

Allen Grant

**Cities of Belgium. Grant
Allen's Historical Guides**



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Cities of Belgium / Grant Allen's Historical Guides:

ISBN <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/49690>

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

RECENT alterations, especially in the Brussels Gallery, make a new edition of this book imperative, and, as I had been with my father during its inception, I have undertaken such revision as is necessary. In the main, however, my work has been merely mechanical, and the guide remains substantially identical in detail with that originally published in 1897.

Since that date it has been remarked in more than one quarter that many interesting towns and objects have been omitted. I can only reply that it would be impossible to deal exhaustively with a country so rich in historical and artistic interest as Belgium in a single volume of this size, and that my father only professed to point out such sights in the chief towns as seemed to him most worthy of interest.

To alter even slightly the work of an author (especially when, as in this case, that author is powerless to object) is a task to be

approached with the utmost diffidence, and I can only trust that those who use this book will impute all blame for any errors or omissions wholly to me, rather than to one who is beyond the reach of criticism.

JERRARD GRANT ALLEN.

July, 1902.

INTRODUCTION

THE object and plan of these Historical Handbooks is somewhat different from that of any other guides at present before the public. They do not compete or clash with such existing works; they are rather intended to supplement than to supplant them. My purpose is not to direct the stranger through the streets and squares of an unknown town towards the buildings or sights which he may desire to visit; still less is it my design to give him practical information about hotels, cab fares, omnibuses, tramways, and other every-day material conveniences. For such details, the traveller must still have recourse to the trusty pages of his Baedeker, his Joanne, or his Murray. I desire rather to supply the tourist who wishes to use his travel as a means of culture with such historical and antiquarian information as will enable him to understand, and therefore to enjoy, the architecture, sculpture, painting, and minor arts of the towns he visits. In one word, it is my object to give the reader in a very compendious form the result of all those inquiries which have naturally suggested themselves to my own mind during thirty-five years of foreign travel, the solution of which has cost myself a good deal of research, thought, and labour, beyond the facts which I could find in the ordinary handbooks.

For several years past I have devoted myself to collecting and arranging material for a set of books to embody the idea

I had thus entertained. I earnestly hope they may meet a want on the part of tourists, especially Americans, who, so far as my experience goes, usually come to Europe with an honest and reverent desire to learn from the Old World whatever of value it has to teach them, and who are prepared to take an amount of pains in turning their trip to good account which is both rare and praiseworthy. For such readers I shall call attention at times to other sources of information.

These guide-books will deal more particularly with the Great Towns where objects of art and antiquity are numerous. In every one of them, the general plan pursued will be somewhat as follows. First will come the inquiry why a town ever gathered together at all at that particular spot – what induced the aggregation of human beings rather there than elsewhere. Next, we shall consider why that town grew to social or political importance and what were the stages by which it assumed its present shape. Thirdly, we shall ask why it gave rise to that higher form of handicraft which we know as Art, and towards what particular arts it especially gravitated. After that, we shall take in detail the various strata of its growth or development, examining the buildings and works of art which they contain in historical order, and, as far as possible, tracing the causes which led to their evolution. In particular, we shall lay stress upon the origin and meaning of each structure as an organic whole, and upon the allusions or symbols which its fabric embodies.

A single instance will show the method upon which I intend

to proceed better than any amount of general description. A church, as a rule, is built over the body or relics of a particular saint, in whose special honour it was originally erected. That saint was usually one of great local importance at the moment of its erection, or was peculiarly implored against plague, foreign enemies, or some other pressing and dreaded misfortune. In dealing with such a church, then, I endeavour to show what were the circumstances which led to its erection, and what memorials of these circumstances it still retains. In other cases it may derive its origin from some special monastic body – Benedictine, Dominican, Franciscan – and may therefore be full of the peculiar symbolism and historical allusion of the order who founded it. Wherever I have to deal with such a church, I try as far as possible to exhibit the effect which its origin had upon its architecture and decoration; to trace the image of the patron saint in sculpture or stained glass throughout the fabric; and to set forth the connection of the whole design with time and place, with order and purpose. In short, instead of looking upon monuments of the sort mainly as the product of this or that architect, I look upon them rather as material embodiments of the spirit of the age – crystallizations, as it were, in stone and bronze, in form and colour, of great popular enthusiasms.

By thus concentrating attention on what is essential and important in a town, I hope to give in a comparatively short space, though with inevitable conciseness, a fuller account than is usually given of the chief architectural and monumental works

of the principal art-cities. In dealing with Paris, for example, I shall have little to say about such modern constructions as the Champs Élysées or the Eiffel Tower; still less, of course, about the Morgue, the Catacombs, the waxworks of the Musée Grévin, and the celebrated Excursion in the Paris Sewers. The space thus saved from vulgar wonders I shall hope to devote to fuller explanation of Notre-Dame and the Sainte Chapelle, of the mediæval carvings or tapestries of Cluny, and of the pictures or sculptures in the galleries of the Louvre. Similarly in Florence, whatever I save from description of the Cascine and even of the beautiful Viale dei Colli (where explanation is needless and word-painting superfluous), I shall give up to the Bargello, the Uffizi, and the Pitti Palace. The passing life of the moment does not enter into my plan; I regard each town I endeavour to illustrate mainly as a museum of its own history.

For this reason, too, I shall devote most attention in every case to what is locally illustrative, and less to what is merely adventitious and foreign. In Paris, for instance, I shall have more to say about truly Parisian art and history, as embodied in St. Denis, the Île de la Cité, and the shrine of Ste. Geneviève, than about the Egyptian and Assyrian collections of the Louvre. In Florence, again, I shall deal rather with the Etruscan remains, with Giotto and Fra Angelico, with the Duomo and the Campanile, than with the admirable Memlincks and Rubenses of the Uffizi and the Pitti, or with the beautiful Van der Goes of the Hospital of Santa Maria. In Bruges and Brussels, once more,

I shall be especially Flemish; in the Rhine towns, Rhenish; in Venice, Venetian. I shall assign a due amount of space, indeed, to the foreign collections, but I shall call attention chiefly to those monuments or objects which are of entirely local and typical value.

As regards the character of the information given, it will be mainly historical, antiquarian, and, above all, explanatory. I am not a connoisseur – an adept in the difficult modern science of distinguishing the handicraft of various masters, in painting or sculpture, by minute signs and delicate inferential processes. In such matters, I shall be well content to follow the lead of the most authoritative experts. Nor am I an art-critic – a student versed in the technique of the studios and the dialect of the modelling-room. In such matters, again, I shall attempt little more than to accept the general opinion of the most discriminative judges. What I aim at rather is to expound the history and meaning of each work – to put the intelligent reader in such a position that he may judge for himself of the æsthetic beauty and success of the object before him. To recognise the fact that this is a Perseus and Andromeda, that a St. Barbara enthroned, the other an obscure episode in the legend of St. Philip, is not art-criticism, but it is often an almost indispensable prelude to the formation of a right and sound judgment. We must know what the artist was trying to represent before we can feel sure what measure of success he has attained in his representation.

For the general study of Christian art, alike in architecture,

sculpture, and painting, no treatises are more useful for the tourist to carry with him for constant reference than Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*, and *Legends of the Madonna* (London, Longmans). For works of Italian art, both in Italy and elsewhere, Kugler's *Italian Schools of Painting* is an invaluable *vade-mecum*. These books should be carried about by everybody everywhere. Other works of special and local importance will occasionally be noticed under each particular city, church, or museum.

I cannot venture to hope that handbooks containing such a mass of facts as these will be wholly free from errors and misstatements, above all in early editions. I can only beg those who may detect any such to point them out, without unnecessary harshness, to the author, care of the publisher, and if possible to assign reasons for any dissentient opinion.

GRANT ALLEN

HOW TO USE THESE GUIDEBOOKS

*THE portions of this book intended to be read at leisure at home, before proceeding to explore each town or monument, are enclosed in brackets [thus]. The portion relating to each **principal object** should be quietly read and digested **before** a visit, and referred to again afterwards. The portion to be read **on the spot** is made as brief as possible, and is printed in large legible type, so as to be easily read in the dim light of churches, chapels, and galleries. The **key-note words** are printed in **bold type**, to catch the eye. Where objects are numbered, the numbers used are always those of the latest official catalogues.*

*Baedeker's Guides are so printed that each principal portion can be detached entire from the volume. The traveller who uses Baedeker is advised to carry in his pocket one such portion, referring to the place he is then visiting, together with the plan of the town, while carrying this book in his hand. These Guides do **not** profess to supply practical information.*

Individual works of merit are distinguished by an asterisk (); those of very exceptional interest and merit have two asterisks. **Nothing** is noticed in this book which does not seem to the writer worthy of attention.*

*See little at a time, and see it thoroughly. **Never** attempt to "do"*

*any place or any monument. By following strictly the order in which objects are noticed in this book, you will gain a conception of the **historical evolution** of the town which you cannot obtain if you go about looking at churches and palaces hap-hazard. The order is arranged, not quite chronologically, but on a definite **plan**, which greatly facilitates comprehension of the subject.*

ORIGINS OF THE BELGIAN TOWNS

THE somewhat heterogeneous country which we now call **Belgium** formed **part of Gaul** under the Roman Empire. But though rich and commercial even then, it seems to have been relatively little Romanised; and in the beginning of the 5th century it was overrun by the **Salic Franks**, on their way towards Laon, Soissons, and Paris. When civilization began to creep northward again in the 9th century through the districts barbarised by the Teutonic invasion, it was the Frankish **Charlemagne** (Karl the Great) who introduced Roman arts afresh into the Upper and Lower Rhinelands. The Rhine from Basle to Cologne was naturally the region most influenced by this new Roman revival; but as Charlemagne had his chief seat at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), near the modern Belgian frontier, the western Frankish provinces were also included in the sphere of his improvements. When the kingdom of the Franks began to divide more or less definitely into the Empire and France, the Flemish region formed nominally part of the Neustrian and, later, of the French dominions. From a very early date, however, it was practically almost independent, and it became so even in name during its later stages. But Brabant (with Brussels) remained a portion of the Empire.

The **Rhine** constituted the great central waterway of mediæval Europe; the **Flemish towns** were its **ports** and its manufacturing centres. They filled in the 13th and 14th centuries much the same place that Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester, and Birmingham fill in the 20th. Many causes contributed to this result. Flanders, half independent under its own Counts, occupied a middle position, geographically and politically, between France and the Empire; it was comparatively free from the disastrous wars which desolated both these countries, and in particular (*see* under Ghent) it largely escaped the long smouldering quarrel between French and English which so long retarded the development of the former. Its commercial towns, again, were not exposed on the open sea to the attacks of pirates or hostile fleets, but were safely ensconced in inland flats, reached by rivers or canals, almost inaccessible to maritime enemies. Similar conditions elsewhere early ensured peace and prosperity for Venice. The canal system of Holland and Belgium began to be developed as early as the 12th century (at first for drainage), and was one leading cause of the commercial importance of the Flemish cities in the 14th. In so flat a country, locks are all but unnecessary. The two towns which earliest rose to greatness in the Belgian area were thus **Bruges** and **Ghent**; they possessed in the highest degree the combined advantages of easy access to the sea and comparative inland security. Bruges, in particular, was one of the chief stations of the Hanseatic League, which formed an essentially commercial alliance for the mutual protection of the northern

trading centres. By the 14th century Bruges had thus become in the north what Venice was in the south, the capital of commerce. Trading companies from all the surrounding countries had their “factories” in the town, and every European king or prince of importance kept a resident minister accredited to the merchant Republic.

