

ROMANTIC BRITANNY

IS THE LEAST FRENCH OF ALL FRANCE.

Bretons Differ In Ancestry, Language and Temperament From Neighbors—Have Maintained Racial Characters Almost Unparalleled in Europe—Originally Same Race as Scots and Irish.

If one were asked what part of France is least French he might be led to think of the province recently rewon from Germany, or regions touching Italy or Spain. But the land that best merits this description is the large peninsula at the northwestern corner of France—Brittany—a region that has been French almost as long as any soil of the republic.

Brittany has no political existence, and is not even represented by name on some modern maps; but the Bretons, differing in ancestry, language, and temperament from their neighbors, have held aloof and maintained their racial characters in a way almost unparalleled in European history. Fierce wars have left their scars, and the concomitants of modern civilization have made their enduring impress on people and country, but so much of the ancient customs and landmarks has survived that Brittany is still a well-marked geographical and ethnological entity and bids fair to remain such for many generations.

This isolation of Brittany from the remainder of France, while at the same time the province is comparatively easy to reach and traverse, has for many years made it a popular holiday and vacation resort for Parisians and Londoners, and has attracted the notice of regular travellers and tourists who, having "done" the Alps, the Rhine, the Norwegian fjords, the Riviera and the European capitals, are seeking new worlds to conquer. Artists of all lands have likewise found this a most agreeable field for work and recreation.

The original name of Brittany was Armorica, which was changed in consequence of extensive immigration from Great Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries. These Armorican tribes formed a part of that race of which the Irish, Highland Scots, and Manx constitute one division, and the Welsh, Cornish and Bretons the other. The Celtic language there spoken at the present time is divided into three or rather distinct dialects, and is understood, though usually used, by a very large percentage of the native population. Many of the older Bretons cannot speak French, and in 1902 it was found that the French language was unknown or but feebly known by 700,000 of the people. The Government now requires the young to learn French, so the gradual disuse and final death of this ancient tongue may be expected.

In prehistoric times the Gauls conquered the earliest of Brittany's races; and then came the Roman conquest and the Roman occupation of Gaul until the fourth century, up to which time the peculiar religious practices of the aboriginal race appear to have flourished unmolested by either Gauls or Romans.

Then the real Bretons arrived. In 353 Maximilian, son-in-law of Octavius of England, and his nephew, Conan Meriadec, went over to Armorica, and endeavored to displace the Romans. This venture cost the lives of some 15,000 soldiers. Then Maximilian took over a huge army and eventually overcame the Romans. Conan became king of the country, which he called Little Britain, or Bretagne; and, making his capital at Nantes, he invited his countrymen, who were then very hard pressed by the Scots and Picts and Saxons, to come over and join him. Many thousands responded to this and subsequent invitations, and by the time of

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So-called stomach troubles, such as indigestion, gas, sourness, stomach-ache and inability to retain food are in probably nine cases out of ten simply evidence that excessive secretion of acid has taken place in the stomach, causing the formation of gas and acid indigestion. Gas distends the stomach and causes that full, oppressive, burning feeling sometimes known as heartburn, while the acid irritates and inflames the delicate lining of the stomach. The trouble lies entirely in the excess development or secretion of acid.

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THE CORONATION STONE.

Place of Origin Is Thought to Be Scotland.

The stone called the Coronation Stone, to most visitors probably the most interesting thing in Westminster Abbey, has another and much ancient name. Its true name is Gaelic—Liath Fhathall, which means in English the "Grey Stone Pillow."

Now, it is certain that Queen Victoria firmly believed that the British Royal House descended from King David, and, therefore, from Jacob himself, and that the stone upon which she received her crown was the identical one upon which he rested his head at Bethel when he dreamed of ascending and descending angels and heard of the future greatness of the nation he should found.

The stone is also called the Stone of Destiny. Doubtless, this name, or the tradition it embodied, was the reason that prompted the astute Edward I to carry it from its ancient site at Scone to his own capital of London and deposit it in St. Edward the Confessor's Chapel. It has remained there ever since, except for one brief ceremony—the installation of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector in Westminster Hall.

