and St Victour, and the seigneurs of Clavelier and Fontenilles, all of which are now extinct. (M. P.\*)

ST NEOTS (pronounced St Neets), a market town in the southern parliamentary division of Huntingdonshire, England, on the right (east) bank of the Ouse, 51½ m. N. of London by the Great Northern railway. Pop. of urban district, (1901) 3880. A stone bridge crosses the river, built in 1589 from the ruins of a former priory. The parish church of St Mary is a fine Perpendicular building of the later 15th century. The original oak roof is noteworthy. Among other buildings may be mentioned the Victoria museum (1887), the library and literary institute, and the endowed school (1760). Paper-mills, breweries, flour-mills, and engineering works furnish the chief industries of the town.

The name of St Neots is derived from the monastery founded in the adjoining parish of Eynesbury in the reign of King Edgar (967-975). St Neot, a priest of Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset, became a recluse at a place which he named Neotstoke, near Bodmin in Cornwall, where he died about the end of the 9th century. His shrine at Eynesbury being threatened by the incursion of the Danes early in the 11th century, the relics were conveyed to Crowland Abbey, in Lincolnshire, of which he became one of the patron saints. But in 1112 the monastery was refounded from that of Bec in Normandy. An Anglo-Saxon enamelled mosaic in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford is supposed to contain a portrait of St Neot. In 1648 a troop of Royalists under the command of Villiers, duke of Buckingham, was routed in St Neots by the Parliamentarians.

ST NICOLAS, a town of Belgium in the province of East Flanders, about 12 m. S.W. of Antwerp. Pop. (1904), 32,767. It is the principal town of Waes, formerly a district of bleak and barren downs, but now the most productive part of Belgium. St Nicolas is the centre and distributing point of this district, being an important junction on the direct line from Antwerp to Ghent; it has also many manufactures of its own. The principal church dedicated to St Nicolas was finished in 1696, but the other public buildings are only of the 19th century.

ST NICOLAS, or Sτ Nicolas du Port, a town of north-eastern France, in the department of Meurthe-et-Moselle,on the left bank of the Meurthe, 8 m. S.E. of Nancy by rail. Pop. (1906), 4796. The town has a fine Gothic church dating from the end of the 15th and the first half of the 16th century, and possessing a finger-joint of St Nicolas formerly the object of pilgrimages which were themselves the origin of well-known fairs. The latter became less important after 1635, when the Swedes sacked the town. There are important salt-workings in the vicinity; cotton spinning and weaving are carried on. Its port, shared with Varangéville on the opposite side of the river, has an active trade.

ST OMER, a town and fortress of northern France, capital of the department of Pas-de-Calais, 42 m. W.N.W. of Lille on the railway to Calais. Pop. (1906), 17,261. At St Omer begins the canalized portion of the Aa, which reaches the sea at Grave- lines, and under its walls it connects with the Neuffossé canal, which ends at the Lys. The fortifications were demolished during the last decade of the 19th century and boulevards and new thoroughfares made in their place. There are two harbours outside and one within the city. St Omer has wide streets and spacious squares, but little animation. The old cathedral belongs almost entirely to the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries. A heavy square tower finished in 1499 surmounts the west portal. The church contains interesting paintings, a colossal statue of Christ seated between the Virgin and St John (13th century, originally belonging to the cathedral of Thérouanne and presented by the emperor Charles V.), the cenotaph of St Omer (13th century) and numerous ex-votos. The richly decorated chapel in the transept contains a wooden figure of the Virgin (12th century), the object of pilgrimages. Of St Bertin, the church of the abbey (built between 1326 and 1520 on the site of previous churches) where Childeric III. retired to end his days, there remain some arches and a Iofty tower, which serve to adorn a public garden, Several other churches or convent chapels are of

