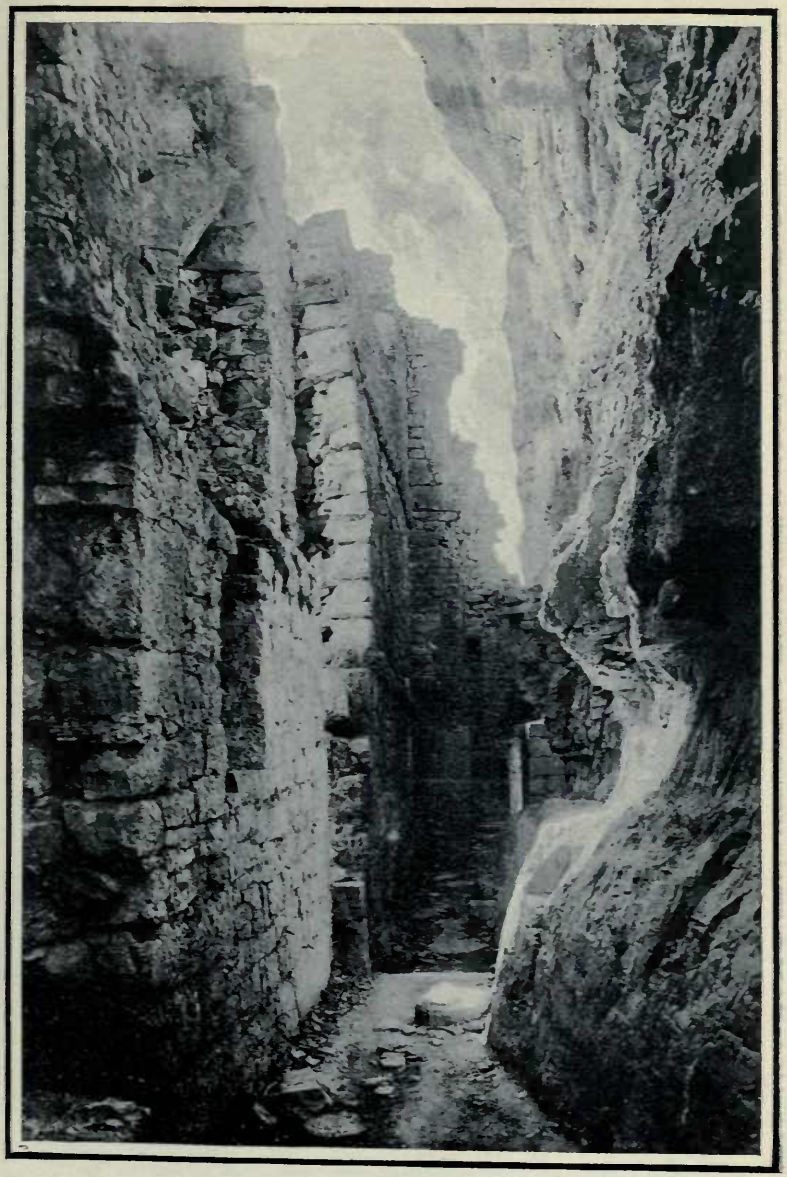


INTERIOR OF THE CHÂTEAU DU DIABLE, CABRERETS

The rock is on one side, the wall edging the precipice is on the other.

neighbourhood and the Sieur des Eyzies on the opposite side of the river, and who was on the French side, was powerless against them. In company with the garrison of Bigaroque they surprised Temniac near Sarlat, S. Quentin and Campagnac, in 1348, but were shortly after dislodged by the Seneschal of Perigord from these acquisitions.

In 1353 they surprised the church and fortress of Tursac and the castle of Palevez. The men of Sarlat hastened to recover Tursac, bringing with them some machines of war, named La Bride, Le Hop, Le Collard, and l'Asne, that flung stones and bolts and pots of flaming tar and sulphur. They managed to drive the English out of Tursac, but were unable to recover the other castle.

In 1401, at the solicitation of the Baron of Limeuil, they took and utterly destroyed the town and castle of La Roche Christophe, as shall be related in full in the sequel. On 4th December 1409, the Constable of France having ruined Bigaroque, besieged the Rock of Tayac, and it was taken after a gallant defence on 10th January 1410, demolished and reduced to the condition in which we see it now. Then a tax was levied throughout Perigord to pay for the cost of the sieges of Bigaroque and the Rock of Tayac.

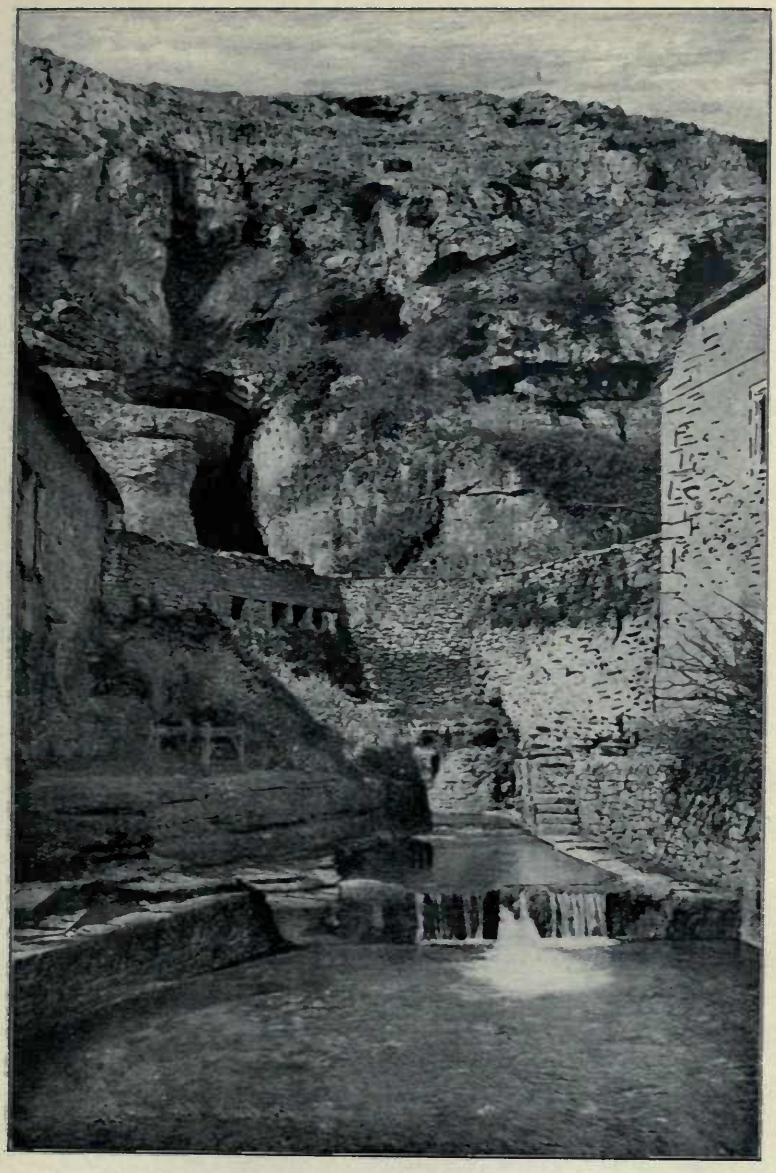
We will now pass from Perigord to Quercy. Here the English Companies held the valley of the Lot from below Capdenac to the gates of Cahors, except the impregnable towns of Cajarc and Calvignac.

Flowing into the Lot at Conduché is the river Célé that descends from Figeac. This river was also in the grip of the English.

Below Figeac the limestone precipices first appear at Corn, and the cliff is full of caves in which there are remains of fortifications. The cliff is not beautiful, but is wondrous strange, white, draped with fallen folds of stalactite, black as ink, as though a tattered funeral pall had been cast over

it. Corn was a feof of the family of Beduer, one of the five most powerful in Quercy. In 1379 Perducat, the Bastard of Albret, an English Captain, occupied Corn, but sold it to John, Count of Armagnac, Seneschal of Quercy; after having marched out and pocketed his money, he turned round, marched in again, and set to work to fortify the caves. He made the citizens of Cajarc contribute to the expense of this proceeding, and even required them to send masons to assist him in the work; but as they were loyal subjects of the French King they demurred at this, and he substituted additional money payment for personal service. He then pushed down the Célé valley to Cabrerets near where it debouches into the Lot, and in 1383 he fortified the caves of Espagnac, Brengues, Marcillac, Sauliac, and built the château du Diable at Cabrerets. The Count d'Armagnac sent troops to dislodge him, but failed.

In the rock of Corn, a little higher up the river than the village, is the Grotto du Consulat, reached by a path along a narrow ledge. To this the villagers were wont to gather to elect their magistrates without interference from the Bastard of Albret. Within is a bench cut in the rock, and the roof is encrusted with stalactite formations like cauliflowers. Immediately above the village is a much larger cavern 72 feet high and 36 feet deep. It is vaulted like a dome, and tendrils of ivy and vine hang down draping the entrance. Violets grow in purple masses at the opening, and maiden-hair fern luxuriates within. At the extreme end, high up, to be reached only by a ladder of forty rungs, is another opening into a cave that runs far into the bowels of the Causse, to where the water falls in a cascade that now flows forth beneath the outer cave and supplies the village with drinking water and a place for washing linen. Hard by the great entrance is another cave situated high up, and called the Citadel, much smaller, access to which



CORN, LOT

Caves occupied by the Routiers. That above the large one was formerly reached by a gallery of wood. It contains the stone table at which the Routiers gambled and drank.

is obtained by a narrow track in the face of the rock, with notches cut in the limestone to receive the beams and struts that supported a wooden gallery which once provided easy access to the cave. I did not myself climb up and investigate the citadel, not having a steady head on the edge of a precipice, and what information I give was received from the curé, who seemed very much amused at my shirking the scramble, and thought that the Englishman of to-day must be very different from the Englishman of the fourteenth century who crawled about these cliffs like a lizard. According to him, the cave within shows signs of having been occupied, and has in it a squared and smoothed block of stone nine feet long, at which Perducat and his ruffians doubtless caroused, as at a table.

In the village of Corn is the picturesque château of the family of Beduer built after the abandonment of the place by the English. It is now occupied by poor families. A little farther down the valley is the castle of Roquefort, which was also annexed by the Captain. It is near the Church of S. Laurent, where was a village that was destroyed by the Company. The church itself was blown up later by the Huguenots. Roquefort is dominated by a precipice, at the foot of which lies a huge mass of rock that has broken off from the cliff, and on this rock a castle has been erected. It belonged to the family of Lascasas. One of these fell at Résinières in a duel with the Seigneur of Camboulet; but his adversary survived him only a few minutes, and both were buried on the spot with three stones at their heads and two at their feet. When the new road was being made their skeletons were found. The stones remain *in situ*.

In 1361 Cahors was in possession of the English. The bishop unwilling to recognise the King of England as his sovereign retired to the Castle of Brengues in the Célé valley that pertained to his family, the Cardaillacs, and thence

governed his diocese. There he died 3rd February 1367, and his successor also occupied the Castle of Brengues. But in 1377 it was captured by an English Company under Bertrand de la Salle, and in 1380 it was held by Bertrand de Besserat, to whom it was delivered over by Perducat d'Albret.

There are two very remarkable castles at Brengues; both were fortified by Perducat and Besserat. One hangs like a swallow's nest under the eaves of the overhanging rock, and is now wholly inaccessible, so much so that it is in perfect preservation. The river flows far below, and a *talus* of rubble runs up to the foot of the cliff, along which *talus*, on a narrow terrace, is a path. This path was defended both above and below the castle by gates that were battlemented and to which guard-rooms were attached. The pensile castle is not large. It was entered at one side, and has in its face three roundheaded windows.

The other castle of Brengues is perforated in an angle of rock, at a great elevation, and consists of several chambers. The cave at the angle was walled up and furnished with doorway and windows.

Near where the Célé flows into the Lot is the little town of Cabrerets. Here the precipice of fawn-coloured limestone overhangs like a wave, curling and about to break. On a ledge under it, and above the river and the road and the houses, is the Devil's Castle, built by Perducat d'Albret and Bertrand de Besserat. The latter held it from 1380 to 1390, but then, at the entreaty of the neighbourhood, the Seigneur Hebraud de Saint-Sulpice at the head of levies laid siege to the castle and took it.

The castle has one of its walls of rock; only that towards the river and the two ends are structural, as is also a round tower. A portion of the castle has been pulled down; it has served as a quarry for the houses beneath, but a good deal still remains. The tower is about 20 feet in diameter. The

CHÂTEAU DES ANGLAIS, AUTOIRE

Reached by a sharp scramble up a steep, and then by a ledge in a precipice. Some chambers are scooped out of the rock. When the English were besieged, they escaped by a goat-path to a point whence hung a rope from a tree above, and up this they swarmed.

entrance hall, lighted by windows, is 70 feet long and 40 feet wide. A second hall, partly hewn out of the rock, with recesses for cupboards and seats and with fireplace, is 42 feet long. The oven remains in a ruinous condition. The castle is reached by steps cut in the rock.

Below Conduché, where the Célé enters the Lot, the road runs under tremendous precipices of orange and grey limestone, in which the track has been cut; and the road would be totally blocked by a huge buttress split down the middle had not a tunnel for it been cut. As the Roman road ran this way, the original tunnel was made by the Masters of the World, but it has been widened of late years. Commanding the road and the tunnel, planted in the cleft of the rock, is a castellated structure, that also owes its origin to the captains who fortified the Célé caves.

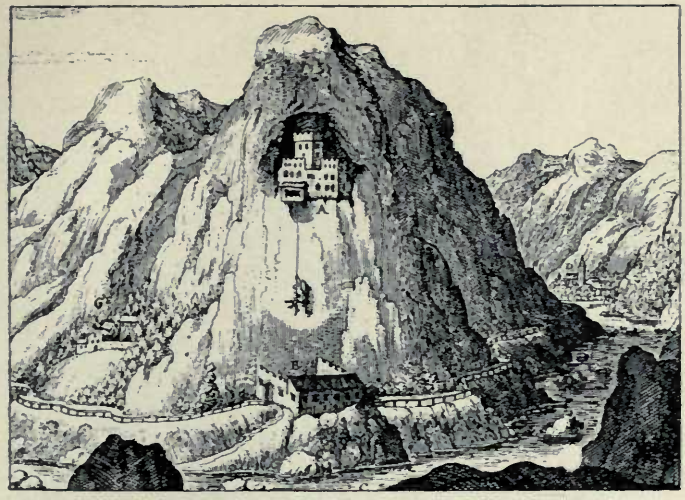
None could pass up or down the road without being spied and arrested, and made to pay toll by the garrison of this fort.[1]

The Cahors Chronicle says of this period: "Deinde fuit in praesenti patria mala guerra. Anglicis et Gallis hinc inde reprædentibus, unde evenit victualium omnium maxima caristia. Nullus civis Caturci villam exire erat ausus, omnia enim per injustitiam regebatur." If the merchants and provision wains for Cahors were not robbed at the Défilé des Anglais, they were subjected to toll. The interior of the chasm reveals a whole labyrinth of passages and vaults dug out in the heart of the calcareous rock. The chambers had openings as windows looking out upon a river, and the rock was converted into a barrack that could accommodate a large garrison.

The last of the rock fastnesses of the *routiers* that I purpose describing is of a totally different character from the rest. It is at Peyrousse in the Rouergue, in the

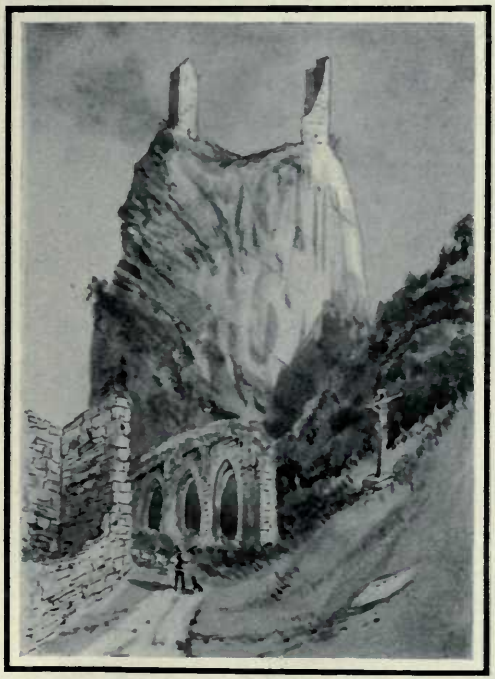
[1] So early as the eleventh or twelfth century there was not a small river, as the Célé and the Aveyron, on which tolls were not levied.

department of Aveyron. Peyrousse is a village, but was once a fortified town on a height, with its church and church tower standing on the highest point and visible from a great distance. It rises above a deep valley or ravine. The houses are all old, and many of them in ruins. The church, dating from 1680, is not ineffective; there are, however, the ruins of a Gothic church farther down the hill. One of the embattled gates of the town is still standing, as well as a tower erroneously supposed to be the bell tower of the ruined church, actually part of the fortification of the place. Projecting from the side of the hill on which stands Peyrousse, partly attached to it, but for the most part detached, is a ridge of schist starting 300 feet above the stream below, in one sheer precipice, and precipitous on every side. It is perhaps 300 feet long, and rises like a blade of an axe; at each extremity of this ridge is a lofty tower—one, the farthest, open at the side. To erect these towers it must have been necessary to level a portion of the sharp edge on which they rest. Between them one could walk only with a balancing pole like a tight-rope dancer, as there is a sheer fall on each side. The rock is called Les Roches du Tailleur, as having been appropriated by a captain who cut folk's coats according as he wanted the cloth. How the builders climbed to this height, how they managed to carry up their material, and how they achieved the building of these towers, is impossible to conjecture. The tradition is, that when the English quitted Peyrousse they destroyed the means of ascent, and since 1443 no human being has been able to climb the rock and visit the towers, that for nearly five hundred years have had no other denizens than ravens and jackdaws. But that is not all the puzzle of the Tailor's Rock. It is supposed that there was a wooden castle between the towers. There is no indication of there having been a stone structure.



COVOLO, FROM A PRINT BY MERIAN, 1640–1648

In the defile of the Brenta; 100 feet above the road. It was capable of containing a garrison of 500 men. It was taken from the Venetians by Maximilian in 1509. It is between Primolano and Cismone.



LA ROCHE DU TAILLEUR

Remains of a castle on a precipitous rock at Peyrousse, Aveyron; it was held by the English Routiers, who, when they abandoned it, destroyed the means of access, since which time it has been inaccessible.

But if so, how was it balanced, or how secured? A plank cast across the blade would make a see-saw for an ogre and ogress, till cut through. I endeavoured with a glass to see whether notches had been hacked in the schist to receive stays, and others on the ridge to accommodate joists, but could distinguish none.

Peyrousse became a Calvinist stronghold in the Wars of Religion, when the churches were destroyed; but the Huguenots made no attempt to climb the Tailor's Rocks and restore the castle. At the foot of the crags are the remains of the chapel of the garrison. How did they descend to it and mount again? I presume by a knotted rope.

A cliff castle that bears a curious resemblance to Peyrousse is Trosky, in Bohemia, but in this latter case the rocks are of basalt, and between the two towers the connecting rock forms a deep depression. In 1415, Johann von Herzmanmiestetz and Otto Berka of Trosk sacked the monastery of Opatowitz, butchered most of the monks, tortured the abbot so that he died a few days later, and carried off all the plunder they could collect. With the spoil Otto Berka built a castle on the two spires of rock, a tower on each, and connected them with a crescent wall, and a gallery of communication. The walls were six feet thick, and the foundations clamped to the rock with iron. He also contrived a tunnel, cut in the rock to the bottom, to enable himself and his men to ascend and descend. In 1424, however, Otto Berka was there no more. The castle was besieged by the terrible one-eyed Hussite commander, Ziska with the Flail, and he succeeded in capturing the lower tower after great loss of life, but entirely failed to take the upper donjon. After the departure of Ziska the castle was taken as a residence by Margaret, widow of Otto Berka, who secured the lower tower, and her granddaughter Barbara occupied the

higher. These women hated each other as poison, and to personal hate was added religious rancour, for Barbara had embraced the party of the Utraquists. The theological quarrel was simply about the use of the chalice at communion. The Roman Church had withdrawn it from the people; the Utraquists asserted their right to it; and about this question the two parties fought and slaughtered each other, and burnt towns and castles. The tradition is that all day long, and part of the night, the two women screamed abuse at each other from their several towers, and desisted only for their meals, their devotions, and necessary sleep. Folk passing along the highway would halt and listen to the yelling and vituperation of the two shrews. Each had her own chapel at the foot of the cliffs, in which each ostentatiously followed the rite of which she approved; and to this day the chapels remain. According to the local story, the cries of the women were so strident and so continuous that all birds were scared away from Trosky. At length Margaret died, and Bertha had become so accustomed to scolding at the top of her voice, that she died soon after from dissatisfaction at having lost the object of her abuse.

In 1468 Trosky was the property of William von Hasenburg, who sided with King Mathias against George Podjebrad. After the defeat of Mathias, Podjebrad captured Trosky, but as the owner came to terms, he was allowed to retain his castle. The towers are all that remain of the castle; the curtain wall has been broken down. The lower tower can be reached by a climber with a steady head, but not without risk of life. The higher tower is quite inaccessible. From the height a magnificent prospect is obtained, with Prague in the distance.

To return once more to the *routiers*.

Near Mont Dore is the Roche de Sanadoire, 3660 feet high, composed of phonolith and basaltic prisms. On the

top stood the fortress of the *routiers*, calling themselves English, under a Captain Chennel, from 1378 to 1386, when he was caught, conveyed to Paris, and broken on the wheel. It is not to be wondered at that the memory of the terrible times of the English domination, and its consequence, the reign of the *routiers*, should linger on in the memory of the people; that every cliff castle should be a Château des Anglais, or a Château du Diable—they mean the same thing. The peasant reads but little—history not at all; but Jean Bonhomme looks up at the cliffs and finds the story of the past graven there; and just as the twinge of a corn is still felt after the foot has been amputated, so —though the English rule has passed away, three hundred and fifty years have intervened—he still winces, and curses the haunts "de ces cochons d'Anglais," though in fact ces cochons were his own compatriots, doubled-dyed in iniquity, as traitors to their country and their King.

CHAPTER VI

CLIFF CASTLES—*Continued*

I TOOK the third of the classes into which I have divided my subject of cliff castles, first of all; and now I shall take the others in the category.

The Seigneurs were not greatly, if at all, to be distinguished from the Captains of the *routiers* in their mode of life and in their fortresses, save only this, that the latter were elected by their followers, and the former were on their hereditary estates and could demand the services of their vassals. In the matter of scoundreldom there was not a pin to choose between them. But the *routier* chiefs were not tied to any one castle as their home; they shifted quarters from one rock to another, from one province to another as suited them, whereas the seigneur had his home that had belonged to his forefathers and which he hoped to transmit to his son.

I will give but an instance.

Archibald V. (1361–1397) was Count of Perigord. He was nominally under the lilies, but he pillaged indiscriminately in his county. Surrounded by adventurers he planted his men in castles about Perigord, and from that of La Rolphie "hung over the city like the sword of Damocles," menaced Perigueux. One little town after another was pillaged. He intercepted the merchants on the roads. At S. Laurent-du-Manoir his captains added outrage to injury, for they took all the women of the place, and cut off their skirts at the knees; and one who made strenuous resistance they killed.

In 1385, the Seneschal of Perigord, in the name of the King of France, ordered Archibald to desist from his acts of violence. When he refused, his lands were declared confiscated. But who was to bell the cat? He mocked at the sentence, and was roused to fresh incursions and pillages. At last in 1391 the Parliament acted, and summoned the Count to appear along with twenty-three of his accomplices before its bar "to answer for having overrun with his troops the suburbs of Perigueux; for having assaulted the city, and neighbouring places; for having wounded and killed a great many persons; for having incarcerated others to extort a ransom from them; for having, like common highwaymen, seized cattle, fired granges, mills, houses; and for having committed crimes so infamous, so ferocious, that one would feel pain to disclose them."

Archibald paid not the slightest regard to the summons or to the sentence pronounced against him *in contumaciam*. The law could not enforce its judgment, and six years later in 1397 he died. The King refused to recognise his son Archibald VI. as Count of Perigord, but Archibald disregarded the refusal, and openly sided with the English. He successfully resisted the troops sent against him, and continued in the same courses as his father. At last he was brought to bay in Montignac, where he was constrained to capitulate. He was sent to Charles VI., but effected his escape and fled to London in 1399. Thence he returned in 1404, and captured Auberoche, much about the time of the English victory at Agincourt. He died in undisturbed possession of his county of Perigord in 1430.

Few portions of France so lent itself to the requirements of the feudal tyrants of the Middle Ages, as they did also to those of the *routiers*, as the volcanic district of Auvergne. There the floods of lava that flowed from the volcanoes have formed caps to hills, with precipices on every side, cut

through by the streams, that have separated portions from the main current. Every such peak or fragment of plateau was laid hold of by the seigneurs of old, as sites for their fortresses. From the number of these strongholds and the almost impregnable nature of most of them, the feudal tyrants of Auvergne were able to hold their own, long after the rest had been brought to their knees; and it was not until Richelieu with iron hand moved against them that their career of rapine and violence was curbed. Beginning in 1626, Richelieu ordered the demolition of all feudal fortresses that were not necessary for the defence of the frontiers, and which were a permanent menace to the King's authority, and an object of terror to town and country, and to the nobles afforded reminiscence of past lawlessness. The demolition was entrusted to the communes themselves. And in order to bring the culprits to speedy judgment, he renewed the institution of the *Grand Jours;* that of Poitiers in 1634 condemned over two hundred nobles convicted of exactions and crimes.

But it was impossible in many places, notably in Auvergne, for the communes to get hold of the castles and blow them up. There, for some thirty years longer, the seigneurs defied justice, and it was much the same elsewhere. On the 31st August 1665, the *Grand Jours* were announced for all the centre of France, but notice that they were to be held had been given so long before that the guilty were allowed plenty of time to escape out of the country, go into hiding or come to terms. Great were the expectations of the people. Right was at length to prevail over Might. The Day of Judgment was coming on the oppressors. The Mighty would be put down from their seat and the humble would be exalted in their room. A peasant wearing his cap before a noble, the latter knocked it off his head "Pick it up," said the peasant, "or the King will cut off your head." The seigneur obeyed.

But the result was disappointing. Only one noble had his head cut off. Few executions were carried into effect, many were on paper. One of the latter, a ruffian steeped in blood, defied the sentence and was banished. Fléchier in his amusing and instructive book, *Les grands Jours d'Auvergne*, has given us a dramatic account of the trial.

Every description of intrigue was had recourse to, in order to neutralise the effect of justice. The fair ladies of Clermont, *les chats fourrés*, as Fléchier calls them, did their utmost to reduce the severity of the judges. The Great Days lasted three months, and ended in disappointment. Many of the worst offenders, convicted of atrocious crimes, entered the Royal service and fought in the armies of the King.