Some comprehension of the **mercantile condition of Europe** in general during the Middle Ages is necessary in order to understand the early importance and wealth of the Flemish cities. Southern Europe, and in particular Italy, was then still the seat of all higher civilization, more especially of the trade in manufactured articles and objects of luxury. Florence, Venice, and Genoa ranked as the polished and learned cities of the world. Further east, again, Constantinople still remained in the hands of the Greek emperors, or, during the Crusades, of their Latin rivals. A brisk trade existed *viâ* the Mediterranean between Europe and India or the nearer East. This double stream of traffic ran along two main routes – one, by the Rhine, from Lombardy and Rome; the other, by sea, from Venice, Genoa, Florence, Constantinople, the Levant, and India. On the other hand, France was still but a half civilized country, with few manufactures and little external trade; while England was an exporter of raw produce, chiefly wool, like Australia in our own time. The Hanseatic merchants of Cologne held the trade of London; those of Wisby and Lübeck governed that of the Baltic; Bruges, as head of the Hansa, was in close connection with all

of these, as well as with Hull, York, Novgorod, and Bergen. The position of the Flemish towns in the 14th century was thus not wholly unlike that of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston at the present day; they stood as intermediaries between the older civilized countries, like Italy or the Greek empire, and the newer producers of raw material, like England, North Germany, and the Baltic towns.

The local **manufactures** of Flanders consisted chiefly of woollen goods and linens; the imports included Italian luxuries, Spanish figs and raisins, Egyptian dates, Oriental silks, English wool, cattle, and metals, Rhenish wines, and Baltic furs, skins, and walrus tusks.

In the early 16th century, when navigation had assumed new conditions, and trade was largely diverted to the Atlantic, Antwerp, the port of the Schelde, superseded the towns on the inland network. As Venice sank, Antwerp rose.

The **art** that grew up in the Flemish cities during their epoch of continuous commercial development bears on its very face the visible impress of its mercantile origin. France is essentially a monarchical country, and it is centralized in Paris; everything in old French art is therefore regal and lordly. The Italian towns were oligarchies of nobles; so the principal buildings of Florence and Venice are the castles or palaces of the princely families, while their pictures represent the type of art that belongs in its nature to a cultivated aristocracy. But in Flanders, everything is in essence **commercial**. The architecture consists mainly, not of

private palaces, but of guilds, town halls, exchanges, belfries: the pictures are the portraits of solid and successful merchants, or the devotional works which a merchant donor presented to the patron saint of his town or business. They are almost overloaded with details of fur, brocade, jewellery, lace, gold, silver, polished brass, glasswork, Oriental carpets, and richly carved furniture. In order to understand Flemish art, therefore, it is necessary to bear in mind at every step that it is **the art of a purely commercial people.**

Another point which differentiates Flemish painting from the painting of Italy during the same period is the complete absence of any opportunity for the display of frescoes. In the Italian churches, where the walls serve largely for support, and the full southern light makes the size of the windows of less importance, great surfaces were left bare in the nave and aisles, or in the lower part of the choir, crying aloud for decoration at the hands of the fresco-painter. But in the northern Gothic, which aimed above all things at height and the soaring effect, and which almost annihilated the wall, by making its churches consist of rows of vast windows with intervening piers or buttresses, the opportunity for mural decoration occurred but seldom. The climate also destroyed frescoes. Hence the works of pictorial art in Flemish buildings are almost confined to **altar-pieces and votive tablets.** Again, the great school of painting in early Italy (from Giotto to Perugino) was a school of fresco-painters; but in Flanders no high type of art arose till the discovery of oil-

painting. Pictures were usually imported from the Rhine towns. Hence, pictorial art in the Low Countries seems to spring almost full-fledged, instead of being traceable through gradual stages of evolution as in Italy. Most of the best early paintings are small and highly finished; it was only at a comparatively late date, when Antwerp became the leading town, that Italian influence began to produce the larger and coarser canvases of Rubens and his followers.

Very early Flemish art greatly resembles the art of the School of Cologne. Only with Hubert and Jan van Eyck (about 1360-1440) does the distinctively Flemish taste begin to show itself – the taste for delicate and minute workmanship, linked with a peculiar realistic idealism, more dainty than German work, more literal than Italian. It is an art that bases itself upon truth of imitation and perfection of finish: its chief æsthetic beauty is its jewel-like colour and its wealth of decorative adjuncts. The subsequent development of Flemish painting – the painting that pleased a clique of opulent commercial patrons – we shall trace in detail in the various cities.

Whoever wishes to gain a deeper insight into Flemish painting should take in his portmanteau Sir Martin **Conway's "Early Flemish Artists,"** a brilliant and masterly work of the first importance, to which this Guide is deeply indebted.

The **political history** of the country during this flourishing period of the Middle Ages has also stamped itself, though somewhat less deeply, on the character of the towns and of

the art evolved in them. The **Counts of Flanders**, originally mere lords of Bruges and its district, held their dominions of the Kings of France. Their territory included, not only Arras (at first the capital, now included in France) with Bruges, Ghent, Courtrai, Tournay, and Ypres, but also the towns and districts of Valenciennes, Lille, and St. Omer, which are now French. From the time of Baldwin VIII. (1191), however, Arras became a part of France, and **Ghent** was erected into the capital of Flanders. In the beginning of the 13th century, two women sovereigns ruled in succession; under them, and during the absence of the elective Counts on crusades, the towns rose to be practically burgher republics. Bruges, Ypres, Ghent, and Lille were said to possess each 40,000 looms; and though this is certainly a mediæval exaggeration, yet the Flemish cities at this epoch were at any rate the chief manufacturing and trading centres of northern Europe, while London was still a mere local emporium.

In the 14th century, the cities acquired still greater freedom. The citizens had always claimed the right to elect their Count; and the people of Ghent now made treaties without him on their own account with Edward III. of England. To this age belongs the heroic period of the Van Arteveldes at Ghent, when the burghers became the real rulers of Flanders, as will be more fully described hereafter. In 1384, however, Count Louis III. died, leaving an only daughter, who was married to **Philip the Bold of Burgundy**; and the wealthy Flemish towns thus passed under the sway of the powerful princes of Dijon. Brabant fell later by

inheritance to Philip the Good. It was under the **Burgundian dynasty**, who often held their court at Ghent, that the arts of the Netherlands attained their first great development. Philip the Good (1419-1467) employed Jan van Eyck as his court painter; and during his reign or just after it the chief works of Flemish art were produced in Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, and Tournai.

Charles the Bold, the last Duke of Burgundy, left one daughter, Mary, who was married to Maximilian, afterwards Emperor. From that date forward the history of the Flemish towns is practically merged in that of the dynasty of Charles V., and finally becomes the story of an unwilling and ever justly rebellious Spanish province. The subsequent vicissitudes of Belgium as an Austrian appanage, a part of Holland, and an independent kingdom, belong to the domain of European history. For the visitor, it is the period of the Burgundian supremacy that really counts in the cities of Belgium.

Yet the one great point for the tourist to bear in mind is really this – that the art of the Flemish towns is essentially **the art of a group of burgher communities**. It is frankly commercial, neither royal nor aristocratic. In its beginnings it develops a strictly municipal architecture, with a school of painters who aimed at portraiture and sacred panel pictures. After the Reformation had destroyed sacred art in Holland, painting in that part of the Netherlands confined itself to portraits and to somewhat vulgar popular scenes: while in Belgium it was Italianised, or rather Titianised and Veronesed, by Rubens and

his followers. But in its best days it was national, local, and sacred or personal.

Take **Conway's "Early Flemish Artists"** with you in your portmanteau, and read over in the evening his account of the works you have seen during the day.

ORDER OF THE TOUR

IF possible, visit the cities of Belgium in **the order in which they are treated in this Guide**: – Bruges first; then Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp. For this order you will find very good reasons. Bruges is the most antique in tone and the least spoiled of all the Flemish towns; it best exhibits the local peculiarities we have here specially to consider; and it leads up naturally to the other cities. It is true, Memling, the great painter whom we have chiefly to study at Bruges, is later in date than Jan van Eyck, whose principal work (with that of his brother Hubert) is to be seen at Ghent. But historical sequence in this minor matter is somewhat less important than a due apprehension of the general air of an old Flemish town such as those in which the art of the Van Eycks arose; and besides, there is at least one characteristic Van Eyck at Bruges, while there are many Memlings for comparison in other cities.

As a rule, too little time is given by tourists to Bruges and Ghent, and too much to Brussels. I should advise three or four days each to the first-named towns, and a week to the capital.

Those who intend to combine a visit to **Holland** in the same tour should certainly see Belgium in the order here given first, and then proceed to Rotterdam, the Hague, Haarlem, and Amsterdam. For such a sequence, which is geographically the easiest, is also chronologically natural. Bruges is the most

mediæval of all the towns, and has for its principal great artist Memling. Ghent comes next, with the Van Eycks and a few later painters. Brussels represents the end of the Middle Ages, and contains a general metropolitan collection of early and middle Flemish art. Antwerp gives us in particular Quentin Matsys and his contemporaries, as well as Rubens and Van Dyck. And the Dutch towns lead us on through Van Dyck and the later transitionals to Rembrandt, Van der Helst, Frans Hals, and the other mighty masters of Holland. I may add that as the arrangement of this Guide is roughly chronological, the tourist will use it best if he follows its order.

The **Ostend route** takes the towns naturally in the sequence I suggest. Visitors arriving by **Harwich** or **Calais** should not stop first at Antwerp or Brussels, but go straight to Bruges, and then double back again.

