfrand drew near to the king.

[Pg 144]

"There was that within, Sire, told me you knew somewhat of my daughter." Gontran smiled.

"Good people," said he to the happy parents, "Bertille will go back with you to Châlon, and there, if I know aught of maids' minds, she will tell you all. Be happy, then; for God has given you a daughter after His Own Heart." Then, turning to the assembly, he spoke thus:

"Lords, since the fatal passage of the Huns across our land, our walls have lain in ruin. We must needs raise them again. In so doing, let us preserve the memory of Bertille's triumph. Three bands of gilded stone shall be built within the wall, to serve it for a girdle; and to remind all descendants to whom our fair city may pass, of the honour due to beauty, to courage, and to virtue."

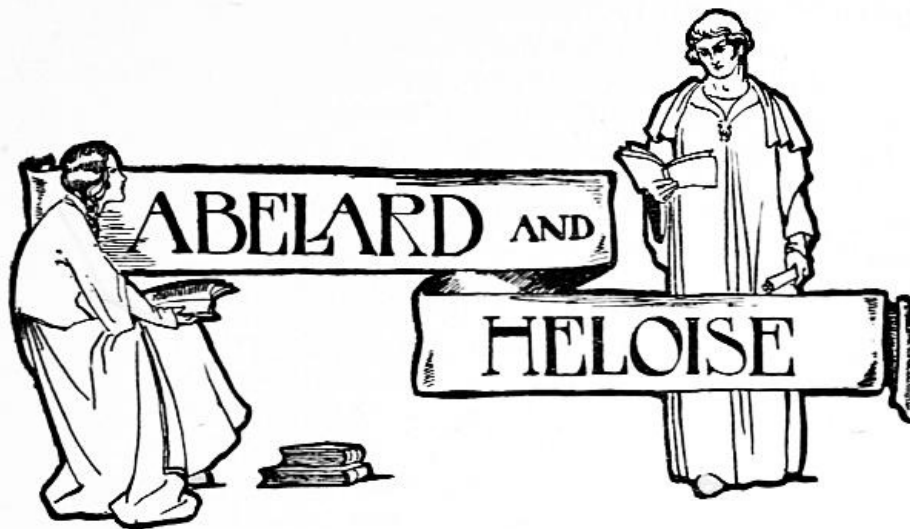
Loud rang the applause from all the townspeople, when, that very evening, Bertille and her parents returned to their home. The family of dead Amalon were forbidden by Gontran, on pain of extinction, to molest further either parents or daughter, and soon, around the new walls of the royal city of Châlon, ran a triple girdle of gold—the three crowns we see to-day upon the arms of the town.



Footnotes:

[114] De Barante. Tome I.

[115] François Fertault's "Bertille" Feuilleton de Paris, 1848.



CHAPTER X

The first thing we did on arriving at Châlon was to mount our bicycles and cross the river to the Church of St. Marcel, all that now remains of the ancient abbey. The feature of the journey was the number of rough Bressane carts we met, filled with potatoes, and drawn, very deliberately, by yoked, dreamy, creamy oxen, whose mild eyes were veiled by fringes of string, tied across the forehead, to keep off the flies.

The Abbey church is a well-proportioned and satisfactory early Burgundian building, with a high narthex, a western tower, and a late Renaissance west front. It is designed rather in the Cistercian manner, with a square apse and two apsidal chapels, square and semi-circular respectively. The whole forms a fine example of early purity of style. Excepting the simple foliage of the capitals and the bosses of the high vault, one looks in vain for any carving, and there is very little moulding that catches the eye. The orders of the arches are left square-edged, and the ridges of the aisle vaulting scarcely show. The piers of the nave, too, are square, with circular shafts to carry the vault.

Over the High Altar are two châsses with the relics of St. Agricola and St. Marcel. A notice in the church informs one that, in the year 879, John VIII. canonized in this church the holy bishops of Châlon; also that, on Holy Saturday, April 13th, 1805, Pope Pius VII. came to visit the relics of Saint Marcel and Saint Agricola, and blessed the High Altar.

[Pg 146]

But the most interesting memory associated with the Abbey is that of the first of the modernists, Abélard, whose name is linked for ever with that of his lover, Héloïse. Only the peaceful, closing years of Abélard's stormy life connect him with Burgundy; but his stay at Cluny, under the care of Pierre le Vénérable, and his last days and burial at St. Marcel, justify me, I hope, in telling again here the life stories of two whose names, with those of Aucassin and Nicolette, Petrarch and Laura, Dante and Beatrice, Paolo and Francesca, are blazoned, for all time, upon the scrolls of love.

It was in the year 1105, or 1106, that a young Breton, about sixteen years of age, of good family, came to Paris to study at the schools of the Quartier Latin, on the Montagne St. Gèneviève, now occupied by the buildings of the Sorbonne. His father, the Seigneur de Pallet, near Nantes, had destined his son for the profession of arms; but a natural bent towards books and learning, and the consequent ambition to become formidable in "logic," induced the lad to abandon prospects of fortune and military glory, to play a prominent and extraordinarily romantic part in the religious and philosophical movements of the greatest century of the middle ages.

The schools of philosophy of Paris were already the most famous in the world, when Abélard put himself, as he expresses it in a letter to Philintus, "under the direction of one Champeaux, a professor who had acquired the character of the most skilful philosopher of his age, but by negative excellencies only, as being the least ignorant." The boy was well received at first, but his abilities in debate and dialectics soon aroused the natural jealousy of a master, who perceived himself to be no match for his pupil. Abélard withdrew to Melun for safety, and for the better establishment of his fast-developing theories concerning the necessary compatibility of dogma and reason, summed up in the phrase "Nul ne peut croire sans avoir compris," an axiom fraught with danger in the middle ages, and in those which succeeded them.

After some years of retirement, the young dialectician attended the schools of Anselm, Bishop of Laon, where, finding himself thoroughly dissatisfied with the teaching of one of whom he could only say, "Stet magni nominis umbra," he decided to take for his guides the primitive fathers, and to launch boldly, for himself, into the study of the Holy Scriptures.

[Pg 147]

When he deemed the time ripe, he returned to Paris, where his success drew many to him; so many that, before long, the fame of the young Breton, now Maitre Pierre, author of the "Gloze

d'Ezéchiel," the great teacher of the new doctrine of Conceptualism, was finding an echo in all Paris. He became the centre of a school of young enthusiasts, who hung upon his words. These early years of success in Paris were, intellectually, the most fruitful of his life, but they had a disastrous effect upon a character, the strength of which was never equal to that of his mind. His pride and vanity, naturally great, became consuming. Freedom of thought was not sufficient for him; so great a liberationist must live a free life; the scholars must share him with the courtesans.

Meanwhile, in a little house in the western end of the Isle de la Cité, at the foot of Notre Dame, that already was beginning to lift its mighty bulk above the palace of the king, and the surrounding churches and cloisters, were living Canon Fulbert and his young niece, fifteen years old, who had just completed her education at the convent of Argenteuil. Héloïse was a girl of unusual ability. That her talents are no mere legend, is abundantly proved by her letters, that rank her among the great women of literature. And she had yet more dangerous gifts—character, charm, beauty. This white lily, blossoming among the cloisters, was the one flower that could draw from Abélard the soul no courtesan had been able to reach. She was fair, sweet, impressionable; looking out upon a lovely world, and waiting only for love to lighten it. He was famous, young, tall, handsome, and well-dressed, beyond the wont of scholars.^[116] No more was needed. Their destiny was upon them. They met; and looked long into each other's eyes.

Within a short time, Abélard was installed in the Canon's house; commissioned to instruct Héloïse in philosophy. "It is my wish that she should obey you in everything," said the guileless uncle, in confiding his niece to her tutor. "Employ every means, even manual chastisement, if you judge it necessary, to stimulate her zeal and constrain her to further submission."^[117]

Fulbert was to discover, only too soon, how little need there was for such an injunction.

[Pg 148]

So the professor of thirty-eight and the maiden of seventeen sat side by side over their book of philosophy, until, at length, their eyes rose from the page to one another, "And that day they read no farther."^[118] Day by day their mutual sympathy increased, though the, as yet, innocent liaison still masqueraded in the guise of a platonic friendship, while, all the time, says Abélard, "There came more words of love than philosophy into our conversations, and more kisses than explanations."

Meanwhile, Abélard the lover was at war with Abélard the philosopher. Gradually, to their astonishment and dismay, it dawned upon his students in the Sainte Montagne, that the metaphysical speculations of their Master had lost something of the accustomed brilliance; that the well of his eloquence was drying up. Then came a greater shock. Maitre Pierre, their own Maitre Pierre, was writing love songs, like any ballad-monger; and all Paris was singing them.

They were very beautiful love songs, sincere love songs; for Abélard and Héloïse were in love. Few knew it, least of all Fulbert, who, dreaming the days away in his stall in the choir of Notre Dame, appears to have had no suspicions concerning the bona-fides of the philosopher in his house. But, one day, coming home unexpectedly, he surprised the lovers in a close embrace. His fury was intense. All his love for Abélard changing to hate, he drove him from the house. He might well have done more than that, had he known all; had he known that Héloïse was to become a mother.

Abélard, in this crisis, appears to have acted with a certain degree of courage. He entrusted his mistress to the care of his sister, Denise, at the Bourg du Pallet, in Brittany, where she went in a nun's dress, to avert suspicion as to her real condition. He endeavoured, too, to obtain the forgiveness of her father; and even promised to marry his daughter, on condition that the alliance was kept secret; but Héloïse, with characteristic greatness of mind, refused to compromise his career by so tightening his bonds. "The title of mistress," she said, speaking with the extraordinary abandonment of self that she always displayed toward her lover, "is infinitely sweeter to me than that of wife." She allowed herself to be persuaded, however, and, after the birth of her child, a son, she returned to Paris, where the secret marriage was celebrated, and Abélard returned to his scholastic duties.

But the presence of Héloïse irked him; probably he felt it impossible to play the double part of husband and philosopher, while his wife was within reach; and he succeeded in persuading her, docile as ever, to return to the cloisters of Argenteuil. So far, he had suffered the least of the three involved in this tragedy; but Nemesis was close at hand. Fulbert, outwardly satisfied, was contemplating a dire revenge.

[Pg 149]

All Paris was startled, one morning, by the rumour of an extraordinary crime. A ruffian, armed with a razor, had broken into Maitre Pierre's house, at night, and had shamefully mutilated the teacher. It was true. Abélard was unsexed; and Fulbert, fully avenged, had fled from Paris. Loud was the lamentation in the Sainte Montagne.

The dominant feeling aroused by such a humiliation, in the mind of a man so proud as Abélard, was, naturally, that of shame; penitence took but a second place. He felt that he could face the world no longer; yet jealousy told him that he could not take the cowl, while another took Héloïse, and knew delights, spiritual and carnal, that had once been his. Héloïse, living only in and for her earthly husband, could refuse him nothing at such a crisis. She took the veil at Argenteuil, and became, for her lover's sake, the spouse of Christ. Abélard donned the robe of the Benedictines at the great abbey of St. Denis, in 1119.

If he had expected to regain peace and serenity in such a house, he must have been grievously disappointed. The abbey of St. Denis had not escaped the degeneracy that had already overtaken

many of the monastic institutions of the day. It had become a centre of private and political intrigue, a pleasure resort for the fashionable life of Paris; laughter and the rustle of ladies' robes were heard in the long alleys of the cloister.^[119] Against these abuses the new-comer was not slow to raise his eloquent voice. It was not heeded, or was received only with jeers. Abélard withdrew, by permission, to the monastery of Deuil, close by, where he opened a school, and gave himself up again to teaching, and to propagating the advanced theology that had already scandalized the more orthodox of Paris. His treatise on "The Divine Trinity and Unity," brought him before the Council of Soissons. The persecution of the freethinker had begun; and though the daring innovator endeavoured strenuously to justify his writings, the fathers condemned him to throw, with his own hands, his book into the lighted brazier prepared in the midst of the assembly. He was then handed over, for correction, to the care of the abbot of St. Médard de Soissons.

This sentence was soon annulled, and Abélard found himself once more at St. Denis. But not for long. Sleeping enmities were aroused; and, one night, Abélard, with the connivance of certain monks, fled secretly from the abbey, and took refuge near Nogent, in a remote part of Champagne, where he hoped "to avoid fame" and live secure against the malice of his enemies. But to avoid fame was not in the reformer's destiny. The hermit was soon surrounded by his followers, who converted a natural grotto into a chapel, and built themselves rustic huts of boughs and thatch, in this Paraclet,^[120] the place of their master's consolation.

Again he re-opened his school, again many listened to his defence of the truth, again he aroused the enmity of the orthodox church, who, this time, had as their champion the greatest name in all Christendom, the more than Pope, St. Bernard. Abélard's four happy years of quiet service were at an end. He fled to the lonely abbey of St. Gildas, in Brittany, his native province, "a barbarous country, the language of which I do not understand," where his walks were along the inaccessible shore of a sea that was always stormy, where dissolute monks lived only to hunt, "and the doors and walls were without ornament, save the heads of wild boars and the feet of hinds and the hides of frightful animals."^[121]

During all these years, though neither was forgotten by the other, no communication had passed between Abélard the monk and Héloïse the nun. Now, for a brief period, the currents of their lives were to mingle again. In the year 1128, the monastery of Argenteuil passed to the abbey of St. Denis, then ruled by Suger, who was no friend to Abélard. The nuns were dispersed, and Héloïse and her sisters found themselves without shelter. Here was the old lover's opportunity. Paraclet, bereft of its lord, had no tenants; Héloïse had no home. An impulse swiftly acted upon, some sudden instinct of pity, of desire, of remorse for the sufferings of which he was the responsible cause, led Abélard to obtain permission to offer her the shelter of his old retreat. She accepted this offer, and established there a nunnery, of which she herself was appointed to be the first abbess. Héloïse and her sisters were to follow the rigorous rule of St. Benedict, modified by Abélard—after special study—as a concession to the frail physique of women.



MAISON COLOMBIER BEAUNE

Facing page 150

The old lovers, both taught in the stern school of suffering, seem to have accepted, with full self-control, the new and spiritual relationship upon which they were about to enter. In the priest's case, that is more easily understood. For him, though still he says, "I sigh, I weep, I grieve, I speak the dear name of Héloïse, I delight to hear the sound," the days of physical desire were past for ever.

[Pg 151]

But what an effort must it have cost the woman, not yet in her thirtieth year, and with her beauty still in bloom, to accept her position, to respect his; to honour as her spiritual brother only, him who was her lover and her husband. Yet she did it—though with awful searchings of heart, with longings, and inward rebellion against fate, that her letters have, in measure, revealed. Happily for her, the torturing joy of their last meetings was not for long. Already rumours and scandal were busy with their names. Abélard came one day to Paraclet; then he came no more. The lovers were not to meet again in this world. Only letters would pass between them—letters that reveal in a wonderful light the passive strength of her character, the utter surrender of herself, body, soul, and spirit, to the man who had won her love. As literature, they reveal the fact that Héloïse, had she given her life to such work, could have excelled all the men of her time^[122] in the domain of letters. As human documents, their correspondence remains

"A dream, an idyll, call it what you will,
Of man still man, and woman—woman still."

The man remained the man, in that, true to his new relationship to her, with the passing of the years he became less the lover and more the priest; he conquered, or he cooled. The woman, true to her type, renounced; but she, though she, too, attained a measure of spiritual liberty, never repented, and I think that she never really changed.

The last episodes in the stormy life of Abélard are soon told. On his final return from Paraclet, he found the monks risen in active revolt against him. Attempts were made, even, to poison him in the holy cup; and he hardly escaped the assassin's knife. In this extremity his thoughts turned again to the scene of those early successes in the Montagne St. Gèneviève, and Paris saw and heard him for the last time. Years that had bowed his head, had not changed the bent of his mind. The innovator was the innovator still. To Bernard, busily engaged in reforming his order in the lonely Vallée d'Absinthe, came the news that Abélard, whom he thought a spent force, had broken out once more. The fanatic was furious. "On fermera cette bouche avec des bâtons," he said, and girded up his loins "to fight the dragon." From his renewed triumphs among the

[Pg 152]

scholars of the Latin quarter, Abélard was summoned to the last great public scene of his life, the Council of Sens.

It was on January 11th, 1140. The King of France, young Louis VII., presided over the assembly. Abélard had hoped to be heard in his own defence; but judgment had already been decided upon. The offensive volume had been read, and condemned, overnight, by the prelates, sleeping over their cups. Upon the occurrence of an objectionable passage, the reader had interrogated the somewhat somnolent judges. "*Damnates?*" to which one drowsy voice had answered, "Damnamus"; while the remainder, aroused by the noise, responded, in half articulate, but appropriate chorus, "Namus."^[123] Abélard, the ascetic, was condemned by the satellites of Bacchus.

The old man, broken, yet still resolute, determined to appeal to the Pope. He set out on the long journey for Rome; but got no further than Cluny, where Pierre le Vénérable received him, with all the gentle and tolerant affection that reveal him as one of the most lovable characters of the century. He obtained the Pope's permission to let Abélard remain with him; he even succeeded in reconciling him with the hitherto implacable St. Bernard. The old orator passed the last two years of his life in the quietude of Cluny, growing ever weaker in body, ever calmer in soul. At last Pierre le Vénérable had him removed to the Abbey of St. Marcel de Châlon, hoping that the change might restore his health; but the end had come. On April 11th, 1142, the Reformer died.^[124]

Pierre, writing to Héloïse of her husband, says: "It is not easy to tell in a few lines, O my sister, the saintliness, the humility, the abnegation that he showed us, to which the whole monastery can bear witness.... I gave him high rank among our brothers, but he would be as the least of all by the simplicity of his clothing. It was the same with his food and all that touched upon the delights of the senses ... he refused everything but what was indispensable to life. He read continually, he prayed often, he kept perpetual silence."

[Pg 153]

Héloïse received her lover's body, and buried it in her own convent of Paraclet. She survived Abélard twenty years, ruling her convent so well that it became one of the most famous religious houses in France, in high repute with all the great ecclesiastics of the day. Legend, always busy with such lives and loves as theirs, tells us, in an ancient chronicle of Tours, that when they laid the body of the Abbess in the tomb of her Abélard, who had rested there already twenty years, the faithful husband raised his arms, stretched them forth, and closely embraced his Héloïse.^[125]

We turn now to a later phase of Burgundian life—the tournaments that are remembered in connection with such towns as Chalon-Sur-Saône, and Dijon.

Olivier de la Marche, that loyal servant of the House of Valois, for whom he suffered so many mischances, has given us, in his memoirs, a good account of the great tournament of La Dame des Pleurs, which took place at Châlon, in a field on the far side of the river, in 1449.

Two famous knights of the time, the Sire of Lalain, who had sworn to appear thirty times in the lists before he attained his thirtieth year, and the Seigneur Pierre de Vasco, had caused a great pavilion to be set up, and lists to be made ready, where, for a whole year, they engaged themselves to fight against all coming in the name of La Dame des Pleurs. "Now this pavilion was palissaded and barred right honourably, and none might approach it without leave of Charolois the herald, a right honourable herald, officer-at-arms of the Count Charles of Charolois; and he wore his coat-of-arms, and bore a white baton in his hand, and kept the images ordered for the challenger's enterprise: and first at the head of that pavilion, as high as might be, was set, on a picture, a representation of the glorious Virgin Mary, holding the Redeemer of the World, her Lord and her Son; and below, on the right side of the picture was fashioned a lady right honestly and richly clad, and her master in simple attire; and she was in guise of weeping so sore, that the tears were falling even on to the left side, where was shown a fountain, and on it a unicorn seated, seeming to embrace the three targets, arranged for the three manners of arms the challenger might furnish for his enterprise; of which the first was white, for the arms of the axe, the second violet for the arms of the sword, and the third (which was below in the manner of a triquet) was black for the arms of the lance, and the said targets were all sown with blue tears; and for these causes was the lady named the Lady of Tears, and the fountain, the Fountain of Tears. Now have I shown the enterprise and the ordering of this noble meeting (*pas*): which things were strange and new in the country, and much admired and seen of many and divers personages.

[Pg 154]

"That same day came to the palace a herald, named Toulongeon, who summoned the herald guard of the pavilion and said to him: 'Noble herald, I ask that you open to me, that I may go and touch one of the targets that are in your guard, for, and in the name of a noble squire named Pierre de Chandios.' The herald received him right joyously, and told him that he was very welcome; and opened to him; and the said Toulongeon, like an officer well learned, kneeled before the Virgin Mary, saluted honourably the Lady of Tears, and then touched the white target, and said, 'I touch the white target for and in the name of Pierre de Chandios esquire: and affirm in word of truth, saying that on the day which shall be appointed him, he will furnish in his person the conditioned and ordered arms for the said target, according to the contents of the chapters of the noble challenger, if God keep him from encumbrance and loyal cares.' And so he left, and the palissades were shut again, and the pavilion remained spread and guarded until mid-

day, when Charolois told of the enterprise and made his report to the good knight messire Jacques de Lalain of his day's adventure, and how Pierre de Chandios had caused the white target to be touched: at which he rejoiced greatly, and welcomed Toulongeon the herald of these good news, gave gift, and named him an early day for the fight, which was the following Saturday.

"On that day (which was the thirteenth day of September) the lists were made ready, and the house of the judge and the pavilions were spread for the champions; and that of messire Jacques was of white satin, sown with blue tears; and that of Chandios of rose red silk emblazoned with his arms about the roof: and came the judge to his place, accompanied by Guillaume, lord of Sarcy, then bailiff of Châlon, by master Pierre, lord of Goux, a great man in the grand council of the duke, and who was afterwards chancellor; and of several other councillors and noblemen well versed in the noble profession of arms. These having taken their places, the said messire Jacques quitted the church of Les Carmes, situate at the gate of the town and of the faubourg of the gate of St. Jehan-du-Maiseau; and after having heard three masses very devoutly, entered into a covered boat, accompanied by messire Pierre de Vasco and by several other noblemen of his house (for he kept very great state), and he found also, of many in the country two noblemen, brothers german; of whom the elder was messire Claude de Toulongeon, lord of La Bastie, and the other Tristan de Toulongeon, lord of Soucy ... and because the said messire Jacques was a stranger in the country, they accompanied him: nor evermore during this contest did they leave him.

[Pg 155]

"Thus the knight crossed the river of Saône, and came to land at the island on which he was to fight: and there jumped out of his boat, clothed in a long robe of cloth of gold, furred with sable. He held his banner in his hand, figured with his devotions; with which he signed himself at the same time, and right well it became him. So came he into the lists, and presented himself before the judge,^[126] and spake with his own mouth these words: "Noble king-of-arms of the Golden Fleece, commissioned by my most redoubted and sovereign lord the duke of Burgundy and count of Hainault, to be my judge in this trial, I present myself before you to keep and defend this enterprise and contest and on my part to furnish and accomplish the arms chosen and required by Pierre de Chandios according to the contents of the chapters on that behalf." The judge, habited in the coat-of-arms of the Duke of Burgundy, the white baton in his hand, received and welcomed him right honourably, and the challenger withdrew into his pavilion.

"Not long had he been there, when there appeared upon the great bridge of Châlon the said Pierre de Chandios, who was coming upon his horse, armed with all arms, the bacinet upon his head and the coat-of-arms upon his back; and, in truth, he was one of the greatest and most powerful squires in all Burgundy, or in Nivernais, and might, in age, be thirty-one years or thereabouts. He was accompanied by the lords of Mirebeau, of Charny and of Seyl, and by so many lords and nobles of Burgundy that I should estimate the company at more than four hundred noblemen. The said de Chandios entered the lists upon a horse emblazoned with his arms, and dismounted; and the lord of Charny led him on his right before the judge, and made speech, and said: 'Noble King of Arms of the Golden Fleece, commissioned by my most redoubted and sovereign lord the duke and count of Burgundy, judge in this cause, here is Pierre de Chandios, my nephew, who presents himself before you, in order that, God aiding him, he may furnish and accomplish the arms by him undertaken and required, in encounter with the challenger of this noble contest, according to the condition of the chapters, and of the white target which he has caused to be touched.'

[Pg 156]

"The King of Arms welcomed him and received him as was his due, and withdrew into his pavilion: and this done, everyone withdrew from the lists, and the accustomed cries were begun; and meanwhile a cousin german of mine, named Anthony de la Marche, lord of Sandon, appointed marshall of the lists, drew near to the said Chandios by the judge's command, and bid him declare the number of strokes of the axe he required, and demanded to make and furnish these arms: and the said Chandios declared seventeen strokes of the axe. So the said marshall came to the judge to acquaint him of the number of strokes, and then he came to the said Jacques de Lalain, to acquaint him of his adversary's intention, and also to ask of him the axes which he must deliver to furnish and do battle withal. So were two axes given and delivered to him, which were long and heavy; and the mallets and heads of the said axes were fashioned like falcons' beaks, with large and heavy spikes above and beneath: and were bladed with a screw-plate of flat iron, with three nail-heads short and thick, diamond fashion, and somewhat after the manner of lance blades for jousting with arms of war, without roquet; and the said axes were taken to the said de Chandios to chose from: and a moment after Pierre de Chandios sallied forth from his pavilion, clothed in his coat-of-arms, his bacinet on his head and his visor lowered, crossing himself with his bannerolle: and then did his uncle, the lord of Charny, deliver him his axe and accompanied him far into the lists. On the other side came forth messire Jacques de Lalain: and had his harness covered, in place of a coat-of-arms, with an over-mantle with sleeves of white satin sown with blue tears, of the same colour as the target that his adversary had touched. He wore a little round helmet, and had his visor covered, and protected with a little collar-piece of steel-mail (maille d'acier): and after the recommendation of his bannerolle, Messire Pierre Vasco handed him his axe.

[Pg 157]

"So paced the champions each towards the other with great assurance, and met before the judge, and, at first each was on his guard against the other. But before long they ran together and dealt great and heavy blows, knightly given and borne on one side and the other; and I remember that the said de Lalain (who knew that the axes he had given and delivered had no spike nor point with which he could bend nor injure his adversary) stepping aside some distance turned his axe,

making the head the tail, and the tail the head: and came forward again with a great effort and reached the said Chandios, with the spike of his axe on the vizor of the bacinet, and gave him so great a blow that he broke the point on the vizor; but the said Chandios (who was strong and great, powerful and valiant) did not give way; but began again the battle between them more fiercely and proudly than before, so that they beset one another so fiercely that in a short time the seventeen strokes required by the said de Chandios were accomplished.

"Then Toison d'Or threw down the baton, and the combattants were taken and separated by the men-at-arms appointed as guard and attendants, and to act as is the wont in such a case; and they, taken before the judge, touched together, and returned each whence he had come, and those arms were accomplished (achevées) on a Saturday, the 18th day of September, the year 49."^[127]

So ended the first combat, which was followed by many others at which several knights and squires of Burgundy, Nivernais, Savoy and Switzerland presented themselves. Among the audience were the duke and duchess of Orleans and a brilliant company from the court of Italy. At the close of the tournament a great banquet was given to all the nobles who had taken part, at which the guests were entertained with many "entremets," as the representations given during the repast were called.

The giver of the feast had desired that all combattants should be painted in their armour, and his own portrait was exhibited with a couplet at the foot, expressing thanks to all noble companions who had accepted him as adversary, and offering to serve them on all occasions, in person or property, as their brother in arms. He presented to Toison d'Or a fair robe of sable, and after having courteously saluted the Lady of Tears, and kissed the feet of the Holy Virgin, he retired; and the picture, the image and the unicorn were carried, in solemn procession, to the church of Châlon.^[128]

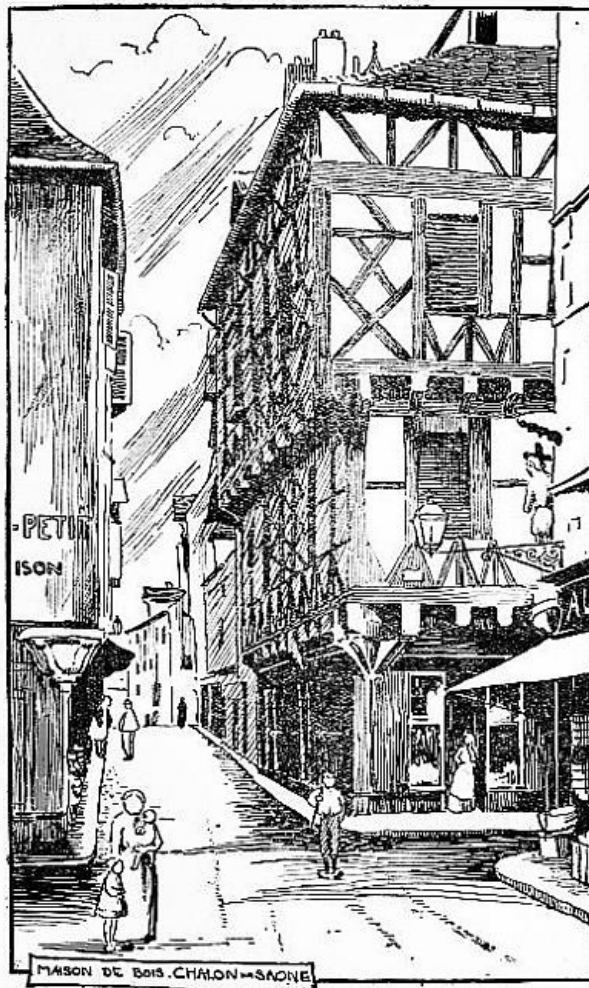
[Pg 158]

We shall hear more of these Burgundian Tournaments when we come to speak of the royal court at Dijon, and the festivities of the Tree of Charlemagne. Here I conclude the subject, for the present, merely reminding my readers that these heavily armoured and comparatively innocuous fights were but the slow development of sterner combats, such as that which occurred in 1273, when Edward I. of England passed through Burgundy, on his way to meet Philip III. returning from Italy. The Burgundians, wishing fittingly to celebrate the occasion, organized a tourney at Chalon-Sur-Saône. "There was a battle," says Mathew of Westminster, "but the English were victors and slew several who were despoiling the conquered; but as these last were men of small condition, the matter was not followed up."^[129]

Modern Chalon-Sur-Saône has not very much that is attractive. The most interesting streets are those around the old cathedral of St. Vincent, before which, on Sunday morning, there is a busy market scene. The church is a fairly good specimen of Burgundian Gothic of the 12th to 14th centuries; but it appears to have been so much restored that a dogmatic opinion concerning its age would be unusually dangerous. The choir appears to be of the 13th century, and the arches, with unribbed vaults, of the late 12th. Strong Roman and Byzantine influence is everywhere apparent, and there are some rich late Gothic side chapels. The upper part of the design betrays the same fault as at St. Bénigne de Dijon. The triforium—weakly designed—and the parapet above it, are lifted up to the clerestory, leaving an unsightly space of bare wall above the arches of the nave. The shafts of the high vault are taken down, as usual, on to fluted pilasters, with highly ornamented capitals. The façade of the church is modern, and unsuccessful.

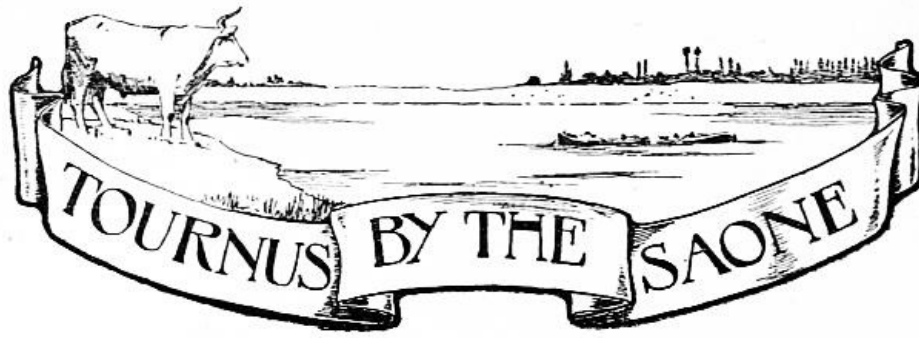
In the old quarter, I remember one particularly good timbered Gothic house, known as the Maison de Bois.

[Pg 159]



Footnotes:

- [116] And he knew it. "I enjoyed at that time so great a renown, and I so outshone all with the glamour of youth and beauty, that I needed to fear no refusal, whoever might be the woman to whom I chanced to address myself."
- [117] "La Passion d'Héloïse et d'Abélard," Bertheroy, p. 45.
- [118] "quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avanti," *Inferno*, Canto V., 138.
- [119] Bertheroy, p. 97.
- [120] Paraclet—The Consoler, the Holy Ghost.
- [121] Abélard's letter to Philintus. "Love Letters of Abélard and Héloïse," p. 19, Temple Classics.
- [122] Lord Lyttleton, "Life of Henry II.," quoted in "Abélard." Temple Classics.
- [123] We swim.
- [124] Bertheroy, p. 176.
- The tablet to the memory of Abélard, in the Church of St. Marcel is a conventionally worded Latin inscription, setting forth his virtues, the date of his death (1142) and the fact of his removal to Paraclet.
- [125] "Curiosities of Literature," Disraeli, quoted in "Abélard and Héloïse," Temple Classics. The tomb was removed later to Père la Chaise, the great cemetery of Paris.
- [126] Duke Philippe le Bon was in Flanders at the time; but he had sent Toison d'Or to officiate as judge in his place. Barante, Tome VII., p. 284.
- [127] Olivier de la Marche. *Mémoires*, Petitot's edition, cap. xxi., pp. 5-11.
- [128] De Barante, Tome VII., pp. 284-5.
- [129] Petit, Tome VI., p. 20.



CHAPTER XI

Tournus is an attractive old town, lying asleep on a hill beside the Saône. Through it ran, north and south, the old Roman road of Agrippa. Its chief monument, the church of the ancient abbey of St. Philibert, whether viewed from within or from without, is one of the most striking examples I know, of the barbaric majesty of early Burgundian art. The grim façade, with its two-storied narthex of three bays—the oldest Clunisian porch—and its machicolations and towers, recalls the fortified churches of Provence and Languedoc, built when the southern land still shook with fear at the thought of the northern "crusaders," or the sea-pirates of the south. Nor does the sight of the interior do other than confirm that impression.

Passing through the lower storey of the gloomy portal, that might well have served to imprison the bodies of men—just as, symbolically, it was a shadowy ante-chamber, a purgatory of souls not yet fitted for the full light of Paradise—we emerged into a church whose rugged strength had in it something awful and menacing, suggestive of a period even more barbaric than that eleventh century in which the nave and narthex were built.

This impression may possibly have a historical as well as an imaginative basis, owing to the fact that the church has been twice destroyed—first by the Huns, and later by fire—both disasters occurring so soon after construction, that the original design may have been adhered to closely. [130]

Several points of detail catch the eye immediately, especially one most unusual feature—that the axes of the barrelling are at right angles to the longitudinal axes of the church. One notices also the great height of the aisles, and the transfer of capitals from their usual position on the columns of the nave, to the vaulting shafts. The aisle columns are engaged in the wall. The apse has a fine ambulatory, and five square radiating chapels. This part of the church dates from the latter part of the eleventh century, and contrary to the evidence of the square chapels, which are somewhat Cistercian, was built under Clunisian influence. Roman example also is apparent. Over the transept is a fine central tower of the twelfth century, beneath which is a dome with Burgundian fluted pilasters. The general barbarity of the romanesque is lightened in the apse by carved shafts, of great delicacy and beauty, which have been selected by Viollet-le-Duc for illustrating the section on colonnettes in his "Dictionnaire Raisoné." [Pg 161]

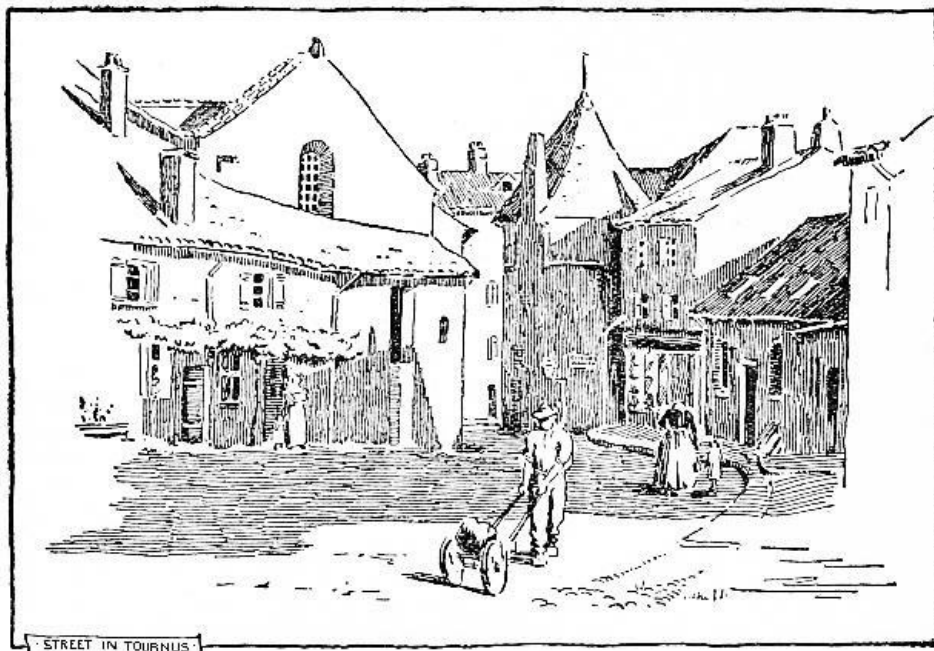
The lower part of the narthex, or rather its extraordinarily massive pillars, are generally attributed to the tenth century; the towers, both of which have some good carving, to the eleventh; and the upper part of the south-west tower to the twelfth. The upper chamber of the narthex, loopholed in several places, was probably intended for the defence of the abbey, [131] further security being afforded by the enceinte and gate, of which the round tower opposite formed part. A door opened from the upper narthex to the interior of the church, so that defenders might attend the office.

