

CATHEDRAL CITIES OF FRANCE

As a seaport and fishing centre, Boulogne is one of the most interesting and important towns in France; and its fishing-boats sail out in great numbers to the North Sea for the cod fishery along the north coast of Scotland. When the herring fishing begins, Boulogne adds its contingent to the fleets of Cornwall, to the luggers of the West Coast, and to the cobbles of Whitby; and on the eve of the departure to the fishing-ground, the fisherman's quarter, known as La Beurière, is alive with the orgies of its sailor population. Dancing takes place on the quays, and short entertainments are held in an improvised theatre, while the rich brown-ochre sails of the splendid luggers and smacks are stretched from deck to deck, forming an awning under which the owners and captains meet together with their friends to wish success to the undertaking of those who "go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters."

Boulogne has the reputation of being the most Anglicised of French towns, and was in years gone by often associated with the seamy side of society. Many a stranger found here a convenient refuge, and Mr. Deuceace and other of Thackeray's heroes enjoyed the sea breezes of Boulogne after the mental strain of somewhat questionable financial manœuvres.

The city walls, restored in the sixteenth or