I BRUGES

A. ORIGINS OF BRUGES

IN a lost corner of the great lowland flat of Flanders, defended from the sea by an artificial dyke, and at the point of intersection of an intricate network of canals and waterways, there arose in the early Middle Ages a trading town, known in Flemish as **Brugge**, in French as **Bruges** (that is to say, **The Bridge**), from a primitive structure that here crossed the river. (A number of bridges now span the sluggish streams. All of them open in the middle to admit the passage of shipping.) Bruges stood originally on a little river, the **Reye**, once navigable, now swallowed by canals: and the Reye flowed into the **Zwin**, long silted up, but then the safest harbour in the Low Countries. At first the capital of a petty Count, this land-locked internal harbour grew in time to be the Venice of the North, and to gather round its quays, or at its haven of Damme, the ships and merchandise of all neighbouring peoples. Already in 1200 it ranked as the central mart of the Hanseatic League. It was the port of entry for English wool and Russian furs: the port of departure for Flemish broadcloths, laces, tapestries, and linens. Canals soon connected

it with Ghent, Dunkirk, Sluys, Furnes, and Ypres. Its nucleus lay in a little knot of buildings about the Grand' Place and the Hôtel de Ville, stretching out to the Cathedral and the Dyver; thence it spread on all sides till in 1362 it filled the whole space within the existing ramparts, now largely abandoned or given over to fields and gardens. It was the wealthiest town of Europe, outside Italy. In the 14th century, Bruges was frequently the residence of the Counts of Flanders; and in the 15th it became the seat of the brilliant court of the Dukes of Burgundy. Under their rule, the opulent burghers and foreign merchants began to employ a group of famous artists who have made the city a place of pilgrimage for Europe and America, and to adorn the town with most of those buildings which now beautify its decay.

The foreign traders in Bruges lived in "factories" or guilds, resembling monasteries or colleges, and were governed by their own commercial laws. The Bardi of Florence were among its famous merchants: the Medici had agents here: so had the millionaire Fuggers of Augsburg.

Bruges is the best place in which to make **a first acquaintance** with the towns and art of Flanders, because here almost all the principal buildings are mediæval, and comparatively little that is modern comes in to mar the completeness of the picture. We see in it the architecture and the painting of Flanders, in the midst of the houses, the land, and the folk that gave them origin. Brussels is largely modernised, and even Ghent has great living manufactures; but Bruges is **a fossil**

of the 15th century. It was the first to flourish and the first to decay of the towns of Belgium.

The **decline** of the town was due partly to the break-up of the Hanseatic system; partly to the rise of English ports and manufacturing towns; but still more (and especially as compared with other Flemish cities) to the silting of the Zwin, and the want of adaptation in its waterways to the needs of great ships and modern navigation. The old sea entrance to Bruges was through the Zwin, by way of Sluys and Kadzand; up that channel came the Venetian merchant fleet and the Flemish galleys, to the port of Damme. By 1470, it ceased to be navigable for large vessels. The later canal is still open, but as it passes through what is now Dutch territory, it is little used; nor is it adapted to any save ships of comparatively small burden. Another canal, suitable for craft of 500 tons, leads through Belgian territory to Ostend; but few vessels now navigate it, and those for the most part only for local trade. The town has shrunk to half its former size, and has only a quarter of its mediæval population. The commercial decay of Bruges, however, has preserved its charm for the artist, the archæologist, and the tourist; its sleepy streets and unfrequented quays are among the most picturesque sights of bustling and industrial modern Belgium. The great private palaces, indeed, are almost all destroyed: but many public buildings remain, and the domestic architecture is quaint and pretty.

Bruges was the mother of the arts in Flanders. Jan van Eyck lived here from 1428 to 1440: Memling, probably, from 1477

till 1494. Caxton, the first English printer, lived as a merchant at Bruges (in the Domus Anglorum or English factory) from 1446 to 1476, and probably put in the press here the earliest English printed book (though strong grounds have been adduced in favour of Cologne). Colard Mansion, the great printer of Bruges at that date, was one of the leaders in the art of typography.

Those who desire further information on this most interesting town will find it in James Weale's *Bruges et ses Environs*, an admirable work, to which I desire to acknowledge my obligations.

At least two whole days should be devoted to Bruges: more if possible. But the hasty traveller, who has but time for a glimpse, should neglect the churches, and walk round the Grand' Place and the Place du Bourg to the Dyver: spending most of his time at the ****Hôpital de St. Jean**, which contains the glorious works of **Memling**. These are by far the most important objects to be seen in the city. The description in this Guide is written from the point of view of the more leisurely traveller.

Expect the frequent recurrence of the following **symbols** on houses or pictures: (1) the Lion of Flanders, heraldic or otherwise, crowned, and bearing a collar with a pendant cross; (2) the Bear of Bruges; (3) the Golden Fleece (*Toison d'or*), the device of the Order founded by Philippe le Bon in 1430, and appropriate to a country which owed its wealth to wool; it consists of a sheep's skin suspended from a collar. The Flemish emblem of the Swan is also common as a relief or decoration.

St. Donatian, Archbishop of Rheims, is the patron saint. His mark is a wheel with five lighted candles.

B. THE HEART OF THE CITY

[The original **nucleus of Bruges** is formed by the **Bourg**, which stands near the centre of the modern city. In 865, Baldwin Bras-de-Fer, Count of Flanders, built a *château* or *burg* by the Reye, in a corner of land still marked by the modern canal of the Dyver, and near it a chapel, into which he transported the relics of St. Donatian. This *burg* grew in time into the chief palace of the Counts of Flanders, now replaced by the Palais de Justice; while the chapel by its side developed into the first cathedral of Bruges, St. Donatian, now wholly demolished. A bridge hard by crossed the little river Reye; and from this bridge the town ultimately derives its name. The *burg* was built as a *tête-du-pont* to protect the passage. A town of traders gradually sprang up under the protection of the castle, and developed at last into the great trading port of Bruges. To this centre, then, we will first direct ourselves.]

Go from your hotel, down the Rue St. Amand, or the Rue St. Jacques, to the **Grand' Place** or market-place of Bruges, noticing on your way the numerous handsome old houses, with high-pitched roofs and gable-ends arranged like steps, mostly of the 16th and 17th centuries. (Bruges is a Flemish-speaking town: note the true names of the streets in Flemish.)

The very tall square tower which faces you as you enter the Grand' Place is the ***Belfry**, the centre and visible embodiment

of the town of Bruges. The Grand' Place itself was the forum and meeting-place of the soldier-citizens, who were called to arms by the chimes in the Belfry. The centre of the Place is therefore appropriately occupied by a colossal **statue group** (modern) of Pieter de Coninck and Jan Breidel, the leaders of the citizens of Bruges at the Battle of the Spurs before the walls of Courtrai in 1302, a conflict which secured the freedom of Flanders from the interference of the Kings of France. The group is by Devigne. The *reliefs* on the pedestal represent scenes from the battle and its antecedents.

The majestic **Belfry** itself represents the first beginnings of freedom in Bruges. Leave to erect such a bell-tower, both as a mark of independence and to summon the citizens to arms, was one of the first privileges which every Teutonic trading town desired to wring from its feudal lord. This (brick) tower, the pledge of municipal rights, was begun in 1291 (to replace an earlier one of wood), and finished about a hundred years later, the octagon (in stone) at the summit (which holds the bells) having been erected in 1393-96. It consists of three stories, the two lower of which are square and flanked by balconies with turrets; the windows below are of the simple Early Gothic style, but show a later type of architecture in the octagon. The *niche* in the centre contains the Virgin and Child (restored, after being destroyed by the French revolutionists). Below it on either side are smaller figures holding escutcheons. From the balcony between these last, the laws and the rescripts of the Counts were

read aloud to the people assembled in the square.

The Belfry can be **ascended** by steps. Apply to the *concierge*; 25 c. per person. Owing to the force of the wind, it leans slightly to the S.E. The ***view** from the top is very extensive and striking; it embraces the greater part of the Plain of Flanders, with its towns and villages: the country, though quite flat, looks beautiful when thus seen. In early times, however, the look-out from the summit was of practical use for purposes of observation, military or maritime. It commanded the river, the Zwin, and the sea approach by Sluys and Damme; the course of the various canals; and the roads to Ghent, Antwerp, Tournai, and Courtrai. The Belfry contains a famous set of **chimes**, the mechanism of which may be inspected by the visitor. He will have frequent opportunities of hearing the beautiful and mellow carillon, perhaps to excess. The existing bells date only from 1680: the mechanism from 1784.

The square building on either side of the Belfry, known as **Les Halles**, was erected in or about 1248, and is a fine but sombre specimen of Early Gothic civic architecture. The wing to the left was originally the **Cloth Hall**, for the display and sale of the woollen manufactures of Ghent and Bruges. It is now used as municipal offices. A door to the L. gives access to a small Museum of Antiquities on the ground floor, which may be safely neglected by all save specialist archæologists. (Admission 50 c.) The wing to the right is the meat market.

Now, stand with your back to the Belfry to survey the **Square**.

The brick building on your right is the Post Office (modern); the stone one beyond it (also modern) is the Palace of the Provincial Government of Flanders. Both have been erected in a style suitable to the town. In the Middle Ages, ships could come up to this part of the Grand' Place to discharge their cargo. The quaint houses that face you, with high-pitched gable-ends, are partly modern, but mostly old, though restored. On the left (W.) side of the Place, at the corner of the Rue St. Amand, stands the square castle-like building known as *Au Lion de Flandre* and marked by its gold lion. It is one of the best brick mediæval buildings in Bruges. According to a doubtful tradition, it was occupied by Charles II. of England during his exile, when he was created by the Brugeois King of the Crossbowmen of St. Sebastian (see later). In the house beside it, known as the Craenenburg, the citizens of Bruges imprisoned Maximilian, King of the Romans, from the 5th to the 17th of February, 1488, because he would not grant the care of his son Philip, heir to the crown of the Netherlands, to the King of France. They only released him after he had sworn before an altar erected at the spot, on the Host, the true Cross, and the Relics of St. Donatian, to renounce his claim to the guardianship of his son, and to grant a general amnesty. However, he was treacherously released from his oath by a congress of Princes convened a little later by his father, the Emperor Frederic IV.

From the corner of the Post Office, take the short Rue Breydel to the **Place du Bourg**, the still more intimate centre and focus

of the early life of Bruges. This Place contained the old Palace of the Counts of Flanders, and the original Cathedral, both now destroyed, as well as the Town Hall and other important buildings still preserved for us.

The tallest of the three handsome edifices on the S. side of the Square (profusely adorned with sculpture) is the ****Hôtel de Ville**, a beautiful gem of Middle Gothic architecture, begun about 1376, and finished about 1387. This is one of the finest pieces of civic architecture in Belgium. The *façade*, though over-restored, and the six beautiful turrets and chimneys, are in the main of the original design. The sculpture in the niches, destroyed during the French Revolution, has been only tolerably replaced by modern Belgian sculptors in our own day. The lower tier contains the Annunciation, R. and L. of the doorway, with figures of various saints and prophets. In the tiers above this are statues of the Counts of Flanders of various ages. The *reliefs* just below the windows of the first floor represent episodes from Biblical history: – David before Saul, David dancing before the Ark, the Judgment of Solomon, the Building of Solomon's Temple, and other scenes which the visitor can easily identify. The Great Hall in the interior is interesting only for its fine pendant Gothic wooden roof.