But if justice spared the culprits, the opportunity was accorded to destroy their strongholds, and now little remains of these Towers of Iniquity but the foundations, and some fragments of their massive walls, which were generally constructed of basaltic prisms taken from the rock that sustained the castles, laid horizontally. "Puzzolana was mixed with the mortar used in these constructions, and without the binding quality communicated by this ingredient, probably no cement would have taken effect on the smooth and iron surfaces of the prisms."[1]

The King had indeed desired that greater severity should be used. He wrote to the judges: "You must manage to banish oppression and violence out of the provinces. You have begun well, and you must finish well." At the conclusion he had a medal struck representing a slave rising from the ground, under the protection of the sword of royalty, and with the expressive device, *Salus provinciarum repressa potentorum audacia.*

It was, however, rather the destruction of the nests than the punishment of the Vultures that effected the work.

[1] Poulett Scrope, "The Extinct Volcanoes of Central France," Lond. 1858.

The Marquis de Canillac, one of the worst, escaped into Spain. He had maintained twelve ruffians, whom he called his Apostles, who catechised with sword and rod all who rebelled against his exactions. He levied taxes on necessary articles of food, and when his vassals abstained from food he fined them for not eating. He allowed none to marry without paying into his hands half the *dot* of the bride. His kinsman, the Vicomte Lamotte-Canillac, was the one culprit executed.

The river Vézère, opposite to the prehistoric caves of Moustier, makes a sudden bend about a wall of chalk 300 feet high and 1500 feet long. "Of all the rocks that have served for the habitation of man, this is the most striking for its dimensions and for the number of habitations it contained, if one may give that name to the excavations which the hand of man has appropriated to his use. Staircases were carved in the rock, carried half-way up the height, to where the cliff has been excavated, its recesses enlarged and divided into compartments."[1]

This bluff is called La Roche S. Christophe. It arrests attention at once, for half-way up it is furrowed horizontally as though worked by a giant's tool. If the visitor approaches the cliff, he will find that the masses of rock that have fallen from above, as well as others that have formed spurs, have been extensively worked to form town walls, gateways, a church, a monastery, and dwelling-houses.

One gateway, bored through the rock, has a guard-room or sentinel's watch-chamber scooped out of a pinnacle. But not a roof remains, not a living soul is to be seen in the street, not a huxter's stall in the market-place, only tiles strewn about and white rocks blackened with smoke show that man lived there.

By a flight of stairs cut in the rock, the visitor can ascend to the furrow in the face of the cliff, and there he finds

[1] De Roumejoux, *Bulletin de la Soc. Hist. de Perigord.* T. xix. 1892.

that the whole has been elaborately utilised. There are chambers excavated in the chalk that were formerly closed by wood partitions, with recesses for beds, cupboards, seats —clearly the bedrooms of ladies. The grooves into which the planks were fitted can be made out. Doors were fitted into rocky rebates to move on their hinges, the hinges being round prolongations of the door frame turning in holes sunk in floor and roof. The kitchen is there, the bakehouse with its oven; the guard-room with its benches for the troopers, cisterns, store-chambers, closets, cellars, a chapel, and the latrines. All but the last are on a level in one long row, with the cliff descending precipitately from the gallery that precedes the apartments and gave communication between them and which, in part, had been widened by means of a wooden balcony and railing. The chapel, if that be the walled structure in a hole of the rock, is now inaccessible. Its destination is uncertain. The peasants so designate it.

Fragments of earthenware vessels and of tiles lie on the floors. I could find nothing else.

Above the principal gallery are others of less importance that can only be reached from the top of the cliff.

This Roche Saint Christophe has a history. It was first fortified by Frotarius de Gourdon to resist the incursions of the Northmen. He was assassinated at Mourcinez in Coursac in 991. There was a priory in the town below, mention of which is found in a charter of 1187.

The remarkable range of chambers and structures in the face of the precipice formed the castle of the family of Laroque. It was a worthy family, greatly respected in the neighbourhood, and loyal to the crown of France. The seigneur was the protector of the little town that lay below.

On Passion Sunday, 1401, the townsfolk and the occupants of the castle were gathered in the church, when a

cry was raised that the enemy had swarmed over the walls and were in the town. Adhémar de Laroque was the seigneur at the time. He hastened from the church, but already the street was full of English, and escape to his castle was cut off, as they had secured the stair.

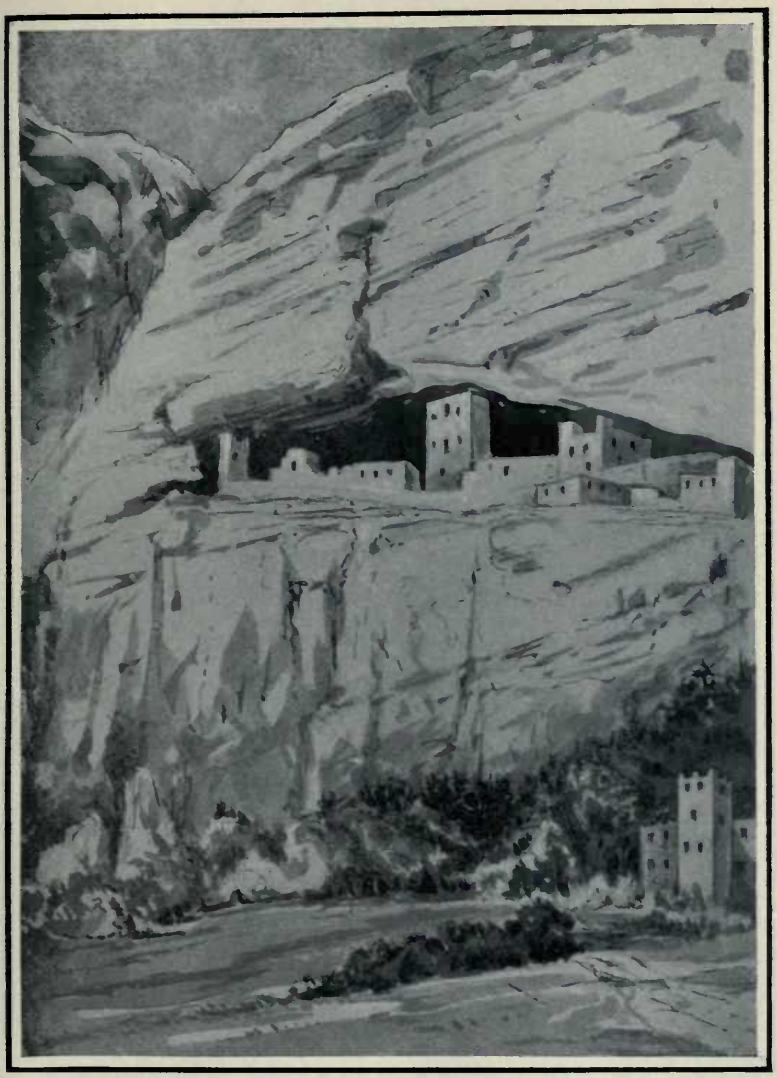
Adhémar had a personal enemy, one Jean Ducos, a kinsman of the Baron de Limeuil. These men, calculating that the garrison of La Roque would be off its guard on that holy day, arranged with the English garrison of the Rock of Tayac to surprise the town.

They came upon it unobserved, and breaking in, massacred the people and the guards; then ensued a general pillage, and a conflagration. Every house was fired after it had been ransacked, and the English Ribauds running along the platform with torches in their hands, applied the flame to everything combustible—doors, galleries, partitions, rafters—all blazed, and the only portion of the castle and town that was left unconsumed were the latrines, to which they did not consider it worth their pains to apply their torches.

From that day to this the town of La Roche Saint Christophe has been abandoned. No cottager has ventured to repair the ruined habitations for his own use; as the place is esteemed haunted, notably on the night of Passion Sunday, when a ghostly train of the dead is seen flickering in and out of the rocks and ruins by the light of the Easter moon.

But the castle was again tenanted for awhile by a band of Huguenots, who committed such depredations in the neighbourhood that on 30th March 1588, the Viscount of Aubeterre, Governor of Perigord issued orders—"as the enemies of the King occupying this Castle are doing incredible mischief to the poor folk of the neighbourhood," that they should be expelled and the castle be utterly destroyed.[1]

[1] La Roche S. Christophe is mentioned in the letters of Petrarch. Labbé. Frag. Ep. Petrarchi.



S. B.-G.

KRONMETZ

This cave castle was nominally held by nobles in feof to the Bishop of Trent, but it actually became a den of robbers. It was taken by storm in 1210. Count v. Firmian, to whom it belongs, has built for himself a more convenient residence at the foot of the rock.

Quite as curious, and with a less tragic history is La Roche Gageac on the Dordogne, below Sarlat. "Ma chère patrie," wrote the old chonicler, Jean Tarde, "une petite ville bien close et très forte dépendant de la temporalité de l'evesque de Sarlet, *la quelle ne fut jamais prinse par les Anglais.*"

The white Jurassic limestone dappled orange, fawn colour, and silver grey, rises 250 feet above the river, the lower portion is in terraces, very narrow, on which are the houses clinging to the rock, cramped between the Dordogne and the cliff which rises 140 to 160 feet above. The old houses are echeloned along the face of the rock, superposed the one on the other, calcined by the sun as they face south, and the rock behind cuts off all northern winds and reflects the glare of the southern sun. This explains the vegetable precocity of the spot, where wallflowers, cactus, roses, luxuriate. It would be too hot were it not for the abundant springs, and the proximity to the Dordogne down which a cool air is wafted.

The habitations are either partly or wholly caves, they do not reach half-way up the rock which overhangs to the west. In the face of the cliff are two castles built into its recesses, one pertained to the Bishop of Sarlat, and the other to the Fénélon family. Both were ideals of a stronghold in the Middle Ages, impossible to escalade or to undermine. In the fifteenth century La Roche Gageac was a walled town containing five châteaux of noble families, juxtaposed and independent of each other, although comprised within the same enclosure. Originally indeed all were under the Bishop of Sarlat, but the Popes had set the example of jobbery for the benefit of their sons and nephews, and the Bishops were not slow to follow the lead. One Bishop made over the principal castle to his brother as a hereditary feof, and others disposed of the rest for money down, so that by the second half of the sixteenth century the town had been dis-

membered. Although it had held out against the English, when thus broken up among several, it could not defend itself against the Calvinists, who took, burned and sacked it in 1574. They killed three Sarlat priests. It was retaken by the Royal troops in 1575, but it again fell into the hands of the Calvinists in 1588, and the wreckage of its ecclesiastical buildings dates from those two captures.

The principal castle, that which belonged to the Bishop of Sarlat, occupies one of the profound horizontal furrows in the face of the rock, that are so common in the limestone and chalk formations. It consists of three towers, two of which are square and one round, with curtains uniting them, and a gate-tower, to which a flight of steps cut in the rock gives access for a part of the way. But to reach this flight one has to mount by a series of posts serving as steps driven into sockets in the rock, with only here and there a sustaining iron bar. Below the structure are chambers, possibly prisons, but more probably store rooms dug out of the rock. In this castle one of the Bishops of Sarlat, in stormy times, lived continuously, and there died. How was his body carried down the stair? Probably it was lowered by ropes.

I cannot quit La Roche Gageac without a word on one of its most illustrious natives, Jean Tarde, born there in 1561 the friend of Galileo, and who, the first in France, five years after the great Florentine had begun to search the skies with his telescope, invented one year previously, erected his tube here at one of the openings of this eagle's nest, and during ten consecutive years pursued his astronomic studies. He was a remarkable man in many ways. He was the first to map his native Perigord, and the first to write a chronicle of the diocese of Sarlat, a valuable work for any who would compile a history of the Hundred Years' War, the first also to repudiate the accepted attribution of the dolmens as altars of sacrifice, and to indicate their true character as

sepulchres. His account of the ravages committed by the Huguenots is also valuable. The year before his birth, in 1560, at Lalande, the Calvinists got into the town through a hole in the wall, killed the first Consul, the Vicar, and six other priests, and massacred a hundred of the inoffensive citizens. Sixty took refuge in the church. The Calvinists forced such as could to ransom their lives, and slaughtered such as were too poor to do this. He was but six or seven years old when the Huguenot captain, the Sieur d'Assier, took La Roque, "killing the priests and burning the churches." He was aged twelve when Captain Vivant took Sarlat, suppressed the bishopric, and killed three of the canons and several of the citizens. At La Chapelle-Faucher in 1569 the heretics drove 260 peasants into the castle and massacred them all. He was made Vicar-General to the Bishop of Sarlat, and it was after having made a tour of the diocese in 1594 that the idea occurred to him to write the history of his country and repair as far as possible the loss of so many of the archives that had been burnt. In 1599 he was made honorary chaplain to Henry IV., and in 1626 was published his *Description du pais de Quercy*. His history of Sarlat, after remaining in MS. was at length published in 1887, but only 150 copies were printed. Happily one is in the British Museum, and I possess another.

Gluges is on the Dordogne near Martel, where high up in the cliff, difficult of access, is the fortified cave-castle of Guillaume Taillefer, son of Raymond IV., Count of Toulouse, who was created Lord of Quercy in 972. Nearly on the level of the river is a cave half walled up, with traces of fresco on the walls, of course much later than the time of Taillefer. A modern house has been built on the platform that has been levelled, and much of the wall demolished; the upper fortified cave has an opening in the wall, pointed, of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. In much the same condition is another cliff castle in the rocks of the

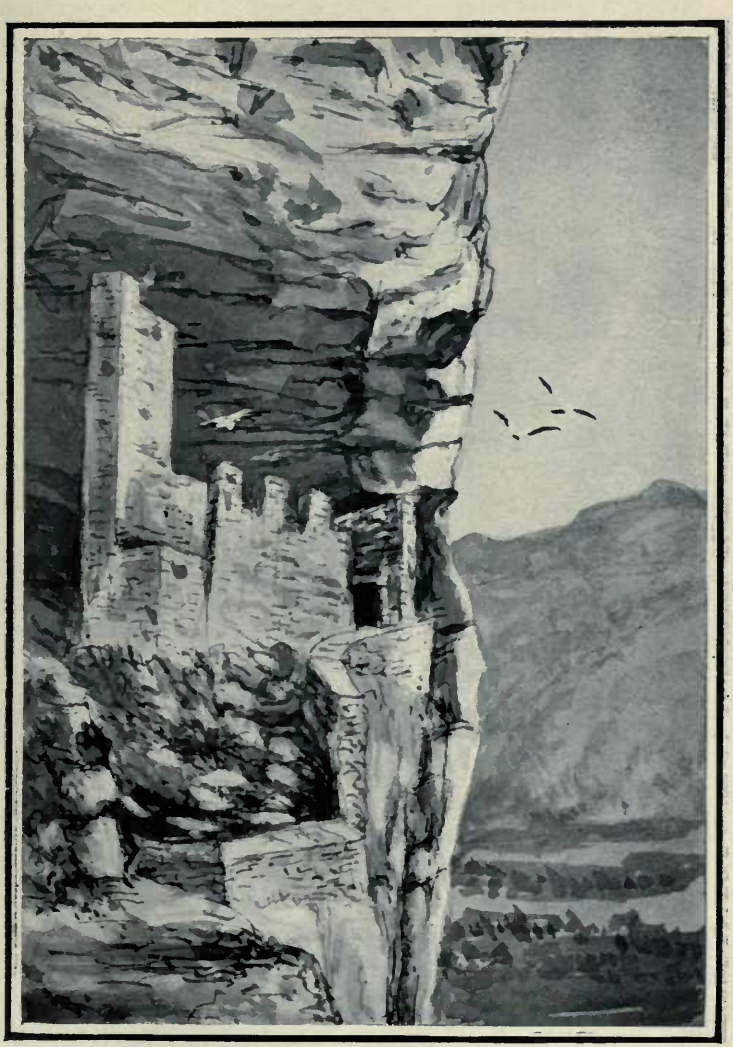
valley of the Alzou, between Grammat and Rocamadour, a little above the cascade of the mill Du Saut.

I have elsewhere[1] given an account of the curious castle of La Roche Lambert at Borne in Haute Loire, built in a basaltic cleft through which roars the river. It is the theatre of George Sand's novel, Jean de la Roche. "I may say without exaggeration that I was reared in a rock. The castle of my fathers is strangely incrusted into an excavation in a wall of basalt 500 feet high. The base of this wall, with that face to face with it, identically the same rock, forms a narrow and sinuous valley, through which winds and leaps an inoffensive torrent in impetuous cascades. The Château de la Roche is a nest of troglodytes, inasmuch as the whole flank of the rock we occupy is riddled with holes and irregular chambers which tradition points out as the residence of ancient savages, and which antiquaries do not hesitate to attribute to a prehistoric people.

"The castle of my fathers is planted high up on a ledge of rock, but so that the conical roofs of the tower just reach above the level of the plain. My mother having poor health, and having no other place to walk save one tiny platform before the castle on the edge of the abyss, took it into her head to create for herself a garden at the summit of the crag on which we were perched midway."

In Cantal at Roqueville are the remains of a castle excavated out of the rocks. Between Jung-Bunzlau and Böhm-Leipa in Bohemia is the rock-castle of Habichstein. Two lakes lie in a basin of the hills that are well-wooded up their sides, but have bare turfy crowns. The upper lake is studded with islands. Between this and the lower lake stands an extraordinary hump of sandstone, on a sloping *talus*. This hump has much resemblance to a Noah's Ark stranded on a diminutive Ararat. The rock is perforated

[1] "A Book of the Cevennes," Lond., J. Long.



S. B.-G.

THE PUXER LOCH, STYRIA

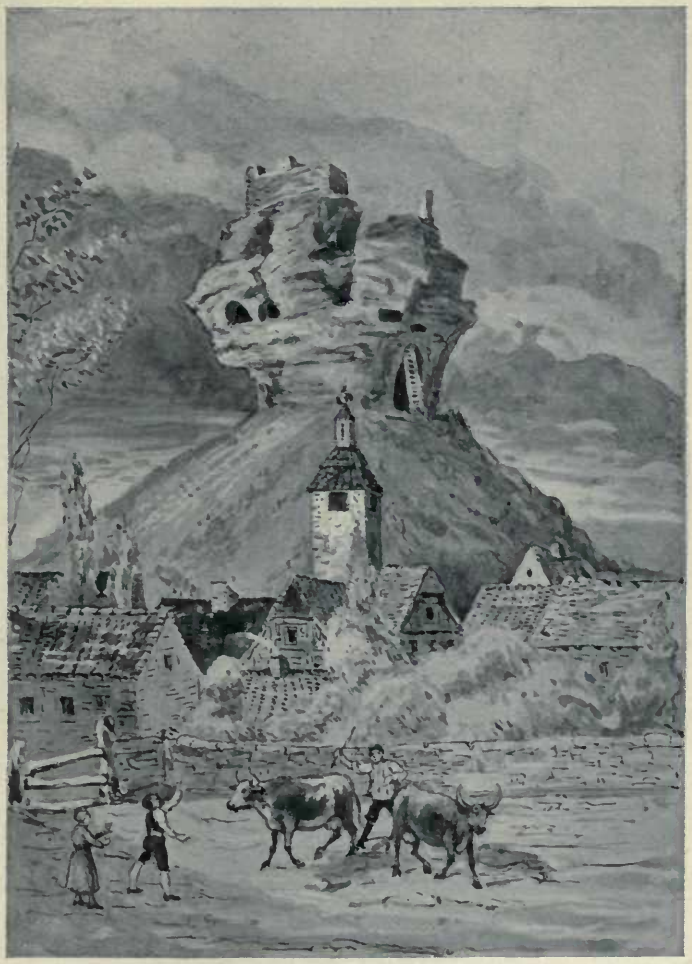
Supposed to have been occupied by a shadowless man. It was still inhabited last century by an old mason.

in all directions with galleries and chambers, and contains a stable for horses and for cattle, which, however, is no longer accessible. On the summit of the rock rises a keep very much resembling a Pictish broch. Habichstein belongs to the Wallenstein family that possesses a stately schloss at the head of the upper lake. It has been abandoned for, probably, two hundred years, as it can never have been a comfortable residence; moreover, the sandstone is continually breaking away. Below the hill and castle is the village. In 1811 there was a fall of the rock, and again in 1815, when it crushed three of the houses beneath.

Another and still more curious cliff castle in Bohemia is that of Burgstein. There are several on the frontier of the Wargau and the Hardt in North Bohemia, where the German and Czech languages meet, but it is not possible here to describe them all. Burgstein is the most curious. It consists of an isolated mass of sandstone springing out of level land, an outlying block of the Schwoik chain. Formerly it rose out of a lake or marsh, but this is now drained. The entrance is through a narrow gap in the rock by a flight of steps that lead into a court on all sides surrounded by sheer precipices except towards the North-west, where a gap was closed by a wall. Out of this court open caves, one was formerly the smithy, another the guard-room, a third the stable, and in a recess is the well. From the court access to the main structure is obtained by a rift in the sandstone commanded by the guard-room, and up which ascends a stair of 15 steps that leads to a second rift at right angles, up which leads a further stair of 76 steps, and from the landing 37 descend to a lower portion of the rock, a platform with a breastwork of wall, important for defence of the entrance.

The steps lead to various chambers, and to an open court that looks out over the precipice, and has on one side scooped out of the rock a watchman's chamber, and on the

other an armoury, where pilasters on each side supported shelves on which helmets and breastplates were laid; and beyond this is a guard-room. The summit of the rock has on it a lantern that lights an underground chapel, and formerly contained a bell, also a modern summer-house. As the rock was commanded from the south by a spur of the Schwoik range, when cannon were introduced, a new mode of access was devised on the north side, a passage in loops was constructed leading to the upper court. The castle called in Czech, Stolpna, or the pillar, is first mentioned in the fourteenth century. The great highroad to and from Böhmisch-Leipa passed near it, and it became the stronghold of a Raubritter, Mikisch Passzer of Smoyn, who became such a terror to the neighbourhood that the Sixtowns league of Lausitz in 1444 attacked it with 9000 men, broke down the dam that held back the water, and made of the rock an islet in a lake and constrained Mikisch to surrender. Soon after, however, he recommenced his lawless proceedings, and was again attacked in 1445, and after a siege that lasted five weeks, forced to quit his fortress. At the end of the seventeenth century Burgstein was converted into a hermitage and Brother Constantine, the first hermit, either enlarged or dug out the present chapel and built the lantern above, through which it obtains light. He did more, he carved a figure of himself looking through a telescope, life size, and planted on the summit of the rock. On the occasion of the Prussian invasion of Bohemia the image was assumed to be a spy, and the Germans fired at it and greatly damaged the figure, and were much puzzled at being unable to prostrate the dauntless spy. The present possessor of the rock castle has had the figure restored. Burgstein remained the abode of a hermit till 1785, when the reforming Joseph II. abolished all hermitages, and turned out every hermit in his dominions. And now, back to the Jura limestone again. A few words must



S. B.-G.

HABICHSTEIN, BOHEMIA

A castle belonging to Count Wallenstein, now abandoned owing to the falling away of portions of the rock. It contains stables for horses and cattle, now inaccessible without ladders.

be given to Kronmetz in Tirol, at the mouth of the Val di Non, opening into the Etschthal.

This castle belonged to the Bishops of Trient, and was intended by them to serve as a place of "ward and custody" against invading or marauding bands.

But *quis custodiet custodes?* It was granted in fief to two brothers Von Leo, who turned it into a robbers' nest, so that the neighbourhood rose in arms in 1210 and stormed it. Then the bishops confided it to the Herren von Metz, and they carried on a feud with their overlord, the bishop.

At last it came to the Counts von Firmian, who, in 1480, built a more convenient mansion at the foot of the cliff, and turned the old castle into a hermitage.

The castle, that is in a fair condition, occupies a broad cleft in the rock, only accessible by a narrow path cut in the rocks on the west side. It consists of an outer court and an inner court, protected on the side of the precipice by a stout wall, behind which were originally chambers, as windows in the wall and beamholes show to have been the case. There is a donjon that reaches to the overhanging rock and a ruinous chapel with apsidal east end. The cleft runs further east, but is blocked with a wall.

Another cliff castle, of which Merian, in his Topographia, 1640–88, gave a picture to arouse interest and wonder, is that of Covolo, at one time in Tirol, now over the Italian border. His description of it is as little accurate as his illustration. As a matter of fact, although it is certainly a cliff castle, constructed in a cave, it is accessible on foot, and it is by no means necessary to be conveyed to it by a windlass. Indeed it would not be easy to erect a crane on the platform of the castle that could haul up men and provisions from below.

A more famous fortress in a cave is that of Schallaun in the Puxerloch. Here is a grotto in the face of the precipice, 75 feet above the valley. The cliff itself is 4500 feet high.

The castle consists of two stages, the outer court is at a lower level than the face of the cliff, and the opening of the grotto. Entrance was obtained through this outer court that was reached by a path cut in the rock, and from it by a stair also rock-hewn. A second court was reached, above this was again a third within the cave. On the right hand the cave branches out into a long inner cleft that was closed at one time by a door, and was probably used as a cellar. The main cavern also runs by a narrow passage deep into the heart of the rock to a pool of crystal clear water, never failing. The main building—hardly a donjon, was occupied till late in last century by an old mason who patched it up and made it habitable. At a little distance to the east is a smaller cave also with a wall in front of it, and this is said by the peasants to have been the kitchen of the castle, and to have been reached by a wooden gallery from the main building. According to tradition, Schallaun derives its name from Chalons. In the time of Charlemagne a knight of Chalons named Charlot eloped with a Saxon princess, and took refuge in this cave. It became a den of thieves, and Margaret Maultasch (Pouchmouth) took and dismantled it. According to another story the castle served as the haunt of a shadowless man. Unlike Camizzo's hero, he had not sold his shade to the devil, but by a lapse of nature had been born without one. This proved to him so distressing, and so completely interfered with his matrimonial prospects that he took refuge in the Puxerloch, where he was in shadow all day, and his peculiarity could not be noticed; he issued from it only on moonless nights, on one of which he carried off a peasant maid—and she never knew that he was shadowless, for he never allowed her to see his deficiency. Historically very little is known of the Schallaun castle, which is to its advantage, as when these castles are mentioned in chronicles, it is to record some deed of violence done by the occupants. In 1472 it belonged to the knightly family of

Sauran, but they sold it. It is now the possession of the Ritter von Franckh.[1]

Perhaps the nearest approach to the Puxerloch castle in France is the Roc de Cuze near Neussargues in Cantal. In the face of the cliff is a cave that has been converted into a castle, a wall closes the mouth, and there is a tower. Another fortress completely carved out of the rock is at Roqueville.

I will now deal with the third class, rock towns and castles combined. And I can afford space to treat of but one out of the many that would enter more or less into the category.

