

## THE SPECTATOR

In the "Century Magazine" for July, 1893, was an article by the artist Joseph Pennell and Mrs. Pennell, entitled "The Most Picturesque Place in the World." There were many illustrations of tantalizing beauty and charm, but the brief text gave no indication of the country in which this marvelous and unique town was situated. "We had always been hunting for it," writes Mrs. Pennell. "We had always felt sure that somewhere, some day, we should find the perfect place which was to combine the charm of the Middle Ages with the comfort of the nineteenth century. Eight years of wandering had brought us no closer to our undiscovered country, when, last summer, as we were traveling in the mountains of—but no! why should we tell the name? Why break the serenity of its hilly streets with the rush of personally conducted parties or of easel-laden artists? Why turn it into another Barbizon or Laguerre's, another Chester or Nuremberg? No; the name of the most picturesque place in the world we shall keep to ourselves. We will give no hints, geographical or geological, statistical or social, historical or humanitarian, mechanical or moral, political or intellectual, as to the site of the city forgotten by Cook, neglected by Murray. We will only ask triumphantly, tantalizingly, 'Do you not wish you knew where to find the most picturesque place in the world?'"

For fourteen years the Spectator had wished he knew where that place was, or how it could be found. On his first trip to Europe he asked many travelers, but learned nothing—those who had read the article were no wiser than he. The search was patiently continued on his second trip, but with no more success. Then, in a strange, unlikely place, he unexpectedly stumbled on what he had so diligently sought. Sailing from Quebec in June, 1907, on a miserable second-class boat, among a shipload of impossible passengers, the Spectator discovered after two days his affinity, a genial and entertaining professor from Tufts College. He also had read the Pennell article, and had patiently but vainly sought the place, until in 1905, while taking a bicycle trip through

southern France, he one bright morning emerged from a bit of woods, saw below him a peaceful valley, and nestling in it recognized the original of Mr. Pennell's illustrations. He felt as happy as though he had found Captain Kidd's treasure, and the Spectator was nearly as delighted when told where it was. The Spectator had not been on land many days before he had bought his ticket for Le Puy-en-Velay. Le Puy is five hours by train from Lyons, and Lyons is eight hours south of Paris. The town is situated in a volcanic mountainous region among the foothills of the French Alps.

One might imagine the town to be built in the center of an enormous extinct volcano. In the village proper arise three precipitous volcanic masses of rocky formation; on the outskirts are two more. The most prominent of these rises abruptly five hundred feet above the town and twenty-five hundred feet above the sea. It is surmounted by a colossal statue of the Virgin, whose towering head seems caressed by the clouds. In her outstretched arms she holds aloft over the village the Holy Child, whose hands seem to be waving a perpetual welcome or benediction. On another of these eminences stands a great cathedral, singularly beautiful, and remarkable artistically and architecturally, worthy to be the pride of a great city. This church, dating from the eleventh century, is a remarkably fine example of Byzantine architecture. The Spectator refrains from any account of its artistic treasures and features except to mention a large crucifix on one of the side walls. It was brought down from Paris at the time the decree went into effect excluding such emblems from the courts of law. Underneath is this rather gruesome inscription, in translation reading, "Jesus Christ, banished from the courts of France, has found refuge here." To the right of the village, on a third of these rocky peaks, is an architectural curiosity of wonderful beauty, a veritable "jewel without a casket," to use an expression of Henry IV. It is a chapel dedicated to St. Michael. Farther down the valley are two more heights. Half on and half built into the first is a grotto chapel in which Charles VII was crowned

king, having heard of the death of Charles VI as he was passing through the town. Last of all is the castle, now in ruins.



Practically the only industry of Le Puy is the manufacture of hand-made lace. Wherever the Spectator walked he saw single workers and groups of women sitting in the squares underneath the trees, or on the shady sides of the narrow and crooked streets. In the open doorways of their homes they sing their old refrains, while the light spindles on the cushions armed with sharp pins hum under their quick fingers. The value of a day's product is about thirty cents. They were always merry and ready to exchange a few words with the Spectator, evidently the only stranger in town. One day, after a trifling purchase, in making payment the keen eyes of an old lady, who said she was ninety-three, spied an American cent in the Spectator's handful of French coins. She was instantly attracted by the Indian's head, inquired where the Indian lived, if he was the Spectator's friend, and was disappointed that he had not even seen him. The Spectator presented the coin to her, and, as he passed down the street and looked back, saw her proudly exhibiting it to her neighbors whom she had called from across the way. The children of Le Puy are many, nearly always pretty, well-mannered, and *dean*. The last virtue is hard to account for, as their mothers make lace all day, and their fathers in the morning drink absinthe and coffee on the east side of the street, and in the afternoon change over to the west side, where they drink coffee and absinthe.



