

**MATHIEU ROPARS:
ET CETERA**

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Mathieu Ropars: Et Cetera by William Young

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WILLIAM YOUNG

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BY AN EX-EDITOR.

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M. R.

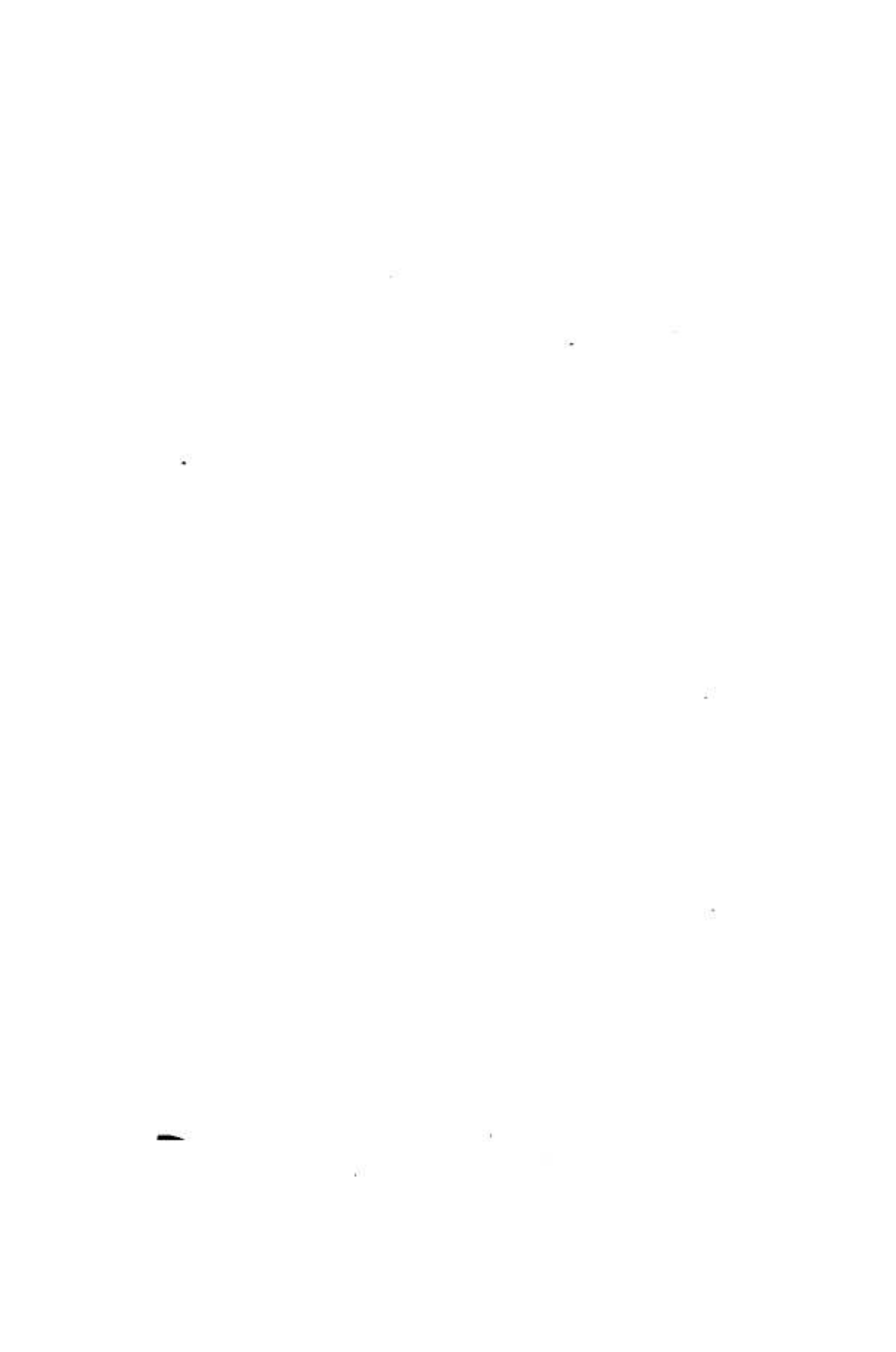
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These literary chips from the workshop of an arduous profession were, with few exceptions, contributed to the "*Abion*" newspaper, between the years 1848 and 1866.

New York, May 25, 1868.



MATHIEU ROPARS.

From the French of Emile Souvestre.

I.

At the extremity of the roadstead of Brest, in the open space that lies stretched out between the Ile Longue and Point Kelerne, may be seen two rocks crowned with massive granite buildings, and standing boldly up. On the former, the lazaretto of Trébéron has been established; the latter, which in other days was used as a burial-ground and thence took its name of the Ile des Morts, now contains the principal powder-magazine of the naval arsenal. The two rocks separated by an arm of the sea, are about six miles distant from Brest. In appearance these little islands are not unlike. Beyond the ground occupied by the buildings upon them, they offer nothing to the eye save a succession of stony slopes, dotted here and there with coarse moss and prickly thorn-broom. Vainly there might you look for any other shelter than that afforded by the fissures of the rocks, for any other shade than that of the walls, for any other walk than the short terrace contrived in front of the buildings. Naked and sterile, the two isles remind you of a couple of

immense sentry-boxes in stone, placed there for the purpose of keeping guard over the sea, which is roaring beneath them. But if the foot that treads them remains imprisoned within a narrow circle, the view from their summit extends over an infinite space. Here, you have the bay of Lanvœc, bordered by a dull-looking and stunted vegetation; there, Roscanvel with its shadows crossed by the graceful spire of its church; there, Spanish Point bristling with batteries; and lastly, close upon the horizon lies Brest, with its dock-yards, its forts, and the hundred masts of its ships, visible through a veil of mist. Midway opens out the Goulet, the harbour of this marvellous lake, through which arrive and depart unceasingly those wandering sails, that issue forth to flaunt the ensign of France upon the waters, or to bring it home again from far-away lands.

A cannon-shot, the echo of which was still booming along the shores, had just announced one of these arrivals, and a frigate, with a light breeze, was doubling the Point under a cloud of canvas. From the esplanade of Trébéron a man, wrapped in a pilot-cloth cape and wearing a narrow-brimmed glazed hat, under which it might be seen that his locks were turning grey, was looking at the noble vessel as she glided along in the distance, between the azure of the sea and of the sky. It was obvious that the keeper of the lazaretto (for he it was) gave but casual attention to the sight, with which his long residence at Trébéron