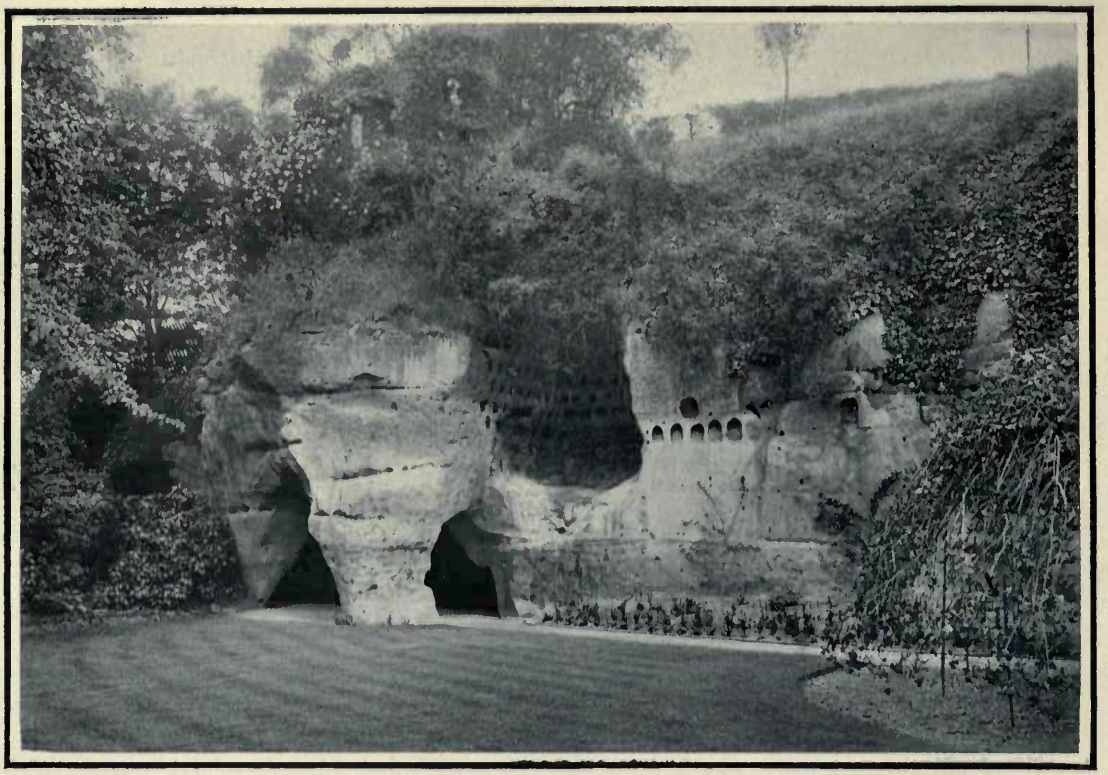
Although Nottingham town does not occupy the top of a rock, its castle that does cannot be passed by without notice, because that rock is perforated with galleries and has in it a subterranean chapel.

The castle, now bereft of its ancient splendour, of its coronet of towers, was built by William the Conqueror on the summit of a precipitous height rising above the river Leen. It was dismantled by Cromwell, and what remained was pulled down by the Duke of Newcastle, who erected on its site the uninteresting and unpicturesque mansion that now exists.

The castle was long considered impregnable; and to it Queen Isabel fled with Sir Roger Mortimer, whom she had created Earl of March, and she held it with a guard of one hundred and eighty knights. King Edward III. with a small retinue occupied the town. Every night the gates of the fortress were locked and the keys delivered to the Queen, who slept with them under her pillow. Sir William Montacute, with the sanction of the young king, summoned to his aid several nobles on whose fidelity he could depend,

[1] In "Unser Vaterland, Steiermark," Stuttgart, n.d., p. 47, is a representation of the Puxerloch, but it resembles much more Kronmetz. It gives towers and walls and gates that do not exist in the Puxerloch.

and obtained Edward's warrant for the apprehension of the Earl of March. The plot was now ripe for execution. For a time, however, the inaccessible nature of the castle rock, and the vigilance with which the gates were guarded, appeared to present an insuperable obstacle to the accomplishment of their designs. However, Sir William Eland, Constable of the Castle, was won over, and he agreed to admit the conspirators. In the words of an old chronicler, the Constable said to Montacute, "Sir, woll ye unterstande that the yats (gates) of the castell both loken with lokys, and Queen Isabell sent hidder by night for the kayes thereof, and they be layde under the chemsell of her beddis-hede unto the morrow . . . but yet I know another weye by an aley that stretchith out of the ward, under the earthe into the castell, which aley Queen Isabell ne none of her meayne, ne the Mortimer, ne none of his companye knoweth it not, and so I shall lede you through the aley, and so ye shall come into the castell without spyes of any man that bith your enemies." On the night of October 19, 1340, Edward and his loyal associates before midnight were guided through the subterranean passage by Eland, and burst into the room where the Earl of March was engaged in council with the Bishop of Lincoln and others of his friends. Sir Hugh Trumpington, Steward of the Household, a creature of Mortimer, attempting to oppose their entrance, was slain. The Earl himself was seized, in spite of the entreaties of Isabel, who, hearing the tumult, rushed from her chamber, crying "Fair son, spare my gentle Mortimer!" Both were secured. The next day, Edward announced that he had assumed the government, and summoned a Parliament to meet at Westminster on the 26th November. No sooner had this Parliament met than a bill of impeachment was presented against Mortimer. The peers found all the charges brought against him to be "notorously true, known to them, and all the people."



THE RUINED MONASTERY IN THE ROCKS, NOTTINGHAM PARK

The monastery commonly called Papists' Holes, abandoned at the Dissolution, was finally wrecked by the Roundheads in the Civil Wars.

And he was sentenced to be drawn and hanged as a traitor. Mortimer was executed at Tyburn, and the Queen Mother was sent under ward to the manor of Rising. The passage by which the conspirators entered, and by which the Earl was conveyed away, goes by the name of Mortimer's Hole to the present day.

If I were to attempt to deal with castles and towns on rocky heights I would have to fill pages with descriptions of Capdenac, Najarc, Minerve, Les Baux, San Marino, San Leo, and many another, but inasmuch as they are *on* rocks instead of being *in* rocks, I must pass them over.

A fourth class of cliff castle, neither the habitation of a *routier* nor the residence of a feudal seigneur, is that which commands an important ford, or the road or waterway to a town, and which was, in point of fact, an outpost of the garrison.

I can describe but a few.

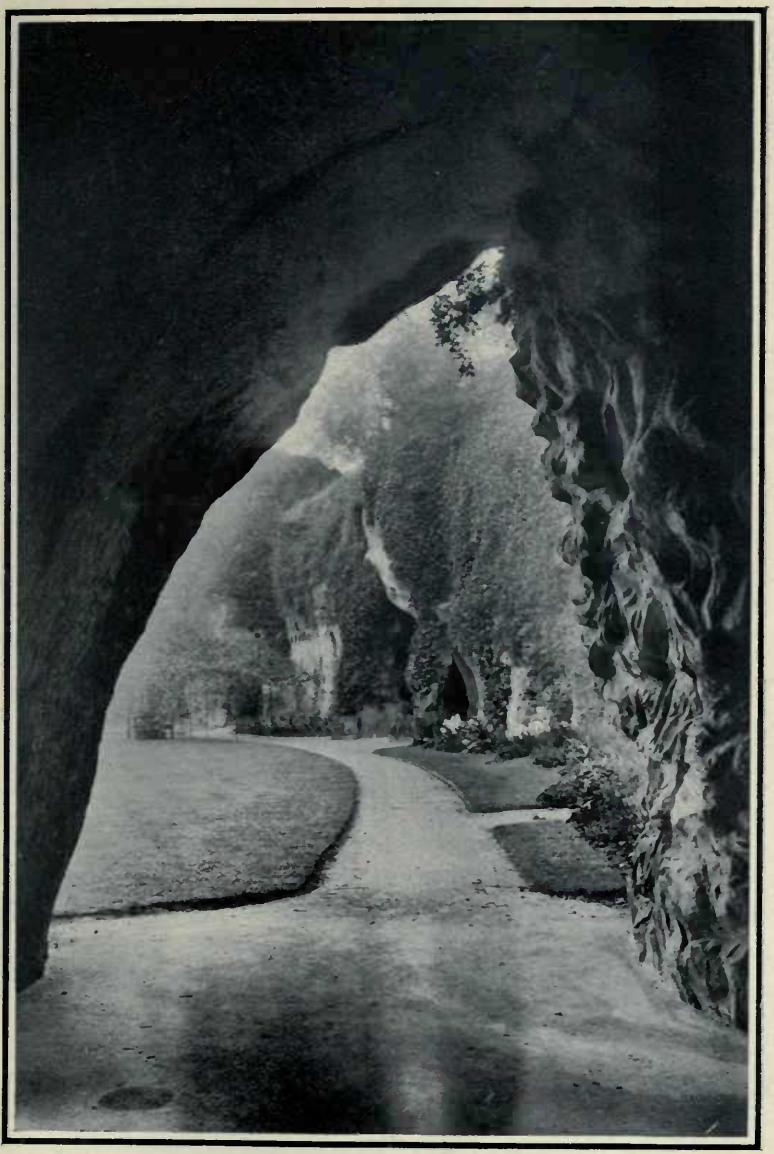
The Emperor Honorius had conceded to the Visigoths all that portion of Gaul that lay between the Loire and the Pyrenees. The Visigoths were Arians. Far from imitating the Romans, who respected the religion of the vanquished, and cared only that the peoples annexed to the Empire should submit to their administrative and military organisation, the Visigoths sought to impose Arianism on the nations over whom they exercised dominion. The bishops and priests protested energetically against this tyranny, and the Visigoths sought to break their resistance by persecution and exile, but gained nothing thereby save bitter hostility. In the year 511 an event took place that gave to the Aquitanians their religious liberty. The Franks were their deliverers.

Clovis, who coveted the rich provinces of the South, profited by the religious antagonism existing between the Aquitanians and the Goths to gain the confidence of the bishops to whom he promised the destruction of Arian

supremacy. And as he had obtained the strongest and most numerous adhesions in Poitou he resolved there to strike a decisive blow.

He prepared his expedition with such secrecy and moved with such celerity that Alaric II., King of the Visigoths, did not become aware of his peril till the army of Clovis was on the confines of his realm. He threw himself into Poitiers, and assembled all the forces he was able to call together. Clovis crossed the Loire at Tours, and directed his march towards Poitiers; he passed over the Creusse at Port de Pilles, and reached the Vienne. The season was the end of September, and there had been so much and such continuous rain that the river was swollen, and he could not cross. Accordingly he and his army ascended it on the right bank seeking for a ford.

He reached Chauvigny, where was a ford, but this was now found impracticable. On the left hand of the present road to Lussac-le-Chateau is a stony, narrow, waterless valley, up which formerly ran the old Roman highway. At the $2\frac{1}{2}$ kilometre stone is a dense thicket of oak coppice, clothing the steep side of the valley. By scrambling down this, clinging to the oak-branches, one reaches a bluff of chalk rock, hollowed out by Nature at the foot to the depth of 10 feet, and running horizontally to the length of from 32 to 34 feet, and terminating in a natural barrier of rock. It contracts in one place so as to form two chambers. Now this gallery is closed towards the valley by a screen of six huge slabs 8 and 9 feet long, 8 and 9 feet high, and 4 feet thick. They have apparently been slung down from above, and caught and planted so as to wall up the open side of the recess. And at the north end another block, now broken, was set at right angles so as to half close the gallery at the end, leaving a doorway for access to the interior. The attempt to plant these huge slabs on a steep slope was not in every case successful, for a couple slid down the



A Portion of the Rock Monastery, Nottingham Park

incline, but these served to form a heel-catch to those who did remain erect. Local antiquaries pronounce this to be a fortified cave, unique of its kind, devised to protect the road to Lussac, at the strategical point where it could best be defended. I have myself no manner of doubt that it was a so-called demi-dolmen, a tribal ossuary of neolithic man. Not only is it quite in character with his megalithic remains scattered over the country, but treasure-seekers who in digging displaced and brought down one of the side slabs found two diorite axes, one of which I was fortunate enough to secure. Persons in Gaulish or post-Roman times would not have dreamed of going to the enormous labour and attempting the difficult task of forming the sides with stone slabs, but would have closed the recess with a wall. The cave goes by the name of La Grotte de Jioux (of Jove) which in itself hints its remote antiquity.

But, although I do not believe that this cave was constructed as a military vidette and guard-house, I have no doubt whatever that it may have been so used, and it is very probable that at this point took place the first brush of Clovis and his Franks with the enemy, for the valley bears the name of Le Vallon des Goths. Alaric knew, what Clovis did not, that there was a ford at Lussac, and if he had any military foresight, he would plant a body of men across the road in the throat of the valley to intercept the Franks on their way. As it was, the Franks pushed on, and seeing a deer wade across the river at Lussac, raised exultant shouts, plunged into the Vienne, and crossed. The result was the battle of Voulon, in which the Arian Goths were defeated, and their empire broken down.[1] The Grotto of Jioux was but an accidental outpost, but those I

[1] This decisive battle is located at Vouillé to the north-west of Poitiers; but local historians are convinced that the site was Voulon to the south of Poitiers. See Thibaudeau, *Abrégé de l'Histoire de Poitou*, Niort, 1889.

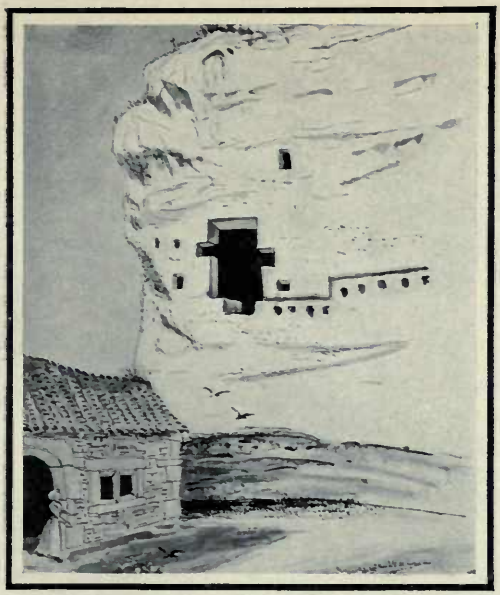
am about to describe were artificially contrived for that purpose.

In the broad valley of Le Loir below Vendôme, the great elevated chalk plateau of Beauce has been cut through, leaving precipitous white sides. At one point a buttress of rock has been thrown forward that dominates the road and also the ford over the river. Its importance was so obvious that it was seized upon in the Middle Ages and converted into a fortress. The place is called Le Gué du Loir. Not far off is the Château of Bonnaventure, where Antoine de Bourbon idled away his time drinking Surène wine, and carrying on an intrigue with a wench at le Gué, whilst his wife, Jeanne d'Albret, was sending gangs of bandits throughout her own and his territories to plunder, burn, and murder in the name of religion. But Antoine cared for none of these things. At Bonnaventure he composed the song:—

Si le roi m'avait donné
Paris, sa grande ville,
Et qu'il me fallait quiter
L'amour de ma mie,
Je dirai au roi Henri (III.)
Reprenez votre Paris,
J'aime mieux ma mie
Au Gué,
J'aime mieux ma mie.

Molière introduced a couplet of this lay into his Alceste.

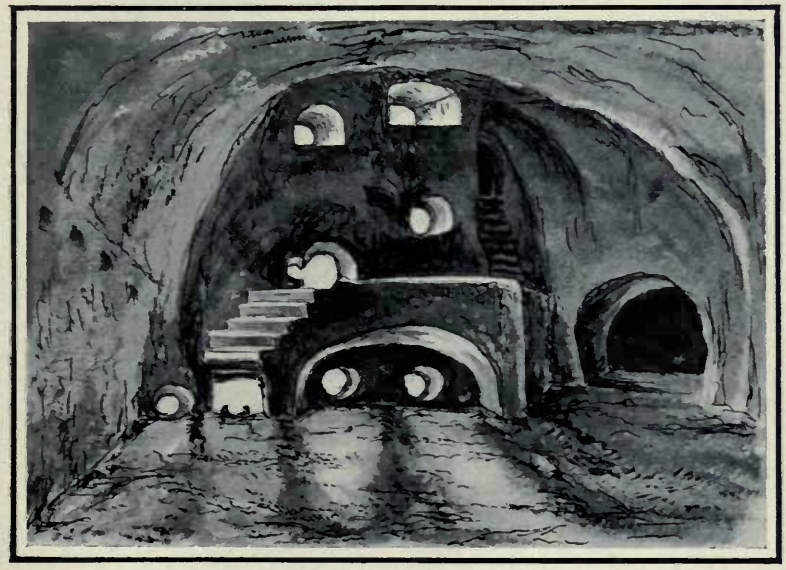
The rock has been excavated throughout, and in places built into, and on to. Two flights of steps cut in the cliff give access to the main portion of the castle. That on the right leads first of all to the Governor's room, hewn out of a projecting portion of the rock floored with tiles, with a good fireplace and a broad window, commanding the Loir and allowing the sun to flood the room. The opening for



S. B.-G.

LA ROCHE CORAIL

A cave fortress commanding the river Charante. The large opening is formed by breaking away a doorway and windows; the doorway communicated with a wooden balcony leading to other chambers in the rock.



THE FIRST HALL. LA ROCHE CORAIL

Windows and slots for discharging missiles and for spearing those attempting to attack the garrison in its stronghold.

the window formerly contained a casement. There is a recess for a bed, and there are in the sides numerous cupboards and other excavations for various purposes. This chamber is entered through that of the sentinel, which was also furnished with a fireplace. The stair leads further up to a large hall artificially carved out of the chalk, but not wholly, for there had been originally a natural cavern of small dimensions, which had a gaping opening. This opening had been walled up with battlements and loopholes, but the old woman to whom the rock or this portion of the rock belongs, and who is a cave-dweller at its foot, has demolished the wall to breast-height, so as to let the sun and air pour in, for she uses the cave as a drying place for her wash. From this hall or guard-room two staircases cut in the rock lead to other chambers also rock-hewn higher up.

The second main stair outside gives access to a second series of chambers.

Unfortunately, some rather lofty modern buildings have been erected in front of this cliff castle, so as to render it impossible to make of it an effective sketch or to take a satisfactory photograph.

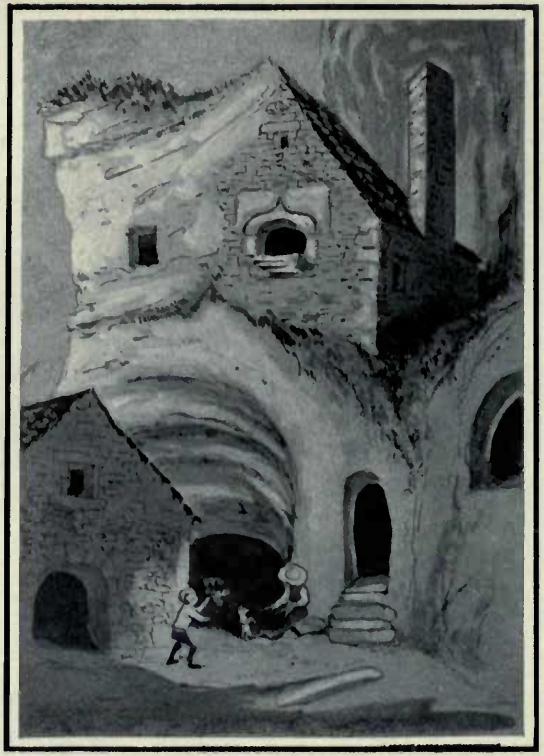
Still more interesting is La Roche Corail below Angoulême on the river Charente, opposite Nersac and the confluence of the Boeme with the Charente. Where is now a bridge was formerly a ford. The castle of Nersac commanded one side of the valley, and La Roche Corail the other. This cliff castle was at one time very extensive. The rock rises from a terrace partly natural and partly artificial, on which a comparatively modern château has been erected that masks the rock-face. But on entering the court behind the château the bare cliff is seen with a yawning opening halfway up, and indentations in the wall of rock show that at one time there were hanging barbacans and chambers suspended before the rock as well as others hewn out of it.

To reach the interior it is necessary to enter a grange that has been built at right angles to the rock, and in it to mount a ladder to another granary that occupies a floor of solid rock. Thence a second ladder leads into the caves. Formerly, however, the ascent was made by steps cut in the side of the cliff, and openings from within enabled the garrison with pikes to precipitate below any who were daring enough to venture up the steps uninvited.

The ladder gives admission through a broken door cut in the rock into a long vaulted hall, that was formerly floored across so as to convert it into two storeys.[1] The lower storey or basement opens on the left-hand side into a second cave, and the upper by a passage cut in the rock communicated with another range of chambers looking out of the face of the crag by artificial windows. Immediately in front of one entering the hall is the portal of admission to another very large hall that had originally well-shaped windows, and a door leading on to the wooden balcony, but this has all been broken away forming the ragged opening seen from below.

In 1534 Calvin was staying in the adjoining parish of S. Saturnin with a canon of the cathedral of Angoulême, who had a good library, and was disposed to favour him. The house is pointed out, but it has been rebuilt or altered. A cavern there is also shown to which Calvin retired to meditate on his Reform. It is now a cellar full of casks, wheelbarrows, and rubbish. It was never a very pleasing resort, and he preferred to come to La Roche Corail where, in the cavern just described, he had more space, and less likelihood of being disturbed. And here it was that he wrote his "Institute of the Christian Religion." One is disposed to rest here for awhile and muse, and consider

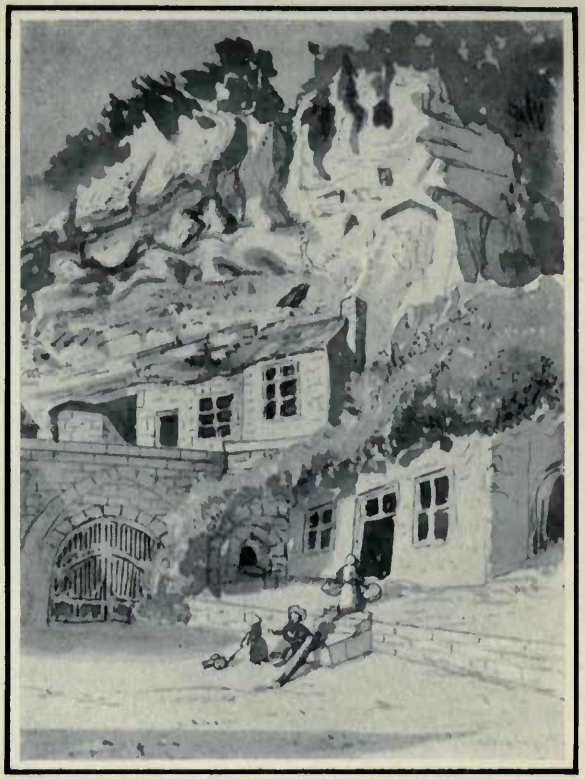
[1] Actually the doorway and three lower openings look into the dark granary. In the illustration I have shown them as letting light in, as intended originally.



S. B.-G.

GUÉ DU LOIR

Remains of a cliff-fortress commanding the approach to Vendôme. But a small portion of this castle is visible in this plate.



S. B. G.

LES ROCHES

Houses built into and against the rocks.

what a manufactory of explosives this cavern was. From this vaulted chamber was launched that doctrine which was to wreck nearly every church in France and drench the soil in blood. I do not in the least suppose that Calvin saw any beauty in the view through the gap in the rock—not in the island below with its poplars and willows whose branches trail in the bottle-green waters of the Charente—not in the lush meadows with the yellow flags fluttering by the waterside—not in the grey towers of Nersac castle and church rising above dark woods, flushed orange in the setting sun against a purple sky. I do not suppose that he noticed the scent of the wallflowers growing out of every fissure wafted in on the summer air. There was logic thought in his head, but no poetry in his heart, no sweetness in his soul. He looked across in the direction of Angoulême, and wished he had a ladder and a hammer that he might smash the serene face of the Saviour looking down on the city from the western gable of the cathedral. Five and twenty years must elapse before that wondrous domed pile was to be wrecked by the Huguenots, his disciples. But here it was, in this cavern, that he elaborated his system of reform, treating Christianity as a French peasant treats an oak tree, pollarding it, and lopping off every lateral, natural outgrowth. Assuredly, many a volatile superstition had lodged in its branches, and many a gross abuse couched under its shadow. But these might have been scared away without mutilating the tree till it was reduced to a stump. He desired, doubtless, to bring back the Church to the condition in which he supposed it had been when born. But one cannot reduce an adult to the simplicity and innocence of childhood by stripping off all his clothes, and denying him the conventional fig-leaf.

Having shattered the Catholic faith by the crowbar of his logic, he sought to build up a grotto out of its fragments,

and call it a church. His "Institute of the Christian Religion" was published the following year. It produced the desired effect at once. There were many reasons why it should. Earnest and devout souls were troubled at the sight of a Christianity that was so in name but had little Christianity in its practice. They felt that the Church had drifted far out of its way and had grounded on quicksands, and they thought that the sole way of saving the hulk was to cast all its precious lading into the sea. Christ's Church had been founded on a rock, it had withstood the rain and the flood, but was crumbling down with dry rot. Calvin would have neither the rock nor the sand. Into the mud he drove the piles by the strokes of his genius, on which to erect the platform that was to uphold the conventicle of his followers, and if that did not stand, it would at least mark its site by their dejections. And dejections there are everywhere, where the Calvinists were, wrecked churches, mutilated monuments, broken glass, and shattered sculpture. Ruskin, remarking on some delicate carving at Lyons, under a pedestal, observes that the mediæval sculptors exhibited absolute confidence in the public, in placing their tenderest work within reach of a schoolboy's hand. Such, however, was the love of the beautiful generally diffused, that objects of art were safe from destruction or defacement. But with the outburst of Calvinism all those affected were inflamed with a positive hatred of the beautiful in art. If this had been confined to the destruction of images to which idolatrous worship was offered, it would be explicable and justifiable, but it extended to the most innocuous objects. Delicate tracery such as adorns the west front of the church of Vendôme, a lace-work of beautiful sculpture representing trailing roses and vines, birds and reptiles, was ruthlessly hacked. Churches, cathedrals, were blown up with gunpowder—such was the fate of the cathedrals of Montauban, Périgueux, and Orléans. Beza himself rolled the barrels of

gunpowder to explode under the great piers that sustained the central tower of Orleans.[1]

The cry for reform was loud, and rang from every quarter of Europe except from the Vatican, where the Pope, like Dame Partington with her mop, thought to stay its progress. The grandsons of the old *routiers* cried fie on this quiet life, and snuffed the air for rapine. The nobility were out of pocket and out at elbows, and looked with avaricious eyes on the fair and broad lands of the Church, and their fingers itched to be groping in her treasury, and they hoped to patch their jerkins with her costly vestments. Court favourites were abbots *in commendam*, held prebendaries, without being in holy orders, sixfold pluralists abounded, ecclesiastical hippopotami, that might fairly be hunted. All kinds of interests were enlisted against the Church, good and bad, sincere and hypocritical, only a spokesman was needed, a trumpet sound to call to the battle, and Calvin proved the spokesman, and his "Institute" was the trumpet note.