The somewhat lower building, to the right of the Hôtel de Ville, is the ****Chapelle du Saint Sang**. The decorated portal round the corner also forms part of the same building.

[In the 12th and 13th centuries (age of the Crusades) the

chivalrous and credulous knights of the North and West who repaired to the Holy Land, whether as pilgrims or as soldiers of the Faith, were anxious to bring back with them relics of the saints or of still more holy personages. The astute Greeks and Syrians with whom they had to deal rose to the occasion, and sold the simple Westerns various sacred objects of more or less doubtful authenticity at fabulous prices. Over these treasured deposits stately churches were often raised; for example, St. Louis of France constructed the Sainte Chapelle in Paris, to contain the Crown of Thorns and part of the True Cross, which he had purchased at an immense cost from Baldwin, Emperor of Constantinople. Among the earlier visitors to the Holy Land who thus signalised their journey was Theodoric of Alsace, elected Count of Flanders in 1128; he brought back with him in 1149 some drops of the **Holy Blood** of the Saviour, said to have been preserved by Joseph of Arimathea, which he presented to his faithful city of Bruges. Fitly to enshrine them, Theodoric erected a chapel in the succeeding year, 1150; and this early church forms the lower floor of the existing building. Above it, in the 15th century, when Bruges grew richer, was raised a second and more gorgeous chapel (as at the Sainte Chapelle), in which the holy relic is now preserved. Almost all the works of art in the dainty little oratory accordingly bear special reference to the Holy Blood, its preservation, and its transport to Bruges. The dedication is to **St. Basil**, the founder of eastern monasticism – a Greek Father little known in the West,

whose fame Theodoric must have learned in Syria. The nobles of Flanders, it must be remembered, were particularly active in organising the Crusades.]

The **exterior** has a fine figure of St. Leonard (holding the fetters which are his symbol) under a Gothic niche. He was the patron of Christian slaves held in duress by the Saracens. The beautiful flamboyant **portal** and **staircase**, round the corner, erected in 1529-1533, in the ornate decorative style of the period, have (restored) figures of Crusaders and their Queens in niches, with incongruous Renaissance busts below.

To visit the **interior**, ring the bell in the corner: admission, 50 c. per person.

The **Museum** of the Brotherhood of the Holy Blood, on the first floor, which we first visit, contains by the **left wall** the handsome silver-gilt Reliquary (of 1617), studded with jewels, which encloses the drops of the Holy Blood. The figures on it represent Christ (the source of the Blood), the Blessed Virgin, St. Basil (patron of the church), and St. Donatian (patron of the town). The Blood is exhibited in a simpler *châsse* in the chapel every Friday; that is to say, on the day of the Crucifixion. The great Reliquary itself is carried in procession only, on the Monday after the 3rd of May. Right and left of the *châsse* are portraits of the members of the Confraternity of the Holy Blood by P. Pourbus, 1556: unusually good works of this painter. A triptych to the right, by an unknown master of the early 16th century, figures the Crucifixion, with special reference to the

Holy Blood, representing St. Longinus in the act of piercing the side of Christ (thus drawing the Blood), with the Holy Women and St. John in attendance; on the wings, the Way to Calvary, and the Resurrection.

Between the windows is a curious chronological picture of the late 15th century, representing the History of Our Lady in the usual stages, with other episodes. To the R. of it, a painting of the 15th century shows Count Theodoric receiving the Holy Blood from his brother-in-law, Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, and the bringing of the Holy Blood to Bruges.

On the **right wall** there is a famous ***trptych** by Gerard David (the finest work here), representing the Deposition in the Tomb, with the Maries, St. John, Nicodemus, and an attendant holding a dish to contain the Holy Blood, which is also seen conspicuously flowing from the wounds; the left wing shows the Magdalen with Cleophas; the right wing, the preservation of the Crown of Thorns by Joseph of Arimathea. The portrait character of the faces is admirable: stand long and study this fine work.

The original designs for the windows of the Chapel are preserved in a **glass case** by the window; behind which are fragments of early coloured glass; conspicuous among them, St. Barbara with her tower.

On the **exit wall** is a fine piece of late Flemish tapestry, representing the bringing of the body of St. Augustine to Pavia, with side figures of San Frediano of Lucca and Sant' Ercolano of Perugia – executed, no doubt, for an Italian patron.

The **Chapel** itself, which we next enter, is gorgeously decorated in polychrome, recently restored. The stained glass windows, containing portraits of the Burgundian Princes from the beginning of the dynasty down to Maria Theresa and Francis I., were executed in 1845 from earlier designs. The large window facing the High Altar is modern. It represents appropriately the history of the Passion, the origin of the Sacred Blood, its Transference to Bruges, and the figures of the Flemish Crusaders engaged in its transport. At the summit of the window, notice the frequent and fitting symbol of the pelican feeding its young with its own blood.

In the little **side chapel** to the R., separated from the main building by an arcade of three arches, is the *tabernacle* or canopy from which the Sacred Blood is exhibited weekly. To the right is hung a Crown of Thorns. Notice, also, the Crown of Thorns held by the angel at the top of the steps. The window to the L. (modern) represents St. Longinus, the centurion who pierced the side of Christ, and St. Veronica, displaying her napkin which she gave to the Saviour to wipe his face on the way to Calvary, and which retained ever after the impress of the Divine Countenance. Almost all the other objects in the chapel bear reference, more or less direct, to the Holy Blood. Observe particularly in the main chapel the handsome modern High Altar with its coloured reliefs of scenes of the Passion. Such scenes as the Paschal Lamb on its base, with the Hebrew smearing the lintel of the door, are of course symbolical.

The **Lower Chapel**, to which we are next conducted, is a fine specimen of late Romanesque architecture. It was built by Theodoric in 1150. Its solid short pillars and round arches contrast with the lighter and later Gothic of the upper building. The space above the door of the eastern of the two chapels which face the entrance, is occupied by an interesting mediæval relief representing a baptism with a dove descending. Notice as you pass out, from the Place outside, the two beautiful *turrets* at the west end of the main chapel.

To the left of the Hôtel de Ville stands the ornate and much gilded Renaissance building known as the ***Maison de l'Ancien Greffe**, originally the municipal record office, but now employed as a police-court. It bears the date 1537, and has been recently restored and profusely covered with gold decoration. Over the main doorway is the Lion of Flanders; on the architrave of the first floor are heads of Counts and Countesses; and the building is surmounted by a figure of Justice, with Moses and Aaron and emblematical statues. Note the Golden Fleece and other symbols. The interior is uninteresting.

The E. side of the square is formed by the **Palais de Justice**, which stands on the site of an old **palace of the Counts of Flanders**, presented by Philippe le Beau to the Liberty of Bruges, and employed by them as their town hall of the *Buitenpoorters*, or inhabitants of the district outside the gate, known as the *Franc de Bruges*. The Renaissance building, erected between 1520 and 1608, was burnt down and replaced in the

18th century by the very uninteresting existing building. Parts of the old palace, however, were preserved, one room in which should be visited for the sake of its magnificent ****chimney-piece**. In order to see it, enter the quadrangle: the porter's room faces you as you enter; inquire there for the key; admission, 50 c. per person. The *concierge* conducts you to the Court-Room, belonging to the original building. Almost the entire side of the room is occupied by a splendid Renaissance chimney-piece, executed in 1529, after designs by Lancelot Blondeel of Bruges (a painter whose works are frequent in the town), and Guyot de Beaugrant of Malines, for the Council of the Liberty of Bruges, in honour of Charles V., as a memorial of the Treaty of Cambrai, in 1526. (This was the treaty concluded after the battle of Pavia, by which François Ier of France was compelled to acknowledge the independence of Flanders. Some of the figures in the background are allusive to the victory.) The lower part, or chimney-piece proper, is of black marble. The upper portion is of carved oak. The marble part has four bas-reliefs in white alabaster by Guyot de Beaugrant, representing the History of Susannah, a mere excuse for the nude: (1) Susannah and the Elders at the Bath; (2) Susannah dragged by the Elders before the Judge; (3) Daniel before the Judge exculpating Susannah; (4) The Stoning of the Elders. The genii at the corners are also by Beaugrant. The whole is in the pagan taste of the Renaissance. The upper portion in oak contains in the centre a statue of Charles V., represented in his capacity as Count of Flanders (as

shown by the arms on his cuirass): the other figures represent his descent and the cumulation of sovereignties in his person. On the throne behind Charles (ill seen) are busts of Philippe le Beau, his father, through whom he inherited the Burgundian dominions, and Johanna (the Mad) of Spain, his mother, through whom he inherited the united Peninsula. The statues L. and R. are those of his actual royal predecessors. The figures to the L. are his paternal grandfather, the Emperor Maximilian, from whom he derived his German territories, and his paternal grandmother, *Mary of Burgundy, who brought into the family Flanders, Burgundy, etc. Mary is represented with a hawk on her wrist, as she was killed at twenty-five by a fall from her horse while out hawking. (We shall see her tomb later at Notre-Dame.) The figures on the R. are those of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, the maternal grandfather and grandmother of Charles, from whom he inherited the two portions of his Spanish dominions. The medallions at the back represent the personages most concerned in the Treaty of Cambrai, and the Victory of Pavia which rendered it possible. (De Lannoy, the conqueror, to whom François gave up his sword, and Margaret of Austria.) The tapestry which surrounds the hall is modern; it was manufactured at Ingelmünster after the pattern of a few old fragments found in the cellars of the ancient building. The mediocre painting on the wall depicts a sitting of the court of the Liberty of Bruges in this room (1659).

The N. side of the square is now occupied by a small Place

planted with trees. Originally, however, the **old cathedral** of Bruges occupied this site. It was dedicated to St. Donatian, the patron of the city, whose relics were preserved in it; but it was barbarously destroyed by the French Revolutionary army in 1799, and the works of art which it contained were dispersed or ruined. Figures of St. Donatian occur accordingly in many paintings at Bruges. Jan van Eyck was buried in this cathedral, and a **statue** has been erected to him under the trees in the little Place. In order, therefore, mentally to complete the picture of the Place du Bourg in the 16th century, we must imagine not only the Hôtel de Ville, the Chapelle du Saint Sang, and the Ancien Greffe in something approaching their existing condition, but also the stately cathedral and the original Renaissance building of the *Franc de Bruges* filling in the remainder.

An archway spans the space between the Ancien Greffe and the Hôtel de Ville. Take the narrow street which dives beneath it, looking back as you pass at the archway with its inscription of S.P.Q.B. (for Senatus Populusque Brugensis). The street then leads across a bridge over the river Reye or principal canal, and affords a good view of the back of the earlier portion of the Palais de Justice, with its picturesque brick turrets, and a few early arches belonging to the primitive palace. I recommend the visitor to turn to the R. after crossing the bridge, traverse the little square, and make his way home by the bank of the Dyver and the church of Notre-Dame. The view towards the Hôtel de Ville and the Belfry, from the part of the Dyver a little to the east behind

the Belfry, is one of the most picturesque and striking in Bruges.

C. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN

[The **Hospital of St. John**, one of the most ancient institutions in Bruges, or of its kind in Europe, was founded not later than 1188, and still retains, within and without, its mediæval arrangement. **Its Augustinian brothers and nuns** tend the sick in the primitive building, now largely added to. It derives its chief interest for the tourist, however, from its small **Picture Gallery**, the one object in Bruges which must above everything else be visited. This is the only place for studying in full the exquisite art of **Memling**, whose charming and poetical work is here more fully represented than elsewhere. In this respect the Hospital of St. John may be fitly compared with the two other famous “one-man shows” of Europe – the Fra Angelicos at San Marco in Florence, and the Giotto in the Madonna dell’ Arena at Padua. Many of the pictures were painted for the institution which they still adorn; so that we have here the opportunity of seeing works of mediæval art in the precise surroundings which first produced them.

Hans Memling, whose name is also written *Memlinc* and *Memlin*, etc. (long erroneously cited as *Hemling*; through a mistaken reading of the initial in his signature) is a painter of whom little is known, save his work; but the work is the man, and therefore amply sufficient. He was born about 1430, perhaps in Germany, and is believed to have been a pupil of Roger van der Weyden, the Brussels painter,

whose work we shall see later at Antwerp and elsewhere. Mr. Weale has shown that he was a person of some wealth, settled at Bruges in his own house (about 1478), and in a position to lend money to the town. He died in 1495. His period of activity as a painter is thus coincident with the earlier work of Carpaccio and Perugino in Italy; and he died while Raphael was still a boy. In relation to the artists of his own country, whose works we have still to see, Memling was junior by more than a generation to Jan van Eyck, having been born about ten years before Van Eyck died; he was also younger by thirty years than Roger van der Weyden; and by twenty or thirty years than Dierick Bouts; but older by at least twenty than Gerard David. Memling has been called the Fra Angelico of Flanders; but this is only true so far as regards Fra Angelico's panel works; the saintly Frate, when he worked in fresco, adopted a style wholly different from that which he displays in his miniature-like altar-pieces. It would be truer to say that Memling is the Benozzo Gozzoli of the North: he has the same love of decorative adjuncts, and the same naïve delight in the beauty of external nature.

Before visiting the Hospital, it is also well to be acquainted in outline with **the history of St. Ursula**, whose *châsse* or **shrine** forms one of its greatest treasures. The Hospital possessed an important relic of the saint – her holy arm – and about 1480-1489 commissioned Memling to paint scenes from her life on the shrine destined to contain this precious deposit. The chest or reliquary which he adorned for the purpose forms the very best work of

Memling's lifetime.

St. Ursula was a British (or Bretonne) princess, brought up as a Christian by her pious parents. She was sought in marriage by a pagan prince, Conon, said to be the son of a king of England. The English king, called Agrippinus in the legend, sent ambassadors to the king of Britain (or Brittany) asking for the hand of Ursula for his heir. But Ursula made three conditions: first, that she should be given as companions ten noble virgins, and that she herself and each of the virgins should be accompanied by a thousand maiden attendants; second, that they should all together visit the shrines of the saints; and third, that the prince Conon and all his court should receive baptism. These conditions were complied with; the king of England collected 11,000 virgins; and Ursula, with her companions, sailed for Cologne, where she arrived miraculously without the assistance of sailors (but Memling adds them). Here, she had a vision of an angel bidding her to repair to Rome, the threshold of the apostles. From Cologne, the pilgrims went up the Rhine by boat, till they arrived at Basle, where they disembarked and continued their journey on foot over the Alps to Italy. At length they reached the Tiber, which they descended till they approached the walls of Rome. There, the Pope, St. Cyriacus, went forth with all his clergy in procession to meet them. He gave them his blessing, and lest the maidens should come to harm in so wicked a city, he had tents pitched for them outside the walls on the side towards Tivoli. Meanwhile, prince Conon had come on pilgrimage by a different route, and arrived at Rome on the same day

as his betrothed. He knelt with Ursula at the feet of the Pope, and, being baptized, received in exchange the name of Ethereus.

After a certain time spent in Rome, the holy maidens bethought them to return home again. Thereupon, Pope Cyriacus decided to accompany them, together with his cardinals, archbishops, bishops, patriarchs, and many others of his prelates. They crossed the Alps, embarked again at Basle, and made their way northward as far as Cologne. Now it happened that the army of the Huns was at that time besieging the Roman colony; and the pagans fell upon the 11,000 virgins, with the Pope and their other saintly companions. Prince Ethereus was one of the first to die; then Cyriacus, the bishops, and the cardinals perished. Last of all, the pagans turned upon the virgins, all of whom they slew, save only St. Ursula. Her they carried before their king, who, beholding her beauty, would fain have wedded her. But Ursula sternly refused the offer of this son of Satan; whereupon the king, seizing his bow, transfixing her breast with three arrows. Hence her symbol is an arrow; also, she is the patroness of young girls and of virgins, so that her shrine is particularly appropriate in a nunnery.

Most of the bones of St. Ursula and her 11,000 virgins are preserved at Cologne, the city of her martyrdom, where they are ranged in cases round the walls of a church dedicated in her honour; but her arm is here, and a few other relics are distributed elsewhere.

The Hospital is open daily from 9 to 6; Sundays, 3 to 6. 1 franc per person. If you have Conway, take it with you.]

From the Grand' Place, turn down the Rue des Pierres, the principal shopping street of Bruges, with several fine old *façades*, many of them dated. At the Place Simon Stévin turn to the L., and go straight on as far as the church of Notre-Dame. The long brick building with Gothic arches, on your right, is the ****Hospital of St. John** the Evangelist.

First, examine the brick Gothic **exterior**. Over the outer doorway is the figure of a bishop with a flaming heart, the emblem of St. Augustine, this being an Augustinian hospital. Continue on to the original main portal (now bricked up) with a broken pillar, and two 13th century reliefs in the tympanum. That to the *right* represents the Death of the Virgin, with the Apostles grouped around, and the figure of the Christ receiving her naked new-born soul as usual. Above is the Coronation of Our Lady. That to the *left* seems like a reversed and altered *replica* of the same subject, with perhaps the Last Judgment above it. It is, however, so much dilapidated that identification is difficult. (Perhaps the top is a Glory of St. Ursula.) Go on as far as the little bridge over the canal, to inspect the picturesque river front of the Hospital.

Return to the main portal and ring the inner bell. Admission, see above. The **pictures** are collected in the former Chapter-house of the Hospital, above the door of which is another figure of St. Augustine.

The centre of the room is occupied by the famous *châsse* or ****shrine** containing the arm of **St. Ursula**, a dainty little

Gothic chapel in miniature. It is painted with exquisite scenes from the legend, by Memling, with all the charm of a fairy tale. He treats it as a poetical romance. Begin the story on the side towards the window. (For a penetrating criticism of these works, see Conway.)

1st panel, on the left: St. Ursula and her maidens, in the rich dress of the Burgundian court of the 15th century, arrive at Cologne, the buildings of which are seen in the background, correctly represented, but not in their true relations. In a window in the background to the R., the angel appears to St. Ursula in a vision.

2nd panel: the Virgins arrive at Basle and disembark from the ships. In the background, they are seen preparing to make their way, one by one, across the Alps, which rise from low hills at the base to snowy mountains. From another ship Conon and his knights are disembarking.

***3rd panel*: (the most beautiful:) the Maidens arrive at Rome. In the distance they are seen entering the city through a triumphal arch; in the foreground, St. Ursula kneels before St. Cyriacus and his bishops, with their attendant deacons, all the faces having the character of portraits. (Note especially the fat and jolly ecclesiastic just under the arch.) At the same time, her betrothed, Conon, with his knights, arrives at Rome by a different road, and is seen kneeling in a red robe trimmed with rich fur beside St. Ursula. (Fine portrait faces of Conon and an old courtier behind him.) The Pope and his priests are

gathered under the portals of a beautiful round-arched building, whose exquisite architecture should be closely examined. To the extreme R., the new converts and Conon receive baptism naked in fonts after the early fashion. In the background of this scene, St. Ursula receives the Sacrament. (She may be recognised throughout by her peculiar blue-and-white dress, with its open sleeves.) To the left of her, Conon makes confession. In this, as in the other scenes, several successive moments of the same episode are contemporaneously represented. Look long at it.

Now, **turn round** the shrine, which swings freely on a pivot, to see the scenes of the return journey.

1st panel: (beginning again at the left:) the Pope and his bishops and cardinals embark with St. Ursula in the boat at Basle on their way to Cologne. Three episodes are here conjoined: the Pope cautiously stepping into a ship; the Pope seated; the ship sailing down the Rhine. All the faces here, and especially the timid old Pope stepping into the boat, deserve careful examination. In the background, the return over the Alps.

**2nd panel:* the Maidens and the Pope arrive at Cologne, where they are instantly set upon by the armed Huns. Conon is slain by the thrust of a sword, and falls back dying in the arms of St. Ursula. Many of the maidens are also slaughtered.

**3rd panel:* continuous with the last, but representing a subsequent moment: the Martyrdom of St. Ursula. The King of the Huns, in full armour, at the door of his tent, bends his bow to shoot the blessed martyr, who has refused his advances. Around

are grouped his knights in admirably painted armour. (Note the reflections.) All the scenes have the character of a mediæval romance. For their open-air tone and make-believe martyrdom, see Conway.

At the **ends** of the shrine are two other pictures, (1) *St. Ursula with her arrow, as the protectress of young girls, sheltering a number of them under her cloak (not, as is commonly said, the 11,000 Virgins). Similar protecting figures of the saint are common elsewhere (Cluny, Bologna, etc.). At the opposite end, (2) the Madonna and Child with an apple, and at her feet two Augustinian nuns of this Hospital, kneeling, to represent the devotion of the order.

The **roof** of the shrine is also decorated with pictures. (1) St. Ursula receiving the crown of martyrdom from God the Father, with the Son and the Holy Ghost; at the sides, two angels playing the mandoline and the regal or portable organ; (2) St. Ursula in Paradise, bearing her arrow, and surrounded by her maidens, who shared her martyrdom, together with the Pope and other ecclesiastics in the background. (This picture is largely borrowed from the famous one by Stephan Lochner on the High Altar of Cologne Cathedral, known as the *Dombild*. If you are going on to Cologne, buy a photograph of this now, to compare with Meister Stephan later. His altar-piece is engraved in Conway. If you have it with you, compare them.) At the sides are two angels playing the zither and the violin. (The angels are possibly by a pupil.)

I have given a brief description only of these pictures, but

every one of them ought to be carefully examined, and the character of the figures and of the landscape or architectural background noted. You will see nothing lovelier in all Flanders.

