

active, a traveler curious to wander through this town, as fine as a perfect suit of antique armor, may find his way, not untouched by melancholy, down an almost deserted street, where the stone window-frames are choked with concrete to avoid the tax. This street ends at a postern-gate built up with a stone wall, and crowned by a clump of saplings planted there by the hand of Breton Nature—France can hardly show a more luxuriant and all-pervading vegetation. If he is a poet or a painter, our wanderer will sit down, absorbed in the enjoyment of the perfect silence that reigns under the still sharp-cut vaulting of this side gate, whither no sound comes from the peaceful town, whence the rich country may be seen in all its beauty through loopholes, once held by archers and cross-bowmen, which seem placed like the little windows arranged to frame a view from a summer-house.

It is impossible to go through the town without being reminded at every step of the manners and customs of long past times; every stone speaks of them; traditions of the Middle Ages survive there as superstitions. If by chance a gendarme passes in his laced hat, his presence is an anachronism against which the mind protests; but nothing is rarer than to meet a being or a thing of the present. There is little to be seen even of the dress of the day; so much of it as the natives have accepted has become to some extent appropriate to their unchanging habits and hereditary physiognomy. The marketplace is filled with Breton costumes, which artists come here to study, and which are amazingly varied. The whiteness of the linen clothes worn by the *paludiers*, the salt-workers who collect salt from the pans in the marshes, contrasts effectively with the blues and browns worn by the inland peasants, and the primitive jewelry piously preserved by the women. These two classes and the jacketed seamen, with their round varnished leather hats, are as distinct as the castes in India, and they still recognize the distinctions that separate the townsfolk, the clergy, and the nobility. Here every landmark still exists; the revolutionary plane found the divisions too rugged and too hard to work over; it would have been notched