

A FRENCH CATHEDRAL CITY

striving at a power apart from the Crown, or, rather, striving to maintain a power which the Crown had never yet been able to incorporate with itself. Thus a city of France has a much more varied, a much more individual history than has the sister city in England; a story less bound up as part of the great whole of the history of the French kingdom, more concentrated within its own walls, and therefore more tangible, if it be desired to study it irrespective of that whole history. This, then, is the story of its growth from almost pre-historic days. Whether, as an individual city, it flourished after the Middle Ages had fortified and strengthened it, or whether it fell into a state of quiet, picturesque and peaceful decay, depended of course upon particular circumstances, but enough remains to make of the general history of the French city a fascinating though almost inexhaustible study, only surpassed by the study of each town in its separate case.

Wars and revolutions have done their best to destroy what Time had kindly tried to preserve for our delight; nevertheless, a cathedral town in France of to-day is a very pleasant place, and offers exceptional opportunity for the study of French life in almost every aspect. Our business here, however, is with the cathedrals and the historical