An outpost station that is curious and puzzling is La Rochebrune on the Dronne, below Brantôme. The road to Bourdeilles and Périgueux runs immediately below a chain of very fine chalk cliffs, and there is but just space for it between the steep slope below them and the river. At one point about a mile and a half below Brantôme, the cliff is broken through, where a lateral valley opens on that of the Dronne: here there is a *talus* overgrown with box and juniper leading up to a rock, of inconsiderable height, with some holes in it, overhanging, and capped with brushwood that at one time also covered the slope below the rock.

By the roadside, immediately under this rock, is the opening into a cave that admits into another much larger,

[1] In 1769 Montgomery was preparing to blow up the beautiful Cathedral of Condon, only consecrated thirty-eight years before, but accepted as its ransom from the inhabitants the sum of 30,000 livres.

and lighted from above, and in which at the extremity is a passage leading upwards, now choked with earth and stone.

The original entrance to the cave has been destroyed through the widening of the highroad, so that it is now impossible to tell whether it was effectually concealed or whether precautions had been taken for its defence.

At one spot only in the rocks above is there a gap, and through that gap, probably once walled up, access is obtained into a sort of circular courtyard, where there are traces of a fireplace, and where is a stone bench. From this court a spiral staircase, rock-hewn, leads to the platform on top of the rocks. In the wall on the right of the court is a doorway neatly cut in the chalk, square-headed and adapted for a framed door that could be strongly barricaded. Immediately within is a quadrangular pit sunk in the floor, now choked with stones. This, in such a position, could not be a silo, it probably was the opening through which those who entered the cave from below, by the road, made their way into the interior of the fortress. Stepping over this pit one enters a hall with six large round holes cut in the roof communicating with an upper chamber, and receiving a borrowed light through them. A spiral staircase at the side furnished with *meurtrières* through which the besieged could stab at their enemies, leads to the upper hall or chamber, which is lighted by two rude windows, one high up, the other low down, and with a bench recess opposite them. But the strange and perplexing feature of this room is that it has in the floor eight round holes, each large enough to let a man fall through. Six communicate with the chamber below, but the other two open under the overhanging cornice, outside the castle. One of the holes—opening into the nether chamber, is precisely where would rest the feet of men seated on the bench. There is no trace of a groove to receive covers to these holes.

It has been conjectured that this strange construction

was a granary, in which the peasants concealed their corn; but there are difficulties in accepting this theory. The Rochebrune commands the road, and a hiding place would assuredly be located in the depths of a wood, away from a highroad, in some secluded valley. It has been conjectured that the holes served for discharging the corn into the lower chamber. But why carry it by a narrow winding stair aloft to pour it down into a nether cave, when the latter, the supposed granary, itself was at once accessible through the doorway? Moreover, two of the holes open outwards, and not into the supposed store-chamber. It may be said that these were for hauling up the sacks of corn, but the incline on which they open is so steep, that it would be a prodigious waste of labour to drag the corn up under the cornice in which they are, whereas the other ascent is easy. The precautions taken to provide means of stabbing at an assailant point to this having been a fortress. My interpretation of the puzzle is this: first, that the left hand stair leading to the summit of the crag enabled one of the defenders to light a beacon, so as to warn the people of Brantôme when danger threatened; that next, the garrison, which could not have comprised more than five or six men, as Rochebrune is very small, retired within the rock. If this courtyard were invaded, they escaped into the lower chamber and barred the door, and were able to thrust at assailants through the slots. But if the door yielded they would scramble up the rock stair into the upper apartment, and as the enemy broke into the lower cavern, they stabbed and thrust at them through the six holes in the floor. Should their position be rendered untenable, they could slip through the two holes that opened outwards, into the brushwood and so effect their escape; for these holes would not be perceived, or their purpose understood by besiegers unfamiliar with the castle.

Usually, over the floor, riddled like a colander, planks

were laid, that on emergency could be turned up on their sides. I may add that the windows opening outwards are purposely so inartificially made that no one passing along the road underneath would suspect that there was a fortress above his head. He would certainly suppose that these holes were natural, such as are commonly found in the chalk cliffs. In fact the first time I visited Brantôme, and walked down the river to Bourdeilles, I passed this rock and entertained no suspicion that it contained anything remarkable, that it was as a matter of fact, a mere shell, with all the artificial work within.

Why was it that every city—nay, every little town—had to be not only walled about but to have its outposts? Because France was not a nation, only a congeries of individualities. As Michelet says of the fourteenth century: "The kingdom was powerless, dying, losing self-consciousness, prostrate as a corpse. Gangrene had set in, maggots swarmed, I mean the brigands, English and Navarese. All this rottenness isolated, detached the members of the poor body from one another. One talks of the Kingdom, but there were no States General, nothing at all general, no intercommunication, the roads were in the power of cut-throats. The fields were all battlefields, war was everywhere, and none could distinguish friend from foe."

How needful these outposts were may be judged from what Froissart says: "Rogues took advantage of such times (of truce), and robbed both towns and castles; so that some of them, becoming rich, constituted themselves captains of bands of thieves; there were among them those worth forty thousand crowns. Their method was to mark out particular towns or castles, a day or two's journey from each other; then they collected twenty or thirty robbers, and travelling through by-roads in the night-time, about daybreak entered the town or castle they had fixed upon, and set one of the houses on fire. When the inhabitants

perceived it they thought it had been a body of soldiers sent to destroy them, and took to their heels as fast as they could" (Bk. i., c. 147).

Passing on from the outposts to towns, or defences to highways, we must glance at such as guard the approaches to countries, or such as Gibraltar that commands the great waterway between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Gibraltar is certainly the most complete and marvellous of all cliff castles. This is too well known to English travellers to need description here.

The French Gibraltar, Urdos, commands one of the passes through the Pyrenees. It is hewn out of the mountain in a buttress of rock, and rises in stages from the road to the height of 500 feet. Externally the mountain looks harmless enough. A cave opens here, and a rift there, and a few streaks of masonry may be noticed, but actually the mountain is riddled with galleries, batteries, and long flights of stairs, and hollowed out for ammunition and other stores; and it is capable of containing a garrison of three thousand men.

Faron also, 1660 feet high, with its magnificent precipices of salmon-coloured limestone, commanding both the harbour of Toulon and the Bay of Hyères, is capped with fortifications and pierced with batteries, casemates, and chambers for military stores, a position made by Nature and utilised with supreme skill. Nor must the chain of rock-forts of Campi delle Alte and of Mont Agel above Monaco, dominating the Corniche road be forgotten, ready to drop bombs amidst an army from Italy venturing along that splendid road, nor must Besançon be forgotten, occupying its inaccessible rock—inaccessible that is, to an enemy.

"Oppidum maximum Sequanorum," as Cæsar described it in his day; "natura loci sic muniebatur ut magnam ad ducendum bellum daret facultatem."

Ehrenbreitstein faces the opening of the Moselle into the

Rhine; and Frankenfeste holds the key of the Brennerpass; and Dover Castle commands the strait at its narrowest. Königstein crowning a precipitous rock 748 feet above the Elbe, though in Saxony is garrisoned by Prussians, guards the pass down the river from Bohemia; and Peterwardein is a rock-built fortress, that has been called the Ehrenbreitstein and Gibraltar of the Danube. What are these frontier fortresses but the same on an extensive scale as the Gué du Loir, the Roche Corail, and the Rochebrune? In the Middle Ages every city, every little town had to have its outposts and watch-tower on the look-out for the enemy, and to break the first impetus of an attack. But now it is not the town but the nation that has to gird itself about with frontier fortresses.

CHAPTER VII

SUBTERRANEAN CHURCHES

WHEN the period of persecution of the early Christians had come to an end, and they were able in security to assemble for worship, two distinct types of Church contested for the supremacy—the Basilican and the Catacumbal.

Even during the times before Constantine, when persecution was in abeyance, Christians had been accustomed to gather together for the Divine mysteries in private houses. But after that Christianity was recognised and favoured, the wealthy and noble citizens of Rome, Italy, and Africa, who had become Christians, made over their stately reception halls, or basilicas, to be converted into churches. These basilicas, attached to most palaces, were halls comprising usually a nave with side aisles separated from the nave by ranges of columns, and an apse at the extremity of the nave in which the master of the house was wont to sit to receive his clients and his guests. This is the type upon which cathedral and parish churches in east and west are modelled. But the early Christians had become accustomed in times of danger to resort to the subterranean chapels in the Catacombs. The poorer members doubtless preferred these dingy meeting-places to the lordly halls of the nobles, and the slaves could not feel their equality with their masters under the same roof where they had served, and been whipped, as in the Catacombs, where all were one in fear of their lives and in the darkness that buried distinction. Moreover, the

cult of the martyrs had grown to a passion, and it had become customary to commemorate their nativities as it was called, *i.e.* the anniversaries of their deaths, at their tombs in the Catacombs. It was there that the faithful habitually prayed, it was near the bones of the Saints that it was believed special sanctity dwelt, and that prayers were most effectually answered through their intercession; and it was there, *ad martyres*, that they themselves purposed to be laid in expectation of the Resurrection.

In Rome, the tombs of the martyrs continued to enjoy popular favour, and to attract crowds, till the incursion of the Lombards, when, to save the relics of the Saints from profanation, they were transferred to the basilicas within the walls, whereupon the Catacombs ceased to interest the faithful, that were neglected and allowed to fall into oblivion. Gaul rejoiced in having had its soil watered with the blood of many witnesses to the Faith, consequently it had numerous hypogee chapels, and when, to the Martyrs were added hermits, abbots, bishops, devout women, and confessors of all descriptions, their underground tombs became extraordinarily numerous, and were resorted to with great devotion. Such was the origin of the crypts found in profusion in France, not under cathedrals only, but under parish and monastic churches as well. The whole population having become Christian, the resort to these subterranean chapels became so great as to cause inconvenience, and the bishops proceeded to "elevate" "illate" and "translate" the bones of the saints from their original resting-places to the basilicas above ground. Thereupon the crypts lost most of their attraction, and the worshippers gathered about the altars in the upper churches to which the bones had been transferred.

In Britain, where there were no early martyrs save Alban at Verulam, and Julius and Aaron at Caerleon, the type of church from the beginning was basilican, as we may see

by that unearthed at Silchester, and that of S. Martin at Canterbury.

It was the same in Germany and throughout Northern Europe.

John and Paul were chamberlains to the Princess Constantia. They had in some way incurred the anger of the Emperor Julian, and he sent orders for their despatch in their own house on the Coelian hill. They were accordingly executed in their bath, and were buried in the cellar under their mansion. At once a rush of the devout of Rome took place to the Coelian to invoke the aid of these new martyrs. The visitors picked off the plaster, scribbled their names on the walls, applied kerchiefs to the tomb, and collected the dust, stained with the blood of the chamberlains. Pope Hadrian IV., 1158, built a basilica on top of the house, driving the foundations through it, and transferred to this upper church the bones of SS. John and Paul. At once the stream of devotion was deflected from the substructure to the superstructure, and the former was filled up with earth and totally abandoned.

Herbert Spencer has established in his "Principles of Sociology" that the mausoleum was the egg out of which the temple was evolved. The first cave-dwellers buried their dead in the grottoes in which they had lived, and themselves moved into others. They periodically revisited the sepulchres to bring offerings to the dead. In time the deceased ancestor became invested by the imagination of his descendants with supernatural powers, and ascended from stage to stage till he was exalted into a deity. Thenceforth his cave became a temple. Ferguson, writing of the Chaldæan temples, and indicating their resemblance to tombs says, "The most celebrated example of this form is as often called (by ancient writers) the tomb or the temple of Belus, and among a Turanian people the tomb

and the temple may be considered as one and the same thing."[1]

In the primitive Church there were, as we have seen, churches which had no connection whatever with sepulchres, and chapels underground that contained tombs. The current of popular feeling set so strongly towards the latter that the Popes yielded to it, as did also the Bishops, and converted every basilica into a mausoleum by the transfer to it of the bones of a saint.

But that was not all. The Holy Mysteries had been celebrated in private houses and basilicas on wooden tables, sometimes square, but often round, and with three legs. An illustration is in the cemetery of S. Calixtus, of the latter half of the second century, where a priest is represented celebrating at what looks like a modern tea-table. According to William of Malmesbury, S. Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester (1062–1095), destroyed the wooden altars in his diocese, which had been universal in England, *altarea lignea jam inde a priscis diebus in Anglia.* But with the transformation of the basilica into a mausoleum, the altar was also transformed into a sepulchre. If it did not contain the entire body of a saint, it had a hole cut in it to receive a box containing relics; and the Roman pontifical and liturgy were altered in accordance with this. The Bishop on consecrating an altar was to exact that it should contain relics, and the priest on approaching it was required to invoke the saints whose bones were stored in it.[2] The cavity in the slab to contain

[1] Clement of Alexandria (Exhort. to the Heathen) had already said, "Temples were originally Tombs." *Cf.* also Eusebius (Præp. Evangelica ii. 6) heads the chapter, "The Temples of the Gods that are none other than Tombs."

[2] Pontifex accepta mitra, intigit policem dextræ manus in sanctum Chrisma et cum eo signat confessionem, id est sepulchrum altaris, in quo reliquiæ deponendæ. *Pont. Roman.* The priest on ascending to the altar kisses it, and refers to the relics contained in it. "Oramus te, Domine, per merita sanctorum tuorum quorum reliquiæ hic sunt—ut indulgere digneris omnia peccata mea."

the relics was liturgically entitled *sepulchrum*. The change from a table to a tomb involved a change of material from wood to stone.

The dedication of a church to a saint in the Latin Church implies the presence in the sepulchre of the altar of the relics of that saint. From the Roman point of view, a dedication without the relic is unmeaning. Among the Celts this was unknown, with them a church took its name after its founder, and the founder of a church dedicated it by a partial fast of forty days, and prayer and vigil on the spot. The early basilicas of Rome also took their titles from the families that surrendered their halls for Christian worship. The introduction of dedication to deceased saints marks unmistakably the transformation of a church from a basilica to a mausoleum.

It is certainly remarkable that whereas in Paganism the identification of the tomb with the temple passed away, and the temple acquired independence of such association, in the Latin Church the reverse took place; there the church unassociated with a tomb—a basilica in fact—was converted into a sepulchral monument.

The reverence of the early pontiffs shrank from dismembering the bodies of the saints. To Queen Theodelinda Pope Gregory I. would accord only oil that had burnt in the lamps at their tombs, or ribbons that had touched them. Gregory V., in 594, wrote to Constantia Augusta, who had built a church in honour of S. Paul, and craved a portion of his body: "Dear lady, know that the Romans when they give relics of the saints are not accustomed to parcel up their bodies, they send no more than a veil that has touched them."[1]

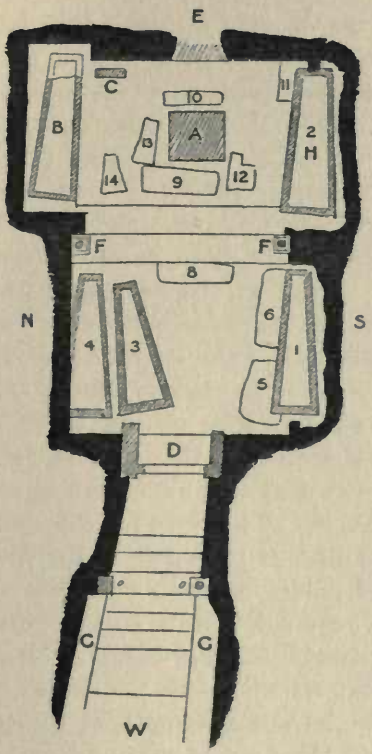
But when the Latin Church was constrained by the force of popular prejudice to transform all her sacred temples into sepulchral churches, there was no help for it; the bodies of

[1] Baronius, *Hiérothonie de J. C.*, Paris, 1630, p. 173.

the saints had to be torn in pieces for distribution. A toe, a finger was taken off, legs and arms were amputated, the vertebræ of the spine were dispersed over Christendom, the teeth were wrenched out of the jaws, the hair plucked from head and chin, moisture exuding from the body was carefully cherished, and bones were rasped to furnish a little sacred phosphate of lime to some church clamorous to be consecrated.

A plateau to the south of Poitiers had long borne the name of Chiron Martyrs. Chiron means a heap of stones, but why the epithet of Martyrs attached to the heaps of stones there nobody knew. The old Roman road leading to and athwart it was named La Route des Martyrs, also for no known reason. But in October 1878 the plateau was being levelled by the military authorities, when it was discovered that the stones were actually broken tombs, and that they were clearing a pagan Necropolis. Soon they came on a portion where were sarcophagi orientated and crowded thickly about a subterranean building. The distinguished antiquary, Le Père de la Croix, now undertook the investigation, and discovered that these latter were the tombs of Christians, and that they surrounded a hypogee Martyrium. This was excavated and proved to be a chapel erected over the bodies of certain martyrs of Poitiers, of whom no records had been preserved, or at all events remained, whose very existence was unknown; also, that it had been constructed by an abbot Mellebaudes at the end of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century. It contained an altar built up of stone, plastered over and painted, measuring at the base 2 feet 8½ inches by 2 feet 2 inches and 3 feet 7 inches high. Also sarcophagi for the bodies of the martyrs there found, also one that Mellebaudes had prepared for himself. In the floor were many graves, possibly of his kinsfolk. Numerous inscriptions in barbarous Latin, some paintings and carvings, were also found. Among the latter

a rude sculpture represented two of the martyrs, Hilarius and Sosthenes, who had been crucified. A bracelet of amber



Plan of the Martyrium.

1–4. Stone sarcophagi.
5, 6, 9, 10, 14. Graves sunk in the rock, covered with flat slabs, containing bones.
8. Pit covered with a carved slab.
11, 13. Children's graves covered with carved slabs brought from elsewhere.
12. Pit containing no bones.

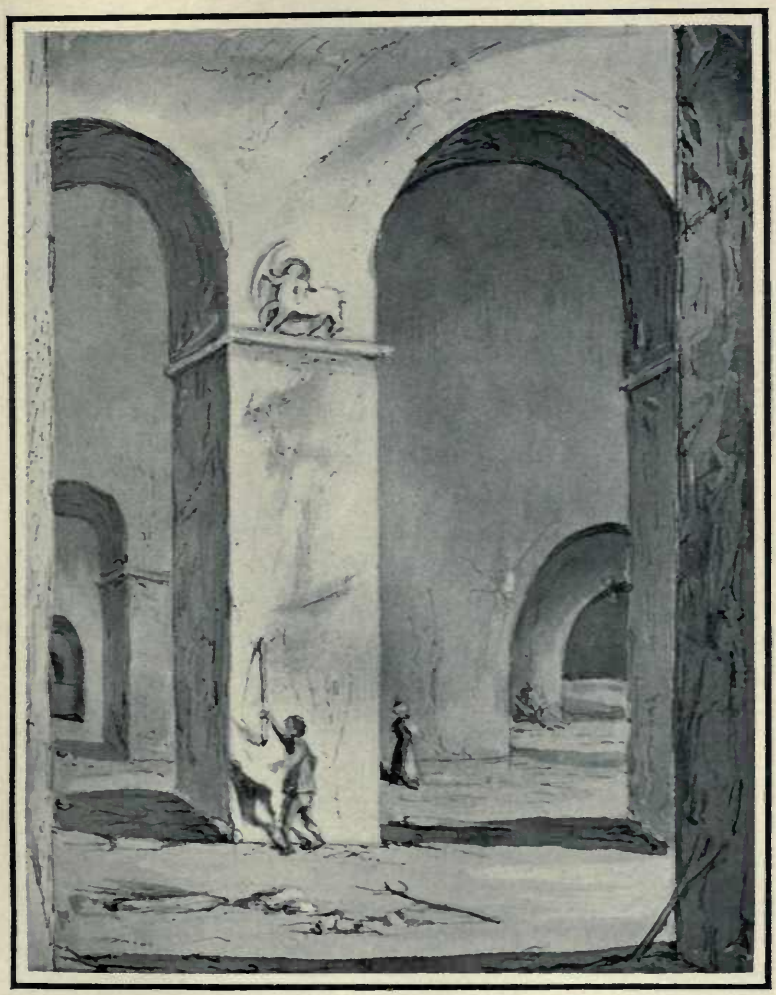
A. Altar.
B. Arcosolium containing the sarcophagus with the bones of the martyrs.
C. The sculpture of the crucified saints.
D. Doorway.
F.F. Pilasters.
O.O. Broken pilasters.
G.G. Benches.
H. Sarcophagus of Mellebaudes.
E. East window.

and coloured glass beads, amber ear-rings, and bronze ornaments were also discovered.

Mellebaudes certainly built his mausoleum where there had been one earlier, that had become completely ruinous, for he complains that he had not been able to recover all the bones of the martyrs that had been laid in it. This destruction had probably been effected by the Visigoths, and the building by Mellebaudes took place some time after the defeat and expulsion of these Arians in 507. The final ruin of the Martyrium he raised may have been the work of the Saracens in 732.[1]

The hypogee was sunk nine feet in the rock, but the roof must have shown above ground. A window was to the east. S. Avitus in the sixth century speaks of the wondrous skill of architects in his day, who contrived to introduce daylight into the crypts. It is evident that no glass was inserted in the window, although the use of glass for windows was becoming general in the sixth century; and Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, died 609, and Gregory, Bishop of Tours, died 595, both speak in terms of admiration of the glazing of windows for churches. It may well be understood that in the mind of the people long after the stream of public devotion had been directed to the churches above ground, a liking for those that are excavated underground should remain. Indeed, it is not extinct yet, as any one may see who visits the church of Ste. Croix at Poitiers, or S. Eutrope at Saintes, or S. Martin at Tours, to mention but three out of many. In all these are mere empty tombs, yet they are the resort of numerous devotees. The darkness, the mystery of these subterranean sanctuaries, impressed the imagination. Accordingly we find, especially in France, many cave-churches. Indeed they are so numerous that I can afford space to describe but a couple of the largest. Many are small, mere chapels, and shall be dealt with under the heading of hermitages.

[1] For full account with plates see P. Camille de la Croix, *S. J. Hypogée Martyrium de Poitiers*, Paris, 1883.



S. B.-G.

INTERIOR OF THE MONOLITHIC CHURCH OF S. EMILION, DORDOGNE

Height from the floor, sixty feet. It is no longer used for divine worship.

SUBTERRANEAN CHURCHES

Few scenes of quiet landscape can surpass that of the valley of the Dordogne from the road between Sauveterre and Libourne. It broke on me upon a breezy spring morning. The Dordogne, broad and blue, swept through the wide valley between banks dense with poplar and osier. The whole country wore a smiling aspect; the houses, built of freestone, looked fresh and comfortable, and were surrounded by their gardens. The maize-fields were as a rippling green sea. The flax-fields in bloom were sheets of the tenderest blue, and those of the *Trifolium incarnatum* red as blood, and the road was like a white ribbon binding together a variegated wreath. To the north of the Dordogne rose a grey cluster of buildings, the old town of S. Emilion, famous for its wine. It occupies the edge of a plateau. The only business pursued therein is the making of wine and of macaroons.

The entrance to S. Emilion is not striking. None of its buildings, except the keep of its castle are visible. The road dives into a grove of acacias, and then enters the town by a narrow street. The acacias were a mass of pink and white blossom, exhaling a sweet fragrance.

In the middle of the eighth century lived a hermit named Emilian, born of obscure parents at Vannes in Brittany. He became known to the Count of that place, who took him into his service, where he showed himself profusely charitable to the poor with his master's substance. This led to his ignominious dismissal, and he wandered into the Saintonge, entered the Benedictine Order, and became baker to the monastery. But he proved so objectionable there that he was turned out. So he wandered further south, and finding a rock in the forest above the Dordogne, wherein was a small cave, out of which flowed a spring, he took up his abode therein. His fame soon brought disciples to him, and gathered admirers about him; and after his death in 767, a monastery of Bene-

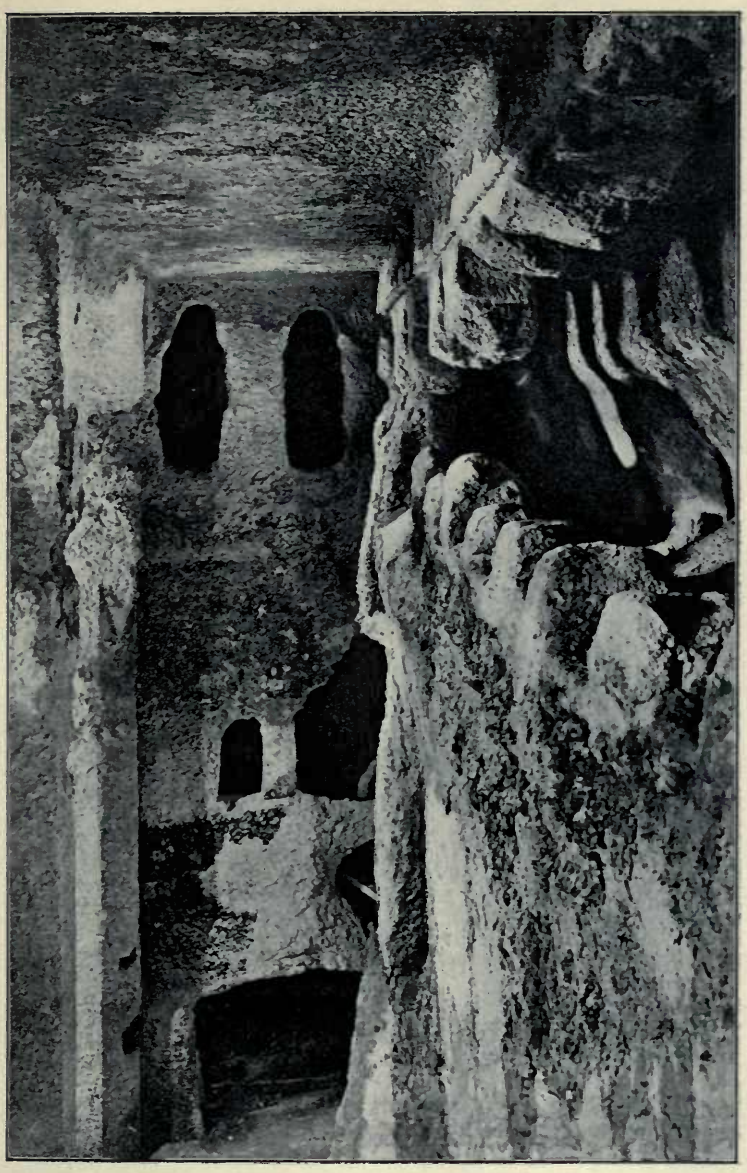
dictine monks was settled there, and a town sprang up about it.

The cave of S. Emilion still remains. In face of it rises a mass of rock with abrupt scarp towards the west and the market-place. Thence a street slopes up to the platform on the top of the rock. The front of the rock has an ambulatory before it pierced with windows and doors, and through these latter access is obtained to the interior of the rock, which is hollowed out into a stately church, dedicated to the three kings, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.