Near the window by the entrance is a ****Triptych**, also by Memling, commissioned by Brother Jan Floreins of this Hospital. The *central panel* represents the **Adoration of the Magi**, which takes place, as usual, under a ruined temple fitted up as a manger. The Eldest of the Three Kings (according to precedent) is kneeling and has presented his gift; Joseph, recognisable (in all three panels) by his red-and-black robe, stands erect behind him, with the presented gift in his hands. The Middle-aged King, arrayed in cloth of gold, with a white tippet, kneels with his gift to the L. of the picture. The Young King, a black man, as always, is entering with his gift to the right. The three thus typify the Three Ages of Man, and also the three known continents, Europe, Asia, Africa. On the L. side of this central panel are figured the donor, Jan Floreins, and his brother Jacob. (Members of the same family are grouped in the well-known "Duchâtel Madonna," also by Memling, in the Louvre.) To the right is a figure looking in at a window and wearing the yellow cap still used by convalescents of the Hospital, (arbitrarily said to be a portrait of Memling.) The *left panel* represents the Nativity, with our Lady, St. Joseph, and two adoring angels. The *right panel* shows the Presentation in the Temple, with Simeon and Anna, and St. Joseph (in red and black) in the background. (The whole thus typifies the Epiphany

of Christ; left, to the Blessed Virgin; centre, to the Gentiles; right, to the Jews.) The *outer panels*, in pursuance of the same idea, have figures, right, of St. John Baptist with the lamb (he pointed out Christ to the Jews), with the Baptism of Christ in the background; and left, St. Veronica, who preserved for us the features of our Lord, displaying his divine face on her napkin. The architectural frame shows the First Sin and the Expulsion from Paradise. Note everywhere the strong character in the men's faces, and the exquisite landscape or architectural backgrounds. Dated 1479. This is Memling's finest altar-piece: its glow of colour is glorious.

By the centre window, a ***triptych**, doubtfully attributed to Memling, represents, in the centre, **the Deposition from the Cross**, with the Holy Blood conspicuous, as might be expected in a Bruges work. In the foreground are St. John, the Madonna, and St. Mary Magdalene; in the background, the preparations for the Deposition in the Tomb. On the **wings**: *left*, Brother Adrian Reins, the donor, with his patron saint, Adrian, bearing his symbol, the anvil, on which his limbs were struck off, and with his lion at his feet; *right*, St. Barbara with her tower, perhaps as patroness of armourers. On the **exterior wings**, *left*, St. Wilgefortis with her tau-shaped cross; *right*, St. Mary of Egypt, with the three loaves which sustained her in the desert.

On the same stand is the beautiful ***diptych** by Memling, representing **Martin van Nieuwenhoven** adoring the Madonna. The *left* panel represents Our Lady and the Child, with an apple,

poised on a beautifully painted cushion. A convex mirror in the background reflects the backs of the figures (as in the Van Eyck of the National Gallery). Through the open window is seen a charming distant prospect. The *right* panel has the fine portrait of the donor, in a velvet dress painted with extreme realism. Note the admirable prayer-book and joined hands. At his back, a stained glass window shows his patron, St. Martin, dividing his cloak for the beggar. Below, a lovely glimpse of landscape. This is probably Memling's most successful portrait. Dated 1487: brought here from the *Hospice* of St. Julian, of which Martin was Master.

In all Flemish art, observe now the **wooden face of the Madonna**— ultimately derived, I believe, from imitation of painted wooden figures, and then hardened into a type. As a rule, the Madonna is the least interesting part of all Flemish painting; and after her, the women, especially the young ones. The men's faces are best, and better when old: character, not beauty, is what the painter cares for. This is most noticeable in Van Eyck, but is true in part even of Memling.

At the end of the room is the magnificent ***trptych** painted by Memling for the **High Altar** of the Church of this Hospital. This is the largest of his works, and it is dedicated to the honour of the two saints (John the Evangelist and John the Baptist) who are patrons of the Hospital. The **central panel** represents Our Lady, seated in an exquisite cloister, on a throne backed with cloth of gold. To the right and left are two exquisite angels, one of whom

plays a regal, while the other, in a delicious pale blue robe, holds a book for Our Lady. Two smaller angels, poised in air, support her crown. To the left, St. Catherine of Alexandria kneels as princess, with the broken wheel and the sword of her martyrdom at her feet. The Child Christ places a ring on her finger; whence the whole composition is often absurdly called "The Marriage of St. Catherine." It should be styled "The Altar-piece of the St. Johns." To the right is St. Barbara, calmly reading, with her tower behind her. When these two saints are thus combined, they represent the meditative and the active life (as St. Barbara was the patroness of arms;) or, more definitely, the clergy and the knighthood. Hence their appropriateness to an institution, half monastic, half secular. In the background stand the two patron saints; St. John Baptist with the lamb (Memling's personal patron), to the left, and St. John the Evangelist with the cup and serpent, to the right. (For these symbols, see Mrs. Jameson.) Behind the Baptist are scenes from his life and preaching. He is led to prison, and his body is burned by order of Julian the Apostate. Behind the Evangelist, he is seen in the cauldron of boiling oil. The small figure in black to the right is the chief donor, Brother Jan Floreins, who is seen further back in his secular capacity as public gauger of wine, near a great crane, which affords a fine picture of mercantile life in old Bruges. The *left wing* represents the life of St. John the Baptist. In the distance is seen the Baptism of Christ. In a room to the left, the daughter of Herodias dances before Herod. The foreground is occupied by

the episode of the Decollation, treated in a courtly manner, very redolent of the Burgundian splendour. Figures and attitudes are charming: only, the martyrdom sinks into insignificance beside the princess's collar. Other minor episodes may be discovered by inspection. (The episodes on either wing overflow into the main pictures.) The *right wing* shows St. John the Evangelist in Patmos, writing the Apocalypse, various scenes from which are realistically and too solidly represented above him, without poetical insight. Memling here attempts to transcend his powers. He has no sublimity. On the *exterior of the wings* are seen the four other members of the society who were donors of the altar-piece; Anthony Zeghers, master of the Hospital, with his patron, St. Anthony, known by his pig and tau-shaped crutch and bell: Jacob de Cueninc, treasurer, accompanied by his patron, St. James the Greater, with his pilgrim's staff and scallop-shell: Agnes Casembrood, mistress of the Hospital, with her patron, St. Agnes, known by her lamb: and Claire van Hulsen, a sister, with her patron, St. Clara. Dated, 1479.

By the entrance door is a **Portrait of Marie Moreel**, represented as a Sibyl. She was a daughter of Willem Moreel or Morelli, a patron of Memling, whom we shall meet again at the Museum. This is a fine portrait of a solid, plain body, a good deal spoiled by attempted cleaning. It comes from the *Hospice* of St. Julian.

As you go out, cast a glance at the fine old brick buildings, and note the cleanliness of all the arrangements.

Return more than once: do not be satisfied with a single visit.

The other pictures and objects formerly exhibited in this Hospital have been transferred to the Potterie and another building. They need only be visited by those whose time is ample.

After leaving the Hospital, I do not advise an immediate visit to the Academy. Let the Memlings first sink into your mind. But the walk may be prolonged by crossing the canal, and taking the second turning to the R., which leads (over a pretty bridge of three arches) to the **Béguinage**, a lay-nunnery for ladies who take no vows, but who live in monastic fashion under the charge of a Superior. Above the gateway is a figure of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, (to whom the church within is dedicated) giving alms to a beggar. She wears her crown, and carries in her hand the crown and book which are her symbol. Remember these, – they will recur later. Pass under the gateway and into the grass-grown precincts for an external glimpse of the quiet old-world close, with its calm white-washed houses. The church, dedicated to St. Elizabeth, is uninteresting. This walk may be further prolonged by the pretty bank of the *Lac d'amour* or *Minnewater* as far as the external canal, returning by the ramparts and the picturesque **Porte de Gand**.

D. THE TOWN IN GENERAL

[The **town of Bruges itself** is more interesting, after all, than almost any one thing in it. Vary your day by giving up the morning to definite sight-seeing, and devoting the afternoon to **strolls** through the town and neighbourhood, in search of picturesqueness. I subjoin a few stray hints for such casual rambles.]

(1) Set out from the Grand' Place, and turn down the Rue Breydel to the Place du Bourg. Cross the Place by the statue of Jan van Eyck; traverse the Rue Philippe Stock; turn up the Rue des Armuriers a little to the R., and continue on to the Place St. Jean, with a few interesting houses. Note here and elsewhere, at every turn, the little statues of the Virgin and Child in niches, and the old signs on the fronts or gables. The interesting **Gothic turret** which faces you as you go belongs to the old 14th Century building called **De Poorters Loodge**, or the Assembly Hall of the Noble Citizens Within the Gate, as opposed to those of the **Franc de Bruges**. Continue on in the same direction to the Place Jan van Eyck, where you open up one of the most charming views in Bruges over the canal and quays. The Place is "adorned" by a modern statue of Jan van Eyck. The dilapidated building to your L. is that of the **Académie des Beaux-Arts** which occupies the site of the Citizens' Assembly Hall: the ancient edifice was wholly rebuilt and spoilt in 1755,

with the exception of the picturesque tower, best viewed from the base of the statue. Opposite you, as you emerge into the Place, is the charming **Tonlieu** or Custom House, whose decorated *façade* and portal (restored) bear the date 1477, with the arms of Pieter van Luxemburg, and the collar of the Golden Fleece. The dainty little neighbouring house to the L., now practically united with it, has a coquettish *façade*: the saints in the niches are St. George, St. John Baptist, St. Thomas à Becket, (or Augustine?) and St. John the Evangelist.

The Tonlieu is now fitted up as the Municipal Library. (Open daily, free, 10 to 1, and 3 to 5, Saturday and Sunday excepted.) It contains illuminated manuscripts and examples of editions printed by Colard Mansion. All round the Place are other picturesque mediæval or Renaissance houses.

The little street to the R. (diagonally) of the Tonlieu leads on to the Marché du Mercredi, now called Place de Memling, embellished by a statue of the great painter. Cross the Place diagonally to the Quai des Espagnoles (Madonna and Child in front of you) and continue along the quay, to the L., to the first bridge; there cross and go along the picturesque Quai des Augustins to the Rue Flamande. (Quaint little window to the left, as you cross the bridge.) Follow the Rue Flamande as far as the Theatre, just before reaching which you pass, right, a handsome mediæval stone mansion, (formerly the Guild of the Genoese Merchants,) with a relief over the door, representing St. George killing the Dragon, and the Princess Cleodolind looking on. At

the Theatre, turn to the R., following the tram-line, and making your way back to the Grand' Place by the Rue des Tonneliers.

(2) As early as 1362, Bruges acquired its existing size, and was surrounded by **ramparts**, which still in part remain. A continuous canal runs round these ramparts, and beyond it again lies an outer moat. Most of the **old gates** have unhappily been destroyed, but four still exist. These may be made the objects of interesting rambles.