The crypt, which occupies the whole of the space beneath the choir, has many pillars, so cunningly disposed that they give to this part of the church an appearance of much greater size than is really the case. It contains several relics of the past, notably a wooden vierge of the twelfth century, the sarcophagus of St. Valérien, and a twelfth century fresco, the earliest of its kind in the department. The central chapel in the crypt is the best part of the building, architecturally; though the beautiful columns and capitals of the eleventh century, including two Roman ones, do not harmonize well with the primitive roof.

Very little now remains of the ancient monastery; but the fifteenth-century *salle abbatiale* is still to be seen in the Place des Arts, on the south-east side of the church. The buildings on the site of the cloisters are still known as the *carré*.

Saint Philibert, after whom the church is named, was not a Burgundian saint; but the monks who had the keeping of his relics, driven from their monastery of Noirmoutiers, established themselves at Tournus. That the cult of this Saint eventually gained great popularity in Burgundy, is evident from the number of churches—St. Philibert of Dijon, of Mersault, &c.—dedicated to him throughout the province. [Pg 162]

While I was in St. Philibert, my wife was sketching and writing in the sunny street outside. I have purloined the following from her notebook.



"When I think of Tournus, there comes to my mind the picture of a dear little street bathed in warm afternoon sunlight. On my left, as I sit, pencil in hand, is the west front of the Cathedral, and in front of me, a row of little, low, whitewashed cottages line the street. Above the last cottage there rises a heavy gable, thick, and white, and solid, pierced only by one little grated window. This gable is a fragment of the old abbey, and the arched grating is the window of the refectory used by the monks. There are small shops and more cottages on my right. The street slopes downhill, and ends in a little, round, white tower, with a round, brown, pointed hat. It is the sort of tower that one longs to get round the other side of, or, best of all, into. A great, warm, purple shadow crosses the street in front of me, and creeps a little way up the white cottages opposite. It leaves a piece of wall in brilliant, dazzling sun, and then begins again in a jagged, purple lace fringe, under the heavy frieze of vine-leaves over the doors.

[Pg 163]

"An old lady, in white cap and woolly shawl, walks out of a cottage, and into my sketch. The little boys round me, with best striped Sunday socks, and mouths full of sweets, suddenly become eager and interested, whereas before they were only curious.

"Hey! La gran'mère!" they whisper excitedly; and a discussion ensues as to whose grandmother it is. There must be heaps of grandmothers in Tournus, and I have only shown her back view disappearing round the little white tower. And, because of the human interest with which my picture is now endowed, the crowd of little boys becomes quite twice as large."

Wandering to-day through the quiet, sleepy, but by no means poverty-stricken streets of Tournus, one can easily forget the condition of awful misery to which this part of Burgundy was reduced at the close of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh centuries, when the old church of St. Philibert was in course of construction. The horrors of that period—when the faithful, eagerly awaiting the second coming of Christ, had, as they thought, ocular demonstration that the end of all mankind was at hand—have been best depicted for us by that strange figure, the priest, Raoul Glaber.

This, the most vivid historian of his time, was a wild, unbalanced, eccentric visionary, whom one of his uncles, himself a monk, had dedicated to the same vocation, in the hope that monkish discipline would cure his natural perversities. The hope was not fulfilled, for Raoul the Bald, always restless and dissatisfied, wandered, in turn, from monastery to monastery, appearing successively at St. Bénigne de Dijon, Moutier St. Jean, St. Germain d'Auxerre, Béze, and Cluny, finding only in St. Guillaume and St. Odilon, at the first and last named houses, masters of calibre enough to calm his troubled spirit, and encourage his literary bent.

But, wherever he might be dwelling, Raoul remained an unhappy man, a victim of a disordered and powerful imagination. He himself tells us of the frequent visions to which he was subject; visions not without interest as throwing light upon the mental condition of the time. At Moutier appeared to him Guillaume de St. Bénigne, who, laying his hand upon the bald head, said gently; "Do not forget me, I beg of you, if it be true that I have sincerely loved you; accomplish rather, such is my desire, the work you have promised to me."^[132]

[Pg 164]

Not all his visions were so consoling. Conscience often brought the devil to his dreams. He saw one night, standing at the foot of his bed, "A hideous little monster. He was of middle height, with a thin neck, a skinny figure, eyes very black, a narrow and wrinkled forehead, a flat nose, a wide mouth, swollen lips, chin short and tapering, a goat's beard, straight ears, hair dirty and stiff, dog's teeth, the back of his head pointed, a protruding belly, a hump on the back, hanging buttocks and dirty clothing. His whole body appeared to be animated by a convulsive and desperate activity. He seated himself on the edge of my bed and proceeded to say to me; 'You will

not remain here much longer,' then ground his teeth and repeated; 'You shall not stay here any longer.' I jumped out of bed; I ran to prostrate myself at the foot of the altar of Father Benedict; I recapitulated all the sins I had committed since my childhood, whether by negligence or perversity."

This strange work of his, which recounts in a chaotic, tortured manner, without order and without literary grace, though with extraordinary vividness and effect, the chief social, political, and religious events of the period dating from 900 to 1046, is the most highly coloured, yet, at the same time, the most sincere and the most valuable document we possess concerning the first half of the eleventh century in Burgundy. The book deals only briefly with the political events of his time, but is extraordinarily prolix concerning monks and marvels, which are a source of constant bewilderment to his troubled brain.

For poor Raoul never attained the calm assurance of the established Christianity of his day, nor came near to realizing the monkish ideals of Cluny and Citeaux. His book is full of dreadful visions, such as the one we have already described. He sees the powers of evil lurking and prowling after men, as lions that lie in wait for their prey. No Christian charity is found in him, no tenderness, no hope; only the spirit of revolt, of discontent, of disgust; superstitious fear and hallucinations chasing one another through his tortured mind, until, at last, with despairing appeals to the Divine pity, he falls into nervous crises which paralyse his mental and physical action.

Nor was so terrible a state of mind then unnatural to any timid ones, whose temperament forbade them to shelter soul, as well as body, within the safe fold of the church. The events which Raoul himself describes as happening, within his own experience, here, in this district round Tournus, are such as might well wreck all but the strongest minds, or those fortified by an incorruptible faith in the good providence of God. Look at his picture of the famine of 1031, and you will cease to wonder that, in those days, men dreamed strange dreams.

[Pg 165]

"Famine commenced to desolate the universe, and the human race was threatened with imminent destruction. The temperature (seasons) became so contrary that no fitting time was found to sow the land, none favourable to the harvest, chiefly on account of the water with which the fields were flooded. One would have said that the elements, enraged, had declared war on one another, when, they were, in fact, but obeying Divine vengeance in punishing the insolence of men.... This avenging scourge had first begun in the East; after having ravaged Greece, it passed to Italy, spread among the Gauls and spared not even the people of England. All men equally felt its attacks. The great, those of middle estate and the poor, all had their mouths equally famished, the same pallor was upon their foreheads; for even the violence of the great had given way at last to the common dearth. When they had fed on beasts and birds, that resource once exhausted, hunger was no less keenly felt, and, to appease it, men must needs resort to devouring corpses, or even, to escape death, uproot the trees in the woods, pluck the grass in the streams; but all was useless, for against the wrath of God there is no refuge save God Himself. Alas! must we believe it? Fury of hunger renewed those examples of atrocity so rare in history, and men devoured the flesh of men. The traveller, assaulted on the road, succumbed to the blows of his aggressors. His limbs were torn, grilled on the fire, and devoured. Others, flying their country to escape famine, received hospitality on the road, and their hosts slew them in the night that they might furnish food. Others lured children away with the offer of an egg or an apple, and immolated them to their hunger. In many a place corpses were unearthed to serve for these sad repasts. One wretch dared even to carry human flesh to the market of Tournus, to sell it cooked for that of animals. He was arrested and did not attempt to deny his crime; he was garrotted, then thrown to the flames. Another, during the night, stole this flesh that they had buried in the earth; he ate it, and was also burned.

[Pg 166]

"Three miles from Mâcon, in the forest of Châtigny, is an isolated church consecrated to St. John. Not far from there, a scoundrel built a cabin, where he cut the throats of any passers-by, or travellers who stopped with him. The monster then fed upon their bodies. One day, a man came there with his wife, to ask for hospitality, and rested a few moments. But, throwing his glance round all the corners of the cabin he saw the heads of men, women and children. Immediately he is troubled, he grows pale, he would leave; but his cruel host endeavours to keep him there by force. The fear of death doubles the traveller's strength; at last he escapes with his wife, and runs with all haste to the town. There he hastens to communicate this frightful discovery to Count Otho and all the other inhabitants. They send instantly a large number of men to verify the fact; they press forward, and on their arrival find the wild beast in his haunt, with forty-eight heads of men whom he had butchered, and whose flesh he had already devoured. They take him to the town, hang him up to a beam in a cellar, then throw him to the flames. We, ourselves, were present at his execution."

"They tried, in the same province, a means which was not, we believe, adopted elsewhere. Many persons mixed a white earth, like clay, with any bran or flour they might have, and made loaves therewith to satisfy their cruel hunger. The faces of all were pale and emaciated, the skin drawn tight and swollen, the voice shrill and resembling the plaintive cry of dying birds. The great number of the dead forbade any thought of their burial, and the wolves, attracted for a long time past by the odour of corpses, came to tear their prey. As they could not give separate burial to all the dead, because of their great number, men full of the Grace of God, dug, in many places, ditches, commonly called "Charniers," into which they would throw five hundred bodies, and sometimes more when they would hold more; they lay there mixed pell mell, half naked, often without any clothing. The cross-ways, the ditches in the fields, served as burial places.

"The church ornaments were sacrificed to the needs of the poor. They consecrated to the same

purpose the treasures that had long been destined for this use, as we find it written in the decree of the Fathers; but, in many places, the treasures of the churches could not suffice for the necessities of the poor. Often, even, when these wretches, long consumed by hunger, found means to satisfy it, they swelled immediately and died; others held in their hands, the food which they wished to raise to their lips; but this last effort cost them their life, and they perished without having been able to enjoy this sad pleasure. There are no words capable of expressing the pain, the sadness, the sobs, the complaints, the tears of the unhappy witnesses of these scenes of disaster, especially among the Churchmen, the bishops, the abbots, the monks and the religieux. It was thought that the orders of the seasons and the laws of the elements, which, till then, had governed the world, were fallen back into eternal chaos, and all feared that the end of the human race had come."

[Pg 167]

Let those who haste to decry modern institutions remember that to-day you can buy bread in Tournus for a few sous the kilo.

From the great abbey church that still symbolizes, in its aspect, something of the horror of those famine-stricken years in which it was built, we wandered down the main street towards the river, and there rested at a little café in the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, which is adorned, as might have been expected, by a statue of Greuze. Here we were waited on by a kindly, grey-haired, stupid, but intensely curious old lady, who, wearied by sixty years of monotonous Tournusian life, was anxious to imbibe from passing travellers, all available gossip, concerning themselves and the world from which she was cut off. My wife showed her some sketches. They left her cold.

"Vous faites ça à coup d'oeil?" she said, and yawned.

"Madame est artiste," I interjected, carelessly, using a word which suggests public performer, or actress, rather than artist. The old woman thawed. Smiling, she turned to my wife.

"In that case madame will be able to earn her evening at the Café de la Terrasse, beside the river. All the artistes go there, and there is a piano and singing." We acquiesced, without intending to go. Meanwhile the old lady studied my wife closely.

"Do you English people dress as we do; and are you married in church?" She looked from one to another.

"We were," I said, "But everyone isn't." I had answered the last question first. "And as to clothes, every painter and artistic person, as is well-known, has her little 'mode à elle.'"

"Justement," said our hostess, "Is this your tour de noces?"

[Pg 168]

The negative reply grieved her. While I paid for the coffee, Madame cast an eye upon the retreating figure of my wife;

"Comme Madame est grande," she said, "Et bien belle!"

A few yards away, in the Rue de l'Hôpital, we came to a little inn with the pretty sign "Au Point de Jour," and the inscription on a board, in capital letters:

"Avan le jour commence ta journée
De l'Eternel le saint nom bénissant
Loue le encore et passe ainsy lannée
Ayme Dieu et ton procchain. 1672."

A little girl, who had been sitting before the inn, approached. Pointing to the inscription, she said scornfully:

"That's not French."

"Pardon, mon enfant," I said, "But it is most certainly French." The little maid looked rather guilty for a moment. Then she cheered up. This French that puzzled her must be a local patois.

"Oh, well then," she said. "C'est que je ne suis pas d'ici." (I am not from this part of the country) and she trotted off up the street.

The landlady and coffee had so fully monopolized our attention that we had bestowed no more than a passing glance upon the statue of Greuze, opposite to which we had been sitting. I doubt whether it deserved more. Surely the most satisfactory monuments to the famous Burgundian painter are the house in which he was born,^[133] the studies from his brush and pencil, to be seen in the local musée, and the rich meadows by the Saône. All these complete a setting that enables us better to sympathize with Greuze's fresh and delicate art.

The painter's life, like that of his fellow-Burgundian, Prudhon, fell short of happiness. Friction with the authorities of the Academy, and the merited failure of his classical work, "The Emperor Severus and Caracalla"—the very title calls up a smile, when we think of it in connection with the painter of "La Cruche Cassée"—caused him to cease exhibiting at the Salon, until the Revolution had opened the way for all painters. Yet the apparent failure was a blessing in disguise; it taught him his limitations, and brought him back from the stilted manner of his time, to the call of individual genius, and the freshness of nature.

He had other troubles; not the least of which was an ill-chosen wife. Mdlle Babuti, whose charming face he has reproduced on so many canvasses, was not so easy to live with as her

[Pg 169]

picture, perhaps idealized by the painter, would lead us to believe; and Greuze himself lacked that touch of philosophy which would have counterbalanced his natural sprightliness of character. Finally came the crowning disaster, the Revolution, that robbed him of nearly all he possessed; so that, though the Convention gave him lodgings in the vacant chambers at the Louvre, he died in complete poverty. Shortly before his death, he remarked to his friend, Barthélemy:

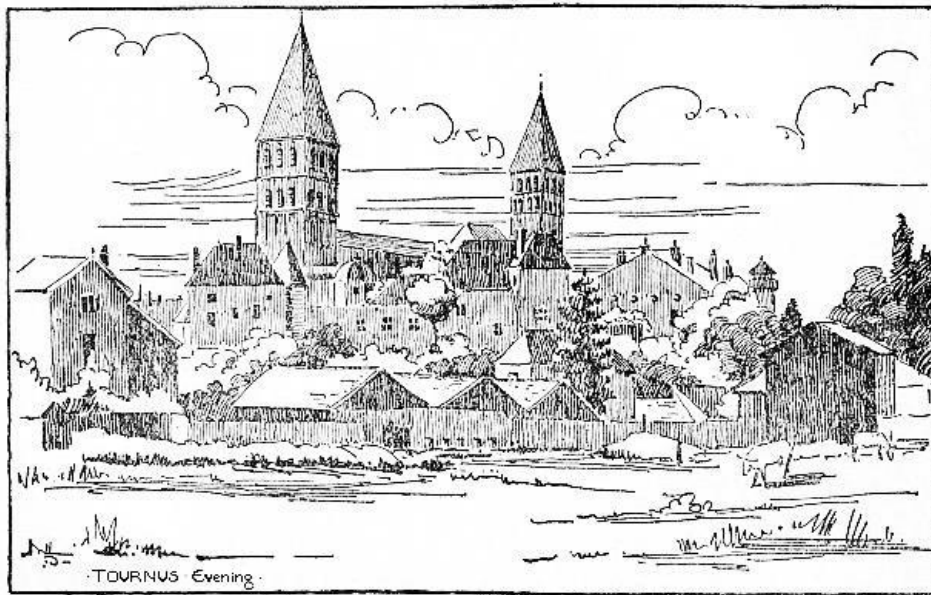
"At my funeral you will be the poor man's dog."

It is said that Napoleon, hearing of the painter's wretched end, said: "If I had known his situation, I would have given him a Sèvres vase full of gold, in payment for all his cruches cassées."^[134]

We need not, in these pages, discuss Greuze's art; but we may recall its best feature. Though his manner sometimes lays him open to the charge of being merely pretty and graceful, to the exclusion of greater qualities, we must not forget that he was one of the first who brought men back to nature—at a time when nature was everywhere forgotten—and reminded them, beautifully, that the simple incidents of village life, the small joys and sorrows that swell the breast of the rustic maid over the broken jug, or the welcome home of her lover, are not less elementally joyful or tragic, not less worthy the attention and sympathy of the true artist, than scenes of court and throne, and kindred emotions that, by the caprice of chance, swell the breasts of kings and decide the destinies of nations.

The idyllic and pastoral effects of Greuze's art, harmonize well with the unpretentiousness of the town of Tournus, and also with one of its most delightful features, the meadow-walks that border the Saône.

Here, at sunset, when you have gazed your fill at the mysterious towers of the abbey, rising above the roofs of the town, you may turn to watch the opalesque lights in the quivering water, that, doubling in its mirror the line of distant poplars, slides between reedy banks, between wide stretches of green pasture, where the pale herds browse. Scarcely a sound breaks the stillness; only, from time to time, comes the chance cry of a roosting Sunday youth, from a meadow far away floats the lowing of distant cattle, from the path the heavy tramp of an aged peasant, homeward-bound, bending beneath the weight of his spade.



[Pg 170]

From the river, where, all day long, around idle punts, tempting baits have been dipping and dropping, comes the flop of a lazy fish, making rings that widen over the glassy surface. Now a distant throb is heard, that deepens, as a tug, gaudily painted in red and black, with white bows, comes gliding down the river, drawing four barges laden with barrels. The second steamer, reversed in the water beneath, is hardly less vivid to the eye. Swish! Swish! Swish! The water foams from the flat prow; all the river is decked with dancing, rainbow ripples, azure blue below, rose pink above, singing, bubbling, racing one another in music to the shore.

This pastoral, green plain of the Saône, these luscious meadows of waterish Burgundy, have often recalled to me Phaedra's longing words, in those last days, when the burden of her life and love was more than she could bear.

"Oh, for a deep and dewy spring,
With runlets cold to draw and drink!
And a great meadow blossoming,
Long grassed, and poplars in a ring,
To rest me by the brink."^[135]

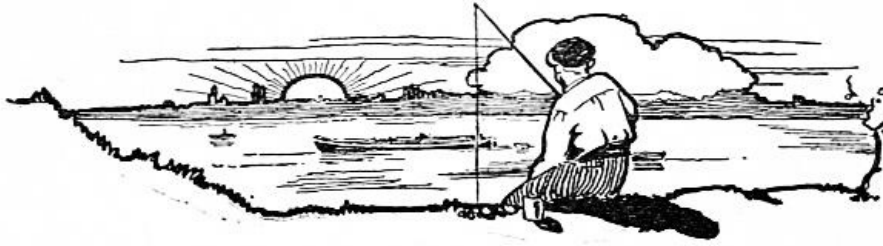
[Pg 171]

Not less lovely was the same spot next morning, when all the landscape shone in a light that had in it already something of southern intensity; when wind and sun were stirring the rushes by the water side, and jewelling the rippled sweep of the river below the dark towers of St. Philibert. Two gaily-caparisoned horses, led by a small boy in a black blouse, came plodding along the

towing-path. Two rowers were easing the horses' labours, with long oars which flashed as they rose and fell. The banks and meadows were dotted with the same herds of white philosophers, browsing, and lazily swishing their tails; only, this morning, heads were bent down to the luscious feast of green, whereas, towards evening, they are lifted, to ruminate through long hours of dreamy delight.

Mâcon, to which we paid a flying visit during the interval between two trains, was once the capital of the Mâconnais, until that country was incorporated with the Duchy of Burgundy. It is now too wholly modern a town to retain much character or interest. Almost all the ancient houses are destroyed, and of the two cathedrals—St. Pierre and St. Vincent—the former is wholly modern. The west front of the old church, which was sacked during the Revolution, remains. Our best impression of Mâcon was the view of the town and river from the train, as it left for Bourg.

[Pg 172]



Footnotes:

- [130] "L'Art en Bourgogne." Perrault-Dabot p. 55.
- [131] Viollet le Duc seems to doubt whether it was originally intended for defence.
- [132] The history of his time, by Raoul Glaber.
- [133] August, 1725.
- [134] "L'Art en Bourgogne," Perrault-Dabot.
- [135] "Hippolytus" of Euripides, Gilbert Murray's translation.



CHAPTER XII

Ever since developing a keen interest in the fortunes of the great Burgundian monasteries, we had decided to take the first opportunity of seeing the Valley of the Ouche, and Labussière, the adopted daughter of Citeaux.

It was a public holiday; and the train from Dijon was packed with excursionists. I found myself the only male in a compartment crammed with eight old ladies, mostly stout, and all in holiday spirits. We fell into conversation. They all expressed kindly interest in the task that had brought me to Dijon. I was catechized.

"Has Monsieur seen the prisons of Dijon?"

"No, Madame; je n'aime pas beaucoup ces endroits là." Little tinkling laughs ran all round the carriage.

"But I only just missed seeing them yesterday—because I had left behind me my permis de circulation. You have so many regulations in France."

"Talking of regulations, Monsieur," said the stoutest and shrewdest of the old ladies, with a wicked twinkle in her eye, "Permit me to call to your attention to the fact that you are in a "Dames seules!"

"Mille pardons, Mesdames; but permit me to observe that I have chosen my company well."

This time the compartment rang with laughter; and eight bonnetted heads bobbed in recognition of the courtoisie.

"And if we let him stay, Monsieur will promise to be bien sage?"

"Assurément, Mesdames, foi de Lion." So the banter went on, until our station was called; and in ten minutes we found ourselves lunching in a meadow of St. Victor, and looking up at the Castle of Marigny perched upon its rock. [Pg 174]

In the time of the first Crusade, Marigny, the great fortress, whose lord was one of the four most powerful barons of Burgundy, proudly dominated the valley. Now it is but a charming relic, where you may wander beneath broken arches and the ivied vaults of great chambers, from whose crannied floors young fir-trees grow, and bushes hoary with silver lichen. There, too, you may wile away all a summer day, lying upon mossy, blossom-jewelled lawns, and dreaming dreams of the great lords of Marigny, and of Brother Albéric of Labussière, or of Tebsima, the Arab exile, whose bones rest in a mountain tomb not far away. All the hills hereabout are full of memories of this most gracious of all Burgundian legends.

Tebsima Ben-Beka (Smile Son of Tears)—so named because his birth brought joy and death to his mother—was a direct descendant of the prophet himself. Growing up a strong and courageous youth, imbued with a fierce hatred of all Christians, he fought valiantly for Islam in the great struggle of the Crescent against the Cross,^[136] but was taken prisoner by Guillaume, Lord of Marigny, at the assault of Jerusalem in 1099. Guillaume, from the first, was drawn towards his young prisoner, whom he tried earnestly to convert to the Christian faith. His prayers were heard, and answered by a wonderful miracle. Tebsima and some companions were present one day, as spectators at a holy celebration. The officiating priest had pronounced the sacramental formula, and was elevating the host, when, suddenly, the sacred emblem was seen by all to change into the form of a young child of marvellous beauty. All present fell upon their faces. Before the priest stood a crystal chalice, filled with white wine and water. He took it between his hands, and spoke the mysterious words. As he did so, the wine changed to blood. Before the new miracle the hardest heart surrendered. Tebsima became a Christian.

In the chalice rested ever after a drop of blood. Guillaume de Marigny was given the sacred relic by the priest, on condition that he would stay two years longer in Palestine. This condition he fulfilled; then, taking with him Tebsima, whose life, as a Christian, was in mortal danger so long as he stayed in the East, Guillaume set out for France. For three long years his wife, Matilde, sorrowing, had awaited her lord. Imagine, then, her joy when, gazing one day from the battlements of the castle, she heard, floating from far down the valley, the blare of the Crusader's [Pg 175]

trumpets, then caught the glint of sun on shining armour, and, at last, the white plume tossing upon her husband's helmet.

The Holy Tear, as people had learned to name the sacred relic that Guillaume had brought with him, was placed, with all reverence, in the tabernacle of the chapel, and every year a solemn fête was celebrated in its honour. Tebsima, the exile, lived in the Castle of Marigny, where Guillaume and his lady treated him as their brother. But his heart ached to see his own people again; and, when the winter cold of Burgundy pierced him through and through, he longed for the strong suns of the East. So he told his friends of his resolution, and, despite their protests, returned whence he came. But his own family, much as they loved him, would not receive him when they knew the truth. How could the very children of Mahomet welcome a follower of the Christ? So, after sorrows and adventures, too many to tell, Tebsima came a second time to the great Castle by the Ouche. Warm, indeed, was the welcome he received, and great the rejoicing, when he told how he had sworn never to leave Burgundy again.

One day a brilliant cavalcade was seen riding down the valley. It was the cortège of Hugues,^[137] the Duke of Burgundy, come to celebrate, by a day's hunting with the lord of Marigny, the safe return of the young Emir. An hour later the horns sounded the ballad of St. Hubert from the Castle tower, and the hunt was laid on. A noble stag broke from the thicket. There was hue and cry down into the valley of Labussière, where the beast was brought to bay. Suddenly, with a splendid bound, it cleared the baying hounds, and made furiously for the lady of the castle, who had followed the hunt. Tebsima, on his Arab steed, that many a time had been his saviour, saw the danger, and pressed forward. His blade pierced the stag's body up to the hilt, but not before the terrible horns had buried themselves deep in the horse's side.^[138]

The violence of Tebsima's fall, the loss of his horse, that, to an Arab, is as the loss of a brother, and the chill winds of Burgundy, wrought mortal harm in the young Arab. Then came a yet greater disaster. It was on the great day of the veneration of the Sainte Larme. A young page, nobly dressed in black, came at evening to the castle chapel, and knelt in prayer before the relic. A moment later the page and the relic had gone. Tebsima, who first noticed the theft, rode headlong in pursuit. Seeing the black rider in front of him, he summoned him, by the blood of Christ, to halt; and, behold, the mule, despite its rider's efforts, stood immovable, as though changed to stone. Tebsima drew near to the thief, demanded the return of the relic.

[Pg 176]

"Since I cannot keep it," said the page, "let it be lost for ever to the Chapel of Marigny." He hurled the chalice down the face of the rock, and, drawing his sword, attacked the Emir, who, while avoiding the blow, plunged his scimitar into the mule's body. The animal bounded into the air; and man and beast rolled headlong over the brink of the abyss, and were dashed to pieces on the stones below. Weeping bitterly, Tebsima descended to seek the fragments of the cup. He found them lying in a dozen pieces, where a little stream bubbles from the rock. That stream is called to this day the Fontaine de Sainte Larme; and still its limpid waters seem to weep the sacrilege its name commemorates.^[139]

The holy relic had vanished for ever. So, with the precious object that had served always to remind Tebsima of the miracle of his conversion, all hope in this life departed from the stricken Emir. Feeling himself to be dying, he left the Castle of Marigny, and withdrew to the pleasant grotto that by chance he had discovered, near by, in the side of the hill. There he lived the life of a hermit, giving his mind wholly to devotion and earnest prayer—which was granted—for conversion to the Faith of Christ of his relatives in the East. There he was visited frequently by the lord and lady of Marigny, who brought him food, and oil for his lamp. He had another friend, to whom he told all his story—the good Albéric, the infirmier at the neighbouring monastery of Labussière.

Into that grotto of Marigny there entered, one stormy night, a group of monks. One of them bore the cross of the monastery; another, Brother Albéric, carried a robe and a scapular. Two novices, torch in hand, preceded the Abbot, who carried the oil and the holy mysteries. Then they clothed Tebsima in the robes of the order, and consecrated him to the service of the church.^[140] And so, while a great wind howled through the hollows of the wooded hills, peacefully, with folded hands, and lips pressed upon the cross of olive, the new monk passed to the joys of the new life.

[Pg 177]

The good Albéric had been one of the three brothers who, at the close of the eleventh century, had founded a little monastery beside the Ouche, in the lonely vale of Labussière, where three mountain ranges and three valleys meet.^[141] He had once been a rich lord; but, when years of famine came, he sold all that he had, and gave to the poor and to God; then, having nothing beside to give, he gave his heart, vowing himself to the religious life. Virtues such as his soon raised him to the head of the monastery; but, well though he filled his post, troubles beset his way. Monk after monk was laid in the cemetery; the cells were empty, and none came to fill them. All the stream of monastic vocation was turned towards Citeaux, the then flourishing Abbey, whose fortunes we have already followed.

One summer night, in 1131, when the tale of the monks of Labussière had dwindled to the original number, three, a mysterious vision came to Albéric.

He was walking, on a bright morning, in the monastery garden. Suddenly he paused before a hive whose tenants seemed to be few and ailing. He raised the cover; the hive was almost empty. "Poor little bees,"^[142] he said, with a sigh, "What will become of you during the winter?" He thought of his own convent, and he wept. Suddenly he heard a noise coming from the mountain, then he perceived a vigorous swarm humming above his head; and, in a moment, the bees of the

valley had come forth to greet their sisters of the hill. All together entered the hive, and set to work with joyful hum. Towards the close of the day Brother Albéric lifted the basket. It was heavy, and already half full. "God be praised," said he. "The future of the hive is assured." As he awoke, at dawn, he heard a voice saying to him, "Do as the bees of the valley, and your work shall live."

At first Albéric did not understand this vision; but the next day, while giving alms at the gate of the convent, one of the poor told him that a great fire had destroyed the monastery of Aseraule, whose monks were in dire distress. This news was a ray of light to Albéric. He told his brother monks of the dream that had come to him, and of the burning of the neighbouring monastery. They marvelled greatly, and all knew surely that God's will bade them summon the Cistercians of the mountain. [Pg 178]

In all haste they went to offer aid to their homeless brothers; and there they met the pious English monk, Stephen Harding, friend of St. Robert, and St. Bernard's master, who had come to offer the shelter of Citeaux. Falling at Stephen's feet, and kissing his hand, Albéric begged him to take into his order himself, his companions, and their monastery. Stephen willingly consented. He gave to Albéric and his companions the white robe of Citeaux, and soon after traced with his own hand upon the soil of Labussière the plan of a new monastic church. Stone by stone the building grew, until, on the 10th September, 1172, in the presence of a vast assemblage, before all the clergy and nobles of Burgundy, the new church was consecrated by Saint Pierre, Archbishop of Tarentaise, who, by prayer and the laying on of hands, wrought so many miracles of healing that day, that the people, witnessing these prodigies, shouted, till the three valleys were echoing with their cries of "Noel, Noel!" The Abbey of Labussière was well founded at last.

A great part of the Abbey buildings still remain, restored almost beyond recognition, and transformed into a magnificent mansion, now in the occupation of a family whose name I have forgotten. To our great regret we were unable to see the house, as the gardien had vanished, taking the keys with him; so we had to content ourselves with glimpses of glorious Gothic arcades, Romanesque staircases, and a west front, apparently of the fifteenth century, with a flamboyant door. But much of the building may be entirely new, for all I know.

It was late in the afternoon that we rode into Labussière, and as we had to get on to Bligny that night, very little time was left in which to do more than explore the church, a thoroughly good sample of Cistercian severity, of the eleventh or twelfth century, with a square apse. It has some fine tombs, and Gothic monumental slabs. Dining that night in the "Cheval Blanc" at Bligny, where the host served to us, at half an hour's notice, a dinner that the Carlton could not have bettered, for hungry men, we agreed that it would not be easy to find a more charming *pays* than the valley of the Ouche, in which to pass a lazy fortnight, tracing out some of its hundred legends, and steeping oneself in its romantic past. [Pg 179]

The road to Arnay-le-Duc, without being more than ordinarily interesting, gives you some fine views over the Côte d'Or. You pass through Antigny-le-Chatel, where there is a fine ruin on a hill, and below it a later ghostly castle of the 14th or 15th century, with the high-pitched roof of the period, and a round tower. At Froissy, entering an inn in search of déjeuner, we found a wedding in full swing. Through a glass panelled door we could see half a dozen perspiring couples scuffling round what would be described in England as the bar parlour. We were detected at once; hot faces were pressed against the glass, while Madame produced an armful of bread, and some cheese on a broken plate.

"Par ici, m'sieur et dame," said she; "Vous serez mieux dans la charmesse." She opened the panelled door, and, one carrying the bread, and the other the cheese on a broken plate, we walked in grand procession through the ballroom—so shaking with our inward mirth that the cheese nearly came to grief. The poor bride, however—a study in sticky purple and white, not good to look upon—did not relish the joke; she scowled upon the intruders; but madame seemed glad to have us—and ready to talk to us, as we sat in the charmesse—a little dusty, rickety arbour, through which the south wind was blowing clouds of dust.

"That castle over there. Oh! no one has lived in it these many years now, except rats. You can't tax them. You see the Government put such heavy taxes upon the castles that they just drive people away. There's not a habited château now in all Côte d'Or. And what weather! Such a wind! Nous n'avons plus de saisons en Bourgogne."

"Whose wedding is this?" said my wife, looking towards the ballroom bar-parlour.

"Oh that's my nephew; he is a vigneron, and a good lad. Is madame married, and has she children? No children! Then madame, je vous souhaite un beau fils."

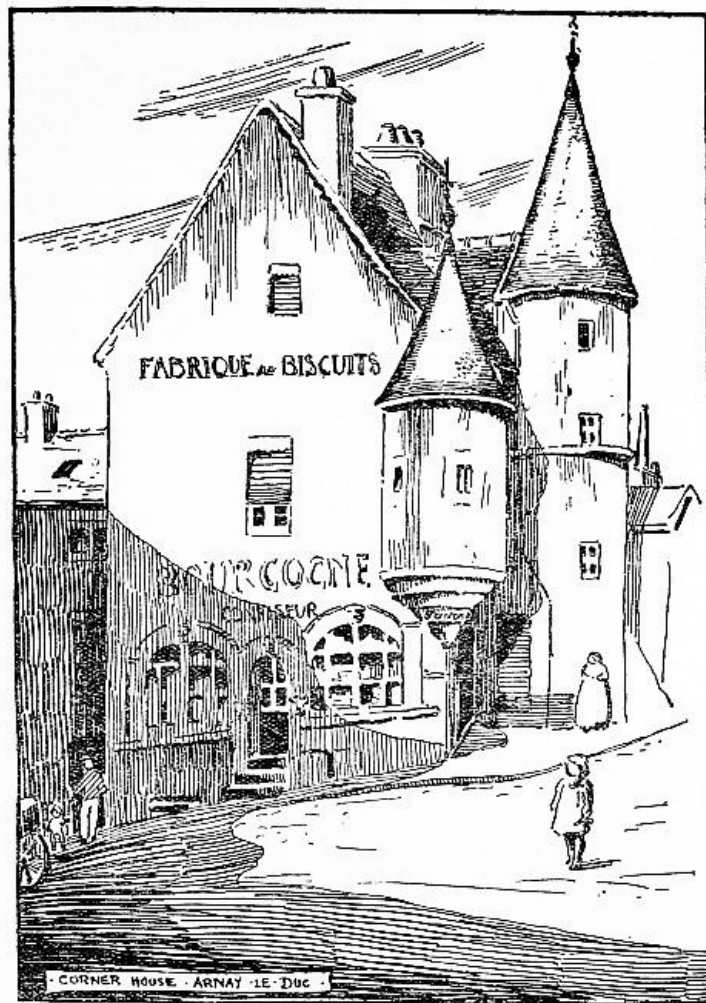
As for me, I was speculating on the market price of rat-poison, of castles in the Côte d'Or, and on the squeezability of the French government in the matter of assessments.

Few incidents in life give more pleasure than happy discovery. That is why we so much enjoyed Arnay-le-Duc. We just found it out, by instinct, or by chance. For nobody knows about it; not even the learned people who write guide-books. And as for the motorists; they come in with the darkness, and go out with the dawn—"Must be at Dijon by ten."

In all France I do not know a richer study in warm, red roof-colours than towered Arnay, seen at sunset from the high land on the road to Saulieu, nor a more satisfying example of the outlines of a ramparted Gothic-Renaissance town. Nor, as is sometimes the case, does close acquaintance disenchant you. Wander through its streets, and prove for yourself that it is one of the most unspoiled places in all Burgundy. There is something good at every turn—a high-pitched, pierced, white gable, from which black window-eyes look out upon a dark, brown-green, mottled roof touched with red; a wall with a warm tiled hood; a glimpse, through a trefoiled gate, of a miniature Renaissance garden, with box and ivy edged borders, fruit trees jewelled with white blossom, and a lovely, pierced balustrade, leading up to a Kate-Greenaway House.

But these are the town's less substantial, and less obvious attractions. Plain for all to see are the flamboyant church with its octagonal lantern, and, at the back of it—best approached by a charming staircase such as we have neither time nor skill to design now-a-days—the old round tower of the Motte Forte. In the central *Place* is a charming white, turretted, and gabled house, reminding one of the Colombier at Beaune, and close to it, beside the *Marché*, are fifteenth-century, cupid-bow windows, and an old Gothic arch leading into a Gothic courtyard. Some of the houses have curious stone benches before them, with lovely round and square-edged mouldings, and everywhere are quaintly designed handles and knockers of forged ironwork. The women, too, it seemed to us, were less heavy in feature, and more spirituelle, than in other parts of Burgundy. The naughtiest of all the naughty children who crowded and criticised round my wife's easel, was a beautiful blonde girl. We reproved her pranks more often than those of the others—because she looked so lovely when she blushed.

[Pg 181]



Another attractive spot in Arnay is the walk, by a red path, between the towering, moss-grown, grey-brown ramparts, where in autumn the wallflowers blow. Good company, too, are the willow-fringed, elder-shaded stream, across which you have a glimpse of garden and orchard, and the green slopes over which anxious ganders take their fluffy yellow children out for exercise.