This monolithic church has for its base a parallelogram measuring 120 feet by 60 feet. It is composed of two portions of unequal height. The anterior portion is a vestibule, narthex, or ambulatory to the church, and is only 21 feet high. The windows in this are of the flamboyant order, and the principal doorway is richly sculptured. The body of the church into which this vestibule opens is 95 feet long and 60 feet high. The body consists of a nave and side aisles, all excavated out of the living rock. Six windows light the interior, the three in the flamboyant style already mentioned, and above, set back the whole length of the narthex under circular-headed arches, are three plain, round-headed windows, like a clerestory, opening into the nave and aisles, one window in each.

Looking from the market-place at the church the spectators would suppose that the nave ran parallel with the vestibule, but this is not the case, it is at right angles to it.

The small upper windows cast but a chill and feeble light into the vast cavern, so that the choir and chapels are buried in perpetual twilight. The windows in the vestibule do very little towards the illumination of the interior. At the extremity of the nave, which is raised on steps to form a choir, anciently stood the high altar, but this has been removed. Above, where



INTERIOR OF THE MONOLITHIC CHURCH, AUBETERRE, CHARENTE.

Showing the gallery of communication to the Seigneural pew, seen in face. The supports of the gallery vault have crumbled away within forty years, through neglect.

it was can be discerned faintly through the obscurity, a bas-relief rudely sculptured, but very curious. It occupies the entire width of the choir; on the right is an angel playing upon a stringed instrument, with outspread wings, as if in the attitude of soaring, and on the left, perched on a rock, is a monstrous animal with gaping jaws, bristling mane, and raised paws. In the midst of the group is a little old man armed with a stick, apparently repelling this monster. It has been conjectured that this is intended as a representation of the saint himself ready to deliver his votaries from the jaws of Hell. But it is more probable that the whole subject is allegorical of Death, armed with his scythe between the powers of Light and of Darkness. The choir arch is one of the boldest and most original conceptions in this marvellous temple. It consists of two gigantic angels carved out of the sandstone, with their feet upon the piers on each side, and their heads nearly meeting at the crown of the vault. Each has four wings, the two smaller wings are raised about their heads, forming a nimbus to each. The other two wings are depressed. These mighty angels were formerly whitened and partially gilt, and the effect of the great figures looming out of the dark vault is most impressive.

On the right side of the nave, at the spring of the arches, between two of the piers, is a centaur armed with a bow, cut in the stone, and on the opposite spandril are two goats, disposed back to back, also cut in the rock. On one of the piers is an inscription graven regarding the dedication of the church, but unfortunately the date is illegible. The exterior of the church is adorned with a noble portal, richly sculptured, of much later date than the church within.

On entering the church through this rich portal a feeling of astonishment comes over one. The exterior in no way corresponds with the interior, which is void of ornament. The piers are massive parallelograms without mouldings,

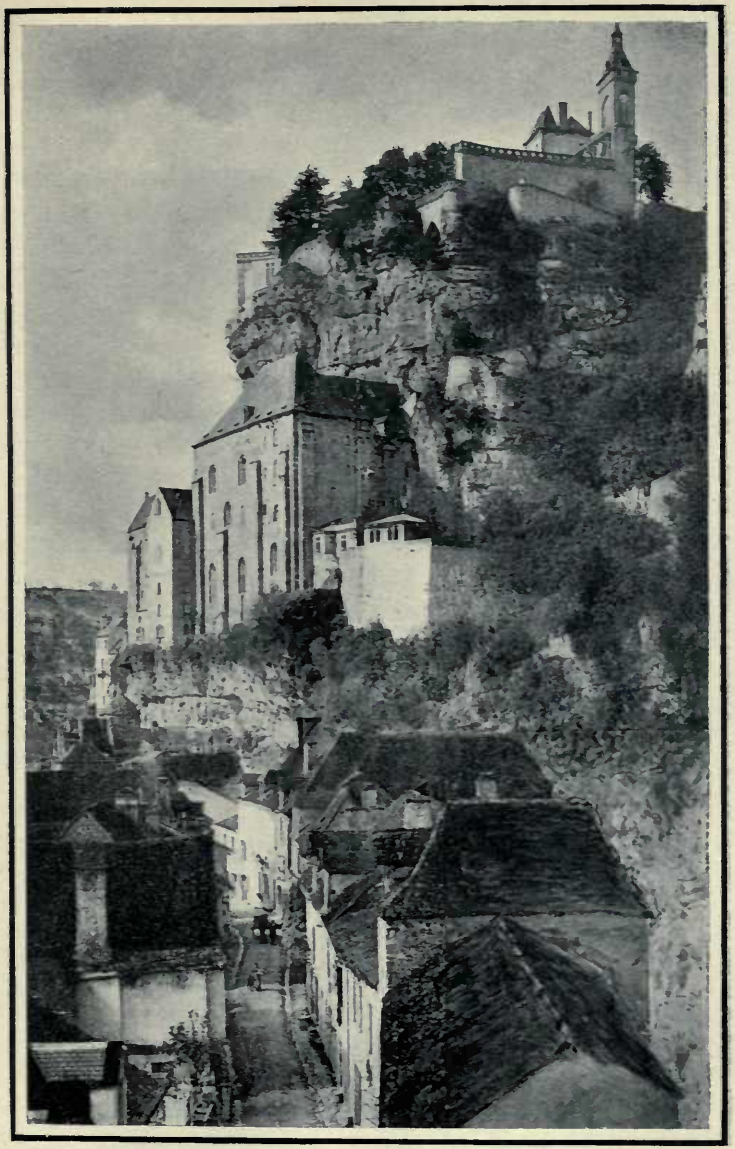
the arches between them semicircular, stilted, perfectly plain; a string alone marks the rise of the arch from the pier.

In the floor of one of the aisles is a hole through which a descent was anciently made into the crypt below the church; this crypt also is hewn in the solid rock, and has a funnel-shaped dome, a spiral flight of steps was cut in the rock round it descending from the church into the crypt. The descent must have been hazardous in the extreme unless the stairs were provided with a balustrade, of which at present no trace remains.

Admittance into the crypt is also obtained through a door cut in the face of the rock, but this was made in 1793 when the soil and the bones of the old canons of the Church of the Three Kings were required for saltpetre to make gunpowder for the armies of the Republic. Over the door is a mask carved in the stone and a little window; above the monolithic church, standing on the platform of rock, is the exquisite flamboyant spire, not communicating with the church beneath, also a modern *salle de danse*.

Another subterranean church as interesting but not as well preserved is that of Aubeterre in Charente, on the Dronne. By the valley of the Dronne all movement of troops from the Limousin and Perigord into the Saintonge took place, and the rock of Aubeterre was considered of so great military importance that a strong castle was constructed on the summit, and its possession was contested repeatedly during the Hundred Years' War and the wars of religion. Its position was peculiar in this also, that it was in the seneschauté of the Angoumois, in the diocese of Périgueux, and for the purpose of taxation in the Limousin.

The town is built in the form of an amphitheatre on a chalk hill that commands the Dronne. The hill is precipitous in parts, and is everywhere so steep that the roofs of the houses are below the gardens of those above them,



ROCAMADOUR

A cluster of chapels, some excavated in the rock. Zacchæus is erroneously supposed to have lived and died in one of them. A famous place of pilgrimage.

and the saying there is, "Mind that your cattle be not found in your neighbour's stable by tumbling through the roof." The castle occupied a height cut off from the town by a deep cleft, that has its sides pierced with caverns, and its store chambers and cellars are dug out of the rock. But the most curious feature of Aubeterre is the monolithic church of S. John beneath the castle. The doorway admitting into it is on the level of the street, and gives access to a charnel-house with what would be termed *arcosolia* in the catacombs, on each side, and the floor is humpy with graves. This is 70 feet long by 16 feet wide. On the right hand it gives admission through a doorway cut in the rock to the church itself, consisting of a nave and side aisle divided from it by massive monolithic piers, very much decayed at the top. It is lighted by three round-headed windows like a clerestory without glass. At the further end is an arch admitting to an apse, in the midst of which is an octagonal monolithic tomb of Renaissance style, with columns at the angles, and surmounted by the statue of Francois d'Esparbes de Lussac, Marshal of Aubeterre, and the much mutilated figure of his wife in Carrara marble.

A gallery excavated in the rock above the arch into the apse is continued the whole length of the aisle, and turns to admit into the seigneural gallery or pew high up over the entrance whence he and his family could hear Divine Service.

On the right-hand side of the nave opens a second charnel-house, called by the people "the Old Church," also with its *arcosolia;* there is also a door by which exit is obtained into a small cemetery overgrown with briars and thorns, and with the head-crosses reeling in all directions, and utterly neglected. For centuries not this yard only, nor the two charnel-houses but also the floor of the church, have served as the burial-place of the citizens of Aubeterre,

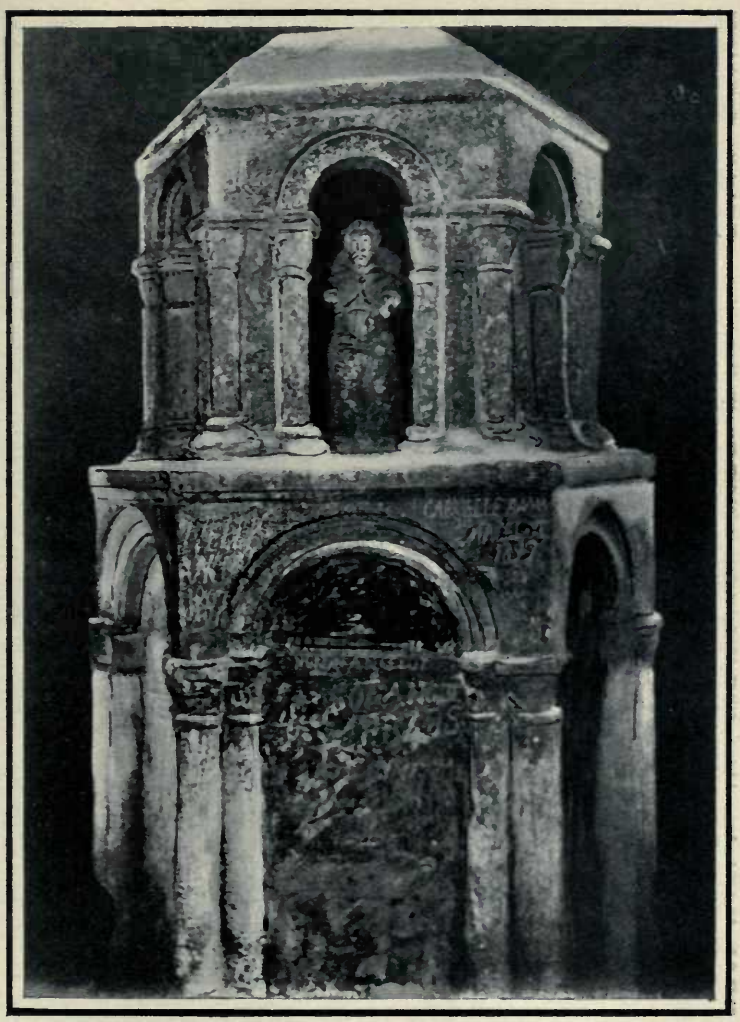
and the floor is raised four feet above that of the apse though frequent interments. The last head cross I noted within the church bore the date 1860.

The height of the church is said to be fifty feet. The castle above was sold about sixty years ago to a small tradesman of the town, who straightway pulled it down and disposed of the stones for building purposes, and out of the lead of the gutters, conduits, and windows made sufficient to pay the purchase-money.

Then he converted the site into a cabbage garden and vineyard. Not content with this he brought a stream of water in to nourish his cabbages. This leaks through and is rapidly disintegrating and ruining the church beneath, that was protected so long as the castle stood above it. Seven years ago the arched gallery in the aisle was perfect, now it has crumbled away. The piers were also intact, now they are corroded at the top. A stream pours down through the vault continuously by the monument of the Marshal. The church is classed as a *monument historique*, nevertheless nothing was done to prevent the damage effected by the destruction of the covering castle, and nothing is done now to preserve it from utter disintegration.

In my opinion the apse was excavated to receive the monument, which consists of a mass of chalk in position, with a hole on one side to receive the coffins let down into the seigneural vault; and this could not have been there with a high altar behind it. In a lateral chapel is a hole in the vault, through which the ropes passed to pull the bells that were hung in a tower above, but which has been destroyed.

In 1450 Aubeterre was in the possession of the English, and they sold it to the Count of Perigord. When the Huguenot troubles began, the Lord of Aubeterre threw himself into the movement and appropriated the lands and



AUBETERRE, CHARENTE

Mausoleum of François Espartes in the choir of the Subterranean Church.

revenues of the ecclesiastical foundations in the town. François d'Aubeterre was involved in the conspiracy of Amboise, and was sentenced to death, but pardoned. He deemed it expedient, however, to go to Geneva, where, as Brantôme informs us, he turned button-maker. In 1561 he was back again in Aubeterre, and converted the monolithic church into a preaching "temple," sweeping away all Catholic symbols, and it remains bare of them to this day. His brother, Guy Bonchard, Bishop of Périgueux, was also an ardent Calvinist, and used his position for introducing preachers of the sect into the churches. Although disbelieving in Episcopacy, he did not see his way to surrendering the emoluments of his see. He was deposed in 1561, and Peter Fournier elected, whom the Huguenots murdered in his bed 14th July 1575.

In 1568 Jeanne d'Albret issued orders to the gangs of men she sent through the country to lay hold of the royal revenues, to sequestrate and appropriate all ecclesiastical property, to raise taxes to pay themselves, and to require all municipalities to furnish from four to five soldiers apiece to replenish their corps.

Jeanne's power extended over Lower Navarre, Béarn, the land of Albret, Foix, Armagnac, and other great seigneuries. Through her husband, Antoine de Bourbon, she could rule and torture Perigord, the Bourbonais, and the Vendomois. She had good cause to be offended with the Pope, for in 1563, with incredible folly, he threatened her with deposition from her throne, a threat he could not possibly execute. By enrolling and sending forth over the south to ravage and confiscate, she was a second Pandora letting loose the hurricane, slaughter, fire, famine, and pestilence, leaving Hope locked up behind.

Aubeterre played a conspicuous part in the wars of religion, and the Catholics in vain essayed to take it. The seigneur could always draw from the bands of Calvinist

soldiery to hold it, and it remained in their power till the peace of La Rochelle.

I might include Rocamadour in the Department of Lot among the interesting rock churches. It consists of a cluster of chapels clinging to the rock or dug out of it, and looking like a range of swallows' nests plastered against the face of the cliff. The people of the place fondly hold that Zaccheus, who climbed up a sycamore tree to see Our Lord pass by, came into Quercy, and having a natural propensity for climbing, scrambled up the face of the precipice to a hole he perceived in it, and there spent the remainder of his days, and changed his name to Amator. No trace of such an identification occurs before 1427, when Pope Martin V. affirmed it in a bull, although in the local breviary there was no such identification. It is extremely doubtful whether any saint of the name of Amator settled here, the story concerning him is an appropriation from Lucca.[1]

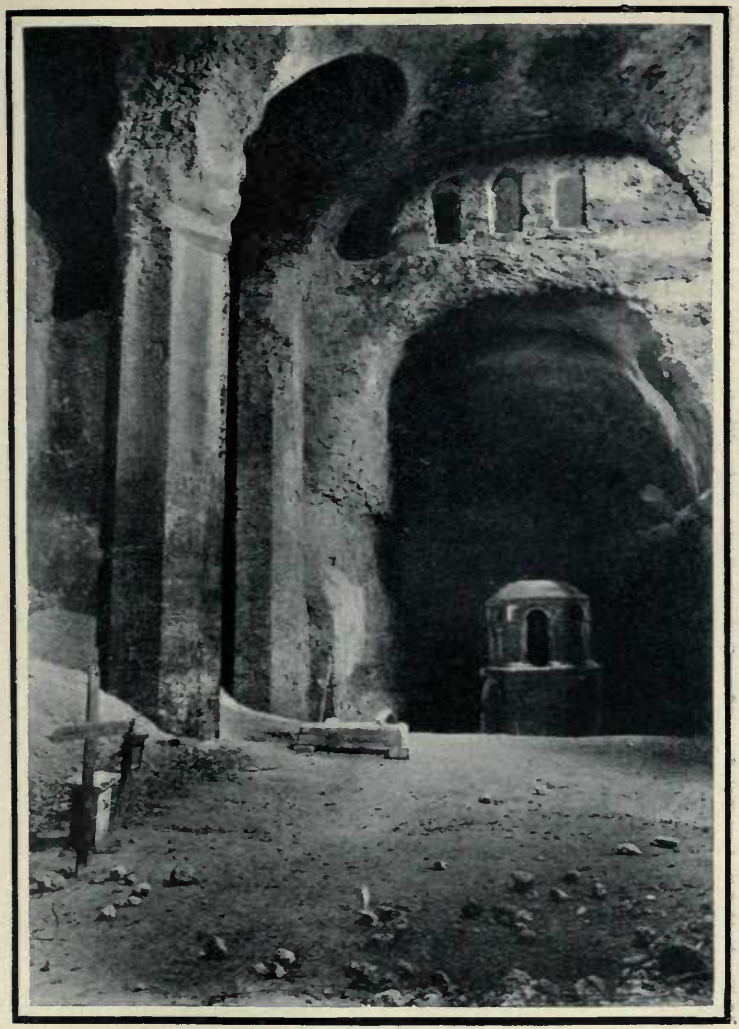
But I will not describe this, one of the most remarkable sites in Europe, as I have done so already in my "Deserts of Southern France," and as of late years it has been visited by a good many English tourists, and the French railway stations exhibit highly coloured views of it, turning Rocamadour into a national show place.

At Lirac, in Gard, is La Sainte Baume, a small church or chapel, excavated out of the rock, 60 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 30 feet high. It is lighted by an aperture in the vault. Three other caves behind the choir are almost as large.

At Mimet, in Bouches-du-Rhône, is the church of Our Lady of the Angels, hewn out of limestone rock, with stalactites depending from the roof.

At Peyre, near Millau, in Tarn, is the church of S. Christophe, scooped out of the living rock, with above it an old crenellated bell tower.

[1] *Analecta Bollandiana*, T. xxviii., pp. 57 *et seq.*



SUBTERRANEAN CHURCH, AUBETERRE

Looking east. In the choir is the mausoleum. The floor of the church is raised four feet by it having been made the parish cemetery. The process of degradation of the pillars is noticeable at their heads.

At Caudon, on the Dordogne, now in the parish of Domme, the old parish church is monolithic, entirely excavated in the rock, but with a structural bell-cot above it. As already mentioned, Caudon was a parish, but as owing to the devastations of the Companies, all the inhabitants had deserted it and fled to Spain, it was annexed to Domme. What is curious is that before it had been carved out of the limestone as a church there had been cave-dwellers in or about it, that have left their traces in the sides of the church. The Marquis de Maleville, who has his château near, has put the church in thorough repair, and it is still occasionally used.

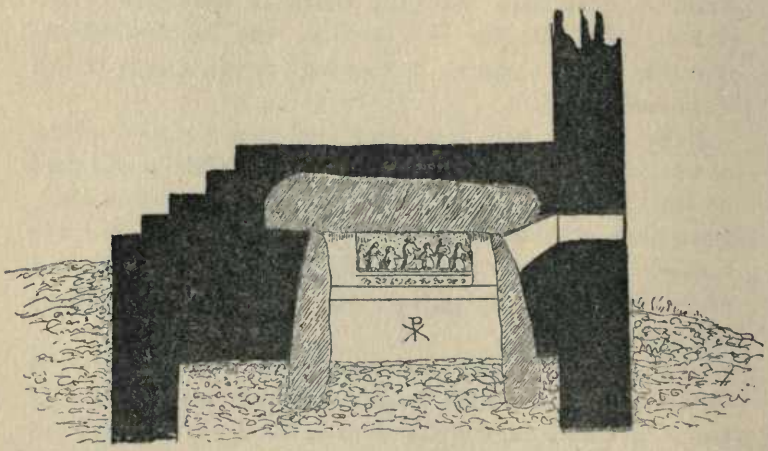
Natural caves have been employed as churches or places of worship. Thus the Grotte des Fées, near Nimes, was used by the Calvinists for their religious assemblies before 1567, when they obtained the mastery of the town, sacked the bishop's palace, and filled up the well with the Catholics, whom they precipitated into it, some dead and others half alive.

The Grotte de Jouclas, near Rocamadour, served the villagers of La Cave till the parish church was rebuilt. At Gurat, in Charente, the church of S. George is hollowed out of the rock ; it dates from the tenth century, it is believed, and preceded the present parish church, which was erected in the eleventh century, and is Romanesque. In the valley of the Borrèze, near Souillac (Lot), is a cave in which bones of the *ursus spelæus* have been found. It is used as a chapel to Notre Dame de Ste. Esperance.

At Lanmeur, in Brittany, is the very early crypt of S. Melor, a Breton prince put to death about the year 544. The legend concerning him is rich in mythical particulars. His uncle, so as to incapacitate him from attaining the crown of Léon, cut off his right hand and left foot. The boy was then provided with a silver hand and a brazen foot. One day he was seen to use his silver hand in plucking filberts

off a tree, whereupon his uncle had him murdered. The crypt is the most ancient monument of Christian architecture in Brittany. It measures 25 feet by 15 feet 6 inches, and is divided into a nave and side aisles by two ranges of columns hardly 4 feet high, sustaining depressed arches not rising above 3 feet 6 inches, and decorated with rudely sculptured trailing branches.

A still more curious subterranean chapel is near Plouaret,

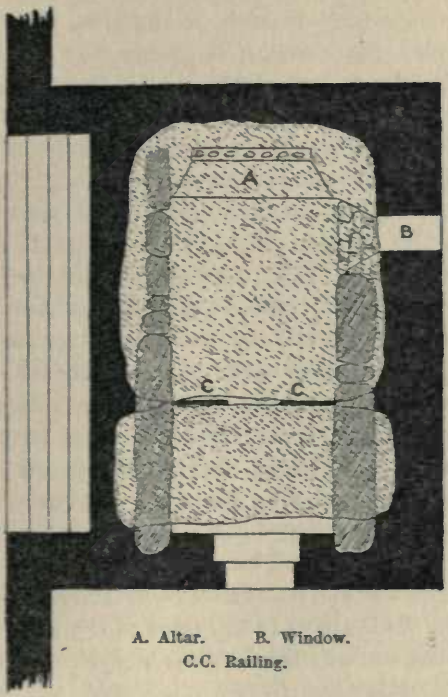


Section of the Dolmen Chapel of the Seven Sleepers near Plouaret.

in Côtes-du-Nord. It is, in fact, a prehistoric dolmen under a tumulus, on top of which a chapel was erected in 1702–4. The descent into the crypt is by a flight of steps. The primitive monument consisted of two huge capstones of granite supported by four or five vertically planted uprights, but one, if not two of the latter have been removed. At the east end is an altar to the Seven Sleepers, and the comical dolls representing them stand in a niche above the altar.

In the north-west of Spain, at Cangas-de-Ones, near Oviedo, is a little church of probably the tenth or eleventh century, built on top of a cairn that covers a dolmen. This

latter consists of a circular chamber into which leads a gallery composed of fifteen upright slabs, covered by four others. The dolmen served as a crypt to the church, and from it have been recovered objects in stone and copper of a prehistoric period. A writer in the seventeenth century



A. Altar. B. Window.
C.C. Railing.

Plan of the Dolmen Chapel near Plouaret.

says that in his time devotees regarded the dolmen as the tomb of a saint, and scrabbled up the soil, and carried it away as a remedy against sundry maladies.[1]

The Bretons have a ballad, *Gwerz*, concerning the former monument. It is a miraculous structure dating from the Creation of the World: "Who will doubt that it was

[1] *Revue mensuelle de l'école d'Anthropologie*, Paris, 1897.

built by the hand of the Almighty? You ask me when and how it was constructed. I reply that I believe that when the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all were created, then was this also made."

Although the dolmen is no longer underground, I must refer to that of Confolens near S. Germain-sur-Vienne, because it was originally under a tumulus. It is a dolmen, of which only the cover, a huge mass of granite remains intact, in an island of the Vienne. Underneath the slab are sculptured a stone axe with handle, and one without, also a cross. The capstone rests on four pillars of the twelfth century. Mr. Ferguson erroneously claimed the dolmen as evidence that rude stone monuments continued to be erected till late in the Middle Ages. But, in fact, the pillars are not of equal length, their capitals are not in line, nor are their bases. What is obvious is that the rude stone supports were removed one by one, and the Gothic pillars inserted in their place were cut exactly to the length required. Thus altered, the dolmen served as a baldachin or canopy over the stone Christian altar that is still in place beneath it. About this monument a chapel had been erected with apse to the east, measuring 36 feet by 15 feet. This has been destroyed, but the foundations remained till recently. The cross on the capstone was cut when the prehistoric monument was converted to use by Christians. To descend to the floor of the chapel a flight of steps had been constructed. The chapel was dedicated to S. Mary Magdalen.

In Egypt, in the Levant, cave-churches are common. The chapel of Agios Niketos, in Crete, is now merely a smoke begrimed grotto beneath a huge mass of rock on the mountain side. The roof is elaborately ornamented with paintings representing incidents in the Gospel story, and the legend of S. Nicolas. Though it is no longer employed as a church, an event that is said to have happened some centuries ago invests it with special regard by the

natives. The church was crowded with worshippers on the eve of the feast of the patron, when the fires which the villagers who had assembled there had lighted near the entrance, where they were bivouacking for the night, attracted the attention of a Barbary corsair, then cruising off the island, and guided him to the spot unobserved. Suddenly and unexpectedly he and his crew, having stolen up the hill, burst upon the crowd of frightened Cretans. The Corsairs thereupon built up the entrance, and waited for day, the better to secure their captives for embarkation. But happily there was another exit from the cavern behind the altar, and by this the whole congregation escaped into another cave, and thence by a passage to a further opening, through which they stole out unobserved by the pirates.

The rock-hewn church of Dayn Aboo Hannes, "the convent of Father John," in Egypt, near Antinoe, has its walls painted with subjects from the New Testament; the church is thought to date back to the time of Constantine.

The passion for associating grottoes with sacred themes is shown in the location of the site of the Nativity at Bethlehem. There is nothing in the Gospel to lead us to suppose that the event took place in a cave, though it is not improbable that it did so. The scene of the Annunciation was also a rock-hewn cave, now occupied by a half-underground church, out of which flows the Virgin's Fountain.

In Gethsemane, "the chapel of the Tomb of the Virgin, over the traditional spot where the Mother of our Lord was buried by the Apostles, is mostly underground. Three flights of steps lead down to the space in front of it, so that nothing is seen above ground but the porch. But even after you have gone down the three flights of steps you are only at the entrance to the church, amidst marble pillars, flying buttresses, and pointed arches. Forty-seven additional marble steps, descending in a broad flight nineteen feet wide, lead down a further depth of thirty-five feet, and here you are surrounded by monkish sites and sacred

CHAPTER VIII

ROCK HERMITAGES

THERE is an account in the *Times*' Correspondent's record of Colonel Younghusband's expedition to Lhasa that when read haunts the imagination. It is the description made by Mr. Landon of a Buddhist monastery, Nyen-de-kyl-Buk, where the inmates enter as little children and grow up with the prospect of being literally immured in a cave from which the light of day is excluded as well as the society of their fellow-men, there to spend the rest of their life till they rot. Horace may say:

> Jubeas miserum esse, libenter
> Quatenus id facit;

but few Christians can feel this towards another human being, though of another race, religion, and under another clime.

