

of the past, the symbol of a great thing now gone, a poem. This house belongs to the noblest family in the land—that of du Guaisnic, who, in the time of the du Guesclin, were as superior to them in fortune and antiquity as the Trojans were to the Romans. The Guaisqlain (also formerly spelt du Glaicquin)—which has become Guesclin—are descended from the Guaisnies. The Guaisnies, as old as the granite of Brittany, are neither Franks nor Gauls; they are Bretons, or, to be exact, Celts. Of old they must have been Druids, have cut the mistletoe in sacred groves, and have sacrificed men on dolmens. To-day this race, the equals of the Rohans, but never choosing to be made Princes, powerful in the land before Hugues Capet's ancestors had been heard of, this family, pure from every alloy, is possessed of about two thousand francs a year, this house at Guérande, and the little castle of le Guaisnic. All the estates belonging to the Barony of le Guaisnic, the oldest in Brittany, are in the hands of farmers, and bring in about sixty thousand francs a year in spite of defective culture. The du Guaisnies are indeed still the owners of the land; but as they cannot pay up the capital deposited with them two hundred years ago by those who then held them, they cannot take the income. They are in the position of the French Crown towards its tenants in 1789. When and where could the Barons find the million francs handed over to them by their farmers? Until 1789 the tenure of the fiefs held of the Castle of le Guaisnic, which stands on a hill, was still worth fifty thousand francs; but by a single vote the National Assembly suppressed the fines on leases and sales paid to the feudal lords. In such circumstances, this family, no longer of any consequence in France, would be a subject of ridicule in Paris; at Guérande it is an epitome of Brittany. At Guérande the Baron du Guaisnic is one of the great lords of France, one of the men above whom there is but one—the King of France, chosen of old to be their chief. In these days the name of du Guaisnic—full of local meanings, of which the etymology has been explained in *Les Chouans, or Brittany in 1799*—has undergone the same