[Pg 182]

But I have not yet mentioned the building that many of the locals, including the landlord of the Cheval Blanc at Bligny, regard as the crowning glory of Arnay; and that is the splendid, transitional, Gothic-Renaissance manoir of the Ducs de Burgogne; though, of course, the landlord of the Cheval Blanc does not know it is anything of the kind. For him it is the Limier or file-factory—the best in all France. For us it is a defiled manoir—still showing traces of ancient loveliness, in slated turret, snake-skin roof, and daintily-carved friezes above the ruined dormer-windows.

Yes: this place is good to wander in. Here comes an old man followed by a flock of tinkling goats. He stops before a house, and knocks at the door. The tinkling stops, too. Then a cup is handed out to him, to be filled from an accommodating goat. He hands it back quite full of warm milk. The door slams; the tinkling begins again.

A very ancient, bent, bearded man, ragged and dirty, was sitting munching bread, on the steps that lead down from the *place*.

"Would you like to give him half a franc?" I said to my wife. She would, very much. In a moment the two were in conversation.

"Why do you give me this?" said the old man, looking down at the coin in his hand.

"Because we saw you having déjeuner yesterday, and were interested. This is for to-day."

"It is much for one who is poor. Are you French?"

"No, English."

"All the English are rich. Are you selling things here?"

"No: I am making pictures for a book my husband is writing."

"Ah! you gain much by that?"

"Not very much. But we like it: we did a book on Provence once."

"Ah Provence. I know Provence. I am from the Basses Alpes. I like Provence very much; you get such good wine there."

"Don't you? Now I must go back to the Café—and finish *my* wine."

"Yes, and I'll finish mine." He put his head under the pump, and drank.



TOUR DE LA MOTTE FORTE ARNAY LE DUC

Facing page 182

Then there was the Hotel Chrétien, as I think it was called; an establishment rather casually run, but marked by a bonhomie and insouciance that enlivened the monotony of wet days. The commercial travellers made themselves very much at home with Madame and the waitress. One of these gentlemen, in particular, subjected the latter to a flow of chaff that ceased not even with the coffee. He always began with a request to her to recite the *ménu* aloud, and whenever a lull came, he would turn to her, and say in the most innocent tone:

"By the way, Mademoiselle, what have we to eat this evening?"

"Is Monsieur stone deaf?"

"Not at all, Mademoiselle; only hungry. And I like to regulate appetite by the dishes that are coming!"

[Pg 183]

Dessert came on. The voluble one cut an apple in half. It was rotten. "Hey, Mademoiselle; regardez-moi ça. Il y en a une qui marche (There's one walking)."

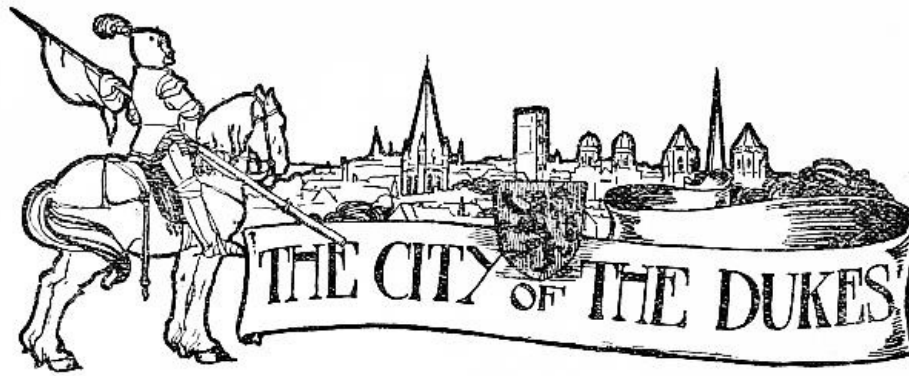
"So I see. He would willingly be quit of Monsieur."

The other men would sit round sniggering—and occasionally chipping in; but they seldom got the better of the maid, who had a fund of repartee that I have rarely heard matched, even in France.

From this house of frivolity and good cooking—the chef had been seven months at the Carlton—hence enough quite incomprehensible jargon to warrant the legend "English spoken" on the hotel omnibus—we made some good excursions over the undulating country that lies around Arnay; through miles of spring woods where brave nightingales sang on a spray before your very eyes; by lofty green uplands, through plateaux, suggestive of Normandy, where the cattle and the lady's-smock dapple with splashes of white and mauve the rich green meadows; where the cloudless skies are mirrored in bluer than English ponds, and peasants' sabots clatter through the most tangle-wood villages of France; wide silences where your eye can roam all ways, along the distant hills shimmering in silver and blue, quivering with living light, to majestic Château-Neuf of Philippe Pot, and the tower-crowned castles of other lords of ancient Burgundy.

Footnotes:

- [136] Godefroy de Bouillon left France for the crusade in 1096.
- [137] Hugues le Pacifique, one of the worthiest of the Capetian Dukes of Burgundy, died in 1142.
- [138] The spring that marks the site of this incident is still called the *Fontaine-Cheval*. It runs into the rivulet De Larvot, by the "Pré de l'Etang." See l'Abbé B—— s "Tebsima," p. 179.
- [139] Tebsima, p. 185.
- [140] Ibid, p. 220.
- [141] The spot was called originally Tres Valles—The Three Valleys.
- [142] He did not use the word abeille, but the prettier mediæval form, *avette*, from the Latin *apicula* little bee. "Labussière et Citeaux," p. 233 of Tebsima, by l'Abbé B——.



CHAPTER XIII

Of the thousand who pass through the town annually, on their way to Switzerland or the Riviera, only a small percentage, probably, know Dijon as the ancient capital of the Duchy of Burgundy; fewer still have any conception of the vanished glories it stands for; or could name the three commodities—if I may so describe them—and the principal industry upon which the prosperity of the modern city is based.

From the early middle ages to the closing years of the Capetian Dukes, from 1032 to 1364, the essential history of Burgundy is centred rather round the religious communities of Cluny and Citeaux, than in the ducal courts of Auxerre or of Dijon. But upon the advent in that year, of the royal house of Valois, with Philippe le Hardi, the full light of the most glorious, and by far the most highly coloured, period of Burgundian history is turned upon the capital of the Duchy.

Yet the "bonne ville de Dijon," through which Duke Philip rode on November 26th, 1364, on his way to the solemn function in the cathedral of St. Bénigne, was no more than a second-rate city. Not only did it lack the glories of the Ducal Palace and the Chartreuse de Champmol that he himself was soon to found, but one would have missed the church of St. Michel, the Palais de Justice, and many other hotels, palaces, and churches, that, still standing, make the modern city one of the most interesting in France. The Dijon of that day was a straggling town of narrow, filthy, unpaved streets over whose projecting gables rose the towers and spires of St. Bénigne, St. Philibert, Notre Dame, and many another Church. In wet weather, the mud spurted from under horses' hoofs upon the grimy walls of the houses on either side of the street, and it is more than probable that the gorgeously attired courtiers of Philip's procession arrived, splashed up to the knees, at the abbey.

[Pg 185]

Twenty years later, even, in 1388, the Duke was annoyed by the dirty condition of the town, which was such that, in the rains of winter, neither man nor horse could make progress without great difficulty. Each inhabitant was consequently compelled to clean and level, at his own cost, the portion of street on which his house fronted; and a new pavement was then laid down, at an expense to the Duchy of two thousand golden francs.^[147]

But, before I tell of modern Dijon, I must say something of the first of the four great Dukes of the house of Valois, who were to lead Burgundy through its brief, meteoric career of greatness.^[144]

Philip, brother of Charles V. of France, and uncle of his successor the mad Charles VI., had deservedly won his title of "Hardi" at the battle of Poitiers, as Froissart has told us. He was a bold, determined, somewhat imprudent prince; kindly and good-natured, as is evident from a glance at the statue upon his tomb; but proud, ambitious, and so addicted to magnificence that he could leave to his son only debts and the dukedom.^[145] His clothing was wonderful to see, as we may judge by some of the details that have come down to us. In 1391, when engaged in treaty with the Duke of Lancaster, uncle of the King of England, he had two coats made for him. One, of black velvet, was embroidered, on the left sleeve and collar with a bunch of roses, upon which were growing twenty-two blossoms, of rubies, or of a single sapphire, surrounded with pearls; and rose-buds also of pearls. The buttonholes were made with a running embroidery of broom, with the pods worked in pearls and sapphires—a souvenir of the ancient order of the Cosse (Broom-pod),^[146] instituted by the Kings of France, and sometimes bestowed by them as a reward for loyal service. One of the coats was embroidered also with P and Y interlaced, while the other, of crimson velvet, showed, on each side, a silver bear, outlined in sapphires and rubies.^[143]

These bears were more than characteristic of the extravagance of the time; they were symbolical of the spirit that, possessing France in the closing years of the thirteenth century, departed only before the exorcisms of La Pucelle.

[Pg 186]

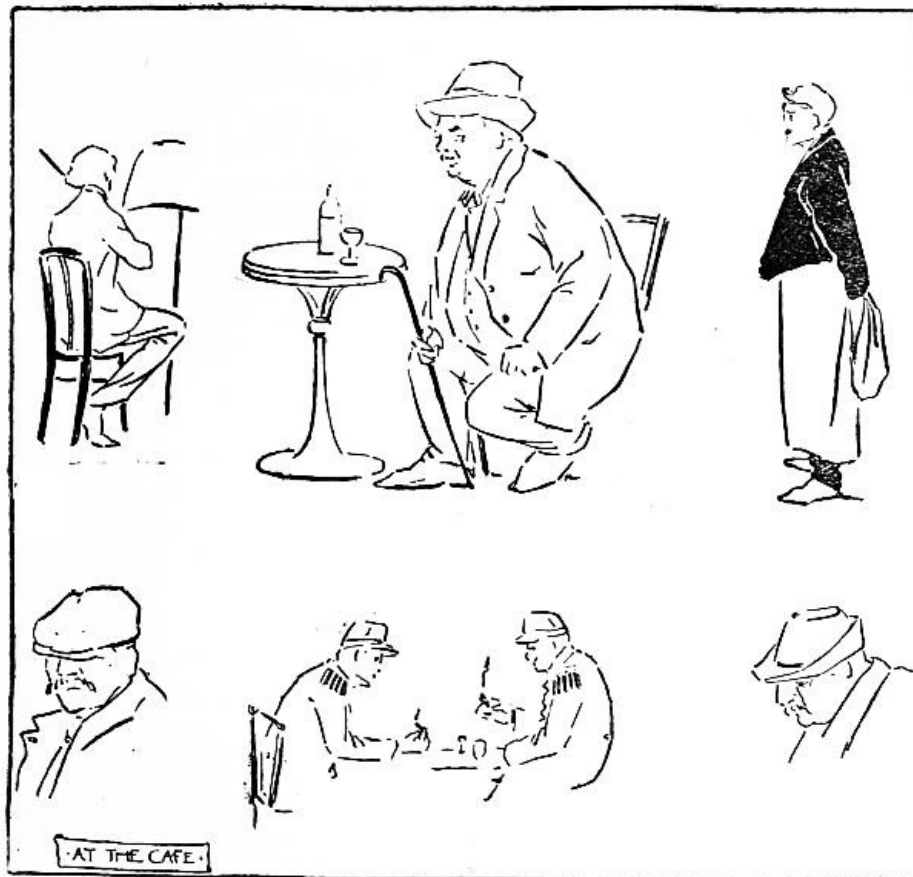
The wise and noble kings, Edward IV. of England, and Charles V. of France, had given place to a dullard and a madman; and the people, no less than the princes, had lost their reason. The feudal system was passing, had passed; and no new political nor social order had as yet developed in its place. Nobles of the day, looking back upon the monkish régime and the early chivalry, could only

ape and burlesque the outward splendours of the movements whose inward spirit and ideals they were wholly incapable of understanding. It seemed that God, even, to borrow Luther's phrase, weary of the game, had thrown his cards upon the table.

Such is the significance of the bear upon Philip's mantle. Everywhere ranged these strange and uncouth beasts. They grinned in long lines from the eaves of the Churches; with a thousand other fantastic fancies of disordered imaginations, they met the eye, at every turn, in corridors of royal palaces, in the reception rooms of baronial halls. Foul jests and foul shapes leered at the passer-by from the fringes of a scarlet skirt. On a high dame's rustling sleeve, whose folds swept the ground, were set the notes of a song; rich doublets blazed with lewd figures, or with strange symbols, improper, if well understood. Great ladies, wearing long horns upon their heads, jested with lords whose pointed toes wriggled up into serpent shapes. Art, sanity, religion were no longer at one. All the pure and natural ornament of early Gothic work, filched from church and cathedral for the service of base needs, flaunted, in horrible disguise, in houses of pleasure and ill fame.^[148]

Small wonder that distracted souls, searching in thick darkness for guidance, for God, and not finding him in life, turned, at last, in despair, to the great negations, Death and the Devil. God had failed them; evil, at least, shall not fail them. In a frenzy of false joy they danced the "danse des morts" in the cemeteries of Paris.^[149]

[Pg 187]



Their dear king Charles, even, so beloved of a mad people, was not less mad than they. Save for occasional lucid intervals, he was a "fou furieux." [Pg 188]

"It was great pity, this malady of the king, which held him for long seasons, and when he ate it was very gluttonously and wolfishly. And he could not be persuaded to strip himself, and was full of lice, vermin, and filth. And he had a little piece of iron that he put secretly close to his flesh. Of which nothing was known. And it had rotted all his poor flesh, and no-one durst go near him to remedy it.

"Nevertheless there was a physician who said that it must be remedied, else was he in danger, and otherwise as it seemed to him, there was no hope for the healing of the malady. And he advised that they should bring ten or twelve companions disguised, who should be blackened, and each one furnished beneath, lest he should wound them. And so it was done and the companions entered very terrible to see, into his chamber. When he saw them he was much astonished, and they drew nigh to him at once: now there had been made ready all new clothing, shirt, tunic, cloak, hose, boots, that they bore with them. They took hold of him, he saying many words to them the while, then they stripped him and put upon him the said things that they had brought. It was great pity to see him, for his body was all eaten with lice and filth. And they found on him the said piece of iron: every time that they would cleanse him, it must needs be done in this said manner."^[151]

Such was the France of the closing years of Philippe le Hardi's rule—King and country lifting clasped hands, to say, with old Lear: "Not mad, sweet Heaven, not mad!"

The condition of Burgundy, and especially of its great appanage Flanders, which Duke Philip had inherited from his wife, though bad, was not so serious as that of the country in general.

In Dijon there was comparative security—enough for the establishment, under Philippe le Hardi, of a new era in Burgundian art. For Philip had great ideas. He never forgot that he was brother to Charles V. of France. Dijon, if not to rival Paris, should be at least a capital worthy of its Valois Duke. This *jouisseur raffiné* must have architects, sculptors, and painters; cunning embroiderers, too, and workers in ivory. But above all, he must have goldsmiths. They came flocking in from all Flanders. "On s'harnachoit d'orfavrerie" says Martial d'Auvergne.^[150] We have already seen the bear upon Philip's coat.

He began, in 1366, with the tower of a new castle—now the Tour de Bar—to replace the ruined château of the Capetian Dukes; and followed it, twelve years later, with a monastery, the Chartreuse de Champnol, at the gates of Dijon, where he wished to house suitably his monks and his tomb.

[Pg 189]

The Chartreuse de Champnol remained the burial place of the Ducal house until the 16th century; but it has not survived to our day. Its close connection with royal authority marked it out for the attentions of the revolutionary mob. The site is now occupied by an "Asile des Aliénées" as the French politely term a mad-house—a choice in which the cynic may detect either a retort upon rampant democracy, or a sly allusion to certain congenital failings of the House of Valois. There is little to be seen in the Asile des Aliénées; but that little is so important that we decided to go there. For, in the centre of the old cloister, was, and is, Claus Sluter's world-famous sculpture—Le Puits des Prophètes.

"Puits?" interrogated a sullen maid, laconically, as she opened to us. We followed in silence. Truly the present home of the Well is depressing, and I wish the authorities would remove it to a safe and more cheerful spot in the precincts of the ducal palace.

But the work itself, though despoiled, by wind and rain, of the calvary that crowned it, and though quite denuded of the gold and brilliant colours with which it once blazed, remains one of the strongest and most impressive pieces of sculpture in existence. Naturally, as one would expect in the case of a work completed so early as the sixth year of the fifteenth century, there are serious and obvious faults—for instance, the figures are too short, the hands and feet generally too small, and the drapery, in some points, badly handled—but all the personalities are so striking, so individual, the whole is so strongly grouped, that the effect is more than majestic. As M. Germain well says: "Il y a un souffle épique dans ces figures." Stand for five minutes before the stern, inflexible face of the law-giver; compare that statue, mentally, with the Moses of Michael Angelo, to which alone it is inferior, and you will begin to realize Claus Sluter's genius as a sculptor of the human face and form. He broke away boldly from primitive and conventional traditions, and went straight to nature, to the men about him, for his types. These strong physiognomies and massive forms are eminently Burgundian.^[152]



[Pg 190]

In the portal of the chapel the guide will show you other, and rather earlier work, generally attributed to Claus Sluter, namely, five statues representing Philippe le Hardi and his wife Margaret of Flanders, being presented to the Virgin by Saint Catherine and Saint John. Four of them may well be from the chisel of the famous sculptor, but I think, with M. Germain, that the figure of the Virgin is wrongly attributed, chiefly for the reason that the proportions are much longer than those of other Sluterian statues.

And what of the man whose genius was to exercise such influence upon Burgundian art? Little is known of him. He remains an enigmatic, mysterious figure, living for us only through his work, and that of the school of which he was the inspiring force. He died in 1406, the same year in which he had finished his Puits des Prophètes; leaving to his nephew, Claus de Werve, the task of further realizing their new ideals in sculpture.

Thus it came about that the second Claus—an artist not unworthy to follow his uncle—was entrusted with the construction of the next great Burgundian monument we have to consider, the tomb of Philippe le Hardi, now in the great hall of the musée, once the "salle des gardes" of the Ducal Palace. The commission had been given originally, in 1384, to Jean de Marville, who died after completing the masonry and the alabaster gallery. Claus Sluter made some progress with the *pleurants*, but it was not completed until the end of 1410, when young De Werve had been at work upon it for four years.

[Pg 191]

The masterpiece was received with universal acclamations. Jean sans Peur, with a Valois' eye for the beautiful, recognised the merit of his new imagier, and commissioned him forthwith to do his (the Duke's) own tomb. Claus accepted the task, but was never able to get to work. Money lacked; and the Duke of Burgundy was too deeply involved in the political struggles of his time to give heed to such trifles as financing the construction of a tomb, even though it were his own. So poor Claus, filled with a glorious ideal that he was never able to see realized in stone, wasted his life in waiting, waiting, until, in 1439, death found him, poor and unknown, and laid him in an obscure tomb, not of his own design, in the Chartreuse de Champnol. So fare they who hang upon princes' favours.

When Jean sans Peur had expiated, at Montereau, the crime of which I shall presently tell, his son, Philippe le Bon, had perforce to look about him for another imagier to do the work. His choice fell, unwisely, upon a Spaniard from Aragon, one Jean de la Huerta, an unscrupulous rascal, who bolted from Dijon in 1455, taking with him cash that he had not earned, and leaving behind him the tomb, void of sculpture, except the angels and the tabernacles of the gallery. The monument was completed, in 1466-1470, by his successor, Antoine le Moiturier, of Avignon.



[Pg 192]

The revolutionary mob destroyed both monuments; but they were pieced together again and restored; and there they stand, for all time let us hope, worthily housed in that magnificent Salle des Gardes. There is nothing in all Burgundy that so conveys, in one coup d'œil, the magnificence of the Valois Dukes.

Philippe le Hardi, clothed in a white robe and a blue mantle lined with ermine, lies, with folded hands, upon a slab of black marble. Two angels with outspread wings hold the helmet over his cushioned head, and his feet rest upon a lion's back. The form and face are realistically done, even to the veins on the hands. But, so far, all is conventional, traditional. It is when we look at the white-robed figures beneath the sculptured tabernacles of the gallery, that we recognise a new motif, dramatic realism, in the monumental art of the period. Claus Sluter and his nephew had developed the individuality of portraiture that made the success of the "Puits de Moïse." Their great patron Duke was dead; and all Dijon had followed weeping in his funeral procession. Claus reproduced that procession, perpetuated it in living stone. They are all there—the high functionaries, the praying monks, the plebeian, wiping his nose on his fingers, all done with a felicity and truth unequalled in any sculpture that has come down to us. Here is a hooded mourner comforted by a priest with finger on text, there an obstinate one receiving exhortation; and an old bourgeois, chin in hand, pondering the way of life. The attitudes alone are so significant that, though the face be hidden, you do not wish to look beneath the cowl. Resignation, despair, faith, argument; all are expressed in pose; the figures behind the pillars are treated with as much sincerity as those which are fully seen.^[153] Look up from them to the figure above their heads, and you will see at once that, while the angels have only a decorative function, the *pleurants* are both decorative and dramatic.



[Pg 193]

And what of Jean San Peur's tomb, with which young Claus had dreamed of outdoing his uncle? A glance will show that, as a whole, it is greatly inferior to that of the father. The recumbent figure

[Pg 194]

and the decorative angels are equally well done; are, perhaps, even superior in the matter of draperies, which were not Sluter's strong point; but the alabaster gallery lacks the harmonious simplicity of the earlier monument: the detail has been over-elaborated in the fashion of the period, and in a not unnatural though ineffectual attempt to improve upon a chef-d'œuvre. The *pleurants* directly imitative of those of Philip's tomb, are, without exception, less natural, less restrained, and less felicitous. Yet, despite all these faults, the monument remains a not unworthy companion of its predecessor.

Would we could say that Jean sans Peur himself was equally worthy of the first Valois Duke. In that case the whole course of French history might have been different and happier.



But the fact is that the Dukes' characters, ethically considered, are of the same relative merit as are their tombs. The contrast between the features of father and son is most striking. Philip has an open, almost handsome face, with a noble, though very Jewish, nose, and a generous mouth revealing kindness and good intentions. Jean's head, on the contrary, is ill-proportioned, flatter, with a weaker chin, and meaner nose. The cheek-bones are too prominent, and the crafty mouth and eye, and "disinheriting" expression, bid the student of physiognomy beware.

Yet, stained though he was by one bloody crime, we shall judge wrongly if we conceive as wholly bad this little chétif, crafty, inarticulate, careful man, who, in days of unbridled luxury, dared to be seen, like Louis XI., in mended clothes, and never risked large sums at play.^[154] He was a working prince—brave, intelligent, interested; with his finger always upon the pulse of public opinion. A hardy campaigner, he knew how to

endure patiently hunger and thirst, heat and cold, rains and winds; and he possessed the gift, inestimably valuable in those days, of winning and holding the loyal devotion of his immediate friends and servants.^[155]

Looking at him, lying there robed, upon royal marble, one's mind returns to the foul murder that for thirty years held France in misery, and drenched her fair fields in blood—a deed that robbed the doer of all happiness, and darkened the after years of his life with the shadow of impending death, until a revenge, not less cowardly in conception, nor less pregnant with calamity, loosed again civil war upon France, and humbled the distracted country beneath a foreign dominion.

For some considerable time before the murder, hatred, bitter though concealed, had existed between Jean sans Peur and Louis, Duc d'Orléans, the brother of King Charles VI. Louis, himself a poet, was a pretty, wayward, loose-living, irresponsible, and charming personality, gifted with that fantastic grace of the early renaissance that is so pleasing in his son, Charles d'Orléans, the singer of Blois. Louis, naturally, was beloved of all ladies, and in spite of his faults—if not because of them, since they were gracious ones—was liked, even by the priests whom he cajoled, and by the commoners whom he oppressed.

The spirited youngster, with an eye upon his Burgundian rival, had taken for his device a knotty cudgel and the words "Je l'envie" (I defy). Jean sans Peur, knowing well at whom that shaft was aimed, retorted by adopting for himself a plane, with the motto, "Je le Tiens" (I hold it), thereby intimating his intention of planing down that cudgel. None guessed how soon he would do so.

Though each prince wore his device openly, and displayed it broadcast on robe, banner, and pennon, they were brought together, and there was sworn reconciliation between the pair. On the 20th November, 1407, they heard mass, and took the sacrament side by side. Two days later the princes attended a great dinner given by the Duc de Berri. After the feast they embraced, drank to each other, and again swore friendship.

The Queen, who was lodging at the time in a little hotel in the old Rue du Temple, near the Porte Barbette, had recently given birth to a still-born child. On November 23rd, the duke of Orleans, always on the best of terms with his sister-in-law—popular rumour, indeed, made her his mistress—came to offer his condolences, and supped with her in that house. The gay meal was interrupted by the advent of a suborned valet de chambre of the king, summoning the duke immediately to the royal presence.

"Il a hâte de vous parler," said the messenger, "pour chose qui touche grandement à vous et à lui."^[156]

The Duke, nothing doubting, ordered his mule to be brought without delay, and, though he had six hundred armed men in Paris, set out, unaccompanied, except by two squires, mounted upon the same horse, and four or five valets on foot carrying torches. It was about eight o'clock in the evening; the night was overcast (assez brun), and the street deserted. The Duke, dressed in a simple costume of black damask, rode slowly down the old Rue du Temple, singing, and playing with his glove. As he was passing before the house of the Maréchal de Rieux, no more than a hundred paces distant from the Queen's apartments, a company of about twenty armed men, in ambuscade behind a house called L'Image Notre Dame, broke out upon the little party. The horse on which were the two squires, startled by the noise, took fright, and galloped away down the street. With cries of "À mort! à mort!" the assassins fell upon the Duke, and one of them struck

him a blow with an axe that cut off his hand.

"What is this?" cried Louis. "Who are all these? I am the Duc d'Orléans."

"'Tis you whom we want" (C'est ce que nous demandons) replied the assailants. In a moment, a storm of blows, from sword, axe, and spiked club, brought him down from his mule. He rose upon his knees, but, before he could recover himself, his head was split open, and his brains were streaming over the pavement. "And they turned him over and over, and so terribly hammered him that he was soon dead and piteously slain." A young page, who sought to defend his master, was likewise struck down; another, grievously wounded, managed to escape into a little shop in the Rue des Rosiers.

[Pg 197]



At that very hour, Jaquette, the wife of a poor cobbler, was in her room, high above the street, awaiting her husband's return. While taking in a garment that had been hanging out of the window to dry, she saw a nobleman pass by on horseback, and, a moment after, while putting her child to bed, she heard the shouts of "À mort! à mort!" She ran to the window with her child in her arms, and, throwing open the casement cried, "Au meurtre, au meurtre!" "Taisez-vous mauvaise femme!" cried one who noticed her, and arrows rattled upon the wall of the house. A moment later, all was over. A big man in a red chaperon drawn down over his eyes, who seemed to be the leader, shouted, "Put out all lights, and let us be off; he is dead!" Some sprang on to their horses which were in waiting at the gates of the Maison Notre Dame, and with a last blow or two at the lifeless body of the Duke, they made off, mounted and on foot, crying, "Au feu! au feu!" in response to the cries of "murder" raised by some of the Duke's men who had come upon the scene.

[Pg 198]

The assassins had set fire to the Maison Notre Dame. As they fled, they threw down behind them iron traps to prevent pursuit, and coerced terrified shopkeepers into extinguishing the lights in the shops along their route. The Duke's men found their master in a pitiable plight. The skull lay open in two places, the left hand was cut off, and the right arm was almost severed. Beside the dead Duke, the young German page, Jacob, lay gasping out his life.

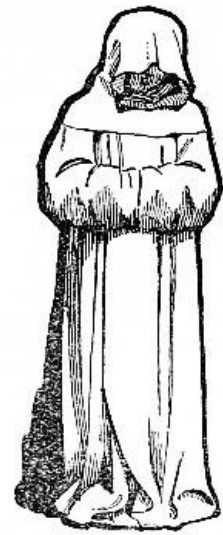
"Ah! mon maître, ah! mon maître!" Il se complaignoit moult fort, come s'il vouloit mourir.^[157]

When it was known that the murdered body of young Louis of Orléans was lying in the Hotel de Rieux, all Paris was in consternation. Death veiled his faults from the people. They could see only his virtues. A prince so gallant and debonair, to die so young! the pity of it! Women and men, noble and base-born, wept for him, so foully slain. Did not even his great rival of Burgundy echo their grief?^[158]

"Never" was he heard to say, "was more wicked nor traitorous murder committed nor executed in his kingdom."

[Pg 199]

At the solemn funeral in the Church of the Célestins, Jean sans Peur was one of those who bore the pall.^[159] He was to bear that pall for the remainder of his life.^[160] Of hundreds who watched him there, clothed in deep mourning, and weeping bitterly,^[161] how many guessed the truth. Yet the truth was not long concealed. When the hue and cry was raised, it soon became known that the assassins had fled towards Rue Mauconseil, where was the Palace of the Duke of Burgundy; and the Provost of Paris suggested that he could soon lay hands on his men, were he permitted to search the hotels of the Princes. Then the Duke of Burgundy's countenance was observed to pale. Drawing aside the Duke of Berri and the King of Sicily, he whispered to them: "'Twas I, the Devil tempted me." They shrank from him; the Duke of Berri burst into tears. "I have lost both my nephews," he murmured.



A few hours later the scene was changed. Pride had conquered remorse in the heart of Jean sans Peur. Denied access to the Council, the murderer mounted horse, and galloped ventre à terre, into Flanders, there to steel his conscience against a deed which was to darken his shortened days with the shadow of impending death, and for thirty years was to drench the fields of France in the blood of her best.

The absent Duke entrusted to a certain learned doctor of Theology, Jean Petit, the duty of whitewashing his master—a task less formidable than it sounds to those unversed in the casuistry of the schools of that day. To do Petit justice, he seems to have acquitted himself as well as the obvious weakness of his case would permit.

Starting from the principal that it is "licit and meritorious to slay a tyrant traitorous and disloyal to his king and sovereign lord," he proceeded to show, to his own satisfaction, that the murder of the "criminal" Duke of Orleans "was perpetrated for the very great good of the king's person, and that of his children and all the kingdom," and held that the king should not only be pleased thereat, but should pardon the Seigneur de Bourgogne, "and remunerate him in every way, that is to say in love, honour, and riches, following the example of remunerations made to Monseigneur Michael the Archangel and the valiant man Phineas."

[Pg 200]

This extraordinary document, which, to the modern mind, is a jumble of unconscious humour and deliberate blasphemy, aroused, not unnaturally, "much murmuring within the town of Paris." The quarrel was taken up far and wide, and soon all France was divided into two camps, the Armagnacs,^[162] known by the white scarf, and the Burgundians, whose badge was the Cross of St. Andrew.



We have no space in which to follow here the varying fortunes of the two parties. For long years, in town and country, they fought it out; the children of the villages with fists, feet, stones, and sticks; their elders in the towns, with sword, dagger, and club. In the autumn of 1418 the Burgundians effected an entry into Paris, and the excited mob commenced an indiscriminate slaughter of their opponents. Two presidents of parliament, magistrates, bishops, even, fell. Sixteen hundred persons perished in a day. They were slain in the prisons, they were slain in the street. "Did you see your enemy passing on the other side of the way, you had but to cry "À l'Armagnac" and he was dead." A woman, about to become a mother, was ripped open; within her dead body, as she lay in the street, the child could

be seen to move. "Vois donc," said the canaille, "this little dog still stirs." But none durst take the child. No Burgundian priest would baptise a little Armagnac. Why should he save an enemy's brat from damnation?

"The children played with the corpses in the streets. The body of the Constable and others lay for three days in the palace, a butt for the jests of the passers by. Some of them remembered to take a strip of skin from his back, so that he, too, might wear in death, the white emblem of the living Armagnacs." At last the stench forced them to throw all the debris into the tomberaux; thence, without priest or prayer, into an open ditch in the pig-market.^[163]

[Pg 201]

These closing years of the reign of the mad king,^[164] from 1418 and on to 1425, were the darkest in all the history of France. War, famine, pestilence, three grim spectres, stalked over the land. Every evening a starving crowd surged round the bake-houses of Paris. In all the town were heard the piteous lamentations of little children crying: "Je meurs de faim!" Upon a dung-heap, thirty boys and girls died of hunger and cold. The dog-knacker was followed by the poor, who, as he slew, devoured all, "chair et trippes."^[165] Nor were things better without the town. The fields, deserted by their normal labourers, were re-peopled with wolves, that, scouring the country in great packs, grew fat upon the corpses they scratched up. The people lived only in the woods and the fortresses; the towns teemed with men at arms; all culture was abandoned, except around the ramparts, within sight of the sentry upon his tower. When the enemy appeared upon the horizon, the sound of the tocsin moved man and beast, by a common instinct, to seek shelter within the walls.^[166] Hunger made brigands of all.

France was receiving at the hand of God full measure for all her sins. The dead man's pall, that Jean sans Peur had been bearing through twelve wretched years of misery and blood, were soon to cover his own mangled body. Murder, as of old, was to breed murder. He who had taken the sword, was to perish by it.

Several attempts, more or less futile, had been made to patch up a reconciliation between the Duke of Burgundy and the Orleanist Dauphin, a boy of sixteen years. In the autumn of the year 1419, a meeting was arranged to be held in a long, wooden gallery, specially erected on the bridge of Montereau, at the junction of the Seine and the Yonne.

Burgundy's fortunes at this time were at a low ebb, and the Dauphin's principal counsellors thought the time had come to deal their enemy a crushing blow. The rumour of their intention spread, and Jean was warned many times of his danger; but he made light of it. In vain his servants assured him that a plot was laid, that he was going to his death. He would not listen. At the last moment, however, he seems to have felt some compunction; for he delayed his coming so long that Tanneguy du Chatel was sent to fetch him. The duke hesitated no more. "This is he in whom I trust," said he, and he laid his hand upon du Chatel's shoulder.

[Pg 202]

The accounts of the final scene differ materially; the exact truth will probably never be known. On coming into the Dauphin's presence, the Duke removed his velvet cap, and kneeling, made a profound obeisance. Hardly had he risen to his feet when a confused mêlée arose, and the young Dauphin was led off to the Castle of Montereau. Meanwhile the assassins had got to work. The first blow passed down the right side of the Duke's face, and cut off the hand with which he sought to ward off the stroke. The second pierced his heart, when, "with a sigh and a movement of the loins," he fell. The abandoned body was buried by the curé of Montereau in the town cemetery, where it was found, several weeks after, clothed only in hose, doublet, and breeches. "A piteous thing to see, and no man there could refrain from weeping."^[167]

Thus the Duke of Orleans was avenged; but the act, as might have been expected, only raised the fallen fortunes of the party it was intended finally to destroy.

As it had been with his victim, so, in turn, it was with Jean. Death expiated the murder, and veiled the murderer's faults. The many, who had been lukewarm for Burgundy, returned to their allegiance again.



Footnotes:

- [143] De Barante, Tome II., pp. 69, 70.
- [144] The four Dukes of the house of Valois were, Philip le Hardi, 1365-1404, Jean sans Peur, 1404-1419, Philip le Bon, 1419-1467, and Charles le Téméraire, 1467-1476.
- [145] I have heard Philip le Hardi described by a flippant American as "Philip le Hard-up."
- [146] Compare the devise of our Plantagenet Kings.
- [147] The coats cost 2977 livres d'or, an enormous sum, bearing in mind the purchasing power of money in those days. De Barante, Tome II., p. 131.
- [148] Michelet V. pp. 72-77.
- [149] A lady well-known in Russian "revolutionary" circles, told me, recently, of similar experiences in Russia to-day. Suicides are so frequent as to excite little comment. Children, even, have caught the contagion. "Life fails them—they turn to death."
- [150] Juvénal des Ursins, quoted Michelet, Tome V., p. 183.
- [151] A. Germain "Les Néerlandais en Bourgogne," p. 38, 39.
- [152] The prophets are all commemorative of Christ, taken from the Messianic texts. The costumes are supposed to be those of the actors in the mystery plays of that time. Germain, p. 63.
- [153] The figures have not been restored in their original order, which is regrettable, as some of the processional effect is thereby lost.
- [154] Shakespeare makes him articulate enough in Henry V., Act V., scene 2. His economies were, perhaps, begotten of his father's prodigalities, who bequeathed only debts and a dukedom.
- [155] Kleinclausz "Histoire de la Bourgogne," p. 142. Also De Barante, Tome IV., p. 466.
- [156] "He is eager to speak with you on a matter that touches closely both you and him."
- [157] Michelet.
- [158] For a contemporary account of the murder, see Monstrelet.
- [159] The others were the King of Sicily and the Dukes of Bourbon and Berri.
- [160] Michelet.
- [161] There is no reason to suppose that the tears were hypocritical. Such display of emotion was in the spirit of the times; and certainly no man had better cause than its author to regret the murder.
- [162] After Bernard d'Armagnac, brother-in-law of the young Duke of Orleans.
- [163] Michelet, Tome VI., pp. 55, 56.
- [164] Charles VI. died in 1422, deeply mourned by the common people. "Ah! très cher prince, jamais nous n'en aurons un si bon." Journal du Bourgeois.

[165] Michelet, Tome VI., p. 114, "Flesh and entrails."

[166] Barante, Tome V., p. 204.

[167] Kleinclausz, p. 146.



CHAPTER XIV

After this long historical digression, it is quite time that we returned to the Salle des Gardes, where there are many good things to be seen beside the tombs of the Dukes. Not the least interesting are the ducal portraits, all very Jewish, and bearing a strong family likeness. In the picture gallery adjoining is a portrait of Charles le Téméraire, by Van Hemerren, done, it is said, shortly before his death at Nancy. Here is Valois madness, indeed; shown in the wildly staring eyes, the furrowed brow, the pursed lips, the poised head, the spread hands, and straying fingers—a mind and body in extreme of tension. What brought the last of the Valois Dukes to such a pass? Readers who do not know will discover, when we come to talk of—the Post Office!

