

## RAMBLES IN ENGLAND—A VISIT TO BRISTOL.

BY CANNIFF HAIGHT.

"BRISTOL" says Elihu Burritt, "is a city worth going to see and study. It was the seat and point of departure of the English vikings and vigors when the old Norse spirit had only begun to be slightly softened by a Christian civilization. For just such men and for just such an age nature had found a port suited to every phase and faculty of their character. It was at the head of a little river that ran crookedly at the bottom of a tremendous furrow ploughed to the sea through the rocks, nearly as deep and wide as the rift below Niagara Falls. It faced the western world of waters, and its plucky old sea-kings turned their prows in that direction by natural impulse. One of them, the elder Cabot, frosted his in the icy breath of Labrador before Columbus touched the main continent of America. One hundred years before Cabot sailed from Bristol, it had its guild of 'Merchants Royal,' and veteran sailors as daring and dauntless as the hyperborean tars of Eric the Red."

The city lies in its southern extremity of Gloucester and the northern of Somersetshire. The rivers of Avon and Frome wind their way through it, and empty into the Bristol Channel or Severn Sea. For many centuries it was the second city in Britain and is still considered the "Metropolis of the West." Like old Rome it stands upon seven hills, and possesses a sister also to the Tiber in the muddy Avon. Some parts of it are built upon level ground, and in others the streets are so steep that it is difficult to traverse them with carriages.

There are but few places in England that present so many objects of interest to the archaeologist as Bristol. It was made an independent city by Edward III., but long before that it was a noted place and possessed some of the finest buildings and churches in Britain. Many of them have given place to more modern structures, but on all the older streets may still be seen those curious old houses with one story projecting over another as they rise, until the opposite gables almost touch over the centre of the narrow street. What grand places those upper windows must have been for gossiping dames!