interest, among them St Sepulchre (14th century), which has a beautiful stone spire and stained-glass windows. A fine collection of records, a picture-gallery, and a theatre are all accommodated in the town hall, built of the materials of the abbey of St Bertin. There are several houses of the 16th and 17th centuries; of the latter the finest is the Hôtel Colbert, once the royal lodging, and now occupied by an archaeological museum. Among the hospitals the military hospital is of note as occupying the well- known college opened by the English Jesuits in 1592. The old episcopal palace adjoining the cathedral is used as a court-house. The chief statue in the town is that of Jacqueline Robin (see below). St Omer is the seat of a sub-prefect, of a court of assizes, of tribunals of first instance and of commerce, of a chamber of commerce, and of a board of trade arbitration. Besides the lycée, there are schools of music and of art. The industries include the manufacture of linen goods, sugar, soap, tobacco- pipes, and mustard, the distilling of oil and liqueurs, dyeing, salt-refining, malting and brewing. The suburb of Haut Pont to the north of St Omer is inhabited by a special stock, which has remained faithful to the Flemish tongue, its original costume and its peculiar customs, and is distinguished by honesty and industry. The ground which these people cultivate has been reclaimed from the marsh, and the *lègres* (*i.e.* the square blocks of land) communicate with each other only by boats floated on the ditches and canals that divide them. At the end of the marsh, on the borders of the forest of Clairmarais, are the ruins of the abbey founded in 1140 by Thierry d’Alsace, to which Thomas Becket betook himself in 1165. To the south of St Omer, on a hill commanding the Aa, lies the camp of Helfaut, often called the camp of St Omer. On the Canal de Neuf-Fossé, near the town, is the Ascenseur des Fontinettes, a hydraulic lift enabling canal boats to surmount a difference of level of over 40 ft.

Omer, bishop of Thérouanne, in the 7th century established the monastery of St Bertin, from which that of Notre-Dame was an offshoot. Rivalry and dissension, which lasted till the Revolution, soon sprang up between the two monasteries, becoming especially virulent when in 1559 St Omer became a bishopric and Notre-Dame was raised to the rank of cathedral. In the 9th century the village which grew up round the monasteries took the name of St Omer. The Normans laid the place waste about 860 and 880, but ten years later found town and monastery surrounded by walls and safe from their attack. Situated on the borders of territories frequently disputed by French, Flemish, English and Spaniards, St Omer long continued subject to siege and military disaster. In 1071 Philip I. and Count Arnulf III. of Flanders were defeated at St Omer by Robert the Frisian. In 1127 the town received a communal charter from William Clito, count of Flanders. In 1493 it came to the Low Countries as part of the Spanish dominion. The French made futile attempts against it between 1551 and 1596, and again in 1638 (under Richelieu) and 1647. But in 1677, after seventeen days’ siege, Louis XIV. forced the town to capitulate; and the peace of Nijmwegen permanently confirmed the conquest. In 1711 St Omer, on the verge of surrendering to Prince Eugene and the duke of Marlborough, owing to famine, was saved by the daring of Jacqueline Robin, who risked her life in bringing provisions into the place. St Omer ceased to be a bishopric in 1801.

See L. Deschamps de Pas, *Hist. de la ville de Saint-Omer* (2nd ed., Arras, 1881). For a full bibliography of other works see U. Chevalier, *Repertoire des sources hist. topo-bibliographie* (Montbéliard, 1903), ii. 2743 *seq.*

SAINTON, PROSPER PHILIPPE CATHERINE (1813-1890), French violinist, was the son of a merchant at Toulouse, where he was born on the 5th of June 1813. He entered the Paris Conservatoire under Habeneck in 1831, and became professor of the violin in the Conservatoire of Toulouse. In 1844 he made his first appearance in England, at a Philharmonic concert directed by Mendelssohn. Settling in London, he was in 1845 appointed professor at the Royal Academy of Music. In the early organizations for chamber music which culminated in the establishment of the Popular concerts, Sainton bore an important