"These men," said the abbot to Mr. Landon, "live here in the mountain of their own free will; a few of them are allowed a little light whereby reading is possible, but these are the weaker brethren; the others live in darkness in a square cell partly hewn out of the sharp slope of the rock, partly built up, with the window just within reach of the upraised hand. There are three periods of immurement. The first is endured for six months, the second, upon which a monk may enter at any time he pleases, or not at all, is for three years and ninety-three days; the third and last period is for life. Only this morning," said the abbot, "a hermit died after having lived in darkness for twenty-five

years." Mr. Landon goes on to say: "Voluntary this self-immolation is said to be, and perhaps technically speaking it is possible for the pluckier souls to refuse to go on with this hideous and useless form of self-sacrifice, but the grip of the Lamas is omnipotent, and practically none refuse."

He describes a visit to the cell of one of those thus immured: "The abbot led us into a small courtyard which had blank walls all round it, over which a peach-tree reared its transparent pink and white against the sky. Almost on a level with the ground there was an opening closed with a flat stone from behind. In front of this window was a ledge eighteen inches in width with two basins beside it, and one at each end. The abbot was attended by an acolyte, who, by his master's orders, tapped three times sharply on the stone slab. We stood in the little courtyard in the sun and watched that wicket with cold apprehension. I think, on the whole, it was the most uncanny thing I saw in all Tibet. What on earth was going to appear when that stone slab, which even then was beginning weakly to quiver, was pushed aside, the wildest conjecture could not suggest. After half-a-minute's pause the stone moved, or tried to move, but it came to rest again. Then, very slowly and uncertainly it was pushed back, and a black chasm was revealed. There was a pause of thirty seconds, during which imagination ran riot, but I do not think that any other thing could have been so intensely pathetic as that which we actually saw. A hand, muffled in a tightly wound piece of dirty cloth, for all the world like the stump of an arm, was painfully thrust up, and very weakly it felt along the slab. After a fruitless fumbling the hand slowly quivered back again into the darkness. A few moments later there was again one ineffectual effort, and then the stone slab moved noiselessly again across the opening. Once a day water and an unleavened cake of flour is placed for the prisoner upon that

slab, the signal is given, and he may take it in. His diversion is over for the day, and in the darkness of his cell, where night and day, noon, sunset, and the dawn are all alike, the poor soul has thought that another day of his long penance was over."

Here is another account from the pen of Sven Hedin.

He visited the monastery of Sumde-pu-pe, where was a hermitage consisting of a single room five paces each way, built over a spring that bubbles up in the centre. Inside the hermit had been walled up with only a tiny tunnel communicating with the outside world. Once inside, he was never again to see the light of day nor hear a human voice. The man Sven Hedin saw had been immured for sixty-nine years, and wished to see the sun again.

"He was all bent up as small as a child, and his body was nothing but a light-grey parchment-like skin and bones. His eyes had lost their colour, and were quite bright and blind. Of the monks who sixty-nine years before had conducted him to the cell not one survived. . . . And he had scarcely been carried out into the sunlight when he too, gave up the ghost."[1]

S. Theresa once said that she had a vision of Hell. The torture did not consist of flames, but in being planted opposite a blank wall, on which to gaze through all eternity. The hermit in a Buddhist cell must have undergone this torture till all intelligence, all consciousness, save desire for food, was dead within him.

There have been horrible instances of voluntary immurement in Christian Europe, and above all in the Christian East; but not quite—though very nearly—as bad as this. Moreover, not one line, not a single word in the Scriptures inculcates such self-annihilation. Christ set the example of retirement from the world into the wilderness for forty days, to a mountain apart for one night, to teach men

[1] "Trans-Himalaya: Discoveries and Adventures in Tibet," Lond. 1910.

occasionally and for a limited period, to withdraw from the swirl of business and the clatter of tongues. And S. Paul retired from the society of men after his conversion to gather his thoughts together, and prepare for his great missionary work. But that was something altogether different from ascetic abnegation of life and flight from its responsibilities.

The peopling of the solitudes of Syria and Egypt by solitaries was due, not to flight from persecution, but to revulsion from the luxury of the great cities, and very largely as an escape from compulsory military service. It was not a new thing. Judaism had been impregnated with Buddhism, or at all events with Brahminism, and with ideas of asceticism. The Essenes and Therapeutæ lived, the first in the time of the Maccabees upon the shores of the Dead Sea, and the last two centuries later, in Egypt. Both inhabited cells in the desert, preserving celibacy, renouncing property, pleasure, and delicate food, and consecrating their time to the study of the Scriptures, and to prayer. And yet celibacy was in violation of the principles of Judaism, which required every man to marry, in the hopes of becoming a progenitor of the Messiah. Further, they rejected the bloody sacrifices of the law, and would have nothing to do with the temple at Jerusalem. We can see by Philo's "On the Contemplative Life" how completely Alexandrian Judaism had sucked in Buddhist doctrine, and how Therapeutic asceticism formed the bridge from Buddhism to Christian monachism. In the same places where Essenes and Therapeutæ had been, there later we find Christian solitaries. "We can have no doubt," says Ferdinand Delaunay, "that the Therapeutic Convents which perhaps gave the first signal for conversion to the new faith, served also as the cradle for Christian monachism. History shows us, hardly a century later, this flourishing in the same localities on the borders of the lake Mareotis,

and on the heights of Nitréa. And we cannot doubt but that Christian solitaries continued at Alexandria the work of their Jewish predecessors, and endeavoured to make their oracles serve for the propagation of the Gospel."

The language in which Philo describes the Therapeutæ might be applied to the Christian monks of Egypt. I must condense his rambling account. The Therapeutæ abandon their property, their children, their wives, parents, and friends and homes, to seek out fresh habitations outside the city walls, in solitary places and in deserts. They pray twice in the day, at morning and evening, and the interval is wholly devoted to meditation on the Scriptures and elucidating the allegories therein. They likewise compose psalms and hymns to God, "and during six days each, retiring into solitude, philosophises, never going outside the threshold of the outer court, and indeed never looking out. But on the seventh day they all assemble, and sit down in order, and the eldest, who has the most profound learning, speaks with steadfast voice explaining the meaning of the laws."

They wore but one garment, a shaggy hide for winter, and a thin mantle for summer. Their food was herbs and bread, and their drink water. Philo concludes his account thus: "This then is what I have to say of those who are called Therapeutæ who have devoted themselves to the contemplation of nature, and who have lived in it, and in the soul alone, being citizens of heaven and of the world, and very acceptable to the Father and Creator of the universe because of their virtue; it has procured them His love as their most appropriate reward, which far surpasses all the gifts of fortune, and conducts them to the very summit and perfection of happiness."

It was not among the Jews alone that the solitary life was cultivated. In the Serapium of Thebes were also

[1] Delaunay (F.), *Moines et Sibylles*, Paris, 1874, p. 316.

heathen monks leading a very similar life. That Persian Manichæism had infected Jews and heathen as well there can exist little doubt.[1]

In 177, in Lyons, when S. Pothinus and others were arrested, thrown into prison, tortured and killed for the Faith, there was one of the martyrs who caused offence to the rest because "he had long been used to a very austere life, and to live entirely on bread and water. He seemed resolved to continue this practice during his confinement, but Attalus (another martyr), after his first combat in the theatre, understood by revelation that Alcibiades gave occasion of offence to others by seeming to favour the new sect of the Montanists (a Christian phase of Manichæism), who endeavoured to recommend themselves by their extraordinary austerities. Alcibiades listened to the admonition, and from that time ate of everything with thanksgiving to God."[2]

But, although Buddhism affected the lives of certain Christians, it in no way touched their faith—that life was the result of contact with Manichæism, which taught that all matter was evil, and that the flesh must be subdued, as essentially ungodly. The Buddhist religion in its ethics is the absolute reverse of the Christian. The Buddhist prays and tortures, and stupefies himself for purely selfish reasons, so as to escape reincarnation in the form of a bug, a louse, or a worm, by the destruction within himself of all human passions and inclinations. His self-torture is undertaken for the object of absorption into Nirvana, only to be reached by reducing the mind and heart to absolute indifference to every animal desire, and thus to escape the eternal revolution of metempsychosis. "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself," is a maxim incom-

[1] Philo gives an account of the sacred banquets of the Therapeutæ that strongly reminds us of the Agapæ of the Early Christians.

[2] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. i.

prehensible to a Buddhist. As Mr. Landon says: "The spiritual brigandage of the Lamas finds its counterpart in many other creeds, but it would be unjust not to record in the strongest terms the great radical difference that exists between Lamaism at its best and Christianity at its worst. There has never been absent from the lowest profession of our faith a full recognition of the half-divine character of self-sacrifice for another. Of this the Tibetians know nothing. The exact performance of their duties, the daily practice of conventional offices, and continual obedience to their Lamaic superiors is for them a means of escape from personal damnation in a form which is more terrible perhaps than any monk-conjured Inferno. For others they do not profess to have even a passing thought. Now this is a distinction which goes to the very root of the matter. The fact is rarely stated in so many words, but it is the truth that Christianity is daily judged by one standard, and by one standard only—its altruism, and this complete absence of carefulness for others, this insistent and fierce desire to save one's own soul, regardless of a brother's, is in itself something that makes foreign to one the best that Lamaism can offer."

One day a gnat stung S. Macarius, and he killed it. To punish himself for this, he went to the marshes of Scete, and stayed there six months. When he returned to his brethren he was so disfigured by the bites of the insects that they recognised him only by the tone of his voice. A Brahmin would have been filled with remorse lest he had killed a reincarnation of his grandmother, but the Egyptian ascetic only because he had given way to momentary irritation.

One has but to read the sayings of the Fathers of the Desert to see that no vein of Brahminism or Buddhism had tinctured their faith, however deeply it may have coloured their practice. When plague raged in Alexandria, they were ready to quit their cells and hasten into the cities to

minister to the sick and dying; when the faith, as they understood it, was menaced, to champion the truth.

That the Egyptian hermits, flying from association with the world, should betake themselves to caves, is hardly to be wondered at. In that land the rocks are pitted with artificial grottoes, which were the tombs of the ancient Egyptians, and were commodious and to be had without asking leave of any one.

Twice was Athanasius obliged to fly from the fury of the Arians, and to take refuge among the solitaries in their caves. Once he was constrained to remain in concealment in his father's tomb, also a cavern. When he was banished to Trèves, tradition says that he would not occupy a house, but sought out a grotto in a hill beyond the Moselle, and made his abode therein.

The filiation between the Syrian and Egyptian solitaries with the hermits of Buddhism may be made out with some plausibility. In the East sanctity and asceticism are inseperable. The smug missionary who cannot preach the Gospel apart from a wife, mosquito curtains and a cottage piano, and who travels from one station to another in a palanquin borne by sweating natives, does not impress the imagination of an Oriental, and has small chance of making converts. It was possibly much the same with the barbarians who overwhelmed the Roman Empire. To strike their imagination and win them to the Cross, it may beithat asceticism was a necessary phase of mission work. "The Spirit breatheth where He wills, and thou canst not tell whence He cometh or whither He goeth," is the Vulgate rendering of S. John iii. 8. But if it was at one time a necessary phase, it ceased to be so when the effect required was produced; and from the close of mediæval times the hermit was an anachronism. The life of S. Antony by Athanasius, and the *Historia Lausiaca* or "Lives of the Fathers of the Desert," by Palladius (died *c.* 430), were published in the West, and inflamed minds

with the desire to emulate the ascetics of Syria and Egypt; and speedily there were zealots who sought out retreats in the dens of the earth, in which to serve God in simplicity.

Some anchorites[1] are commemorated in both the Greek Menæa and the Roman Martyrology more worthy to be esteemed Buddhists than Christian saints. Theodoret, who wrote A.D. 440, describes the lives of two women of Berœa, whom he had himself seen. They lived in a roofless hovel with the door walled up and plastered over with clay, and with a narrow slit left for a window, through which they received food. They spoke to those who visited them but once in the year, at Pentecost; not content with the squalor and solitude of their hut, they loaded themselves with masses of iron which bent them double. Theodoret was wont to peer in through the chink at the revolting sight of the ghastly women, a mass of filth, crushed double with great rings and chains of iron. Thus they spent forty-two years, and then a yearning came on them to go forth and visit Jerusalem. The little door was accordingly broken open, and they crawled out, visited the Holy City, and crawled back again.

Another visited by Theodoret was Baradatus, who built himself a cabin on the top of a rock, so small that he was unable to stand upright in it, and was obliged to move therein bent nearly double. The joints of the stones were, moreover, so open that it resembled a cage and exposed him to the sun and rain. Theodosius, patriarch of Antioch, as a sensible man, ordered him to leave it. Then Baradatus encased himself in leather so that only his nose and mouth were visible. Nowhere was the imitation carried to such wild extravagance as in Ireland. S. Findchua is described as living like an Indian fakir. In his cell he suspended himself for seven years on iron sickles under his arm-pits, and only

[1] Properly an *anchorite* is a recluse, walled into his cell; a *monk* is a solitary; and an *eremite* or *hermit* is a dweller in the desert.

descended from them to go forth and howl curses on the enemies of the King of Leinster.

In England also there was extravagance. S. Wulfric, who died in 1154, encased himself in a coat of chain-mail worn next his skin even in winter, and occupied a cell at Hazelbury in Somerset. S. Edmund of Canterbury (died 1242) wore a shirt of twisted horsehair with knots in it, and bound a cart rope round his waist so that he could scarce bend his body. In Advent and Lent he wore a shirt of sheet-lead. Thomas à Becket, when slain, was found by the monks of Canterbury to be wearing a hair shirt and hair-cloth drawers, and their admiration became enthusiastic when they further discovered that this hair-cloth was "boiling over" with lice. That this species of sanctity is still highly approved and commended to the imitation of the faithful we may suppose from the fact that Pius IX. in 1850 beatified the Blessed Marianna, because she was wont to sleep in a coffin or on a cross, and on Fridays hung herself for two hours on a cross attached to it by her hair and by ropes. On broiling hot days she denied herself a drop of water to quench an almost intolerable thirst. Verily Manichæism has eaten like a canker into the heart of the Latin Church.

But the early anchorites of Europe were not usually guilty of such extravagance. They were earnest men who sought by self-conquest to place themselves in a position in which they could act as missionaries. It was their means of preparing for the work of an evangelist. In most cases the apostle of a district sunk in paganism had no choice, he must take up his abode in a cave or in a hovel made of branches. In the Gallo-Roman cities the Christian bishops had gradually taken into their hands the functions of the civil governors. They were men of family and opulence, and lived in palaces crowded with slaves. They did nothing whatever towards the conversion of the country folk, the pagani. This was the achievement of the hermits. Till the peasants

had been Christianised they would not invite the preacher of strange doctrines under their roofs, they looked on him with dislike or mistrust as interfering with their cherished superstitions and ancestral customs. He could not force his society on reluctant hosts.

S. Beatus, a British or Irish missionary, settled into a cave above the lake of Thun, dreaded by the natives as the abode of a dragon. He succeeded in his work, and died there at the advanced age of ninety. In 1556 the Protestant Government of Berne built up the mouth of the grotto and set soldiers to repel the pilgrims who came there. Now a monster hotel occupies the site, and those who go there for winter sport or as summer tourists know nothing or care less about the abode of the Apostle whence streamed the light of the Gospel throughout the land.

Below the terrace that surrounds the height on which Angoulême is built is the cave of S. Cybard (Eparchius died 581). An iron gate prevents access to it, and the path down to it is strewn with broken bottles and sardine tins. No one now visits it. But within, where are an altar and the mutilated statue of the saint, lived the hermit who in the sixth century did more than any other man to bring the people of the Angoumois out of darkness into light. But, as already said, when the work of evangelisation was done, then the profession of the hermit was no longer required, and such anchorites as lingered on in Europe through the Middle Ages to our own day were but degenerate representatives of the ancient evangelical solitaries.

A few years ago hermits abounded in Languedoc. They took charge of remote chapels on mountain tops, or in caves and ravines. They were always habited as Franciscan friars, but they were by no means a reputable order of men, and the French prefêts in conjunction with the bishops have suppressed them.

They were always to be seen on a market day in the

nearest town, not infrequently in the taverns, and in the evening festooning along the roads on their way back to their hermitages, trolling out convivial songs spiced with snatches of ecclesiastical chants. "Mon Dieu," says Ferdinand Fabre,[1] "I know well enough that the Free Brothers of S. Francis, as they loved to entitle themselves, had allowed themselves a good deal of freedom, more than was decorous. But as these monastically-habited gentry in no way scandalised the population of the South, who never confounded the occupants of the hermitages with the curés of the parishes, why sweep away these fantastic figures who, without any religious character, recruited from the farms, never educated in seminaries, peasants at bottom, in no way priests, capable, when required, to give a helping hand with the pruning knife in the vineyard, or with the pole among the olives, or the sickle among the corn. Alas! they had their weaknesses, and these weaknesses worked their ruin." The salt had lost its savour, wherewith could it be seasoned?

It was not in Southern France alone that the part of the hermit was played out. An amusing incident in the confession of Fetzer, head of a gang of robbers who infested the Rhine at the end of the eighteenth century, will go some way to show this. The gang had resolved on "burgling" a hermit near Lobberich. Had he been an eremite of the old sort, the last place in which robbers would have expected to find plunder would be his cell. But in the eighteenth century it was otherwise, and this particular hermit kept a grocer's shop, and sold coffee, sugar, and nutmegs. The rogues approached the cell at night, and as a precaution one of them climbed and cut the rope of the bell wherewith the hermit announced to the neighbourhood that he was about to say his prayers. Then they broke open his door. In Fetzer's own words, "The hermit was

[1] Barnabé, Paris, 1899.

not at home, but as we learned, had gone a journey in connection with his grocery business. In the hermitage, however, we found several men placed there to keep guard over his goods. We soon settled them, beat them with our cudgels and cast them prostrate on the floor. Then we burst open all the chests and cupboards, but found little money. There was, however, plenty of tea and sugar. As we were about to leave, a fearful storm came on, and without more ado we returned into the hermitage to remain there till it was overpast. In order to dissipate the tedium, we ransacked the place for food, and found an excellent ham and wine in abundance. I assumed the place of host. Serve the meal! Bring more! I ordered, and we revelled and shouted and made as great a din as we liked. In the second room the hermit had a small organ. I seated myself at it, and to make the row more riotous I played as well as I was able. The laughter and the racket did not cease till morning broke. Then I dressed myself up in the hermit's cowl and habit, and so went off with my comrades."[1]

I remember visiting a hermit in 1868 who lived on a ledge in the cliff above S. Maurice in the Vallais, where was a cave that had been occupied by the repentant Burgundian King Sigismund. He cultivated there a little garden, and I have still by me a dried bouquet of larkspur that he presented to my wife on our leaving after a pleasant chat. A pilgrimage to the cave was due on the morrow, and he had just returned from the town whither he had descended to borrow mugs out of which the devotees might drink of the holy spring that issued from the cave.

The Wild Kirchlein, in Appenzell, is now visited rather by tourists than by pilgrims. A huge limestone precipice rises above the Bodmenalp, that is a paradise of wild flowers. A hundred and seventy feet up the cliff gapes a cavern, and at its mouth is a tiny chapel. It is reached by what is now

[1] *Der neue Pitaval*, Leipzig, xviii. p. 182.

a safe pathway and over a bridge cast across a chasm. But formerly the ascent could not be made without danger. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, some Alpine shepherds, who had reached the cave, reported that they had seen in it the remains of an altar. This aroused interest, and in the summer of 1621 a Capuchin named Tanner ascended to the cave, blessed, and consecrated it as a place of pilgrimage. He said mass there and preached. He was shortly afterwards called away to Freiburg, and for thirty years the cave was disregarded and neglected. But at the end of that time Tanner returned to Appenzell, and interested the parish priest Ulmann in it. When war broke out between Schwyz and Zurich in 1656, Ulmann concealed the treasures of the church in the cave. This drew attention to it, and shortly after an altar was furnished with what was needful, and on the Feast of S. Michael in 1657 mass was again said there. Various matters—loss of friends, and contests with the secular authorities—wearied Ulmann, and he resolved on retiring as a hermit to the cave in the cliff, taking with him, however, an attendant. The swallows left, the winter storms came on, yet he braved the wind and cold, and remained a tenant of the cave for two winters and as many summers; but then, by order of the Bishop, he left to act as chaplain to a convent in Lindau. There he spent nine years, till falling ill, he felt a craving for the purer air of his Appenzell home, and obtained leave to return and again re-tenant the beloved cave. In his last will he bequeathed the Upper Bodmen Alp that was his ancestral inheritance for the maintenance of the Holy Grotto. After his death the little chapel with its tower was built, and a Capuchin friar occupied the hermitage. In 1853, the last hermit there, Brother Antony Fassler, fell down the precipice whilst gathering herbs. Since then there has been no such picturesque object to lead the visitor through the recesses of the cavern and show the stalactites; that office

is now performed by the innkeeper of the hotel on the Alp.

The cave of S. Verena is one of the favourite pilgrim resorts in Switzerland. It is near Soleure, and lies in a valley of a spur of the Jura. According to the received tradition she ran after the Theban legion—in modern parlance was a camp-follower, but deserted the soldiers here, and took up her abode in this grotto. There is no mention of this hermitage earlier than 1426, and the legend has grown up since. That the cave was much more ancient, and was invested with holy awe, is no doubt true. In fact, there is reason to believe that Verena was a German goddess.[1] Her symbol is a comb, and in the wall are cut these words:

> Pectore dum Christo, dum pectine servit egenis,
> Non latuit quondam sancta Verena cavo;

that is to say, serving Christ and combing the heads of the poor, the holy Verena lived unconcealed in this grotto.

The way to the chapel is through woods, the valley closing in till bold rocks are reached. In a niche is a statue of the Magdalen, with the inscription, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." A few steps further is a representation of the Garden of Gethsemane. From this a long and steep stair leads up to the chapel, cut deep in the rock, with an altar in it. Behind this is the Holy Sepulchre carved in the stone, in the seventeenth century by the hermit Arsenius. On the other side of the chapel a long stone stair leads again into the open air. Under this stair is a hole in the rock into which the hand can be thrust. According to a "pious belief" the Saint one day was much tormented with the remembrance of the military, and longed to resume her pursuit of them, and she gripped the rock, which yielded like wax to her fingers.

[1] Rocholz, *Dei Gaugöttinnen*, Leipzig, 1870.

Another Swiss rock hermitage is that of the Magdalen near Freiburg, in the cliff on the right bank of the Saane. At the close of the seventeenth century it was enlarged by a hermit, John Baptist Duprés, and his comrade John Licht. They worked at it for twenty years. Duprés dug a number of cells out of the sandstone, a kitchen with a chimney, a dining-room, a church, and a stable. The church measures 63 feet long, 30 feet wide, and is 22 feet high. He built a tower to his church, and gave his chimney the height of 90 feet so as to ensure that his fire should not smoke. The hermit Duprés was drowned in 1708 as he was rowing over the river a party of scholars who had come to visit him. No hermit lives there now. His residence is occupied by a peasant with his family.

On the Nahe, that flows into the Rhine, is the little town of Oberstein, whose inhabitants are nearly all employed in cutting and polishing agates, sardonyxes, and various other stones prized by ladies. Precipitous cliffs arise above the town, and contract the space on which houses could be raised, and these rocks are crowned by two ruined castles, the Older and the Newer Oberstein. About half-way up the face of the cliff, 260 feet above the river, can be seen a tiny church, to which ascent is made by flights of steps. The old castle rises above this, and stands 360 feet above the river, but its remains are reduced to a fragment of a tower. Separated from it by a notch in the rocks is the new castle that was destroyed by fire about thirty-five years ago.

In the old castle lived in the eleventh century two brothers, Wyrich and Emich von Oberstein. Both fell in love with the daughter of the knight of Lichtenberg, but neither confessed his passion to the other. At last, one day Emich returned to the castle to announce to his brother that he had been accepted by the fair maid; Wyrich, in an impulse of jealousy, caught his brother by the throat and hurled him down the precipice. His conscience at once

spoke out, and in the agony of his remorse he had resort to a hermit who bade him renounce the world, grave for himself a cell in the face of the melaphyre clay—the hermit did not give to the rock its mineralogical name—and await a token from heaven that he was forgiven. Accordingly Wyrich von Oberstein scrambled up the face of the cliff as high as he could possibly go, and there laboured day after day till he had excavated for himself a grotto in which to live and expiate his crime. And a spring oozed out of the rock in his cave, and was accepted by him as the promised token of pardon. After a while he obtained that a little church should be consecrated which he had constructed at the mouth of his cave. On the day that the bishop came to dedicate the structure he was found dead.

What is supposed to be his figure, that of a knight in armour, is in the chapel. This latter was rebuilt in 1482, and the monument came from the older structure. The chapel has been handed over to the Calvinists for their religious services, which is the humour of it, as Nym would have said.

Beside the highroad (*route nationale*) from Brive to Cahors, but a very little way out of the town, is a mass of red Permian sandstone perforated with caves. In 1226 S. Anthony of Padua was at Brive, and resided for a while in one of them. Since then it has been held sacred and occupied by Franciscans, who erected a convent above it; in so doing they cut into and mutilated some very ancient artificial workings in the sandstone for the contrivance of rock habitations. The cave, however, was neglected when the Franciscans were expelled at the Revolution, but they returned in 1875 and rebuilt or greatly enlarged their convent, only to be expelled again in 1906. The grottoes, now converted into chapels to the number of four, are in a line under the superstructures, that in the middle the actual hermitage. This, moreover, has been cut out of the

rock artificially, at a higher level than the others, that are natural and are untenable, owing to the incessant drip of water from the roofs. The first cave is dedicated to S. Francis of Assisi, but it is a rock shelter rather than a cave. It is natural, but in one corner a small water-basin has been scooped. The second cave is mainly natural, but partly artificial; it is dedicated to Notre Dame Auxiliatrice. The third, reached by steps, is wholly artificial, and before the stairs were built to lead to it, was inaccessible save by a short ladder. It placed the occupant in safety from invasion by wolves or other objectionable visitors. It measures 21 feet by 15 feet. This, which was the habitation of S. Anthony, communicated with the two lower caves, one on each side, by lateral openings.

The fourth cave is that of Des Fontaines, in which are basins of water cut in the rock, receiving the everlasting drip from above.

It is impossible to give one tithe of the hermitages in caves that are to be seen in Europe; but a few words may be devoted to La Sainte Beaume in Var, where, according to tradition, Mary Magdalen spent the end of her days. The tradition is entirely destitute of historical basis, and rests on a misconception. Scott has described the cave with tolerable accuracy in "Anne of Geierstein," though he had not seen it himself.

