

An early scientific voyage to Greenland had suggested that country as a field for exploration, and in 1887 he began to prepare for crossing the great Greenland ice-field. Starting the following year, he traversed Greenland from east to west, and his book, "The First Crossing of Greenland," appeared in 1890.

Expedition in the *Fram*

He then determined to test his theory of the existence of a drift-current across the Polar regions towards the east coast of Greenland. In 1893 he sailed from Christiania in a specially built ship, the *Fram*, with the intention of fixing her in the ice and letting her drift with the current. His theory proved entirely correct, and the *Fram* eventually came home safely by the west coast of Spitzbergen.

After leaving his ship to drift, Nansen went as far north as $86^{\circ} 14'$, the highest latitude reached at that time. The account of the expedition was published in 1897 in his book, "Farthest North."

After the separation of Norway and Sweden Nansen became the first Norwegian Minister to England. He took a prominent part in repatriating prisoners of the World War, and in relieving sufferers from famine in Russia.

NANTES (*nänt*), FRANCE. In its long and varied history, dating back to the Celtic Nannetes who ruled here before the coming of the Romans, the most memorable event associated with Nantes was the issuing here of the famous Edict, by which Henry IV in 1598 granted toleration and civil rights to the Huguenots or French Protestants. (See Henry, Kings of France.)

Importance as a Seaport

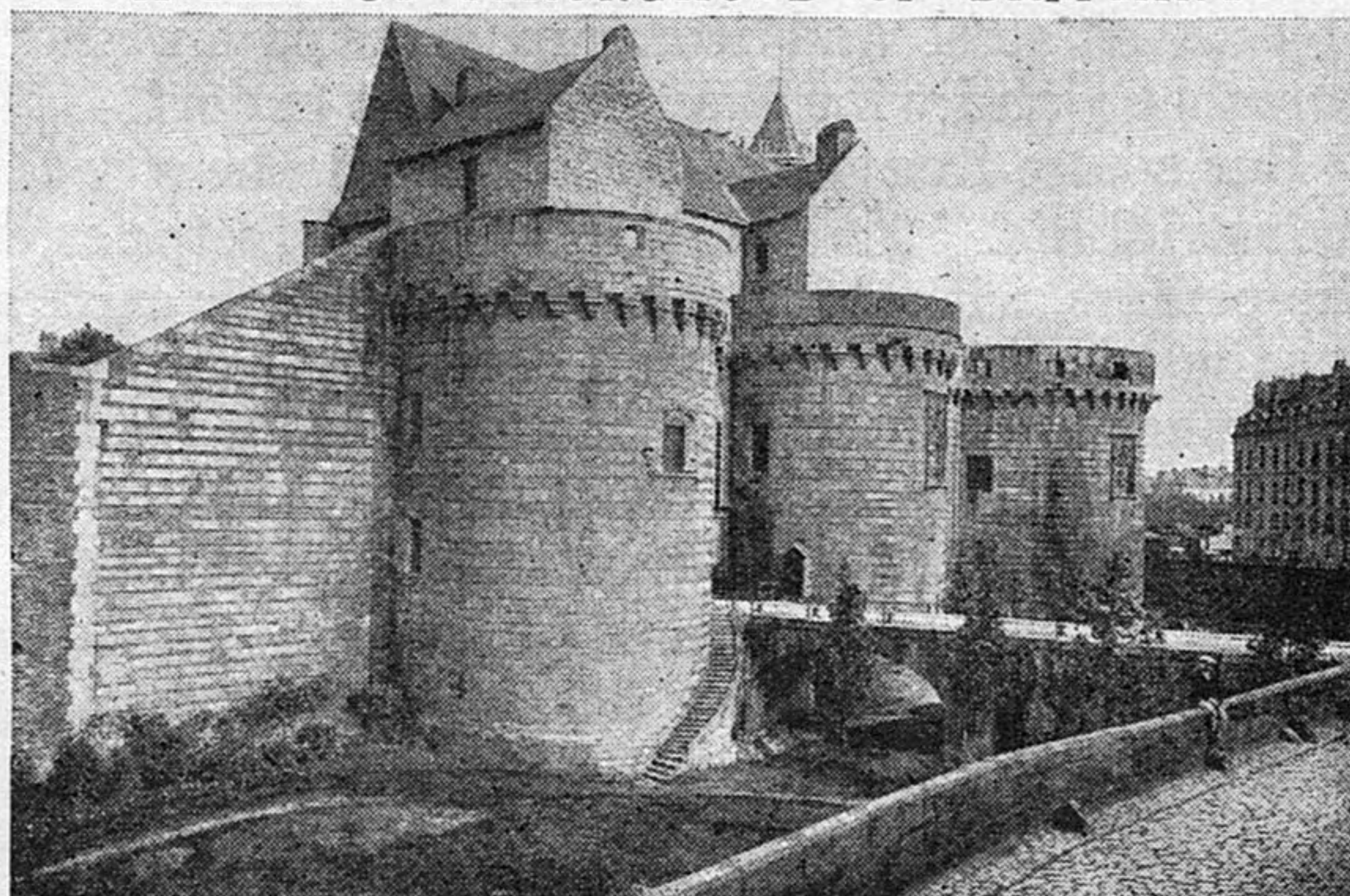
To-day its position on the estuary of the river Loire, about 50 miles from the sea, and its chain of connecting canals, make it one of the seven chief seaports of France. Sugar, tobacco, sardines, and preserved foods, with ironworks and shipbuilding, are the principal industries. Nantes contains a good number of historic public buildings, among them an unfinished cathedral of great beauty. Historically, it is one of the chief cities of Brittany, that land of picturesque people and customs. Population, about 183,000.