Upon the many other things worth seeing in that Salle des Gardes, I have no time to dwell; also the reader will find them catalogued in any guide. But one or two I will mention. The most striking of all, perhaps, is the magnificent chimney-piece, built in 1504, after the great fire, which, in 1502, destroyed all the decorations and the original ceiling of the chamber. On the walls are two gorgeous altarpieces in wood-gilt, done by a Flemish artist, Jacques de Baerze, to the order of Philippe le Bon, in 1391. The subjects of one are: The Execution of John the Baptist, The Martyrdom of St. Catherine; and the Temptation of St. Anthony. Those of the other include the Adoration of the Magi, Calvary, and the Entombment. All the figures, especially the Roman soldiery, in very mediæval clothing, playing dice for Christ's vesture at the foot of the Cross, and the weeping relatives, are treated with the usual vivacity and realism of the Burgundian school; the whole is decorated with flamboyant Gothic detail of richness unrivalled, so far as I am aware, by any similar work, excepting, possibly, the famous rétable at the Eglise de Brou. The painting and gilding of the volets is by Melchior Broederlam, court painter to Philippe le Hardi.

[Pg 204]



There are also two charming sixteenth century renaissance doors, from the Palais de Justice, carved with the most perfect arabesques, and a torso by Hugues Sambin, the famous architect who built the curious façade of the Eglise St. Michel. The guide will point out to you, in the centre cabinets, St. Bernard's Cup, the cross of his friend St. Robert, who received him when he first came to Citeaux, and other good relics, including a cast of a skull, said to be that of Jean sans Peur, with a slit in it—the slit through which the English entered France, as our guide sagely remarked. The epigram earned for him the respect due to an homme instruit, until he proffered the information that the église Notre Dame is not a thirteenth century church!

If you want to get an idea of Dijon in mediæval times, study the sixteenth century tapestry in this salle. It shows a walled city with many churches, most of which have now disappeared. Indeed, with the exception of the Tour du Logis du Roi, or Tour de la Terrasse, beneath which you are standing at the moment, very few of the buildings are easily recognisable. The subject represents the siege of the City by the Swiss. The black virgin, now, I believe, in the Eglise Notre Dame, has been borne out to assist in the relief of the

[Pg 205]

City, and the mayor of the town is in negotiation with the enemy. They covenanted to raise the siege for a specified sum; but were foolish enough to depart without the cash, which, consequently was never paid.

The remainder of the musée installed in the Palace has little that is of first-rate interest, except, the ducal kitchen, some good Burgundian altarpieces, and a large collection of modern statues, chiefly by the Burgundian Rude (1784-1855).^[168] Among hundreds of inferior pictures, I was most interested in three paintings of Dijon Castle, in salle 8, by G. P. H. Jeannot. Dijon Castle does not now exist. If the reader can endure more history, I will tell him the reason why.

If you will walk down the Rue de la Liberté, in this town, and turn, two hundred yards or so below the arch, along one of the narrow streets to the left, you will emerge on to a large *place*, in the centre of which stands a great, white building. That white building, the Post Office, occupies the site of the Castle, which, until a few years ago, stood as a memento of the end of the Valois Dukes. Dijon, however, now grown to be a great and prosperous city, a centre of the wine trade, is more concerned with the development of her industries than with her historical monuments; consequently, when a new Post Office was needed, the authorities came to the conclusion that a castle so centrally situate must go.^[169] It went: but its memories remain. Its story is that of the final struggle between Burgundy and France, between Charles le Téméraire and Louis XI., respective champions of the old order and the new.^[169]

These rivals were not well matched. It was the unequal combat of the matador against the bull. Charles, though a prince of great charm and ability, endowed with the dual qualities of scholar and general, was still but a man of his time. If he possessed the virtues of the middle ages—courage, daring, resolution,—he shared also its defects—pride, obstinacy, shortsightedness, boundless ambition, and a touch, perhaps, of the hereditary insanity of the House of Valois. Dreams of more than feudal glory, of empire, even, dazzled him.

His father had been "Philip the Good"; the son should be Alexander the Great. "Si grand et si puissant qu'il put être conducteur et meneur des autres." He would re-establish in greater glory, with wider bounds, the ancient Kingdom of Burgundy. And France! He reckoned without France. It was not within the power of this man to fathom nor to play move for move against such an opponent as Louis. He had held the king in his grasp once,^[170] and had let him go. The opportunity would never recur.

[Pg 206]

Patient, untiring Louis, touched, just as his rival was, with insanity, endowed with more than the common cunning of his type, possessed a mind as modern, almost, in essentials, as was that of Bacon half a century later. He foresaw clearly enough the coming death of feudalism, and, while waiting wolf-like, to prey upon the corpse, he bent his mind to the wider constructive processes of a subtler, more Machiavellian policy.

The reigning princes of Europe were old; Louis, noting the fact, realized that he had only to wait, leaving the active part to his ally, Death, a power as certain as God's, and one, moreover, that he need not cajole with prayers, nor bribe with silver balustrades. He waited, while the black angel shook the tree; then he gathered the plums as they fell: and France was his.

King Charles, meanwhile—king in all but name—was burning to fight all comers. He flung himself first upon the Swiss, who were in league against him. He was defeated at Grandson, and again at Morat, on the 22nd June, 1476, losing many men and much spoil, including his great diamond, one of the largest in Christendom.^[171] He lost heart, too, and retired into solitude, letting his beard grow, and dreaming of revenge. There was to be no revenge for him.

On the 22nd October, he commenced the siege of Nancy, which he prosecuted with quiet energy, until, in the following January, he heard that the Swiss were advancing against him to the relief of the town. The doomed Duke turned to meet them, and his fate. His army, wearied by much campaigning, was completely routed. The following day Duke Charles could not be found; various rumours were current in the town concerning him.

He was dead; he was not dead. "Beware," said the timid ones, "lest you behave otherwise than if he were yet alive, for his vengeance will be terrible on his return." On 6th January there was brought to Duke René, a young page, named Jean Baptiste Colonna, who said he had seen his master fall, and could find the place. The next day they recommenced their search for the body. The page led them to a pond called the Etang de St. Jean, distant about three culverin shots from the town. There, half-buried in the mud-banks of a little stream, near a chapel, lay a dozen despoiled corpses. "They commenced to search all the dead; all were naked and frozen, scarcely could one know them; the page, passing here and there, found many mighty ones, and great and small, white as snow. And all turned them over. 'Alas!' said he, 'Here is my good master.'"^[172]

[Pg 207]

Others gathered round. As they lifted the head from the ice to which it had frozen, the skin was torn from the face. Already the wolves and dogs had been at work upon the other cheek; moreover a great wound had split the head from the ear to the mouth.^[173]

In such condition the corpse was not easily recognisable, but Olivier de la Marche and others identified it by the teeth and the nails, and by certain marks, such as the scar of the wound received at Montlhéri. When they had washed the body in warm water and wine, it was easily recognised by all. In addition to the wound in the head, there were two others, one through the thighs, and another below the loins. The dead Duke was borne into the town, and placed in a velvet bed beneath a canopy of black satin. The corpse was clothed in a camisole of white satin, and covered with a crimson mantle of the same material. A Ducal crown was laid on the head, scarlet shoes and golden spurs upon the feet. "The said Duke being honourably clothed, he was white as snow; he was small and well-limbed; on a table, well wrapped up in white sheets, upon a silk pillow, on the head a red cap set, the hands joined, the cross and holy water beside him; all who would might see him, none were turned away; some prayed God for him, and others not." The victorious René, Duke of Lorraine, came to throw holy water upon the body of the unhappy prince.

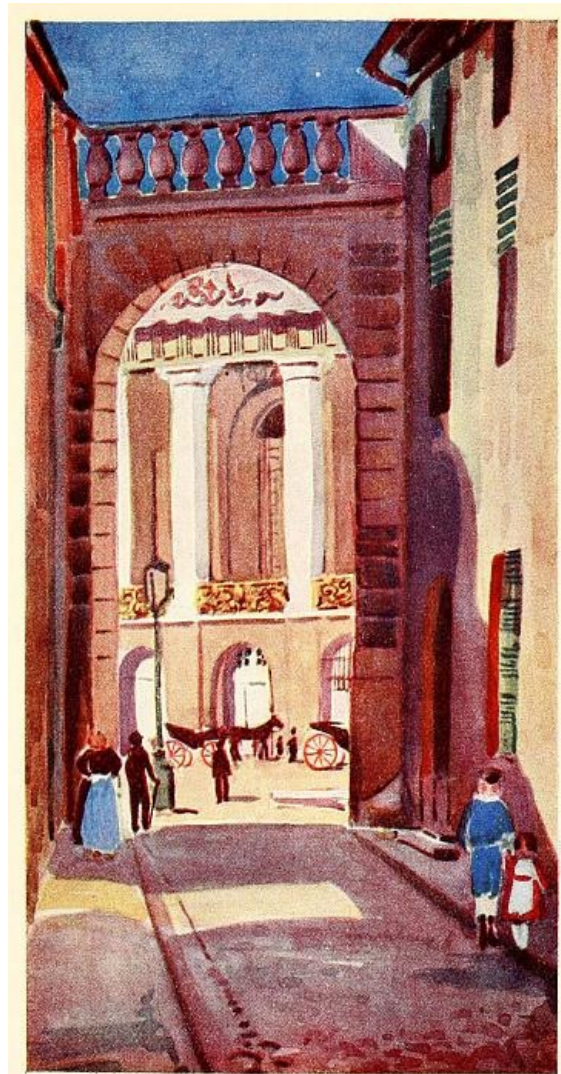
He took the hand beneath the coverlet; tears came into his eyes. "Ah! dear cousin," said he, "may God receive your soul, you have brought on us many an ill and many a sorrow." Then he kissed the hand, fell upon his knees, and remained for a quarter of an hour in prayer.^[174]

[Pg 208]

Louis XI. made no attempt to conceal his rejoicing over the tragedy of Nancy. A silver balustrade, weighing 6,776 marks, erected around the tomb of St. Martin de Tours, testified his gratitude to the heavenly powers, who had removed the rival of the most Christian King. Then, with great energy, he proceeded to support his claim to Burgundy. Towns were occupied; rebels and seditious persons were executed and proscribed, and a castle was erected at the gates of Beaune, in addition to that at Dijon. Both were occupied by royal garrisons responsible for the subjection of the country.

On July 31st, 1479, the king made his solemn entry into Dijon. "The mayor, the échevins, the procureurs, clothed in scarlet robes, walked before him, as they had formerly walked before the Dukes; the clergy in their chapes bore the holy relics. Louis proceeded first to the Abbey of St. Bénigne, where the Dijonnais swore fealty to him, as to their natural lord, and prayed him to hold them in his good grace; then, preceded by trumpets, tambourines, and minstrels, he went to lodge at the Ducal Palace. Everywhere they covered with lime the arms of Burgundy, broke the windows of the Chambre Des Comtes which bore that device, and replaced it by that of the King with the cord of St. Michael and the arms of the Dauphin."^[175]

So ended the power of Burgundy. From the days of Philippe le Hardi, onwards, there had arisen in the minds of those proud dukes—who were more than dukes—a dream of a new kingdom that should exceed in extent and in dominion the old Burgundy of their fathers—a kingdom, an empire, perhaps, freed for ever from the hated rivalry of the Fleur-de-lys. But that dream was not to be realised. All the conditions, geographical, historical, psychological, were against them; nor had the dukes themselves, for all their abilities, the constructive minds necessary for the accomplishment of such a task. Louis, on the other hand, as we have seen, possessed such a mind; and destiny and death, as though consciously realizing the fact, worked for him. Burgundy was no more than the greatest of the fruits that fell into his lap.



STREET IN DIJON

Facing page 208

Nevertheless, we shall surely do well to remember these years, and these Dukes, that went to the making of France. Dijon, it appears, proud of her mustard, and of her wine-begotten prosperity, does not care to remember. She has pulled down the unworthy memento of subjection. Truly she has her reward. She has the best Post Office in the Duchy.

[Pg 209]

Now, after all this history, what of Dijon as it is to-day? Well, modern Dijon, despite the ever-to-

be-deplored demolition of the Castle, remains one of the most individual and fascinating of French towns—a cheerful, lively, bustling little city, full of fine buildings, and unexpected architectural surprises of the Renaissance and earlier times. For its size, I know no town in France in which past and present have blended more happily. Wherever you walk, in the heart of the town, the next corner has something fascinating to show.

The building which first calls for attention is the Cathedral of St. Bénigne. Of the early, circular, Romanesque church, which dated from the eleventh century, and was probably imitated from the Holy Sepulchre, nothing now remains but the crypt. The primitive, carved pillars are the oldest of their kind in Burgundy, and mark the origin of an art of sculpture, that, as we have already seen, was to go far. In this rude church was buried St. Bénigne, the Christian martyr of the third century; here, too, the pious Alèthe, St. Bernard's mother, was laid, probably in the year 1110; and here, many a time, Bernard himself came down from his father's castle at Fontaine, to pray, in those early days when his spirit was torn between the claims of cloister and the world. The cathedral, above ground, though historically interesting, as the scene of the inaugural ceremonies of the great Dukes, and the solemn merger of the duchy into the kingdom of France, is not architecturally of first-rate interest. Gothic art was not always well inspired in Burgundy during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and St. Bénigne is no exception to the rule. The façade is very bold, for a church of cathedral rank; the west window is weak and shallow, and the parvis mean and uninteresting. Nor is the interior successful. The triforium, one of the feeblest I know, is suggestive of a cardboard model, and the simplicity of the nave has been broken by a series of restless yearning statues, that, poised upon the abaci of the capitals, grimace at one another across the nave. The thirteenth-century choir is better; though spoiled architecturally by bare spaces of wall between the triforium and the sills of the clerestory. The exterior, however, especially as seen from the east-end, is impressive, and the "Snake-skin" tiling, though rather trying at first, is rich and effective, when the eye has become accustomed to the shock.

[Pg 210]

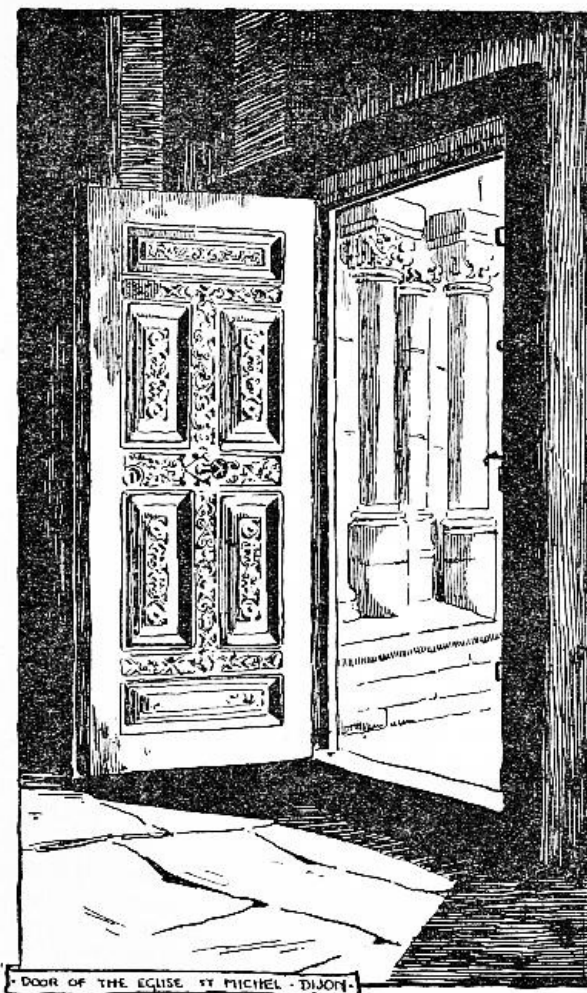
Opposite to St. Bénigne is a typical Burgundian church of the twelfth century, with a triple porch and narthex, an octagonal tower, and a beautiful Romanesque south doorway. It is now a secular building, as are several other old churches of Dijon. You may look, as I did, through a decorated window of St. Etienne, and see a man changing his shirt!

Another church of considerable interest, from the architectural point of view, is St. Michel. I am not referring to the interior, which is, on the whole, an ineffective example of late Gothic, with clumsy vaulting ribs, and heavy, square, nave piers, rounded off by vaulting shafts at the angles—but to the façade, one of the best examples I know of Gothic design worked out in Renaissance detail, with four classical orders superposed.^[176] Hugues Sambin, the architect, or reputed architect—he who did those beautiful doors for the Palace de Justice, that we have seen in the Musée—has made so harmonious a compromise of the two styles, that I wonder he has not found more imitators. The fact that others dared not follow emphasises the difficulty of the task.

But the most interesting, by far, of all the churches of Dijon, is Notre Dame, that, within hail of the Palace, and dedicated to Our Lady, enjoyed the special patronage of the Dukes. It was here that, after the great tournament at the arbre Charlemagne, in the plain south of Dijon, to be spoken of presently, the competing knights came to hang up their shields, and to render thanks to their preserver. Here, too, in 1453, after long imprisonment in the east, came Philippe Pot, whom also we shall meet again, barefooted, amidst a brilliant assemblage, to fulfil his vows to Notre Dame de Bon Espoir.

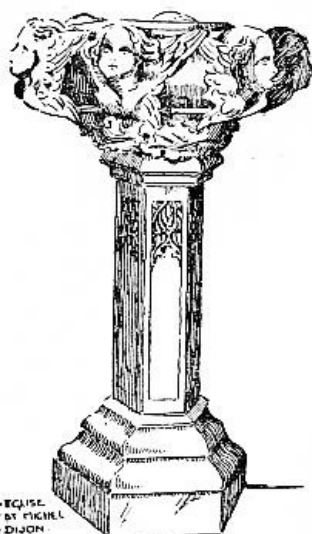
Notre Dame is a purely Burgundian Gothic church, of the thirteenth century. The interior, with its typical stiff leaf capitals, and pointed arches, is not very remarkable. The arcade round the choir is good; but the square blocks above the abaci, that take the vaulting shafts, are clumsy, and the rose windows without tracery, in the transept, are not effective. As with St. Michel, it is the exterior design that makes the church so remarkable from an architectural point of view. The triple porch—if its carvings were as good as those above—must have been very charming before the revolutionary gentlemen set to work with hammer and axe upon tympanum and arch.

[Pg 211]



Even now it is pleasing. Indeed, the west front, as seen from the Rue des Forges, though, perhaps, a little stiff, is most striking, especially when the bright sun of Burgundy is picking out in warm light and pitchy shadow the triple row of strange eager faces, that, craning their necks out over the street, gaze down upon the passers-by. These grotesque beasts, and the friezes in which they dwell, are among the best examples of Burgundian sculpture to be seen anywhere. They have all the vigour, individuality, and vivacity that are characteristic of the Province. The façade, as a whole, with its double arcade, between the friezes, surmounting the triple porch, is one of the most original in France, and would be much more effective than it is, could it be better seen. The tower, too, and the flanking turrets, are boldly designed, and relieved with little sculptures, grinning suns and grimacing heads, on the corbels and the springings, that suggest an art lively and alert compared with the conventional dulness of St. Bénigne. The sense of realism is increased by the many pigeons—not of stone—who glide all day over monsters' backs, and coo into old monks' ears.

[Pg 212]



The Jacquemart clock on the tower was brought to Dijon by Philippe le Hardi, after the sack of Courtrai, in 1383. Froissart, charmed with it, declared it to be "ouvrage le plus beau qu'on put trouver deçà ni delà la mer." Philip may have thought so, too; since he chose it for his trophy.

Nearly every street in this central part of old Dijon, around the palace of the Dukes, has many good things. Late Gothic buildings meet you at every turn, and in no town of France that I know, except, perhaps, Toulouse, will you find better Renaissance houses. The fronts of the Maison Milsand and the Maison des Caryatides, are both charming of their kind; and so is the courtyard of the Maison Richard, or Hotel des Ambassadeurs, with a magnificent mediæval staircase, and a fifteenth century gallery of perpendicular woodwork. Behind Notre Dame is the old Hotel Vogué, with one of the fine snake-skin roofs that are a feature of Dijon.

[Pg 213]

But of all the quiet haunts in the city, the best are the little garden without, and the courtyard within, the Palace of the Dukes. Looking up through green boughs at the beautiful windows of the Salle des Gardes and the Tour de la Terrasse, or, from a post upon the inner flag-stones, peering into the dark shadows of the lovely Renaissance

staircase that mounts by the Tour de Bar,^[177] you may go back again into the days when Dijon was more famous, more alive, than mustard and gingerbread can ever make it.

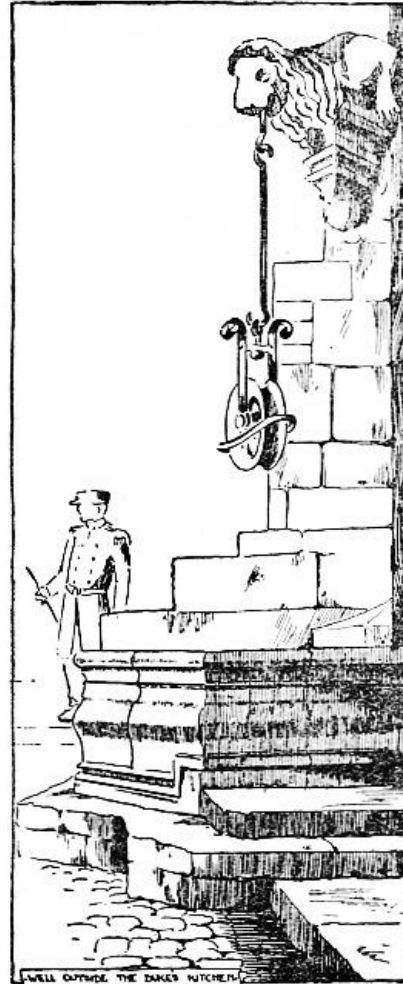
The mention of mustard and gingerbread, reminds me that here, opposite to the staircase, is the kitchen, where, between eight great furnaces, two in each

wall, below a converging shaft, fashioned to carry the fumes upward to the blue sky, the Duke's chef superintended a small army of perspiring cooks and scullions.

My wife's brains were busy with such dreams, as she sat in that courtyard sketching the well, the staircase, and little Marie Bon, who, for two sous, and the privilege of being allowed to tell about her uncle, also a painter—he worked on back doors—allowed herself to be drawn. And while the picture grew, tiresome boys would come up and jostle each other, and make remarks—usually, however, of a complimentary nature.



[Pg 214]



"Ma foi, c'est épatant, ça!" "C'est très chic—beaucoup mieux qu'une photographie."

[Pg 215]

Gallant young men, too, would come, and say boldly, as though prepared to step into the breach, "Madame, n'a pas de cavalier aujourd'hui!" And diffident old ladies, shy, but unable to restrain their curiosity, would come up and say, "Est-ce qu'on est permis de regarder un peu, Madame?" And my wife would smile and reply, "Mais oui, certainement." For towards good and diffident old ladies her heart is as soft as it is adamantine towards small and cheeky urchins.

One other building in Dijon I will mention—the Palais de Justice, which has a beautiful Renaissance façade, with a high gable in the Flemish style, and a domed Corinthian porch. The threatening darkness of the stone, and the grim, lurid, purplish colours it takes in certain lights, harmonise well with our memories of deeds done in that Salle des Pas Perdus, and the torture chamber of the prisons within. This Palace was also the Parliament House of the Valois Dukes.



But we, who pass our days in London, soon weary of other cities, even though they be ancient and French; besides, we wanted to see something of the environs of Dijon; so a fine afternoon

found us cycling along the five kilometres of flat yet attractive road that leads by the Canal de Bourgogne to Plombières, in the valley of the Ouche. There was music all the way; the breeze that whispered to the "paint-brush" poplars, and rustled in the reeds and grasses of the bank; the song of the grasshoppers, the "sound of waters shaken" where they curled foaming through the lock gates. We had beauty with us, too; all the mature beauty of a bright autumn day, as we glided beside the still water, between waving grasses and lichen-gilded trunks. On our left were golden vineyards, and, beneath them, rose-embowered cottages and jagged quarries where brawny quarrymen were dealing mighty, swinging strokes that echoed through the valley. To our right were the terraced hills of Talant, and ahead the tower of Plombières church, high above the village roofs. We passed white-hooded peasants—ample women with genuine, solid bodies, ambling homeward from the markets of Dijon, and black-bloused peasants, who, blessed with a patience that was never given to us, were "soaking an indefinite bait in an indifferent stream;" we passed blazing bonfires by the side of the road, whereon girls were heaping all the grasses they had cut during a busy day with the sickle. And when we got there, we found the mairie besieged by women in white dresses and men in black coats. There was a wedding; and couples were whirling in the Salle de Bal.

[Pg 216]

That Talant I spoke of, on the hill, is another spot to make for between tea and dinner; if only for the views it gives you down over the City of Dijon and the Valley of the Ouche. From the village green, shaded with ancient walnut trees, between which the children play with their dappled goats, there lie before you, across the willow-fringed silver streak that is the Canal de Bourgogne, the hills of the Côte d'Or, now shrouded in the purple mists of evening. Southward, looming through the red smoke-wreaths, that curl upwards from its factories, rise the towered palace, and the spires of the ducal city. Below, among the vines and fruit trees, beside the red gravel pit in the grey cemetery, the flames of the peasants' fires, flashing in lines, like the camp fires of a beleaguered town, are deepening with an opalesque veil of floating vapour the gathering mysteries of the night.

As we climbed the road that winds up the hill to Talant, whose old Castle, by the way, was the scene of a hundred memorable events, that I have no time to remember now, we saw on our right another wooded spur of the Côte d'Or, crowned with a big church and a little one. We knew it at once for Fontaine, the home of St. Bernard—a spot not to be missed. The next day found us there. Passing through the village, we came to a small, round pool at the foot of the steep, shaded with a ring of poplars and walnut trees. This must be the very pool in which St. Bernard plunged, when, in the hey-day of youth, he felt his blood glowing too warmly within him. I wonder that the peasants, or the priests, have not made holy water of it before this. We climbed the hill, and, sitting on a broken stone wall, caught glimpses, across the changing vines, of distant Dijon towers, while those improvident grasshoppers, who should have been harvesting against a coming winter, just sang and sang, as though they would out-sing the larks.

[Pg 217]

Then I wandered through the little Burgundian church, and the tangled wilderness of a churchyard, while my wife, sitting enthroned in lilac bushes, and eating blackberries of her own picking, watched the western sun gilding, height beyond height, the distant hills, and dreamed of Bernard, her chosen patron saint. How often must he, torn between chivalry and church, have wrestled with his spirit upon that very spot.

This great building near us, on the crest of the hill, is built on the site of Tescelin le Roux's castle; and contains, I believe, some remnants of it; but it has no longer any attraction for us. Restoration and modern additions^[178] have stolen away its hoary age. We may be foolish in these matters; but we got more pleasure from a wooden bust of St. Bernard, that we bought for three francs from a white-winged sister, in the pilgrimage shop beside the basilica. We still look at it daily, and believe it—quite wrongly, no doubt—to be a perfect likeness of Tescelin's perfect son.

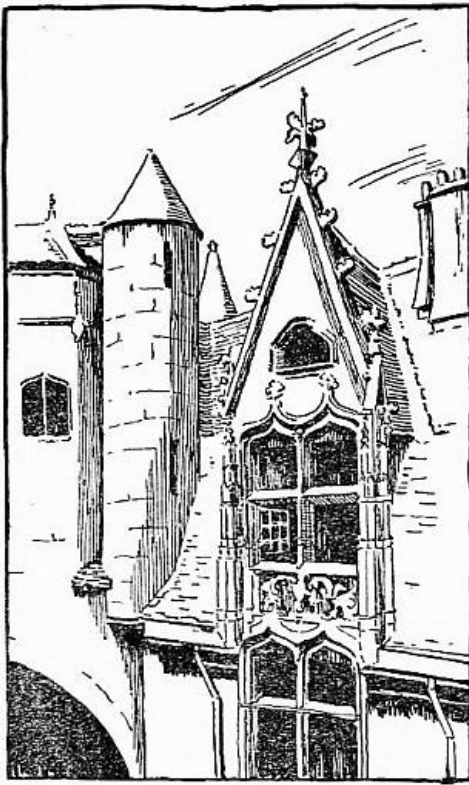
Before we part from Dijon, there is one other episode in its history to which I should like to refer.

Leaving the town by the southward road that leads to the ancient village of Rouvres—Philippe le Hardi, by the way, before his accession to the dukedom, was Philippe de Rouvres—you come upon a vast plain traversed by many poplar-fringed roads.

It was in this plain, close to Dijon, towards Nuits, that was held, in July, 1443, the great tournament known as the Tournoi de l'Arbre Charlemagne, given by the Seigneur de Charny and twelve other noblemen of Burgundy. Two lists were dressed—the smaller one for combats on foot, and the other, much larger, for mounted knights with the lance. Between them was a great pavilion of wood. The larger list had two steps at one end, to enable attendants to assist, to arm, or to disarm their knight, without compelling him to dismount. On the Dijon side of the lists was a great tent, for use as occasion might require. The tree of Charlemagne, close by, was draped with cloth of high warp, bearing the arms of the Lord of Charny; near it was "a fountain large and fair with a high stone capital above which were images of God, of Our Lady, and of Madame St. Anne, and upon the said capital were raised in stone the thirteen blazons of the arms of the said Lord of Charny and of his companions."

On that 11th July, "the princes having come they entered the house set apart for this purpose (which was right honourably decked and hung); and the Duke of Burgundy held a little white baton in his hand to throw and separate the champions, their arms being concluded, as is the custom in such a case. As for the lists, they were a sight most triumphant to see; for they were decked with two pavillons for the knights, bearing their

[Pg 218]



arms and devices in blazons, banners, and otherwise ... the entry of the assailant in the lists was on the side of Dijon, and that of the defender and guardian of the pas was on the side of Nuits."

The first fight between Charny and a Spanish knight, both on foot and armed with axes, is too like that already described, in the Tournoi de la dame de Pleurs, to justify us in giving Olivier de la Marche's graphic description of it. We will tell, instead, of a fight on the 9th day of the Tournament, between the Count of St. Martin and Guillaume de Vaudrey.

[Pg 219]

"At the third course the said De Vaudrey reached the Count's great arm-guard and disarmed him, so that they had to forge and open the said arm-guard, and two full hours were spent before he was re-armed. At the fourth charge the said Guillaume de Vaudrey reached the Count, with his lance on the arm near the side, and with this stroke he dented his arm, and broke his lance off short at the blade, so that the blade remained in the said Count's arm, and readily appeared the blood and the wound. So the Duke commanded that he should at once be disarmed, and set aright, and certes the duke and all the lords were most troubled at this adventure; and even the said De Vaudrey regretted right wonderfully his companion's wound."

There was much subsequent discussion as to how this accident could have occurred; and the general opinion seemed to be that it was the Count's own fault, by reason of a bad trick he had of riding at his man from the corner of the lists, and so meeting him cross-wise, instead of charging along the matting—which was laid from end to end of the lists especially for that purpose; but, whatever the cause, as Olivier fatalistically remarks, "Ce qui doit advenir advient: et fut telle ceste aventure."

"On the 10th day of August, a day of St. Laurence, came Monsieur de Bourgogne, Madame his spouse, all the ladies and lords, to see the arms of the two noblemen, and there presented himself Jacques de Challant Seigneur de Manille, most honourably accompanied by the Lord of Charny, and by his companions, as also by his relatives and friends; and he presented himself on a charger, covered with cloth of blue damask, right prettily adorned with his letters and devices; as he was mounted and armed ready to furnish arms. On the other side presented himself the knight (who sustained the enterprise), mounted and armed as is fitting in such case. His horse was decked, as I remember, in satin, half white and half violet, quartered; and right well the knight sat on his horse, for in figure he was supple, fair to look upon, and right agreeable to all. All due things were done and the lances distributed; and it came about that in the first onset Jacques de Challant got home upon the knight's arm-guard; by the which he was disarmed, so that the said arm-guard had to be opened by the armourers, (and it took) more than three hours, and while they made good the said arm-guard, the Lord of Charny caused a banquet to be served to the Duke and to the Duchess and to all the Signeurs, where they were sitting, right bounteously, both meats and wines."



After the luncheon they set to it again.

"And at their second charge the noble men rode with all the strength of their steeds; and so stern was this onset, that the Spaniard's charger could not sustain the shock, so fell to the ground; and swiftly horseman and horse were raised, but from this fall the Spaniard's harness was so bent and forced that he was quite disarmed; and they must needs put off those arms unto another day. Within a few days after that the term of six weeks that this noble meeting should last was past and expired, and the following day (which was on a Sunday, a little before the Great Mass) the kings-at-arms and the heralds assembled from all parts further to honour the mystery; and, having put on their coats of arms, they brought by order and with great magnificence, the two shields which for six weeks had been hung and fastened to the tree of Charlemagne, and on which was founded the meeting aforesaid. Then they entered the Church of Notre Dame de Dijon, and all kneeling offered and presented the aforesaid shields to the glorious Virgin Mary; which shields are still in the said church, in a chapel on the right hand as you come to the choir."

[Pg 220]



Footnotes:

- [168] I should add that there is a good replica of the Puits de Moïse, which gives you an opportunity to study that work at leisure.
- [169] The demolition was begun in 1870, to give work to the unemployed at the time of the war.
- [170] At Péronne.
- [171] Kleinclausz, "Histoire de la Bourgogne."
- [172] De Barante states that the body was found by a washerwoman, who was attracted by the sparkle of a ring on the Duke's finger. I have followed Michelet.
- [173] Olivier de Marche, "Mémoires."
- [174] De Barante, Tome XI; pp. 156-158.
- [175] Kleinclausz.
- [176] The classical orders are five: Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan, Composite.
- [177] The Tour de Bar was named after Renée of Anjou (Duke of Bar), known as good king Renée, who was imprisoned there after the battle of Buligneville in 1431, the year in which Joan of Arc was burned.
- [178] The western portion was rebuilt under Louis XIII.



CHAPTER XV

By a curious coincidence—by a real coincidence, reader, not by design—it was on a morning of Easter-day that we rode out from Dijon to Lux—on just such an Easter morning as that about which I am going to tell; the air fresh and fragrant, the larks in full song, and the sun shining so strongly in the deep, blue sky, that I had to make a Sunday purchase of a broad-brimmed straw hat. So that, you see, in one sense, I began the day badly, and perhaps deserved the trouble that befell me later.

Lux, the village in which the legend begins, and the village beyond it, are not particularly interesting places, situate on the border of the Forêt de Velours, some twenty or more kilometres north-east of Dijon, in Wiltshire-like scenery reminding one of Salisbury Plain. If you want a not too exciting excursion, to fill an otherwise idle day, by all means go there; but truth compels me to add that this Creux du Diable, when you have found it^[179]—and it is not particularly easy to find, being hidden one hundred yards within the wood—is not exciting. It is just a tangled pit running sheer down from the scrub that borders the forest path. One look at it was enough. We felt no desire to follow the devil down into its depths, nor did conscience tell us that we deserved to. True, we, too, had hunted on Easter morning, without going to Mass; but then we had hunted a legend, not a boar—and surely that makes all the difference.

Back to the village, then, we went; and there I re-discovered a peasant, of whom I had asked the way. He was sitting in a lovely doorway, at the top of some broken steps, reading a paper. Hearing the whirr of the wheels, he looked up. [Pg 222]

"Ah ha! did you find it?" "Thanks to you," said I, and joined him on the steps.

"Mon Dieu," says he, "It's a strange place. It ends almost in a point—this Creux du Diable. It is just full of foxes' holes; and as for the vipers—there are so many there that, when the time comes to cut the wood, they have to do it in the fraiche; sans cela ils vous mordent les jambes à tout instant. O! il y en a; il y en a!"

"Why do they bite less in the fraiche—these limbs of Satan?" I asked him.

"Oh! they are busy in the morning (font leur travail le matin)."

I tried to get the old man's version of the legend; but, discovering that he knew nothing of it, I bid him farewell.

"Good-bye," said he, shaking my hand warmly, "When we meet at Dijon, nous irons boire un coup."

So we rode home through a hop country—a land of blackthorn and good purple furrows, dotted with stacks of poles. Will you listen, while we go, to the legend of that viper-haunted pit?

THE DEVIL'S PIT

It is Easter day. From the belfry the Alleluia rings out; the lark sings it above the meadows; the thrush whistles it in the woods; the sun writes it in letters of gold on the blue, blue sky. All nature is in her gayest mood, to celebrate the festival of Christ's resurrection.

In the village of Lux, all hearts are echoing this Alleluia. The good people, in their holiday attire, go to hear matins, and to receive communion with holy Jesus, the renewer of heavenly as of earthly spring. But to Gaston, the lord of the village, the pure joys of the Christian Easter are unknown. He is a young baron, proud, haughty, violent, and devoted only to the chase. Loudly he sounds the horn, and cries to his servants: "Saddle the horses, and bring hither my hounds." [Pg 223]

Vainly the grooms and valets recall to him the solemnity of the day, and our Lord's commandment. "To the hunt," he cries; "We leave prayers to the priests and the women; such a fine hunting day is not to be missed."

The steeds are ready; in the courtyard of the castle the hounds are baying. As Gaston gives the signal for departure, the old chaplain lays his hand on the courser's rein.

"For the love of Heaven, Monseigneur!" cries he, "do not thus outrage God, nor so darkly stain your soul!"

The headstrong baron strikes the priest, who, without flinching, offers again his old white head to the blow.

"Strike again, Monseigneur; but, for pity of your soul, do not fail to hear mass to-day; else, evil will befall you."

Again he is repulsed, and the young lord departs.

Followed by his hounds and his servants, and blowing great blasts upon his horn, Gaston passes through a straggling village. Disdainfully he looks down on the good villagers, who salute him on their way to church. "Misfortune will come upon our lord," murmur the old men. "Great and powerful seigneur though he be, he insults and scorns a greater and more powerful than himself."

