

CATHEDRAL CITIES OF FRANCE

marble baths; aqueducts threw a succession of arches to the nearest water source, theatres sloped up the hill-side, bridges crossed the river, and where the grottoes of the Druidic or other primitive faiths had been, rose the columns and friezes of splendid temples to Jupiter and Diana and Apollo. Certainly it was a change for the better; and the appearance of many of these towns under the Cæsars was probably much more imposing, though perhaps less picturesque, than that which they presented in mediæval days. In the later Roman era a new element introduces itself. From the early Christian Church at Rome come missionary saints; not saints in those days, but often the poorest and meanest of the brethren, charged with a message to Gaul—Hilary, Martin, Dionysius, and the others. Fierce conflicts follow, persecutions, burnings, martyrdoms—Dionysius bears witness at Lutetia, Savinian and Potentian at Sens—and at last the first church arises within the city, poor and meagre very often in comparison with the huge pagan temples which it replaces, but loved and venerated by the faithful few, and, best of all, the origin of the grand cathedrals which are now the glory of France. "The votaries of the new creed found a home within the walls of their seats of worship such as the votaries of the elder creed had never found within theirs.