

The Delights of Normandy.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

By Rev. L. M. Colfelt D. D.

Normandy, with its undulating, well-wooded, well-watered, green verdured landscapes, rich in sylvan beauty, reminds the traveler of the prettiest parts of England rather than of the brown monotony of the greater part of France. We would confidently recommend it to those tourists who may be frequently heard lamenting the difficulty of finding a spot unfrequented by the sight and sound of others of the same species. It is a strange subject of complaint this, though all who have rambled on the Continent must have heard it. Little complimentary too, one would suppose when addressed to an English speaking traveler, yet you will hear it at Ems, at Carlsbad, at Sonnet, under the cedars of Lebanon or at Ladmor, in the desert. Mrs. Smith confiding to Mrs. Jones her distresses that she has not been able to discover a single spot uninfested with English or Americans! And that with a complacency indicating the conviction entertained by Mrs. Smith that she was hereby clearly manifesting her own immense superiority over the common herd of her compatriots. One of the objections to this solitary system of travel is the vast deal of the world now requisite to furnish isolated lodgings for these anti-gregarious people. There is accommodation however, we would respectfully suggest, for one or two in the bye-ways of Normandy.

Taking the night boat up the Seine halfway between Havre and Paris, you arrive at Rouen, the most interesting city in the north of France. It is prolific in historic interest. Deriving its name from Rother, an idol which the Vellocassi adored, it was already a village in Caesar's day and is definitely mentioned in the geography of Ptolemy. The capital of Normandy and the seat of the ducal palace, it bears token in the venerable aspect of many of its buildings to the important part it played in the days of Norman glory and aggression. Here Walter Scott fixed the scene and drew the materials for his tale of "Ivanhoe." Richard Coeur De Lion is forever identified with the history of Rouen and has found a memorial in her cathedral. The city fell into the power of the English in 1419. In 1431 the Prelates, who were deaf to the voice of patriotism and instruments in the hands of foreigners, adjudged and put to death the heroine who had saved her country. A statue of Joan of Arc erected on the market place as well as a street bearing her name prove that her memory is still

revered in the town in which she was unjustly condemned.

Rouen possesses probably the most valuable collection of paintings in France outside of Paris. Its academy contains more than five hundred paintings of unusual merit as works of art. The collection took its origin from the paintings taken from the convents and churches suppressed in 1793 and have been subsequently vastly enriched by important purchases by the city and gifts by private individuals and by the government. The most valuable are Jesus Ches Marthe and Marie, by Jordaens; Adoration des Virgines, by Rubens; La Verge de Lixte, by Raphael, and Un Portrait d' Homme, by Titian. The lover of art can readily pass a day of great enjoyment in this truly remarkable gallery.

The Gothic work of Rouen is however the chief attraction to the traveler. The Linen Market and the Palais de Justice are beautiful monuments of the middle ages. But the Church of St. Ouen is an exquisite gem of Gothic architecture, notable for its perfection and for the beauty of its painted windows. The first stone was laid in 1318 and the choir chapels and transepts were finished immediately. The nave and tower, 260 feet high, a model of finished beauty, were added 160 years later. The south portal is as delicate a bit of taste as was ever translated into stone. The interior is 443 feet long and 106 feet high. All the windows are of painted glass and there is a fine reflection of the nave from the Holy Water basin. The Cathedral is also of vast proportions and elaborate decorations. But for the make-believe spire we would rank the Cathedral of Rouen above the Notre Dame of Paris. The central spire is a disfiguring iron work replacing one burned down. The work of the whole external front wall is exceedingly elegant. Dark ages, the middle ages may have been called but they put a deal of light and beauty in the stone work they did. Much of this vast cathedral was wrought in the 13th century yet from nave to transept, from every curve in yonder dome, 100 feet overhead to the minutest carving of the curious stalls by my side, thought is visible, as varied, rich, airy, thorough and conscientious as aught witnessed in any architecture of our vaunted times.

Rouen is a city of contrasts. When the capital of the province of Normandy, it was a proud mediaeval city, a legitimate child of the feudal system. Its palace, its long and intricately tortuous streets, compelled to twist round the huge town mansions of the Rouenese nobles and forced between long lines of dead walls by their large gardens, contributed to impress upon it the stamp of an old provincial capital of the first class. Much of this aspect still remains in old streets, narrow, and picturesque. The street called La Rue Le La Grasse Horloge from the clock gate house is an interesting illustration as well as many others containing many fine specimens

of the domestic architecture of the Middle Ages.

In the midst of this antique city, a young commercial upstart has arisen, the old and the new jostling each other side by side. Wealthy and industrious residents have erected a city that will vie with London or Paris in the nobility of its buildings. Hard by streets narrow and tortuous, are boulevards, straight and imposing, and long rows of business squares without a break. The quays are lined with buildings of noble proportions and crowded with vessels of every clime, attesting that Rouen is a port of entry for an important coast and foreign trade.

St. Patrick.

Far back in the mists of early history, there lived a robust old saint who is revered by the Irish people today. He must have had a most original personality, as something out of his commanding and winsome character has come down through all these ages, to influence the life of these times.

He must have been a statesman as well as a religious leader and a man of great power and influence, as he is said to have founded 365 churches and to have put a school beside each one.

The Irish people, who have become so important an element in American life, look back to Saint Patrick with a peculiar affection, perhaps because he typified in so many ways the Irish temperament. The man who did so much to stamp out heathenism, who faced and overcame the perils of those savage times must have been one of undaunted courage and cheerfulness, and these characteristics have been handed on to his descendants in America.

Someone has said that when an Irishman has a roof over his head, he sings, and if he doesn't have a roof, he sings, too. There is an imperishable good cheer in this race that has helped them win their way.

Wherever you find the sons of St. Patrick in this country, you find people who have taken hold of the hardest tasks with persistent industry, and a kind of smiling faith which has worked wonders. The first pioneers began on the most laborious tasks, they helped build our railroads and dig our ditches. Now they have risen to the highest posts in the nation and business. The same fearless spirit that carried old Saint Patrick through his achievements and drove the snakes out of Ireland, has today driven away the difficulties and obstacles that beset the people who come to a new land.

Governor John S. Fisher has designated Friday, April 8, and Friday, April 22, as Spring Arbor Days. The Governor asks that these days be appropriately observed throughout the State by the planting of trees, the study of birds, and the consideration of other important conservation problems.

The Music of Ireland.

"Although it is not long since the opinion was generally entertained that Ireland had been sunk in barbarism until the English invasion," says Grove's "Dictionary of Music and Musicians," "historical and antiquarian researches have established the fact that the island was in early times the seat of Christianized learning and a remarkable artistic civilization. The music of Ireland, in particular her ancient school of harp playing, has from early times been in high repute, having been lauded in the writings of Brompton, Giraldus, Cambrensis, Dante and John of Salisbury (twelfth century.) The latter writes thus: 'The

attention of this people of musical instruments I find worthy of commendation, in which their skill is beyond comparison superior to that of any nation I have seen.'" In recent years successful efforts have been made to revive harp playing in Ireland.

Fastest Electric Train.

The fastest electric railroad train in the country is said to be the Northland Limited which runs between Chicago and Milwaukee. The train covers the 88.24 miles between the two cities in two hours, making nine stops. Its average speed, stops excluded, is 51.91 miles per hour.

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