NAPLES, ITALY. To catch the spirit of Naples the visitor must see it first as he sails between the islands of Ischia and Capri, and enters the celebrated Bay of Naples, some 22 miles wide. There at the bay's northern apex lies the largest, noisiest, most picturesque and most fascinating of Italy's historic cities. As the ship ploughs forward, through the bluest of waters under the bluest of skies, the sloping city appears, flanked seven miles to the east by the ominous bulk of Mount Vesuvius,

and on the west by the graceful heights of Posilipo. In the background an amphitheatre of volcanic hills curls around the city, which has been called the most beautifully situated in all Europe. To the lovely island of Capri go 30,000 tourists every year, to enjoy the balmy air and the picturesque scenery and to view the ruins of the palaces in which the profligate emperor Tiberius spent the last seven years of his life.

From a crest north of the city, where stands the massive bulk of St. Elmo Castle, built in the 16th century and now used as a prison, a spiny ridge runs down to the sea, splitting the city in two. This ridge ends in a rocky

A FAMOUS STRONGHOLD OF BRITTANY



Entrance of the castle at Nantes, showing the three towers. The castle, which has a moat, was built in the 14th century. Here was signed the Edict of Nantes.

islet, on which stands the Castello dell'Ovo—so called because it is egg-shaped—built in the 12th century.

In the older and larger part of the city, to the east of this ridge, the spires of scores of ancient churches rise, intermingled with large public buildings, and here and there a factory chimney. In this quarter the poorer people live, and here centres the industrial and political life of the city. On the western side of the ridge are the new fashionable dwellings of the rich, built on terraced hills and commanding sweeping views of the bay, with the twin mountains of famous Capri in the far distance.

Terrible Outbreak of Cholera

During the last century the population increased at a rate far more rapid than did the dwelling-places, and for many decades the poorer people were crowded together so thickly that disease, crime, and vice flourished hopelessly in filthy tenements. In 1884 a fierce epidemic of cholera broke out which carried away thousands of victims.

Shortly afterwards the centre of the old district was literally torn out by the roots. Modern buildings and broad streets were built, an excellent water supply was established, and