Go from your hotel, or from the Grand' Place, by the Rue Flamande, as far as the Rue de l'Académie. Turn along this to the R., into the Place Jan van Eyck, noting as you pass the Bear of Bruges at the corner of the building of the old Academy. Follow the quay straight on till you reach a second canal, near the corner of which, by the Rue des Carmes, is an interesting shop with good beaten brasswork. Take the long squalid Rue des Carmes to the right, past the ugly convent of the English Ladies, with its domed church in the most painful taste of the later Renaissance (1736). The mediæval brick building on your right, at the end of the street, is the late Gothic **Guild-house of the Archers of St. Sebastian**. Its slender octagonal tower has a certain picturesqueness. (St. Sebastian was of course the patron of archery.) Charles II. of England (see under the Grand' Place) was a member of this society during his exile: his bust is preserved here. So also was the Emperor Maximilian. Continue to the **ramparts**, and mount the first hill, crowned by a windmill, – a scene of a type familiar to us in many later

Dutch and Flemish pictures. A picturesque view of Bruges is obtained from this point: the octagonal Belfry, the square tower of St. Sauveur, (the Cathedral), the tapering brick spire of Notre-Dame, with its projecting gallery and the steeple of the new church of the Madeleine are all conspicuous in views from this side. Follow the ramparts to the R., to the picturesque **Porte de Ste. Croix**, and on past the barracks and the little garden to the Quai des Dominicains, returning by the Park and the Place du Bourg or the Dyver.

(3) Set out by the Grand' Place and the Place du Bourg; then follow the Rue Haute, with its interesting old houses, as far as the canal. Do not cross it, but skirt the quay on the further side, with the towers of St. Walburge and St. Gilles in front of you. At the bridge, diverge to the right, round the church of St. Anne, and the quaint little **Church of Jerusalem**, which contains an unimportant imitation of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, founded by a burgomaster of Bruges in the 15th century. It is just worth looking at. Return to the bridge, and follow the quay straight on to the modern Episcopal Seminary and the picturesque old **Hospice de la Potterie**, which now harbours the Museum of Antiquities belonging to the Hospital of St. John. I do not advise a visit. (It contains third-rate early Flemish pictures, inferior tapestry, and a few pieces of carved oak furniture. Admission, 50 c.: entrance by the door just beyond the church, No. F, 79. The church itself is worth a minute's visit.) This walk passes many interesting old houses, which it is not

necessary now to specify. Return by the **Porte de Damme**, and the opposite side of the same canal, to the Pont des Carmes, whence follow the pretty canal on the right to the Rue Flamande.

(4) Take the Rue St. Jacques, and go straight out to the **Porte d' Ostende**, which forms an interesting picture. Cross the canal and outer moat, and traverse the long avenue, past the gasometers, as far as the navigable canal from Bruges to Ostend. Then retrace your steps to the gateway, and return by the ramparts and the Railway Station to the Rue Nord du Sablon.

These four walks will show you almost all that is externally interesting in the streets and canals of the city.

The original Palace of the Counts of Flanders, we saw, occupied the site of the Palais de Justice. Their later residence, the **Cour des Princes**, in a street behind the Hôtel du Commerce, has now entirely disappeared. Its site is filled by a large ornate modern building, belonging to the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who use it as a school for girls.

The water-system of Bruges is also interesting. The original river Reye enters the town at the Minnewater, flows past the Hospital and the Dyver, and turns northward at the Bourg, running under arches till it emerges on the Place Jan van Eyck. This accounts for the apparently meaningless way this branch seems to stop short close to the statue of Van Eyck: also, for the mediæval ships unloading at the Grand' Place. The water is now mostly diverted along the canals and the moat by the ramparts.

***E.* THE CHURCHES**

[The **original Cathedral** of Bruges (St. Donatian) was destroyed, as we saw, by the French, in 1799; but the town still possesses two fine **mediaeval churches** of considerable pretensions, as well as several others of lesser importance. Though of very ancient foundation, the two principal churches in their existing form date only from the most flourishing period of Bruges, the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries.

St. Salvator or **St. Sauveur**, the larger, was erected into the **Cathedral** after the destruction of St. Donatian, whose relics were transferred to it. To this, therefore, we will first direct ourselves.]

Go down the Rue des Pierres as far as

the cathedral,

which replaces a very ancient church built by St. Eligius (St. Éloy) in 646.

Externally, the edifice, which is built of brick, has rather a heavy and cumbrous effect, its chief good features being the handsome square tower and the large decorated windows of the N. and S. Transepts. The Choir and its chapels have the characteristic French form of a *chevêt*. The main portal of the

N. Transept has been robbed of its sculpture. The Choir is of the late 13th century: the Nave and Transept are mainly in the decorated style of the 14th.

The best **entrance** is near the tower on the N. side. Walk straight on into the body of the Nave, by the archway in the heavy tower, so as to view the internal architecture as a whole. The **Nave** and *single Aisles* are handsome and imposing, though the windows on the S. side have been despoiled of their tracery. Notice the curious high-pointed **Triforium** (1362), between the arches of the Nave and the windows of the Clerestory. The **Choir** is closed by a strikingly ugly debased Renaissance or rococo Rood-Screen, (1682), in black-and-white marble, supporting the organ. It has a statue of God the Father by the younger Quellin. The whole of the interior has been decorated afresh in somewhat gaudy polychrome by Jean Béthune. The effect is on the whole not unpleasing.

The Cathedral contains few works of art of high merit, but a preliminary walk round the Aisles, Transept, and Ambulatory behind the Choir will give a good idea of its general arrangement. Then return to view the paintings. The sacristan takes you round and unlocks the pictures. Do not let him hurry you.

Begin with the **Left Aisle**.

The **Baptistery**, on your L., contains a handsome font. R. and L. of the entry to it are admirable brasses. In the Baptistery itself, *L. wall*, are two wings of a rather quaint triptych, representing St. Martin dividing his cloak with the beggar; St. Nicholas raising

to life the three boys who had been salted for meat; St. Mary Magdalen with the pot of ointment (in the distance, as Penitent in the Desert); and St. Barbara with her tower; dated 1613. Also a rude Flemish picture (16th century) of the lives of St. Joachim and St. Anna, and their daughter the Blessed Virgin: – the main episodes are the Marriage of the Virgin, Birth of the Virgin, and Rejection of St. Joachim from the Temple, with other scenes in the background.

The *end wall* of the Baptistery has Peter Pourbus's masterpiece, a *triptych painted for the **Guild of the Holy Sacrament**, attached to the church of St. Sauveur, and allusive to their functions. The *outer wings*, when closed, represent the Miracle of the Mass of St. Gregory, when the Host, as he consecrated it, was changed into the bodily Presence of the Saviour, to silence a doubter. It thus shows in a visible form the tremendous mystery of Transubstantiation, in honour of which the Guild was founded. Behind, the Brothers of the Confraternity are represented (on the right wing) in attendance on the Pope, as spectators of the miracle. One of them holds his triple crown. These may rank among the finest portraits by the elder Pourbus. They show the last stage in the evolution of native Flemish art before it was revolutionized by Rubens. The *inner picture* represents, in the centre, the Last Supper, or rather, the Institution of the Eucharist, to commemorate which fact the Guild was founded. The arrangement of the figures is in the old conventional order, round three sides of a table, with Judas

in the foreground to the left. The *wings* contain Old Testament subjects of typical import, as foreshadowing the Eucharist. *Left*, Melchisedec giving bread and wine to Abraham; *right*, Elijah fed by the angel in the Wilderness. All the faces have still much of the old Flemish portrait character.

On the *R. wall* are the wings of a picture, by F. Pourbus (the son), painted for the Guild of Shoemakers, whose chapel is adjacent. The *inside* contains portraits of the members. On the *outside* are their patrons, St. Crispinus and St. Crispianus, with their shoemakers' knives. Also, an early Crucifixion, of the school of Cologne (about 1400), with St. Catherine holding her wheel and trampling on the tyrant Maximin, by whose orders she was executed, and St. Barbara with her tower. (These two also occur together in Memling's great triptych.) The picture is interesting as the only specimen in Bruges of the precursors of Van Eyck on the lower Rhine. The Baptistry contains, besides, a fine old candlestick, and a quaint ciborium (for the Holy Oil) with coloured reliefs of the Seven Joys of Mary (1536).

The vistas from the **North Transept** are impressive. It terminates in the **Chapel of the Shoemakers' Guild**, with a fine carved wooden door of about 1470, and good brasses, as well as an early crucifix. It is dedicated to the patron saints of the craft, and bears their arms, a boot.

The first two chapels in the **Ambulatory** (behind the Choir) have good screens.

The **third Chapel** encloses the tomb of Archbishop

Carondelet, in alabaster, (1544,) a fine work of the Italian Renaissance. The Descent from the Cross by Claeissens, with the Crown of Thorns and the Holy Blood in the foreground: on the wings, St. Philip, and the donor, under the protection of (the canonized) Charlemagne. Near this is a ***trptych** by Dierick Bouts, (falsely ascribed to Memling) representing, in the *centre*, St. Hippolytus torn to pieces by four horses. (He was the jailor of St. Lawrence, who converted him: *see* Mrs. Jameson). The faces show well the remarkable power of this bourgeois painter of Louvain. On the *left wing* are the donors; on the *right wing* Hippolytus confesses himself a Christian, and is condemned to martyrdom. Over the **altar**, *retable*, a Tree of Jesse, in carved woodwork, with the family of Our Lady: on the wings, (painted,) the legend of St. Hubert and the stag, and the legend of St. Lucy.

In the **Apse** is the Chapel of the Host.

The next **chapel**, of the Seven Sorrows, has a Mater Dolorosa of 1460 (copy of one at Rome); a fine **brass*; and the **portrait* of Philippe le Beau, known as Philippus Stok (father of Charles V), and bearing the collar of the Golden Fleece.

The **Choir**, (admirable architecturally,) contains the **stalls* and arms of the Knights of the Golden Fleece, with good carved Misereres.

The Cathedral contains many other pictures of interest, which, however, do not fall within the scope of these Guides.

The **Chambre des Marguilliers**, or Churchwardens' Vestry, contains manuscripts and church furniture, sufficiently described

by the sacristan.

In the **Sacristy** are still preserved the relics of St. Donatian.

Give the sacristan a franc, and then go round alone again, to inspect the unlocked pictures at your leisure.

On leaving the Cathedral, go round the south side, which affords an excellent view of the chapels built out from the apse. Then take the little Rue du St. Esprit as far as the Church of

Notre-Dame,

which replaces a chapel, built by St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, in 744, and enclosed in the town in 909.

Stand opposite it, in the small Place on the N. side, to observe the somewhat shapeless architecture, the handsome brick tower crowned by a tall brick steeple, and the beautiful little ***porch** or "Paradise," built out from the main structure in flamboyant Gothic of the 15th century. The portal of this porch has been walled up, and the area is now used as a chapel, approached from the interior. Notice the delicate tracery of the windows, the fine finials and niches, and the charming gable-end.

