

It is only an hour's ride from Brussels to Antwerp. At Vilvorde, six miles from Brussels, 360 years ago the English Reformer Tindale, for translating the Bible, was burned at the stake. His last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." The very next year—was it not an answer to his prayer?—the Bible was published in England by royal command, and a copy placed in every church.

Twelve miles from Brussels is the ancient town of Malines or Mechlin, 40,000 inhabitants, situated on the *Dyle*, which flows through the town in numerous arms and is crossed by thirty-five bridges. Notwithstanding its broad and regular streets, handsome squares, and fine buildings, it is a dull place, and totally destitute of the brisk traffic which enlivens most of the principal Belgian towns. The Cathedral of St. Rombold (shown in our frontispiece), begun at the end of the 12th century, completed in 1312, is a cruciform Gothic church with a richly decorated choir and a huge unfinished tower three hundred and twenty-four feet in height. The face of the clock on the tower is forty-nine feet in diameter. The church was almost entirely erected with money paid by the pilgrims who flocked hither in the 14th and 15th centuries to obtain the indulgences issued by Pope Nicholas V.

Antwerp, a busy city on the "lazy Scheldt," was, under Charles V., the most prosperous city in Europe. At that period thousands of vessels are said to have lain in the Scheldt at one time, while a hundred or more arrived and departed daily. Commerce, which luxury and revolution had banished from other Flemish towns, especially Bruges, sought refuge at Antwerp about the close of the 15th century. Under Charles V. Antwerp was perhaps the most prosperous and wealthy city on the continent, surpassing even Venice itself. The great fairs held here attracted merchants from all parts of the civilized world. But Spanish tyranny and the terrors of the Inquisition reduced the population to, at one time, 40,000. Its present population is about 160,000. It is strongly fortified, and has stood many a siege. The glory of the city is its magnificent cathedral. Its lofty open spire Napoleon compared to Mechlin lace, and Charles V. used to say it should be preserved in a glass case. Its interior is unique in this, that it has three aisles on each side of the nave. The perspective of the arches, supported on 125 columns, is very fine. The glory of the church is Rubens' masterpiece—his wonderful "Descent from the Cross." I confess to a lack of appreciation of Rubens. I can see little beauty in his figures, and they often have a vulgar