

me, and there swear to guard the rights and privileges of the city. The facade is ornamented with niches containing statues of these Counts, which were destroyed during the Revolution by the French, *sans culottes*, but afterwards replaced. In the Belgian town-halls the art is expended on the exterior, and within there is little worthy of notice—very nice, too, for a lazy tourist on a sunny day! But I wandered in later, and there saw an indifferently painted fresco of the return from the Battle of the Golden Spurs, that famous fight in which the hardy peasants overthrew the knights of France which Philip, the Fair, had sent to avenge the blood of the Frenchmen who had died on Bruges Matins.

The old square has seen much, but never an afternoon more peaceful than the one I spent in the shadow of the Statue Van Eyck. Yet, looking closer, I perceived that here, too, were signs of strife. A bearded artist, whom I recognized as a well-known French landscape painter, was standing near me with an easel under one arm and a half-finished canvas under the other. He frowned severely on the group of chattering students and then at his canvas. Clearly the German girls were in possession of his position. He frowned a while longer, then turned on his heel and departed. Shortly afterwards the etcher came in sight. I hailed her, and she sat down behind me.

"I've got a plate ready for the Hôtel de Ville," she said. "Charming, isn't it?"

"But there isn't a foot of ground vacant," I objected.

"Oh, I'll sit down right in front of those girls. I don't take up much room."

This was true. Hunched up on a low stool with her plate in her lap, no one could say she obstructed the view—at least, the German girls didn't. But soon a troop of children coming from school spied her. Now, artists who painted impressionistic pictures

on large canvases were quite common, but a lady who drew in gold lines on black was a novelty. In vain did the artists behind scold and entreat them—the children would not go. One by one the students gathered up their paints and left. Then did the bearded artist appear from behind the Statue Van Eyck, and with a malicious smile on his face set up his easel. Had he perchance bribed the children? I wonder. Did the old Place du Bourg on that day witness a battle in which a company of Germans were put to flight single-handed by a Frenchman, and was my little friend, the etcher, his unconscious ally?

In the evening we found some entertainment in a café called *Vieux Bruges*, the walls of which are decorated with enormous paintings representing the old landmarks of the town. You can see all Bruges without going outside its doors. There was also an excellent orchestra, led by an Austrian with long gray hair and still longer side-whiskers, who bowed to the ground and kissed his hands impressively to the ladies after each selection. He looked such a perfect old scoundrel that we were not surprised on hearing, at the beginning of the war, that he had skipped, owing money to nearly everyone in town. To pay for this entertainment we had to order coffee or a *liqueur*, which cost about ten cents, and just as we were getting change from the waiter, out went the lights and a moving picture representing a drama of American cow-boy life flashed on the screen.

During our stay in Bruges we became *habitués* of this place, as were nearly all the foreign artists. We got to know them by sight, and I even recognized an acquaintance amongst the members of an art class from New York, brought there by William Chase, and the etcher was hailed with delight by a youth she had known in her student days in London.

"What are you painting Bruges, too, Mr. Cohen?" she asked.