The cave is in the range of cretaceous limestone that runs east and west to the north-east of Marseilles, and at La Beaume Sainte reaches the height of 3450 feet. The wild flowers, the fine forest, and the white rocks impart great interest to the visit without consideration of historical and legendary association. The botanist will find the globe flower, the anemone, the citisus, the man, the bee, the fly orchids, and the *Orchis militaris* in considerable abundance; also banks of scented violets.

The grotto is at a considerable height above the valley.

According to the legend, as already said, Mary Magdalen spent the close of her life here, and numerous anchorites settled in the caves around. In the fifth century Cassian placed monks in the grotto, but they were driven away by the barbarians, and La Sainte Beaume fell into complete oblivion till the thirteenth century.

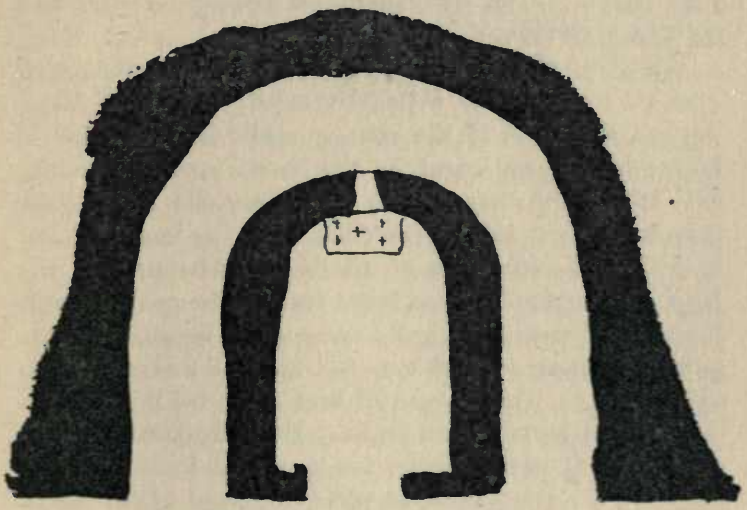
The cave is lofty and spacious, not a little damp, and water drips from the roof. To protect the altar a baldachin has been erected over it. At the extreme end is a raised dais of natural rock, on which the saint is supposed to have made her bed. Another cave is that of the Holy Sepulchre, which was formerly occupied by the monks of S. Cassian. From the Sainte Beaume a path leads upwards to the Saint Pilon, the highest pinnacle of the rock which here rises to a point, out of which grow wild pinks and aromatic shrubs, and where falcons make their nest. According to the legend, Mary Magdalen was elevated by the hands of angels to this point seven times a day, there to say her prayers, which proceeding surely entitles her to a place as the patroness of aviation.

At Sougé, on the Loir, a little below the troglodyte town of Trôo already described, half-way up the cliff is the cave-chapel of S. Amadou. It is 45 feet deep and 15 feet wide. The altar is at the end surmounted by a niche containing a statue of the saint, and to this formerly pilgrimages were made from all the valleys round. But this is a thing of the past, for it is now private property and converted into a cellar. What is peculiar about this chapel is that it is surrounded by a gallery also rock-hewn, and it was customary for the pilgrims to pass round the chapel through this gallery before entering it.

At Villiers, near Vendôme, is the chapel of S. Andrew, that was formerly inhabited by a hermit. It is divided into two chambers. That on the left is the chapel proper, with its altar. Above the other opening is a bas-relief of

the Crucifixion. When levelling the floor of this hermitage a few years ago, so as to convert it into a commodious private dwelling, a number of skeletons were found in graves sunk in the rock.

Montserrat is famous throughout Spain on account of its statue of the Virgin, which is supposed to have been made by S. Luke, and brought to Barcelona in the year 50 by



Plan of the Chapel of S. Amadou.

S. Peter, which, of course, is nonsense. S. Luke never painted, and S. Peter never visited Spain. This extraordinary mountain derives its name from its saw-like appearance, *Mons serratus*. It consists of pudding-stone, "a strange solitary exiled peak, drifted away in the beginning of things from its brethren of the Pyrenees, and stranded in a different geological period." Mr. Bayard Taylor thus describes the summit after a two hours' climb. "Emerging from the thickets we burst suddenly upon one of the wildest and most wonderful pictures I ever beheld. A tremendous wall of rock arose in front, crowned by colossal turrets,

pyramids, clubs, pillars, and ten-pin shaped masses, which were drawn singly, or in groups of incredible distinction, against the deep blue of the sky. At the foot of the rock the buildings of the monastery and the narrow gardens completely filled and almost overhung a horizontal shelf of the mountain, under which it again fell sheer away down, down into misty depths, the bottom of which was hidden from sight. In all the galleries of memory I could find nothing resembling it."[1]

The spires of rock range about 3300 feet high, jumbled together by nature in a sportive mood. Here and there, perched like nests of the solitary eagle, are the ruins of former hermitages, burnt by the French under Suchet in July 1811, when they amused themselves with hunting the hermits like chamois in the cliffs, hung the monks of the monastery, plundered it of all its contents, stripped the Virgin of her jewellery, and burnt the fine library. Hitherto the monks, when periodically dressing the image, had done so with modestly averted eyes, but Suchet's soldiers had no such scruples. This image had been entrusted in the ninth century to a hermit, Jean Garin. Now Riguilda, daughter of the Count of Barcelona, was possessed by a devil, in another word, crazy, and was sent to be cured by the image or the hermit. A temptation similar to that of S. Anthony followed, but with exactly the opposite result. To conceal his crime, Jean Garin cut off Riguilda's head, buried her, and fled. Overtaken by remorse he went to Rome, and confessed his sin to the Pope, who bade him become a beast, never lifting his face towards heaven until the hour when God himself would signify his pardon.

Jean Garin went forth from the Papal presence on his hands and knees, crawled back to Montserrat, and there lived seven years as a wild beast, eating grass and bark, and never looking up to heaven. At the end of this time

[1] Taylor (B.), "Byways of Europe," Lond. 1869, i. p. 23.

his body was entirely covered with hair, and it so fell out that the hunters of the Count snared him as a wild animal, put a chain round his neck, and brought him to Barcelona. Here an infant of five months old, on beholding the strange beast, uttered a cry and exclaimed, "Rise up, Jean Garin, God has pardoned thee." Then, to the amazement of all, the beast arose and spoke in a human tongue. Happily the story is no more true than that the image was made by S. Luke. It is an old Greek story of S. James the Penitent, with the penance of Nebuchadnezzar tacked on to it.

Forbes says: "The traveller should visit the ruined hermitages of Sta. Anna, San Benito, not forgetting La Roca Estrecha, a singular natural fissure; the highest and most interesting of all is the S. Jeronimo. These retreats satisfied the Oriental and Spanish tendency to close a life of action by repose, and atone for past sensualism by mortification. The hermitages were once thirteen in number; each was separate, and with difficulty accessible. The anchorite who once entered one, never left it again. There he lived, like things bound within a cold rock alive, while all was stone around, and there he died, after a living death to the world, in solitude without love. Yet they were never vacant, being sought for as eagerly as apartments in Hampton Court are by retired dowagers. Risco says that there were always a dozen expectants waiting in the convent the happy release of an occupant. To be a hermit, and left to live after his own fashion, exactly suited the reserved, isolated Spaniard, who hates discipline and subjection to a superior."[1]

[1] "Handbook of Spain," Lond. 1845, p. 496. A visit to the image is heavily indulgenced. Pope Paul V. granted remission of all his sins to any one who entered the confraternity of our Lady of Montserrat. Mr. B. Taylor says of the image: "I took no pains to get sight of the miraculous statue. I have already seen both the painting and the sculpture of S. Luke, and think him one of the worst artists that ever existed."

Above Cordova, also in the Sierra, are rock hermitages serving in Andalusia the same purpose that did those of Montserrat in Catalonia. These also never wanted a tenant, for in the Iberian temperament, *inedia et labor*, violent action alternating with repose is inherent.

In Italy, Subiaco must not be left without a notice. It was hither that S. Benedict fled when aged fourteen. He chose a cave as his abode, and none knew what was his hiding-place save a monk, Romanus, who let down to him from the top of the rock the half of the daily loaf allotted to himself, giving him notice of its being ready for him by ringing a little bell. Here, once, troubled by the passions of the flesh, Benedict cast himself into a thicket of thorns, and afterwards planted there two rose-trees which still flourish. This is now converted into a garden, and near by all the monks of Subiaco are buried.

Near La Vernia, a favourite retreat of S. Francis, is a deep cleft in the rocks, and a cave to which he was wont to retire at times. One friar only, Brother Leo, was permitted to visit him, and that once in the day with a little bread and water, and once at night; and when he reached the narrow path at the entrance, he was required to say *Domine labia mea aperies;* when, if an answer came, he might enter and say matins with his master. In a second cave the saint slept. Outside this is the point of rock from which according to the *Fiorette:* "Through all that Lent, a falcon, whose nest was hard by his cell, awakened S. Francis every night a little before the hour of matins by her cry and the flapping of her wings, and would not leave off till he had risen to say the office; and if at any time S. Francis was more sick than ordinary, or weak, or weary, that falcon, like a discreet and charitable Christian, would call him somewhat later than was her wont. And S. Francis took great delight in this clock of his, because the great carefulness of the falcon drove away all slothfulness, and summoned him to prayers;

and moreover, during the daytime, she would often abide familiarly with him."

The Warkworth hermitage in Northumberland was made famous by Bishop Percy's ballad.

In "Rambles in Northumberland and on the Scottish Border," 1835, it is thus described. "The hermitage of Warkworth is situated on the north bank of the Coquet, and about a mile from the castle. Leaving the castle yard and passing round the exterior of the keep, a footpath leads down the declivity on the north side of the river. Entering a boat and rowing a short distance along the river, the visitor is landed at the foot of a pleasant walk which leads directly to the Hermitage. This secluded retreat consists of three small apartments, hollowed out of the freestone cliff which overlooks the river. An ascent of seventeen steps leads to the entrance of the outer and principal apartment, which is about eighteen feet long, its width being seven feet and a half, and its height nearly the same. Above the doorway are the remains of some letters now illegible, but which are supposed when perfect to have expressed, from the Latin version of the Psalms, the words: Fuerint mihi lacrymæ meæ panes die ac nocte. The roof is chiselled in imitation of a groin, formed by two intersecting arches; and at the east end, where the floor is raised two steps, is an altar occupying the whole width of the apartment. In the centre, immediately above the altar, is a niche in which there has probably stood a figure either of Christ or of the Virgin.

"Near the altar, on the south side, there is carved in the wall a monumental figure of a recumbent female. In a niche near the foot of the monument is the figure of a man, conjectured to be that of the first hermit, on his knees, with his head resting on his right hand, and his left placed upon his breast. On the wall, on the same side, is cut a basin for the reception of holy water; and between the principal

figure and the door are two small windows. At the west end is a third small window, in the form of a quatrefoil.

"From this apartment, which appears to have been the hermit's chapel, a doorway opens into the corner one, about five feet wide, and having also an altar at the east end, with a basin for holy water cut in the wall. In the north wall of this inner chamber an arched recess is cut, the base of which is of sufficient length and breadth to admit a middle-sized man reclining. An opening, cut slantwise through the wall dividing the chamber, allows a person lying in this recess to see the monument in the chapel. In the same wall there is rather an elegantly-formed window, which admits the light from the outer apartment. To the north of the inner chamber is a third excavation, much smaller than the other two, which led to an outer gallery to the west, commanding a view of the river. This gallery, which has been much injured by the fall of a part of the cliff, is said to have been arched like a cloister. After returning from these dimly-lighted cells to open day, and passing through a stone archway, a flight of steps cut in the side of the rock leads to the hermit's garden at the top."

S. Robert of Knaresborough, who died 1218, was the son of one John Thorne of York, of which city his brother was mayor. Leland informs us that he forsook "the lands and goodes of his father to whom he was heire as eldest sonne." Leaving his home he came to Knaresborough, where he found a certain knight ensconced in a cave scooped out of the rock by the side of the Nidd, and dignified by the name of S. Giles's Chapel. But the knight had had enough of it, and *instante diabolo* quitted his cave and made it over to Robert Thorne, and "returned like a dog to his vomit," which is a monastic way of putting the fact that he returned to his wife and family.

Robert, however, did not spend an entire year in the cave, for certain *latrunculi* having stolen *hys bred*, *hys chese*,

SCULPTURE IN ROYSTON CAVE

Representing S. Christopher and other Saints, men in armour and ladies.

hys sustenance, he quitted the grotto—doubtless at the approach of winter—and established himself in much more comfortable quarters at Bramham. He was certainly a hermit who boiled his peas, for we are told that he maintained four men-servants; two were occupied in tilling his farm, one attended to his personal wants—was, in fact, his valet—and one went about with him on his begging expeditions.

The cave is 10 feet long, 9 feet wide, and 7 feet high. There is an image of a knight at the entrance, by some supposed to be more modern; it is, however, said that S. Robert did much himself to adorn and enlarge his chapel.

It was in this cave that Eugene Aram and Richard Housman murdered Daniel Clarke on 8th February 1745, for the sake of some jewellery and plate they had induced him to bring to S. Robert's Chapel with him.

It was not till fourteen years after that the body of Clarke was found, and Mrs. Aram declared that her husband and Housman had murdered him; Housman turned King's evidence, and Aram was hung on 16th August 1759.

Roche hermitage in Cornwall occupies a spire of rocks of schorl that shoots 100 feet above the surrounding moor. Built into the rocks is a little chapel, and beneath it is the hermit's cell. This seems to have been occupied continuously down to the Reformation, and various stories are told of the tenants.

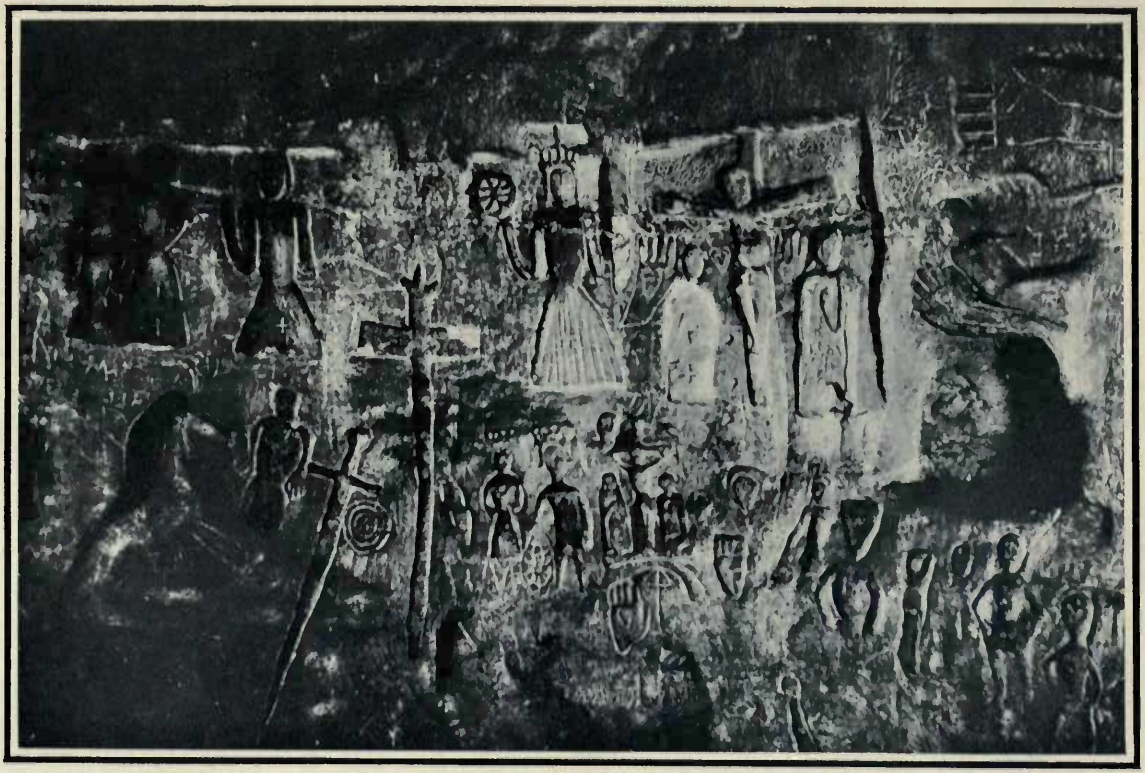
There was once a steward under the Duchy named Tregeagle. He was a peculiarly nefarious agent, and very hard upon the tenants. His spirit is still supposed to roam over the moors, and not to be able to find peace till he has dipped the water out of Dozmare Pool with a nutshell.

Once, pursued by devils, he fled for sanctuary to Roche, and thrust his head through the east window of the chapel,

but, being a broad-shouldered spirit, could force his way in no further. The devils were baffled and withdrew. But Tregeagle's position was not desirable. The wind, the rain, and the hail lashed that portion of his person that remained exposed, and he dared not withdraw his head from sanctuary lest the devils should be on him again. At every cutting blast he howled, and his howls so disturbed the hermit of Roche, that he found it impossible to sleep or to attend to his prayers on windy nights. Unable to liberate Tregeagle himself, he sent for the monks of Bodmin, and they imposed on the wretched steward the task aforementioned, and assured him immunity from pursuit whilst engaged upon it.

"Robin Hood's Stable," in Nottinghamshire, at Pappewick, of which Throsby gives an illustration in his "History of the County," 1797, was in all probability a hermitage. Mr. W. Stevenson writes: "I am convinced, from its nearness to the great old road, its position due south, and its evidences of columns and arches, that it is an old cell or anchorite's cave of equal, if not superior age, to the neighbouring abbey. The interior would make a good picture, as the dampness of the rock is favourable to green vegetation in sportive lines and patches on the warm colours and the shadows of the rock. It is an artist's dream. Time, during the lapse of centuries, has made sad havoc with the entrance. Originally it had a level cutting running into the hill until a face of rock was won in which to make a door and hew an underground apartment.

"The hollow of this cutting has been raised, the banks rounded down, the roof over the door has fallen; the hand of destruction has worked back into the cave, and all evidence of the door and its whereabouts has vanished. The floor is loaded with sand and blocks fallen from the roof. The floor being so buried renders it difficult perfectly to judge of the depth of the apartment." What a habitation



SCULPTURE IN ROYSTON CAVE

S. Catherine, the Crucifixion, the Five Wounds, and sundry enigmatical figures.

for a rheumatic hermit! The "sportive lines and patches" of vegetation suggest sportive tweaks and twinges of the loins.

Two miles from Repton is Anchor Church, where are the remains of a hermitage in a singular rocky bank, rising abruptly above the pastures on the verge of the Trent. "The summit is clothed with overhanging woods, forming only a portion of the high grounds, but the suddenness of the change which the scenery derives from the appearance of precipitous and broken rocks, occurring in the midst of a soft and beautiful region of pastoral luxuriance, is very striking. A curious series of chambers, communicating with each other, has been at some distant period beyond tradition excavated in that portion of the rock which is most naked and precipitous; and from this circumstance the site has been designated Anchor Church, signifying the residence of a hermit. At a distance it bears a very close resemblance to a Gothic ruin; the rude openings formed to admit light into the several cells, and the ruggedly fashioned doorway aiding, at first sight, the appearance of an artificial pile of grey antiquity. The rock is found principally to consist of rough grit-stone, and of a congeries of sand and pebbles. The Trent, which now flows at a short distance, formerly ran close under the rock, as is indicated by a dead pool of water situate near its foot, and communicating with the channel of the river.

"A tall flight of steep steps rudely fashioned of large unshapen blocks of stone, conducted to the entrance of the hermitage, and the dim light within its hoary, moss-grown, sloping walls is admitted through irregularly formed apertures, pierced through the dense body of the rock, and command magnificent views of the subjacent scenery."[1]

In the month of August 1742, when occasion arose for

[1] Bigsby (R.), "Historical and Topographical Description of Repton in the County of Derby," Lond. 1854.

setting a post in a "Mercat House" at Royston in Hertfordshire in order to place a bench on it for the convenience of the market women, the men in digging struck through the eye or central hole of a millstone, laid underground, and on raising this found that it occupied the crown of a cave sixteen feet deep, as appeared by letting down a plumb line. There was a descent into it of about two feet wide, with holes cut in the chalk at equal distances, and succeeding each other like the steps of a ladder. It was accurately circular. They let a boy down, and from his report of its passing into another cavity, a slender man with a lighted candle descended, and he confirmed the report, and added that the second cave was filled with loose earth, which, however, did not quite touch the wall, which he could see to right and left.

The people now conceived the notion that a great treasure was concealed here, and some workmen were employed to enlarge the passage of descent. Then with buckets and a well-kerb, they set to work to clear it, and drew up the earth and rubbish that filled the cave. When they came to the floor of the descending passage they ran a long spit downwards and found that the earth was still loose. The vast concourse of people now became troublesome, and the workmen were obliged to postpone further operations till night.

After much time and labour had been expended, the cave was cleared, but no really scientific examination of it was made till 1852, when Mr. Beldam drew up a report concerning it, which he presented to the Royal Society of Antiquaries. The cave is bell-shaped, and from the floor to the top of the dome measures 25½ feet. The bottom is not quite circular, but nearly so, and in diameter is from 17 feet to 17 feet 6 inches. A broad step surrounds it, 8 inches wide and 3 feet from the floor. About 8 feet above

the floor a cornice runs round the walls cut in a reticulated or diamond pattern two feet wide. Almost all the space between the step and this cornice is occupied with sculpture, crucifixes, saints, martyrs, and subjects not easy to explain. Vestiges of red, blue, and yellow are visible in various places, and the relief of the figures has been assisted by a dark pigment. In various parts of the cave, above and below the cornice, are deep cavities or recesses of various forms and sizes, some of them oblong, and others oven-shaped, of much the same character as those found in the French caves. High up are two dates cut in the chalk, in Arabic numerals, that have been erroneously read 1347 and "Martin 1350 February 18," but these should be respectively 1547 and 1550, as Arabic numerals were not in use in England in the fourteenth century, and the name of Martin and the February are distinctly sixteenth century in character. The figure carving was not done by the same hand throughout.

Apparently the cave was originally a shaft for burial or for rubbish, and a hole in the side and floor that Dr. Stukeley took for a grave was nothing but a continuation downwards of the ancient shaft, as is proved by what has been found in it. But in mediæval times the puticolus was enlarged and converted into a hermitage, and a hermit is known to have occupied it till the eve of the Reformation, for in the Churchwarden's book of the parish of Bassingborne, under the date 1506, is the entry, "*Gyft of* 20*d. recd. off a Hermytt depting at Roiston in ys pysh.*" It is true that this entry does not absolutely fix the residence of the hermit at the cave, but it is hardly probable that there were two hermitages in so small a town.

The cave was probably filled in with earth in 1547 and 1550, when the inscribed dates were affixed. After which its existence was forgotten, and the Mercat House was

erected over it before 1610. The carvings have been supposed to belong to the period of Henry II. and Richard Cœur-de-Lion, but it is not possible to put them earlier than the beginning of the sixteenth century, at all events such as represent the Crucifixion. It is possible, however, that some of the kingly or knightly figures may be somewhat earlier.

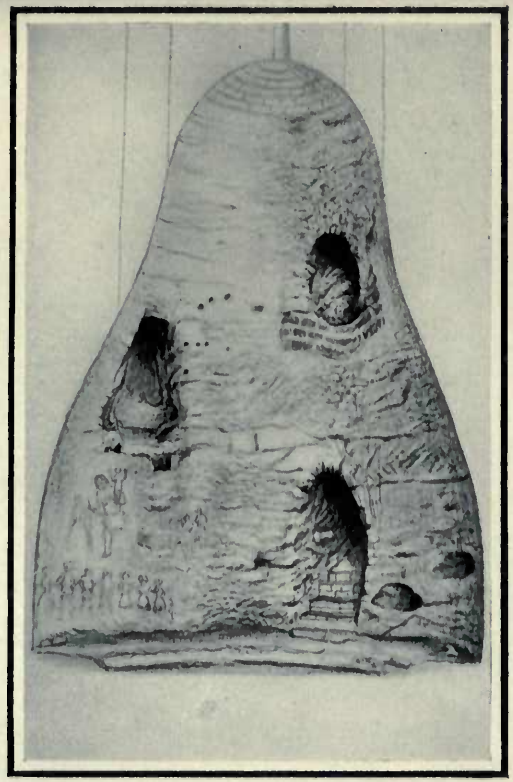
Stukeley was quite convinced that the Royston cave was the oratory of the Lady Rohesia, daughter of Aubrey de Vere, who succeeded his father in 1088, but there exists no evidence that she ever lived at Royston. The place takes its name from Rohesia, daughter of Eudo Dapifer.

In 1537, says Froude, while the harbours, piers, and fortresses were rising in Dover, "an ancient hermit tottered night after night from his cell to a chapel on the cliff, and the tapers on the altars before which he knelt in his lonely orisons made a familiar beacon far over the rolling waters. The men of the rising world cared little for the sentiment of the past. The anchorite was told sternly by the workmen that his light was a signal to the King's enemies" (a Spanish invasion from Flanders was expected), "and must burn no more; and when it was next seen, three of them waylaid the old man on his way home, threw him down, and beat him cruelly." [1]

The following notice appeared in the *Daily Express* of 9th June 1910. "A subterranean chamber with a spiral staircase at one end and a Gothic roof has been discovered at Greenhithe. It is believed to have been a hermit's cell."

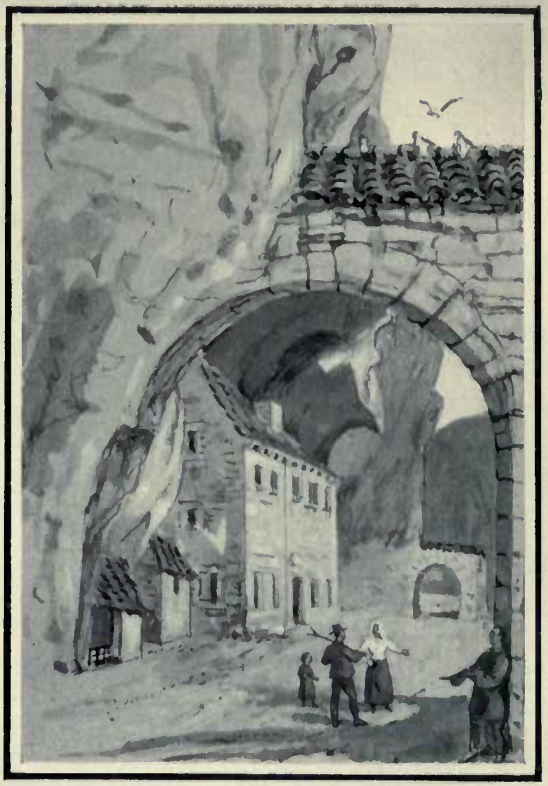
The hermit left a pleasant memory behind him when he disappeared from England, perhaps just in time before complete degeneration set in as in France and Germany, Italy and Spain. Shakespeare, whenever he introduces him, does so in a kindly spirit, and represents him as a consoler

[1] "History of England," vol. iii. p. 256.



