

## THE CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE-DAME, PARIS.

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Of the many interesting objects which strike the eye of the stranger in the gay capital of France, no one edifice perhaps leaves so distinct and vivid an impression on his memory as the Cathedral of Notre-Dame. Paris, it is true, presents numerous other ancient structures to his notice; but they all, more or less, have undergone such modifications and alterations, that the character of their original appearance is lost. Like an aged patriarch forsaken of his coevals, Notre-Dame stands alone amidst the city, a majestic monument of by-gone days, almost unchanged, except by the soft greyness shed over it by time, and as stately in its dimensions as it was when the sainted Louis assumed before its altar the pilgrim's garb.

For seven centuries now, the worship of the Most High has been with but little interruption carried on within the precincts of this noble temple; and seven centuries more, should our globe remain unrenovated so long, would, to all appearance, scarce suffice to dissolve the solid masonry of its walls, or even affect the beautiful adjustments of its airy buttresses.

The foundation of the present building is ascribed to Maurice de Sully, Bishop of Paris, during the reign of Louis the Young. It occupies the site of a still more ancient Christian edifice, which Childebert is said to have raised on the ruins of a heathen temple, dedicated to Jupiter, Castor, and Pollux, by the merchants of Paris in the time of the emperor Tiberius. Although many additions and improvements were made during the three centuries succeeding the erection of the original structure, yet even as late as the middle of the fifteenth century the noble design was not as yet completed, and kings and bishops emulously endeavoured to perfect the majestic edifice.

The first serious injuries which it sustained, were inflicted in the Revolution; nor was it until after the peace in 1815, that these injuries were repaired, and the restoration of the building effected. Even now, although it is unquestionably one of the finest specimens of ecclesiastical architecture in the world, it is not what it was in the days of its glory. Time has stripped it of some of its attractions—and the destructive grasp of man has robbed it even of more. Many of the statues, pictures, and other costly decorations with which it was lavishly enriched by princes, ecclesiastics and corporations, shared the fate of other noble works of art