

# THE Methodist Magazine.

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## FLEMISH PICTURES.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE Netherlands, though for the most part deficient in picturesque scenery, possesses historic memories unsurpassed in heroic and romantic interest by those of any country in Europe. The Protestant struggle against the despotism of Spain is one of the grandest episodes in the history of mankind. The provinces of Brabant, Flanders, Hainault, and Holland, recall many a storied page of Motley, Prescott, and Robertson. The industries, art and literature of the Walloons, Flemings, and Dutch, both pique and gratify the curiosity of the tourist. Here, as nowhere else, he sees the *chefs d'œuvre* of Rubens, Vandyck, Rembrandt, and other Flemish masters.

Brussels, with a population of nearly 400,000, is another Paris, with its broad boulevards, its palaces, parks and squares, and its cafés and gay out-of-door life. In constructing new streets, the city offered prizes, from \$4,000 down, for the best twenty façades. The result is some of the finest architecture in Europe, characterized largely by the use of the human figure in caryatides and the like. The new Palais de Justice has cost \$1,000,000. Of the new, however, one can see enough in New York and Chicago. My own taste is for the old, and this was amply gratified. The ancient church of St. Gudule is of vast size and venerable majesty—one of the richest I have seen. The singing of the vespers at twilight was exquisitely sweet. The celebrated Hôtel de Ville, recently illustrated in this MAGAZINE, is one of the noblest town halls in Europe. Its flamboyant façade and exquisite open spire, soaring like a fountain 370 feet in the air, once seen can never be forgotten. At the summit the Archangel Michael forever waves his glittering sword as if to guard the city at his feet. The fretted stonework looks like petrified lace.