

2 THE BATTLE OF THE STRONG

among her possessions is one which, from the hour its charter was granted it by King John, has been loyal, unwavering, and unpurchasable. Until the beginning of the century the language of this province was not our language, nor is English its official language to-day; and with a pretty pride oblivious of contrasts, and a simplicity unconscious of mirth, its people say: "We are the conquering race; we conquered England, England did not conquer us."

A little island lying in the wash of St. Michael's Basin off the coast of France, Norman in its foundations and in its racial growth, it has been as the keeper of the gate to England; though so near to France is it, that from its shores on a fine day may be seen the spires of Coutances, whence its spiritual welfare was ruled long after England lost Normandy. A province of British people, speaking still the Norman-French that the Conqueror spoke; such is the island of Jersey, which, with Guernsey, Alderney, Sark, Herm, and Jethou, form what we call the Channel Isles, and the French call the Iles de la Manche.