

## BETHUNE.

THE family name of BETHUNE is taken from the city of that name in the ancient province of Picardie, France. It was called by the Romans "Betunia in Gaul." It was the chief city of a Barony, belonging to a family descended from the Counts of Artois. Since the sixth century they have been known in history as the Bethunes of Picardie; prior to that date family names were unknown.

In the year 1011, Robert, first of his name, Baron of Bethune and Lord of Richebourg was chosen "*Defender or Protector of the Church.*" This was deemed a very great honor, only conferred on powerful Princes; for it involved the duty of defending and protecting the church property and the interests of the church generally.

The AVOUE D'ARRAS, as it is written in the old French histories, enjoyed the high honor of having the banner of the church borne before him in all warlike expeditions. Hence Robert the First, of Bethune, is called "*Faisseus*" to indicate that he enjoyed this distinction, and the band or *Fasse* in the shield of the Bethune arms was to commemorate the conferring of this honor on him and his posterity.

In return for the services the Barons of Bethune rendered the church, the church has preserved, in its Archives, a minute and reliable history of the family; so that we have before us an uninterrupted Genealogy from father to son from 1011 to the present day; together with all the births, deaths, and marriages, and an account of everything worthy of note connected with their history. A very large volume is the result of all this accumulation of incidents during eight centuries. The difficulty is to select the interesting items and pass by that which is less noteworthy.

The most remarkable feature of their history is the number of churches they have built; the institutions for learning they have founded, supported, and patronized; the public charities they have started and kept alive by their bounty; and the costly bridges, buildings, and the like they have given to the public. I have not space to give even a list of