The Spectator's last day was a Sunday, and he dutifully went to the morning service in the cathedral. But the music was painfully hideous, and after twenty minutes of suffering he tiptoed out to the almost deserted streets. Never did getting away from any noise give him greater relief. He walked a mile and a half up the river, and opposite the deserted ruin stood looking longingly at a short cut through a charming garden, and wondering whether a lover of the picturesque should debase himself by trespassing. But he was spared a decision. Among the

rose-bushes he saw slowly and painfully straightening himself an old, white-haired man. He raised his trembling hand to shade his eyes, came slowly toward the Spectator, and with the greatest deference and charm of manner inquired if he desired to ascend to the castle. If so, he would unlock the gate and let the Spectator through the high wall if he would honor him by crossing his garden. How delightful and comforting beyond expression it is, in a strange land, to receive such unpurchased and unexpected kindness and consideration! The Spectator admired his roses and tall white lilies, and must wait till he gathered him a bouquet of them. After leaving the garden the path led through a field of brown grain spotted thick with the brilliant poppies and blue cornflowers of England, under fruit trees and up through a tangle of bushes and gorgeous lilies standing nearly as high as the Spectator's head and greeting him with their delicious perfume, till he reached the crumbling steps leading to the castle, standing alone on its dizzy height, deserted for many generations, and now, as far as could be judged by signs, rarely visited. What a boy's paradise of caves, dungeons, and subterranean passages! And what a superb view, and what a painter's paradise—and practically unknown.



As the Spectator writes, he sees in the quietly singing river far below a few red-legged soldiers fishing; boys are swimming; pigeons and ducks are bathing; farther on some women are doing their never-ending wash, beating the wet clothes with little wooden paddles. The volcanoes have been extinguished, and where streams of hot lava once made their deadly progress now stretch as far as sight can reach fields of grain and vineyards full of busy workers. The horizon is of inexhaustible breadth and magnificence, commanded away off to the east by the summit of Mont Blanc, clothed in its eternal snows. But, loveliest of all, nestling in the valley and canopied by the bluest of skies and whitest of fleecy clouds, lie the red-roofed houses of rare Le Puy, those ancient monuments of nature and man, almost appalling in their grandeur.

# THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE<sup>1</sup>

BY GEORGE W. WICKERSHAM

ATTORNEY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

PRIOR to the year 1870, while the Attorney-General was a recognized member of the President's Cabinet, his duties and responsibilities did not differ much from those described in the Judiciary Act of 1789. The general work of prosecuting delinquents for offenses cognizable under the authority of the United States, and that of conducting civil actions in which the United States was concerned in all tribunals other than the Supreme Court, was conducted by the attorneys for the respective districts without reference to or interference by the Attorney-General. But the increased growth of Federal jurisdiction following the Civil War brought to the attention of Congress the need of a more systematic conduct of the legal affairs of the Nation, and in 1870 a law was passed creating the Department of Justice as one of the Executive Departments of the Government, under the direction of the Attorney-General.

The personnel of the Department has been increased from time to time until at present it is composed of the Attorney-General, seven assistants, and the Solicitor-General, besides the Solicitors or Assistant Attorneys-General to the State, Treasury, Interior, and Post-Office Departments, and the Department of Commerce and Labor, who, while nominally under the control of the Department of Justice, are practically legal aides to the heads of the Departments where they are respectively stationed. These officials, with a permanent staff of nine administrative officers, sixty-four attorneys, twenty-four examiners and special agents, and one hundred and eighty-nine clerks, messengers, etc., besides attorneys from time to time especially retained for particular matters, together with eighty-four District Attorneys and their respective assistants and clerks, constitute the working force of the Department of Justice, which con-

ducts all the legal business of the Federal Government. The National jurisdiction is constantly being exercised over new objects, and the range of subjects dealt with by the Department of Justice is therefore constantly expanding. The acts relating to inter-State commerce have developed a large amount of litigation concerning traffic problems, the result of the extension of Federal control over inter-State railway lines, although the initiative and the conduct of these proceedings are, under the present system, shared with the Inter-State Commerce Commission, a division of responsibilities which, it is hoped, will soon be terminated. These also include causes civil and criminal, arising under the Safety Appliance Act, the Twenty-eight-Hour Law, and the Employers' Liability Act.

The enforcement of the land laws of the United States, and the conduct of proceedings to restore to the public domain lands which have been procured from it in violation of Congressional enactment, constitute an enormous volume of civil and criminal litigation little known of in the East, but of great importance and of much public interest to the Western part of the country. This includes suits to set aside and recover to the Government lands the patents for which have been procured by fraud, or, where the title has been acquired by a bona-fide purchaser, to recover the value of the land; suits for illegal fencing of the public domain; and actions for trespass in unlawfully cutting and removing timber from public lands.

A very large number of suits and proceedings are also pending in the Western States to set aside deeds executed by Indians contrary to the provisions against alienation in the acts of Congress providing for the allotment of lands in severalty, brought in the discharge of that guardianship which the United States Government has always maintained to protect them from the designs of sharpers, who are ever ready to take advantage of these simple folk in the exercise by them of their newly

<sup>1</sup> A portion of an address made by the Hon. George W. Wickersham, Attorney-General, before the Pennsylvania Society, in New York, on December 11, 1909.