Newspapers by ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/587082540

Downloaded on Jun 15, 2021

PUBLIC LEDGER.

THE PUBLIC LEDGER IS PUBLISHED every afternoon (except Sunday) at No. 14 Jefferson street.

The Public Ledger is served to city subscribers by its own carriers at FIFTEEN CENTS PER WEEK, payable weekly to the carriers. By mail (in advance): One year, $5; six months, $2; three months, $1; one month, 50 cents. Sunday issue, extra.

Speciemens supplied at 5c. cents per copy.

Weekly Public Ledger,

Published every Tuesday at $1 per annum in advance. Postage free.

Communications upon subjects of general interest to the public are at all times acceptable.

Rejected manuscripts will not be returned.

RATES OF ADVERTISING IN DAILY:

First insertion ..... $1 00 per square
Subsequent insertions ..... 50 " "
For one week ..... 3 00 " "
For two weeks ..... 4 00 " "
For three weeks ..... 5 00 " "
For one month ..... 7 00 " "
Each additional square ..... 4 00 " "

RATES OF ADVERTISING IN WEEKLY:

First insertion ..... $1 00 per square
Subsequent insertions ..... 50 " "

Eight lines of nonpareil, solid, constitute a square.

Displayed advertisements will be charged according to the space occupied, at above rates—there being twelve lines of solid type to the inch.

The regular advertisers we offer superior inducements. Apply at the office for charges and manner of changing their favors.

Notices in local column inserted for1 twenty cents per line for each insertion.

Special notices inserted for ten cents per line for each insertion.

Notices of deaths and marriages, twenty cents per line.

All bills for advertising are due when contracted and payable on demand.

All letters, whether upon business or otherwise, must be addressed to

E. WHITMORE,
Publisher and Proprietor.

MISS BREWSTER IN FRANCE.

The Marquis de Locmaria—The Church of St. Jean du Doigt—Curious Old Legend—The Interior of the Church—The Church Treasures.

Special Correspondence Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.]

COTES DU NORD, BRITTANY, FRANCE, September 11, 1877.

Our driver made a mistake and took us first to the little church of Plonegat, which is not far from St. Jean. Plonegat is the village near which lived the gay Marquis de Locmaria. Guerand, his country seat or chateau, was in the environs. Madame de Sevigne mentions him in one of her letters to her daughter. That lively and interesting writer met him at the Etats de Vitre, in 1671, when he was in the very spring time of his brilliant life. She was most enthusiastic over his dancing.

"I wish you could have seen the air of Monsieur de Locmaria," writes this queen of correspondents, "and the way he took off and replaced his hat. What lightness! What perfection! On my word he could defy all the courtiers to equal him. He has 60,000 livres income, il ressemble a tout ce qu'il y a de plus joli, and he would have been very glad to have married you, ma chere."

The Marquis de Locmaria was a son of the Marshal du Parc, and was himself lieutenant general; in 1702 he distinguished himself at the battle of Spires. But when Madame de Sevigne lost her clever head over his graceful dancing and beauty, he was like those gay, reckless courtiers whose naughty doings are chronicled in "l'Oeil de Boeuf," Saint Simon's memoirs, etc., those witty, graceful, elegant, unprincipled noblemen who made up the brilliant court of Louis XIV and Louis XV, and whose wicked Sodom and Gomorrah lives led to the Deluge of Blood of 1789. The traditions of this Breton land say that he was the terror of the peasant husbands; and a droll story tells us that when he sailed forth from his Chateau de Guerand to take an airing of a morning his mother herself ran quickly to the tower and rang the great castle bell, to give the alarm to the peasant husbands of the wolf being abroad in the flock. Who can wonder at the excesses of the Revolution of '89, when we read and hear of such reports of the vicious, corrupt lives of the young nobility!

But the gay Marquis de Locmaria had something in him besides this youthful gallantry. He became a great general and totally reformed his life as he grew old. He grew very religious, and built a hospital at Plonegat which was destroyed in the Revolution of '89; his chateau was also destroyed then; but he had gone to his long unwaking sleep many a long year before; he died in 1709, a childless old man, and left his fortune to charities. To this day he is remembered by the peasants of Plonegat, who imagine they see at night a light in the ruins of the hospital chapel the marquis built; they say it is the spirit of the marquis who is praying there to God to pardon the sins of his youth.