Two wide roads meet upon the verge of the forest of Velours. There come two horsemen, riding swiftly as the wind, and place themselves each by Gaston's side. He on the right, mounted on a white horse, is radiant and of noble mien; his eyes shine with a heavenly light, and his clothing, glistening like snow, exhales a perfume sweeter than the meadows on a morning of Spring. The rider on the left is of sullen countenance, and swarthy of aspect; his glance stern and forbidding. His hair is blacker than the raven's wing; and his garments, darker than the night, emit an odour of sulphur. His steed glows like a flame of fire.

"Friends," cries Gaston, "Welcome to you both. In happy hour you have come, to hunt the great woods with me. Fair fall us then! there is no sport, in heaven or on earth, like the chase—above all when we hunt in goodly company."

The horseman on the right speaks: "Young seigneur, the bell calls you; listen to its plaintive note chiming, from far away, through the trees. Return; or misfortune will befall you. Let us kneel together at the altar of Christ. Already, before daybreak, I heard mass, and sang the Alleluia; willingly will I do so again by your side. Come! Our duty done, sweeter by far will be the pleasures of the chase."

[Pg 224]

"Ride, noble baron, ride," cries the black horseman. "Do not listen to this ill counsellor. The bugle blast is finer music than the chiming of bells, and the hunt better pastime far than a dull priest's sermon, and the droning of hymns."

"Well said, friend on my left!" cries Gaston. "Without offence to the white horseman, you are jovial company, after my own heart. We young lords want lively sport and merry jests; let us leave sermons and paternosters to the monks."

Gaston has unleashed his hounds. Caressing them with eye and hand, urging them on with voice and gesture, he looses them upon the scent. With heads held low and wagging tails, baying with deep bell notes, they dash through the forest upon the track of the game. The baying redoubles, as, plunging into a thick copse, they come upon the lair of a great wolf. With bristling hair, fiery eyed, and snarling horribly, for an instant the fierce brute faces the hounds, then turns, and flies through the forest. Vainly he seeks the thickest brakes, the most secret hollows; always the ravening pack is at his heels.

At length the wolf gains the open country, and the chase follows him: the blast of Gaston's horn has collected the scattered huntsmen. Far, far they gallop, by cornfields and meadows, over weald and waste.

From a hamlet before them, comes tripping a little shepherdess at the head of her flock. The road is narrow and bordered by hedges. All in tears, the child cries out to Gaston: "Be merciful, sweet lord, be merciful; spare my flock. For pity's sake, do not destroy the widow's sheep, and our dear little lambs."

"Have pity, for your soul's sake," cries the white horseman. "Do not scorn her prayers nor her tears; they will rise to God, and cry out for vengeance against you there."

"Ride down lambs and sheep," replies the black rider. "What are they—that they should spoil a young lord's sport? For such a trifle must we let our prey escape us?"

[Pg 225]



[Pg 226]

"You are right," cries the impetuous hunter. He spurs on his horse; after him gallop the grooms and the valets. Only the white horseman turns aside with a sigh.

Like a whirlwind the hunt has passed, leaving desolation and death in its wake. The sheep fall bleeding to the earth, the lambs are trampled down, and the little shepherdess is lying upon the ground, bruised like a trodden flower of the field.

Still the wolf flies on—by field and wood, by hill and valley, by upland and mountain. None can overtake him. The hounds fall exhausted; scarce a horse can carry its rider further.

The hunters come to a lonely valley. There, near a spring which bubbles beneath an ancient oak, a little chapel and a cottage rise from the midst of a field of green corn. This is the little domain of an old hermit, whose days are passed in work and in prayer; one who shelters the poor, and puts the lost traveller upon his way.

"Noble baron," cries the black horseman, "By my troth, here let us stay, and refresh ourselves. There is water for our thirst, and good grazing for our steeds." "Zounds," replies the hunter, "You say well."

Gaston, with a blast of his horn, recalls the hounds and attendants; and, despite the entreaties of the white horseman, and the reluctance of his followers, he bids them turn the horses into the field of green corn. Hastening to him, the hermit cries, in tones of earnest pleading: "Have pity, gracious lord; spare the labour of an old man; do not let your steeds devour and trample down the field which nourishes the solitary, the traveller, and the poor."

"To the devil with hermits and nuns," replies the proud hunter. "Away with you, lazy rascal; or your carcass shall go to feed my hounds."

Frightened and sad, the poor old man turns away, murmuring to himself: "Father, which art in Heaven, forgive this young man; Thy providence which feeds the birds of the air and clothes the flower of the field will suffice for me also."

"Gaston," interposes the white rider, "Your words are harsh. Who knows but that you owe your very life to this old man? that, perchance without his prayers and fastings, your soul, already weighed many times in the heavenly scales, might well have been found too light." But the admonition of the white horseman passes unheeded. Seated beside the spring, the huntsmen make a long and merry repast; the jests ring out, loose and loud; with wild laughter the young baron applauds every sally of his dark companion.

[Pg 227]

'Tis the vesper hour; the hermit rings the chapel bell. To-day he is not alone in the sanctuary; the white horseman, leaving his companions, joins the old man in psalm and canticle. Never has the recluse heard a voice more pure, never has he

joined in a more holy communion. The two servants of God, leaving the chapel together, pause for a moment on the threshold. They gaze out over the scene. The huntsmen are gone; the field of green corn is ravaged, blasted, as though by a storm of hail. In one hour, Gaston's horses have destroyed the work of a year.

The white horseman bids farewell to the hermit, and hastens to join the baron. Regretfully the recluse watches the departing figure. "Who," he murmurs to himself, "may this noble hunter be? His kiss has filled me with peace and joy, and all my heart is aglow in his presence."

Now the hunt is again set on. The wolf has doubled back upon his track. Meanwhile the forest shadows lengthen, the sun is low upon the horizon. Once more the hunt passes through the village. In the road, still red with the blood of the shepherdess, a poor man stands, awaiting Gaston. He seizes the young lord's cloak, and asks alms, for the love of God.

"Dear baron," cries the white rider, "It is a means of grace, which the Saviour sends you. I beseech you, redeem your sins by the giving of alms; it is like water which quenches fire. Give a helping hand to him who stands for Jesus."

"Gaston," retorts the black rider, "For this clown will you stay the hunt, and let the great wolf win the day? Gallop! gallop!"

"There are my alms," cries the brutal lord; and, making his horse rear, with his whip he strikes at the poor man's head. The beggar utters a cry, and wipes his bleeding face. Again the hunt plunges into the forest of Velours, in pursuit of the tireless wolf. The sun has set behind the great trees; the forest shadows are blotted out in the darkness of the night. 'Tis the hour of solemn thought.

"Friend," says the white horseman, softly to Gaston, "this has been an ill day's work: you have mocked God, you have insulted his minister; you have trampled upon the shepherdess and her flock; you have ravaged the hermit's field, and you have struck the face of the poor. Turn, I entreat you, a suppliant eye to heaven, breathe a word of repentance towards God."

"What is that to me?" replies the hunter with a sneer. "Time enough yet to think of my soul. When I can search the woods no more, then I will wear a hair shirt, throw largesse to monk and beggar, and mutter psalms and what-not in church; but, until then, the gay life for me!"

[Pg 228]

"Gaston! the life of man is short and fragile; it is given him, not to waste in folly; but to purchase therewith the joys of heaven. I conjure you, for your soul's sake, implore the mercy of God."

"He's dull company indeed! Off with you to your paradise!" cries the young lord, irritated by these entreaties, and by his day of ill-success.

"Farewell, Gaston," murmurs the white rider. "Why would you not listen to one who would save you?" A tear falls from his eye, as spreading wide two white wings, he soars heavenward, leaving behind him a stream of light.

Then the hunter realizes that his good angel has deserted him. Fearfully he looks towards the dark figure on his left; a shiver of mortal dread shakes every limb, and the sweat of death rises damp upon his face. The arms of the black one extend and seize him. He feels his flesh pierced and torn by talons more powerful than a lion's, sharper than those of a vulture. He roars with pain and terror; so bewildered is he, that no cry to God comes from him, nor, with the holy sign, does he invoke the name of Jesus.

Still grasping his prey, the black horseman strikes the ground with his lance. The earth groans deeply, opens wide, and from the gaping cavity there rises a column of black smoke. From the abyss beneath, a sea of fire, upon whose heaving waves are rolled the legions of the damned, rise lamentations, cries, and blasphemies, heard above the roaring of the infernal waters. Like fiery serpents the flames writhe and coil round the body of the guilty hunter. "Gaston," hisses the black horseman, as steed and rider leap into the boiling cavity; "Gaston, you have lent ear to me during life; now you are mine for all eternity."

"Woe betide me!" cries the reprobate. "I have disregarded the Lord's warning, and the counsels of my good angel!"

The abyss closed up, leaving only a dark and fearsome cavity. That cavity is the Devil's Pit.

We had started on our way back to Dijon by train, when, at Gemeaux, the first stopping place, I became unpleasantly aware that I had left my notebook behind me, on the table of a café at Is-sur-Tille. Not caring to leave several chapters of this volume to the vagaries of a very uncertain memory, there was nothing for it but to leave the train, and walk the five kilometres back to Is. Under less anxious circumstances I should have enjoyed that walk, by field paths, below hills that reminded me of the North Downs at Wrotham. The light was golden; the evening breeze rustled

[Pg 229]

in the young crops. In front of me paced a shepherd, followed by a flock of pattering sheep, at whose fleeces the guardian dog tugged mercilessly, when succulent, wayside trifles tempted them from the straight path.

On the bridge at Is, I met mademoiselle of the café, whose beaming countenance revealed to me, before she spoke, the news that she had found my book. So far so good; but how to pass the four hours before the next train? I was cold and clammy; and much too tired to explore that savage étang de Marcilly hard by—lonely and desolate enough for the site of a Cistercian house. Such places need a receptive mood. Moreover, here was no fit place to dine—and I had within me a *Creux du Diable*. Surely my good angel had left me.

I dined at last—very badly—and there were still two hours to wait. Time flew no longer; it crept. Thoughts came no longer; nothing came; nothing happened. I was bored, bored stiff. Reader, do you know what it is to be bored?

"I wish to goodness you wouldn't be so garrulous—all about nothing."

"That's all very well, Reader; but what the dickens is a fellow to do, cast away for four mortal hours in this benighted hole—except talk?"

"Well its your own fault. You ought to have known, when you started, that it was Easter morning, and—"

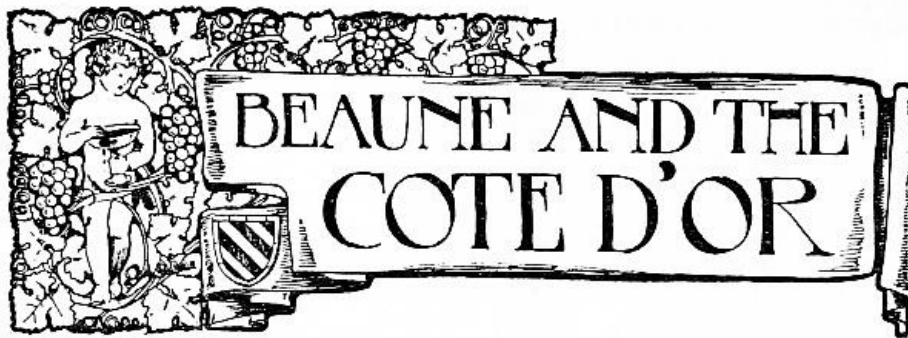
"Oh! G r r r r r r!"

"Monsieur, it is time you left. If you miss this train you will be here all night!"

"Et bien; au revoir, Mademoiselle."

Footnotes:

[179] The Carte-Taride marks it incorrectly as being outside the wood, whereas it is within it.



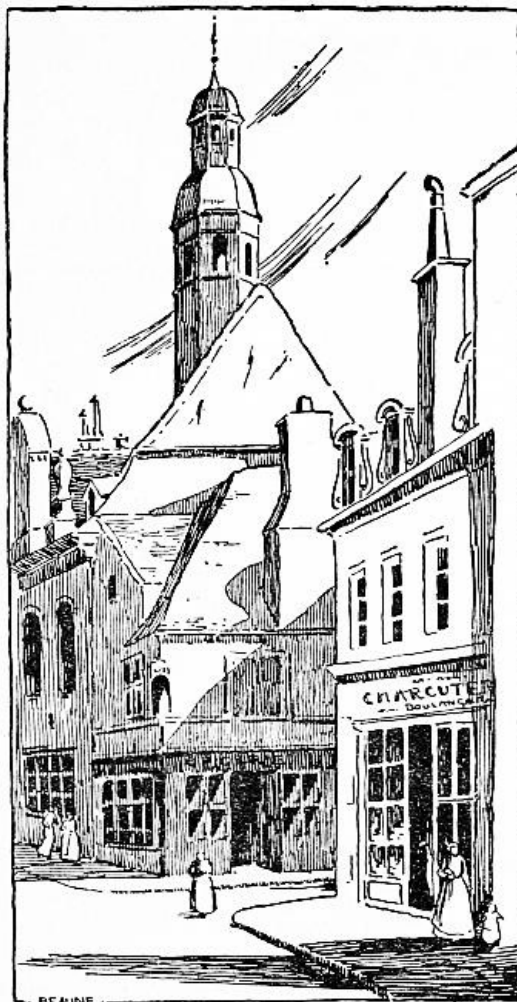
CHAPTER XVI

Ever since we left Beaune, my wife has been endeavouring, at frequent intervals, to extract from me an unconditional promise that, one day, we will go to live there. "It would be lovely," she says, "to live close to the Hôtel Dieu, and to watch the vines, for a whole summer, ripening on the Côte d'Or." So it would.

Certainly, if we are to live in France, we might do worse than choose this little rampart-girdled town, that, though on the main line of the P.L.M., has retained so much of its mediæval charm, and still has houses to show you of every century from the thirteenth onwards.

Beaune has a *cachet*, and surprises all its own. Go where you may, you will find them, or they will find you. Stand in the little Rue de l'Enfer, not happily named, and look up towards the church. Along a white wall, that the sun has fretted with a lace-work of leafy shadow, runs a frieze of ivy, below a rich cornice of blossoming lilac. Within that garden are glimpses of ancient mottled walls, seen through green branches, whose wavy lines lead up to the tower, crowned by the lovely dome and lantern of Notre Dame.

Or stand beneath the exquisite, gothic porch of that same church, and look through its soft, brown shadowy arches to the white walls and flowery gardens of the old houses beside it; or across the place, to where the warm, purple shadows lie upon the rosy oriel and tourelle of the Maison du Colombier.



ancient houses in the Rue de Lorraine; and especially a glimpse of a fifteenth century, pink-washed corner shop, topped by the graceful lantern of the Hospice de la Charité.

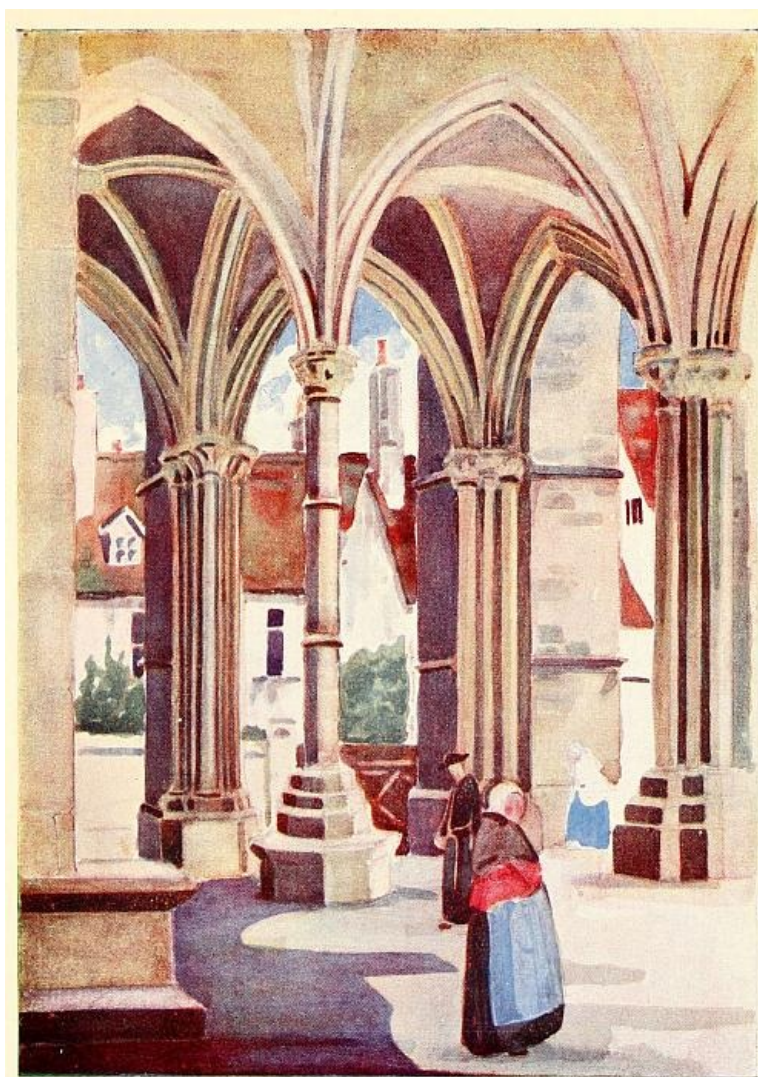
Here we are back at Notre Dame, one of the finest churches in Burgundy, but so hemmed in by other buildings that it is not seen to advantage, except from the west side, at a point in the street beyond the Colombier. There only do you get the whole building and the proportions of the tower in good perspective. The view from the east end, however, is presentable. The apsidal chapels, the ambulatory and lofty choir, leading the eye upward, stage by stage, to the glorious dome tiled in red, green, and yellow, give a quite Burgundian effect of satisfying solidity, and of colouring that, though, on the whole, rather cold, is harmonious in certain lights.

As usual, the heavy flying buttresses, that fail to fly, are an architectural defect.

The gem of the exterior is the early thirteenth-century, triple, open-aisled porch, of two bays, with gloriously carved panelled doors of the fifteenth century. For grace and harmony of proportion this porch is one of the best in France. It recalls that most successful of all façades, Peterborough Cathedral.

The interior has all the features of twelfth-century Burgundian romanesque—an almost barrel-vaulted nave, and aisle, with slightly stilted horseshoe arches, and quadripartite vaulting, groined, without ribs. Some of the cushion capitals are plain, some carved, and the vaulting shafts throughout, except in the transept, take the ordinary Burgundian form of fluted pilasters.

Each bay of the triforium is divided, as usual, into three round-headed arches—of which two are blind and the centre one pierced—with fluted, or zig-zagged pilasters between them. In the chapel of St. Léger are two quite interesting fifteenth century frescoes of the raising of Lazarus, and the stoning of Stephen—both, probably, by a painter of the Flemish school. The former picture, though mutilated and faded, is still quite realistic; too much so, in a sense; for the bystanders are so interested in the miracle that they have elbowed the Christ quite to one side of the picture. Martha is prominent, in the conventional attitude, with her handkerchief to her nose. "Jam Foetet."



PORCH OF EGLISE NOTRE DAME—BEAUNE

Facing page 232

But Notre Dame, though good, is not the best of Beaune. The church must yield to the Hôtel Dieu. History, or, at any rate, my history, does not relate how Nicholas Rolin, the Chancellor of Philippe le Bon, came to erect at a little fifth-rate town, such as is Beaune, a hospital unrivalled in all France; yet such is the fact. I do not even know why he built one at all, unless old Louis XI.'s mot be true—that he had "made enough poor to necessitate building a hospital to keep them in."

But, there it is, an eighth wonder of the world; beautiful, from the crest on the gable to the knocker on the door.

This Hôtel Dieu, seen on a grey day or a blue one, is absolutely harmonious and satisfying. Whether you follow the length of soft, yellow, brown wall, the blue-grey expanse of the high-pitched roof, the delicate flèche, or the starry, gabled hood over the entrance, your eye feasts upon a poem in form and colour; you feel at once the intense delight of looking upon a work of art that could not have been better done. But you will stay longest before the porch, the most daring and most completely successful that exists.

The entrance is beneath a flattened arch, through a panelled door with a beautiful forged-iron knocker and alms-box; all protected by a glorious three-gabled hood, crocketed and pinnacled, and built into the main wall, from which it projects without visible support. The pendants have angels, bearing shields, with the arms of Nicholas Rolin and his wife. The hood is slated in grey, as is the roof, and the blue vault beneath is starred with golden stars, symbolizing the little heaven within. Upon the blue tympanum is written in gold letters, "Hostel Dieu, 1443." All these blues and golds harmonise perfectly with the great crested roof, whether in its more sombre, grey mood, or when the richer purples come leaping from it at the call of the sun, to play about the sides of the dormers, or among the shadows of the flagged pinnacles above.

The exterior remains almost unchanged from the time of Nicholas Rolin, when the poor of Beaune first gathered round the stone benches, and beneath the verandah,^[180] to receive their dole of five hundred kilos of bread that are still distributed once a year to the needy of the district.

Following a white-winged sister, we passed into the courtyard, to find ourselves in a great, galleried building, of the late Flemish type, with a many-coloured linoleum roof, elaborate pinnacled gables, and, in one corner, a well in the forged ironwork which the Flamands of that time worked with unrivalled skill.

[Pg 234]

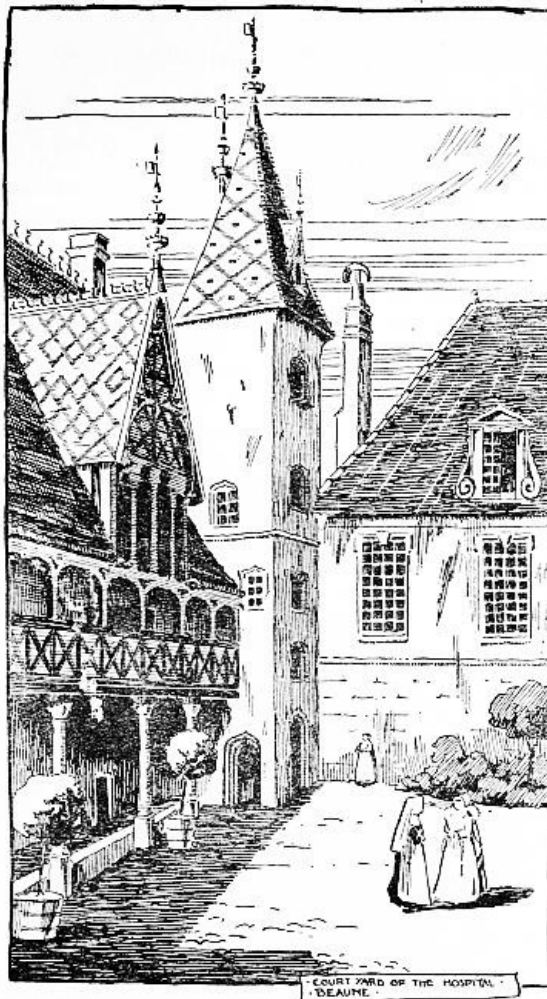
There was only one jarring note—the garish brown colour of the woodwork, laid on, the guide told me, five years ago. It is a thousand pities; for had the oak been merely oiled, or painted a dark brown, or matched with one of the tints in the roof, many visitors would be spared a shock, and I doubt not that the convalescence of certain patients would be considerably accelerated. Yet, in spite of garish paint, we can echo Viollet-le-Duc's sentiment, that it is worth while to be ill at Beaune.

This abode of peace takes you straight back to the fifteenth century, with its beauties all intact, and only its horrors mitigated. Nothing here has changed—from the costumes of the white angels who flit noiselessly through the kitchens and wards, to the tapestry covers laid upon the curtained, oak beds, with the oak chairs beside them. Even the pewter vessels are identical with those in use at the founding of the hospital.

The chapel, too, opening from one of the wards, is a good place to pray in. Through the glorious windows—copies of the original, resplendent with figures and devices—the warm colour streams down upon the altar, where of old was set up Roger Van der Weyden's magnificent Last Judgment; now in the musée above. On great days the volets were drawn back, and the picture exposed; magnificent red tapestries were laid upon the beds, and all was ordered for the best in this little kingdom-of-heaven upon earth.

Here Guigonne de Salins, the great Chancellor's wife, is laid; and her arms (the castle) and his (the key) with his device, "Seule ★" (Only Star), are scattered broadcast. No less ubiquitous is her motto, The Bird on the Bough, signifying how lonely she was to be after her lord's death. Guigonne, no doubt, was sincere enough; but one cannot help remembering that the sentiments expressed in these devices were not always lived up to. Did not Rolin's own master, Philippe le Bon, for example, choose the words "Aultre n'Auray" as a chaste allusion to his conjugal devotion? yet we have Olivier de la Marche assuring us that his gracious master had "de bâtards et de bâtardes une moult belle compagnie."

[Pg 235]

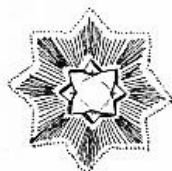


COURT YARD OF THE HOSPITAL
DEAUNE.

But I am digressing. We must follow to the musée our guide, whose manner could not be more gentle, were we patients and not visitors,—reminded on the way, by the sight of polished floors and shining pots, that the cleanliness of this building moved a certain worthy Canon Papillon, in the 17th century, to remark, "Ineptiarum stultus est labor," which, freely rendered, means: "They are fools who waste soap."

[Pg 236]

The best thing in the musée—in fact, the only thing that one really goes there to see—is the Last Judgment of Roger Van der Weyden, which, in spite of the 19th century restoration, remains a splendid example of Flemish art, still very Gothic in treatment, and full of the sadness of decline. The work is executed with all the microscopic accuracy of detail characteristic of the school. There is fine realism, and individual treatment; but no breakaway from tradition: all the figures are consciously attitudinizing, and one feels that the painter is making a last desperate effort to enforce belief in an outworn dogma. The welter of human beings, bursting out from their graves, dragging one another, and being dragged, by hair and limbs, pell-mell down into hell; this biting of fingers, and pulling of ears till they bleed, does not convince. Such a subject was well suited to the primitives of the Romanesque and early Gothic periods, but seems hopelessly archaic for a painter born within hail of the Renaissance. Nevertheless, though, in spite of its horrors, and its unhappy colouring, the picture, as you linger before it, grows on you, it is with a sigh of relief that you turn to its more successful part, the portraits of the donors, magnificent in their energy and expression. Here you have an opportunity to judge concerning the probability of Louis XI.'s alleged slander upon Nicholas Rolin. Did he, or did he not, grind the faces of the poor? My wife says unhesitatingly, "He did"; and, looking at the significant scarlet angel above his head—suggestive of a red aura—I decline to contradict a lady. His is, indeed, a disinheriting countenance. But Guigonne, his *seule étoile*, is of a different stamp. Piety exudes from her. As the guide somewhat bluntly put it, "She was as good as she was ugly"—a speech which no lady, living or dead, would ever forgive.



Footnotes:

[180] This verandah or hood has disappeared. It is shown on a model of the hospital to be seen in the musée.



CHAPTER XVII

Leaving my wife to run the gauntlet of the gamins of Beaune, while she sketched the starry hood and the porch of Notre Dame, we fared forth on our bicycles, towards the ancient village of Bouilland, fifteen kilometres away, to which I received my first call when I happened upon the legend of its Abbey.

Bouilland lies beyond Savigny, in the heart of the valley of the Bouxaise, a tributary of the Saône, by a road so lonely that, between Savigny and our destination we met only one individual—and he was sitting in a cart, so fast asleep that, though we longed to do so, we had not the heart to wake him.

Saint Marguerite lies high up in a hollow of the rocky hills, on the edge of the Forêt au Maitre—one of the most deserted spots in all Christendom. What was once a glorious building, with a Romanesque nave and a lovely, late thirteenth-century transept and apse, lightened with carved foliage, capitals, and graceful, slender shafts, is now a roofless ruin. Wild fruit trees grow in the transepts; the floor of the nave is paved with a litter of mossy stones, beneath which the ivy and the brambles take root; cowslips and purple violets jewel the apse with delights beyond the art of even Gothic sculptors; through the roofless arches you look up at the whispering forest-pines. Westward of the Abbey, beside the deserted adjunct buildings, is a grassy terrace, stone-walled, shaded by blossoming fruit trees. From this fresh, green garden you can look, beyond the darkness of the ancient gateway, into the flaming yellow of a field of "Mustard," the symbol of a living world beyond. Sit beside me on the old stone wall, and hear the legend of Saint Marguerite.

[Pg 238]

In days of yore, there lived in the Castle of Vergy, a maiden, beautiful and pure as an angel; she was named Marguerite.

Many young suitors of noble birth desired her hand: one, in particular, was more handsome than all the others; but his conversation was unchaste, and treachery lurked in his glance and in his smile.

Marguerite would never listen to his profane addresses; she repulsed him, saying: "Speak not to me of earthly love; to me, who have chosen, for all eternity, Jesus, the most loving and tender of husbands."

At the name of Jesus, the face of the handsome youth grew pale; and he turned away.

The holy maid, sometimes followed by one of her companions, went to speak of God and of heavenly things, with an old hermit, who lived in the depths of a neighbouring forest.

One evening, when she was returning from one of these visits, and, mounted on her mule, was crossing the great wood, she perceived the page awaiting her at a bend of the path. Swiftly she turned the animal, and, in her hasty flight, left her veil hanging on the branches of a hawthorn bush.

Her steed moved swiftly; but swifter still follows the treacherous youth; he is lighter than the wind; scarcely do the grasses bend beneath his feet.

But—crowning misfortune—the poor girl, instead of following the broad valley way, as her companion has done, turns into a side path that is soon barred by a great rampart of rocks.

All is over; she must fall a victim to her pursuer.... Already he stretches out his arms to seize her. As his hands, quivering with passion, touch the young girl, he breaks into a peal of infernal laughter that resounds through the whole valley.

Then Marguerite remembers her betrothed in Heaven. She calls upon Him for aid; she murmurs His name, and arms herself with His sign.

At the name of Jesus, spoken with that faith which removes mountains, the rock opens before her, and the mule carries the Christian maid to safety.

But the false page, a demon in disguise, fell down into a fiery gulf that opened suddenly beneath

his feet. Afterwards, when the earth had closed again over the spot, the peasants found, lying upon the wayside grass, a girdle of white silk, the symbol of Marguerite's purity and innocence.

[Pg 239]



The maid of Vergy reined in her mule before a fountain, a few paces from the parted rock. She dismounted, and, prostrating herself, she consecrated to the Lord her virginity that had been so miraculously preserved.

[Pg 240]

In a later year, with the dowry left her by her father, she built, on this spot, a monastery, to which she gave the name of Ste. Marguerite, her patron saint, as a song of thanksgiving in praise of her Heavenly Spouse.

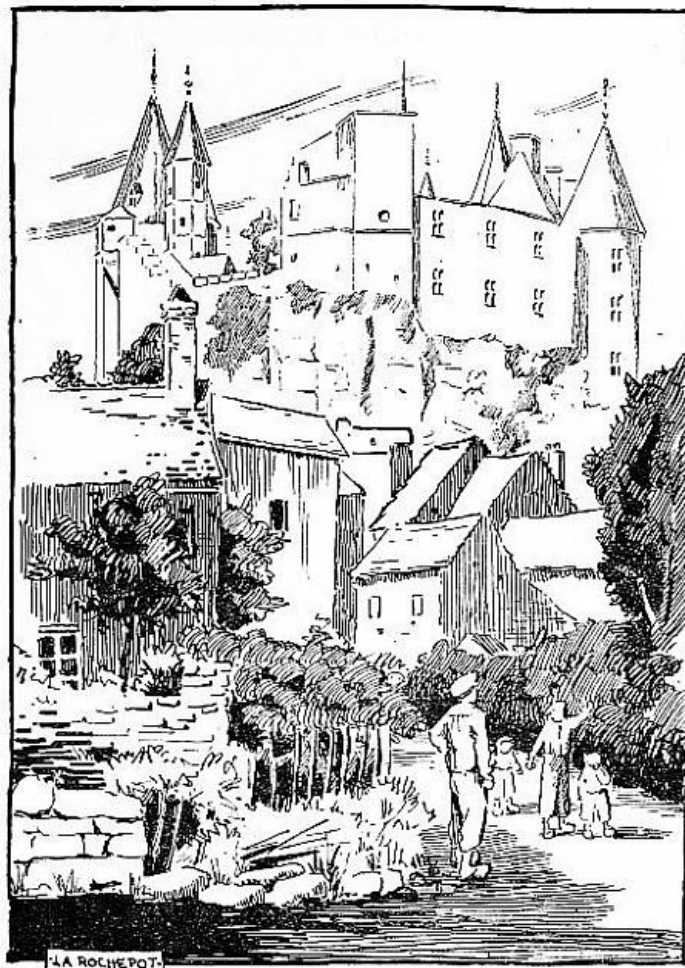
Philippe Pot being a name to conjure with in Burgundy, we took the first opportunity to make acquaintance with his eagle's nest, the Roche-Pot. The road from Beaune skirts the Côte d'Or, as far as Pommard, and climbs, between the vineyards, into the hills. These vineyards, in which are produced some of the choicest vines of the district, are surrounded each with a stone wall and gateway, with the name of the *clos* written on it—"Clos des Chênes," "Clos des Antres," etc. As you rise, there opens out a lovely view over the fruitful plain of Burgundy, a golden sea of vines. Below us, ahead, the dark roofs and spires of Meursault rise from the trees, and beyond them, shining in a blue mist, the widening southern hills of the Côte d'Or.

About half a mile from Meursault, the road, turning due west, plunges down into the valley of the Clous, between the hills, rock-clad at their summits, vine-clad below. Thence the way undulates past Auxey-le-Grand and Melin, until suddenly you sight, above the trees, the towers of Rochepot perched upon its crag. Leaving my wife to sketch, I made my way up through the dilapidated village, and soon found myself crossing the drawbridge of a mediæval castle, glowing as brightly with gold and colour, and with blazoned coats of arms, as on the day when it was first built. Here were round towers, machicolated battlements, a pepper-pot roof, with not a stone or tile of them disordered. I had expected a ruin—a lizards' playground; yet here before my eyes was Philippe Pot's own legend, "TANT L VAUT," as fresh as painter and gilder could make it.

"Whose is this castle?" I asked of the harmless, necessary guide, who by now had put in an appearance, and was assuring some gaping visitors that Philippe was called Pot because he always carried a pot about with him—a paint pot, judging by the condition of his castle.

"This is M. Carnot's castle, Monsieur, the eldest son of the late President. He has already spent millions in restoration, and he is about to convert into a terrace the remains of the 11th century Château, up there." He pointed to a fine, rounded-headed window, of two lights, high above us on the rock. While we were being hurried round this fortress of all the centuries, I fell to thinking of Philippe Pot, of his home, and his legend.

[Pg 241]



Begun in the thirteenth century, by Alexandre de Bourgogne, Prince de Morée, the castle was fortified in the early fifteenth by René Pot,^[181] whose son Philippe^[182] was the only man of them all to leave it a popular name.

[Pg 242]

In the middle of the fifteenth century, the Ottoman Sultan, Mahomet II., was threatening Constantinople, then in the hands of Constantine, Emperor of Byzantium, who appealed to Pope Nicholas V. for help against the Islamite invasion. To young Philippe Pot, nearly twenty-five years of age, the bravest, most handsome, and most eloquent chevalier of his day, and a poet withal—a crusade was as the candle to the moth. Never might come such another opportunity to win his spurs away from home. So he wrote to his fiancée, the richest and loveliest heiress of all Burgundy, Jeanne, daughter of Pierre de Baufremont, Comte de Charny, great chamberlain of Philippe le Bon.

"Gentille Damoiselle, I am setting forth to Constantinople; I wish before our bridal to render myself worthy of you and of your valiant father." Before dawn, on an August morning, in the year 1452, he left Rochepot, and rode to Notre Dame de Dijon, where he met four hundred other young knights sworn to follow his lead. There they heard Mass before the altar of the Virgin, and bespoke her blessing on their banner, that bore her picture, and the device: "Notre Dame de Bon Espoir, soyez-nous en aide." Then they rode eastward through the streets of Dijon. "Honneur aux preux!" shouted the crowds; "Honneur aux chevaliers de Notre Dame!"^[183]

We have no time to follow all the adventures of our chevalier in the land of Islam—how with his own hand, he slew and slew, until the bravest of the Saracens learned to fear the prowess of the "Chevalier de la Mort"; how, at last, he was captured by the Turks, before Constantinople, imprisoned, flogged, almost to death, because he would not become the Sultan's man, nor bow to the name of the Prophet—how he consoled himself in prison by writing verses to the Lady Virgin to whom he was vowed.



PORCH OF HOTEL DIEU—BEAUNE

Facing page 242

"Sauve-moi, Dame glorieuse,
De la prison tant rigoureuse,
Où l'on ne voit que cruauté;
Garde-moi d'y être bouté,
Car à chacun tu es piteuse,
Mère de Dieu."^[184]

[Pg 243]

His prayer was answered. For, before long, the Sultan, wishing to make an end of his prisoner, brought him one day into the arena, and caused to be handed to him, for his only weapon, a light scimitar, that was but a toy compared with the young chevalier's mighty sword, beneath whose deadly strokes so many Turks had already fallen. Then was loosed upon him, thus armed, a magnificent lion, that had already been the death of many prisoner knights.

"This is no combat," murmured the assembled thousands, one to another, "'Tis an execution—already the old lion has slain his hundreds—and he has eaten nothing these three days," Meanwhile the adversaries stood face to face. With two great bounds the lion is upon his man; but, as he crouches for the third spring, the hero makes a swift movement; the scimitar flashes, falls upon the animal's front paws. Roaring with pain and fury, the beast rolls upon his back, and licks the stumps of his wounded legs. Again, like lightning, the scimitar plays. In a moment the lion's tongue is lying at the feet of the Sultan. With a last effort the wounded beast rises, open-mouthed. Philippe, seizing his opportunity, plunges the blade down the ravening throat. The great lion falls dead. Loud rings the applause of the crowd, as the hero, waving aloft his smoking weapon, cries, "Gloire à Notre Dame. Tant elle vaut!"

