

SAINT-PAUL TROIS-CHATEAUX.

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The city of the Tricastini is a city which has fallen indeed. It has fallen about as low as a city can fall which has not been swept away altogether. It is not indeed, like Norba and Calleva, cut down to a wall fencing in no dwellings, to a collection of ruined dwellings, like Ninfa, or to a collection of dwellings like Les Baux, where just enough are inhabited to make us feel more strongly that the more part of them are not. Saint Paul of the Three Castles—the three castles are not to be seen, the name of *Trois Châteaux* was somehow made out of the tribe of the Tricastini—is still an inhabited town or village; it still keeps traces of walls and gates, and it seems to point to a certain measure of energy in its present inhabitants that a steady omnibus-service is kept up several times a day with the neighbouring station of Pierrelatte. But the traveller who proposes to combine his visit to Saint Paul with a visit to the spot called after Saint Paul's first Bishop Restitut, will most likely prefer either to use his own feet or to take a carriage for himself. In either case he will have the opportunity of comparing the goodness of French roads, as long as they keep to anything like a main line—that is, as long as they are national or even departmental—with their extreme badness as soon as they turn aside to places which, like Saint Restitut, are lower in the scale of human habitation than Saint Paul. But, both on the good and the bad road, the traveller will be cheered on his way by the sight of a landscape, such as we are used to in the lands of the Imperial Burgundy, the hills gathering before him

to the east, and giving glimpses now and then of higher mountains. One of the lower among them he will have to climb to reach Saint Restitut, which lies hidden behind it; but his eye will most likely be rather drawn to the north to another hill, crowned by the remains of the castle of Garde-Adhemar. Thither he ought to go, to see, among other things, a church, one of the very few in Provence or in any other of the lands which go to make up modern France, which follow the German fashion of an apse at each end. So does the cathedral at Nevers which rises with such dignity above the Loire, before the Loire has reached the full measure of his greatness. So do one or two other churches here and there, but a small company indeed compared with the eastern examples headed by Mainz and Worms. With Garde-Adhemar, his guide-books tell him, he ought to join a place bearing the attractive name of Val-des-Nymphes, which may set him speculating on any possible connexion with Nymphs-field on the Cotswolds or with that wonderful Ninfa at the foot of the Volscian hills to which we have been already led by another path. But it is hard to see everything, and it is hard to take in all these four objects if one has to see them in the time between two trains on the way from Avignon to Valence. Some one will say, Why not prefer Orange, with its arch and theatre, to all four? But it may so happen that Orange has been seen before, and that the four smaller objects have not. And when a choice has to be made among the four, it seems only respectful to the Tricastini and their ninety-five bishops, some of whom figure as martyrs and some as cardinals, to take Saint Paul and Saint Restitus this time, and to leave Adhemar and the nymphs to take their chance another time.

There seems no reasonable ground for doubt as to the origin of the name of Saint-Paul 'Trois-Châteaux. It has been doubted whether this spot or some other in its neighbourhood is the real site of Augusta Tricastinorum. But there was an Augusta Tricastinorum; there is a Saint-Paul Trois-Châteaux; and Saint-Paul Trois-Châteaux was, down to modern times, the seat of the bishopric of the Tricastini. Following the common analogy of Gaulish cities, it would need some strong direct evidence to

show that the two places are distinct. And, assuming them to be the same, we need some no less clear proof of the existence of three castles at Saint-Paul to keep us from feeling that the castles are purely imaginary, evolved by a process of what the Germans call *Volksetymologie* out of the name of the tribe and the consequent title of its bishops. The only other explanation would be that the Augusta Tricastinorum held the more northern site on the Drôme which some have given to it, and that the bishopric was translated hither at some later time. So it may be, and such an explanation would account for the city bearing, neither a local name, according to the use of this country, nor yet the name of the tribe, according to the use of Northern Gaul, but the name of one of its bishops. After all, except as a piece of local history, the question is not of the highest interest. Whether Saint-Paul be Augusta or not, it is certain that all the attractions of the place belong to it in its character of Saint-Paul, and not in its character of Augusta. There are no Augustan monuments which are at all likely to divide our attention with the monuments of Saint-Paul, and in any case Saint-Paul is the historic site of what, ninety years back, we might have called the still existing bishopric of the Tricastini. But the Tricastini were never among the foremost tribes of Gaul, and their city cannot claim to have played any prominent place in history. Its name figures once in Gregory of Tours; he tells us how its bishop Victor, while he was saying mass, was set upon and well-nigh killed by the two wicked brothers Salonus and Sagittarius, who, in their character of bishops of Embrun and Gap, so greatly disturbed and disgraced the kingdom of good King Guntchramn. The final fall of the town to its present estate is attributed to the havoc of the Huguenot wars, when the church lay desolate from 1561 to 1605. But Saint Paul was ever a very small diocese, and we may be sure that its ecclesiastical head was at no time a great city. We have nothing exactly like it in England. We were going to say that Saint-Paul, as a town, ranked, not with Wells or Ely, but with Saint David's or Llandaff. But Llandaff has a good deal more of modern life than Saint-Paul, and Saint-Paul is as far as other places from sharing the peculiar air of Saint David's. Saint-Paul,