The picturesque building with turrets to the L. of the church was originally the **mansion** of the family **Van der Gruuthuus**, one of the principal mediæval stocks of Bruges. It had a passage communicating with the family gallery in the church of Notre-Dame. The building, recently restored, is now in course of being fitted up for the Town Museum of Antiquities. A Museum of

Lace is already installed in it; the entrance is by a doorway over the bridge to the left (50 c. per person).

Enter the church, and walk straight into the Nave, below the great West Window, a spot which affords a good view of the centre of the church, the vaulted *double* Aisles, and the angular Apse. The Choir is shut off from the body of the church by a very ugly marble Rood-Screen (1722), still bearing its crucifix, and with a figure of Our Lady, patroness of the church, enshrined above its central arch. Rococo statues of the Twelve Apostles, with their well-known symbols (1618), are attached to the pillars. (Note these symbols: they recur in similar situations everywhere.) In spite of hideous disfigurements, the main portion of the interior is still a fine specimen of good middle Gothic architecture, mainly of the 14th century.

Walk up the **outer left Aisle**. The last bay is formed by the **Baptistry**, originally the **porch**, whose beautiful exterior we have already viewed. Its interior architecture is also very charming. It contains the Font, and the usual figure of the patron, St. John the Baptist. This Aisle terminates in an apsidal chapel (of the Holy Cross) containing inferior pictures of the 17th century, representing the history of a relic of the True Cross preserved here.

The **inner left Aisle** leads to the **Ambulatory** or passage at the back of the Choir. The Confessionals to the R. have fairly good rococo carved woodwork, 1689. On the L. is the handsome mediæval woodwork **gallery** (1474), belonging to the Van der

Gruuthuus family, originally approached by a passage from their mansion behind. Beneath it, is a screen of delicate early Gothic architecture, with family escutcheons above the door.

The windows of the **Apse** have good modern stained glass.

On the L., at the entrance to the Apse, Pourbus's Adoration of the Shepherds, a winged picture, closed. The sacristan will open it. On the wings are, *left*, the donor, Sire Josse de Damhoudere, with his patron, St. Josse, and his four sons; *right*, his wife, Louise, with her five daughters, and her patron St. Louis of France, wearing his crown and robe of fleurs-de-lis, and holding the *main de justice*. He is represented older than is usual, or indeed historical, and in features somewhat resembles Henri IV. This is a fine picture for its master. On the outer wings are the cognate subjects, the Circumcision and the Adoration of the Magi, in grisaille.

The chapel in the Apse, formerly the Lady Chapel, now contains the Host. It has a gaudy modern altar for the monstrance.

In the **South Ambulatory**, over a doorway, Foundation of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome, by Claeissens.

A **chapel** to the L., just beyond, locked, but opened by the sacristan (1 franc; or, for a party, according to notice displayed at entrance), contains the celebrated ****tombs of Mary of Burgundy and Charles the Bold**, her father. Mary was the wife of Maximilian, and died by a fall from her horse in 1482, when only twenty-five. Her ****monument** was designed and executed by Peter Beckere of Brussels, by order of her son Philippe le

Beau, in 1502. The sarcophagus is of black marble: the statue of the Princess, in gilt bronze, lies recumbent upon it. The style is intermediate between that of the later Middle Ages and of the full Renaissance. Beside it is the *tomb of Charles the Bold, of far less artistic value. Charles was buried at Nancy, after the fatal battle, but his body was transported to St. Donatian in this town by his descendant Charles V, and finally laid here beside his daughter by Philip II, who had this tomb constructed for his ancestor in imitation of that of Mary.

(I advise the visitor after seeing these tombs and the great chimney-piece of the *Franc de Bruges* to read up the history of Charles the Bold and his descendants, down to Charles V.)

The *east wall* of this chapel, beyond the tomb of Charles the Bold, has a fine picture of Our Lady of Sorrows, enthroned, surrounded by smaller subjects of the Seven Sorrows. Beginning at the left, the Circumcision, the Flight into Egypt, Christ lost by his parents in the Temple, the Way to Calvary, (with St. Veronica holding out her napkin,) the Crucifixion, (with Our Lady, St. John, and Mary Magdalen,) the Descent from the Cross, and the Deposition in the Tomb. A fine work of its sort, attributed to Mostart (or to Maubeuge). On the *west wall* are two wings from a triptych by Pourbus, with tolerable portraits, (centre-piece destroyed,) and an early Flemish painting of the Deposition from the Cross (interesting for comparison with Roger van der Weyden and Gerard David). In the foreground lies the vessel containing the Holy Blood. On the wings are the Crucifixion

and the Resurrection. The whole is very rudely painted. Outside are portraits of the donor and his wife and children, with their patrons St. James (staff and scallop) and St. Margaret (whose dragon just appears in the background).

On an **arcade**, a little further on, is a very early fresco (1350?) of a saint (St. Louis of France?), and also a dainty small relief (about 1500) of a donor, introduced by his patron, St. Peter, adoring Our Lady.

The **end chapel** of the right aisle, that of the Holy Sacrament, contains a celebrated and noble white marble ****Madonna and Child, by Michael Angelo**, enshrined in a black marble niche. The pensive, grave, and graceful face, the exquisite modelling of the dainty naked Child, and the beautiful infantile pose of its left hand, all betray a design of Michael Angelo, though the execution may possibly have been left to pupils. But the modelling is softer and more feminine than is usual with this great sculptor, except in his early period. In this respect, it resembles most the unfinished Madonna in the Bargello at Florence. Condivi mentions that Peter Mouscron of Bruges ordered of Michael Angelo a Madonna and Child in bronze: he was probably mistaken as to the material: and we have here doubtless the work in question. Apart from its great artistic value, this exquisite group is interesting as affording another link between Flanders and Italy.

The same chapel also contains some good 17th century pictures.

Near the confessional, as we return towards the West End of the church, we find a good diptych of Herri met de Bles, of 1520, containing, *left panel*, an Annunciation, with all the conventional elements; to the left, as usual, is the angel Gabriel; to the right, Our Lady. These relative positions are never altered. The lilies in the pot, the desk and book, the bed with its furniture, the arcade in the background, and the rich brocade, are all constant features in pictures of this subject. Look out for them elsewhere. The *right panel* has the Adoration of the Magi, with the Old, Middle-aged, and Young Kings, the last-named a Moor. This quaint and interesting work of a Flemish painter, with its archaic background, and its early Italian reminiscences, also betrays the influence of Dürer. Among the other pictures may be mentioned a triptych in an adjacent small chapel: the *central panel* shows the Transfiguration, with the three apostles below, Moses, Elias, and the Eternal Father above (perhaps by Jan Mostart). On the *wings* (much later, by P. Pourbus), are the portraits of the donor, his wife, and their patron saints.

The **West Wall** of the church has several large pictures of the later Renaissance, which can be sufficiently inspected on their merits by those who care for them. The best of them are the Adoration of the Magi by Seghers, and De Crayer's Adoration of the Infant Jesus. I do not propose to deal at length with later Flemish art till we reach Brussels and Antwerp: at Bruges, it is best to confine oneself to the introductory period of Flemish painting – that of the Burgundian princes. I will therefore only

call attention here to the meaningless way in which huge pictures like B. van Orley's Crucifixion, with subsidiary scenes from the Passion, reproduce the form of earlier winged pictures, which becomes absurd on this gigantic scale.

The **Church of St. Jacques** stands in the street of the same name, conveniently near the Hôtel du Commerce. It is a good old mediæval building (12th century, rebuilt 1457-1518), but hopelessly ruined by alterations in the 17th century, and now, as a fabric, externally and internally uninteresting. Its architecture is in the churchwarden style: its decoration in the upholsterer's. The carved wooden pulpit is a miracle of bad taste (17th century), surpassed only by the parti-coloured marble rood-screen. A few good pictures and decorative objects, however, occur among the mass of paintings ranged round its walls as in a gallery. The best is a **panel** of the old Flemish School (by Dierick Bouts, or more probably a pupil), in the *left aisle*, just beyond the second doorway. It tells very naïvely the History of St. Lucy (see Mrs. Jameson). *Left*, she informs her mother that she is about to distribute her goods to the poor, who are visibly represented in a compact body asking alms behind her. *Centre*, she is hailed before the consul Paschasius by her betrothed, whom she refuses to marry. She confesses herself a Christian, and is condemned to a life of shame. *Right*, she is dragged away to a house of ill-fame, the consul Paschasius accompanying; but two very stumpy oxen fail to move her. The Holy Ghost flits above her head. The details are good, but the figures very wooden. Dated, 1480.

Beside it is an extravagant Lancelot Blondeel of St. Cosmo and St. Damian, the doctor saints, with surgical instruments and pots of ointment. The central picture shows their martyrdom.

Further on hangs a good Flemish triptych (according to Waagen, by Jan Mostart), representing, the prophecies of Christ's coming: *centre*, the Madonna and Child; with King Solomon below, from whom a genealogical tree rises to bear St. Joachim and St. Anna, parents of Our Lady. R. and L. of him, Balaam and Isaiah, who prophesied of the Virgin and Christ: with two Sibyls, universally believed in the Middle Ages to have also foretold the advent of the Saviour. The stem ends in the Virgin and Child. *Left*, the Tiburtine Sibyl showing the Emperor Augustus the vision of the glorious Virgin in the sky: *right*, St. John the Evangelist in Patmos beholding the Apocalyptic vision of the Woman clothed with the Sun. This is a fine work of its kind, and full of the prophetic ideas of the Middle Ages.

Pass round the **Ambulatory** and **Choir** to the *first chapel* at the *east end* of the *right Aisle*. It contains an altar with the Madonna and Child in Della Robbia ware, probably by Luca. Also, a fine tomb of Ferry de Gros and his two wives, the first of whom reposes by his side and the second beneath him. This is a good piece of early Renaissance workmanship (about 1530). The church also contains a few excellent later works by Pourbus and others, which need not be specified. This was the church of the Florentine merchants at Bruges (whence perhaps the Della Robbia) and particularly of the Portinari, who commissioned the

great altar-piece by Van der Goes now in the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova at Florence.

The other churches of Bruges need not detain the tourist, though all contain a few objects of interest for the visitor who has a week or two at his disposition.

F. THE ACADEMY

[The **Académie des Beaux-Arts**, which formerly occupied the *Poorters Loodge* (or Guild Hall of the citizens within the gates) has a small but valuable **collection of pictures**, removed from the destroyed cathedral of St. Donatian and other churches of Bruges, which well repays a visit. You will here have an excellent opportunity for studying *Jan van Eyck*, whose work I shall more particularly notice when we arrive at Ghent. It is interesting, however, here to compare him with his great successor, *Memling*

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