ROYSTON CAVE

A section. The entrance with steps at the side is a modern addition.



S. B.-G.

CHÂTEAU DE RIGNAC

A renaissance château on the Vézère, built partly into and partly out of the overhanging cliff. Since the sketch was made a portion of the first archway has fallen.

of the afflicted and a refuge to the troubled spirit. By Spenser also he is treated with affection.

"Towards night they came unto a plaine
By which a little hermitage there lay,
Far from all neighbourhood, the which annoy it may.

And nigh thereto a little chappel stoode,
Which being all with ivy overspred
Deckt all the roofe, and, shadowing the roode,
Seem'd like a grove faire braunched over hed:
Therein the hermit, which his life here led
In streight observance of religious vow,
Was wont his hours and holy things to bed;
And therein he likewise was praying now,
Whenas these knights arrived, they wist not where nor how."

I do not recall any harsh words spoken of the departed hermit. After the Reformation it was felt that a factor in life was gone that could be ill spared.

In these days when we live in a hurricane of new ideas, in the stress of business, we cannot understand the attractiveness of the peace of a cell away from the swirl of the storm, or the value of the hermits as guides of life. When the hermit was swept away, into his place as counsellor of the troubled stepped the witch, and to her those had recourse who had previously sought the eremite. The influence of the witch was always for evil, that of the hermit was usually good. The troubled soul desires a confidant and an adviser. The parish priest is not always spiritually minded, and is not always disinterested. What is hid from the wise and prudent is revealed to babes, and for the guidance of distracted consciences, the healing of wounded spirits, the words of the childlike hermit were a boon. However, he is gone past recall, and into his room have stepped the lawyer who demands six-and-eightpence for a word of advice, and the doctor whose charges are proportionate to the rental of our houses.

CHAPTER IX

ROCK MONASTERIES

THE early Syrian and Egyptian hermits would have become a sect of manichæan heretics but for the popularity of the profession and the Arian persecution. In quitting the world they cut themselves off from the churches. They no more took part in its assemblies, participated in the sacraments, nor observed the sacred seasons. Paul, the first hermit, deserted the society of men when aged fifteen, and lived till the age of a hundred and ten in solitude without ever having partaken of the Bread of Life. S. Mary of Egypt spent forty-seven years in the Wilderness, stark naked, covered with hair like a wild beast, and only received the Viaticum when dying, by the chance of a priest passing that way. A fifteenth century statue of her, nearly life-size, is in the National Museum at Munich, removed from the Cathedral of Augsburg as indelicate. S. Antony spent twenty years in a sort of cistern, and only twice a year received loaves, let down from above through the roof. Certainly all that time he was voluntarily excommunicate. If S. Hilarius ever made sacramental communion we are not told, but we do know that he was for ever hiding himself from where were his fellow-men, in wilds and oases, and where there were no Christian churches.

In the desert, times and seasons slipped away, and became confounded, so that by the first hermits neither Easter nor the Lord's Day were observed. In the Gospel, the works of mercy, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and prisoners, are

appointed as the means of deserving a reward in heaven, but the anchorites neglected every one, cut themselves adrift from the chance of performing them, and sought to merit heaven in their own way. Christ declared, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," but they wilfully lived apart from the sacramental life as surely as any modern Quaker.

But when crowds of refugees from the duties and pleasures of life sought the desert, they ceased to be solitaries, and organisation on a monarchical system under an abbot became necessary; and when bishops and priests fled to them, or were banished and sought them, during the Arian persecution, they came to plume themselves as champions of orthodoxy, and conformed to Catholic usage, assembling on the Lord's Day for prayers and the Eucharist. When the fashion set in for deserting the world, floods of men, women, and children threw themselves into it, and flowed into the desert during a century with resistless force. Pachomius, who died at fifty-six, reckoned three thousand monks under his rule; the monasteries of Tabenna soon included seven thousand, and S. Jerome affirms that as many as fifty thousand were present at the annual gathering of the general congregation of monasteries that followed his rule.

There were five thousand on the mountain of Nitria; near Arsinoë the Abbot Serapion governed ten thousand. It has even been asserted that there were as many monks in the deserts of Egypt as inhabitants in the towns. The immense majority of these religious were cenobites; that is to say, they lived in the same enclosure, and were united under an elected head, the abbot. The cenobitical life rapidly and necessarily superseded that of the solitary. In fact the monks were now no more solitaries than are the jackdaws in a cleft, or the bees in a hive, but unlike the jackdaws, they were under discipline, and unlike bees were without a sting.

It was not mere love of an indolent life and a desire to

escape from military service that swelled the numbers in the desert. The condition of the decaying Roman world led men to despair of the Commonwealth, and of the possibility of their being able to save their own souls in the midst of the general corruption. "The people were exhausted by compulsory taxes, to be spent in wars which did not concern them, or in Court luxury in which they had no share. In the municipal towns liberty and justice were dead. The curials, who were responsible for the payment of the public moneys, tried their best to escape the unpopular office, and when compelled to serve wrung the money in self-defence out of the poorer inhabitants by every kind of tyranny. Private profligacy among all ranks was such as cannot be described in any modern pages. The regular clergy of the cities were able to make no stand against the general corruption of the age because—at least if we are to trust such writers as Jerome and Chrysostom—they were giving themselves up to ambition and avarice, vanity and luxury; and, as a background to all these seething heaps of decay, misrule and misery, hung the black cloud of the barbarians, waxing stronger and stronger so that the wisest Romans saw clearly as the years rolled on, they would soon be the conquerors of the Cæsars and the masters of the Western world.

"No wonder, if in such a state of things, the minds of men were stirred by a passion akin to despair, which ended in a new and grand form of suicide. It would have ended often, but for Christianity, in such an actual despair as that which had led in past ages more than one noble Roman to slay himself, when he lost all hope for the Republic. That the world—such at least as they saw it then—was doomed, Scripture and their own reason taught them. They did not merely believe, but saw, in the misery and confusion, the desolation and degradation around them, that the world was passing away, and the lust thereof, and that only he who did the will of God could abide for ever. They did not merely

believe, but saw that the wrath of God was revealed from Heaven against all unrighteousness of men. Under these terrible forebodings, men began to flee from a doomed world, and try to be alone with God, if by any means they might save each man his own soul in that dread day."[1]

In the year 336 Athanasius was in exile at Trèves. He is traditionally held to have there occupied a cave beyond the Moselle. The Bishop Maximinus received him with honour. Early in his episcopate Athanasius had visited the congregation of monks on the Upper Nile, and he was enthusiastic in his admiration of their manner of life. It is supposed that whilst at Trèves he began to write the "Life of S. Anthony," if indeed he was the author of that popular work. Here he is thought to have been visited by Maxentius, Bishop of Poitiers, and brother of the Bishop of Trèves, bringing with him Martin, then a friend and pupil of S. Hilary, this latter at the time a wealthy noble of Poitiers. And from the discourse of Athanasius, if this meeting actually took place, the imagination of Martin was fired with ambition to reproduce in Europe the life of the fathers of the desert in Egypt.

Anyhow, to this residence of Athanasius at Trèves, "one may trace the introduction into the Western Church of the principle and laws of ascetic self-renunciation, which, though they had run to great extremes in the Nitrian desert and in the valley of the Nile, assumed noble form when the idea took possession of the more phlegmatic temperament and practical energies of the West. Without discussing the vexed question of the authorship of the 'Life of S. Anthony,' which is referred by many traditional testimonies to Athanasius, we think it obvious, from the 'Confessions' of Augustine, that the religious circles at Trèves had been strongly moved by the self-abandonment and entire consecration to the religious life of the exiled bishops. It was here, while

[1] Kingsley (C.), "The Hermits," Lond. 1868.

reading the 'Life of S. Anthony' that the friends of Augustine at length yielded themselves to God."[1]

Martin was at Poitiers in 361 when S. Hilary had returned from exile to his bishopric and to his wife and daughter. He had been living the eremitic life on the isle of Gallinaria, shaped so like a snail, off the coast of Albenga, and had nearly poisoned himself with trying to eat hellebore leaves. On reaching Poitiers, he told his old friend the Bishop, that he desired to follow the monastic life in his diocese, and obtained his cheerful consent. Some way up the Clain, five miles from Poitiers, the little river glides through a broad valley, with meadows on its left bank often overflowed, but with a ridge of conglomerate rocks pierced with caves on the right bank. Here Martin settled, and there can exist no manner of doubt that his first settlement was in one of these grottoes, though at a later period the monastery was moved to the further side of the river, when the caves proved inadequate to harbour all the candidates for the religious life who placed themselves under his direction. One of his monks, however, named Felix, refused to quit his cave that is now shown, and in which he died perhaps, in an inaccessible cliff that is surmounted by a cross.

The friable conglomerate has yielded to storm and rain, and much of it has crumbled down; but the openings to the caves are visible from below, where the slopes are purple and fragrant with violets and, later, pink with primulas, and the rocks are wreathed with clematis. A pure spring bursts forth at the foot and works its way through beds of forget-me-not and marsh marigold to the Clain.

Martin had been ordained exorcist and then priest.

His most trusted disciples were Felix, Macarius, and Florentius. As already said, except in the Gallo-Roman cities, Christianity did not exist. The country-folk were

[1] Reynolds (H. R.), "Athanasius, his Life and Life-work," Lond., R.T.S., 1889, p. 54.

pagans. Martin lifted up his eyes and saw that the fields were white to harvest. He preached throughout Poitou and La Vendée, and visited the coast to the isles of Yeu and Ré. He travelled on foot, or mounted on an ass, sought every village and hamlet, to sow the seed of the Word of God, and where he could not go himself, he sent his disciples. Ligugé, his monastery, became a centre of evangelisation to the country round. It was the first monastery planted on Gaulish soil. It was ruined by the Saracens in 732, and again by the Normans in 848. It was rebuilt in 1040. But Ligugé never had a worse enemy than one of its abbots, Arthur de Cossé. He made public confession of Calvinism; gave up the abbey to be pillaged, sold its lands for his own advantage, and did everything in his power to utterly ruin it. It owed its restoration to the care of François de Servier, Bishop of Bayonne.

Ligugé was, however, destroyed at the French Revolution. In 1864 it was acquired by the Benedictines, and rebuilt on a large scale. It was enriched with a valuable library, and became a nursery of Christian art and literature. But the law of 1901 banished the monks, and the vast building is now empty, as the State has not so far found any use for it.

In the year 971 the episcopal throne of Tours was vacant, and the citizens at once decided on securing Martin as their bishop. But when he arrived on foot, dust-covered, with shaggy hair, the bishops assembled to consecrate protested against the election. It was customary to choose a bishop from among the nobility and the wealthy. Defensor, the Bishop of Angers, signalised himself by his opposition. He absolutely refused to consecrate the poor dishevelled monk. But when the lector opening the psalter at hazard read out the words, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies: that thou mightest still the enemy and the defender" (defensor),[1] the

[1] So in the old Gallican Version; in the Vulgate the word is *Ultor*.

people raised a great shout, God himself had spoken, and the bishops had to yield to the popular will. Martin was then aged fifty-four.

No sooner was he installed than he cast about him to establish on the banks of the Loire a monastic colony such as he had founded at Ligugé. He found a place where in later times rose the great abbey of Marmoutier, the wealthiest in France, and with a church that was called the Gem of Touraine. But then it was merely a chalk cliff rising above the Loire on its right bank, two miles above Tours, and on the summit had stood the old Gaulish city of Altionos. The Romans had transferred the capital of the Turones to its present site, and had given it the name of Cæsarodunum. But Althionos was probably not wholly abandoned, poor Gauls still dwelt there in their huts, and nothing had been done to bring them into the fold of Christ's Church.

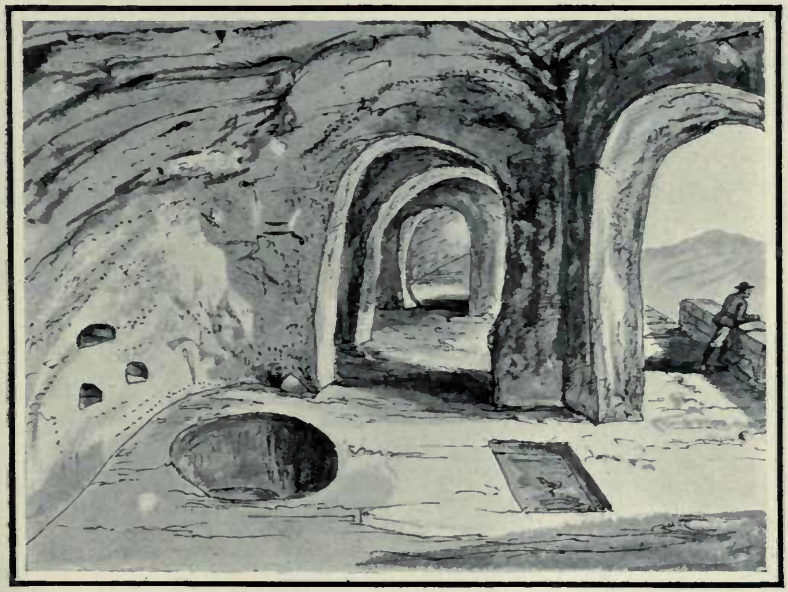
The cliff with its caves had already been sanctified. It had been a refuge in time of persecution, and there S. Gatianus, the first Bishop of Tours, in the third century had sheltered. But now Martin and his disciples set to work to enlarge and remodel the subterranean habitations; they scooped out a chapel, and they formed a baptistry.

In 853 the Northmen came up the Loire and massacred a hundred and sixteen of the monks. Only twenty-four escaped. In 982 Marmoutier was refounded by Eudo, Count of Blois, and the noble basilica built below the rock was consecrated by Pope Urban II. in 1095. The vast wealth of the abbey led to enlargements and splendour of architectural work; but in 1562 the Huguenots wrecked it, burned the precious library with all its MSS., broke down the altars, and shattered the windows. Its complete destruction, however, was due to the Revolution, when in 1791 it was completely pulled down, nothing left of the splendid church but the tower and a portion of the northern transept

S. B.-G.

LE TROU BOUROU

A cave fortress on the Beune. The hole through which the man is peering was used for defence of the steep ascent to the entrance. Note the arrangement for barring the door.



S. B.-G.

ROCK BAPTISTERY OF S. MARTIN, MARMOUTIER

Excavated and occupied by S. Martin, Bishop of Tours, A.D. 371–396. On the right-hand side is the well, on the left the font for immersion. The niches in the wall are for the holy oils.

that was glued to the rock. The oratory of S. Martin was levelled to the rock on which it stood.

But the fact of the transfer of the monastery to the flat land below the cliff had this effect, that the old caves, the original cradle of Marmoutier, were neglected and forgotten. They were overgrown by brambles, crumbled away, and none visited them.

In 1859 the oratory in which S. Martin had prayed was restored or rather rebuilt from its foundations.

One night when Martin was engaged therein in reading the Scriptures, the door was burst open and in broke a party of masqueraders. They had disguised themselves as Jupiter, Minerva, and Mercury, and some damsel devoid of modesty presented herself before the startled modesty of the bishop without disguise of any sort, as Venus rising from the foam of the sea. Some were dressed as Wood Druses very much like the devils of popular fancy. Mercury was a sharp, shrewd wag, and bothered the saint greatly, as he admitted to Sulpicius, his biographer, but Jupiter was a "stupid sot." At the rebuke of Martin the whole gang good-humouredly withdrew.

I was in this cell on Mid Lent Sunday, when hearing a noise outside, I looked forth and saw a party of masqueraders frolic and frisk past on their way to a tavern where was to be a costume ball. So goes the world. Some fifteen hundred and thirty years ago the Gospel was being preached in Tours, as it is now, men and women were striving to follow its precepts as now, and tomfoolery was rampant in Tours fifteen hundred and thirty years ago as it is now.

And now, as to the remains in the rock of the primitive Marmoutier. The grottoes of S. Gatianus and of the disciples of S. Martin have been cleared out. There is a little arcade of three round-headed unadorned arches cut in the cliff that served as a cloister, and there is the old baptistry where Martin admitted his converts into the

Christian Church, sunk in the rock for adult and complete submersion, and the niches in the wall for the sacred oils. Adjoining is the cave in which the neophyte unclothed and afterwards reclothed himself. There are graves sunk in the rock, where some of his disciples were laid, and there is the chapel partly in the rock and partly rebuilt, dedicated later by Gregory of Tours to the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, but of which in after times a different story was told—namely that seven brothers who had been devoted disciples of Martin prayed him when he was dying that they might speedily follow, and on the anniversary of his death they all seven fell asleep.

There is another cave that escaped destruction at the Revolution, though opening out of the transept of the church. It is that of the Penitence of Brice.

Brice had been adopted as a child by Martin, and brought up by him to be a monk. But Brice had no liking for the religious life, and was very disrespectful to his master. One day a sick man came to see Martin and asked of Brice where the saint was. "The fool is yonder," answered he, "staring at the sky like an idiot."

One day Martin rebuked Brice for buying horses and slaves at a high price, and even providing himself with beautiful young girls. Brice was furious, and said. "I am a better Christian than you. I have had an ecclesiastical education from my youth, and you were bred up amidst the license of a camp."

On the death of S. Martin, the people of Tours, tired of having a saint at their head, with proverbial fickleness chose Brice as his successor because rich—he was said to have been the son of the Count of Nevers—and because he was anything but a saint. As bishop he showed little improvement, and gave great scandal. Lazarus, Bishop of Aix, accused him before several councils. At last a gross outrage on morals was attributed to him, and caused his

flight. A nun gave birth to a child, and confessed that she had been seduced by the bishop. Brice either ran away from Tours or was deposed. A priest named Justinian was elected in his room. On the death of Justinian, Armentius succeeded him. Brice remained in exile till the death of Armentius, and then ventured back to Tours to reclaim his episcopal throne. He was allowed to reascend it, and he occupied it for seven years; and the cave in which he did penance for his frailties and the scandal he had caused is intact to this day. He died, after having been nominally bishop for forty-seven years, the greater portion of which time he had spent in exile. The Church of Rome is certainly very charitably disposed in numbering him among the saints. Why he should be regarded as the patron of wool-combers one cannot see,[1] but as such he enjoyed some popularity.

There is yet another cave in the Marmoutier rocks that may be mentioned; it is that of S. Leobard. Leobard was a saint of the sixth century, a native of Auvergne, who, coming to pray at the tomb of S. Martin, resolved on spending the rest of his days in one of the cells of Martin's monastery in the rocks. He settled into an untenanted cave, which he enlarged, and lived in it for twenty-two years. At the extremity he dug a deep pit in which he desired to be buried standing with his face to the East, thus to await the coming of the Lord. But although his desire was fulfilled, the monks of Marmoutier would not let his body rest there, but hauled it up, that it might become an object of devotion to the faithful.

[1] The following prayer is recommended by the Archbishop of Tours to the faithful for use. "Nous vous supplions, Seigneur, par l'intercession de S. Brice, Evêque et Confesseur, de conserver votre peuple qui se confie en votre amour; afin que, par les vertues de notre Saint Pontife, nous méritions de partager avec lui les joies celestes." The virtues of Brice!

The Abbey of Brantôme on the Dronne (Dep. Dordogne) was originally, like Marmoutier, a cavern monastery, and like those of Marmoutier, the monks waxing fat, they kicked and abandoned the grottoes for a stately structural monastery. The beautiful Romanesque tower of the church stands on top of a rock that is honeycombed with their cells. The church, consisting of nave only, is of marvellous beauty, early pointed, and built on a curve, as there was but little space to spare between the river and the cliffs. Unhappily church and cloister were delivered over to be "restored" by that arch-wrecker, Abbadie, who has done such incalculable mischief in Perigord and the Angoumois, and his hoof-mark is visible here. The monks, not content with a sumptuous Gothic abbey, pulled it down and built one in the baroque style, and had but just completed it when the Revolution broke out "and the flood came and swept them all away." In the court behind this modern structure is to be seen the cliff perforated with caves; it has, however, been cut back to the detriment of these, so that we have them shorn of their faces. Nevertheless they are interesting. The old monolithic chapel of the monastery remains, turned into a pigeonry, and with the steps left that gave access to the pulpit, and two pieces of sculpture on a very large scale, cut out of the living rock. One represents the Crucifixion with SS. Mary and John; the other has been variously explained as the Last Judgment or the Triumph of Death. It perhaps represents the Triumph of Christ over Death. His figure and the kneeling figures of His Mother and the Beloved Disciple were, however, never completed, and remain in the rough.

Beneath the figure of Christ is Death, figured by a head surmounted by a crown of bones, and a crest representing a spectre armed with a club. On each side is an angel blowing a trumpet. Below are ranged a dozen heads of

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST OVER DEATH

Sculpture in the cave monastery of Brantôme. The figure of Christ was never completed. Below is a head crowned with bones, for Death, with Time as crest. Below, in boxes, are the dead, of various degrees.

popes, bishops, princes, knights, and ladies, in boxes to represent graves.

In the front of this huge piece of sculpture are trestles planted in the ground to support planks to serve as tables when the Brantômois desire to have a banquet and a dance.

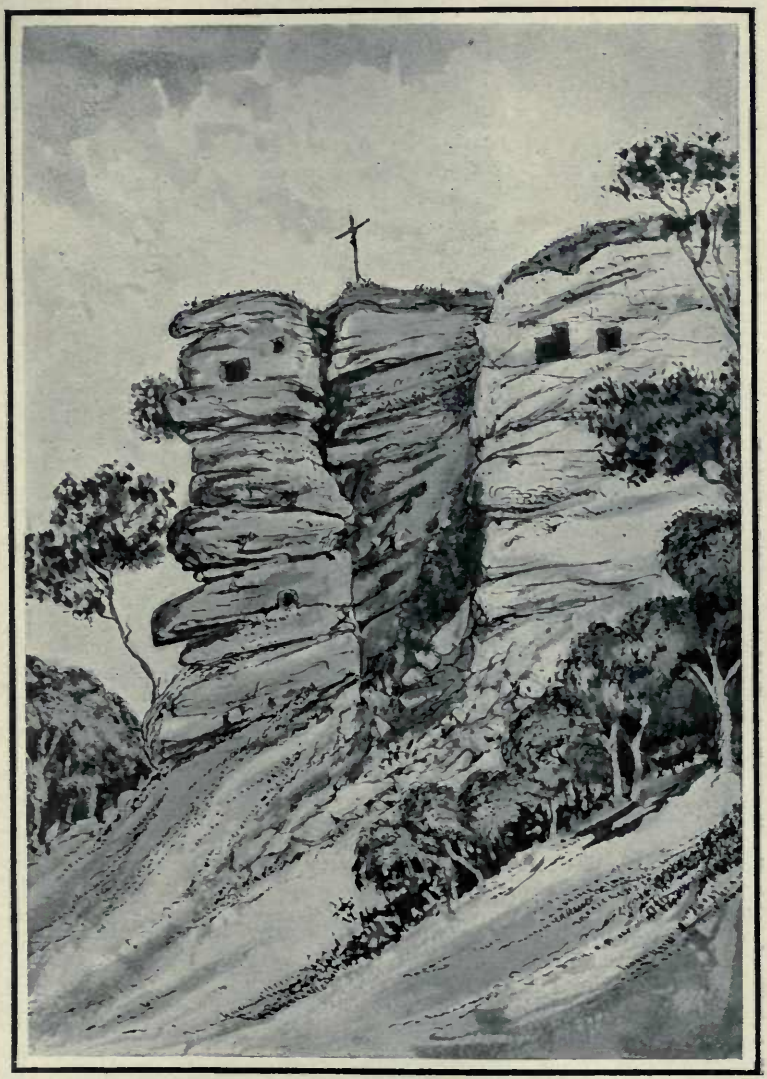
The sculpture above described is not earlier than the sixteenth century. A few paces from it, in the same line and almost under the tower, is another grotto called *La Babayou*—that is to say "of the statue," and it probably at one time enshrined an image of a saint. On the left of the subterranean church is the fountain of the little Cut-throat already mentioned. S. Sicarius, whose relics were the great "draw" to Brantôme in the Middle Ages, was supposed to have been one of the Innocents slain by Herod; and the relics were also supposed to have been given to the abbey by Charlemagne. As there was no historic evidence that Charles the Great ever had a set of little bones passed off on him as those of the Innocent, or that he ever made a present to the abbey of a relic, it will be seen that a good deal of supposition goes to the story. As I have said before, how it was that the child of a Hebrew mother acquired a Latin name, and that one so peculiar, we are not informed.

Outside the town gate are other large excavations that are supposed to have formed a temple of Mithras, but this is mere conjecture. The largest is now employed as a *Tir*—a shooting gallery. That there were buildings connected with it is seen by the holes in the rock to receive rafters.

S. Maximus, Bishop of Riez, who died in 460, was born at Château Redon, near Digne, and he entered the monastic life on the isle of Lerins, under S. Honoratus, and when that saint was raised in 426 to the episcopal throne of Arles, Maximus succeeded him as Abbot of Lerins. But this monastery was becoming crowded, and Maximus pined

for the solitary life, so one day he took a boat, crossed to the mainland, and plunged into the wild country about the river Verdon, that has sawn for itself a chasm through the limestone; where it debouches, he planted himself at a place since called Moustier-Ste-Marie. The lips of the crevasse are linked by a chain, with a gilt star hanging in the midst, little under 690 feet above the bed of the torrent. No one knows when this star was hung there, but it is supposed to have been an *ex voto* of a chevalier, de Blac. Within the ravine, reached by a narrow goat-path, were caves in the cliffs, and into one of these Maximus retired in 434 and was speedily followed by other solitaries. The caves are still there, the faces walled up, but as at Ligugé, and as at Marmoutier, and as at Brantôme, so was it here. As the monastery grew rich, the solitaries crawled out of their holes into which the sun never shone, and erected their residence at the opening of the ravine. A chapel remains, founded by Charlemagne, but rebuilt in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, reached by a stair protected by a parapet.

Moustier was famous at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century for its faience, with elegant designs and good colouring. Specimens are now extremely scarce. Two vases of this ware may be seen on the altar of the chapel. The principal potters there were Pierre Fournier, Joseph Olery, Paul Rouse, and Féraud. They usually signed their work with their initials. Maximus was just a century later than Martin; the fever for imitating the lives of the Fathers of the Deserts of Egypt was then in full heat. His master, Honoratus, had been wont to escape from his island monastery and hide in a cave in the glowing red porphyry rocks of the Esterelle. I can understand his retiring thither, above a sea blue as the neck of a peacock, among glowing red rocks, and masses of pines, and heather, and arbutus, and every kind of fragrant



S. B.-G.

CAVES OF LIGUGÉ

The primitive rock monastery of S. Martin. It was abandoned later when the monks moved to the further side of the river; but Felix, a disciple of S. Martin, remained and died in the cave, now inaccessible, below the cross.