after all, was and in some sort still is, a walled city, and no walled city could ever attain to the peculiar look either of Saint David's or of Llandaff.

But if the place is not rich in history, it takes it out in legend. Its first bishop Saint Restitutus passes for no other than the blind man who was restored to sight in Saint John's Gospel. The story, we may be pretty sure, is another piece of *Volksetymologie*, alongside of the name of the town. Restitutus comes in as part of the same legends which bring the whole family of Bethany into this corner of Gaul, and which specially quarter Saint Martha at Tarascon as destroyer of the fearful monster called the Tarasque. Only in the Tarasconian version, unless our memory wholly fails us, he is not called Latin Restitutus, but bears a Greek name. His name lives on the hill above; there was his tomb; but relics of him were believed to abide at Saint-Paul till they perished in the Huguenot havoc. On the whole we yearn for greater knowledge of the history of Saint-Paul, church and city. Till we are lucky enough to find it, it is something, as things go, to know the name and to have seen the place.

We reach our little city from the station of Pierrelatte. The name is said to be *Petra Lata*, the second half of Ehrenbreitstein; but there certainly is no likeness between the two spots. We look up at hills and mountains, but the ground on which we are is flat. Does any megalithic monument, or the memory of such, lurk under the name? The distance to Saint Paul, on an easy road, is about five miles. We reach the city whose honours have passed away. It has not much to show beyond its once cathedral church; but it has a little. Considerable remains of its walls are still standing; we enter in due style through a gateway; a narrow street or two leads us to what we conceive to have been the Tricastinian fortress; and another narrow street leads us into the ecclesiastical precinct. We now see the church which once held the chair of the Tricastinian bishops, and, if we did not already know where we were, a sight of it would at once tell us in what land we were. The church is small; but in Provence and the neighbouring land no churches are large, according to an English, a Norman, or a French standard; and, small

as they are, the churches of the Provençal Romanesque somehow contrive to reach a dignity of general effect quite out of proportion to their size. We have seen this at Saint Trophimus, the head church of an illustrious metropolis; and the same good luck has followed the builder of the lowlier pile of Saint Paul. The little minster bears itself well for a church whose chapter numbered only ten canons, and whose bishop had jurisdiction over only thirty-five parishes. Of outline it has not very much; a single low tower stands over one of the transepts, the southern one, an arrangement not uncommon in the earlier churches of Somerset, as at Somerton and Stoke-sub-Hamdon. West of the crossing is the nave of three bays; east of it are the three apses. They are as unlike anything in Auvergne as anything in England; save that they have not the same height and slenderness, they rather remind one of some of the east ends of southern Italy. For they do not so much seem to finish the three bodies of the church as to be set against a tall low-roofed wall, with which they might be thought to have nothing to do. The mid-apse is polygonal without, though round within; it has pilasters with capitals at the angles and windows with a marked outside splay. This feature of the earlier Romanesque makes us cast up our eyes to the tower for mid-wall shafts. Real mid-walls, common in some parts of Burgundy and Aquitaine, but not just here, are to be seen in the desecrated abbey of Saint Rufus near Avignon, but there are none at Saint-Paul; the tower is adorned with an arcade of the ordinary kind. The west end is perhaps the most singular thing about the church. It cannot be said to have any particular shape; the nave gable is low; the slope of the aisles is cut into two stages so as to give the whole rather the air of great corbie-steps. A single very rich western doorway is set between a half-column and a pilaster on each side, fluted and furnished with capitals, but supporting neither arch nor entablature nor anything else. They are doubtless ancient fragments, but one seldom sees ancient fragments so inartistically made use of. The aisles have no windows ranging with the doorway; high up is a plain round window in each aisle, and a little higher two plain round-headed windows in the

nave, with another plain round window in the gable. Except the rich doorway and the columns and pilasters on each side of it, everything is perfectly plain: no other columns or pilasters, no arcades, no turret or buttress of any kind, relieve the utter bareness of the outline. The designer of the front seems to have thrown all his strength into a single highly ornamented feature, and to have been unable to devise anything to agree with it. In the like sort, in the aisles and clerestory the bays do not agree; here is one perfectly plain; another has a richly moulded window between two pilasters, another an arcade between pilasters with a single window. Perhaps on the outside Saint-Paul of the Tricastini is on the whole more singular than beautiful; but Saint Paul of the Tricastini does not put forth his full strength outside.