The Sultan, who loved courage first and last, descended into the arena, hung a rich chain about his prisoner's neck, and said: "Such valour deserves freedom. Return to your lady, and to your home."

So the victorious Philippe reached France again, and, in poor man's guise, begging his bread by the way, came to Rochepot, on the day following the Fête des Trépassés, the great Autumn festival that the Catholic church has appointed in celebration of the dead. There he found the castle all hung with black, and a great company mourning a living man's death. So he made himself known, and sorrow changed into exceeding great joy.

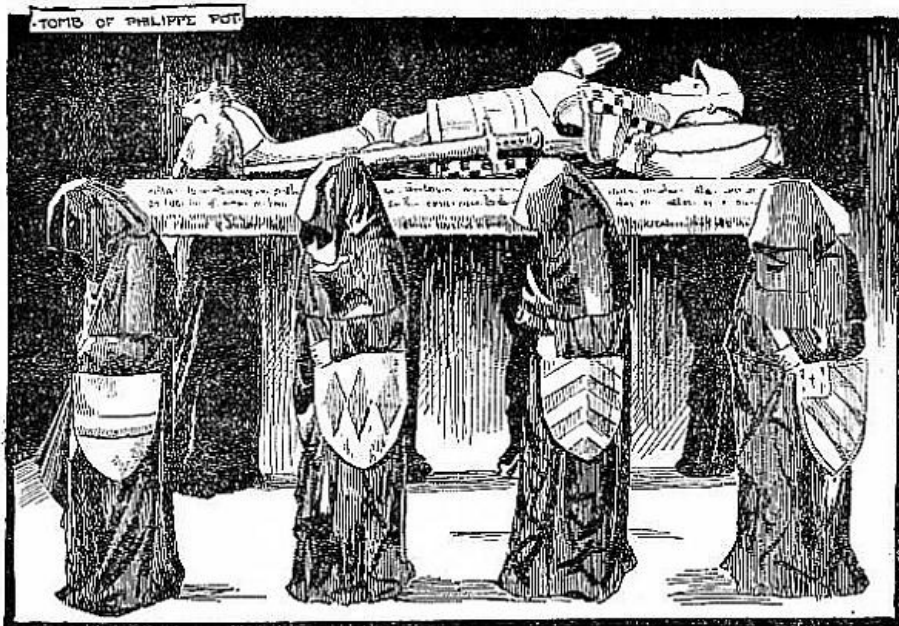
[Pg 244]

On the 11th November, 1453, through the fresh warm air of a St. Martin's summer, a brilliant

cortège issues from the Ducal Palace at Dijon, and turns towards the church of Notre Dame. At their head rides Philippe le Bon, crowned with the crown of Burgundy, and wearing, about his neck and breast, the collar of the Golden Fleece, and a purple mantle, lined with ermine. He is leading by the arm a slim girl, veiled, and clothed in white. Behind them follows a young chevalier, in shining armour, with a lion's skin clasped upon his shoulder. 'Tis Philippe Pot; his feet still bleeding from the stones of the pilgrim way. In one hand he carries a candle, the other arm supports the Duchess of Burgundy, splendid in a robe of cloth of gold. Beside them walk two heralds-at-arms, one bearing a scimitar, the other a veiled picture. From balcony and window the people acclaim their passage: "Noel! Noel!"

They enter Notre Dame—its walls splendid with tapestries of Arras—and kneel in the chapel of Notre Dame de Bon-Espoir. Philippe lights his candle, and places it upon the altar. The picture is uncovered, and hung before the black virgin. It shows the knight, under his Lady's protection, slaying the lion in the arena. Below are written the words—

"Tant L vaut et a valu
A celui qui a recouru
A celle pour qui dit ce mot
Le suppliant Philippe Pot
Qui de tout mal l'a secouru
TANT L VAUT."^[185]



[Pg 245]

Having accomplished his vow, the knight puts on his spurs. The Duke of Burgundy approaches, embraces him, gives him the collar and mantle of the Toison d'Or. The fiancée is led forward. Lover and lady join hands, and—the due ceremonies accomplished—Philippe and his bride leave the church.

[Pg 246]

"Noel! Noel!" shout the people. "Honneur au chevalier de Notre Dame!"

Now you know why you may read, in letters of gold, upon the walls and windows of Philippe's castles—at Rochepot, at Château-neuf, and at others—that device—TANT L VAUT.^[186]

On our way home from Rochepot, we halted for a rest at Auxey le Grand, and dropped into an inn, where we found two workmen hobnobbing over a bottle of red wine. One of them—the listener—was just an ordinary workman; common, base, and popular, as Pistol would have said. His companion, however, was a man of mark—a handsome, bronzed rascal, whose fiercely curled moustache and Paderewski hair, well set off by enormously baggy corduroys, a scarlet belt, and a blue shirt, suggested the merry bandit of an Elizabethan drama. Our curiosity being aroused, we addressed the brigand, who was not slow to reveal his identity. He was one François Paulin, a vine-dresser, and no brigand, as he proved by the production of a greasy document, stating that "The administrative council of the Société Vigneronne of the arrondissement of Beaune certifies that Monsieur Paulin (François) successfully passed the examinations of March 24th, 1889, and is skilled in pruning (apte à greffer) the vine, and in teaching that operation." Vines and vineyards naturally became our topic.

"Ah!" said the brigand; "What a season we have had. Nothing but rain and cold, cold and rain! It is just ruin for us poor workmen." He drained his glass, and put it down, with a tense Gallic movement of the arm. He failed, somehow, to convey the idea that he was ruined. Such are the triumphs of personality.

"Did the crop fail utterly hereabouts?" I asked.

[Pg 247]

"Utterly, Monsieur," said Mathilde Duhesme, the innkeeper's daughter, as she brought us our

coffee. "Not a bunch of grapes."

Mathilde was a perfectly charming French girl, of the type that you will come upon, here and there, even in the remotest part of that country. England breeds few such women, in her station of life. That easy, graceful manner, and natural amiability and dignity are found here—when they are found at all—only among the educated or the high-born.

"Yes, yes; mon Dieu, you have come in the wrong year for the vines," said the brigand, thumping the table. "You should have chosen a good season. Then lots of visitors come. They come in carts, full of *belles anges* with gentlemen standing behind in top-hats. And they all take photographs. This very day we ought to have been in full vendange."

His pride would have been solely hurt, had he guessed how little his description allured us.

"Let's drink to a full vendange," said I. Mathilde ran off for another bottle.

"What do you earn, you vigneron, in a good year?"

"Four francs, and a litre of wine, per man, per day. And it is worth it; for we make good stuff here on the hillside, though this village of Auxey is the end of it. Yes, good wines!"

"Tell me more about them," I said.

"The best wines of all are called Aligote, and the second-best—still very good—are called Pinot. The *boite ordinaire* that grows away there in the plain, is called Gamay. When the Gamay is not red enough, we put it into some Otellot; that's as black as your hat, and colours the rest up beautifully. Do you drink much wine in your country, Monsieur?"

"No, only the rich drink wine in our country. The poor never taste it. They drink mostly beer!"

"Sapristi!"

It was now our turn to be questioned. Mathilde, in particular, was very much interested in my wife's appearance and clothes. Were we married? Were we married in church? Why were we travelling? Were the English peasantry poor, and were they provident?

"More poor than provident," we said.

"Ah! now; the French poor are provident. They kill one pig a year, and lose not a hair of it. First comes the bacon; the fat is used for preparing meat; the blood for pudding; the entrails for sausages. It lasts from winter to winter—ah, Madame is making a picture!"

Madame was sketching the brigand.

"I shall put you into our book," said she. The brigand beamed approval. Five minutes later my wife thoughtlessly gave him the sketch. He tried not to look hurt—he was not, then, to go into the book, after all. Her woman's readiness saved the situation.

"I never forget what I have once drawn," she said.

"Vous y serez quand même." He was quite pacified.

Then we left the men over their wine, while Mathilde took us the round of the church and village. She certainly was a charming person. I am not so sure that we shall live at Beaune after all.



[Pg 248]

Lest we should entirely forget the Roman occupation that was so much in our minds at Autun, we decided to make a pilgrimage to Cussy, a village due west of Beaune, where the Romans have set up a column, in memory of an event, or of a person, unknown. If a motor car be not available, you can best get there by taking the steam tramway, between Beaune and Arnay-le-Duc, as far as Lusigny; thence by bicycle, or as you will. The journey is worth making, for the sake of the climb you get through the gorge of Nantoux, and up the valley of Mavilly, where the train mounts, by a series of steep zig-zags, into the heart of the Côte d'Or. The view that opens out is quite Swiss in quality and magnificence. You look from the summit of a gigantic devil's cauldron, down rocky steeps, shaped like cathedral organ-pipes, whose eerie mountain music cheers the vigneron at their work below. All this great expanse of brown, cliff-bound upland, dappled in spring-time with blossoming fruit trees, is curiously chequered by dark hedges and white serpentine roads. Stage by stage the land falls away from you, until all detail is lost, and far away, over range after range of shining hills, the boundless plains of lower Burgundy merge imperceptibly into the sky.

[Pg 249]

So the train puffs up to the col, then rattles down into the quaint village of Lusigny. The road to Cussy climbs the opposite hill for two kilometres or so, before switchbacking through the village of Montceau to this lovely spot that the Romans, or Gallo-Romans, have so chosen to honour.

Not a human being could we discover in all Cussy. Some destroying angel, I thought, must have passed over, leaving only chickens alive, and, by oversight, one old woman, of whose close-fitting, white cap we caught a glimpse through an open window.

But my wife would not accept that solution.

"No; there has been no destroying angel here. There has just been a most wicked old witch, who, in revenge for some insult, has changed all the villagers into ducks and hens. Let's speak to them.

I'm sure they'll answer."

She addressed a lanky, yellow hen, that had left scratching, to watch us. Poised on one leg it stood, with its head bent inquiringly.

"Please, Mrs. Hen; can you tell me the way to the colonne?"—only, of course, it being a French hen—if it was really a hen at all—she spoke to it in French. The hen moved its head to the other side.

"La colonne, Madame, est là bas, dans la prairie."

My wife danced for joy. It *was* a talking hen. The people were really bewitched! "How lovely!" But I knew all the time that she was wrong. The hen had not spoken—not a word. No such luck. It was that dark girl, who had been watching us from the shed by the house. So we just thanked her, for politeness sake, and walked sadly down the hill towards the Colonne. I looked round. The hen was scratching again.

We found the Colonne at last—a fine one, of the composite Corinthian style, its shaft beautifully ornamented with the favourite Roman leaf pattern. Round the base are eight statues in relief. Every antiquary in the kingdom has puzzled his brains over the motif of this column; and, except Courtepée, who says that "selon toute apparence c'est un monument sépulcral,"^[187] and Lempereur and Montfauçon, who respectively believed it to be a Gaulish tomb, and a religious monument, all agree that it is in memory of a great victory.

But what victory? One has said that it commemorates the triumph of Cæsar over the Helvetii B.C. 58; another that it was raised by the Emperor Claude, conqueror of the Goths; others believe it to have been erected by the Aedui to Maximian Hercules, after his victory over the Bagaudes in 286 A.D.; finally the Burgundian, Girault, maintains that the monument remembers the victory of Silius over Sacrovir in 22 A.D.^[188]

[Pg 250]

Beyond expressing a doubt whether the column is of later date than 100 A.D., and my conviction that it is triumphal not monumental, I venture no opinion upon any of these interesting theories. The antiquarians must settle that among themselves.

Meanwhile, let me inform the visitor who may find himself there in the autumn, that blackberries of a very choice quality grow in those prairies of the Colonne. I devoured them steadily, while the cows chewed their cud, and my wife sketched. She sketched; but she was not happy, as she usually is when thus occupied. A cruel wind came out of the north, and chilled her to the bone. She shivered; almost she wept. I, too, in spite of blackberries, was all comfortless within, and felt an uncanny sensation in the small of my back.

"Come along, Marjorie; you were quite right. It *was* the hen who spoke. This place is bewitched." She cheered up.

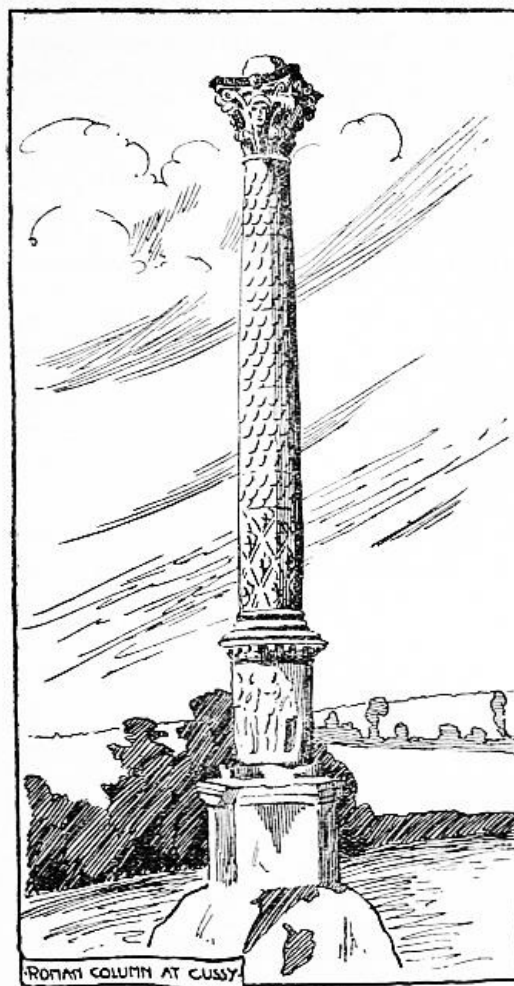
"How lovely! I was so afraid witches had quite died out."

Then we went home in the gloaming, by the same plucky, cheerful, little train that puffed up the hills, and chattered tumbling down them. Opposite to us, in the dimly-lit, bare apartment, a fat farmer and a slim little sister of mercy slept, nodding in time to the jerks and vibrations that shook them from head to foot.

At the first station a wrinkled old woman, leaning out of the window, held so animated a debate with another on the platform, concerning peaches, that the company were constrained to chip in, as one may do in democratic France. Across the compartment came the laconic tones of an unseen listener.

"Twenty sous the livre, for peaches! eh! ma foi!"

[Pg 251]



The train started, snorting violently; the old lady sat, firm-lipped, vigilantly on guard among her baskets of fruit. There arose around her a running commentary concerning peaches, and the ethics of trade therein.

[Pg 252]

"Moi, je vous dis"—"Eh bien moi je vous dis...."

"And half of them were rotten—the robber!" "Et quand même!" The old lady defended herself warmly.

"Rattle, rattle, rattle," commented the train, as it plunged downhill into the pitchy darkness of the valley of Nantoux. Still the passengers babbled. I grew weary of it, and my dreams went back to St. Martin, and the Christianity he planted there. Were they really honest, these chattering peasants? I thought of all the bad money palmed off on us in Burgundy—the Italian, Spanish, Belgian rubbish; any coin at all that your carelessness or trustfulness will accept. I thought of the lumps of lead unblushingly handed to me in the dark by a Paris cabman, on the steps of St. Lazare. I thought ... I yawned ... I joined the fat farmer and the slim nun in dreamland.

"Beaune Ville!" said the guard. And the drowsy company searched vacantly—every man for his pack.

During a hunt for Burgundian lore and legend among the libraries of Beaune, we found ourselves in conversation with a very entertaining bookseller, who described to us his boyhood holidays in the valley of Nantoux, and the legendary haunts of St. Martin.

"Many a summer afternoon," he said, "we spent climbing the valley hills, and playing upon the rock in which is St. Martin's well; and never once, not even in the hottest summers—and some were very hot—did we find the well dry. Always there was water in it. I cannot tell why. But it was so."

Next morning I mounted my bicycle, and went to see for myself, whether, after a week of cloudless October skies, I should find water in St. Martin's well.

Following the valley road as far as Pommard—every name hereabouts is borrowed unblushingly from a wine-list—you turn northward, and, always following the railway, come to the little, grey village of Nantoux, where the valley narrows, until you see, on your right, almost overhanging the road, a ridge of jagged, grey rock, crossing the sparsely-wooded hill. Just before it, on the Nantoux side, at a rather lower elevation, projects another shoulder of the rock. There is the Puits de St. Martin.

[Pg 253]

If you call a passer-by, or one of the workmen in the roadside quarries, he will show you the way, or take you up. It is not very easy to find without help. You pass the overhanging cliff, and take a

narrow path, at the first bend of the road; not the wider one at the top of the slight ascent. I enlisted the services of a brawny, good-tempered, blue-trousered young quarryman, who landed me in a trice upon the terrace of weather-worn rock, known locally as the Saut (leap) de St. Martin. As I stood facing the gorge, my guide pointed to an oval-shaped, red-edged basin, not a foot in diameter, filled, to within a few inches of the surface, with clear water.

"That is St. Martin's Well, Monsieur; it is never empty. And see, here beside it is the mark of his horse's hoofs clear-cut in the rock. Those long marks there were made by the lash of his whip. There are more hoof-prints nearer the edge. He jumped clean across, in one bound. Ma foi! it needed jarrets!"

We looked down at the rough-hewn gashes in the limestone. Gold-green mosses, ivy, and warm, red rock plants were creeping out from every cranny of the terrace, where of old the people beset St. Martin. Elderberry bushes trembled in the breeze.

"Now look down the valley, Monsieur! There is Nantoux, towards the midi where the rains come from. No rain while the sky is clear there. Come now, and see the view up the valley."

Climbing to the topmost northward ridge, we found ourselves standing before a majestic amphitheatre of dusky, brown hills of the Côte d'Or, whose threatening, almost terrible, aspect suggested rather the wicked brew of a devil's cauldron, than the juice of the merry vines over which black spider workmen were bending. Threatening clouds, driven before a rising wind, darkened with flying shadows the narrow roads that serpented up to the lofty, lonely villages of Mavilly and Mandelot. A rumbling sound broke the silence. Below us we saw, writhing and snorting up the hill, like a legendary, fire-breathing demon, a black train, fouling with wreaths of purple smoke the lovely valley of Nantoux.

We returned to the Puits de St. Martin. Sitting on the very edge of the cliff, we looked across at the wooded hill where the Saint alit, and down the road, over the scrub, the vines, and the red quarries, still echoing the sound of the pick; over the winding row of silvery willows and dark alders that mark the valley stream bubbling towards the welcoming roofs of Beaune.



[Pg 254]

There, in the very spot where it happened, the young quarryman told me the story of St. Martin's Well. But I shall tell it you in my words, not his—for story-telling was not his forte.

[Pg 255]

In the second century of the Christian era, Saint Bénigne and his companions, coming from Asia, brought the Gospel of Christ into Burgundy. The good news spread rapidly through the towns, but gained only a slow hearing in the villages and the hamlets. Idol worship, driven from the cities, found refuge among the remote hills and valleys of the land.

Mavilly, which, for centuries past, had possessed a college of Druids, remained faithful to its gods, its priests, and its temple. Vauchignon, too, whose hills, rocks, and woods, full of murmuring sounds and mysterious terrors, was one of those natural sanctuaries dear to the heart of the Gaul, still practised the heathen cult.^[189]

It is a warm autumn day; the holy missionary, Saint Martin, whose good horse has borne him over the rugged mountain which rises between Mavilly and the plain, has passed, one by one, through the villages of the Côte d'Or. At a crossing of the ways, in the midst of a great wood, he meets a little, ragged, red-haired man, with fiery eyes and an anxious countenance. The bishop offers him alms.

"Keep your silver piece," replies the stranger, "for I am more rich than you."

Saint Martin, taking him for a herdsman of the country, asks him the way to Mavilly.

"I know your object," replies the unknown man, laying hold upon the horse's bridle, "and I will be your guide."

They go on in silence, and come, at length, to the slope of a vine-covered hill where peasants are

busy at the vintage. Martin, like Boaz of old in the fields, salutes them:—"The Lord be with you!"

"Vintagers!" cries the guide, "Come hither in haste; I bring you the great enemy of the gods. This man, on his way, destroys their statues and breaks down their altars; he is come to destroy the temple that is the glory and safety of your country. Rise and defend your gods!"

The angry peasants come running towards the speaker. They surround the Saint and threaten him with the billhooks with which they are cutting the grapes. Serenely the aged bishop looks round upon them; his calmness disarms their anger. He is about to speak to them, but the red man knows well that his cause is lost, if once the missionary obtains a hearing. [Pg 256]

"Let us shut his impious mouth!" he cries to the vintagers. "His blasphemies will bring down upon us the wrath of heaven. Cry aloud, 'Death! death to the denouncer of the gods!' Away with him to the edge of the cliff, and hurl him down into the torrent!"

Loud rise the angry shouts of the crowd, as the guide leads away the horse. Already they have reached the brink of the abyss. All is over; the saint must die. Hemmed about on all sides, Martin cries:

"Come to my aid, O my God! make haste to help me!"

He signs himself with the cross, strikes, with his whip, the rock and the flanks of his horse. The animal, with one mighty bound, clears the valley, and alights upon the opposite peak. Immediately, around the spot which he has just left, the earth trembles with an awful rending sound; a rock is torn from the flank of the hill, and plunges into the torrent beneath, bearing with it the false prophet, whose fall is marked by a flash of sulphurous lightning. The troubled waters boil and bubble, as they close over his body.

At the sight of such wonders, the vintagers stand dumb with astonishment. Imprinted upon the granite rock they see the stroke of the rider's whip, and the hoof-print of his horse, from which, already, a stream of limpid water is flowing.

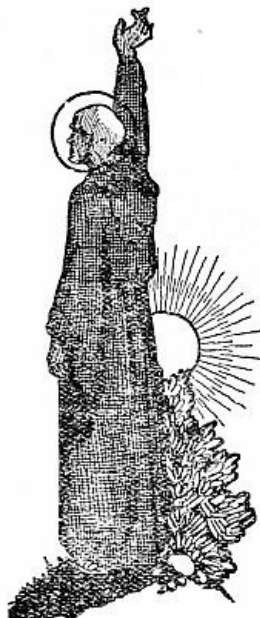
The old man, calm and majestic as before, standing motionless upon the opposite peak, casts upon the peasants a compassionate glance. Terror-stricken, they acclaim him a divine being. Then, swarming down the mountain path to the valley, they climb the opposite peak, and again surround him. But, this time, they lie prostrate at his feet, and, with prayers for pardon, are about to adore him.

"Rise," says the bishop; "I am but a mortal, a vintager of Christ; and your souls are the grapes I have come to gather in His name."

He bids them sit down upon the hill side, and there, before the temple of the false gods, on the brink of the abyss into which Satan fell lightning-struck, he speaks to them of the emptiness of their past worship, and reveals the power, the beauty, and the tenderness of the God of the Gospel. The peasants, won at last from Paganism, descend to the temple, overthrow the images, and bury them in many a deep trench. [190] They would destroy the temple itself, but the pontiff restrains them. [Pg 257]

"Not so; let us offer it to the true God, as a trophy won from the powers of darkness; let Jesus be adored upon the altar whence Jupiter has fallen; and let the Virgin Immaculate stand in the place of Venus."

"Be it so," replies the crowd, with one voice; "Let Christ reign and rule, here where He has overthrown the Devil."



Footnotes:

- [181] Rochepot has been inhabited by many other noble families of the house of Burgundy, notably those of Montmorency, Silly, Angennes, Legoux, Blancheton.
- [182] Born 1428.
- [183] Légendes Bourguignonnes; "Philippe Pot" p. 154. By l'Abbé B——.
- [184] Sovereign Lady, of thy grace,
Save me from this fearsome place,
Where but cruelty is seen;
Come thou me and harm between,
Pity all who seek thy face,
Mother of God.
- [185] Great her worth was, aye, and is
To her seekers all, I wis;
So of her he speaketh—so,
The poor suppliant Philippe Pot—
Shielding him from miseries,
GREAT HER WORTH.
- [186] Those interested in Philippe Pot can find his tomb in the mediæval gallery of the Louvre at Paris. It is one of the best monuments of its kind in existence, certainly inspired by the work of Claus Sluter, and possessing the dramatic qualities of that school. It was completed in 1477-1483, and placed originally in the Abbey of Citeaux. See picture on preceding page.
- [187] Description de Bourgogne, tom. iii, p. 33.
- [188] "Lettre sur les Richesses historiques de la Bourgogne." Abel Jeandet.
- [189] St. Martin, bishop of Tours, who visited Burgundy, probably in the year 376 A.D., was mainly instrumental in putting an end to Paganism among the Gauls.
- [190] The debris referred to were discovered in the 18th century. Among the images identified were those of Jupiter, Neptune, Minerva, Pan, Vulcan, Venus, Apollo, Diana, and Esculapius. Histoire de Beaune. M. Rossignol, p. 39.



CHAPTER XVIII

The little town of Verdun sur le Doubs has no particular attraction for the archæologist nor for the tourist, yet it is a place with which all visitors to Beaune who wish to keep themselves in touch with the real Burgundy, with the life of the village and the ville de Canton, as well as with the larger movements of the great cities, cannot afford to neglect.

For myself, the little town will always be associated with happy souvenirs, and with gracious pictures of country life, as it has been since first I rode there, on a warm September afternoon, along a pleasant, undulating road, through typical, low-lying lands of fertile Burgundy, sometimes running quite straight for several kilometres, sometimes curving slightly through golden vineyards, and fields of bearded maize, and crimson clover. I passed through St. Loup, a village with a delightful Romanesque church, and through other attractive hamlets crowned with Gothic towers; by hay fields, where a late second crop was being taken in, by rich arable lands, where yoked oxen were ploughing with attendant women clearing the way for the plough-share with a stick. I passed patches of fragrant wild flowers, and ill weeds growing in tangled masses by the road side, by rich grasses that lean cattle were stolidly munching.

One of the boys who looked after them was singing a song. I could not catch the words exactly, nor the air, but I fitted the snatch of melody to the best of all Burgundian folk-songs, an exquisite little poem with a curious and very pretty history, that I am going to tell. This is the song. It is sung to-day, with local variations, not by the shepherds of Burgundy only, but throughout all France almost; in Dauphiné, in Champagne, in the lonely forests of the Ardennes.

[Pg 259]

Eho! ého! ého!
 Les agneaux vont aux plaines,
 Eho! ého! ého!
 Et les loups sont aux bos.

Tant qu'aux bords des fontaines,
 Ou dans les frais ruisseaux
 Les moutons baign'nt leur laine,
 I dansont au préau.
 Eho! ého! ého!

Mais, queq'fois par vingtaines
 I s'éloign'nt des troupeaux
 Pour aller sous les chênes
 Qu'ri des herbag's noviaux.
 Eho! ého! ého!

T'es mon agneau, ma reine;
 Les grand's vill's, c'est les bos ...
 Par ainsi donc Mad'leine
 N't'en vas pas du hameau.
 Eho! ého! ého!

Et ses ombres lointaines
 Leurs y cach'nt leurs bourreaux;
 Car, malgré leurs plaint's vaines,
 Les loups croqu'ent les agneaux.
 Eho! ého! ého!

Eho! ého! ého!
 Les agneaux vont aux plaines
 Eho! ého! ého!
 Et les loups sont aux bos.

The French is so simple that, though I have appended no translation, nearly all my readers will be able to feel some of the charm and lilt of the original.

Generally speaking, of course, a folk song is not the work of one individual, but of many; it is essentially a local product, that grows with the years, and reflects truly the spirit of the land which gave it birth. Yet, strangely enough, this particular song, though it has all the virtues of its kind—the simplicity, the melody, the descriptive, pastoral, and amorous characteristics of a semi-southern race—is an exception to the general rule.

When it first appeared, in 1840, in the Burgundian section of an important work, "Les Français peints par eux-mêmes," the whole French nation welcomed it as one of the best of its kind; and other provinces, as I have said, did not hesitate to adopt it. It was held to be one of the most naive, and authentically popular songs of all Burgundy,—Burgundy itself, even, had no doubt whatever upon the subject. It was discussed everywhere in literary circles; and that eminent writer, M. Catulle Mendès, one evening, in the presence of many other French literateurs, openly expressed the opinion that it was written by a young Burgundian shepherd, very much in love. Then a strange thing happened. One of the oldest men present, the Burgundian poet, M. François Fertault, walked up to Mendès, and said, with a smile: "Eh, bien Monsieur, then I am that young Burgundian shepherd."

All the world wondered. The thing was impossible! It was not impossible; it was true. Indeed, rightly regarded, it was simple, and natural. M. Fertault, living among the peasants and loving them, had absorbed all that of which the folk song is born. The poetic spirit of a rural people had, indeed, passed into him. What he had heard sung within him, he wrote. M. Fertault, still hale and hearty, after ninety seven years of active life, told us the story himself, in his library, in the Rue Clausel, at Paris.

"I had to get material for this work," he said; "And though, for a dance song, I had ready a Bourrée Charollaise, and for a religious song, one of De La Monnoye's Noels Bourguignons, I could find no example of the Chanson, properly so called; nothing, nothing at all, that was complete enough to be representative. The first part of my article was already published; the remainder must go to press. What could I do? Then an idea came to me. Only to attempt to carry it out was absurd. A minute later the attempt seemed to be audacious; then merely bold; then perfectly possible. Soon I knew that I must do it. The idea was growing in my brain. I felt something at work here (tapping his forehead), something alive. I could see my country; I could see my peasants. I was listening, listening. It all came to me—an impression straight from life, with the scent of the fields in it. I heard couplets, and a refrain. Yes, through the sweetness of the dream, came a song. I heard words and music.



For the words it was simple enough; but what to do for the tune? Technically I was ignorant of music; I could not read the hieroglyphics that are the language of Gounod and Rossini. I thought. Then I remembered Scheffer; he knew of my search for a song. He would understand. It was nearly eleven at night. With a feverish hand I was knocking at Scheffer's door.

"You are not in bed?"

"Not yet; but it's about time."

"Are you sleepy?"

"I could be—if I liked."

"In that case, let me come in." My friendly neighbour opened wide the door of his room. I hurried in.

"What is it?" said he, briskly.

"I have got my Burgundian song," said I, with an air of triumph.

"Bravo! Where did you unearth it?"

"I didn't. I made it. And as it needs you, here it is." Scheffer stood in unspeakable astonishment. I told him my story. Then I added: "My crime is double,—the air came to me with the words." My neighbour's eyes opened wide. He thought me very mad indeed. "And," I added, "musician that I am, I bring you my air; I can hear it buzzing in my head; but my throat will not translate it properly."

"What shall we do?" said he.

"I will hum it over to you, and we will piece it together on the piano."

"Bon. J'y suis. And together it was done—well done. We kept silence. The next day the compositors were busy; and soon everyone was reading the Burgundian Folk-Song, 'Eho.' I had succeeded." Now you understand why one remembers a déjeuner with François Fertiault.^[191]

Here we are at the shining Saône, crossed by a suspension bridge that rocks under the weight of every carriage we meet; and here, at the end of the long avenue of poplars, beside the junction of the two rivers, is Verdun sur-le-Doubs.

Now that we are here I do not know that I have much to say about the town itself, except that it is a peaceful little place, lying snugly beside its waters that flow over golden sands.^[192] In the 14th century, however, Verdun was a *bonne ville fermée*, one of the most ancient baronies of Burgundy, with fortress, fairs, markets, fiefs, vassals, and all the other appointments of a mediæval town; but the tides of war, sweeping, time after time, over this part of the country, have left not even a ruin to remind us of its past. [Pg 263]



Yet some incidents of that past are worth remembering; notably the siege of 1350, following on a disastrous war between the Sieurs de Viennes and the Seigneurs de Verdun, and again, in 1477 and 1478, when the Verdunois, always prominent in their adherence to the Burgundian cause, refused to accept the merger of their province into Louis XI.'s great kingdom of France.

But the most memorable of all the bloody scenes in which Verdun has played a part, was the great struggle of 1592, when the little town, the strongest holding for Henry IV. in all Burgundy, sustained a desperate attack under the Ligueurs, commanded by the Vicomte de Tavannes. At the head of the Verdunois was Héliodore de Thiard de Bissy, and his brave wife, Marguerite de Busseul-Saint-Sernin, who, to sustain the courage of the defenders, voluntarily shared the fatigues and dangers of the fight.

She took upon herself the duty of distributing, with her own hands, powder and ammunition to her soldiers; until a spark set light to the barrels, and the brave girl, blown to pieces, met a warrior's death. Young, beautiful, generous, intrepid, and of noble birth, though she was, her heroic deed, by some strange caprice of destiny, has not rescued her name from oblivion. [Pg 264]

But the thoughts uppermost in my mind, in connection with Verdun, are not historical, nor are they archæological. They hover rather about rural Burgundy; the folk-lore, the old superstitions, and the intimate life of the peasants, such as that of which M. Fertiault has made such good use in his charming little story "The First of March."

Every year on the last day of February, when they think it will soon be midnight, the women of the village leave their beds—I mean, of course, the young women, the maids, with roses in their cheeks, and love in their hearts—and await impatiently the first minute of the first hour of March, the decisive minute for them. At the first stroke from the belfry tower their windows fly open, each girl leans out, and whispers in the darkness her prayer to Mars: "Bonjour, Mars; Comment te portes-tu Mars? Montre-moi dans mon dormant celui que j'aurai dans mon vivant."^[193]

Then they go back to bed, and their lovers come floating into their dreams.^[194]

Not very long ago in Arcy, the hamlet which gave its name to the famous grottos that so many travellers have visited and described, dwelt two splendid cocks, whose voices were the pride of the village. But a day came when they were heard no more. The birds stood downcast, each upon his favourite waste-heap, wheezing vainly from a voiceless throat. Then it was known that they had been bewitched by a wicked sorcerer. Their owner was in consternation. For who would wake him now in the morning and hearten him cheerily for his day's work? So he went off to discuss his trouble with one in the village who was known to be wise in these matters; and this man told him at once the remedy.

"You must give the cocks," he said, "barley cooked at the rising of the moon." The owner went home straightway; did as he was bid, and in the grey light of the following morning, to his great joy, he was awakened by his two chanticleers announcing lustily, from rival dung-heaps, the coming of the dawn.



OXEN PLOUGHING

Facing page 264

Not less fantastic, nor less poetical in conception, are some of the measures adopted for the cure of personal ills. "Indeed," says M. Fertiault, "it is difficult to conceive the amount of imaginative labour these rustic intelligencies impose upon themselves, in their efforts to heal those who are dear to them. They vie with one another in rummaging among old customs, to find the best cure. Antoinette will take her sick Pierre to the church, and, somehow or other, holding him by the hands and under the arms, will lead him nine times round the altar so that health may come again; well she knows, too, what healing virtue there is, for children's fevers, in the sweet odour of hawthorn in spring; for did not the murderers of Christ weave for him a crown of thorns."^[195]

[Pg 265]

It is around such places as Verdun, where the mind is not too much distracted by archæological interests, that one's thoughts can escape from the town, into the fertile surrounding lands, and picture scenes that M. Fertiault has described for us so vividly, such as the autumn fête of the grand teillage when they work far into the night, beside the great bonfires, the boys and girls sitting around the piles of hemp. The work goes ahead speedily; and much chaffing and many a merry jest inspire deft fingers to outdo one another in peeling the hemp. The little mountains grow smaller, disappear. The workers gather up what is left of the peeled stalks, and pile them upon the fire which blazes again into a feu de joie. All dance round it gleefully; some even jump through the tongues of flame, believing that courage will make them incombustible. Then each takes his girl, and together they go home through the autumn night, the maid and the boy she had seen in her dreams six months ago, when, with her long hair falling about her face, she had leaned from the window, to say "Good-morning" to March. And as they go, they sing:

"Le mariage fait heureux
Les Amoureux."

"And if ever one day you love me less than you love me to-night?"

"Eh ben! ma foi?"

"Eh ben! Pierre ... je mourrais." 'Tis time to say "Good-night" at the cottage gate.

Or it is a winter scene that comes. The copper lamp, hanging from a beam, does its best, though not quite successfully, to play the part of the moon upon a harvest field. Catherine plies her distaff busily, making her bobbin hum; Toinette knits, steadily as a machine, a thick, woollen stocking; Jacquot mends, with osier rushes, a basket for next summer's vintage. Justin, sitting with his face to the back of his chair, is cutting, upon the blade of an iron shovel, bunches of maize, of which the grains go raining down and dancing up from the heaps in the vessel below. The old father, Claude, does just nothing at all. A long life of hard work has well earned him some idle hours; and he is content to sit and doze by the fireside; just throwing in a word now and again; when the right cord is struck, or something reminds him of a story of his early escapades, in the days when he was as Jacquot is—with a good hand for the plough, a good heart for the girls, and a good stomach for a bowl of la Pochouse.^[196]

So, through the quiet round of French rustic life, the generations are born, are married, and pass again to the keeping of the earth that kept them.

The second of these episodes, marriage, in a family of any consequence, in the olden time, was a charmingly elaborate and picturesque function. Much of the poetry of it has now passed for ever; though, a few years back, a prominent citizen of the locality decided to revive all the ceremonies at his daughter's wedding, and did so with complete success.

I have not the space here to describe in detail, as I would—as M. Fertault has done so effectively in "Une Noce d'Autrefois en Bourgogne,"—all that took place. But I cannot pass it by wholly in silence.

The wedding festivities extend over three days. The first day is full of processions, and fife and drum, and flying ribbons, and sweetmeats, and official journeys to summon from their abodes the Dames d'honneur, who attend upon the bride. Then comes the municipal ceremony at the mairie—the official marriage—and then the return to the Hôtel des Trois Maures, where the bride and bridegroom, who, all the time have been scattering sweetmeats right and left, receive, in their turn, an aspersion of grains of corn, which come showering down upon them from the upper windows. This is the ceremony of "Sowing the épousés"; the golden rain is a blessing upon the marriage, a poetical invocation of the good-will of Plenty's Goddess.



