



A BREEZY DAY.

- F. McE. Knowles.

this trade was prohibited through the efforts of Bathilda, a wealthy freed-woman.

These fairs were of great value during the Middle Ages, and especially serviceable in rude and inland countries. They had numerous privileges, and afforded special facilities for the disposal of goods. While commerce was burdened with every possible kind of taxes and tolls, and travel was not only difficult, but frequently unsafe, the fairs had generally the advantage of being free from imposts, and the merchants enjoyed the protection of the Government for their goods and persons.

Many fairs were associated with

religious festivals, perhaps to insure a large concourse of people. In many places they are still held on the same day with the vigil or feast of the saint to whom the principal church of the town is dedicated. It was even customary in England and Germany to hold the fairs in the churches and churchyards.

To the priory of St. Bartholomew in London, founded early in the 12th century, Henry I. granted in 1133 the privilege of holding a fair on St. Bartholomew's Day. It was at first a great place of resort for traders and pleasure-seekers, but it declined in importance until it was only attended by itinerant showmen and the owners of a few