We pass within, and we see at a glance what singular majesty can be attained in this simple Provencal style, even in buildings of very small size. The basilican Romanesque of Southern Gaul distinctly goes in for height as the ruling dimension, and the Provencal variety perhaps carries the love of height further than any other. We say basilican Romanesque, in order to distinguish the churches of this type from those of the domical pattern of which Saint Front at Périgueux is the head. In the class to which Saint-Paul belongs—a class whose immediate model is Saint Trophimus of Arles, but which acknowledges near kindred in Saint Sernin at Toulouse and even in Our Lady of Poitiers—there may be a cupola over the crossing, but the nave is like the naves of Auvergne, lofty and covered with the barrel vault. At Arles, and often elsewhere, the barrel is pointed; here, as at Saint Sernin, it is round. This simple kind of roof, rising from tall columns or from pilasters attached to tall square piers, has a singular stateliness. No one will be dissatisfied as he looks down the nave of Saint Paul to the west. It is wonderfully lofty, and yet, small as the building is, we do not feel that it is too short. The design of the west front, the two round windows with the circle over them—the barrel vault allows the gable window to be seen within—comes out far better inside than out; somehow the great gap between the doorway and the windows seems less than it does outside. And this type of Romanesque is all the more striking to the

English traveller because it is so utterly unlike anything to which he is used in England and Normandy. It is singular that our architects of this age should have so seldom employed the barrel vault, either in great or in small churches. We have its round form in the White Tower; we have it at Ewenny; it would be dangerous to say that it is not to be found anywhere else; but it certainly is not common. In one district of Britain, to be sure, the pointed barrel-vault is actually the rule, namely in the English part of Pembrokeshire. But it there takes a shape which has not much in common with the barrel-vaults of southern Gaul. While elsewhere in Britain a stone vault is a sign of unusual finish, in Pembrokeshire it is a sign of special rudeness. In such a chancel as Manorbeer, where the arches seem to rise from the ground without any piers, the thought suggested by the vault is rather that of a cavern. Perhaps no building in the world has less of the general effect of Saint Trophimus or of Saint Paul than the Church of Manorbeer. Where a church in *Anglia Transwalliana* has, like Saint Mary's at Haverfordwest or the chancel of Hodgeston, any pretensions to finished architecture, we do not find the barrel-vault. And all examples of the barrel-vault everywhere must be distinguished from those buildings in Ireland and elsewhere, say the south transept at Minchinhampton or the exchequer at Merton College, where the outer and inner roof are actually the same thing. These last are stone roofs, but we can hardly call them vaults. To them the roof of the kitchen at Glastonbury stands in much the same relation in which a cupola stands to an ordinary vault. In the Romanesque of England the choice, both in great and in small churches, lay between the cross-vaulting and the flat ceiling. And in churches of the highest type the usual choice, till the twelfth century was well advanced, was the flat ceiling for the main body and cross-vaulting for the aisles. In English Romanesque all vaulting is rare; the barrel-vault is specially rare; the pointed barrel-vault, if any of its examples can be called Romanesque, is a sign of rudeness; it shows a seeking for strength rather than for beauty. In southern Gaul the barrel-vault, round and pointed, was evidently a favourite form which was liked and made the most of.

The type of interior with which we are dealing hardly admits of the threefold division of pier-arch, triforium, and clerestory. In many examples, as at Carcassonne, Aix, and Valence, there is nothing answering to either clerestory or triforium; the barrel-vault rises at once from the pier-arches. And this is wonderfully effective at Carcassonne, where the piers take the shape of huge columns after the fashion of Gloucester and Tewkesbury. And Carcassonne, with no triforium or clerestory at all, but with its barrel-vault, is at any rate—what there is of it—immeasurably grander than Tewkesbury, with its triforium squeezed into nothingness, and its clerestory half hid by the vault added at a later time. Carcassonne looks like what Tewkesbury would have liked to be if it could. But here at Saint-Paul we have the square pier characteristic of the Provençal type, and there is, as at Saint Sernin, a single range answering to triforium and clerestory in one. The treatment of this range is worth careful study. The barrel-vault rises immediately from small fluted shafts; a little greater richness than usual is not uncommon in this position, as we see at Saint Trophimus. The *quasi*-clerestory range has small pilasters, which, in the eastern bay of the nave, have arches between them, and the string or cornice below has a singular ornament which seems to represent drapery. In the apse the polygonal form of the outside is exchanged within for the round, and instead of pilasters, it is surrounded by channelled columns.