"Scarcity and want shall shun you
Ceres' blessing now is on you."

Then before the spread feast, comes the *trempeé*, the health-drinking, a very significant function in a wine country. But first they clink glasses—for franc Bourguignon, on ne boit jamais sans trinquer—and having drunk, clink again, and all relatives and intimates—relatives embrace cousins, as the boy's latin book darkly hints—give the bride the baiser de la trempeé.

Then there is feasting, more healths, more music; then a general cry for the farandole, and in an instant they are wreathing it, uninvited and all, in hall, and lane, and street; fife and tambourine and flying feet are at it with an élan that even that sunny land of song and dance, Provence, would find it hard to equal. In the evening there is a great ball given to the guests, and, on the

next days, more processions, and a ball for the uninvited, at which the bride and bridegroom appear for a few minutes, open the dancing with a contre-danse, and then withdraw.

The third day's round is somewhat similar, but there are fewer ladies present—many of them have had enough—and one notices, walking behind the drums and fifes, an individual carrying a laurel—not a branch, but a bush, well-grown and decked with ribbons. At the maison paternelle a halt is made, and all gather round to admire the laurel. Then he calls for the strongest volunteers to assist the bearer.

"Are you ready, you six?" "Yes," in six voices.

"You know the job is none so easy—dangerous too?"

"No fun if it wasn't."

"To it, then."

"Tie it well!"

"And as high as you can!"

"Come down now—and take care!"

They have to tie the laurel to the highest chimney of the house.

They mount gaily, for they are very excited, and, moreover, have a bottle with them, a bottle of good wine; good, sparkling, red wine that is pushing at the cork. They are going to sprinkle the tree with it. Happy tree!

But the boys have had their share these days—'tis fairly the tree's turn. So they mount to the roof, called the *lid* in the locality.

"Not too steep, is it?"

"Not a bit."

"Can you stick it?"

[Pg 269]

"Rather—comfortable as an armchair!" At last it is done, well done, with a good stout cord.

"Look out for the baskets, John!" John pours prodigally, till the wine is trickling down the wall, and making a little rivulet in the street.

"Long life to the laurel" yell the five others. "Long life to the porteur."

"A la santé des camarades."

All glasses are charged; then comes the clash of a trinquade, and, in an instant, every glass is drained. Jests fly about, and laughter. There is more drinking, more trinquades.

"La ronde, the round of the laurel! Allons!"

"Hands for the round—and hold tight."

Beating time with their feet, they dance round the chimney, until the tiles resound, singing:

Il est planté, le laurier;
Le bon vin l'arrose.
Qu'il amène aux mariées
Ménage tout rose!
Tout rose,
Tout rose.

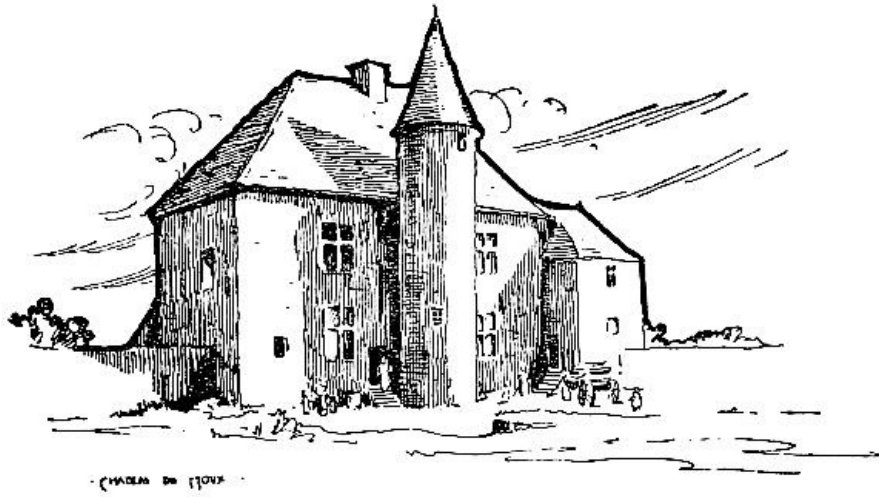
Autour buvons et chantons;
Ayons l'âme en joie!
Qu'en gentil rejeton
La mère se voit
Se voie,
Se voie!

Que le rejeton grandi
Plus tard se marie,
Pour qu'un laurier reverdi
Leux charme la vie!
La vie,
La vie!

Que des ans et puis des ans
Passent sur leur tête!...
Et nous, sur ce Toit plaisant,
Célébrons la fête.
La fête,
La fête!

[Pg 270]

The laurel is well fixed, the drums cease. From every window of the house, besieged by the gamins, pours down a shower of sugar plums. The timid ones get what they can, the greedy fight and struggle. After the mass it is still worse; there is many a sore head for souvenir. Fameux! Fameux les enfants! But the thing has been mightily well done.



While we are talking about these ancient customs, let us spare a word or two for the tongue which was heard through so many of them—the patois. The Burgundian patois, to use Sainte-Beuve's picturesque expression—"a eu des malheurs"; it has never become a living language as the Breton and the Provençal have, and is therefore doomed, I suppose, to early destruction; as its older devotees die off, and the young peasant, versed in the language of towns, learns to despise his father's tongue.

M. Perrault-Dabot, in his excellent little work on the subject,^[197] tells us that, as might have been expected, all the many races that have inhabited or influenced Burgundy—the Eduens, the Romans, the Flemish—have left their traces upon its local tongue. Its chief defect, he adds, is that, like the country itself, half plain half mountain, it lacks unity. Placed between the two great centres of the Langue d'Oil and Langue d'Oc, it has naturally drawn from both. In accent, its chief characteristics are vivacity, expression, and charm; it comes between the northern lisp and the resonant redundancy of the southern tongue, and is spoken in a sing-song manner not easily rendered typographically. It has many peculiar words, phrases, and idioms, but does not appear to have taken definite form until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when it was spoken in all the provinces of eastern and central France, and also in the Canton of Geneva (Switzerland), which once formed part of the ancient kingdom of Burgundy.

[Pg 271]

To the practised ear, a Burgundian reveals his origin at once, by the way he pronounces his *a*'s. A becomes *â* (ah) in all words such as *cave*, *table*, *Jacques*, terminated by a dumb syllable, and the *O* is shortened in all words ending in *ot* or *op*, such as *gigot* or *sirop*.

The Burgundian offers no exception to the general rule that the words peculiar to a dialect are often very beautiful. Provence gives us "voun, voun" for the hum of the bees, Normandy gives us "boisettes" for the dead sticks that the peasants gather for faggots; while from Burgundy we get "faublette" for a little tale. For "beggar," instead of a brutal word like "mendiant," they say "cherchou de pain." There is purity in their dialect, as in their customs.

While writing these pages upon the old creeds and customs of rustic Burgundy, I have felt strongly, as a foreigner, my inefficiency for such a task, and have wished that I could hand over my pen to the Burgundian poet, my friend, M. François Fertiault, by whose kind permission I am able to make use of so much material that is his, and to whom any merit there may be in this chapter is wholly due. Had his still firm and active, though aged hand, taken up my task, my readers would well have been able to say, as the peasants of Burgundy, with one voice, have said of his work: "Yé ben vrâ qu' tout c'qui s'passe cheu nous."

Footnotes:

- [191] "L'Histoire d'un Chant Populaire." F. Fertiault.
- [192] Abel Jeandet, in the Feuilleton de Paris, March 1851, records several historical instances of the discovery of gold in the sands of Doubs.
- [193] "Good morning, Mars. How are you Mars? Show me in my sleep him I am to have in my waking life." This is an interesting poetical relic of pagan worship.
- [194] "Le Premier de Mars" by F. Fertiault, published in the Feuilleton de Paris.
- [195] "En Bourgogne."
- [196] A national dish of fresh-water fish cooked in white wine and seasoned with garlic and aromatic herbs. It is not unlike the provençal bouillabaisse.
- [197] "La Patois Bourguignon" A. Perrault-Dabot.



CHAPTER XIX

When the train from Bourg had left the valley, and commenced its mountainous passage across the Jura, en route for Nantua, we felt that, historically, if not geographically, we were leaving Burgundy for an intermediate land that, while ceasing to be France, was not quite Switzerland. Yet, for all that, the journey is worth making, for the sake of the loveliness of the hills, and the links it forms in your mind between what you have left, and the regions of lake and mountain that once formed part of the old Kingdom of Burgundy.

The passage of the viaduct over the Suran soon reconciles you to the Cimmerian darkness of Jura tunnels. Hundreds of feet below winds the blue river mackerel-backed, beside terraced lawns of rich, green grass, between banks of dark fir-wood, through which silvery, snowy waterfalls come swirling and splashing down to the valley stream.

Almost equally beautiful is the crossing of the Ain that follows. At length, after some fifty kilometres of charming surprises, you leave La Cluse and jog onward, until the bend of the line shows you the red roofs and white church-tower of the little town of Nantua reflected in the dark waters of the placid lake, ringed round with upland meadows, and steep, fir-clad hills.

Here, for a few days, we ceased to see things. We just idled, lounged, looked on. Only too soon we learned that this is not Burgundy, but a pocket edition of Switzerland, a tourist resort, where the hotel is more expensive, and the gamins hail you with cries of "Oh! yes!" But if this spot has Swiss drawbacks, it has Swiss beauties, too; ce que est déjà quelque chose.

It was on a lovely autumn morning, that, after a breakfast made memorable by mountain honey, we climbed the hills above the town, and basked in the rays of the sun, that shone from a cloudless sky. Such sun-heat has not been felt in Burgundy all this frozen summer and vineless fall. We bathed in it with infinite joy. Below us flickered, golden green, the grasses of an upland meadow, where the hay-makers were busy raking over the last crop. Lower down, across a fringe of branches tossing in the north wind, shone in soft, warm colours, grey, brown, and red, the roofs and walls of ancient Nantua, crowned with the tower of the Romanesque Church, whose sides and sculptured shafts and capitals challenged, in the fierce morning light, the pitchy shadows that lurked in every rounded arch.

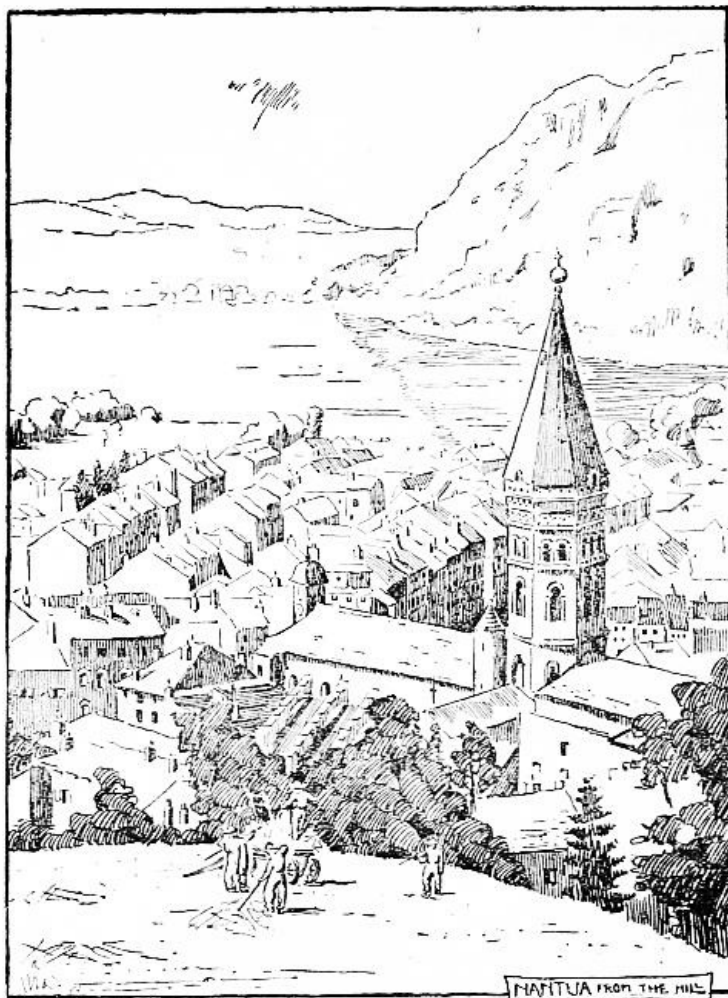
[Pg 273]

Through the angle, formed by the tower and the mottled roof of the nave, one caught a glimpse of shops in the main street. From the gable of one of them flapped the tricolor flag of France. People passed beneath it—black specks, like flies walking. Beyond lay the blue lake, breeze-ruffled, striped like a fish's back in shades of azure and grey, passing now and then into buff and yellow, where the waters reflected the naked rock—the whole framed, hemmed in by rugged cliffs, whose lower slopes are clothed in scrub and trees of every tint, from black to green and gold. The topmost rocks—jagged, bare, vertical faces broken with black patches, and streaked, on the sunny side, with bright, zig-zag paths—threaten the town and lake beneath. Unbroken shadows still enveloping the eastern cliffs, throw into stronger relief the gleaming water, and opposite shore quivering in the morning light. Westward only can the eye escape from these rugged beauties to the gentler slopes of the Jura beyond La Cluse.

Wandering dream-hunter that I am, it is there that I find myself gazing, at these shining, shining waters, and beyond them, to the real Burgundy, to the memories of her glorious past still lingering in the Palace of Dijon, and the mother abbeys of the west. While my wife sketched Nantua, and envied the hay-makers their arms, I thought of Cluny and of Citeaux, of things, in fact, symbolized in that Romanesque tower below.

Walking through the town, on our way back to our hotel, we entered a shop, and nearly fell over a small child—some seven years old—who was playing on the doormat with shells and bits of glass. She jumped up at once, adjusted her long, straight, red hair, worn in two plaits; and turned to us a round, sweet, intelligent little face.

[Pg 274]



"Bonjour, Monsieur et Dame!" she said.

[Pg 275]

"Bonjour, Mademoiselle," we replied; and looked round for the shop-keeper. There was no other. This was the shop-keeper—this baby, with the sweet face and red plaits; now a woman, official, dignified, alert.

"You desire post-cards, 'Sieur et Dame? Here is a tray-full—please choose."

We chose. Our dame de comptoir looked on, graciously. The cards were handed to her to count: The little red head was ready first with the figure.

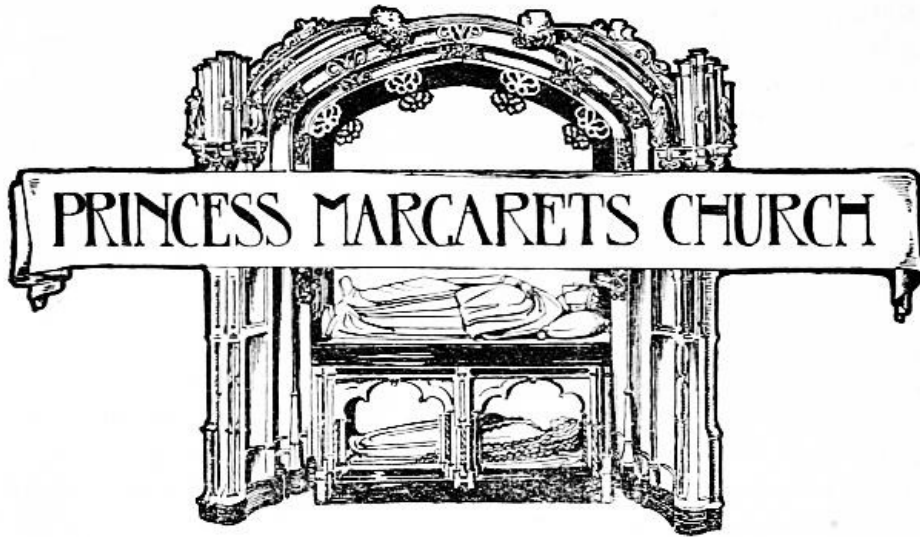
"Ca fait dix-neuf sous, Monsieur. Yes, I have change. Do you desire stamps?" Stamps and change were instantly forthcoming.

"Voilà, Bonjour M'sieur-Dame!"

From twenty yards away we looked back. A sweet child with ted pigtailed was playing with shells on the doormat.

Don't believe people who tell you that French women are not born capable.

The church of Nantua is worth a visit. It has a good Romanesque façade, carved with the usual energy and freedom of the Burgundy school; but the capitals are mutilated, as is the tympanum at the first order of the arch. The interior is in the usual Burgundian style. The nave has square pillars with engaged vaulting shafts; but the original ceiling has been replaced by a thirteenth-century ribbed vault, springing from corbel-capitals at the same height as the vaulting shafts. The thrust of the vaults has forced the pillars outwards both ways, and flying buttresses of a very substantial kind have been built to hold the church together. The tower, of later date than the body of the church, is the best in the district. Other points worth noticing are the barrel-vaulted transept, the primitive vaulting of the ceiling, the frescoes in the choir, and the westward slope of the floor.



CHAPTER XX

Our strongest impression of Bourg en Bresse—apart from its associations with the Eglise de Brou—was that it brought us almost within hail of the beloved Midi. As at Mâcon, the sun, when it shone, was aggressive. You welcomed the sight of leafy plane trees, you hugged the shady side of the road. Good peaches were to be had for a sou la pièce; and the cattle wore hats—red and yellow tassels and elaborate string fly-protectors bound about their foreheads. These things are full of significance for one who has seen the south.

Another memory is the ill-manners of the townspeople. The attentions of the folk at Paray were but neglect when compared with the fixed stare of Bourg. One delinquent was so absorbed in us that he nearly wrecked his motor in the open street: another fell down the hotel stairs; there were three cases of abrasion. The fact that these victims had obviously not forgotten the "convenances," only made more striking their failure to observe them. They appeared to have no control over certain faculties. Both sexes had forgotten how to blush. They wrought me to anger, and my wife to tears.

But such trifles, after all, are merely the "petit désagréments" of travel—remembered only with a smile; relics of primitivism, such as was the service de la gare—omnibuses still running, not so much as varnished since the French Revolution.

[Pg 277]

"C'est ancien" said a hotel porter, with a wave of the hand. "C'est un monument historique," added a bystander. The porter smiled, as his hand closed mechanically over a franc.

We rode, that first afternoon, to Cezenat, on the slopes of the Jura. The aspect of the country round was harsher than that of central Burgundy, and the light fiercer; the landscape, as a whole, lacks the soft charm of the vine-clad Côte d'Or, without attaining to the romantic quivering whiteness of the vrai midi. It was very delightful to rest before the café opposite to the church of Revonnat, and watch the shapely, creamy cattle, following the swarthy maid to the water-trough beneath the virgin-crowned fountain. They drank steadily, until a long stick, rattling about their shiny muzzles, made them raise mildly-protesting heads. They walked home with unruffled dignity, a processional frieze of madonnas—their faces veiled, as befits holiness.

More, and then more, came tinkling by, driven by a diminutive boy. They disappeared down a winding lane, and were followed by four horses, harnessed tandem, wearing the three-horned attelage of the Midi, and stamping, swishing their tails, and tossing heads, till all the village was vocal with their music. After them waddled a fat woman, leaking seed, and followed by a hundred hungry fowls. Last of all, two piebald oxen, harnessed in front of a skinny pony, tugged wearily up the hill the household goods of a whole family piled upon a creaking cart.

With the exception of a few old houses and the world-famous Brou, there is very little architecture worth seeing in Bourg. Or, if there is, it did not detain us long. We made at once for Princess Margaret's Church, rather more than a kilometre distant from the lower part of the town, at the end of a long, straight, squalid road. There we found it—this jewel ill-set. The authorities, with the cynical apathy, or ignorance, that characterises French ecclesiasticism, have surrounded the building, on the west and north, with a gravelled open space, like the playground of a board-school, adorned with a tawdry crucifix, and a lavatory, the whole enclosed within an ignoble wall. Why the French public tolerate such outrages is a mystery!

[Pg 278]



I suppose that, in this case, darkness is just ignorance.^[198] Yet before their very eyes are evidences that it was not always so. The pictures in their church show that the "parvis" was originally planted with shrubs, which would grow as readily to-day as they did then; failing a grassy lawn, and the money or men to keep it green and trim.

[Pg 279]

Enough of the setting—what of Princess Margaret's Church? Looking up at it, we are reminded, at once, of her Flemish sympathies. The high gables of this west front—of which the centre one is lightened by a rose and three triangular windows, symbols of eternity and the Trinity—recall the splendid architecture of Bruges and the Rhine country. Rich flamboyant carving is to be seen everywhere; yet the effect is more striking than successful. The façade is surrounded with elaborate embellishments, that, jostling with one another, break the harmony of line; the ornament is tortured, and conveys the impression that it is merely hung upon the Church; the figures in the tympanum below the flat-arched portal, are poor in execution; the tower is mean and insufficient. Yet we must not hasten to condemn. This fallen Gothic, though marred by the defects of its qualities, and, beyond question, fundamentally decrepit, has yet wintry graces all her own. Her death days were neither ignoble, nor frozen; rather they were instinct with a repentant animation, and warmed by a delicate flush, the hope and vision of coming spring.

Yes, despite the wanton waste of ornament, despite intemperance and lack of restraint, there is pathos, there is beauty, even, in these splendid agonies of a matchless art. That proud princess of ancient lineage, lying stricken in her darkened chamber, where yet lingered the shadows of a passing night, bent timidly, fearfully, her dreamy, dying eyes upon the before and after, upon what had been and was yet to be; until, gathering strength for a last effort, the frail, fair, white hand, drawing apart the silken folds of the curtain, caught, through the glowing casement, a glimpse of a golden dawn brightening a yet lovelier world, and smiled to see the pure radiance of a happier, more human belief touching with the tender light of a new-born hope the sterner mysticism of her earlier discarded faith. The discarded faith was mediævalism; that new-born hope we call the Renaissance.

Come with me into the building, and, before I tell Margaret's story, look, for a moment, round this amazing church. The nave, though it conveys at once to the mind of the devotee of pure Gothic, a sensation of wintry decadence, that neither the richness of the lovely *jubé*, nor a glimpse, through its open door, of the wonderful marble tombs within the choir, can quite dispel, is pleasing in its grace and simplicity, qualities which the exterior would not have led you to expect. So restful, too, are the flowing lines of the columns and engaged colonnettes rising, unbroken by capitals, to the low vaults, that one imagines the architect to have planned deliberately this cool, white marble hall, in which worshippers could soothe spirits wrought to intensity by sights seen within. They may well have needed such repose, since we need it to-day; though the love which brought this church into being was left lonely four hundred years ago. Pass through that open doorway, and see for yourself. You stand in a maze of sculptures, among

[Pg 280]

a thousand flowers, figures, emblems, devices, and myths, feminine fantasies carved everywhere, in regal profusion upon many a pedestal and column, upon shadowy niches and overhanging tabernacles, upon dainty shaft, and lightest fretwork pinnacle, their marble whiteness all warmed in blue, crimson, and golden light streaming from the painted windows. Whether you look down upon the blue enamelled bricks at your feet,^[199] at the silent figures beneath those strangely decorated canopies, and the myriad carven shapes about them, or whether you look up at the resplendent saints, kings, and nobles ablaze upon the panes, your sensation is one of unsatisfied wonder, and you know yourself to be in a building, that, for all its faults, is unrivalled in the world of art. Let me tell how it came to be so.

The story of Margaret d'Autriche, the unfortunate princess to whom we owe this extraordinary Eglise de Brou, is closely linked with events and personalities already mentioned in these pages. Born in 1480, she was the daughter of Maximilian and Marie de Bourgogne, and grand-daughter of Charles le Téméraire. In the closing years of his life, that old fox, Louis XI., had chosen her out as the future wife of his Dauphin, and would, no doubt, have had his will, had not his erstwhile ally, death, turned against him at last, and claimed forfeiture.

The childhood of Marguerite passed peaceably in that lovely Château of Amboise by the Loire, in the company of her official husband, Charles VIII., and his French Court, was not foreshadowed by sorrows that were soon to come. The King torn between desires to unite Burgundy and Brittany to the French crown, and finding that he could not have both, decided in favour of the latter. Acting upon that decision, he broke his sworn faith to Marguerite, dismissed his fiancée, and married Anne of Brittany. Marguerite left in anger; nor did she ever forgive Charles. Henceforth, France was her enemy. So, for many years, was Fortune. The next stroke fell swiftly.

[Pg 281]

In April, 1497, Marguerite married Juan, Prince of Castille, the son of Ferdinand and Isabella, who died of fever at Salamanca in the same year—a misfortune that—if we are to believe her historiographer, Jean Lemaire—neither crushed the girl's spirit, nor extinguished her natural wit; "for, being on shipboard, and having passed a horrible and tempestuous night, in fear of perilous shipwreck, as the following day the sea had been calm and tranquil, while Marguerite was conversing with her maids upon their past fears and perturbations, the proposal was made that each should compose her own epitaph; whereupon she promptly composed her own in this manner":

"Cy gist Margot la gentil' Damoiselle,
Q'u ha deux marys et encore est pucelle."^[200]

Truly a very joyous epitaph, as Lemaire says, "si plein de vraie urbanité." Not so did she salute the death of her next husband.^[201]

It was on the 26th of September, 1501, that was signed the treaty of her marriage with Philibert le Beau, Duke of Savoy—the event that first links Marguerite's story with that of Brou.

The fifth of August in the following year, when Philibert and Marguerite paid their first visit to Bourg, was a memorable day in the annals of the town. Artillery boomed, joy bells clashed; every house was bright with gay hangings of all colours, with festoons, and the arms of Burgundy and Savoy. Soon the call of the trumpet drew all the crowd to the Town Hall, whence issued the corps municipal, preceded by the syndics clothed in red robes, one of whom bore the keys of the town upon a silver plate.

The procession moved slowly forward, to the beat of music, until a warlike fanfare of trumpets, and the neighing of horses, announced the coming of the ducal cortège, at the head of which rode Philibert and Marguerite. Loud were the cries of joy that greeted the young couple. On a prancing steed, decked with rich draperies, bearing the arms of Burgundy, its beautiful head plumed with tossing white feathers, rode Marguerite, wearing the ducal crown. Through the folds of her silver veil, spectators could obtain a glimpse of a gracious face, and long fair tresses. Her dress was of crimson velvet, embroidered in gold, showing upon the skirt the escutcheons of Austria and Savoy. In one hand she held her reins, the other was lifted in gracious salutation to the crowd. At her right ambled the Duke Philibert, proud of the reception that Bourg was according his lady.

[Pg 282]

Philibert le Beau was a handsome, gay, debonair prince, who loved to give to music and good cheer all the hours he could spare from his favourite pastime of the hunt. He left to his ministers exclusively all such troublesome matters as affairs of State. Such was the young gallant who rode by Marguerite's side through the streets of Bourg.

Every house, as we have said, was gay with blazoned arms and bunting. On a great scaffold before the Church of Notre Dame, the preaching friars were presenting mystery plays, the Christian legends of St. George and of the Archangel St. Michael. On the scaffolds, in various parts of the town, were figured scenes from mythological history. The Labours of Hercules, or Jason's encounters with monsters and dragons during his quest of the Golden Fleece. Before the town wall, in the presence of a crowd so dense that a way could scarcely be cleared for the duchess, was represented the allegory of "The Fountain and the Maid," in which, from the metal breasts of a gigantic female figure, two jets of wine splashed into the basin below.

During the three short years of Philibert's married life, the peace of Europe was untroubled, and the Duke of Savoy was forced to appease his military ardour in tournament and hunt. A chronicler of the time has left us a detailed account of the jousts held on the occasion of the marriage of Laurent de Gorrevod, at the Castle of Carignan. Philibert bore himself so bravely in

the lists, that the ladies, with one consent, "benign and not ungrateful, knowing the honour and the great and mighty feats of arms done for love of them, advised that by right and without favour, the honour and prize of the combat should be given to Duke Philibert. Wherefore the said ladies desired him that he would of his grace accept the ring presented to him on their behalf by a young and fair demoiselle—which supplication, as one full of honour, courtesy, and benignity, thanking the said ladies, their said ring and present he graciously accepted."^[202]

[Pg 283]

The Duke's favourite hunting-seat was at Château de Pont-Ain,^[203] high up on the hill overlooking Bresse and Bugey. Many a day the dark woods around echoed the merry note of the horn, and the deep bay of his hounds, as Philip and Marguerite rode forth together. She with "the ivory horn hung in a sling, mounted on a spirited palfrey, followed her very dear lord and spouse, in hot chase of the horned stags, by wood and plain, by mountain and valley, fearing not the ardour of the sun nor the toil of the hunt, so that by her careful presence she could guard him from all misfortune."

On a very hot morning, in September, 1504, the young prince, led far afield by the excitement of the chase, "and almost separated from his party, who could follow him no longer, was passing, at mid-day, a long and narrow valley, on foot, because his horses, by reason of the long ride, were dead or broken down."

Arriving, breathless and bathed in perspiration, at the Fontaine St. Vulbas, he was charmed by the cool shade of the place, and ordered his meal to be served to him there. Before long, feeling himself seized with a sudden shivering fit, he ordered his horse, and began his homeward journey, "holding his hand to his chest, then commencing to bend forward and to be in great agony." He reached the Castle at last, and threw himself down upon a camp bed, "beside which came soon, all troubled in heart, the very dear Duchess, his very dear spouse and companion, who, seeing her lord and friend lying ill, and nevertheless not knowing as yet of her great mourning so soon to be, began to comfort him very sweetly, and to cheer him with all her power."

For several days the young prince battled with a violent attack of pleurisy; but, at last, in spite of bleeding and many prayers, even his strong constitution gave way, and the lovers knew that they must part. "And himself feeling his end drawing near, rose and would fain bid an eternal farewell to his very loved companion, holding her in a strong embrace." He died in the arms of Marguerite, on the 10th September, 1504, in the very room in which he had been born, twenty-four years before, in the Château de Pont-d'Ain.

[Pg 284]

The brief days of Marguerite's happiness were closed. Coming years were to bring their measure of consolation to the stricken woman; but, as she herself, a poetess of sorrow, wrote in verse, whose graceful melodies recall the plaintive notes of Charles D'Orléans, henceforth for her

Deuil et ennuy, soussy, regret et peine,
Ont eslongué ma plaisance mondaine,
Dont a part moy, je me plains et tourmente;
Et en espoir n'ay plus un brin d'attente:
Vééz là, comment Fortune me pourmeine.

Ceste longheur vault pis que mort soudaine;
Je n'ay pensé qui joye me rameine;
Ma fantasie est de déplaisir pleine;
Car devant moy à toute heure se présente
Deuil et ennuy.^[204]

So poor Marguerite adopted a new device, the last and saddest of three comments upon her destiny.^[205] You may read it to-day, a hundred times, on the walls, the tombs, the windows of the church of Brou.

[Pg 285]

FORTUNE. INFORTUNE. FORT UNE.^[206]

It was in the spring of 1505 that Margaret laid with her own hand the first stone of the building she had dreamed of ever since her husband's death, a church which would, at the same time worthily perpetuate the memory of their loves, and accomplish the unfulfilled vow of her mother, Marguerite de Bourbon, who had sworn many years before to erect a church to the glory of God, should her husband recover from an illness that then threatened his life.

The princess chose for her architect Loys van Boghen, a Flamand of great ability, under whose direction the whole fabric of the church was constructed. The statues and sculptures were in the hands of "Maistre Conrard, le consommé tailleur d'ymages," between whom and the difficult, quarrelsome Loys considerable friction seems to have arisen. This we gather from the archives of Ain.^[207]

"Insomuch as Maistre Loys is somewhat light of word and threat towards one and another, both ecclesiastic and secular, whence much scandal may arise, as indeed has already chanced, and our Lady's work thereby retarded, the said Maistre Loys is thereby expressly forbidden and prohibited henceforth from using such threats and words; and should he notwithstanding attempt to do so, he will be held accountable therefore to our Lady in his person and goods. The same shall be said to Maistre Conrard and to all other whom it may concern."^[208]

[Pg 286]

At length, stone by stone, in spite of Maistre Loys' temper and the awful famine and pestilence, which, in those years, were ravaging the town of Bourg, Marguerite's darling project approached completion. Many a day would she ride over from the Castle of Pont d'Ain, where she was passing the early years of her widowhood, to watch her beloved building growing beneath her eyes.

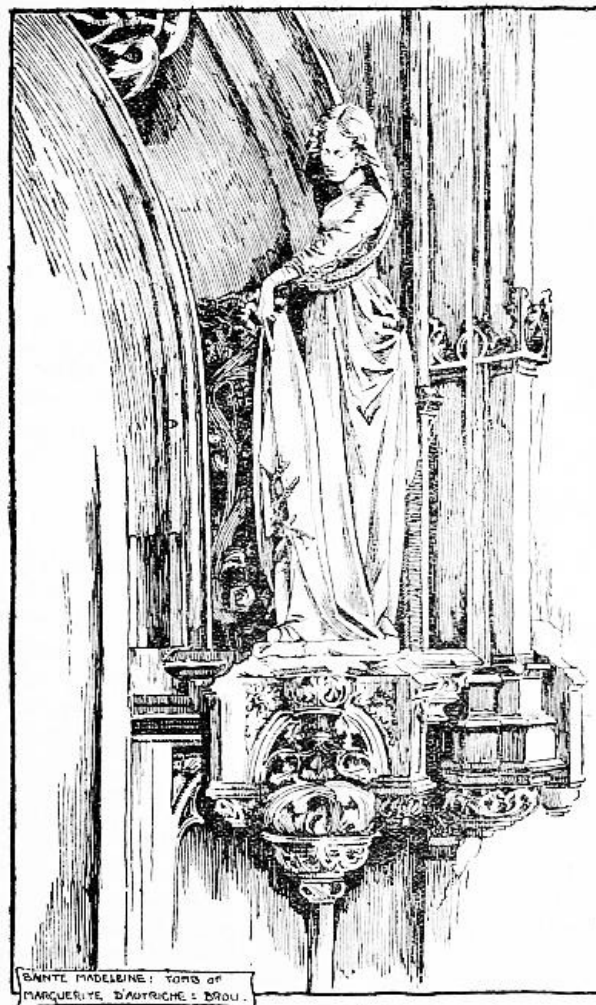
On her palfrey white the Duchess
Sate and watched her working train—
Flemish carvers, Lombard gilders,
German masons, smiths from Spain.

Clad in black, on her white palfrey,
Her old architect beside—
There they found her in the mountains,
Morn and noon and eventide.

There she sate and watched the builders,
Till the Church was roofed and done.
Last of all the builders reared her
In the nave a tomb of stone.^[209]

The closing years of Marguerite's life were passed in administering, wisely and justly, the affairs of the Pays Bas, of which country she had long been appointed governor. Her wealth, her great abilities, and her exalted rank all combined to render her one of the most prominent figures in the political life of the time.

[Pg 287]



Francis I., after his defeat at Pavia, sought her good graces; she was courted of many; her voice was loud in the counsels of Europe. But Marguerite, who had already refused the hand of Henry VII. of England, was not to be dazzled by the glitter of a crown. Long ago she had renounced wedded life, until friendly death should lay her once more beside Philibert in those bridal tombs. Her inmost thoughts, far away from thrones and principalities, were turning towards the cloister, as a fitting refuge from the cares of state, when, in 1530, her unhappy life was brought to a sudden close. This is the traditional story of her death, as told in a manuscript of the eighteenth century.^[210]

[Pg 288]

On the fifteenth of the month of November, in the morning, before rising, she asked for a drink of water from one of her attendants, Magdeleine of Rochester, who, obeying her immediately, brought the water in a crystal cup; but, while taking it back, she unfortunately let the glass fall in front of the bed, where it was smashed to pieces. The girl gathered the fragments up, as carefully as she could, but did not think of looking into her Royal mistress's slippers. Some hours later, Princess Marguerite put on her slippers, and walked to the fire. Feeling a violent pricking

sensation in her left foot, she called a lady in waiting, who found a fragment of the broken cup firmly embedded therein. This she drew out, as carefully as she could, and the princess, with her usual courage, made light of the matter, and dismissed it from her mind.

Some days after, she began to feel great pain in the foot, and noticed that the limb was swollen. Physicians were summoned, who, after private consultation, decided that the wound was gangrened, and that amputation was the only practicable means of saving the patient's life. They communicated their decision to Montécut, the princess's confessor, and asked him to break the news to his mistress. She was much surprised, but bore bravely what she must have known to be virtually a sentence of death. The next few days having been passed in confession, absolution, and the settlement of her temporal affairs, she submitted herself to her doctors, who proceeded to administer to their patient so large a dose of opium "that they put her to a sleep so sound that it is not yet ended, and will not end until the Resurrection of all the dead."

Marguerite was buried at Malines, where her body lay for two years, until, her tomb being ready, she was laid, in 1532, according to the express terms of her will, beside her "lord and husband," who was to rest between his mother and his wife.

[Pg 289]

There you may see her to-day lying, proud and lovely, as in life, her royal face still turned to the man to whose glory, rather than to God's, she had raised those astounding memorials of a woman's devotion. There, in flaming colour upon the purpled panes, in blazoned device upon floor and wall, in a thousand delicate fancies, wrought, with most exquisite art, upon the pale, white marble of the tombs, and altar pieces, you may read the story of her life.

We are now in a position to realize why the church, though built by men, breathes femininity. It was the expression of a woman's mind, the love offering of a lady to her lord. As such, all women's virtues are expressed in it—dignity and grace in the flowing lines of the nave, purity in the whiteness of the marble, wit and ingenuity in the legends and devices, daintiness in the exquisite detail; courage, patience, and devotion, revealed everywhere in the complete unity of the whole.^[211] And those women's virtues carried with them women's faults—a certain lack of breadth and vision; over-elaboration of detail, and a love of prettiness that verges upon the petty.^[212] All these things are apparent. But the greatest defect of all—the subordination of design to ornament—is as much the fault of the age as of the individual. These were the years of transition.