But why the Stone of Destiny? Well, not only had all the ancient Kings of Scotland, from the remotest dawn of Scottish history, been crowned on this stone, but it was firmly believed that whosoever this stone went, there would go the sovereignty.

That was exactly what Edward sought, so he carried off the Stone of Destiny. Doubtless, he also believed that this "disaster," as the Scots regarded it, would break the spirit of the northern kingdom. In this, of course, he was greatly mistaken, as Bannockburn abundantly proved.

There was another reading of the legend, however. It was this—that wherever the stone went there a Scot should rule. And, with the death of Elizabeth, the crown of England devolved upon a pure Scot, James VI. of Scotland becoming James I. of Great Britain and Ireland. It is, too, by virtue of his Stuart blood that King George sits to-day on the throne of Britain.

Since the day that Edward I. carried the Stone of Destiny from Scone and deposited it in the Abbey, every English sovereign, with one exception, has been crowned upon it. That one exception was Mary, the unhappy daughter of Henry VIII., and Katharine of Aragon.

But what ground is there for believing that this stone is the identical one which Jacob set up at Bethel? It is not improbable that it was the original stone on which the ancient Irish kings were crowned on the hill of Tara, and that it was removed by Fergus to Argyll, and thence by King Kenneth in the ninth century—or about the time of Alfred the Great—to Scone.

But this piece of "possible history" does not carry us much nearer to the Jordan Valley, and, seeing that the Stone of Destiny is a piece of Scottish granite, its place of origin may, after all, have been in Scotland.

Training Insect Army.

Insects are being trained by policemen by a British scientist. He plans to release swarms of minute creatures to fight other insects, which destroy or harm crops. For instance, caterpillars can be prevented from ruining trees and so on by turning against them hordes of other caterpillars, trained to have cannibal instincts, so that they will fight and eat pests. The inventor of this aid to farmers and gardeners considers that one of his greatest successes is the production of a slug-tiger. This creature, called a testacolia, has very sharp jaws, with which it pierces the slugs and eats them. Almost any kind of insect pest can be fought by other insects, and as time goes on it may be possible to make the process of destruction absolutely natural. That is to say, the insect-killers will breed without any assistance from science. The only unsolved point is whether the slayers will eventually become more of a nuisance than the slain.

Conan's death, in 421, Christianity, that had been introduced with the Briton immigrants, had been established and paganism abolished over a large part of the country. In the Middle Ages the dukes of Brittany exercised semi-royal prerogatives, and the people had a separate parliament for many years preceding the French Revolution. At the outbreak of the momentous struggle the Bretons lived up to their reputation for conservatism and remained loyal to the monarchy, and forcibly resisted the establishment of the republic long after the other parts of France had accepted the new regime. This sanguinary chapter in the history of the country has been vividly portrayed in Balzac's stirring novel, "The Chouans."

The Britons, at first the friends and kindred of the Bretons, eventually became their hereditary enemies. For centuries the British privateers and naval vessels ravaged this coast, blockaded the harbors, bombarded the towns, landed fighting parties, and the long-continued and deep-seated animosity thus engendered still abides in this land, where change in habits and customs and sentiment occur very slowly.

The present population of Brittany is about 3,250,000. The principal cities are Brest, the great naval port of France, beautifully located on one of the best harbors in all Europe; Rennes, in the interior, brought prominently to the world's notice some years ago as the scene of Dreyfus' first trial; and Nantes, on the Loire, the largest and one of the most interesting places in all Brittany. Its chief attraction is its hoary age and romantic history. It is mentioned by Caesar, Pliny, and other writers of their time, and was a city of note long before Caesar divided all Gaul into three parts. In the Middle Ages it was one of the most valuable possessions of the semi-royal dukes of Brittany, and when, in 1495, Anne of Brittany here wedded Louis XII it passed to the crown of France. During the revolution it was the scene of the most atrocious massacres, and in 1793 fully 30,000 men, women and children were here butchered.

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