We said that the church of Saint-Paul had nothing of the Augustan age of the Tricastini to rival it. Nor is there. But Augusta Tricastinorum, as distinguished from Saint-Paul Trois-Châteaux, is not left wholly without memories. Some graceful pieces of sculpture may still be seen in an odd corner, and the guide-books speak also of mosaics underground, to which we could not find our way.

With the church of Saint Paul we have settled to combine the church of his predecessor Saint Restitutus, and we accordingly make our way to the village which bears his name. We climb the hill on which it stands, casting an eye to Garde-Adhemar on the left, and grumbling somewhat that we cannot manage to see

everything. But the one object to be seen at Saint-*Restitut* is hardly less attractive than Saint-Paul itself. This is the church, a much smaller and less stately building than Saint-Paul, but containing points of higher interest. Saint-Paul is simply a building, a church of a particular type, and a type to which Englishmen are not familiar. Saint-*Restitut* carries us into the region of mystery ; into those transitional ages which, for some minds at least, have a charm above all times before and after them. The church proper, of good but by no means early Romanesque, is small and aisleless, three bays and an apse. We are struck as we draw near by the apse, polygonal with pilasters and a rich cornice, and by the south porch which reminds us of the west front of the metropolitan church of Avignon. A round headed doorway stands between two columns supporting an entablature and pediment, all of classical work, the remains undoubtedly of some far earlier building. But intermediate in date between this fragment of pagan times and the present church is a work far more curious than either, because it alone is strange and perplexing. Romanesque churches and Roman fragments are always interesting, but there are too many of both for either of them to be, strictly speaking, wonderful. But what do we say to the building against which the present church is built up ? Inside it acts as a kind of narthex to the church, only a narthex it is not, for it is surely of the nature of a narthex to have an approach from outside. It is a square building, which certainly contained, which was perhaps built to contain, the tomb of Saint *Restitus*. That tomb it contains still ; only, since the Huguenot havoc at Saint-Paul, the saint himself is no longer there. Only how was the building finished before the present church was built ? At present it opens into the church by two arches of its own, one over the other, very much after the fashion of an Arvernian narthex. Over these soars the western arch of the present church, doubtless its latest finish. Its pointed arch of three orders though springing from thoroughly Romanesque supports (which remind us not a little of the supports of the barrel-vault at Saint-Paul), forms a marked contrast to the detached columns, with very fine Corinthian capitals, which surround the round interior of the apse. But this

western arch of the church of Saint Restitutus cannot be said to open into his special home beyond. It is built up against its eastern wall, and beneath it we can see the eastern side of the singular frieze, band of sculpture, or whatever we please to call it, which goes all round this strange building, the other three sides of course appearing outside. This long line of somewhat rude sculpture contains various figures, specially animal forms, and above all a representation of the Last Judgement. The guide-books attribute it to the ninth century; whether they have any evidence for so doing we know not, but it clearly belongs to some time a good deal earlier than the finished Romanesque of the church, and a good deal later than the classical building of which it preserves fragments. Only what was its form and object? Could it have opened into a lower church than the present one, so low that the sculptures would have been seen over it? Or could it be in strictness a Christian mausoleum, containing the tomb of the saint, and open on one side? Only in that case, would not the open side have been more likely to have been the west than the east? The question becomes one rather for those who can bring either local knowledge or special ritual experience; to the passing antiquary who brings only his ordinary knowledge of history and architecture, the building is somewhat puzzling. But, without solving the question, he is well satisfied to start it, as well as to enjoy the very considerable store which Saint Restitut supplies him in his own department. He does not climb the hill and track out the steep village streets for naught, when he carries away memories of classical Roman, of late Romanesque, and of something, whatever its nature, of a time between them. He comes down from the height; he casts again a lingering look at Garde-Adhemar and the hills which rise above it, and he betakes himself to the halting-place of the Broad Stone, whence he is to be carried, not indeed with the full speed of modern times, but with a speed which perhaps still startles the inhabitants of Saint Restitut, to the colony of Valentia in the land of the Sagellauni.