The old greatness had passed; the new greatness in building was not yet come. In that sense this church is inherently decadent.

When men of the early middle ages reared their mighty fanes to God and to his saints, they lifted vault and roof into echoing airy spaces, where the rapt worshippers, looking upward, might seek haply after God; but here is no upward call. This roof is low, flattened, heavy; threatening, almost, to fall upon the heads bent in prayer. The builders of pure Gothic loved to ornament their churches with the richest sculpture that skilful, reverent hands could carve; and they sought their inspirations in Nature alone, who shapes the tree before she decks it with leaves, and fashions the plant before the flower.

But these later men, losing sincerity, lost truth; they thought of the leaf before the limb, and of blossom rather than of bough. That is why Brou leaves us unsatisfied. Yet, as I have said, we must not blame utterly. Whatever architect and sculptor may have lacked, one thing they did not lack—patience. And if patience were indeed genius, as Buffon says it is, then is genius here, too. Surely, the most fastidious spectator may say with Paradin, the old chronicler of Savoy, "après tout estant léans (à Brou), semble que voyez un songe, et ne savez à quoi premierment adresser vos yeux pour les repaistre, parce qu' une chascune chose se convie á regarder comme un nouveau spectacle."

[Pg 290]

We have no space left in which to deal with details of the tombs, the choir stalls, altar pieces, and other marvels the church contains. The reader must discover them for himself; we can only give a few general impressions.



As you face the east end of the Church, the tomb of Marguerite d'Autriche is on your left, that of Philibert le Beau in the centre, and that of Marguerite de Bourbon on the right. This last, the earliest of the three, is obviously inspired by the royal tombs at Dijon, but, having no base, it lacks their dignity, just as it lacks their harmony and simplicity. The pleurants are very poor, when compared with those of Claus Sluter and his nephew. The minute

detail is extraordinarily good, but there is a superabundance of ornament, and the whole is tortured and conscious. The meaning of the device bearing the letters F E R T has been much debated. Some say that it represents *Fortitudo Ejus Rhodum Tenuit*, or *Tuetur*, in memory of Amédee le Grand's victory over the Turks; others that it is a chevaleresque French device; *Frappez, Entrez, Rompez Tout*. The guide, however, gave us *Fide et Religione Tenemur*, as the true solution.

Philibert's tomb is quite fittingly the best of the three, as being the simplest and most dignified. The detail is very Flemish, some of the figures recalling in pose as well as in costume, the manner of Van Eyck and his school.

The tomb of Marguerite d'Autriche is beautifully proportioned, but much of the ornament has so little relation to the design that it appears to be appliqué. Tortured lines are the inevitable result. Many of the figures however, are very charming; notably the Madeleine holding her hair, and Catherine of Alexandria trampling down the Emperor Maximilian of Italy. The Marguerites make effective and appropriate ornament, as also do the briquets of the house of Burgundy—two sticks in the form of St. Andrew's cross.

The altar piece of the virgin in the north transept is one of the most extraordinary productions of its kind that I know. It is more magnificent even than the tombs, and far exceeds them in grace, charm, and realism. The seven scenes represented are: The Ascension of the Virgin; the Visitation; the Annunciation; the Nativity; the Adoration; Pentecost; Christ appearing to His Mother. In the oratory of Marguerite d'Autriche there is a curious oblique arch, enabling her to see both altars at the same time.

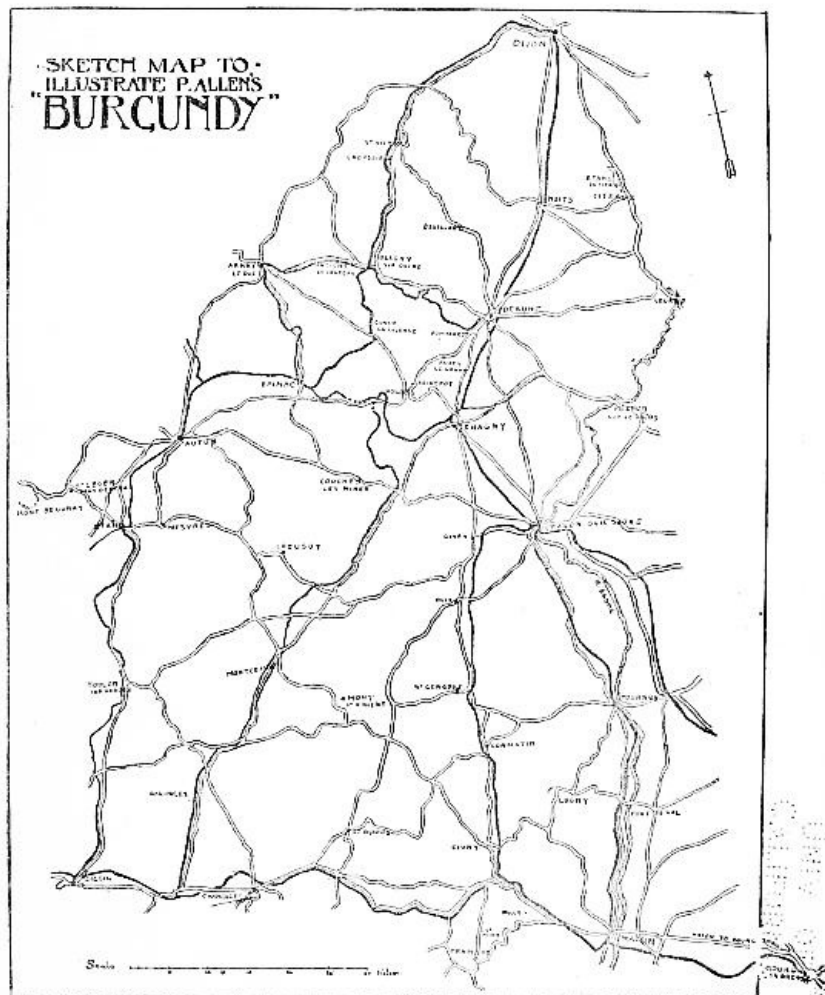
Let me close these few notes on the church of Brou with some lively comments from Paradin's *Chronique de Savoie*.

"As to the pavement, even that which is in the choir as well as that which is in the chapel of my said Lady Marguerite d'Autriche, it is in truth a thing as pleasant and delicious to see as may possibly be found, being all such joyous and singular leadwork mingled with very divers picturing ... which so pleases spectators that almost with regret one walks upon it. I remember that, being there, was a gentleman who feeling scruples at walking on this pavement, spat in the face of a great rascal of a pastrycook, whose nose was all beflowered with knobs of scarlet tint, saying that there was no spot in all the church more dirty to spit on than that."

"I remember also having seen descend (here), the late King Francis^[213] when he came to Bourg, who, having seen this church, was ravished with admiration, saying that he had never seen nor heard of a temple of such excellence for what it contained. And true it is that he noted (as he was a Prince exceeding in good sense all the kings of his time) that this white stone of which the Church is built, would not well endure frost, being too rare and tender. And it was since found that he spoke truly; for long after there fell from the clock tower some of the great bastions or gargoyles which take the water over the roof, on the side of the cloisters, a thing which did much hurt to the building."

The revolutionary mob were proposing to do still greater hurt to the building, and would have done so, had not the wisest man in all Bourg filled the church with hay which the sans-culottes could not bring themselves to burn. So Brou is ours, we hope, for many centuries to come.





Facing page 292.

Footnotes:

- [198] The English public are supposed to be extraordinarily tolerant, yet the French are undoubtedly more so. The inconveniences of such a large railway station as that at Dijon, for example, with its almost impassable doors and swinging gates that bang all day long with a report like that of heavy artillery, are such as would be dealt with sternly by an English public. But the French take quite good-humouredly the evils of railway monopoly—and other ills besides.
- [199] Azulejos—from the Arab word *Azul*, blue.
- [200] "Within this tomb the sweet Margot is laid,
Who has two husbands and is still a maid."
- [201] "Eglise de Brou," by Jules Baux, p. 22.
- [202] Beaux's "Eglise de Brou," 52.
- [203] The Château de Pont D'Ain does not seem to have met with general favour, to judge from the following humorous lines which Jean Lemaire imagined himself addressing to Marguerite.
- "Ha! Le Pont d'Ain, que tu fusses péry!
Lieu exécration, anathématisé,
Mal feu, puist être en tes tours attisé!
Au moins, Princesse, en extrême guerdon,
Je te requiers et te supplie ung don:
C'est que mon corps n'y soit ensevely;
Ains le netz en quelque lieu joy,
Bien tapisesé de diverses flourettes
Où pastoureaux devisent d'amourettes."
- [204] Mourning and care, regret and grief and pain,
Within my heart all worldly joy have slain,
Wherefore, apart, I make my moan and grieve
That hope no more my anguish may relieve,
For see how Fate to do me hurt is fain.
- Far less to sudden Death would I complain,
Than life drawn out—nor ever joy again;
But fancy leading phantoms in her train,
For here, all day, all year long, I receive

For complete poem see Baux's "Eglise de Brou," p. 66.

- [205] The first, adopted after her dismissal from the Court of France by Charles VIII., was a windswept mountain, with the motto, "Perflant altissimo venti." The second, taken after the death of John Castille, and her child by him, was a fruit tree split by lightning.
- [206] This enigmatic device has been variously deciphered, but two contemporary authors agree in interpreting it "*Fortuna infortunat fortiter unam*," which means "Fortune tries cruelly a woman." Murray's guide gives incorrectly, "Fortune infortune forte une," meaning "Here is a woman strong in fortune or in misfortune."
- [207] Beaux's "Eglise de Brou," p. 57.
- [208] The fabric, however, does not seem to have suffered as much from the quarrels of the builders, as from the extraordinary failure of the architect to provide efficiently for carrying away the roof water, with the result that heavy rains nearly destroyed the building before even it was finished. Loys had probably forgotten structural soundness in his efforts to satisfy his employer's passion for decorative effect.
- [209] Matthew Arnold's poem, "The Church of Brou," is marred by a number of unnecessary inaccuracies. Philibert was not slain by a boar, he died of pleurisy. Marguerite's Tomb is at the "Crossing East of the Choir," and not in the nave, moreover, the poet seems so uncertain whether the Church is in the mountain or in the valley, that one is led to doubt whether he really knew.
- [210] "Description Historique de la belle église et du couvent royal de Brou." Quoted Beaux pp. 126-8.
- [211] Baux points out that the church does not contain one statue of St. Nicholas of Tolentin, its patron saint.
- [212] Michelet vii. cap. xii.
- [213] Francis I.

Quick Links to Index Letters

[\[A\]](#) [\[B\]](#) [\[C\]](#) [\[D\]](#) [\[E\]](#) [\[F\]](#) [\[G\]](#) [\[H\]](#) [\[I\]](#) [\[J\]](#) [\[L\]](#) [\[M\]](#) [\[N\]](#) [\[O\]](#) [\[P\]](#) [\[R\]](#)
[\[S\]](#) [\[T\]](#) [\[U\]](#) [\[V\]](#) [\[W\]](#)

	PAGE
A	
Abélard	89 , 146 , 153
" At Paris	146
" Marriage with Héloïse	148
" Fulbert's crime	149
" At St. Denis & St. Gildas	150
" Paraclet & correspondence	151
" Death	152
Aedui	13 , 16 , 32
Agrippa, Voie de	21 , 36 , 63
Aimard, Abbot of Cluny	91
Ain, The	272
Albéric	174 , 176 , 178
Albigensian Crusade	123
Alençon, Duc d'	106
Alesia	15
Alethea (Alèthe)	115 , 209
Alexandre de Bourgogne	242
Aligote (wine)	247
Alonzo VI., King of Castille	71
Amalon, Duke	138 , 140
Amboise, Jacques de	88 , 94
Amboise, Château de	281
Ambulatorium Angelorum, Cluny Abbey	75
Amphitheatres	39
Andrew	18
Anjou, Duke of	136
Anne of Brittany	281
Anselm	89
" Bishop of Laon	146
Antoine-le-Moiturier	192
Antigny-le-Châtel	179
Antony de la Marche	156
Apollo	32 , 50
Apollo, Temple of	21 , 32 , 34
Aquitaine, William, Duke of	60 , 61 , 63
Argenteuil, Convent of	147 , 149
Ariovistus	14
Arles	32 , 36 , 100
Armagnacs et Bourguignons	105 , 200
Arnay-le-due, Road to	179
" Town	180 , 182 , 183 , 248
Arnaud, Abbot of Citeaux	123
Arnold, Matthew, "Church of Brou"	286
Arverni	13

Aseraule, Monastery of	178
Asile des Aliénées, Dijon	189
Augustodunum (See Autun)	33
Augustus	11
Autun	8 , 10-58
" Amphitheatres	39
" Cathedral St. Lazare	12 , 26 , 42 , 51
" translation of Relics	42
" Destruction of Tomb	48
" Alterations to	48
" Capitals	49
" Capitol	21 , 32 , 34
" Castrum	21 , 26 , 55
" Caves Joyaux (See Theatre)	
" Champ de Mars, Place du	11 , 26 , 55 , 56
" des Urnes	20
" Crot Volu (Amphitheatre)	39
" Ecoles Méniennes	21 , 22 , 33 , 34
" Faubourg d'Arroux	11 , 24 , 27
" des Marbres	34
" Forum	21
" Fountain of Pelican	28 , 51 , 52
" Hôpital St. Nicholas	53
" Hôtel Rolin	51-53
" de Ville	55
" St. Louis	31 , 41
" Hospice St. Gabriel,	34
" Jambe de Bois, Rue de la	21
" Lazarus (See St. Lazare)	
" Marbres, Faubourg des	34
" Promenade des	34 , 39
" Porte des	21
" Martha (See St. Martha)	
" Mary (See St. Mary)	
" Musée lapidaire	43 , 53-55
" Musée municipal	55
" Porch of Cathedral	44 , 45
" Porte d'Arroux	26 , 27
" des Marbres (Porte de Rome)	21
" St. Andoche	39
" André	27
" St. Andrew	43
" Saint Lazare	41 , 46
" Tomb of	43 , 48
" Cathedral of	12 , 26 , 42 , 51
" St. Martha	41 , 43 , 46 , 54
" Martin, Abbey of	154
" Mary	41 , 43 , 46 , 54
" Rue de la Jambe de Bois	21
" Sand, Georges	57
" Temple of Appollo	21 , 32 , 34
" Janus	12 , 16 , 22 , 24
" Theatre (Roman)	35-37 , 39
" Tour des Ursulines	29
" Voie d'Agrippa	21 , 36
Auvergne, Mountains of	10 , 13
Auxerre	184
Auxey-le-Grand	240 , 246
Avignon	136

B

Babuti, Mdlle. (Mme Greuze)	169
Bagaudes, The	250

Baleuse, Julian de	91
Balme, Monastery of	64
Bar, Tour de, Dijon	215
" Duc de	213
Batonard, Citizen	85
Baufremont, Jeanne de	242
" Pierre de	242
Beauchamp, Guillaume de	53
Beaune, Vicomte de	112
" Castle of	208
" Maison du Colombier	230
" Flemish Belfry	232
" Hospice de la Charité	232
" Notre Dame	232
" Hotel Dieu	233-236
Bees, Albéric's Dream of	177
Belfry of Beaune	232
Belle Pierre, Cluny	94
Berecynthia, Cybele	50
Bernard (see St. Bernard)	
Bernon, Abbot of Gigny	61
Berri, Jean, Duke of	196, 199
Bertille	137-144
Bertrand, Maréchal	56
Besançon	24
Beuvray	2, 4-10, 13,15,16,53
Berzé-le-Châtel	103-106
Béziers	123
Bibracte, Oppidum (see Beuvray)	5
" Goddess	6
Blanche de Castille (Queen)	103, 123
Bligny-sur-Ouche	178, 179
Boniface VIII., Pope	89
Bouilland	237
Boulogne	24
Bouillon, Cardinal de	98
Bourbon, Jean de	88, 89, 91
" l'Archambaud	24
" Marguerite de	285
Bourg-en-Bresse	276, 277
Bourgogne, Canal de	215
" Marie de	250
Bouxaise, Valley of the	237
Brasey, Guillaume de	53
Brayer, General	56
Bresse, Pays de	276, 277, 283
Broederlam, Melchior	204
Brou, Eglise de	204, 277-292
Brunehault, Queen	54
Bugey	283
Buligneville, Battle of	213
Bulliot	6, 9, 16, 53
Burgundian Dreams of Empire	205, 206, 208
" Patois	270, 271

" Sculpture	212
" Wedding	266-270
Busseul-Saint Sernin, Marguerite de	263

C

Cæsar, Julius	5 , 10 , 13 , 14 , 250
Canal de Bourgogne	215 , 216
Canossa	67
Capitals, Cluny Abbey	93
" Autun Cathedral	49
Carignan, Château de	282 , 283
Carnot	240
Caves Joyaux	34
Célestins, Church of the	199
Cezenat	277
Challant, Jacques de, Seigneur de Manille	219 , 220
Chalonnais	137
Chalon-sur-Saône	136 , 137 , 153 , 158
" Cathedral of	158
Champeux	146
Champs des Urnes, Autun	20
Chandios, Pierre de	154-158
Chapelle Bourbon, Cluny	87 , 88
Charlemagne, Tree of	210 , 217 , 220
Charles V. of France	185 , 186 , 188
Charles VI. of France	89 , 185
" madness of	188 , 201
Charles VII. of France	91 , 105
" as Dauphin	201 , 202
Charles VIII. of France	20
" at Autun	56 , 94 , 281
Charles le Téméraire	53 , 203 , 205
" death of	206-208 , 280
Charles the Simple	61
Charmeur de Vipères	134 , 135
Charney, Lord of	156 , 217 , 219 , 220 , 242
Charolles	135
Charolois, Count Charles of	153
Chartreuse de Champnol	189 , 191
Chastelux, Pierre de	88
Château-neuf	246
Châtigny, Forest of	166
Châtillon-sur-Seine	111 , 115
Childebert	137
Chilperic	137
Cicero	13 , 14
Circateurs	79
Cistercian Architecture	120 , 145
" Order and Rule	111 , 112 , 113
" Sites	113
" to-day	124-126 , 177 , 184 , 204
Citeaux	59 , 111-126
" Foundation of	112
Clairvaux	111 , 117 , 125

Claude de France	20
Claude de Guise	94
Claudius, Emperor	250
Claus Sluter (see Sluter)	
" de Werve	190, 191
Clermain, village of	63
Clotaire	11, 54
Clous, Valley of the	240
Cluny	26, 59-110, 111, 120, 127, 184
" Eglise Notre Dame	97
" " St. Marcel	97, 99
" Hôtel Dieu	
" " de Bourgogne	60, 88, 100, 101
" " des Monnaies	97
" " de Ville	94
" Impressions of	59, 60, 99
" Women of	99, 100
Cluny Abbey	75
" " Abélard at	152
" " Arms of	91
" " Basilica, Interior of	74
" " Boar, Legend of the	65
" " Capitals	93
" " Chapelle Bourbon	87
" " Consecration by Innocent II.	70
" " Crumbs, Legend of the	64
" " Description	71-73
" " Dream of	102
" " Exterior	75, 76
" " Foundation	60, 61, 63
" " Gateway	89
" " Hugues, Death of St.	82
" " Luxury	84
" " Monastic Revival	65, 66
" " Monks Vision	69
" " " Purpose of	73
" " Palace of Pope Gélase	86
" " Palais Abbatial	89
" " Pascal II. at	70
" " Raoul Glaber at	163
" " Revolution	85
" " Romanesque Houses	95
" " Rule of	76-82
" " Tour de l'Eau Bénite	89
" " " l'Horloge	87
Colonna, Jean Baptiste	207
Conrad, Maitre	285, 286
Constantine	21, 28, 32
" Emperor of Byzantium	242
Constantius Chlorus	32
Correggio	99
Cosse (Broom-pod) Order of	185
Costumes of 15th century	185, 186
Côte-d'Or	216, 230-257, 240, 248, 253
Couhard, Pierre de	16, 18, 20-22
Courtépée	249
Courtrai	212
Creux du Diable	221, 222
" " Legend of	222-229

Cross of St. Andrew (Burgundian Badge)	200
Croix de Rebout	5
Crumbs, Legend of	64
Cussy	248-250
" la Colonne	248, 250
Cybele (Berecynthia)	50

D

Damien, Pierre	80, 89
Dame des Pleurs, Tournament of	153-158
Dance des Morts	186
Déchelette	27
De la Monnoye	260
Delmace	66
Devil's Pit	221, 222
" " Legend of	222-229
Diana	50
Digoin	135
Dijon	21, 184-220
" As it was in the 14th century	184
" Asile des Aliénées	189
" Bar, Tour de	189
" Castle of	205
" Chartreuse de Champnol	189
" Louis 11th, Entry of	208
" Musée	203-205
" Murder of Duc d'Orléans	196-199
" Notre Dame, Church of	204, 210, 212, 220, 242, 244
" Palais de Justice	204, 210, 215
" Palais des Ducs	213, 244
" Post Office	205, 209
" Prisons of	173
" Puits des Prophètes	189, 190
" St. Michel, Church of	204, 210
" Tomb of Jean Sans Peur	192, 194
" " Philippe le Hardi	191, 192
" To-day	209-215
Divitiacus	13, 14, 31, 34
Druids	13
Dumnorix	14, 15

E

Edward I. (King of England)	158
Edward IV. (King of England)	186
Eglise de Brou (see Brou)	
"Eho" (Folk Song)	258-262
Epinac	58
Eringarde	111
Etzebon	71
Eudes I., Duke of Burgundy	115
Eudes II., Duke of Burgundy	42
Eudes III., Duke of Burgundy	123
Eugène III., Pope	117, 118, 122
Eumenes	26, 28, 32, 33, 34

F

Famine in France	165-168
Faurtride, Abbot of Clairvaux	118
Ferdinand, King of Spain	281
Fertiault, François	260 , 262 , 271
Fête des Trépassés	244
First of March	264
Folk Song	258-262
Fontaine-les-Dijon	115 , 216
Fontaine St. Vulbas	283
Fontenay (M. De)	22 , 24 , 26 , 27 , 34 , 36
Fountain of the Pelican, Autun	51 , 52
Forêt au Maitre	237
François I.	20 , 21 , 54 , 129 , 288 , 291
Froissart	212
Froissy	179
Fulbert, Canon	147-149

G

Gabriel de Roquette	36
Gamay, Wine	247
Gaul	6 , 9 , 10 , 14 , 15
Gaulish Coins	16
Gaulish Remains	6
Gélase II., Pope	74 , 86 , 89
Gemeaux	228
Geneva, Canton of	271
Geoffrey (St. Bernard's Secretary)	118
" de Berze	104
Geraldus	43 , 44
Gérard (Brother of St. Bernard)	116
Gisilbertus	46
Glaber, Raoul	163-167
" History of his Time	164
Gloze d'Ezéchiél	147
Golden Fleece (Toison d'Or)	156-158 , 244 , 246
Gontran (King of Burgundy)	137 , 140-144
Gorrevod, Laurant de	282
Goujon, Jean	51
Goux, Pierre de	155
Grandson, Battle of	53 , 206
Grancy, Château de	116
Gregory of Tours	54 , 143
" VII. (Pope Hildebrand)	67-69
Greuze	99 , 167-169
Guigennes de Salins	234 , 236
Guillain, Nicolas	49
Guillaume de St. Bénigne	164
Guillaume de Vaudray	220
" Lord of Marigny	174-176
Guise, Claude de	94 , 106

H

Hamerton, P. G.	9 , 10 , 27 , 42 , 55
-----------------	---

Harding, Stephen	112-114, 178
Héliodore de Thiard de Bissy	263
Héloïse	146-153
" meets Abélard	147
" marriage	148, 149
" at Paraclet	150, 151
" death of	153
Helvetii	14, 250
Henry I. (King of England)	71
" IV. (King of France)	106, 263
" IV. (King of the Germans)	67, 68
" V. (King of the Germans)	86
" VII. (King of England)	288
Heraclius	50
Hercules, Maximian	250
Hildebrand de Mans	75
" Pope Gregory VII.	67, 68, 89
Holy Tear	175
Hospice de la Charité, Beaune	232
Hotel Chrétien, Arnay-le-Duc	183
" des Ambassadeurs, Maison Richard, Dijon	213
" de Bourgogne, Cluny	60, 68
" de Cluny, Paris	91
" Dieu, Beaune	232-236
" Dieu, Cluny	97, 98
" Rolin, Autun	51
" St. Louis, Autun	51
Huerta, Jean de la	191
Hugues, Abbot of St. Martin, Autun	61
" Abbot of Cluny	66-70, 74, 80, 82, 91
" II. Abbot of Cluny	83
" II. Duke of Burgundy	115
" III. "	45
" IV. "	122
" le Pacifique, Duke of Burgundy	175
" de Mâcon	117
" Sambin	204, 210
Huguenots	105
Humbert de Bage	42
Huns	137, 144, 160

I

Ingres	49, 50
Innocent II., Pope	42, 71, 119
" III., Pope	68, 123
" IV., Pope	89
Isabella, Queen of Spain	281
Isabeau de Bavière, Queen	196
Is-sur-Tille	229

J

Jaquemart, Clock	212
Jacques d'Amboisè	88, 94
" de Baerze	203
Janus, Temple of (See Autun)	
Jayet, Pierre	129
Jean de la Huerta	191
" de Bourbon	88, 89
" de Marville	191

" Petit	199
" sans Peur, Tomb of	192 , 194
" character	194 , 195 , 198 , 199 , 201
" murder of	202 , 204
Jeannin, Pierre	49
Jeannot, G.H.P.	205
John VIII., Pope	146
Josephine, Empress	56
Juan, Prince of Castille	281
Judith Chalonnaise, La (Bertille)	137-144

L

Labussière, Abbey of	173-178
" Church	178
La Cluse	272 , 273
La Ferté, Abbey of	117 , 125
Lalain, Jaques de	154-158
La Marche, Olivier de	153 , 207 , 218 , 219 , 234
" " Anthony de	156
Lamartine (de Prat)	107-110
Lancaster, Duke of	185
Langue d'Oc	271
Langue d'Oil	271
Laurel, Fixing and Song of	268-270
Lemaire, Jean	281
Lempereur	249
Leo XIII., Pope	125
Les Carmes, Church of	155
Lichfield Cathedral, Spire of	44
Ligueurs	263
Loire, Valley of	10
Lois von Boghen	285 , 286
Louée, la	1
Louis VII., of France	42 , 122 , 152
" IX. "	89 , 122 , 123
" XI. "	194 , 205 , 206 , 208 , 233 , 236 , 263 , 280 , 281
" XIV. "	98
" d'Orléans, murder of	196-199
" le Gros	122
Louise de Savoie	20
Lourdon, Château de	106 , 107
Ludwige	137 , 138 , 142 , 144
Lusigny	248 , 249
Lux, Village of	221 , 222

M

Mâcon	63 , 104 , 135 , 171 , 172
Maeniana	33
Magdeleine of Rochester	288
Maison de Bois, Chalon-sur-Saône	158
" Colombier, Beaune	230
" des Caryatids, Dijon	213
" Milsand, Dijon	213
" Notre Dame, Paris	196 , 198
" des Pompons	129

" Richard, Dijon	213
Mahomet II., Sultan	242
Maitre, Foret au	237
Malines	289
Malvaux, Gorge of	6
Mandelot	253
Manoir des Ducs de Bourgogne, Arnay-le-Duc	182
Marbres, Les, Autun	28
"March, First of"	264
Marcilly, Etang de	229
Marcus Aurelius	50
Maréchal de Rieux	196
Marguerite d'Autriche	280-292
" Devices of	285
" closing years of	286
" death of	288
Marguerite de Bourbon	285
" de Busseul-Saint-Sernin	263
" de Flandres	190
" Ste. Abbey and Legend of	237-240
Marigny, Château de	174
Marie de Bourgogne	280
Martha (see St. Martha)	
Martial d'Auvergne	188, 189
Martin of Autun	43, 48
Marville, Jean de	191
Mary (see St. Mary)	
Mathilde Duhesme	247
" Lady of Marigny	175
Matthew Arnold's "Church of Brou"	286
" Bishop, of Westminster	68
Mavilly	248, 253, 255
Maximilian d'Autriche	280
" of Italy	291
Melchior Broederlam	204
Melin	240
Melun	164
Mendes, Catulle	260
Meursault	240
Michael Angelo	190
Milly, Comte de	103, 106
Milly, Village of	107
Mirebeau, Lord of	156
Molême, Forest and Abbey of	111, 112
Monnoye, De la	260
Montagne Ste. Gêneviève, Abélard at	146
Montbard, Counts of	115
Mont Beuvray (see Beuvray)	
Montceau	249
Montécuit	288
Montégut, Emile	31, 49, 99, 123, 129
Montereau	191
" Murder at Bridge of	202
Montfaçon	249

Monthelon	10
Montjeu, Chateau de	47
Monthéri, Battle of	206
Morat, Battle of	206
Morée, Prince de (Alexandre de Bourgogne)	242
Morimond	117 , 125
Morvan	2
Moses, Well of	100
Motte Forte, Tour de la, Arnay-le-Duc	180
Musée Lapidaire, Autun	43 , 53-55
" Municipal Autun	55

N

Namours, Duc de	105
Nancy, Siege and Battle of	206 , 207
Nantoux, Valley and Gorge of	248 , 252 , 253
Nantua	272-275
" Church of	275
Napoleon Buonaparte	56 , 57 , 169
Narthex, Purpose of	73
" of St. Philibert, Tournus	160 , 161
Nicolas Rolin	44 , 53 , 233 , 236
" V., Pope	242
"Noce d'autrefois en Bourgogne"	266-270
Nogent	150
Noirmoutiers, Monastery of	162
Notre Dame, Beaune	232
" Cluny	97
" Dijon	204 , 210 , 212 , 220 , 242 , 244
Nuits	217 , 218

O

Odilon, Abbot of Cluny	65-67 , 74 , 163
Odon	64 , 74
" Legend of the Crumbs	64
Olivier de la Marche (see La Marche)	
Orbandale	137
Otellot, Wine	247
Ouche, Valley of the	172-183 , 215 , 216

P

Palace of Pope Gélase	86
" the Dukes, Dijon	213
Palais Abbatial, Cluny	89
" de Justice, Dijon	204 , 215
Palermo	67
Pallet, Seigneur de	146
" Bourg du	148
Papillon, Canon	236
Paracllet	150 , 151 , 153
Paradin, Chronicler of Savoy	291
Paray-le-Monial	127-135
" Hotel de Ville	129
" church	129-134

Pascal II., Pope	70
Paris, Massacre of the Armagnacs	200
" famine	201
Patois, Burgundian	270 , 271
Perrault-Dabot	271
Petit, Jean	199
Philibert le Beau, Duke of Savoy	281-284
" death of	284
" tomb	290
Philintus	146
Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy	191 , 203 , 206 , 218 , 234 , 244
" de Rouvre (see Philippe le Hardi)	
" le Bel	89
" le Hardi	136 , 184-190 , 204 , 212 , 217
" III., King of France	158
" Pot	210 , 240-246
Pierre Damien	80 , 89
" de Chastellux	88
" de Chandios	154-158
" de Couhard, La	16 , 18 , 29-32
" de la Wivre, La	6 , 8
" le Vénérable	75 , 79 , 111 , 117 , 120 , 146 , 152
" Jayet	129
" Salvee, La	9
" de Vasco	153
Pinot, Wine	147
Pius VII., Pope	146
Planoise, Forest of	20
Pleurants	191 , 192 , 194
Plombières	215 , 216
Pochoise, La (national dish)	266
Poillot, Denis	54
Poirer aux Chiens	4
Pommard	252
Pons, Abbot of Cluny	75
Pont d'Ain, Château de	283 , 284
Pontigny, Abbey of	117 , 125
Porcheresse, Château de	20
Porch of Cathedral, Autun	44 , 45
Porte d'Arroux	24 , 26 , 27 , 29 , 47
" des Marbres	21 , 28
" de Rome (See Porte des Marbres)	
" St. Andoche	24 , 28 , 29
" St. André	24 , 27
Post Office, Dijon	205 , 209
Pot, Philippe (see Philippe Pot)	
" René	242
Prat family (Lamartine)	107
Prudhon	99 , 168
Puits des Prophètes, Dijon	189

R

Raoul Glaber	163-167
Richelieu	106
Rieux, Maréchal de	196
" Hotel de	198

Renée (Duc d'Anjou, Duc de Bar, "Good King Renée")	213
René (Duke of Lorraine)	207
Revonnat	277
Robert I., Abbot of Cluny	73
Robert, Abbot of Molême (see St. Robert)	
Rochepot, Castle of	240-243
Rolin, Cardinal	44 , 53
" Hotel	51-53
" Nicolas	44 , 53 , 233 , 236
Roman Buildings (see Autun)	
" Column (see Cussy la Colonne)	
Romanesque Houses, Cluny	95
Rouvres	123 , 124 , 217
Rude	205

S

Sacré Cœur, Cult of	127
Sainte Larme, Fontaine de	176
" " (Holy Tear)	175 , 176
Saint Agricole	145 , 165
" Albéric	113
" Antony, Temptation of	204
" Bénigne de Dijon, Abbey of	163 , 184
" Cathedral	208 , 209
" " Missionary	255
" Benedict, Rule of	76-82
" Bernard	83 , 115 , 150 , 152 , 216
" " takes the Cowl	114
" " Legend of his birth	115
" " His Austerities	116
" " Appointed Abbot of Clairvaux	117
" " His Character	118
" " Correspondence with Pierre le Vénéérable	120-122
" " Cup of	204
" " Home of	216 , 217
" Catherine, Martyrdom of	203 , 204
" Cécile	63
" Denis, Abbey of	149 , 150
" Germain d'Auxerre, Abbey of	163
" Gildas, Abbey of	150
" Hubert, Confraternity of	4
" Lazare, and Cathedral of (see Autun)	
" Leger-sous-Beuvray	1-4 , 8
" Louis (see Louis IX.)	
" Loup, Village of	258
" Marcel de Chalon	137 , 140 , 142 , 145 , 146 , 152
" Marcel, Eglise de, Cluny	97
" Marguerite, Abbey and Legend of	237-240
" Martha	41 , 42 , 43 , 54
" " Martial Chapel of, Cluny	88
" Martin, Abbey of, Autun	54
" "	6 , 9 , 255-257
" " Count of	219
" " de Tours, Tomb of	208
" " Legend of	255-257
" " Saut de	253
" " Puits de	252-255
" Mayeul, Abbot of Cluny	74
" Mary	41 , 43 , 46 , 54
" Michael, Church of, Dijon	204 , 210

" Nicholas, Church of, Paray	129
" Odilon (see Odilon)	
" Pierre, Mâcon	172
" Philibert, Tournus	160-162
" " Dijon	185
" Point, Chateau and Village of	107-110
" " Church	108
" " Guillaume de	109
" Rémy, Provence	110
" Robert	111, 112
" " Cross of	204
" Stephen, Stoning of	232
" " Chapel of, Cluny	88
" Symphorien	49-51
" Valérien	161
" Victor, Village of	174
" Vincent, Mâcon	172
" " Cathedral of, Chalon-Sur-Saône	158
" Vulbas, Fontaine de	283
Salamanca	281
Salernes, Jean de	64
Sambin, Hugues	204, 210
Sand, Georges	57
Sandon, Lord of (Anthony de la Marche)	156
Sarcy, Guillaume de	155
Savigny	237
Scheffer	262
Sens, Council of	152
Seyl, Lord of	156
Sluter, Claus	192-194, 246
"Snake-Skin" tiling	210
Soissons, Council of	149
Suran, The	272

T

Tacitus	13, 32, 35
Talant	216
Tanneguy du Chatel	202
Tavannes, Vicomte de	263
Tebsima-Ben-Beka	174-177
Tebsima, Legend of	174-177
Teillage (Autumn Fête)	265
Tescelin le Roux	115, 117
Tetricus	21, 28, 32
Theatre of Ephesus	36
" " Roman (see Autun)	
" " Smyrna	36
Thermes, Palais des, Paris	88
Thomas, Eden	36
Touleur	8
Toulongeon, the Herald	154
" Tristan de	155
" Claude	155
Tour des Fromages	
" de l'Eau Bénite, Cluny	87, 99, 100
" de la Gênetoie	24
" de l'Horloge, Cluny	87
" du Logis du Roi (Tour de la Terrasse) Dijon	204, 213

Tour du Moulin, Cluny	88
" des Ursulines	29
Tournament of La Dame des Pleurs	153-158
" " the Tree of Charlemagne	217
Tournoi (see Tournament)	
Tournus	99 , 160-171
Tramaye	110
Trempée, La	268
Tres Valles (Three Valleys)	177

U

Udalric	77 , 80
---------	---

V

Vallée d'Absinthe	152
Valois, Duke of House of	185
" Madness of	203 , 205
Van Boghen, Lois de	285 , 286
" der Weyden, Roger	100 , 234 , 236
" Hemerren	203
Varennes, Bernard de	82
Vauchignon	82
Vaudrey, Guillaume de	220
Velours, Forest of	221
Vercingetorix	15
Verdun-sur-le-Doubs	258 , 262-264
" Seigneurs de	263
Vergy, Castle of	238
" Maid of (see Marguerite)	
Verrière, La	10
Vesentio, Road of	36
Vespasian	18
Vézeley	42 , 45
Vienne, Sieurs de	263
Violet-le-Duc	22 , 24 , 27 , 131 , 161 , 234
Vitruvius	16
Voltaire	47
Vulfrand	137 , 138 , 142-144

W

Well of St. Martin	252-255
Well of the Prophets	
Werve, Claus de	190 , 191
William I., of England	89
Wines, qualities of	247
Wivern	9

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—Different spelling of Citeaux and Cit-eaux results from usage in text.

—Chalon-Sur-Saône are different (cities) from Chalon and Châlon. No further change to spelling.

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