



COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SOUTH BRITTANY.

The province of Brittany is remarkable for its scenery, its buildings, and its costumes — all of a quaintness special to

picturesque the people must have been some years ago, when these quaint dresses were common throughout the country,

but, alas! costume is fast becoming modernized, and only to be found in its ancient integrity in certain parts of the province. The south is still the stronghold of costume, in Quimper and the neighboring towns it is to be seen in perfection — specially on a fête or market day, when the country people throng in from far and near — and the great Place beside the noble cathedral is a most interesting and lively scene. At such times an artist may, if he please, soon fill his sketchbook with picturesque subjects.

The illustrations which accompany this paper represent some of the costumes of this part of South Brittany, as they now exist. They are from sketches by Mr. Percy Macquoid: the originals sat and stood to him for their portraits. Perhaps one of the most extraordinary gatherings of Breton costume and character is to be seen at the Fair of St. Nicodème (Morbihan), a pardon or pilgrimage, which is held once a year amid the noble chestnut trees that surround the beautiful church. The groups of men, women, and children are unending in their variety. Most interesting specimens of the farmer abound: he stalks about in his wide-brimmed black hat, long hair, *bragons bras*, embroidered jacket and waistcoat, his broad buff leather belt with quaint metal clasps; garters, and sabots stuffed with straw: or he may be seen engaged in selling his beasts, or in seriously enjoying his cider in the open air, under the trees or in booths, the men and women sitting



MARIE: A BONNE. (Sketched from life.)

themselves — and I can promise to any one on sketching thoughts intent, an abundant harvest of work. One thing is to be noted, however, that spite of the brilliant sun of Brittany, there is much sadness of color over people, buildings, and iron-bound coast: there is not the sparkle of Italy, or the rich coloring of Spain. The inhabitants of the province are as remarkable as their country — as wild and sombre as their stone-covered heaths and storm-beaten shores. Bretons are said to have five virtues and three vices. The virtues are love of their country, resignation under the will of God, loyalty, perseverance, and hospitality. The vices — avarice, contempt of women, and drunkenness.

There is enough costume still worn in Brittany to show how

ting drinking on opposite sides of long tables, reminding one of the interiors by Dutch masters

At the Pardon of St. Nicodème a peculiar incident called "The descent of the Angel" takes place towards the end of the day. The little figure of an angel descends on a rope from the church tower and sets light to some fireworks, amid the most intense excitement of the crowd. The patron saints of the churches in Lower Brittany — in the popular belief — still work miracles for the faithful, and have the power to procure pardon for sinners. Great pardons generally last three days.

The Pardon of St. Anne la Palue is very remarkable, on account of the local scenery where it takes place.