At last we reached the Church of St. Jean du Doigt. Such a pretty, pleasant place as is the country around! Green fields bordered with elms, and the delicious hedges of white thorn and wild vines!

There is a curious old legend about the relic that is preserved in this church. The relic is the index finger of John the Baptist. It used to be at another church, or little chapel, some distance from St. Jean. Once on a time a crusading Breton soldier was returning from the Holy Land, after many dangerous encounters by sea and shore. He was, of course, as all Bretons are, very reverential and devout; as he stopped by every roadside and every chapel to give thanks for his safe return to his home. At a chapel of St. Meriadec was this relic of St. John, and of course the soldier could not pass so holy a shrine without doing it reverence. While he was praying devoutly the relic hopped out of its shrine and hid itself in the wrist of the unconscious soldier. After his prayers he resumed his journey, but was surprised to see tall spires and lofty trees bow down before him as he passed. When he saw the roofs of his native town, which was the present St. John, he went into another chapel of St. Meriadec to offer up thanks; moreover he was bewildered and confounded at the great reverence the buildings and trees were rendering his unworthy body, and he wished to ask aid of God and counsel of the priest; as he was quite ignorant of the great relic hidden in his wrist. While he was kneeling and praying at the altar he felt a quiver in his wrist, and saw the holy relic hop out and up on the sanctuary; then he and all knew that St. John wished his finger to remain in that chapel. This was early in the fifteenth century.

When the news of this miraculous transportation of the relic was noised abroad, it was decided that a beautiful new church should be built in the place of the little chapel of St. Meriadec. So a new one was begun in 1440, which was not completed until 1513. It has a beautiful tower, in form similar to the Breton spires, with two long openings or windows on each face; its divisions have rich balustrades; above is a platform, with a cornice of three rows of crockets, and surrounded by a flamboyant balustrade. From this platform rises up between four little towers an octagonal spire.

THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH.

Inside there are three naves, but no transept, and it is covered with one roof; the ceiling is of painted wood, which is often seen in Breton churches. The naves are divided by pillars, from which rise light, bold arches. Around the base of the ceiling; that is, where the ends of the wood rest, is a beautiful frieze or garland of pine cones, and bunches of grapes. The choir is ended by a straight wall. The suppression of the apse is one of the distinctive characteristics of Gothic architecture in Brittany. The main window over the choir, "maitresse vitre," as it is called in France, is remarkable; it has numberless compartments formed by the radiating mullions.

The church treasures are notable. The famous finger relic is in a rock crystal case, mounted in gold. Queen Anne of Brittany, who married Louis XII of France, and whose daughter was the wife of Francis I, is said to have had a great devotion for this church; she gave it the fine gold and silver processional cross, which is in beautiful repousse work, and two silver gilt chalices, one small, with eight enameled medallions representing the apostles; the other is said, however, to be the gift of Queen Claude at the time of the birth of the Dauphin, 1517. It is very handsome, and is covered with the most curious workmanship in gold. The head of Francis I is in relief on bosse on the patena, and on the bowl and foot of the chalice are figures of dolphins.

Anne of Brittany gave this church also a pretty little fountain, or chateau d'eau, as they call it in Brittany. It stands in the cemetery or churchyard, near the entrance. The water of this fountain is believed to possess miraculous qualities, and on the 23d of June there is a great pardon or pilgrimage made to St. Jean du Doigt, when miraculous cures are performed by this fountain water, as well as by the relic of St. John the Baptist's finger. The fountain construction is in the French Renaissance style. The design is extremely graceful, and is finer than the execution. There are three vases, one above another, supported on a column that unites them. The base of this column is in a larger basin, that rests on a pedestal, and which throws its water from lions' mouths. The surplus water of the upper basins flows off through a line of cherubs' heads, the prettiest feature of the composition. There is a group between the two upper basins representing the baptism of Christ; above it are some angels, and on the summit of the column the Father Eternal. It is said to have been made by an Italian artist of the time.

ANNE BREWSTER.

Who Invented the Telescope?

The invention of the telescope has been generally attributed to Galileo, but it appears the claim is not well founded. A library in Zurich contains a manuscript written in 1616 by Scheiner, in which occurs the following curious passage: "It must be allowed first, considering what the telescope does, that Baptista Porta has a better right to be thought the inventor,

Copyright © 2021 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.

Powered by Newspapers.com